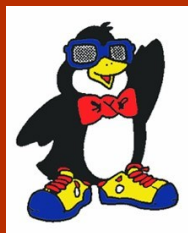


EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM UPDATE

Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects is funded by the Westmoreland Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc. through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.



SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026

VOLUME 3: ISSUE 2

K-12 SAP Trainings & SAP Thematic Workshops

K-12 SAP TRAINING Dates: **October 22&23, 2026; November 12&13, 2026; February 11&12, 2027; April 1&2, 2027.** Trainings are held at the Fred

Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College. The Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaisons, Treatment Staff, and School-Based Probation Officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at these trainings. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.

SAP Thematic Workshops: **October 6, 2026; December 3, 2026; March 9, 2027.** Workshops are held at the Fred Rogers Conference Center, Saint Vincent College. Training announcements will be emailed and also posted in the newsletter. For additional information or to register, please call Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050.



SVCPP mailing
Address:

300 Fraser
Purchase Road,
Latrobe, PA
15650

Phone:
724-805-2050
Fax:
724-420-5930

Awareness Days

You can easily take advantage of special events to raise awareness of an important issue or cause. **Here are a few up-coming events for the next month:**

- ♦ **October 2026—Talk About Prescriptions Month** <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/blog/talk-about-prescriptions-month>
- ♦ **National Drug-Free Work Week: October 12-16, 2026** <http://www.ndwa.org/>
- ♦ **October 23-31, 2026—Red RibbonWeek** www.redribbon.org
- ♦ **October 2026—"It's Time to Stop Bullying" National Bully Prevention Month** <http://www.pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/unity-day.asp>



Trainings, Workshops, Events, & more...



Thematic Workshops— **October 6, 2026; December 3, 2026; March 9, 2027.** The training announcements will go to your email address and appear when appropriate in our monthly newsletter. For more information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$40.00, and this includes continental breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria. Act 48 credits will be given.

K-12 SAP TRAINING— **October 22&23, 2026; November 12&13, 2026; February 11&12, 2027; April 1&2, 2027.** Training is designed for new members of either a secondary or elementary S.A.P. team who have not completed the initial training with their team. This is also appropriate for Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Liaison, Treatment staff and school-based probation officers who have been assigned the role of "ad hoc" S.A.P. team members. Those individuals needing to make up a training session from a prior training will be able to complete those requirements at this training. For information or to register, please call the Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050. The cost of the training is \$360 which includes training materials, lunch and continental breakfast both days. SAP Training for all school district employees is \$0 until December 31, 2026.





PREVENTION EDUCATION SERIES

Presented by:



Clear the Air: Facts & Truths on Vaping & Gas Station Drugs

Hear from the Attorney General's Office about enforcement, legislative updates, the addictive nature of these substances, and what we're seeing in Westmoreland County



**FRIDAY,
OCT. 16**

9AM-2PM



Beyond the Bet: Gambling Harm & Suicide Awareness

Learn about the correlation of gambling and suicides, the impact on our youth, the LOSS team and a personal story of the connection of gambling and suicide

**FRIDAY,
NOV. 13**

9AM-2PM



All sessions at:
WCCC, Student Achievement
Center



Questions contact:
sopalinski@wedacinc.org

Register here:



Social Work and ACT 48 Credits pending


Westmoreland
Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc.



Awareness Month Information



Talk About Subscription Month—October 2026



TALK ABOUT PRESCRIPTIONS MONTH

Talk About Prescriptions Month is an annual designation observed in October. This month, we are all encouraged to stay informed about the medications we use. All medication comes with a risk and can be extremely dangerous, even deadly if abused.

HOW TO OBSERVE

Make sure you and your family are aware of your prescription. Use #TalkAboutPrescriptions to post on social media. It's essential to research and talk about the medications we take because if we don't, we can do considerable damage to our bodies without meaning to. If you or someone you know think they may have a problem with painkillers, look for these symptoms: use of the drug for longer than it was intended, trouble cutting down on the use of painkillers, or abstaining from activities like sports or spending time with family.

5 Questions to Ask Your Doctor

There are a few important questions you should ask your doctor when you get a medication prescribed.

Question 1: How and when do I take it, and for how long?

Question 2: What side effects can I expect, and should I do anything about them?

Question 3: Will this medicine work safely with other medications I'm on?

Question 4: How should I store this medicine?

Question 5: Should I take this if addiction runs in my family/is this a prescription that people can become addicted to?

Asking your doctor these simple question will help ensure your safety and will allow the medication to do exactly what it's meant to do for you.

Info from: <https://nationaldaycalendar.com/celebrations/talk-about-prescriptions-month-october>



Awareness Month Information



We are proud to announce the next annual anniversary observance of NATIONAL DRUG -FREE WORK WEEK, OCTOBER 12-16, 2026. This yearly public awareness campaign highlights the importance of a drug-free workplace and encourages workers with substance use disorders to seek help.

History of National Drug-Free Work Week

National Drug-Free Work Week was initiated by the U.S. Department of Labor as a cooperative agreement focused on improving safety and health in the construction industry through drug-free workplace programs. The first Drug-Free Work Week was observed in 2006, and in subsequent years, more and more organizations—representing a range of industries—also rallied behind the effort, helping firmly establish it as an annual opportunity to reinforce to employers and employees alike that “working drug free works.”

Today, the National Drug-Free Workplace Alliance, a division of Drug Free America Foundation, in collaboration with stakeholders for a safe and healthy workplace, promote this annual observance. Together, we spread the message to encourage individual workplaces to take this opportunity to educate and strengthen their safe and healthy work environments—reflecting the true spirit of National Drug-Free Work Week.

Marijuana in the Workplace Toolkit

As the use of marijuana escalates across the country and legalization efforts gain traction, its effect touches every part of our society. The workplace is not immune to these consequences.

Employers must be diligent and proactive in understanding how the use of marijuana affects individuals, the overall influence to the business, and the level of financial liability that is acceptable. Drug Free America Foundation and the National Drug-Free Workplace Alliance are pleased to present this timely and informative toolkit to employers to assist in navigating marijuana and its confusing effect on the work environment.

[Download toolkit now!](#)



Awareness Month Information



How to Observe National Bullying Prevention Month

Students: Practice empathy

Reach out to new classmates this month — especially those who appear to be struggling. Report bullying when you see it and don't let others suffer in silence.

Teachers: Reward students who show respect

Positive reinforcement works. Students who demonstrate thoughtfulness and respect for classmates, adults, and the school itself deserve your accolades.

Administrators: Plan bullying prevention programs

Make sure parents, teachers, and students understand the problem and know how to confront it.



Why National Bullying Prevention Month is Important

Students feel safer

That means parents worry less and teachers can focus on their work. Everyone wins when bullying stops.

A sense of teamwork

Students. Parents. Teachers. School administrators. We're all in this together. Remember, one school principal can't stop this problem alone.

Back-to-school has a whole new meaning

October brings fresh connections and new friendships, while setting the tone for the rest of the school year. Let's try to confront bullying as early as possible.



Awareness Month Information



RED RIBBON WEEK: OCTOBER 23-31, 2026

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO TEACH PREVENTION

How will you celebrate Red Ribbon Week®?

Schools

- Plan essay and poster contests about drug prevention
- Create theme days and coordinate fun and impactful prevention activities
- Decorate the interior and exterior of your school
- Decorate your homeroom door
- Invite parents and families to a special health fair or education program
- Organize a Red Ribbon Rally
- Organize a Miles of Quarters Campaign
- Screen Natural High videos (naturalhigh.org)

Business

- Wear Red Ribbons and distribute to your employees
- Display Red Ribbons and posters on the interior and exterior of your building
- Place a Red Ribbon message in your advertisements and monthly statements
- Sponsor a School
- Sponsor a Classroom
- Identify and share local prevention, intervention and treatment resources with your employees

Government

- Wear Red Ribbons and distribute to staff and employees
- Display Red Ribbons on interior and exterior of city and county buildings
- Encourage police and fire departments to participate in Red Ribbon Activities
- Display Red Ribbon Car Magnets on all your governmental cars
- Include Red Ribbon Message in employee pay checks and in utility bills
- Identify and share local prevention, intervention and treatment resources with your employees and outside community

Law Enforcement

- Wear Red Ribbons and distribute to staff and officers
- Display Red Ribbon Car Magnets on all your patrol cars

- Offer to speak at community programs on alcohol and other drugs

Faith Based

- Distribute Red Ribbons at your services
- Incorporate a drug-free message into your sermon.
- Include a special Red Ribbon insert in bulletins
- Distribute Red Ribbons at your services and explain the significance of the campaign
- Hold prayer vigils for those affected by the use of drugs
- Identify and share local prevention, intervention and treatment resources with your members.

Medical

- Display a basket of Red Ribbons in the waiting room lobby for patients and family members
- Display the Red Ribbon message with posters and banners in your facility
- Incorporate screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment (SBIRT) into your daily practice

Media

- Inform the community about the Red Ribbon Campaign®, encourage them to participate
- Wear Red Ribbons and distribute to your employees,
- TV Anchor person, news reporters, etc.

Everyone!

- Celebrate National Plant the Promise Week – October 23-31st! During Red Ribbon Week® schools, businesses, families and youth across America will plant bulbs that will bloom and serve as a reminder to stay drug-free. In most regions bulbs that are planted during October, will bloom in April, during National Alcohol Awareness Month. [Order your bulbs today at Nimco.com!](http://www.nimco.com)

For more activity suggestions, visit www.redribbon.org/activities.





Awareness Month Information



- Put the Red Ribbon Theme on the school marquee to deliver the message in the school and community.
- Have “wear red” day at school and other spirit days during the week. Incorporate prevention curriculum into classes each day.
- Schedule a speaker to speak to the students about the risks associated with drug use.
- Use the Red Ribbon Theme to create an Essay or Poster Contest.
- Use the Red Ribbon theme to decorate each classroom door and then each class competes for the best door.
- Use red material or plastic red solo cups to spell out the Red Ribbon theme in the school chain link fence.
- Make small red bows for all students and staff members; wear the red bow every day during Red Ribbon Week®. Students who wear it every day win a prize.
- Deliver a drug prevention message every day during the morning announcements.
- Show the winning poster during the morning announcements.
- Read the winning essay during the morning announcements.
- Create a “Wall of Pledges” on a giant piece of poster paper in the main hallway. Print the Red Ribbon Theme on the poster paper and hang it up. Anyone who takes the “Pledge” signs his/her name on the poster.
- March around the school grounds chanting the Red Ribbon Theme or organize a walk-a-thon.
- Schedule a student screening of “Natural High” videos (www.naturalhigh.org)





Awareness Month Information



RED RIBBON WORD SEARCH

F D R U G F R E E J G O A L S
 I C C M F E D U C A T I O N Z
 E Y S O A C O M M I T M E N T
 N J U L M M E N T O R S K V C
 C R P E I M W C O U R A G E H
 O E P A L S U B N Y A F G R O
 U S O D Y T P N X H V E B E I
 R P R E V E N T I O N S H D C
 A E T R L S A F U T U R E R E
 G C I N T E G R I T Y F A I S
 E T C O N F I D E N T U L B B
 Q A W A R E N E S S H N T B R
 J P X B A L A N C E E I H O A
 X W E I N S P I R E R T Y N V
 R O L E M O D E L F O Y E B E

Awareness

Balance

Brave

Choices

Commitment

Community

Confident

Courage

DrugFree

Education

Encourage

Family

Focus

Future

Goals

Healthy

Hero

Inspire

Integrity

Leader

Mentor

Prevention

RedRibbon

Respect

RoleModel

Safe

Support

Unity





Awareness Month Information



MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Copyright © 2026 National Family Partnership



Info from: <https://413387.fs1.hubspotusercontent-na1.net/hubfs/413387/Red%20Ribbon%20Planning%20Guide%202026.pdf>



Available Services Through SVCPP:



LOOK FOR THE SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE PREVENTION PROJECTS AT MANY SCHOOL EVENTS THROUGHOUT WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Special Speaker Presentations

Presentations are available to your community group, business or organization at minimal cost or FREE. Topics include: Current Drug Trends, Power of Parents, Gambling/Gaming Awareness, Responsible Gambling, Talking with your Kids and The Dangers of Underage Drinking, Mobile Bedroom, Social Media, Click-Bait and Other On-Line Potholes, and more.

RADAR (Free Materials)

Regional Alcohol/Drug Awareness Resource, Information Center

The Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects provides free materials (pamphlets, brochures, posters, etc.) to schools, organizations, community groups, and to the general public on various topics that include: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence prevention, child guidance, and medications and the elderly.

To schedule a program for your business, school or organization, please contact Beth Potochnik, Prevention Education & Community Outreach Services Manager at Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects at 724-805-2050 or email beth.potochnik@stvincent.edu





Available Intervention Services Through SVCPP:



**The following Tier II Intervention Programs are offered to all
Westmoreland County Secondary Schools
at NO cost to the school districts:**



N.O.T. (Not on Tobacco) Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists deliver 6 sessions covering facts vs. myths, triggers and advertising nicotine products, identifying support strategies, benefits to quitting nicotine use and how your body responds, creating healthy habits, and ways to stay nicotine free. N.O.T. explores the various delivery systems, i.e. vape devices, chewing, smoking, etc. N.O.T. is an American Lung Association program aimed to recognize dependence on nicotine and to identify replacement strategies to restore health.

The Blues Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists provide early intervention service groups for adolescents with observable behaviors displaying depressive symptoms or are at-risk for depression. These are 6 session groups provided weekly within your school.

Marijuana Brief Intervention Program

SVCPP Intervention Specialists use this evidence-based program for early intervention with students who may be experimenting with marijuana in its various forms. During the 6 weekly sessions, students will identify triggers, how their environment can contribute to usage, and practical evidence-based ways to reduce/eliminate marijuana use.

In-Depth Program

The American Lung Association's INDEPTH® (Intervention for Nicotine Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health) program is an alternative to suspension or citation program that is offered as an option to students who face suspension for violation of school tobacco or e-cigarette use policies. This program is administered by a trained adult facilitator in either a one-on-one or group format and can be offered in a school or community-based setting. The program consists of four sessions of approximately 50 minutes geared toward youth and focused on tobacco use, including e-cigarettes, nicotine dependence, establishing healthy alternatives and making the change to be free of all tobacco products. Because the program is offered as an alternative to suspension or citation, attendance is mandatory to fulfill the obligation for the infraction. While INDEPTH is not a cessation program, steps toward cessation are strongly encouraged. Students may decide to quit or reduce their tobacco/nicotine use as result of their participation in the program.

If your school district can benefit from these services, please email: Christina Weimer, SAP
Coordinator and Intervention Services Manager, Christina.weimer@stvincent.edu



Westmoreland County Information



1200 Maronda Way, Suite 300, Monessen, PA
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

724-243-2220

<http://wedacinc.org>



Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services, Inc.

203 S Maple Ave, Greensburg, PA 15601

724-834-0420

Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30am-9:00pm

<http://www.sphs.org>

Friday 8:30am-5:00pm

Outside In

To the Fullest...

Outpatient Services
PHONE 724-837-1518

Residential Programs
PHONE 724-238-8441

PO Box 639
Greensburg, PA 15601



First Floor Suite 110, 40 N Pennsylvania Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601
(724-830-3617)

<http://www.co.westmoreland.pa.us/>



SVC Prevention Projects

Christina Weimer

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Map from: <https://www.city2map.com/en/us/pa/westmoreland-county.html>



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



9/18/26, 1:02 PM

Talking to Your Kids About Drugs — Print Version - Nemours KidsHealth



Nemours KidsHealth
Devoted to children's health and development.
Learn more at KidsHealth.org

Talking to Your Kids About Drugs

Parents can help protect kids against drug use by giving them the facts before they're in a risky situation. This can make them less likely to experiment with drugs or to rely on friends for answers.

You're a role models for your kids, and your views on alcohol, tobacco, and drugs can strongly affect how they think about them. So make talking about drugs a part of your general health and safety conversations.

How Should I Talk to My Young Child About Drugs?

Take advantage of "teachable moments" now. If you see a character in a movie or on TV with a cigarette, talk about smoking and what it does to a person's body. This can lead to a talk about other drugs and how they can harm.

Keep your tone calm and use terms that your child can understand. Explain that drugs are dangerous and can cause lots of problems in the body. Teach kids early on how to say no if someone offers them something they know is dangerous.

How Should I Talk to My 8- to 12-Year-Old About Drugs?

As kids grow older, start talks with them by asking them what they've heard about drugs. Ask in a nonjudgmental, open-ended way, so you're more likely to get an honest response.

Remember to show your kids that you're listening and really paying attention to their concerns and questions. To give your kids the facts, you might have to do a little research.

Kids this age usually are still willing to talk openly to their parents about touchy subjects. Talking now helps keep the door open as kids get older so they continue to share their thoughts and feelings.

News about things like steroid use in professional sports can be a way to start a talk and to give your kids information about the risks of drugs.

How Should I Talk to My Teen About Drugs?

Teens are likely to have peers who use alcohol or drugs, and to have friends who drive. Have conversations not only to understand your teen's thoughts and feelings, but also to talk about the dangers of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Talk about the legal issues — jail time and fines — and the possibility that they or someone else might be killed or seriously injured.

Consider making a written or verbal contract on the rules about going out or using the car. You can promise to pick your kids up at any time (even 2 a.m.!), no questions asked, if they call you when the person responsible for driving has been drinking or using drugs.

They may ask you more specific questions about drugs. By discussing this with your teen from the start, you can make your expectations clear and help them feel safe coming to you.



From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



9/18/26, 1:02 PM

Talking to Your Kids About Drugs — Print Version - Nemours KidsHealth

How Can I Help Keep My Kids Safe From Drugs?

Drugs can affect any family. But by talking with your kids and staying involved in their lives, you can help keep them safe.

Encourage your kids to take part in hobbies, sports, and clubs that interest them. This can help with positive interactions and self-esteem. Know who their friends are and where they spend their time. Kids who have friends who use drugs are more likely to try drugs themselves.

Help kids know how to turn down drugs if they are offered. Let them know they can always text or call if they want to leave a situation and you will come get them.

A warm, open family environment — where kids can talk about their feelings, where their achievements are praised, and where their self-esteem is boosted — encourages kids to come forward with their questions and concerns.

Make talking with your kids a regular part of your day. Find time to do things you enjoy together as a family, which helps everyone stay connected and maintain open communication. Sometimes kids are more likely to talk when they don't have to make eye contact — like when you are in the car or walking together.

Pay attention so you know when your kids are going through tough times. Offer the support they need or get extra help, if it's needed.

If you need for more resources for yourself or your child, talk to your doctor.

Medically reviewed by: Larissa Hirsch, MD

Date reviewed: November 2020

Note: All information on KidsHealth® is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses, and treatment, consult your doctor.

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From the Desk of Saint Vincent College Prevention Projects: Parent Tips & Resources



Best Practices for Talking to Your Kids About Drugs and Alcohol at Any Age

Having an open and honest conversation with your child about drugs and alcohol is an important step in helping them make informed decisions as they grow up. However, the approach you take may vary depending on your child's age.

For young children (ages 5-10), keep the conversation age-appropriate and simple. Use clear language to explain the dangers of drugs and alcohol and how they can harm the body. Emphasize the Importance of following rules and making healthy choices.

For preteens (ages 11-12), you can start to have more in-depth conversations about the risks associated with drug and alcohol use. Be open and honest about your own experiences and values, and encourage your child to ask questions and express their thoughts and feelings.

For teenagers (ages 13-18), it's important to acknowledge the peer pressure and social influences that can lead to experimentation with drugs and alcohol. Continue to have open and honest conversations, and provide your child with factual information about the risks and consequences of drug and alcohol use. Encourage them to make healthy choices and establish a plan for handling peer pressure.

Regardless of your child's age, it's important to establish clear rules and consequences for drug and alcohol use and to be consistent in enforcing them. Above all, maintain open communication and let your child know you are there to support and guide them.

Info from: <https://wellspringprevention.org/blog/tips-talk-to-kids-about-drugs-and-alcohol/>

