

# Mill Valley Middle School



*Parent Meeting*

*March 8, 2017*

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# FCD Educational Services



- ▶ **Private nonprofit organization**
- ▶ **40** years of school-based substance abuse prevention
- ▶ **2** million students, **69** countries



▶ Prevention is a **climate** and not a program

# FCD's Prevention Approach



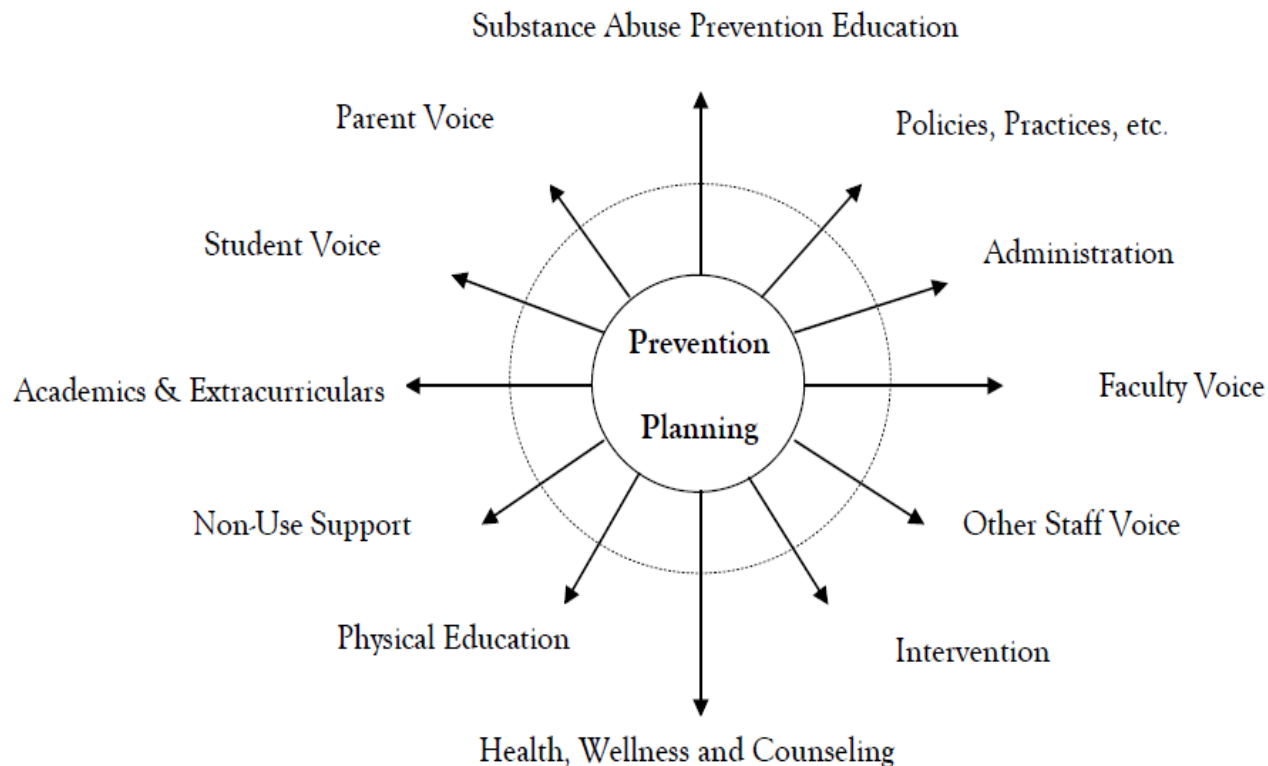
- **A collaborative process promoting healthy young people by:**
  - **Reducing risks**
  - **Intervening on unhealthy behaviors**
  - **Nurturing protections**



# A HEALTH PERSPECTIVE



# Comprehensive Prevention Planning



# Middle School Intensive Student Education



## Facts and Strengths Building

- ▶ **Seminar 1: Addiction**
  - ▶ Addiction as a disease, risk and protective factors
- ▶ **Seminar 2: Alcohol, Tobacco/Nicotine, and Marijuana**
  - ▶ Basic information, the risks and consequences of use
- ▶ **Seminar 3: Facts About Other Drugs**
  - ▶ More ATM discussion and other questions answered
- ▶ **Seminar 4: Solutions and Alternatives**
  - ▶ How to help a friend, stress management, healthy highs



# Addiction



## Definition

### Addiction

**An individual's repetitive, compulsive use of a substance (or performance of a behavior) despite negative consequences.**



## Risk Factors for Addiction

- ▶ **Family History**
- ▶ **Age of first use**
- ▶ **Cravings**
- ▶ **Tolerance**
- ▶ **Surroundings**





# The Teenage Brain and Substances

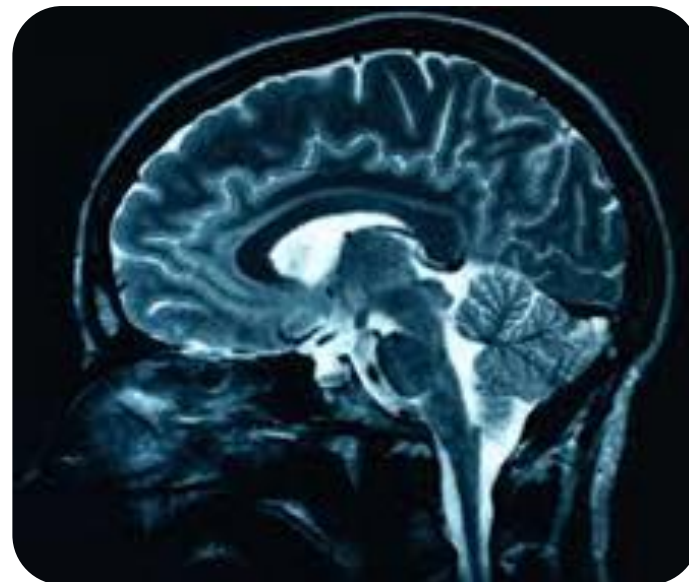
## Unique Vulnerabilities

- Alcohol and other drugs interfere with forming connections in a teen's brain.
- These connections are intended to be formed *without the presence of alcohol or other drugs.*
- *A brain in transition from child to adult is more vulnerable to addiction.*
- *Delayed use is critical to protection.*



## How Teen Brain Works

- **Process of synaptic pruning:**
  - *Decrease* in of grey matter
  - *Increase* in white matter
  - *High levels of dopamine*
- **Maturing**
- **Driven emotionally**
- **Primed socially**
- **Risk taking**
- **Pleasure seeking**



# Social Norms Approach



## An Introduction

- ▶ People tend to do what they perceive everyone else is doing.
- ▶ What people think everyone else is doing becomes the norm. But...
- ▶ ...perceptions are not always accurate. Still...
- ▶ ...future behaviors are driven by false norms.



# Why Do Kids Use Alcohol and Other Drugs?



## What Students Tell FCD

- ▶ Curiosity
- ▶ Stress
- ▶ “To have fun.”
- ▶ “Everybody does it.”
- ▶ “All the cool kids are doing it.”
- ▶ Lack of information
- ▶ Unknown expectations



# Social Norms

- People tend to do what they perceive everyone else is doing.
- What people *think* everyone else is doing becomes the norm. But...
- ...perceptions are not always accurate. Still...
- ...behaviors occur based on false norms.



# Perceptions vs. Reality



- **4%** of all students think “it is cool to get drunk”
- Yet, **23%** of all students assume schoolmates think “it’s cool to get drunk”
  
- **6%** of 12<sup>th</sup> graders think “it is cool to get drunk”
- Yet, **37%** of 12<sup>th</sup> graders assume schoolmates think “it is cool to get drunk”

# How Student Use Looks



## Early Detection and Intervention



# Resiliency

- Adapting well
- “Bouncing back”
- Keeps kids healthy
- Prevents substance abuse





# How is Resiliency Built?

- Loving adults
- “Stress role models”
- Age-appropriate communication
- Behavior control
- Knowing about support systems
- Having healthy highs in place



# What Parents Can Do



## Your Role in Prevention



- ▶ Model healthy, appropriate attitudes and behaviors
- ▶ Set clear limits, expectations and consequences
- ▶ Know what is going on:
  - ▶ after school
  - ▶ on weekends
  - ▶ during breaks/vacations
  - ▶ When stress is high
- ▶ Get to know their friends

# What Parents Can Do



## Your Role in Prevention

- ▶ Eat together
- ▶ Talk with your teens about alcohol and other drugs
- ▶ Listen to your teens thoughts about alcohol and other drugs
- ▶ Continue to share your thoughts and concerns
- ▶ Spend the time you can with them



# What Parents Can Do



## Your Role in Prevention



- Families, peers, schools, and communities are all key components in prevention.

- **Research shows that youths who 1) perceive that their parents disapprove of substance use, and 2) who report that their parents are involved in their day-to-day activities are less likely than those who do not to use alcohol, tobacco/nicotine or illicit drugs.**

# Common Questions



## What Parents Ask FCD

- ▶ What do I say about my own history with alcohol or other drugs?
- ▶ When and under what circumstances is teen alcohol use advisable?
- ▶ What about when traveling outside the United States, where drinking ages are lower?
- ▶ What are some warning signs of use?
- ▶ What do I do if I think my child may be using drugs?



# Resources



- **FCD Prevention Works**
  - Find us on Facebook
  - [www.fcd.org](http://www.fcd.org)
  - [schools@fcd.org](mailto:schools@fcd.org)
- **National Institute on Drug Abuse**
  - <http://www.nida.nih.gov>
- **Partnership for Drug-Free Kids**
  - <http://www.drugfree.org/>
- **Above the Influence**
  - <http://abovetheinfluence.com/>



**QUESTIONS?  
COMMENTS?  
THANK YOU!**

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**[FCD PREVENTION WORKS](#)**

