



Upcoming Events

- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Healthy Vision Month
- 11-17 / National Prevention Week
- 20 / World Bee Day
- 26 / Memorial Day



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What's SAPpening

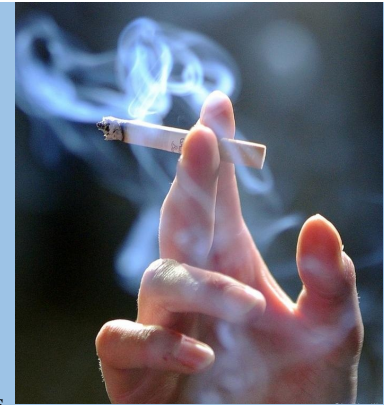
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STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LIAISONS

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The same 5 disparities in cigarette smoking persists in all 50 states

Disparities in cigarette smoking:

1. Income level: Lower-income households have significantly higher rates of cigarette smokers
2. Race and ethnicity: American Indians/Alaskan Natives and African Americans have the highest rate of cigarette smokers.
3. Sexual orientation: LGBTQ+ individuals face higher rates of tobacco use, with bisexual women particularly affected.
4. Mental health conditions: People with mental health conditions are 70% more likely to smoke than those who do not have them.
5. Living in rural areas: Rural communities have significantly higher rates of smoking than urban ones.



Understanding the areas of society that are disproportionately affected by cigarette smoking allows for more targeted prevention and cessation strategies. Addressing these inequalities can help decelerate the overall trend of cigarette smoking in the U.S

5 Strategies to Reduce Geographic Disparities in Tobacco Use:

1. Address access and affordability of cessation programs and medications
2. Ensure that mental health resources get integrated into tobacco cessation efforts
3. Implement smoking prevention and cessation policies in local communities
4. Collaborate with community leaders, healthcare providers, and schools
5. Use data-driven efforts to allocate resources to regions with higher smoking prevalence



I 'Almost Died' From Smoking Pot

David Krumholtz "almost died" after suffering an extreme reaction to smoking pot. The "Santa Clause" star said that he started using marijuana and became "a daily smoker," which led him to develop a rare condition called cannabinoid hyperemesis syndrome (CHS). "It's rare, [but] it's becoming more and more prevalent, numbers are doubling every year." CHS "leads to repeated and severe bouts of vomiting," according to Cedars-Sinai, which notes that the condition "only occurs in daily long-term users of marijuana." "Essentially, they messed up weed," Krumholtz opined. "They made it too strong, and they don't know why it's happening. There's a lot of theories." The "Oppenheimer" actor, 46, explained that the brain has "cannabinoid receptors" and "you can blow out the receptors, like blowing out an engine, making it that every time you smoke pot — not every time, but if you smoke it enough — you get wildly, dangerously nauseous." The "Numb3rs" alum believes "no one talks about" the dangers of weed "because it's the friendly drug, it's the drug that doesn't kill you." However, he cautioned, "It's a very addictive drug ... and now that it's super strong, it's really addictive." Krumholtz, who no longer smokes pot, would like the public to be made aware of CHS, which can be fatal, according to the peer-reviewed Journal of Forensic Sciences.

"I would love to see every legal cannabis store be required to have a pamphlet," the SAG Award nominee, who will next appear in Seth Rogen's series "The Studio," suggested. "An optional pamphlet that says, 'Hey, if you start feeling nauseous, stop because there is nothing that works except stopping.'"



Signs of Depression

Depression is a complex medical condition. It can affect every aspect of a person's life, from their personal relationships to their physical health. And of course, it impacts mental wellbeing. Being unhappy isn't the same as being

depressed. Depression is a term often used loosely to describe how people feel after a bad week at work or when they're going through a breakup. Clinical depression, also known as major depressive disorder, is more than feeling blue. Specific symptoms differentiate depression from the type of generalized sadness all people sometimes experience. Some symptoms include: hopeless outlook, loss of interest, increased fatigue and sleep problems, anxiety, (depression and anxiety often occur together), irritability (in men), changes in appetite and weight, uncontrollable emotions, looking at death (depression is sometimes connected to suicide. In 2022, nearly 50,000 people died from suicide in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). When people are at immediate risk of self-harm or hurting others, those around them should:

- Call 911 or a local emergency number.
- Call or text the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988Lifeline.org.
- Stay with the person until help arrives.
- Remove any guns, knives, medications, or other potentially dangerous items.
- Listen, but don't judge, argue, threaten, or yell.



Help Kids Find Their Tribe

There's a saying that's been floating around for a while now: "You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with." It's a common way to state

the reality that our closest friends shape who we become. That's a problem, though, for parents who worry about their kids' friends. So what can parents do to support their kids' friendships? Since identity formation in teens primarily is something that happens through peer relationships, those of us who have kids who are struggling with close friendships with good people need to be even more proactive. Here's what parents can do to support their kids' friendships:

1. Encourage: Encourage activities that they are interested in.
2. Inquire: Ask neutral questions about their friendships.
3. Engage: Too often, parents take one of two modes with their teenage kids as it relates to their friends. Either they criticize them, which, surprisingly, rarely goes well. Or, they take a hands-off approach.

The best parenting research shows that kids who have parents who continuously show genuine interest in their social lives and seek to build relationships with their friends, too, will have a healthier social life and do better through those identity formation years. When you feel concerned about a friend they spend time with, share your concerns in a neutral way, without anxiety, fear, or shame in your tone of voice. Let them know your concerns, and bring it up a few times. Our ongoing commitment to you as educators and parents is free and compelling content that directly impacts young people's lives.

Deepfake Images Are Impacting Teens

One of the most urgent issues right now is the rise of deepfake explicit content—AI-generated images designed to embarrass, harass, or exploit someone, often without their knowledge or consent.

1 in 4 teens knows someone affected by inappropriate deepfake images. The discovery shocks victims, leaving them to deal with fear, shame, and confusion without clear support.

Why it matters: The mental health repercussions are significant, with teens struggling to restore their reputations and adults largely unaware of the issue's severity.

The big picture: Despite the images being fake, the harm to individuals' self-esteem and mental health is very real, complicating efforts to address the problem.

Yes, but: Awareness and education can empower both teens and adults to combat the spread and impact of deepfakes.

The bottom line: Starting conversations, educating about digital consent, and creating supportive environments are key steps adults can take to protect and empower teens.



The Impact of Sleep Patterns on Mental Health



Research indicates that sleep patterns, particularly the alignment of an individual's sleep schedule with their body clock, can affect mental health, specifically the risk of depression and anxiety.

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Sleep-Wake Mismatch: Individuals who are “night owls” (prefer staying up late) often face mismatched work schedules (typically 9-to-5), leading to earlier wake times that do not align with their natural rhythms. This misalignment may contribute to increased levels of depression and anxiety.

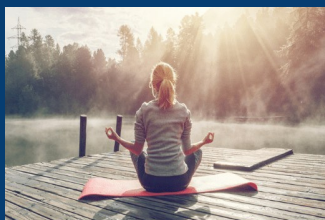
Genetic Factors: Research shows a genetic link between being an early riser and a reduced risk of depression due to better alignment with societal schedules and natural body rhythms. A study analyzed genetic data from over 450,000 adults to explore the correlation between sleep patterns and mental health outcomes.

Chronotype and Well-Being: “Chronotype” refers to whether someone is an early bird or night owl, generally dictated by genetics but can adapt over time. Those who align with an optimal sleep-wake cycle report better well-being.

Suggestions for Healthy Sleep Hygiene: Maintain a consistent wake-up time, get exposure to bright light in the morning, eat balanced meals and avoid heavy meals at night, exercise regularly and limit daytime naps, and avoid caffeine and screens before bedtime.

Strategies for Coping with Stress in 30 Minutes or Less

Stress can have physical and mental effects, and managing it is crucial. Here are some ways to cope with stress in under 30 minutes:



- In 5 minutes: Force a laugh or smile, correct your posture, mute phone notifications, hug someone or yourself, and play uplifting music.
- In 10 minutes: Try deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or visualization exercises.
- In 30 minutes: Stretch, use essential oils, scan for muscular tension, foam roll, or meditate.

When to seek help: If you notice a change in your patience, consider whether you need to take a break or if there's something bigger at play. Chronic stress may increase your risk of other mental health concerns, such as depression and anxiety. If these strategies aren't giving you tools to cope, try seeking help from a professional.



Tips for Getting Out of a Rut

Life can sometimes feel dull and uninspiring, but don't worry! It's normal to find yourself in a rut once in a while.

To get out of it, start by acknowledging your situation, have self-compassion, and make simple, realistic changes.

If you're feeling stuck, start by understanding the cause, breaking it down, and making small changes. Also, remind yourself to practice self-care and take a break to refresh your mind and body.

To boost your creative problem-solving skills, try un-focusing, embracing your impulsive side, taking a realistic approach, and letting go of perfectionism.

Escaping a mental rut can be challenging, but it is possible with the right strategies and support. Learning to accept your situation, taking care of yourself, exploring your impulsive side, and managing expectations are key steps.

Speaking with a mental health professional is also highly recommended.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILDS MENTAL HEALTH

COPING SKILLS

Work with your child to develop coping skills. Support your child to learn skills such as problem solving and thought challenging.

WELL BEING

Promote healthy eating, physical activity and enough sleep. Exercise and healthy sleep habits boost mood and reduce stress and anxiety

TALKING

Encourage your child to talk about their problems and how they are feeling.

AUTONOMY

Allow your child to make their own decisions. This will help to build resilience.

ROLE MODEL

Be a positive mental health role model. Demonstrate positive behaviors which your child can learn from you.

SELF CARE

Make sure your child has time and space to look after themselves. Involve yourself in their hobbies.

PLAY

Promote play and creativity among your child. Allow them to explore.

RELATIONSHIPS

Support your child to build positive relationships with family and friends.

