

Middle Schoolers at Risk: What Every Parent Should Know

November 13, 2018 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Oak Middle School

6:00 – 7:00 Hidden in Plain Sight Exhibit/SYFS Resource Table

Parents - do you know what today's substance use paraphernalia, including Juul products, looks like? Would you be able to identify where it may be hidden? Don't miss this exhibit that recreates a teenager's bedroom and is designed to raise awareness about the possibility of substance abuse. The mock bedroom is intended to teach parents about the indicators, which are often "hidden in plain sight," that their son or daughter might be using drugs.

Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services will be available to answer questions and provide resources.

7:00 – 8:15 Panel Discussion

Jennifer Rifkin, Clinical Director of Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services

Mental Health Challenges are increasingly prevalent among adolescents. In fact, 1 in 5 teens will experience a mental illness and 50% of those illnesses have an onset by the age of 14. Jennifer Rifkin will discuss the early signs and symptoms of mental health challenges in youth and how to decipher normal teen behavior from a potential mental health issue.

Mark Joyce, LMHC, Spectrum Health – Concerned about your child using, or being exposed to substances? Mark will present information on youth substance use and substance use disorders and how they co-occur with mental health issues.

Tina Grosowsky, UMASS Department of Psychiatry Tobacco Free Community Partnership

The vaping epidemic is a critical issue among middle and high school student and big tobacco is specifically targeting our children. Tina will discuss programs and policies, and provide tobacco prevention and smoking/vaping cessation resources

Robert Hackenson, Dynamic Influence – Technology and Social Media Landmines

Robert will be briefly addressing some of the "Technology & Social Media Land Mines" that you as a parent need to know about. With the rise of smart phones, social media, gaming, etc., there are certain dangers you and your kids might not see coming until it's too late. This presentation will briefly discuss some of these potential issues from social media anxiety and technology addiction, to cyber bullying, cyber predators, and your digital footprint. Robert will then provide you with some of the tricks and tools to help your child navigate around these potential dangers.

Cassandra Anderson, Worcester Department of Public Health

Cassandra joins the panel to review the 2017 Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS) data for Oak Middle School.

8:15 – 9:00 Panel Q & A

The panel will be available to answer any questions you may have about any of the topics being presented. Please join us.