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## “ FEWER TEENS DRINKING THAN EVER, SURVEY FINDS ”

Preliminary 2018 Illinois Youth Survey data collected in the spring from our students contains good news! In the District 203 & 204 High Schools Additional Questions Report (N=11,127 students), 82% of student chose to be alcohol-free in 2018, up from 81% in 2016 (past 30-day use rate). Consider that in 2014, 77% were alcohol-free, and in 2003 66% were alcohol-free. The shift to healthy choices keeps incrementally moving in a positive direction.

### 3 SURPRISING REASONS FEWER TEENS ARE DRINKING

- 1. Teens like feeling in control.** High school students enjoy balanced social interactions. Risky behaviors could mean public regrets in the age of social media.
- 2. Youth culture is changing.** Like smoking cigarettes is no longer cool, there's been a subtle shift in perception about alcohol use by youth. Campaigns, including the Power of Choice, share the norm that the majority of teens are not drinking. Science shows that an accurate perception of social norms matters to a teen when deciding what to do when offered an addictive substance. Most teens say they don't need it.

- 3. Others count on them to be alcohol-free.** In summer 2018 focus groups and intercept surveys, Power of Choice learned the local high school participants valued being alcohol-free so they could "be there" for their little brothers and sisters, and for friends who might need them.

### RESOURCES FOR YOU



### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

The Power of Choice is a project of 360 Youth Services, Naperville School District 203, Indian Prairie School District 204, Naperville Police Department, KidsMatter and District 203 and 204 Parents. Survey and data analysis provided by Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) at the University of Illinois.

### POWER OF CHOICE CONTACT

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## PARENTING WISE TEENS

Research shows the risk of using an addictive substance is reduced by half for teens whose parents keep talking with them about not using alcohol and other drugs. The Power of Choice substance abuse prevention campaign was created to support resiliency and healthy choices in youth and families, thereby reducing the number of youth who use alcohol and other drugs.

### POWER OF CHOICE 2018-2019 KICK-OFF!

2018 is about firsts. First time since the Power of Choice campaign began that the logo has been updated.



For the very first time the website: [thepowerofchoice.info](http://thepowerofchoice.info) has been redesigned (and it's still evolving!). And, it's the first time Power of Choice has had the theme: "Who I Am Makes a Difference."

This theme was voted on by local high school students who participated in focus groups and intercept surveys during summer of 2018. The teens talked about the message and poster images for 2018-2019 campaign that resonated with them.

They were brutally honest about what didn't. Ouch!

**Their Fall poster is up in the high schools. For the majority, being alcohol-free is part of who they are, today, and that person makes a difference.**



Connect with us on social media!



## Tips for Connecting With Your Teen

### SIMPLE WAYS TO CONNECT

- **Set aside time to hang out with your teen.** With time, comes opportunity for conversation.
- **Make it easy for your teen to talk honestly with you.** Keep listening without judgment to stories about their friends. They'll keep trusting you will help them, lovingly, when needed.
- **Be a good example regarding your own alcohol use.** Teens look up to parents, and respect them as role models. They don't want to let you down. Likewise, teens will feel most comfortable in conversation with a parent at a time when the parent is not under the effects of alcohol.

### HEALTHY HISTORY LESSONS

#### Power of Choice Celebrates 15 Years!

The collaborative project led by 360 Youth Services in District 203 and 204 high schools began in 2003. Steadily, the number of teens taking the anonymous Illinois Youth Survey who reported they were alcohol and other drug free has increased. Data with the statistics is available at [thepowerofchoice.info](http://thepowerofchoice.info)

Throughout the school year, look for Twitter, Facebook, emails, posters, videos, and resources on [thepowerofchoice.info](http://thepowerofchoice.info) for tips on how to keep raising resilient kids, and how to encourage conversations. Parents who talk with their teens on a regular basis may find it natural to bring up facts about alcohol, reasons to avoid drinking, and ways to avoid drinking in difficult situations.



360 Youth Services & Naperville Police Department staff worked together visiting Naperville Central High School during Link Sessions as the Power of Choice Crew.