

PREVENTION PRESS

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Volunteers of the Howell Alliance strive to build a stronger community for a better tomorrow through substance abuse prevention, education, and awareness, with a focus on Howell's youth.

Visit NJ Cares, <https://www.njcares.gov>, a real-time dashboard of opioid-related data and information for NJ and Monmouth County.

IN THE NEWS

NEW! "Friends of the Alliance" think tanks will be the 1st Monday of every quarter, 7 p.m. at Echo Lake. No Alliance committee membership is necessary to participate. Just share your ideas and your voice to enrich our community commitment to substance abuse prevention!



Crisis Text Line: Help Is Just a Text Away

**Text "HELLO" to 741741
(24/7, anonymous)**

Crisis Text Line offers free, 24/7, anonymous, and confidential support to teens and people of all ages struggling with stressful situations involving violence, depression, suicide, relationship trouble, and other crises. The not-for-profit helpline receives about 15,000 messages a day, with the average back-and-forth messaging continuing over the course of an hour. Since its start in 2011, Crisis Text Line has processed over 79 million messages, with the need for support continuing to grow.

Teens are comfortable with texting and digital communication, and Crisis Text Line allows them to reach out for support and direction during an immediate or on-going crisis. Crisis Text Line reassures texters that there are caring people willing to listen during a time of need, and teens seem more at ease sharing through anonymous texts rather than through in-person or over-the-phone dialogue. The texting helpline provides safe, discreet communication without detection during an active crisis—at almost any time and location.

After texting a message to Crisis Text Line, texters from the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom receive a welcome message with the organization's privacy policy and are advised that they can choose to stop texting at any time.

Over 80% of the time, within 5 minutes, a trained volunteer counselor responds to the texter, asking open-ended questions and implementing other targeted strategies with empathy and understanding during the back-and-forth conversation. An algorithm reviews incoming texts to identify situations indicating immediate risk. Full-time, paid staff with master's degrees in mental health or related fields oversee the volunteer counselors.

In the future, Crisis Text Line hopes its substantial amount of anonymous data on mental health and crisis trends can be applied to help communities, schools, and police departments more effectively target their actions and responses to mental health, suicide, stress, and relationship crises.

Crisis Text Line's website, www.crisistextline.org, offers tips for sharing the valuable helpline resource with peers, schools, and community/civic organizations and provides information on how to become a volunteer crisis counselor. It also showcases crisis trends, "fast facts," and blog posts about topics such as depression, anxiety, and suicide.

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2018 Youth Substance Use Survey Reveals Increase in Teen Vaping

The Monitoring the Future survey, conducted annually since 1975, measures adolescents' drug, tobacco, and alcohol use and attitudes nationwide. Participating 8th, 10th, and 12th graders nationwide answer questions about lifetime, past-year, and past-month drug use, with this year's survey including 44,482 students from 392 public and private schools. The survey is funded by a government grant through the National Institute of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA).



2018 Teen Substance Use Survey Overview

Overall, the 2018 Monitoring the Future (MTF) survey indicated positive outcomes for teen substance use; 6.1% of 8th graders, 9.6% of 10th graders, and 12.4% of 12th graders reported past-year use of illicit drugs other than marijuana—the lowest in 20 years.

However, almost 25% of 12th graders said they had used an illicit drug in the past month, which was mostly marijuana.

Vaping:

The survey revealed a concerning spike in teen vaping—including nicotine, marijuana/hash oil, and just flavoring—placing vaping right behind alcohol use in the list of substances surveyed.

- 17.6% of 8th graders reported past-year vaping of any substance
- 10.9% of 8th graders reported past-year vaping of nicotine
- 32.3% of 10th graders reported past-year vaping of any substance
- 37.3% of 12th graders reported past-year vaping of any substance (2017: 27.8%)
- 13.1% of 12th graders reported past-year vaping of marijuana (2017: 9.5%)

Marijuana:

While marijuana use remained steady, only 26.7% of 12th graders considered regular marijuana use risky or harmful; if teens perceive a low risk of using a drug or consuming alcohol, they are more likely to engage in doing it. In 2016,

marijuana past-year use for 8th and 10th graders dropped to its lowest point in 20 years, where it has held steady.

- 10.5% of 8th graders reported past-year use of marijuana (2013: 12.7%)
- 27.5% of 10th graders reported past-year use of marijuana
- 35.9% of 12th graders reported past-year use of marijuana
- 5% to 6.6% of 12th graders polled over the past 20 years have reported daily use of marijuana

Regular Tobacco:

Adolescent cigarette smoking remained at its lowest point since the survey began tracking teen tobacco use.

- 0.8% of 8th graders reported daily cigarette smoking
- 1.8% of 10th graders reported daily cigarette smoking
- 3.6% of 12th graders reported daily cigarette smoking (1998: 22.4%)

Opioids:

Opioid misuse and overdose deaths, while rising in the adult population, declined for adolescents, with teens saying prescription opioids/narcotics seemed more difficult to get. Heroin use remained very low for teens, not increasing until after high school.

- 58.4% decrease in Vicodin® use by 8th graders over the past 5 years
- 75.4% decrease in Vicodin® use by 10th graders over the past 5 years
- 67.2% decrease in Vicodin® use by 12th graders over the past 5 years
- 0.4% of 12th graders reported past-year use of heroin

Other Illicit Drugs:

Cocaine and synthetic drug use—including K2/Spice (synthetic marijuana), bath salts (cathinone), and ecstasy/Molly (MDMA)—remained low for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.

Inhalant use, which is usually higher among younger teens, declined to 4.6%, in contrast to its 1995 high-point of 12.8%.

The Central Jersey Family Health Consortium (CJFHC) is one of three consortiums in New Jersey focused on maternal and child health. As a private non-profit 501c (3) funded mostly by grant dollars, the consortium collaborates with community-based organizations, health care providers, governmental organizations, and consumers to assess maternal and child health needs and provide services and programs aimed at improving the health of child-bearing-age women, children, and infants across Monmouth, Ocean, Mercer, Middlesex, Hunterdon, and Somerset counties.

CJFHC's Perinatal Addictions Department provides the community with professional and consumer education on topics such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, professional opioid education, the effects of marijuana on pregnancy, vaping, testing your drug IQ, family roles and their influence on drug use and pregnancy, stress and its effects on pregnancy, smoking cessation (facilitated by certified tobacco cessation specialists), and a host of other subjects tailored to the needs of specific audiences.

On January 7th 2019, CJFHC launched its statewide interactive mobile learning management system that serves as a personal concierge to support and educate prenatal/postpartum mothers, caregivers, and healthcare providers impacted by opioid use and dependency.

The opioid epidemic is hitting New Jersey especially hard and is affecting the pregnant population at the same rate as the general population. To assist these women, one major focus is reducing stigma, starting with word choices used. For example, "substance use disorder" and "opioid use disorder" should replace the words "addict" and "addiction." Similarly, the babies born to women suffering from substance use or opioid use disorders are not "addicted" or "addicts," but are experiencing neonatal abstinence syndrome as substance-exposed infants.



These women also need the help of medication during pregnancy, which is considered medical best practice by both the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). Breastfeeding is also strongly encouraged while on medication-assisted treatment, unless contraindicated. CJFHC is able to connect these women with resources, agencies, and specific sources of support before, during, and after pregnancy.

At CJFHC, Deena Cohen, BA, CADC, WTS, CTTS, serves as project director of perinatal opioid education. She also chairs the Municipal Alliance Steering Subcommittee for Monmouth and Ocean counties, the tobacco subcommittee of the DART Prevention Coalition of Ocean County, and the Prevention Coalition of Monmouth County. Cohen and other CJFHC staff are available to provide free, targeted, audience-specific education spanning a variety of related topics. Please reach out to Cohen at 732-345-0500 to schedule your next educational opportunity.

Howell Alliance's New Coordinator, Christa Riddle



Christa Riddle is serving as the new Howell Township Municipal Alliance coordinator. Riddle, a Howell Township resident since 2003, previously volunteered for the Howell Township Municipal Alliance for 10 years as co-chair, active member, and *Prevention Press* author before becoming coordinator in August 2018.

As an active business owner in Howell, Riddle has owned All About Writing since 2007, which she continues to do part-time. She is also an active member of the Howell Chamber of Commerce and the Howell Optimist Club. Riddle holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from Monmouth University as a highest-ranking degree recipient and a Bachelor of Arts in English from Drew University with magna cum laude honors.

"I am proud to serve my community, especially when it comes to substance abuse prevention efforts, and I look forward to furthering the

Alliance's collaboration with the Howell Township police, schools, civic organizations, businesses, community members, and the substance-use treatment and recovery sectors," says Riddle.

"I know that effective substance abuse prevention must be a collective effort because addiction affects everyone in a community. As coordinator, I want to lead our Alliance to deliver effective, inclusive substance use prevention initiatives, to protect our youth from the risk factors that can lead to substance use disorders, and to empower young people to respect themselves and make positive life choices with confidence. We must provide our youth with the tools necessary to stay strong when facing life's challenges through cultivating inner strength and access to appropriate resources."

"Did you know?"...Over 20 million people in the U.S. suffer from addiction, and each day, 415 lives are lost to drug overdoses and alcohol-related deaths. "What Is Addiction?" at <https://www.cadca.org/news/what-addiction-video> is an informative quick-watch about the inner workings of addiction.

**ANONYMOUS
TEXT-A-TIP**



Howell Police Anonymous
Community Tip Line Available 24/7:
Report suspicious activity at www.p3tips.com
or download the P3 Tips app today!

www.P3Tips.com
"Committed to Community"

Substance Use and Mental Health Services Resources

Howell Municipal Alliance: 732-938-4500 ext. 4012
Howell Police: 732-938-4575 ext. 2237
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255
Jeanna Ribon, Howell School District SAC (K-8): 732-919-0095 ext. 8204
Camille Mussari, Howell High School SAC: 732-919-2131 ext. 4035
NJ Connect: 855-652-3737
Partnership for Drug-Free Kids Parent Helpline: 855-378-4373
2nd Floor Youth Helpline: 888-222-2228 (text or call)
CFC Loud N Clear Foundation: 833-300-4673, www.healingus.org
For a comprehensive list of support services, visit the Alliance website
<https://tinyurl.com/yb3fxt25>

**PROJECT
MEDICINE
DROP**

Empty your medicine cabinet and save a life! Drop unwanted prescriptions in the Project Medicine Drop box at the Howell Police Department. Anonymous and available 24-7.

www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop/



GCADA
Governor's Council on
ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

The mission of the Howell Alliance is to collaborate with our citizens, schools, town government, police, businesses, and local organizations to prevent substance abuse, underage drinking, alcoholism, and tobacco use through public awareness, education, outreach resources, and the promotion of life skills and positive choices.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION!
Alliance meetings: 3rd Tuesday of month, 12:30 pm, Howell Municipal Building

Friends of the Alliance think tanks: 1st Monday of quarter, 7 pm, Echo Lake

For more information, visit www.twp.howell.nj.us, "Departments," and "Municipal Alliance."

The Howell Township Municipal Alliance does not endorse and is not responsible for any resources referred or the services these resources provide. This publication is for informational purposes only.

(Newsletter production by Linda Coppolino of Little Hat Marketing & Design.)

