

## welcome back

As you clean the sand out of car for the hundredth time and fill the last days of summer with sun-drenched memories, you inevitably start thinking about buying school supplies and wonder how your child will grow in the new school year. As a parent, the challenges and the triumphs of adolescence can exhilarate and let's face it, sometimes bring us to our knees.

One of the most influential factors during a child's adolescence is maintaining a strong, open relationship with a parent. When parents create supportive and nurturing environments, children make better decisions. Though it may not always seem like it, children really want to hear their parents' opinions.

The #1 reason kids give for not drinking or doing drugs is that they don't want to disappoint their parents. Children who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are significantly less likely to do drugs.

Alcohol is the most commonly used and abused drug among youth in the United States yet, 1/3 of Riverhead students say their parents haven't talked to them about the dangers of alcohol.



**T**ake time to discuss alcohol, drugs, and vaping with your child at a young age. In the car, during a movie, and point out issues related to substance use to open the conversation.

**A**cknowledge any family history with drugs or alcohol as you would with any chronic illness like diabetes or high blood pressure.

**L**isten without interruption. Encourage your child's thoughts and feelings. If you hear something you don't like, don't respond with anger or punishment. Talk about your feelings in a constructive way.

**K**eep talking. One "Big Talk" is not enough. Ongoing discussions throughout childhood and the teen years are important to keeping the lines of communication open and expectations clear.

**It's not the questions you ask,  
it's how you ask the questions...**

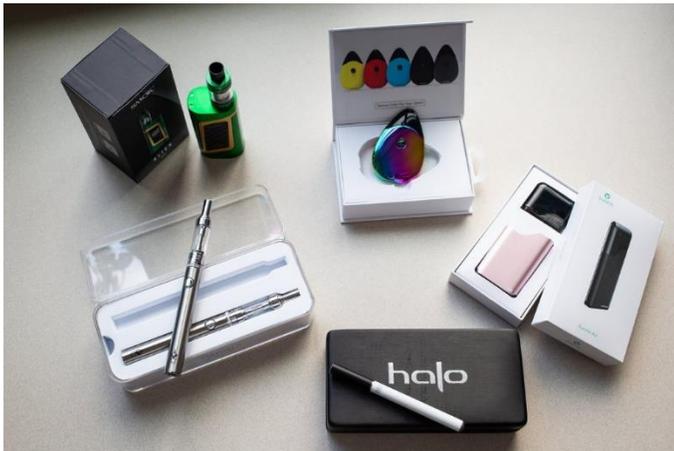
1. **Start calmly**
2. **Start casually**
3. **Pick a peaceful surrounding**
4. **Stay upbeat**
5. **Watch your body language**
6. **Focus on the facts**
7. **Avoid scare tactics**
8. **Show your child you're listening**
9. **Role play how to navigate real-life situations**
10. **Appeal to your child's sense of self-respect**

## current trends

### VAPING

Vapes, otherwise known as e-cigarettes, are what the U.S. Surgeon General, calls an “epidemic” among teens. Marketing, social media, attractive technology and flavors have resulted in a dramatic increase in youth use. According to the CDC, teen vape use skyrocketed by 78% in 2018.

Riverhead students report that vape use has become normalized in school and that devices are easy to conceal from parents and teachers.



1 out of 3 Riverhead 8<sup>th</sup> grade students reported that they have tried vaping.

4 out of 10 Riverhead 8<sup>th</sup> graders think there is little or no risk associated with vaping.

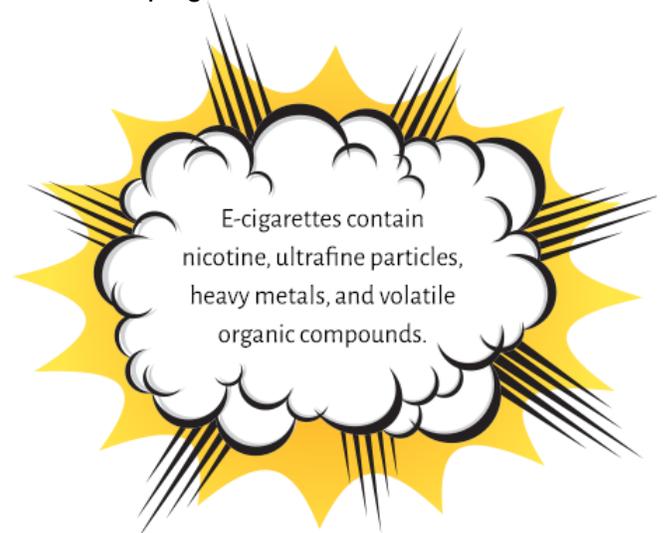
1 out of 5 Riverhead seniors who use vape products report that they use their devices to vape marijuana, hash oil, dab, or wax.

*-Riverhead CAP, “Prevention Needs Assessment RCSD 2018, grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup>.”*

### “IT’S JUST FLAVORS”

Most teens who vape believe that vaping is harmless and don’t actually know what is in e-liquid. However, 99% of e-liquid on the market contains nicotine even when the label says it’s nicotine-free.

One JUUL pod, the most popular brand among youth, has the same amount of nicotine as one pack of cigarettes. Nicotine is highly addictive and nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain.



The inadequacy of quality control, the lack of product regulation, unchecked marketing to youth and the unknown long-term health consequences of vaping have created an unsafe environment for youth.

Vaping is not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes. It is another way for companies to profit from addiction.

**Big Tobacco refers to youth as “Replacement Customers.”**

## MARIJUANA

As marijuana becomes legal for medical and recreational use around the country, social norms are changing just as quickly. Many people equate marijuana use with alcohol use. What hasn't changed is that just like alcohol, marijuana remains a drug. It changes the way we think, act, and feel. However, research has shown that when the perception of risk goes down, marijuana use goes up.

For youth, the effects of any drug can be more dramatic as their brains are not fully developed until the age of 25. Studies have shown that marijuana use can affect a teen's critical thinking skills, memory, the ability to learn and make good decisions, and it can adversely affect the mental health of a young person.

**30-day marijuana use among Riverhead 10<sup>th</sup> graders increased from 17.9% in 2016 to 22.4% in 2018**

THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is the high-producing ingredient found in marijuana. With new technology and higher demand, THC levels have increased steadily and can range from 15% to 30%.

Vaping devices compound the potency of marijuana by producing a more intense high without the harsh effects. The devices allow for discreet use as they do not produce odors associated with marijuana use.



Dabbing involves a concentrated dose of THC resin from the plant. It is usually a sticky oil or wax that is vaped using a long, thin pen resembling a stylus.



## ALCOHOL

**44% of Riverhead 12<sup>th</sup> graders drank alcohol in the past 30 days**

**28% of Riverhead 10<sup>th</sup> graders drank alcohol in the past 30 days.**

**27% of Riverhead 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported binge drinking in the past two weeks (Consuming 5 or more drinks at one time)**

Easy access, the glorification of alcohol use, peer pressure, and permissive parental attitudes make alcohol the #1 drug of choice among youth. Alcohol use by youth under the age of 21 is always unsafe, unhealthy, and illegal. Teens who drink alcohol have an increased risk of unplanned or unwanted sexual activity, assault or injury, DWI, alcohol overdose and alcohol dependence later in life.

In the 2018 Prevention Needs Assessment, Riverhead students reported that they obtained alcohol at parties. Nearly 50% of high school seniors who reported drinking alcohol drank at home with their parents' permission or at a friend's home with the permission of the friend's parents.

In Suffolk County, adults over the age of 18 who knowingly provide or allow minors to consume alcohol can be arrested and charged with a misdemeanor in violation of the Suffolk County Social Host Law. Penalties include fines up to \$1,000 and/or one year in jail.