



Upcoming Events

- Healthy Skin Month
- Stress Awareness Day / 5
- World Kindness Day / 13
- **SAPpening Event 11/17**
Ed Law - Don't forget to register! (See next page)
- Great American Smokeout / 20
- International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day / 22

Center for Humanistic Change

3400 Bath Pike / Suite 306
Bethlehem, PA 18017
610-443-1595
www.thehc.org

For more information contact:
Wendy Texter / SAP Manager
wtexter@thehc.org

CHC Student Assistance Program Team

Sahar Giacobbe: Sr. Liaison
sgiacobbe@thehc.org

Kathy Brand: Liaison
kbrand@thehc.org

Chrissy Confer: Liaison
cconfer@thehc.org

Nancy Salomon: Liaison
nsalomon@thehc.org

Piper Schwenk: Liaison
pschwenk@thehc.org

Marci Stappung: Liaison
mstappung@thehc.org

Macie Sullivan: Liaison
msullivan@thehc.org

Stephanie Dorney:
SAP Commonwealth Trainer
sdorney@thehc.org



New trend alert: “Smart” e-cigarettes resemble gaming devices

In the newest trend among disposable e-cigarettes, manufacturers are now adding high-tech elements such as Bluetooth capability, high-definition screens, and speakers to their e-cigarette products, with some versions including games similar to Pac-Man and Tetris.

Some of these products, such as the Craftbox V-Play 20k disposable vape, feature video game controls that make the e-cigarette look like a handheld gaming device. Other brands include wireless speakers that users can pair with their phones, and some even light up while music is playing. Many of these products are sold for \$20 or less, making them affordable for cost-conscious young people.

Free Resources for Educators

It's important to introduce all students to vaping prevention and quit resources. To support schools in addressing youth nicotine use, Truth Initiative and Kaiser Permanente, in collaboration with the American Heart Association, developed Vaping: Know the Truth—a free, national youth vaping prevention curriculum. This modern, evidence-based course helps teachers educate students about the dangers of e-cigarettes and nicotine addiction, while providing resources to help youth quit. To download free curriculum go to: <https://truthinitiative.org/vaping-curriculum>



ZYN

As youth e-cigarette use remains high—with 1.63 million middle and high schoolers reporting use in 2024—another nicotine product is gaining ground: oral nicotine pouches. These small pouches, placed between the lip and gum, contain nicotine powder and flavorings but no tobacco. Brands like Zyn, On!, and Velo are now the second most used tobacco product among youth after e-cigarettes. Sales rose from 126 million units in 2019 to over 808 million in 2022, and 207% between 2023 and 2025, reaching \$446.8 million monthly. Marketing promotes flavors and discreet use, with nearly \$25 million spent on ads between 2019 and 2021. Ongoing research is needed to track youth use and health effects.

Aside from raising cancer risk, nicotine in any form can affect your health in the following ways.

Oral health:

- * Gum irritation and recession
- * Tooth decay and cavities
- * Dry or sore mouth

Cardiovascular health:

- * Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- * Greater risk of heart disease and stroke
- * Damage to blood vessels

General symptoms:

- * Nausea
- * Headaches
- * Dizziness
- * Hiccups
- * Upset stomach
- * Mental health concerns, including depression and anxiety



How AI Helps Students With Special Needs—

In Real Classrooms

Artificial intelligence (AI) can raise concerns about replacing teachers, but in practice, it's already helping students with disabilities learn, communicate, and participate more fully. The U.S. Department of Education's 2023 guidance and UNESCO's recent reports emphasize that AI should support, not replace, educators—keeping equity and accessibility at the center.

AI improves access and communication for many learners. Speech-to-text tools help students who struggle with handwriting express their ideas, while text-to-speech and captions support those with reading challenges or hearing loss. Research shows these tools can improve spelling, comprehension, and writing outcomes for students with learning disabilities.

AI also enables personalized learning without singling students out. Adaptive reading and math programs give immediate feedback, break down steps, and provide tailored hints—freeing teachers to focus on small-group instruction and relationships. Federal guidance supports this teacher-led use of AI while discouraging over-automation.

Beyond academics, AI can foster independence. Tools that summarize text, simplify instructions, or create visual schedules help students manage information and focus on learning. Studies by the OECD and others show that combining AI supports with proper accommodations improves student participation and access to assessments.

Talkie App: What Parents Need to Know

A parent recently shared online how the Talkie app created chaos in their home. Their 14-year-old son kept finding ways around parental controls to access Talkie's sexualized AI content. Curious and concerned, I downloaded the app myself. It asked only for gender and age—no account, no verification. When I entered "male" and "20," the app immediately generated a sexually suggestive chat between a student and a teacher.

During a training with school counselors, one mentioned that even a third-grader at their school was using Talkie. That confirmed my concern: this app is spreading quickly among youth, and its filters aren't keeping up.

What Is Talkie? Talkie is an AI chat app that lets users "talk" with virtual characters—from historical figures to anime personalities. But parent-safety platforms like Gabb and Bark warn that it's become a gateway to sexualized AI content, even for children.

There's little age verification, and "teen mode" filters fail to block romantic or explicit dialogue. With a few taps, kids can access chatrooms filled with flirtatious or adult-themed scenarios.

Key Concerns

- **Instant exposure:** Kids can enter sexualized chats within seconds—no verification required.
- **Bypassed filters:** "Safe" modes are easily tricked by entering an older age.
- **Inappropriate themes:** AI characters often simulate adult or teacher-student relationships.
- **Privacy risks:** The app collects personal data, including voice samples and location details.
- **Young users:** Reports show children as young as third grade using the app.

What Parents Can Do

1. **Search and Remove the App:** Look for Talkie, Talkie AI, or Talkie Soul. Delete it and clear saved data.
2. **Talk About "AI Friends":** Explain that chatbots aren't real friends—they're designed to keep users hooked.
3. **Create Tech Check-Ins:** Instead of only blocking apps, explore what your child uses and discuss what's healthy.
4. **Review App Permissions:** Show your child what data apps collect and how it can be misused.
5. **Keep Communication Open:** Ask what apps their friends use and what conversations look like. Curiosity and trust go further than filters.

The Bottom Line

AI chat apps like Talkie blur the line between connection and exploitation. They're designed to feel personal and romantic—and that's what makes them risky. You can't block every app, but you can help your child pause, think, and make informed choices. Awareness and open conversation remain your best digital safety tools.



SAPpenings Event

Legal Issues Every SAP Team Member Needs to Know

Led by Erin D. Gilsbach, Esq., Executive Director of Ed Law Interactive. Erin is a nationally-recognized speaker on a wide variety of school law topics.

November 17 / 1:00 pm on Zoom

Register at: https://www.thechc.org/event_calendar/event_calendar.html/event/2025/11/17/sappenings-event/543299

Energy Drinks & Children/Teens

An energy drink is a type of beverage that contains ingredients intended to boost energy, alertness, and concentration. They are especially popular among children and teens.



Key Facts:



✓ Nearly 1/3 of teens aged 12 to 17 consume energy drinks regularly.

✓ These drinks often contain high levels of caffeine, added sugars, and legal stimulants designed to boost alertness and energy.

✓ However, the safe daily amount of caffeine for children and adolescents has not been firmly established.



Adverse Effects:

- ☐ Anxiety
- ☐ Dehydration
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Heart Arrhythmias
- ☐ Increased Aggression
- ☐ Seizures
- ☐ Sleep Disturbances
- ☐ Stress

10 Tips to Teach Your Kids How To Combat Bullying

Effective strategies to combat bullying behaviors include teaching social and emotional skills to increase empathy. Strategies include:

- 1 | Talk to kids about **how their behavior impacts others** and [encourage kindness](#).
- 2 | Have [conversations about feelings](#) and teach [coping tools](#), especially [related to conflict](#).
- 3 | Teach that a **bystander** is someone who witnesses bullying but doesn't say anything or take action to help. **An upstander takes action to support someone who is being bullied.**
- 4 | If a child sees someone being bullied, they can ask their peer to **join their group or activity** so that they aren't alone.
- 5 | Sometimes, just **walking the child being bullied over near an adult** is helpful. If there are **safety concerns**, they should tell an adult right away.
- 6 | If it's safe, a child can tell the bully something like: "Please stop. This is bullying and that's not OK." **Speaking up creates a culture that does not accept unkind, bullying behaviors.**
- 7 | If there are **no safety concerns**, a child can ignore the bully, making it less rewarding for the bully and less likely that they'll continue.
- 8 | **Teach assertiveness skills** like speaking clearly, firmly and directly; confident body language; and making eye contact.
- 9 | Encourage children to keep a peer or adult around them to **stop bullying attempts**.
- 10 | **Contact school staff** to come up with a plan together. Talk with your child about a safe adult they can talk to and report bullying behavior when it happens.

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