

June 2016



coalition news

Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

Teen's Summer: More Freedom, More Relaxation, More Risks

School's out for the summer. Teens look forward to more free time and some much-needed relaxation, but that freedom comes with risks that parents need to talk about frequently to make sure a safe summer lies ahead.

Driving risks escalate. The AAA says Memorial Day kicks off the "100 deadliest days" for teen drivers. Over the past five years, the average number of crashes involving drivers ages 16-19 increased 16% per day during summer months compared with other days of the year and nearly 60% of teen crashes involved distracted drivers.

Certainly texting while driving, which is illegal in Rhode Island, is a distraction that can be eliminated if teens promise not to use their phones when they're behind the wheel, but the National Safety Council reports that passengers in the car are even a bigger distraction. Passengers increase the risk of a teen driver having a fatal crash by at least 44%. John Ulczycki, NSC vice president of strategic initiatives, says, "It's tragic that parents don't really appreciate the risks of passengers," adding that passengers are a distraction the entire time a teen is driving.



Substance use sky rockets. National Survey on Drug Use and Health reports first-time use of most substances peaks during the summer months. More than 11,000 youths used alcohol for the first time; in other months, the daily average ranged from about 5,000 to 8,000 new users per day. And more than 4,800 youths used marijuana for the first time, whereas the daily average ranged from about 3,000 to 4,000 in other months.

Conversations and rules reduce risk. Parents need a plan of action to help keep their teens summer-safe. Here's one plan recommended by prevention specialists.

1. Set clear rules.
2. Understand the risks and talk about them with your teens.
3. Monitor your teen's activities.
4. Stay involved in your teen's life.
5. Engage your teen in summer activities or work.
6. Reserve time for family.





REBECCA'S notes

The waiting game has begun. Now, it's in the hands of the federal government.

Five years ago, after a second try, Tiverton was awarded its first Drug Free Communities Grant, about \$125,000 per year for five years and the grant expires at the end of September 2016. We have put those funds to good use — and the annual surveys of Tiverton youth confirm that. Alcohol, marijuana and tobacco use by Tiverton teens have all declined since 2011. Our special summer issue of Coalition News, which will be mailed to all Tiverton households in August, will provide the statistical details as well as a summary of the Coalition's many outreach and educational programs that the DFC grant made possible.

During the spring, I submitted an application to continue this grant for another five years. Grantees will be announced in September. With fingers crossed, we'll wait as patiently as we can to learn what the Feds have to say. We'll share the news, good or bad, in our September newsletter.

Thanks to all who made our progress possible over the last five years. Here's hoping for another five!

Tons of Teen Activities at TPL

You have a rare teen indeed if you can get through the summer without hearing, "There's nothing to do," but in addition to programs offered by the Tiverton Recreation Department, our brand new library has a full menu of summer activities for teens.

TPL will offer weekly art labs and gaming clubs, as well as a couple of movie nights. Special events include workshops on drawing action illustrations, karate, cooking with farm fresh Rhode Island produce and henna art, a workshop that filled up fast last summer. The library will also sponsor "Pizza and Pages," an opportunity for teens to discuss books with peers and enjoy pizza at the same time.



Check out the [full list](#) of teen activities on TPL's website, as well as activities designed for [children](#). TPL could be your answer for teens that have "nothing to do."



If you can answer most of these questions correctly, you probably know your teen pretty well. If you don't know the answers to some of the questions, think of them as good discussion starters. *Good luck — either way!*

- What embarrasses your teen the most?
- What is your teen's biggest fear?
- What person outside the family has most influenced your teen's life?
- What are your teen's favorite and least favorite foods?
- What is your teen's biggest complaint about the family?
- What are your teen's favorite and least favorite subjects in school?
- Who is your teen's favorite teacher?
- What non-school book has your teen recently read?
- What is your teen's most prized possession?

No Vaping Zones Become Law in RI

As they wrapped up the 2016 session, the Rhode Island legislature amended General Laws entitled "Public Health and Workplace Safety Act" to prohibit the use of electronic nicotine-delivery system products in public and enclosed workplaces. The only exceptions to this new law are retail businesses that sell vaping devices and "vaping bars."

