



SAFE HOMES PROGRAM

A county-wide initiative that helps parents and caregivers model positive behaviors in their homes and community.



Montgomery
County
Prevention
Coalition

THE IMPORTANCE OF A **SAFE HOME**

- ▲ As parents and caregivers, it is our job to keep our home safe for our kids.
- ▲ There is no handbook for this!
- ▲ Most youth say that they access drugs and alcohol from their home or friends' homes.
- ▲ Parent substance use is shown to increase the risk of youth use, and start at an earlier age. The more we use substances, the more use is normalized for our kids.
- ▲ Stigma often makes it difficult for us to start these conversations. We have some tips and tricks to help.



THE SAFE HOMES PROGRAM HELPS PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS



**CONSIDER
THEIR ACTIONS**



**START THE
CONVERSATION**



**TAKE THE SAFE
HOMES PLEDGE**

HELP CHANGE THESE STATS

According to a survey of 7-12th graders in Montgomery County:

Alcohol & Cannabis are the most used substances by youth, especially when normalized at home.

40%

have never talked to their parents about the impact of substance use.

15%

who consumed alcohol had their first sip at age 8 or earlier.

38%

who consumed alcohol said they received it from a parent or friend's parent.

10%

said that they consumed alcohol in the last 30 days.

WHAT PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS CAN DO

You can be a part of the solution.

- ▲ Clearly communicate your household's values and beliefs to youth – don't assume they already know them.
- ▲ Model the skills, behaviors, and attitudes that you want your children to follow.
- ▲ Establish an environment of trust in the home.



WHAT PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS CAN DO (CONT.)

- ▲ Regularly monitor children when they are in your home and establish an expectation that an adult will check in on them periodically.
- ▲ Set limits and establish rules with consequences and include youth in setting this in advance.
- ▲ Are there potentially harmful items in your house?
 - How are they stored?
 - Who can access them?
 - How do you know if something goes missing?

START THE CONVERSATION

Research has shown that talking with youth and setting clear boundaries can help them make healthy choices. Here are some pointers on having those important conversations.



- ▲ Don't wait for them to come to you.
- ▲ Make it an ongoing conversation.
- ▲ Make it honest, sincere, and clear.
- ▲ Practice before having the conversation.
- ▲ Teach kids how to use refusal skills (like diverting, suggesting something better, or walking away).
- ▲ Establish open communication.

START THE CONVERSATION (CONT.)

- ▲ Make it easy for your youth to be honest with you.
 - Show neutral body language.
 - Remain calm in conversations, especially when they disclose something that has happened.
- ▲ Thank them for their honesty and avoid teasing, shaming, or criticism.
- ▲ Regularly spend time with them to build trust.
- ▲ Set realistic expectations and establish appropriate, consistent consequences when broken.

TALK WITH OTHER PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Talking with youth is only half the equation. Talking with other parents and caregivers helps ensure your child is safe outside of your own home.



TALK WITH OTHER PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS (CONT.)

Here are some tips on how to get the conversation going:

- ▲ Acknowledge that having these conversations can be awkward, but both of your priorities are your children's safety.
- ▲ Ask if substances are accessible in the home, and if so, how are they stored?
 - Are firearms in the home, and if so, how are they secured?
 - Will other adults and children be there?
 - Are you going to be home?

SAFELY HOST YOUTH

If you're the one hosting youth in your home, here are some things to consider.

- ▲ Set expectations and provide the information upfront to other parents.
- ▲ How to host a party:
 - Agree on a guest list and don't admit others.
 - Discuss ground rules before the party.
 - Encourage the child to plan the party with a responsible friend.
 - Brainstorm fun activities.
 - If someone brings any substance into the home, ask them to leave.
 - If someone leaves, they cannot return.
 - Have plenty of snacks and non-alcoholic drinks available.
 - Be visible and available, but don't join the party.

SUBSTANCE AND MEDICATION SAFETY

Creating a healthy home environment for youth is about more than just hosting safe parties. Let's take a look at some other behaviors.



SUBSTANCE AND MEDICATION SAFETY

You can take action today to help ensure youth have decreased contact with substances or medication in your home.

Legal Substances (Cannabis/Alcohol/Tobacco):

- ▲ Put substances in a designated, locked location.
- ▲ Let friends, visitors, and parents know your plans for securing substances.
- ▲ Model the behaviors you want to see in your children by not drinking, smoking, or vaping in excess.
- ▲ Have conversations about the legal age of consumption.

SUBSTANCE AND MEDICATION SAFETY (CONT.)

Medication Safety:

- ▲ Have all medications (prescription or over-the-counter) up high and out of sight.
- ▲ Only take medication as prescribed.
- ▲ Practice proper disposal practices like a local medication drop box or Detera bag.

Conversation Tip:

Most that use get it from their family and friends.

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Firearms:

- ▲ If they see a gun, don't touch it and tell an adult.
- ▲ Look into gun safes or locks.
- ▲ If there are firearms or weapons in the home, ensure that they are properly locked and stored.
- ▲ Have direct conversations with other parents about firearms in their home.

Conversation Tip:
Don't touch it and walk away.

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS (CONT.)

Healthy Relationships:

- ▲ Excess substance is associated with most cases of sexual assault.
- ▲ Victims of sexual assault are most often abused by someone they know.

Conversation tips:

- Discuss the importance of watching and covering their drink.
- Talk about boundaries and consent, and how to communicate them.
- Help your child identify safe people and spaces in the home.
- Establish a plan so your child has an “out” from any uncomfortable situation.

OTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS_(CONT.)

Social Media and Gaming:

- ▲ Have conversations about online safety and set parental controls.
- ▲ Ask other parents how they monitor online activity.
- ▲ Talk to youth about risks of sharing personal information online.
- ▲ Encourage them to talk to an adult if they come across someone or something suspicious.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

See the impact these trusted strategies are having in Montgomery County.

- ▲ **72%** of Ohio's youth 17 and under state that they have never had a drink of alcohol.*
- ▲ The number of youth who state they have never had a drink of alcohol (72%) is the **highest number** that has been reported in **8 years**.*
- ▲ And the number one factor that keeps youth from using substances? The presence of **one trusted adult** in their lives.

*Ohio Healthy Youth Environments Survey, 2019



READY FOR MORE INFORMATION?

The Montgomery County ADAMHS Board offers FREE trainings for Montgomery County residents.

▲ Substance Use:

- Encompass
- Minimize Risk, Maximize Life
- Substance Use Disorder 101

▲ Medication Safety:

- Generation RX

▲ Firearms Safety:

- Firearms Safety 101

▲ Suicide Prevention:

- QPR
- ASIST

▲ Sexual Assault Prevention:

- Stewards of Children

▲ Social Media Use:

- Digital Detox 101

▲ Mental Health:

- Mental Health First Aid
- Mental Health 101
- Trauma 101

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME

Questions? Contact Colleen Oakes at
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