



Prevention *for parents*

Back to (Tele) School Support

Welcome back to another school year at SWMS/SWHS/SWA!

Now that tele-school is here to stay for a little while, we are all trying to make the best out of a not-so-ideal situation.

The back-to-school season is typically a challenge for many students. Getting back into a sleep schedule, dealing with social pressures, and managing their time as they resume their studies always adds some stress.

This year is no exception, though now we have additional stresses to cope with—a new learning model, the national climate, and the worry that comes with a pandemic. That's a lot for teens to navigate!

Take a moment to check in with your kids (and yourself) to see how everybody is doing.

This is a good time to talk about how you and your kids can cope



with stress, anxiety, and any other feelings they are experiencing.

Make sure you and your kids know how to contact their school counselors, too— we're here to help!

We can help students connect with their classes if they are having trouble, and we are here to provide social and emotional support.

What is Prevention?

Prevention for Parents is a monthly newsletter designed to give parents tips and ideas for preventing youth substance use. But what is prevention and why is it important?

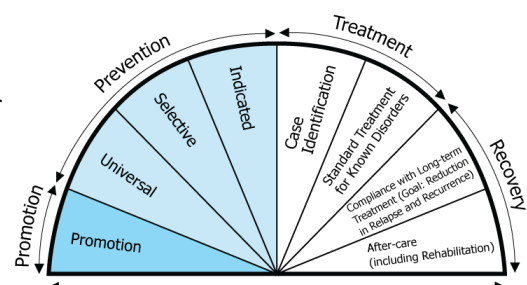
When we're talking about substance use, prevention is all the effort we put into stop-

ping (or delaying) someone's decision to use substances before it happens.

Prevention efforts can be a lot of different things— the best efforts are those that promote mental / physical wellness, positive relationships, and pro-social activities.

Why put in the effort to stop it before it happens? It's a lot easier (and less expensive) to prevent substance use than to help someone recover once they are using. Plus, we know kids

are happier and healthier when they aren't using substances.



Cyber Safety in a Screen-Heavy Season

Whether we like it or not, our kids are dealing with a lot of screen time. The school day accounts for at least three hours, and we also know our teens are social creatures. During this pandemic when social connection has moved online even more than before, screen time is hard to escape.

So, what are they doing when they are on Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat? Hopefully they are being kind, uplifting, and having fun together. However, they may need some help navigating the virtual world.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Communicate appropriate online etiquette
- Talk about how to handle cyberbullying
- Encourage open conversation and listen empathetically
- Encourage them to be an upstander (“if you see something, say something”)
- Don’t hover and check their accounts all the time, but get a sense of who they talk to and what they post about



What Would You Like To See In The Next Issue?

Contact Colleen Chan with any suggestions, comments, or questions.

Colleen Chan

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South Whidbey Student Assistance Program

Hi! I’m Colleen Chan and I work at South Whidbey Middle/High School & SWA as a Student Assistance Professional (SAP), doing youth substance use prevention and interventions.

What that really means is my job is to help students maintain wellness—mentally and physically!

I am available for individual or small group sessions to support your student’s wellness. I currently see students over the phone or on Zoom. Parents and students can email me to set up appointments.

A big part of my job is building relationships with all students at the middle and high school, so you

might see me working with our high school prevention group (SW²), or hear about me in your student’s health class, too.

I love to partner with parents, also! Please message me just to say hi or get in touch if you are worried about a student.

Thank you, parents, for all you do for our young people— it certainly makes a difference!



Parent Resources

How To Talk With Kids About Online Meanness and Cyberbullying

<https://www.childrenandscreens.com/media/press-releases/its-not-funny-how-to-talk-with-kids-about-online-meanness-and-cyberbullying/>

Coping with Stress: A Guide for Parents

<https://www.treehouse rehab.org/coping-with-stress-guide-struggling-parents/>

Talking With Your Children About Stress

<https://www.apa.org/topics/talking-stress>