Talk With Your Kids About the Dangers of Vaping

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol (often called vapor) produced by an e-cigarette or similar battery-powered device. The aerosol can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances, including:

- Nicotine
- Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs
- Flavoring such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to a serious lung disease
- Volatile organic compounds
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead
- E-cigarettes come in many different sizes, types, and colors.

Some e-cigarettes are made to look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some resemble pens, small electronic devices such as USB sticks, and other everyday items. The products that are designed to resemble small electronic devices are often compact and allow for discreet carrying and use - at home, in school hallways and bathrooms, and even in classrooms.

E-cigarettes have become very popular among teens and are now the most commonly used form of nicotine among youth in the United States. In Massachusetts, almost 24% of high-school students report currently using e-cigarettes, and nearly half tried them at least once. More high school students used e-cigarettes than all other tobacco products combined and they used them nine times more often than adults.

The teen years are a critical time for brain development which continues until about the age of 25. Young people who use nicotine products in any form, including e-cigarettes, are at great risk for long-lasting effects. Nicotine is addictive and has a negative impact on teen brain development, including increased...
JGMS After School Program Fall 2018

Attention all students that will be attending the John Glenn Middle School in the Fall! Bedford Youth and Family Services in collaboration with John Glenn Middle School is gearing up for another successful Fall after school program with a focus on the most popular activities including Babysitter Training with Maureen McDermott, Fitness After School with Lisa Butterfield, Girl Talk with Wendy Tanahashi-Works, and Bedford High School student leaders, and our always popular Shooting & Editing for TV, and Advanced Video Production with BTV staff.

Activities begin the week of October 1st. The registration deadline for all programs is September 21st. Space is limited; be sure to sign up as soon as possible to secure your spot. You can find our flyer and registration form at: www.bedfordma.gov/youth (click on Youth Development). Flyers are also available in our office and at the JGMS Main Office.

Sign Up For Bedford’s SAFE HOMES Program

The Safe Homes program is a support network for Bedford parents with children in grades 6-12 who are concerned about alcohol and drug use at pre-teen and teen parties and gatherings. Through Safe Homes, we are encouraging parents of Bedford middle school and high school students to make a pledge that they will provide a safe environment for youth when they have parties or gatherings in their homes - safe from alcohol, drugs, firearms, and other hazardous items. Underage drinking is harmful to kids. Love them enough to say no.

Safe Homes brochures were included in middle and high school mailings in mid-summer. This is a reminder that you can complete the form on the back of that brochure, or you can sign up online via our website www.bedfordma.gov/youth by clicking on “Safe Homes” under the Homepage menu options. Participating families will receive a directory booklet in November containing contact information of others who have joined Safe Homes. Let’s join together to keep all our youth healthy and safe.

Pledges Due By September 30th
For more information or questions call Jessica Wildfong, Prevention Services Coordinator at 781-275-7727 ext. 4331 or email jessicaw@bedfordma.gov

Talk With Your Kids About the Dangers of Vaping Cont’d from Page 1

Simply talking with your child about these products can help protect them. Let them know that you care about them and think vaping is not safe. For more information on e-cigarettes and how to talk to your kids about the risks, visit: Make Smoking History
If your child is vaping, talk with your child’s health care provider about specific resources for teens that address tobacco/nicotine addiction. Smokefree Teen is a website from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services geared toward helping teens quit tobacco/nicotine. Visit www.teen.smokefree.gov
For more information contact Jessica Wildfong, Prevention Services Coordinator at 781-275-7727 ext. 4331 or email jessicaw@bedfordma.gov

Feel free to call Jessica Wildfong at 781-275-7727 ext. 4331 or email jessicaw@bedfordma.gov with any questions or concerns.
Bedford Recognized for Safe Routes to School Initiative

Bedford Public Schools and the Safe Routes to School/Healthy Bedford Task Force were recently honored by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation as a Silver Level Partner for their contributions toward creating a more sustainable Massachusetts. Selectman Margot Fleischman was present to receive the award on behalf of the Healthy Bedford/Safe Routes to School Task Force at an awards ceremony at the State House. Bedford has been participating in the Safe Routes to School program since 2008, and this is Bedford’s third award.

Safe Routes to School works with schools, communities, students, and families to increase safe biking and walking among elementary and middle school students in the Commonwealth. To learn more about the program visit www.massdot.state.ma.us/saferoutestoschool/home

To learn more about Bedford’s Safe Routes to School program visit www.bedfordma.gov/healthy-bedford/pages/safe-routes-to-school and don’t forget to mark your calendar for International Walk and Bike to School Day on Wednesday, October 3rd! Watch your school news for more details.

Watch our Website for the 2018 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results Release in November!

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey provides data from our students on their risky behaviors. Last spring, Bedford students in grades 6-12 answered questions about smoking, drinking, sexual behavior, bullying, and other risky behaviors. This data helps inform the health curriculum in our schools and health programs offered in the town.

Our plans for sharing the results are:

♦ We will announce the release of the results to the community in our Substance Abuse Awareness Month letter November of 2018
♦ The results will be posted on our department’s web site
♦ We will present the results to groups in the community as requested and desired
♦ We plan to work with students at JGMS & BHS on social marketing projects to get the results out in the schools

For more information contact Jessica Wildfong, Prevention Services Coordinator at 781-275-7727 ext. 4331 or email jessicaw@bedfordma.gov
How to Safely Plan for Back to School Travel

Planning for back-to-school travel after the usually more leisurely two months of summer can be distressing for parents, especially as children get older, move up to different schools, and want more independence. Bedford is fortunate to provide free school bus transportation for all grades.

As kids age, they may become more confident and prefer to make decisions for themselves and bike or walk to school on their own or with friends. Toca Magazine talked to parents whose middle-schoolers regularly ride Bay Area Rapid Transit in the San Francisco Bay Area and Capital Metro in Austin to get some tips on getting kids ready to travel on their own, which we have adapted below for travel in Bedford.

1. Start by walking or biking the route kids will be taking. After a few trials, just remain quiet and let them initiate everything with you following along. Then when you are both comfortable, let them go it alone.

2. Buddy up. On those companion rides, see if other kids or classmates may be on the same route and let them pair or group up to travel together.

3. Keep it simple and safe. If a route doesn’t feel safe to you or the connections are too complicated, have kids figure out an alternate, safer route. Alternatively, consider driving the unsafe part of the commute, park the car, and walk the remainder.

4. Remind kids to stay aware. Tell them not to put in both ear buds or look down at the phone constantly. They should look around and be alert.

5. Let kids practice with orientation, directions, and decision-making. “Our kids lead us on our vacation travels through various world transit systems.” - Jeff Songster, Oakland

6. Register your kids for the DASH, Bedford’s pilot door to door shuttle. Consider purchasing the 20 ride prepaid ticket book so students will have an alternative and won’t have to rely on having cash.

7. Have a plan. If someone or a situation doesn’t seem right, have them call you and/or walk to a public place with lots of people around. Some families elect to have a Plan B at all times, such as walking to the public library or a trusted neighbor’s home. Let kids know that they could go to a bus driver or store owner if there are any problems.

8. Talk to your kids openly and listen to their concerns. One parent said “Keep your lines of communication open, discuss your child’s fears in depth - no judgement as to real or imagined fears.”

9. Teach them to trust their gut. If something doesn’t feel right or safe, move away or get help.

10. Trust your kids. Empower them to make decisions so they are comfortable thinking and acting independently.

For other ideas about how to safely help your children get to and from school, check out the Healthy Bedford Safe Routes to School webpage https://www.bedfordma.gov/healthy-Bedford/pages/safe-routes-to-school or the Grist website about the benefits of public transportation https://grist.org/article/2010-11-01-why-public-transportation-is-good-for-kids/

Register yourself and your child/ren for the DASH at www.bedforddash.com
Does your student need a ride to after-school activities?  
Need help with parental chauffeuring duties?

WHAT: The Bedford DASH is available to transport Bedford residents ages 12 and up throughout Bedford and to some neighboring communities.

WHO: The DASH is a pilot transportation program running until Spring 2019, providing a 14-passenger, WIFI enabled, handicapped accessible vehicle.

WHEN: It operates between the hours of 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday (excluding holidays and weather emergencies), and provides service within Bedford as well as to the neighboring towns of Lexington, Billerica, and Burlington. Concord trips are available on Mondays and Tuesdays on a space available basis only. Youth (under 18) pay $1 in town and $2 out-of-town each way. Discount books are available for purchase.

HOW: Call 781-275-DASH (3274) or go online at www.bedforddash.com to speak with the dispatcher, fill out the one-time registration form, and book your trip. After initial parental registration and permission, students are able to book trips on their own, or parents can choose to limit trips.

The Fuel Assistance Program may be for you!

The Fuel Assistance Program provides a benefit for home heating for Bedford residents of all ages who meet income guidelines. Those who enroll in the Fuel Assistance Program are also eligible for free home weatherization, free heating system repair replacement, free energy-saving devices, and discounts on some utility bills.

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To apply, Bedford residents under age 60 should call Bedford Youth & Family Services (YFS) at 275-7727 and those over should call the Bedford Council on Aging (COA) at 275-6825. Please be assured that all information will be held in the strictest confidence. Remember, your taxes paid for this program, so if you think you qualify, apply for the benefits you deserve! Program available November 1, 2018 to March 29, 2019.

13 Questions That Can Help You Learn From a Conflict with Your Child

◊ “Why am I getting so upset?”
◊ “What’s at stake here?”
◊ “How do I feel threatened by my child’s behavior?” (Or “What feels threatened in this situation?”)
◊ “How is my own behavior contributing to this conflict?”
◊ “What would happen if my child didn’t do what I want?”
◊ “What am I really afraid of?”
◊ “What am I trying to accomplish here?”
◊ “How would I handle this situation if it involved someone else’s child?”
◊ “How would I handle this situation if it involved another adult instead of my child?”
◊ “If I were my child’s age, what would I want in this situation?”
◊ “How can I motivate more cooperative behavior?”
◊ “What can I learn from this experience?”
◊ “If this same situation comes up again, how might I handle it differently next time?”

May 4-10 in Parenting Calendar from “The Parent’s Little Book of Lists” by Jane Bluestein
Veterans’ Services District

***Save the Date***
Annual Veterans’ Day Remembrance
Sunday, November 11th at 12 noon
The Patriotic Holiday Committee is planning its annual Veterans Day event for Sunday, November 11th, 2018.

Veterans Day
Gina Rada is tentatively scheduled to give a presentation about her experience as a medic in Afghanistan starting around 4 p.m. on November 11th. It will be held at Old Town Hall as part of the Bedford Historical Society’s Speaker Series.

2018-2019 Youth and Family Services Committee:
Peter Ricci, Chair ♦ Marcia Morgan, at Large ♦ Dori Pulizzi, at Large ♦ Marge Heckman, at Large
Caroline Fedele, Selectman & Recreation Liaison ♦ Jeff Wardwell, Police
Mary Seymour, Board of Health ♦ Ann Guay, School Committee

BYFS Staff Queries - Main Number: 781/275-7727
Sue Baldauf, Director, x4328 - Counseling referrals or questions ♦ General dept. questions ♦ Community concern ♦ Issue related to Violence Prevention Coalition, Bedford Community Partnership, Business Diversity Training, Progress Fund ♦ Parenting Education Topic
Fran Stander, Administrative Assistant, x4329 - General questions ♦ General community & Resources ♦ Job Match ♦ Events & Press Releases ♦ New Resident Packets ♦ Volunteer Opportunities
Jessica Wildfong, Youth Development/Prevention, x4331 - JGMS After School ♦ Peer Mentoring ♦ Youth Website ♦ Other youth related issues - Alcohol, tobacco, or drug education ♦ Diversion ♦ Youth Risk Behavior Survey ♦ Safe Homes ♦ Fuel Assistance
Carla Olson, Healthy Bedford Coordinator, x4330 - Safe Routes to School & Healthy Bedford initiatives
Bill Linnehan, Veterans Agent, 781/275-1328 - Any veterans related question
Elliot Counselors: 781-275-7727 Lynne Chapas x4332, Laura Smith x4335; 978-369-1113 Andrea Vana x4159

Job Match
Teens looking for part-time employment?
Residents looking for help with child care, yard work, snow shoveling, odd jobs?
Applications Online or at BYFS Office
Youths may register and enjoy the flexibility of not being locked into a job giving them the freedom to be involved in other activities.
After completing an application the teen is matched to a resident’s request depending on their capability.
Applications can be downloaded at www.bedfordma.gov/youth under Job Match or in hardcopy at our office.
Residents with a job can call Fran Stander at 781/275-7727 or frans@bedfordma.gov