



**Healthy Missoula Youth**  
Coalition

# PARENT RESOURCES

+1 (406) 258-3023



[www.healthymissoulayouth.org](http://www.healthymissoulayouth.org)



[info@healthymissoulayouth.org](mailto:info@healthymissoulayouth.org)



# PARENT RESOURCES

## Purpose of the Section

- Provide basic resources for teachers to give to parents if asked for assistance

## What Educators Can Do

- Become aware of local, easily accessible resources for parents
- Reference these resources at parent-teacher conferences or when asked for assistance
- Host resources in the Family Resource Center at schools

## Why is this important?

Parents may not know about resources, and as someone who has lots of interaction with youth educators may be able to provide assistance in locating them.

**YOUTH OF PARENTS WHO TALK TO THEIR KIDS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF SUBSTANCES EARLY AND OFTEN ARE 50% LESS LIKELY TO USE DRUGS THAN THOSE WHO DO NOT RECEIVE THESE CRITICAL MESSAGES AT HOME.<sup>1</sup>**

# PARENT RESOURCES

## ParentingMontana.org

An online resource that offers tools to parents and those in a parenting role to help them raise healthy, successful children.

## Parent Programs

Information on how/why parent involvement is important and beneficial, as well as examples of local programs.

## Refusal Training

Local and national resources for refusal training, for both students, parents, and staff.

### **Parents Have a Significant Influence in Their Children's Decisions to Experiment With Alcohol and Other Drugs**

One of the most influential factors during a child's adolescence is maintaining a strong, open relationship with a parent.<sup>2</sup> When parents talk with their children early and often about alcohol and other drugs, they can protect their children from many of the high-risk behaviors associated with using these drugs.



ParentingMontana.org is an online resource that offers tools to Montana parents and those in a parenting role to help them raise healthy, successful children. The tools grow social and emotional skills by addressing common parenting challenges like confidence, chores, routines, and homework.

We know that each person develops physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally throughout their life, and that supporting healthy development is important. ParentingMontana.org recognizes that sometimes we don't pay enough attention to growing social and emotional skills.

Stress management, self-motivation, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and ethical responsibility are social and emotional skills. Social and emotional skills are essential for people's success in school, work, and relationships. These skills are associated with better behavior, lower emotional stress, and positive wellbeing.

ParentingMontana.org emphasizes that parents and those in a parenting role have a significant influence on their children and can create environments to help their children develop social and emotional skills in everyday life. ParentingMontana.org provides ways for parents and those in a parenting role to teach and practice the skills with their children.

In Montana, we have many things to be proud of, and it's the best place to live and raise a family. ParentingMontana.org provides parenting tools to build the skills our kids need to be successful.

For more information on social and emotional development, visit "I Want to Know More" on ParentingMontana.org. This section is an excellent resource for parents who would also like to learn about intentional ways to grow a healthy parenting relationship, healthy risk taking, discipline for skill building, logical consequences, why teens shouldn't drink alcohol, what to do if your child is drinking, and other valuable information.

The tools were created by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services in partnership with Montana State University's Center for Health and Safety Culture.

# PARENT PROGRAMS

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports that strong, open relationships with parents are one of the most influential factors in preventing substance use during adolescence<sup>3</sup>. Youth make better decisions when their parents or guardians provide nurturing and supportive environments<sup>3</sup>. Young people who have open and frequent conversations with their parents about the dangers of alcohol and drugs and receive clear rules, expectations, and consequences from their parents about substance use are 50% less likely to use alcohol or drugs compared to youth who do not receive this instruction at home<sup>4</sup>.

"A majority of substance-free adolescents credit their parents for their decision not to use illegal substances. Even if you're not a parent, you can still play a significant role in a youth's life. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings, mentors, volunteers, teachers, and coaches can all help guide youth toward healthy choices at every stage of life. Caring adults can take action by having frequent conversations with the youth in their lives about the dangers of substance use. Let youth know YOU are a resource<sup>4</sup>."

There is a myriad of misinformation all around us, and youth might not know or understand the dangers of substance use. It is imperative that parents learn about these dangers and convey their concerns and expectations to their child(ren). Though it may not seem like it, youth DO listen!

## LOCAL RESOURCES

[Missoula Dads](#)  
[Zero to Five Missoula](#)  
[406 Families](#)  
[Bright by Text](#)

[Missoula Healthy Families](#)  
[Healthy Start Missoula](#)  
[The Parenting Place](#)

# PARENT PROGRAMS

The home or family environment is the single most profound influence on every aspect of child development. The family nurtures and keeps children safe. Parents instill social and emotional regulatory skills, and teach children the importance of sharing and the skills and opportunities to engage in reciprocal relationships. They generally reinforce accepted norms, values, and prosocial behaviors. Parents and family serve a vital role through adolescence guiding and supporting their children as they become more autonomous and have more opportunities to engage in risky behaviors.<sup>5</sup>

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

**Positive Indian Parenting** (PIP) classes are 8-10 weeks in length and teach effective communication and discipline techniques for raising healthy children by drawing on the strengths of traditional Indigenous child-rearing practices. These classes empower parents to raise children with respect, empathy, and discipline through a culturally-centered curriculum including storytelling, cradleboard making, harmony teachings, lessons of nature, traditional behavior management, and the use of praise. These classes also address the impact of intergenerational trauma and help Indigenous families reclaim their right to their heritage to be positive parents. For more information and to find local PIP classes, please reach out to the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) at (503) 222-4044 or [info@nicwa.org](mailto:info@nicwa.org)



All Nations Health Center also has resources to help Indigenous parents find resources as they navigate parenthood.

# REFUSAL TRAINING

Refusal Training is an easy and effective way to teach youth how to say no while under pressure. While refusal training is generally focused on refusing alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD), it can also be utilized to teach students how to say no in any uncomfortable situation. Additionally, though adults can facilitate the training, refusal training is most effective when it's taught by students' peers. This provides a more comfortable space for students. For example, in the Frenchtown School District, the Youth Leadership Committee facilitates Refusal Training. Before diving into the training, they play a game with the class, present the Line of Addiction, then present the four steps of refusal skills: Refuse, Explain, Avoid, and Leave. After presenting this information, the Youth Leadership Committee students will split students up into groups to practice their refusal skills in two scenarios.

## REFUSE

Teach students to say "no" and be firm and confident while doing so. Remind them of reasons to say no: ask them what their dreams and aspirations are and how substance use could impact them.

## EXPLAIN

Provide students with examples of explanations - they can be honest or made up: "We have school tomorrow, I need to be sober," "I can't vape because my parents drug test me," "My cousin had a bad reaction to dabbing," or "I don't want to get in trouble."

## AVOID

Avoid situations that are hotspots for ATOD-use, including parties or bonfires. Talk with students about situations where ATOD may be present.

## LEAVE

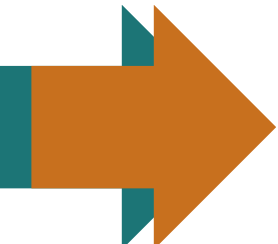
If students attend a party or social gathering where ATODs are present, they need to leave immediately to avoid peer pressure, injury, or legal consequences.

# REFUSAL TRAINING

## ESTABLISH A CODEWORD

If the student has a car, then leaving may be simple. For younger students, or those who do not have a car or license yet, this may become an uncomfortable situation. Therefore, it is important to teach students to establish a **CODEWORD** with their parent(s) or guardian(s).

A **CODEWORD** is any word or phrase between the student and their parent/guardian that indicates "I'm uncomfortable and need you to come get me." An example of a CODEWORD is "pink pajamas." If a student is in an uncomfortable situation, they can text or call their parent/guardian stating, "I need you to bring my pink pajamas." The parent/guardian then knows they need to get their child immediately, no questions asked until the child is picked up.



If you have any specific questions or would like training on how to start a peer-led refusal training program, please contact Reagan Mecham at: [ReaganMecham@ftbroncs.org](mailto:ReaganMecham@ftbroncs.org)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [What Are Drug Refusal Skills?](#)
- [Health and Opioid Prevention Education \(HOPE\) - 8th Grade Refusal Skills Lesson](#)
- [Building Youth Resistance Strategies and Skills](#)
- [Stanford Medicine: Refusal Skills Activities](#)



# PARENT RESOURCES

## Conclusion

As the #1 influence in their child's life, it is crucial that parents are educated about substances and discuss it frequently with their kids. However, parents may not know where to look for these resources or support. As an educator you have the opportunity to point them in the right direction, or provide guidance and recommendations as to what resources are available.

## Action Items

- **CHECK** if your school has a list of recommendations regarding substance use in the Family Resource Center or counselor's office.
- **QUESTION** your administration: Does your school have partnerships with mental health facilities like Western Montana Mental Health Center or Partnership Health Center?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Why You Should Talk With Your Child About Alcohol and Other Drugs](#)
- [ParentingMontana.org](#)
- [A Parents Role in Substance Use Prevention: Tips for Talking to Youth of All Ages](#)
- [Help teens say no to drug and alcohol with these 10 practical refusal strategies](#)

1: [NCADD, 2015](#)  
2: [SAMHSA](#)

3: [SAMHSA, 2022](#)  
4: [Scott et al, 2019](#)

5: [HealtheKnowledge](#)

