

SAP COUNTY COORDINATION UPDATE

May, 2018



Prepared by: PA Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)

www.pnsas.org

PENNSYLVANIA NETWORK FOR STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES INTERAGENCY UPDATE

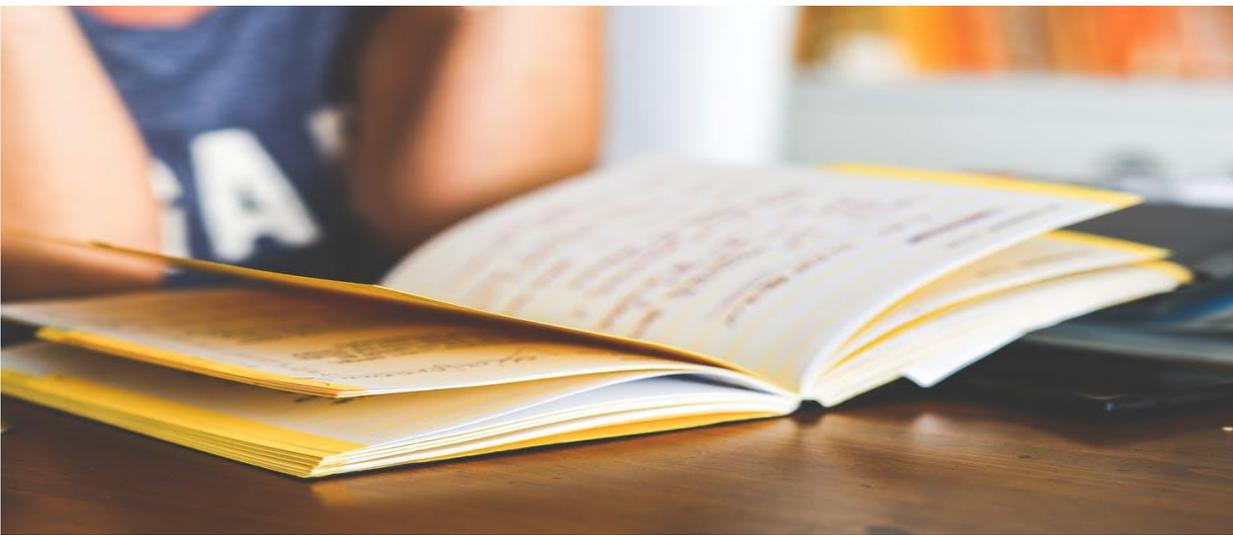
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Prevention Week

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is holding its [National Prevention Week](#) from May 13 to 19. National Prevention Week is an annual health observance dedicated to increasing public awareness of mental illness and substance use disorders. Adolescents and full-time college students most often use substances for the first time during June or July, according to SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) data on [adolescents – 2012 \(PDF | 704 KB\)](#) and NSDUH data on [full-time college students – 2015 \(PDF | 1.2 MB\)](#). The timing of National Prevention Week provides an opportunity for schools and organizations to host prevention-themed events before the school year ends, raising awareness about this important issue among students and their families. These are key periods of social transitions, a risk factor for youth substance use, and an opportunity to develop or strengthen the community, school, and family bonds that protect young people from substance use. More information can be found in [The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health \(PDF | 12 MB\)](#). This year's theme is "Action Today, Healthier Tomorrow." Access National Prevention Week materials, including a promotional materials and a planning toolkit, [here](#).

SAP BACK TO BASICS

How Do I Know When to Refer a Student to the Student Assistance Program?

Growing up is tough and we watch our students struggle through friendships, class assignments, body changes, family issues, etc. just like we did. But how do we know when the struggles are beyond the normal challenges of life and students may be getting weighed down by the pressure of it all? The goal of every school is that students are learning and experiencing success in their overall well-being so when a block or barrier to this learning occurs, the systematic team process designed to mobilize school resources is put into action through the PA Student Assistance Program (SAP). It is well known that SAP is designed to assist with identifying issues such as alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs but when other issues pose barriers to student success it can be tricky to know at what point to refer and we ask, "Should I refer this individual to the Student Assistance team?"



The first thing we often notice are changes in the student's behaviors. These changes may indicate that the student is experiencing difficulties and that a referral to the SAP team is warranted. Student Assistance refers to these as "observable behaviors". In other words, they are behaviors that can be seen and described, without label or opinion. Notice the difference between "Megan has a bad attitude" and "Megan has refused to sit down and begin the in-class assignment 5 times in the past two weeks".

A few examples of these observable behaviors include:

- A decrease in grades
- Decreased or low-class participation
- Frequent outbursts of anger
- A drop in attendance
- A significant change in appearance
- Falling asleep in class
- Frequent requests to leave the room

When it comes to observable behaviors, the authors of the book *Help is Down the Hall: A Handbook on Student Assistance* provide a word of caution. "While a student's appearance, behavior, or words can signal certain problems, they do not clearly indicate the cause or extent of a student's problems. For instance, a student may be depressed because of alcohol abuse. Conversely, the student may be using alcohol to medicate feelings of depression. Falling asleep in class may be due to a student working at a job too late at night or it may be because the child's parents fight late into the night. Which problems are causes and which are effects is not important". (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 2007)

Even if you are unsure, making a SAP referral is a starting point. The SAP team will follow the Student Assistance process, gathering additional information and sorting out what supports are needed for a student. Even if a referral to SAP once reviewed is not warranted, it is best to err on the side of caution than miss an opportunity to intervene and assist a student to succeed both in school and in life.

Resources:

Student Information/Behavior Observation Templates are located on the SAP website at www.pnsas.org. These templates are not final products distributed as models by the Commonwealth Student Assistance Program.

Rather, they are offered to help SAP teams develop their own information collection forms that reflect school policy and procedures.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). 2007. *Help is Down the Hall: A Handbook on Student Assistance*. Rockville: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

RESOURCES

After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools, Second Edition

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC) is pleased to announce the release of the second edition of *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools*. Developed in collaboration with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and in consultation with other national experts, this toolkit assists schools in implementing a coordinated response to the suicide death of a student. It includes new information and tools that middle and high schools can use to help the school community cope and reduce suicide risk. The toolkit was developed primarily for school administrators and staff but can also be useful for parents and communities. The free toolkit can be downloaded [here](#).

Archived Webinar: Engaging and Supporting Families in Suicide Prevention

Suicide Prevention Resource Center's recent webinar on engaging and supporting families in suicide prevention is now archived online. It focuses on engaging families whose loved ones are in suicidal crisis or have attempted suicide, and their crucial role in suicide prevention. Presenters highlight current research in family engagement and share an example of family programming geared toward parents of suicidal teens and young adults. Go [here](#) to access the archived webinar.

Heroin, Fentanyl & Other Opioids eBook

Fueled by drugs like heroin, fentanyl and the misuse of prescription pain pills, the opioid epidemic in our country has impacted countless families. Parents and families need to be prepared with the knowledge and skills to identify opioids, spot early use and take action effectively. To help address this, the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids has created a new eBook, *Heroin, Fentanyl & Other Opioids: A Comprehensive Resource for Families with a Teen or Young Adult Struggling with Opioid Use*. Download the eBook [here](#) or you can read the seven key takeaways of the eBook [here](#).

Start the Conversation --Underage Drinking: Myths versus Facts

Did you know that alcohol is the most widely misused substance among America's youth? To help increase awareness about this serious issue, SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention offers an updated fact sheet, "Underage Drinking: Myths Versus Facts", specifically written for preteens and teens. This fact sheet compares common myths about alcohol use with the facts about the prevalence of alcohol use. Share this resource with our youth to start the conversation and spread the word about underage drinking and alcohol misuse. Download the free fact sheet [here](#).

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

PASAP North Central Region Workshop

May 8, 2018

8:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Central PA Convention and Visitors Bureau

800 E. Park Ave.

State College, PA 16803

Go [here](#) for more information and to register.

Center for Schools and Communities

“Social and Emotional Learning Conference: Building Skills for Lifelong Success”

May 9-10, 2018

Hilton Harrisburg

Harrisburg, PA

For more information and to register click [here](#).

2018 Pennsylvania Suicide Prevention Conference

“Suicide Prevention: Reaching Out Across the Lifespan”

May 10-11, 2018

Best Western Premier

800 E Park Drive

Harrisburg, PA 17111

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

May 21, 2018

8:30 AM - 5:30 PM

Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, PA

Registration Fee: \$30.00 Please register online by visiting the PaTTAN website

For registration questions contact: Kristen Olszyk, kolszyk@pattan.net, 412-826-6848

For questions regarding content, contact: Elaine Neugebauer, eneugebauer@pattan.net, 412-826-6867

PAPBS Network Implementers Forum

May 22-23, 2018

Hershey Lodge and Convention Center

Hershey, PA

For more information and to register go [here](#).

28th Annual Commonwealth Prevention Alliance Conference

June 5-8, 2018

Penn Stater Conference Center

State College, PA

Visit the CPA [website](#) for conference details, scholarship information, and registration.

Social Leadership Institute: Bridging the Gap Between Social Services and Educators

June 25-29, 2018

Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit 16

Location of Institute:

Lewisburg Area High School,

545 Newman Rd, Lewisburg, PA 17837

Contact Audrey Jows at ajows@csiu.org for more information.

Go [here](#) to register.

11th Annual Pennsylvania Autism Training Conference (PATC) for Professionals: “Delivering Autism Services in Pennsylvania: Practical Strategies & Tools”

June 5-7, 2018

Eden Resort Inn & Suites

222 Eden Road, Lancaster, PA

For more information and to register click [here](#).

NEWS

Suicidal Ideation and Suicide Attempts among Court-Involved, Non-Incarcerated Youth

A recent study found that 14 percent of court-involved, non-incarcerated (CINI) youth have a lifetime history of suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempts. These youth are more likely to have a history of prior criminal offenses, marijuana and/or alcohol use, and sexual abuse than CINI youth without a history of suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempts. The study used data from 353 youth referred for a full forensic mental health evaluation at a juvenile court clinic in the Northeast United States. CINI youth may be at particularly high risk for suicide because they may never reach detention, where they are more likely to encounter routine screening for suicidality. These findings support the need for systematic suicide screenings for CINI youth, and a better understanding of suicidal history among youth throughout the juvenile justice system. Go [here](#) to read more of the study.

E-Cig Ads May Prompt Teens to Take Up Tobacco Too

American teens and young adults who are receptive to ads for electronic cigarettes are much more likely to start smoking tobacco cigarettes, a new study finds. A nationwide analysis found that 12- to 24-year-olds who had never used tobacco products had high rates of receptivity -- meaning they recalled and/or liked -- for tobacco product ads. They were most receptive to ads for e-cigarettes, followed by ads for cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and cigars.

Receptivity increased with age, peaking at 69 percent among 18- to 21-year-olds. Those who were receptive to ads for e-cigarettes, cigarettes and cigars were more likely to try those respective products within a year, the study found.

The researchers also uncovered a startling trend among 12- to 21-year-olds who had never smoked. Those who were receptive to e-cigarette ads were 60 percent more likely to try cigarettes within a year, the study found.

The study was published March 26 in the journal *JAMA Pediatrics*.

"There is a growing body of evidence that adolescents who start with an e-cigarette may transition to cigarettes," study lead author John Pierce said. He is a retired professor of cancer prevention at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and Cancer Center. "This study provides the first evidence that e-cigarette advertising is one of the risk factors for those who are underage to become cigarette smokers," he said in a university news release. Read about the study [here](#). For more on e-cigarettes and youth, visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [website](#).

Overdose Risk Factors in Youth with Substance Use Disorders

A team of Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) investigators has identified factors that may increase the risk of drug overdose in adolescents and young adults. In their report published online in the *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, the researchers describe finding that more than a quarter of those seeking treatment at Addiction Recovery Management Service, an MGH-based outpatient substance-use-disorder treatment program for youth ages 14 to 26, had a history of at least one overdose. Factors associated with increased overdose risk were disorders involving the use of alcohol, cocaine or amphetamines and histories of depression, anxiety or eating disorders.

Very little research exists on risk factors associated with overdose in young people presenting for substance use disorder treatment," says lead and corresponding author Amy Yule, MD, of Addiction Recovery Management Service and the MGH Division of Child Psychiatry. "In addition to screening for substance-specific risk factors, it is important that providers systematically screen young patients for overdose histories and for psychiatric factors that may increase overdose risk."

Most studies of overdose risk among individuals with substance use disorders have focused on adults, and the few that specifically studied young people only assessed substance-related risk factors and not psychiatric symptoms. Yule notes that, since substance use patterns are known to differ between youth and adults, and since brain regions important to

decision making do not fully mature until the 20s, it is important to investigate whether risk factors differ between the two age groups.

"It's going to be helpful to assess overdose risk among young people with substance use disorders over a longer period of time and to examine whether treatment mitigates the risk for subsequent overdose," says Yule, an instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School (HMS). "While the opioid epidemic has raised public awareness of the importance of increased access to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders, our findings support the importance of considering all substances of misuse -- both opioids and non-opioids -- when assessing overdose risk."

Study senior author Timothy Wilens, MD, chief of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at MGH and associate professor of Psychiatry at HMS adds, "The striking prevalence of overdose history in treatment-seeking young people reflects how common overdose unfortunately is among those with substance use disorders, no matter the age." Read more [here](#).