

F A L L 2 0 1 5

Prevention for Putnam

Putnam County Communities That Care Coalition

Family Meals: A Great Way to Connect

Are there benefits to family dinners? I myself have found the benefit of having meals with my children. Sometimes not dinner because of our hectic schedules but a meal nonetheless. There is no magical aura surrounding the dinner table which strengthens family bonds, prevents your child from getting involved with drugs or alcohol or making the honor roll at school. It takes more than sharing food to obtain these things. If not, it would make parenting a snap.

Study after study shows that if you eat dinner with your child at least 5 times a week, he or she do better in school, won't have a problem with drugs and alcohol and be healthier than those teens who don't sit down together at the dinner table as often. I truly believe in these studies but they require one additional thing to make them work – parent engagement. As parents, we can use this time to connect with our teens, listen to them and share with them, otherwise all we will have is well fed children.



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT – CONVERSATION STARTERS

For the next couple of months, we will be putting up posts and activities centered around family mealtime. We call it Food for Thought and hope that it will help you in maintaining a positive bond between you and your child. So check back each week on our website www.putnamcadd.org/blog for more things to do to further that goal. The dinner table is a focal point in many homes. It's a place where you as a family get together on a daily basis and as such is a great place to talk. As your child grows into his or her teen years, it's extremely important to establish an open line of communication. Your teen is entering a phase of his or her life where everything is changing – their bodies, their minds and their emotions. You need to be a part of that process to help them navigate through the teen years. Family mealtime is a great place to start. Below are some conversation starters you can use to get the ball rolling.

Family Dinner Conversation Starters

Tired of the monosyllabic grunts? The silent pea-pushing? Spin this handy cutout wheel for a question guaranteed to perk up your table talk. Making time to talk as a family at meal times goes a long way in creating a strong relationship between parent and child.

How to: Print out the Conversation Starters page by clicking on <http://www.realsimple.com/static/pdfs/dinner-chat-topics.pdf> . Glue it to a piece of cardboard (the back of an old spiral notebook will do), then cut out the wheel and the arrow. Make a hole in the wheel's center with a hole punch, and attach the arrow loosely with a metal brad (sold at office-supply stores). Now give the arrow a (gentle) flick.

If this isn't for you, well you can try taking turns talking about the best and worst part of your day but be sure that you go first. Why? because by going first, you are showing your interest in sharing with your child. Many times, we as parents have a habit of asking a series of questions to our children which in most cases results in yes or no answers. By sharing your experiences you are making your child part of the conversation not the subject of the conversation. Give it a try!





Just because
medicine is OTC
DOESN'T mean
it is "safer."

#RXABUSEAWARE

WWW.PREVENTRXABUSE.ORG



TEENS LISTEN,
even if they act
like they don't.

To be in your children's
memories tomorrow,
you have to be in their
lives today.

October is Medicine Abuse Awareness Month

The medicine abuse problem: Each generation of kids looks for new ways to get high. Recent trends indicate they are increasingly turning to prescription (Rx) or over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. Teens report getting many of these medicines from home medicine cabinets and mistakenly believe that abusing them is “safer” than other drugs.

According to surveys from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 20 percent of teens say they have taken a prescription drug without having a prescription for it themselves, and 5 percent report abusing OTC cough medicine to get high.

What types of medicines do teens abuse? Rx Drugs: While prescription medicines benefit many different people – for many different conditions – when used appropriately, they are being increasingly misused and abused. In fact, behind only marijuana, the most common drugs teens abuse are prescription medications. The most commonly abused prescription medications are listed below, and all can be dangerous or deadly when abused:

1. **Opioids and pain relievers:** examples include hydrocodone (Vicodin®), oxycodone (OxyContin®)
2. **Barbiturates and benzodiazepines:** examples include diazepam (Valium®), alprazolam (Xanax®)
3. **Stimulants:** examples include dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine® or Adderall®), methylphenidate (Ritalin® or Concerta®) OTC Cough/Cold Medicine:

While millions of Americans safely rely on OTC cough medicine to temporarily relieve their cough, some teens intentionally take large amounts – sometimes more than 25 times the recommended dose of these medicines – to get high. This means some teens ingest multiple packages or bottles of OTC cough medicines that contain dextromethorphan (DXM).

DXM is the active ingredient in most OTC cough medicines. Approved by the FDA in the 1950s, DXM is the most widely used cough suppressant ingredient in the United States. FACT SHEET When taken in excessive amounts DXM can cause serious side effects including rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure, memory problems, nausea and vomiting. More than 100 OTC medicines containing DXM are on the market today.

These medicines come in the form of liquids, capsules, gelcaps, lozenges, and tablets. Common DXM- containing cough medicines include many forms of Coricidin™, Delsym™, Dimetapp™, Mucinex DM™, Robitussin™, Triaminic™, Tylenol Cough & Cold™, Vicks DayQuil™/NyQuil™, Vicks Formula 44™ and more.

Help prevent medicine abuse: **TALK to your teen about prescription and OTC cough medicine abuse.** Teens listen, even if they act like they don't. In fact, teens who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are 50 percent less likely to use drugs. SAFEGUARD your medicine cabinets. Take steps to protect your teens by safeguarding all the medicines you have in your home. Know what you have and how much, so you will know if anything is missing. Discard any medicines you no longer need. SHARE what you have learned. SPEAK UP at school meetings, sports events, community events and other gatherings of parents – to make sure others active in your teen's day-to-day activities know about the dangers of medicine abuse. Circulate articles via your school listserv or write an opinion editorial to your local newspaper. Blog, Facebook or Tweet about it to alert your friends and peers. Learn more at: www.PreventRxAbuse.org www.StopMedicineAbuse.org

Coalition Member Spotlight: John Mulreany!

We are proud to spotlight Putnam CTC member John Mulreany of the Carmel Fire Department. John, who is the President of the Carmel Fire Department, is also a Senior Probation Officer for the Putnam County Probation Department and a Security Officer at Putnam Hospital Center. John is the Treasurer of the Putnam NCADD Board of Directors, and a member of the Putnam CTC Coalition. John is the past president of the CSEA Union for Putnam County Employees, the past President of the Carmel Volunteer Ambulance Corp, and a member of the Fraternal Order of Police Stephen P. Driscoll Memorial Lodge #704.

In his role as a firefighter, John agreed to work with the coalition this summer to get the word out on prevention through the use of outdoor signage. John posted three prevention messages throughout the summer on the digital bulletin board on Rte. 52 which was seen by thousands of people. When a community member told John that the messages were controversial, John retorted, "That's the purpose – to start conversations around the issues young people face today."

John also helps out the coalition by promoting Medication Take Back Day in the Spring and Fall each year on the digital board. John is also involved with the Putnam CTC Coalition's Simulated Impaired Driving Experience program.

John is the proud father of Robert and fiancé to Claudette, and is a lifelong resident of the Town of Carmel.



PUTNAM COMMUNITIES THAT CARE COALITION
PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
PUTNAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



PRESENT:

MEDICATION TAKE BACK DAY

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 7, 2015 ~ 9AM TO 2PM
at Putnam Hospital Center Wagner Cancer Pavilion
at 670 Stoneleigh Ave. Carmel, NY 10512