

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Substance Use Prevention and Education Policy

Overview

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) considers alcohol and substance use/abuse first and foremost a health concern. It is harmful to students, their families and to the educational purposes of the larger school community. This includes, but is not limited to, the use and/or abuse of alcohol and illegal drugs, steroids, and the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances such as cigarettes, inhalants, herbal supplements, e-cigarettes, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications.

It is the policy of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) that the school will respond to the use and/or abuse of substances including alcohol and illegal drugs, including steroids, and the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances such as cigarettes, inhalants, e-cigarettes, herbal supplements, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications through collaboration with families, education, medical/health assistance, and only when necessary, discipline and law enforcement.

Education

An education/medical/health approach will be the first step in an attempt to help students decide not to use and/or abuse substances and to assist students who may already be involved.

Teachers and counselors work to educate students about substance use and/or abuse, in an age appropriate manner, and to create an atmosphere of knowledge, confidence, and trust that will encourage young people to seek help in overcoming problems with substance abuse. Education primarily takes place within the school's Health and Wellness Classes. HCCPS also uses the DPH SBIRT screening tool (screening, brief intervention, referral, treatment) annually with all 7th graders. This provides educational, preventive and identification opportunities.

Workshops may be provided to enhance faculty and parent/guardian awareness of the scope of substance abuse as related to our school, community, and society; to provide knowledge of scientific and medical findings; knowledge of laws relating to substance abuse and legal penalties for violation of the law; and to familiarize teachers with available educational resources.

Community Liaisons

The school will maintain liaisons with rehabilitation, treatment, judicial, and law enforcement agencies to help ensure that the total community capability is brought to bear on the elimination of substance abuse problems. Specific groups and organizations include:

ServiceNet

Outpatient Services, Northampton

584-6855 x.3 for intake dept

Clinical and Support Options

Hampshire County office: Northampton

582-0471

Children's Clinic, Northampton

587-3265 x. 315

Mass Substance Abuse Information and Education Helpline

800-327-5050

www.helpline-online.com

Policy & Procedures

Policy

The use and/or abuse of any substance including alcohol and illegal drugs, including steroids, and the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances such as but not limited to cigarettes, inhalants, e-cigarettes, herbal supplements, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications is strictly prohibited on school grounds. Any possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or

drug paraphernalia, legal substances intended for misuse or alcoholic beverages on the school grounds, at school functions or on school buses is prohibited at all times. In addition, non-alcoholic beer and non-alcoholic wine are not permitted on school grounds at any time.

HCCPS's goal to have a "Drug Free School" can only be achieved if the administration has the authority it needs to carry out the Drug/Alcohol policy. Therefore, the administration follows the principle of "reasonable suspicion" not "probable cause." Students smelling of alcohol or marijuana, or behaving in a manner that would indicate possession or ingestion of drugs or alcohol, on school property and at school events, are subject to this policy, and could be asked to submit to a field sobriety test, a search, and/or a breathalyzer test by the Easthampton Police. Refusal to do so will necessitate the student's parents being called, and disciplinary action could follow.

Procedures

The following steps will be taken in response to student use of substances:

1. If a student voluntarily confides a drug or alcohol problem to any staff member, staff will consult immediately with the school counselor who will employ the school's Self-Harm protocol and meet with the student and discuss next steps with the family.
2. If a school administrator has reasonable grounds to suspect, through direct observation, that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, an assessment will be made by appropriate staff. The student may be removed from class, and parents will be contacted immediately. With the approval of the parent, the assessment may involve a test conducted by Easthampton Police.
3. When a student is determined to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, a school administrator or designee will immediately notify parents. The student may be required to attend meetings of an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment. The student will be subject to a maximum of five days suspension from school. A conference will be held with the student and parents before the student returns to school.
4. If a student is found to be in possession of drugs or alcohol, a school administrator or designee will notify parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents. The substance will be sealed and labeled with the date and time of confiscation and noted in the incident report. If it is a legal substance, it may be given to the parent or disposed of at the parent's request. If the substance

is illegal, it will be turned over to the Easthampton Police. The student may be required to attend an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment. The student will be subject to a maximum of ten days suspension from school and may be subject to expulsion from school.

5. If a student is found to be selling, distributing or in possession of a quantity sufficient to be charged with the intent to distribute drugs or alcohol, a school administrator or designee will immediately notify the parent and the police for mandatory removal of the student from the school property. There will be 10 day suspension and the student may be subject to expulsion. The police will take appropriate action under the law regarding the sale of drugs in proximity to school buildings.

The intent of HCCPS's Drug and Alcohol Policy is to be proactive so that individuals with problems can be readily identified and provided with appropriate services.

Resources / Supports

If you are concerned about a HCCPS student and the possible use of drugs or alcohol, we encourage you to contact our school counselor or nurse and/or the Administrative Coordinator. In addition, here are some prevention tips provided by the [Bureau of Substance Abuse Services](#) within the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#).

In addition, here are some resources that families may find helpful:

- [Talking to Your Kids about Marijuana](#) -- Mass Public Health Blog
- [Parent Power](#)- Mass.gov Health & Human Services
- [Alcohol Use and Your Kids](#) - Mass Public Health
- [Prevention Tips for your Middle School Aged Child](#) - Mass.gov Health & Human Services
- <http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov> - National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments
- <http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/> - DEA
- [Office of Adolescent Health](#) - U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
- [Adolescent Substance Abuse Program](#)- Boston Children's Hospital
- [Peer Pressure](#) - American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

Prevention Tips for Your Middle School-Aged Child¹

Help Your Child Have Good Friends

- Know who your child is with and what they are doing.
- Get to know your child's friends and, where possible, support them in choosing friends who have a positive influence on their behavior.
- Help your child understand what values to look for in friends while in middle school. These learned skills help them develop healthier friendships throughout their teenage years.
- Try to make sure there is adult supervision when your child is with their friends.
- Talk to their friend's parents about your rules concerning alcohol and other drugs.

Start the Conversation – First Steps for Talking to Your Child

- Know the facts - here are two to get you started:
- Most middle school-aged youth in Massachusetts don't use alcohol or other drugs. Most use prescription drugs only if their doctor prescribes them.
- The younger a child starts to use alcohol and other drugs, the more likely it is that they will run into problems now, and in the future.

Stay Involved

- Spend time with your child, involving them in healthy activities.
- Check your child's use of social media

Set Clear Ground Rules; Then Enforce Them

- Set ground rules so that your children know what is acceptable behavior. Let them know that alcohol, other drug use or misuse of prescriptions is simply unacceptable.
- Discuss with your children the privileges you plan to restrict if they do not follow the rules. For example, take away their video games or cell phone privileges for a set period of time. Follow through with your plans if rules are broken.
- Reward them when they do well.

Questions about Your Own Use

- Your children look up to you and may copy your behavior. That is why it is important that you are thoughtful about what they hear you say or see you do.

¹ This information is provided by the [Bureau of Substance Abuse Services](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/substance-abuse/prevention/prevention-tips-for-your-middle-school-aged-child-.html) within the [Department of Public Health](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/substance-abuse/prevention/prevention-tips-for-your-middle-school-aged-child-.html).
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/substance-abuse/prevention/prevention-tips-for-your-middle-school-aged-child-.html>

- When your child asks questions about your own alcohol or other drug use sharing details may be harmful. Research suggests that when you describe past drug use to your child, you may be undercutting your message that they should not use.
- Keep the focus on your child.

If you are concerned about your own use of alcohol, or other drugs, [visit the Massachusetts Substance Abuse Helpline's website for more information or a referral to treatment in your area.](#)

Seeking Help for your Child

If you are concerned about your child's use of alcohol, other drugs or misuse of prescriptions, the Department's Bureau of Substance Abuse Services can help.

For free and confidential information and referral services for youth and young adults (up to age 24) who are experiencing a problem with alcohol, or other drugs, contact [BSAS' Youth Central Intake & Care Coordination service:](#)

Toll Free: 866-705-2807 / 617-661-3991

TTY: 617-661-9051

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