# Tool for parents



# Wanna talk?

# Start a discussion with your teenager





Because it's normal for teenagers to be curious about new experiences...

Because it is also normal that, as a parent, you wonder and sometimes worry...

Because parents play an important part in their teen's wellbeing...

OBJECTIVES

- To help you open a discussion with your teenager.
- To provide information.

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This document is the result of collaboration between Tangage des Laurentides and the CISSS des Laurentides Public Health Department. If you have concerns about your teenager's substance use or screen time, call <u>Info-Social 811</u>, option 2.



# Drug and alcohol use

# LAW OF EFFECTS E=SxIxC

The effects experienced from substance use depend on several factors :

Substance

## ndividual

#### quantity, ingredients, speed of consumption, mixed or not with other substances.

age, state of physical and mental health, weight, height.

## Context

time of day, place, atmosphere, people present during use, reasons for use.

# THEREFORE...

Two different **people** who use the same **substance** won't necessarily experience the same **effects**.

Also, the same **person** using the same **substance** in a different context can experience different **effects**.

#### TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR TEENAGER

Listen to what they tell you.

Choose a time that suits both of you.

Express your concerns but remain open-minded.

Encourage your teenager to talk about their thoughts on substance and screen use.

Thank your teenager for sharing and remain available to them.

#### As a parent, what place do **alcohol**, **energy drinks**, **cannabis**, **vaping** and **screens** take up in your life?

#### IF YOUR CHILD USES OR HAS EVER USED DRUGS

Explore the reasons behind their use.

Express how you fell in a sympathetic way

Confirm your support and remain available to your teenager.

#### TALKING POINTS TO LIMIT RISKS

Encourage your teenager to create a 'buddy system' with a friend to look after one another.

Avoid mixing alcohol, energy drinks, drugs.

Avoid participating in dangerous activities.

#### **EXPLORE TOGETHER**

Reflect on pastimes and activites that interest them.

Encourage them to develop their passions.

Help them find solutions to manage their stress if that is causing their drug or alcohol use.

Think about social media **posts** and **sharing** content in the context of drug and alcohol use.

Is what is shown legal? Does everyone consent? If that was me in the photo, would I like it?



# Alcohol

## WHAT IS IT?

Alcohol is a liquid obtained by fermenting certain fruits or grains.

It acts to depress the central nervous system, slowing the brain's general activity and bodily functions (reflexes, attention, judgment, etc.). Nearly **half** of teenagers have **never drank** alcohol.

> Your teenager might like to know this and talk about it with you if they feel pressured to drink.

### **HEALTH RISKS**

For young people, excessive or regular use of alcohol is linked to health problems such as :

- acute intoxication
- trauma;
- violence;
- risky behaviour.

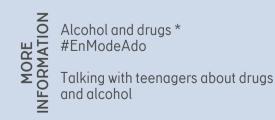
Alcohol consumption is normalized in Québec. It can be found everywhere and in many different contexts.

#### HOW TO limit the risks?

- Delay the age for having their first drink.
- Determine a maximum quantity to be consumed.
- Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks

As a parent, what place does alcohol take in your life?

Do you think that your habits can have an impact on your child and their view of alcohol?





Tel-jeunes Parents

SUPPORT

HELP

Info-Social 811, option 2

#### References

Institut national de santé publique du Québec (2024). <u>Alcool : substance psychoactive</u> (in French only) Gouvernement du Québec (2024). <u>Alcohol and drugs: a combination to avoid</u> Institut de la statistique du Québec (2018). <u>Québec Health Survey of High School Students, 2016-2017</u>



# **Energy drinks**

## WHAT ARF THFY?

Drinks whose main inaredient is caffeine. synthetic or natural origin (guarana, yerba maté, etc.).

They also contain other stimulants. sugar or sugar substitutes.

Many young people have already gotten

> free energy drinks.

## **HFAI TH RISKS**

Possible side effects :

- anxiety:
- irritability:
- insomnia;
- increased blood pressure and heart rate:
- headaches:
- vomiting.

#### A single bottle can contain more caffeine than the maximum safe intake for young people.

Frequent consumption of these drinks can also create a dependence on caffeine.

Advertising encourages young people to consume them by promoting their ability to increase energy and alertness.

## TO MAINTAIN A GOOD ENERGY LEVEL

#### **HOW TO** limit the risks

- Choose water or other drinks over energy drinks.
- Avoid mixing an energy drink with alcohol as it hides the effects of the alcohol which remain present.
- Avoid drinking them while participating in sports.

Getting adequate sleep, eating a balanced diet and being active are much more effective (and safer!) lifestyle habits than energy drinks.

MORE NFORMATION Water, the drink of choice to stay hydrated Gouvernement du Québec

Alcohol & drugs: a combination to avoid

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References

Association pour la santé publique du Québec (2023). collectifvital.ca/en/energy-drinks

Collectif vital (2023). Brand Advertising Directed at Children and Teenagers: The case of Energy Drinks.

Government of Canada (2024). Supplemented foods: Overview

Gouvernement du Québec(2024). Alcohol and drugs: a combination to avoid

Institut de la statistique du Québec. (2023). Enquête québécoise sur la santé de la population 2020-2021 (in French only)

# Cannabis

### WHAT IS IT?

Cannabis (marijuana, weed, pot, hashish, etc.) is a drug made up mainly of THC and CBD which has disruptive effects on the brain.

# The vast **majority**

of young people have **not used it**.

Your teenager might like to know this as it can lower the pressure they feel to use it.

# **THC** = psychoactive chemical substance that is responsible for the **euphoric/« high » feeling** and **intoxication**.

**CBD** = chemical substance that **does not produce** a **« high »** or **intoxication**. CBD still has an effect on the brain.

Cannabis can be consumed in many ways: smoking, vaping, eating and oral drops.

#### It is inhaling a concentrate of cannabis through a small electronic device, a **wax pen**.

- In Québec, wax pens cannot be found on the legal market. They cannot be bought at the SQDC.
   It is therefore difficult to know what they really contain.
- Wax pens often contain from 70 % to 96 % THC, while cannabis products purchased at the SQDC contain a maximum of 30 % THC.

Cannabis & Mental health
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#### References

**/APING** 

Government of Canada (2023). <u>About cannabis</u> Gouvernement du Québec (2024). <u>Health risks of cannabis use</u> Institut de la statistique du Québec (April 11, l 2024). <u>Enquête québécoise sur le cannabis - 2023</u> (in French only) Institut national de santé publique du Québec (November 24, 2022). <u>Vapotage de nicotine et de cannabis - identifier et comprendre les risques pour la</u> <u>santé</u> (in French only)

## HEALTH RISKS

Possible side effects :

- nausea;
- dizziness;
- anxiety;
- paranoia;
- hallucinations;
- toxic psychosis.

The more THC the more severe and unpleasant the side effects can be, no matter the way the cannabis is consumed.

#### **HOW TO** limit the risks?

- Delay the age for the first use.
- Choose products with a low level of THC.
- Avoid consuming several substances at the same time.



# Vaping

## WHAT IS IT?

Vaping is consuming a substance that contains chemical products, fine particles, heavy metals and, most of the time, **nicotine**.

Nicotine is the substance responsible for addiction.

risk of starting to smoke cigarettes by

Vaping multiplies the

Teenagers are more sensitive to the effects of nicotine and are therefore at greater risk of rapidly developing an addiction.

#### Vaping is growing in popularity.

The tobacco industry uses **marketing techniques** (flavours, colours, stylish accessories, influencers, etc.) to attract young people so that they develop an addiction to nicotine.

## HEALTH RISKS

Products that you vape can cause :

- stress, anxiety and depression;
- insomnia;
- addiction to nicotine;
- coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath;
- greater susceptibility to infection;
- memory and concentration problems.

# Vaping can create an addiction to nicotine, just like cigarettes.

#### **It's not easy to quit...** Your teenager may need help.

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#### References

Santé Canada. (2023). Tip sheet for parents: Talking with your teen about vaping.

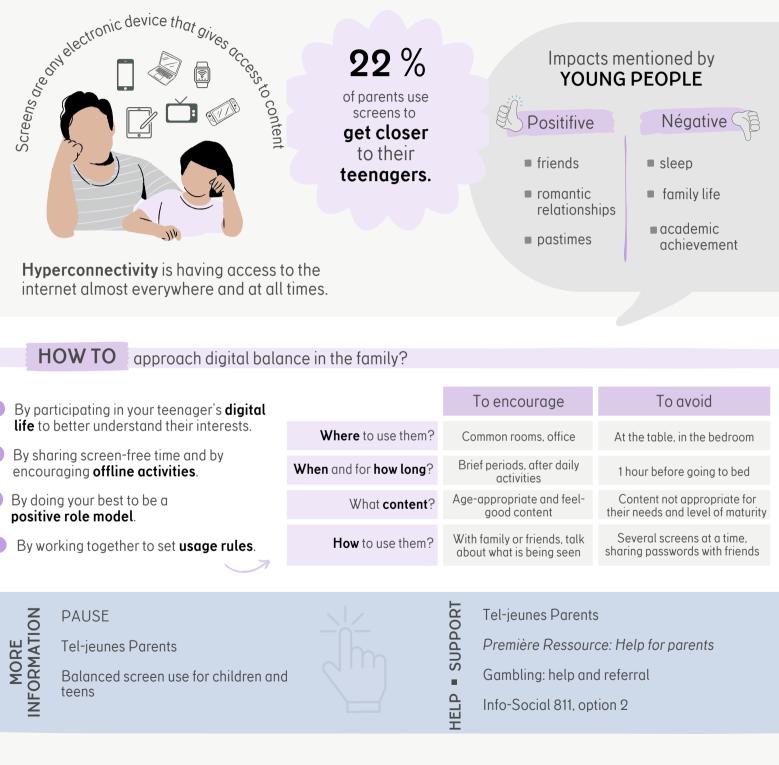
<u>CQTS. (2021).</u> Outil destiné aux parents – Le vapotage chez les jeunes est un problème à prendre au sérieux. Parlons-en maintenant! (in French only) Info-tabac.ca. (2020). Mobiliser les parents pour prévenir le vapotage (in French only)

Centers for disease control and prevention. Tobacco products and associated factors among middle and high school students - USA (2019). Morbidity and

mortality weekly report. December 6, 2019; 68 (SS12): 1-23 https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/ss/ss6812a1.htm

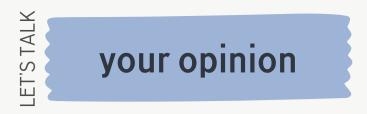
# Screens

We're looking for **balance** in our use of screens to take advantage of the **benefits** and reduce the **risks**.



#### References

Capsana. (2023). <u>Guide informatif sur l'utilisation des écrans</u> (in French only) Généreux, M. et al. (2023). <u>Enquête sur la santé psychologique des 12 à 25 ans – Rapport 2023</u> (in French only) Gouvernement du Québec. (2022). <u>Stratégie québécoise sur l'utilisation des écrans et la santé des jeunes 2022-2025</u> (in French only) Institut de la statistique du Québec. (2022). <u>Enquête québécoise sur la parentalité 2022</u> (in French only)



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# Thank you for your valuable contribution!

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We thank 4Korners for their valuable contribution to this english version.