

What parents & guardians need to know

What’s happening in Wellington Dufferin Guelph:

 1 in 6 Grade 9-12 students used cannabis in the past year	 Nearly 1 in 4 Grade 9-12 students who use alcohol reported binge drinking	 21% of Grade 7-8 students used cough syrup to get high
 1 in 6 Grade 9-12 students say they vaped in the past year	 7,000+ flavours of vape liquids, many designed to appeal to youth	 Nearly 1 in 7 Grade 7-8 students say they used prescription pain pills without a prescription



Some vape devices = **40** cigarettes worth of nicotine

What it can mean for young people:



Youth substance use can lead to harm to lungs, addiction, mental health challenges, and other serious health concerns.



The brain develops until age 25 —regular substance use affects learning, focus, and memory.



Teens who binge drink, use cannabis, or vape also report spending less quality time with family.



Youth can turn to substance use as a means of coping with stress due to friends, family or school.

Parents & Guardians: 3 Step Strategy

- #### 1. Observe

 - Watch for coughing or other health changes
 - Is your teen stressed, sad or anxious?
 - Watch for vaping or cannabis scents or paraphernalia
 - Notice any changes in friends, schoolwork or routines
- #### 2. Engage

 - Talk often, and without judgment about substance use
 - Ask questions, listen intently and learn more together
 - Discuss the signs of addiction and mental health challenges
- #### 3. Lead

 - Model healthy coping skills and ways to manage stress and challenges
 - Ensure your substances are not available to youth
 - Encourage family activities and quality time together
 - Help your child find support if there is a problem



Visit **ChoicesRewired.ca** for facts, strategies & tools.

