



**Helping Your Teens Conquer Stress**

These days everyone is feeling stressed including teens. They have daily stressors including the burdens of achieving academic success, the rush of hormones, and the pressure to fit in. It's important to talk to your teens and provide proper guidance to help them avoid the pitfalls of stress which may, in some cases, lead to drug and/or alcohol abuse as a way to escape. Monitor your teen's behavior and become familiar with issues like depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other harmful changes that might indicate your teen is unable to deal with stress in a healthy way.

Teens sometimes feel that no one understands what they are going through. Although the pressures teens face today are very different from those faced 20 years ago, parents can still be instrumental in the solution. Demonstrate your interest in communicating with your kids, respect their point-of-view, and provide tips on how to manage everyday pressures. To read the full article [click here](#).

**French Look to Curb Youth Drinking**

New laws designed to restrict alcohol sales in France are a direct result of a recent spike in what is being referred to as "le binge drinking" by French youth. The legislation -- which would raise the minimum purchase age for alcohol and tobacco from 16 to 18 -- was proposed in response to a 50-percent rise in the number of minors under the age of 15 hospitalized due to alcohol problems between 2004 and 2007. A government-issued report warned of "a worrying rise in massive alcohol use by young people." The national assembly voted to ban "open bars" that offer unlimited drinks for a single entry price. A ban on alcohol sales at service stations -- considered a major source for youth drinking -- between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. is also part of the new law. To read the full article: <http://www.jointogether.org/news/headlines/inthenews/2009/french-look-to-curb-youth.html>



For more information on HCTC, Youth Development and for the latest on upcoming HCTC Meetings and Activities  
**Go To:** <http://www.gvhp.org/Home/OurProjects/HealthyCommunities/tabid/102/Default.aspx>



**FOCUS ON ALCOHOL AND POPULAR CULTURE**

When crafting prevention messages and programs, it is important to understand that popular culture plays a powerful role in young people's lives. Youth between the ages of 8 and 18 spend almost 7 hours per day with various types of media. Through movies, television, music, advertising, and other outlets, youth are exposed to an extraordinary array of messages—many of which glamorize alcohol use. Drinking is frequently portrayed in the media as cool, sophisticated, or humorous. Rarely are the negative consequences or health risks of alcohol use shown. Young people need to learn how to be critical thinkers about media messages, to question sources of information, and to look for missing information. Community groups can help youth understand the risks associated with alcohol use and resist pressures to drink.

**Facts**

- More than 9 out of 10 (93%) of the 200 most popular movie rentals in 1996 and 1997 included depictions of alcohol use. When alcohol use was portrayed, no consequences were associated with consumption in over half (57%) of the movies
- A review of top-selling popular songs found alcohol mentioned in 47% of rap musing lyrics (Ibid)
- In recent television programs, 9 out of 10 drinkers are portrayed as either experiencing no effects at all or only positive personal and social outcomes from their alcohol consumption

**What to Do**

- Write an article for a local parenting section of a newspaper, PTA newsletter or faith community bulletin encouraging adults in you community to watch television, attend concerts, and go to the movies with young people. Urge adults to note when underage drinking is portrayed in the media and to use these experiences as opportunities to talk with youth about the real consequences of alcohol use. Remind adults to be respectful of young people's opinions and to listen to their observations.
- Invite local agencies such as the Department of Health to teach media literacy in the school and community to help youth and adults learn how to analyze messages that glamorize unhealthy behaviors

How to do it: Simple! Just Contact Rachel Pena, HCTC Coordinator: 585-227-0279 to arrange