

# Supporting Students to Make Healthy Choices

Emma Beall, MPH

Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA)



# Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition Of Alexandria

- Created in 2007 as part of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria
- Mission: To engage diverse sectors of the community in collaborative, cross-cultural and comprehensive substance abuse prevention efforts that result in a reduction of underage substance use and abuse in the City of Alexandria



# Community Impact: 2019-2025

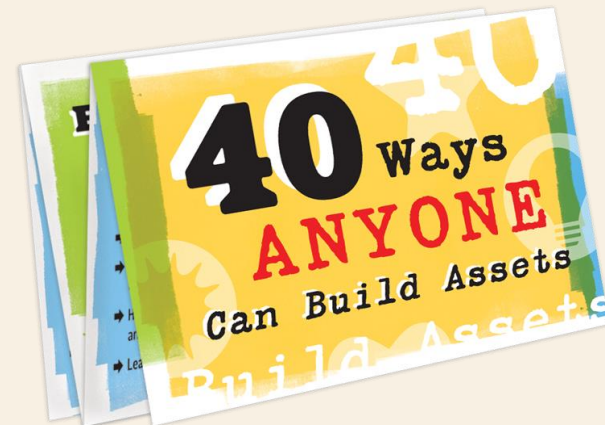
Past 30-day use among ACPS 8 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , and 12 <sup>th</sup> graders	2019	2022	2025
Alcohol	16%	14%	10%
Marijuana	11%	8%	5%
Cigarettes	3%	2%	2%
Vaping (tobacco, nicotine, or marijuana)	*	12%	7%
Medication (misuse)	4%	3%	2%

\*This question was first asked in 2022



# What can I do?

- Communicate early and often!
- Learn (and share) the facts
  - Current substance use trends
  - Health impacts
  - Consequences of underage use
- Encourage healthy coping strategies and refusal skills
- Focus on building Developmental Assets, the building blocks that support positive, healthy development



# Prevention Tips: Early Elementary (Ages 5-8)

- Talk about messages they see on TV or hear at school.
- Explain that alcohol and other substances can harm growing brains and bodies.
- Set clear rules and expectations.
- Discuss the differences between taking medication as directed and medication misuse.
- Get to know your child's friends and their friends' parents.
- Reinforce your family's values and discuss how different people make different choices.



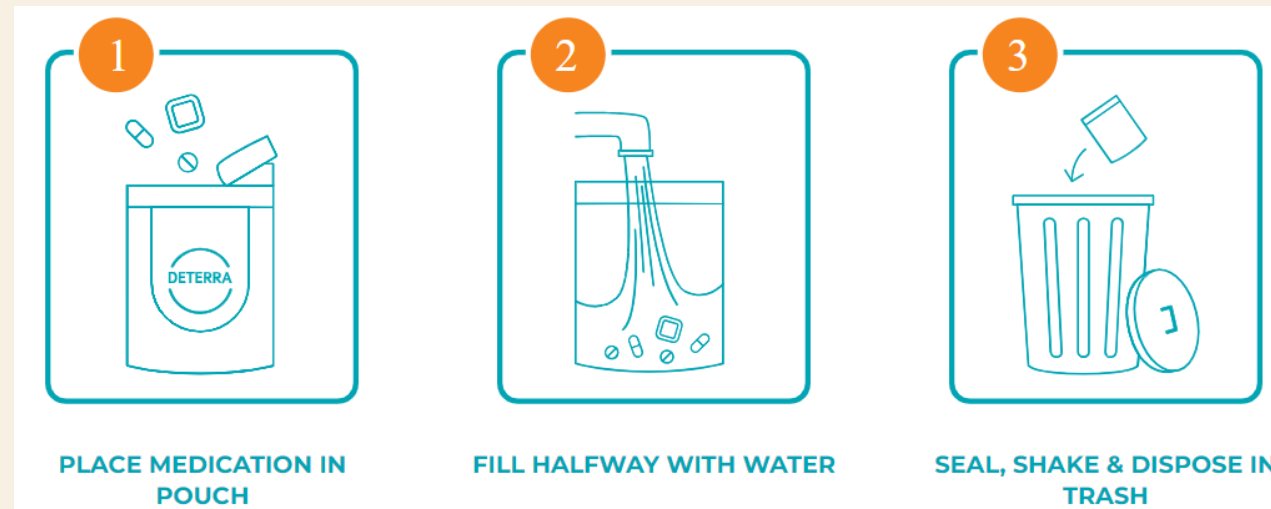
# Prevention Tips: Preteen (Ages 9-12)

- Make sure your child knows your rules. Discuss and set appropriate consequences together.
- Get to know your child's friends and their friends' parents. Make sure they are on the same page about supervision and prohibiting substance use, particularly if their home is to be used for a party or sleepover.
- Help children separate reality from fantasy in shows, movies, advertisements, and other media.
- Talk about how sources of information may contain biases - and emphasize that not everything on the internet is true.
- Feelings of insecurity, doubt and pressure may creep in during puberty. Offset those feelings with a lot of positive comments about your child's individuality and strengths. Focus on their effort, creativity, and kindness rather than specific outcomes such as good grades or winning a game.



# Reducing access to prescription and over-the-counter medication

- Store medication using a medication lock box, available for free at the Alexandria Health Department (4850 Mark Center Drive)
- Safely dispose of unused or expired medication year-round at one of the City's three permanent medication drop boxes or during National Prescription Drug Take Back Days (held twice a year each October and April)
- Dispose of unused or expired medication using a drug deactivation disposal pouch



# RESOURCES FOR SUPPORTING YOUTH



# Where to Find Resources

PreventItAlexandria.org

Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA)

## Featured Resources

- 02 you anyway" after a romantic disappointment can feel dismissive. Instead, show kids that you understand and empathize by reflecting the comment back: "Wow, that does sound difficult."
- 03 Show trust Teens want to be taken seriously, especially by their parents/caregivers. Look for ways to show that you trust your teen. Asking them for a favor shows that you rely on them. Offering a privilege shows that you think they
- 04 Muestre confianza Los adolescentes quieren ser tomados en serio, especialmente por sus padres/cuidadores. Busque formas de demostrar que confía en su adolescente. Pedirle un favor demuestra que confía en ellos. Ofrecerle un privilegio de manera voluntaria demuestra que usted cree que puede manejarlo. Hacer que sus hijos
- 03 Playbook for Parents to Support Healthy Youth



Sign up for SAPCA's e-newsletter!



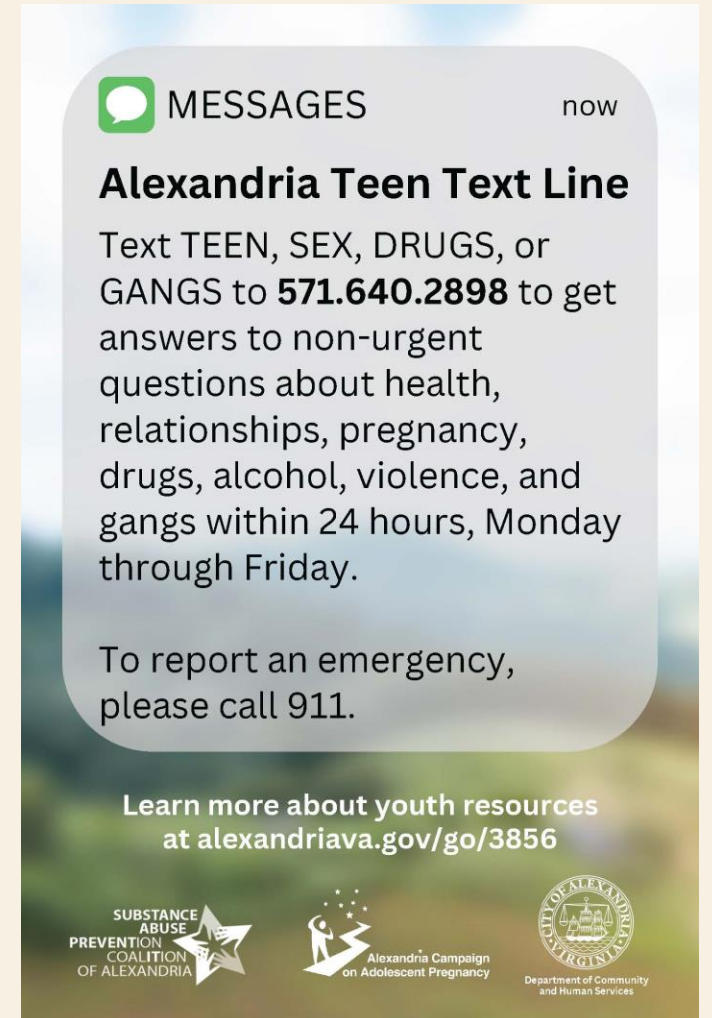
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# Community Resources

- For non-urgent questions about alcohol or other drugs, peer pressure, healthy coping practices, and ways to get involved in the community, **text TEEN to 571.640.2898**
- Youth with mental health or substance use concerns can contact Child and Family Behavioral Health Services
  - **Call 571.213.7963**
  - **Email [DCHSYouthIntake@alexandriava.gov](mailto:DCHSYouthIntake@alexandriava.gov)**
- 24/7 support is available from the Crisis Text Line
  - **Text "HOME" to 741-741** or visit **[CrisisTextLine.org](https://www.crisistextline.org)** to chat with someone



**MESSAGES** now

**Alexandria Teen Text Line**  
Text TEEN, SEX, DRUGS, or GANGS to **571.640.2898** to get answers to non-urgent questions about health, relationships, pregnancy, drugs, alcohol, violence, and gangs within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.

To report an emergency, please call 911.

Learn more about youth resources at [alexandriava.gov/go/3856](https://alexandriava.gov/go/3856)

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION OF ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA VIRGINIA  
Department of Community and Human Services





# Marijuana



Smoking



Vaping



Edibles



## Virginia AG Threatens Crackdown on Copycat THC Edibles



## Warning Issued About Cannabis Edibles That Look Like Well-known Snacks

Real examples of products **deceptively designed** to look like standard snacks and candy.



# E-cigarettes/vaping



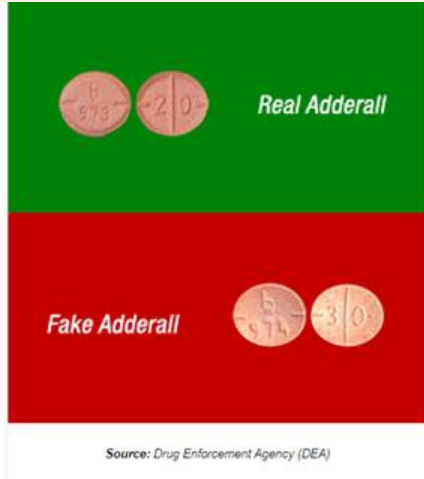
[CDC.gov/Vaping](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaping) 



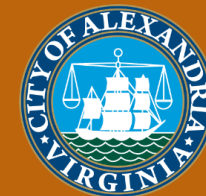
# Nicotine pouches



# Fentanyl & fake pills



**GET  
INVOLVED**



# Get Involved

## WHY VOLUNTEER?

- Build relationships
- Help Alexandria youth
- Be a community advocate
- Have fun!

## HOW?

- Co-present workshops
- Create social media posts
- Distribute flyers
- Fundraise
- Help with video production
- Monitor state legislation
- Share your opinions and ideas
- Write op-eds



# THANK YOU

[PreventItAlexandria.org](http://PreventItAlexandria.org)

Emma Beall

SAPCA Coordinator

[emma.beall@alexandriava.gov](mailto:emma.beall@alexandriava.gov) | 703.746.3670

