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For more information on youth and alcohol, check out these websites:

- <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>
- [www.settherulesct.org](http://www.settherulesct.org)
- [www.faceproject.org](http://www.faceproject.org)
- [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)
- [www.teen-safe.org](http://www.teen-safe.org)
- [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov)
- [www.preventionworksct.org](http://www.preventionworksct.org)
- [www.housepartybill.org](http://www.housepartybill.org)
- [www.madd.org/under21](http://www.madd.org/under21)
- [www.mourningparentsact.org](http://www.mourningparentsact.org)
- [www.dontserveteens.gov](http://www.dontserveteens.gov)
- [www.alcoholfreechildren.org](http://www.alcoholfreechildren.org)
- [www.Alot2Lose.com](http://www.Alot2Lose.com)
- [www.thecoolspot.gov](http://www.thecoolspot.gov)
- [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org)
- [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- [www.notmykid.org](http://www.notmykid.org)
- [www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org)



## Cell Phone Safety Tips For Teens



- Only give out your cell phone number to people you know and trust.
- Do not take any cell phone pictures or video that are sexual in nature. They are illegal. They also can ruin your reputation.
- Do not send texts or capture pictures or video on your cell phone that you wouldn't feel comfortable sharing with your parents.
- Ask yourself how you'd feel if the text or tweet you sent were broadcast all across the school and internet.
- Remember that all texts, photos, and videos you create with your phone are saved and available as digital evidence.
- Schools can take your cell phone when they have reasonable suspicion that it has been involved in some violation of school policy or the law.
- Never text and drive. If something is urgent, pull over to a safe place.
- Remember that having a cell phone is a privilege and not a right. Treat it as such. Appreciate that your parents have allowed you to have one.
- Don't respond to text messages from numbers and people you don't know. Learn how you can block certain people from contacting you.
- Keep your cell phone keypad locked so that others can't grab it, unlock it, and use it to get you into trouble.

Source: [www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us)

## Too Much Acetaminophen?



Acetaminophen—the active ingredient in **TYLENOL**— is well-known as an effective pain reliever and fever reducer. Today more than 600 over-the-counter and prescription medications contain acetaminophen, including **TYLENOL**, Ny-Quil, Percocet and Vicodin. Some people accidentally exceed the recommended dose when taking multiple products at the same time, often without realizing they contain acetaminophen or by not reading and following the dosing

instructions. Many cold products have decongestants AND acetaminophen in them. Be sure to check the labels.

Acetaminophen is safe when used as directed, but when taken in overdose amounts it can cause liver damage. To avoid unintentional overdoses read the labels of the medication bottles and determine the amount of strength of acetaminophen in each pill. To see what medications have acetaminophen in them, visit [www.getreliefresponsibly.com](http://www.getreliefresponsibly.com).

**Be sure to check out our websites!**

<http://youth.ellington-ct.gov> and <http://bethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

### Cell Phone Safety Tips



#### for Parents

- Kids should never text with strangers. They should never text/talk about sex. Phones should be used for communicating.
- Talk with your kids about manners and ethics, cyberbullying and harassment.
- Many teens can do social networking literally anywhere. Smart phones have cameras, video-cams, access to internet and more. Talk with your teen about where they're accessing their profiles or blogs from and whether they are making good decisions.
- Many cell phones have GPS technology on them which means others who have these phones can pinpoint their friends' location.
- Talk to your teen about the dangers of texting while driving and that it is illegal.
- Evaluate the features available on your teen's phone. Learn how to look up how many texts your teen is sending and receiving.
- Discuss academic integrity and cell phone use in school.
- Discuss the legality and usage of a cell phone camera.

The Parent Connection is  
on Facebook



## Rise Above Student Leadership Group



Rise Above is going strong in its 5th year. With over 100 members, the group enjoys hosting alcohol and drug free events for their peers as well as helping out in the community. They have already hosted a dodge ball tournament for high school students and one for middle school students this year, volunteered at the Ellington Fall Festival and sponsored a bowling and billiards event. The energetic group of teens plans to host a game night in February. In addition, they plan to sponsor a "Find Your Passion" poster campaign for middle school students as well as host additional events for the middle school students. Rise Above meets monthly after school in the school library. Applications can be found on our website. Members are required to re-join Rise Above every year. For more info contact [dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov](mailto:dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov) or [klarew@comcast.net](mailto:klarew@comcast.net)

### Superbowl Ads



The world's biggest brewer spent roughly \$25 million last year to buy 10 ads for Bud, Bud Light and Michelob during the Super Bowl, when an estimated 25 million underage youth, including seven million under 12, were watching. Using animals in beer ads, like the baby Clydesdale, sheep and bear in Bud and Bud Light's Super Bowl commercials, makes the brands popular among youth, according to research. A study published last fall in the *Journal of Health Communication* found that youth 10-17 years old prefer beer ads with humor, music, and animal characters, and are more likely to say such commercials make them want to buy the beer advertised.

## Is It Worth It Holiday Campaign



In early December the DAPC sent out post-cards to parents of students in grades 8 through 12 reminding them not to relax their rules during the holiday season.

The DAPC surveyed parents at the Ellington Middle School and Ellington High School open houses in September to see how many noticed the IS IT WORTH IT campaign launched in May of 2011. 99% of the parents surveyed did see our campaign and agreed with the message. While the majority of Ellington parents agree they will not provide alcohol to teens, the truth is teens are still drinking. Even when it is not the holidays always remember to check in with the host of a party to make sure it is an alcohol free event. Make time to talk with your teen about the dangers of alcohol and know the laws with regards to underage drinking. Visit our website at [bethethechange.ellington-ct.gov](http://bethethechange.ellington-ct.gov) for more information.

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~ Email: [dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov](mailto:dstauffer@ellington-ct.gov)

Website-<http://bethethechange.ellington-ct.gov>

## Marijuana Myths

Do you know the facts about marijuana? Here are some common myths.



### ***MYTH: Marijuana is harmless.***

**FACT:** Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug among youth today and is more potent than ever. Marijuana use can lead to a host of significant health, social, learning, and behavioral problems at a crucial time in a young person's development. Getting high also impairs judgment, which can lead to risky decision making on issues like sex, criminal activity, or riding with someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, teens who use drugs are five times more likely to have sex than teens who do not use drugs. Getting high also contributes to general apathy, irresponsible behavior, and risky choices.

### ***MYTH: You can't get addicted to marijuana.***

**FACT:** Don't be fooled by popular beliefs. Kids can get hooked on pot. Research shows that marijuana use can lead to addiction. Each year, more kids enter treatment with a primary diagnosis of marijuana dependence than for all other illegal drugs combined. Marijuana increases dopamine, which creates the good feelings or "high" associated with its use. A user may feel the urge to smoke marijuana again, and again, and again to re-create that experience. Repeated use could lead to addiction—a disease where people continue to do something, even when they are aware of the severe negative consequences at the personal, social, academic, and professional levels.

### ***MYTH: There's not much parents can do to stop their kids from "experimenting" with it.***

**FACT:** Most parents are surprised to learn that they are the most powerful influence on their children when it comes to drugs. But, it's true, so this message needs to start with parents. Kids need to hear how risky marijuana use can be. They need to know how damaging it can be to their lives. And they need to begin by listening to someone they trust. By staying involved, knowing what their kids are doing, and setting limits with clear rules and consequences, parents can keep their kids drug-free.

### ***MYTH: There are no long-term consequences to marijuana use.***

**FACT:** Research shows that kids who smoke marijuana engage in risky behavior that can jeopardize their futures, like having sex, getting in trouble with the law, or losing scholarship money. Marijuana can also hurt academic achievement and puts kids at risk for depression and anxiety.

### ***MYTH: Marijuana isn't as popular as other drugs like ecstasy among teens today.***

**FACT:** Kids use marijuana far more than any other illegal drug. Among kids who use drugs, 60 percent use only marijuana. Marijuana use among teens rose in 2011 for the fourth straight year. Daily marijuana use is now at a 30-year peak level among high school seniors. One in every fifteen high school seniors today is smoking pot on a daily or near daily basis. The proportion of young people using any illicit drug has been rising gradually over the past four years, due largely to the increased use of marijuana—the most widely used drug of all the illicit drugs.

Source: [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) and [www.monitoringthefuture.org](http://www.monitoringthefuture.org) and [http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts\\_mj2.php](http://teens.drugabuse.gov/facts/facts_mj2.php)

## Drunk Driving Laws Update and Info



Effective January 1st, new laws have taken effect in Connecticut. Drivers convicted for their first drunk driving offense are required by law to install an ignition interlock device on their vehicle at their expense for a year in order to drive their cars. This device requires the driver to blow into it, like a breathalyzer, before their car will start. A conviction also carries a 45 day license suspension. A second conviction will require the device be on the vehicle for three years.

The U.S. Department of Transportation this summer launched a multi-year ad campaign—*Drive Sober Or Get Pulled Over*—aimed at getting drunk drivers off the road. New analysis shows fatal crashes involving drunk drivers occur most frequently between the hours of midnight and 3 am. The next worst times of day with high percentages of alcohol-impaired crashes were 9 pm to midnight. In Connecticut, a driver is considered legally drunk if their BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) is .08 or higher. Those under 21 years old are considered legally intoxicated at a .02 BAC or higher.