

Substance Use Prevention: Tools for a Healthy You.



**change
to Chill**
by Allina Health

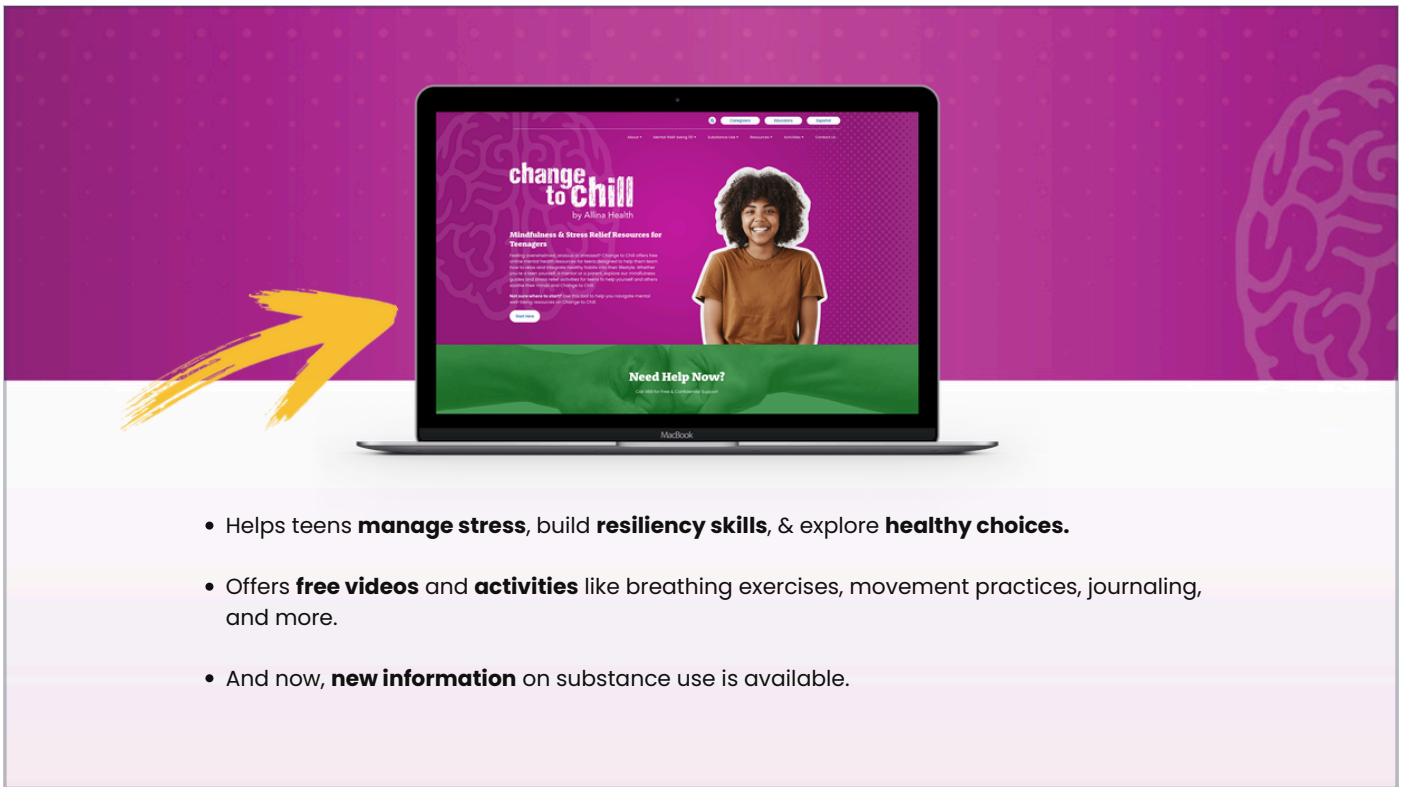
**For facilitators: This presentation highlights substance use prevention for youth. It is free to use and modify to meet your needs, the age of your audience, and time available.

Activities for youth engagement, as well as informational handouts, are also available as enrichment tools corresponding to this presentation.

This presentation is meant for two class periods or can be broken into a series of small lessons based upon your audience, available time and goals.

- 1) Session one might cover slides 1-28 (50 minutes)
- 2) Session two might cover the final slides 28-38 (30 minutes and Q/A)

Visit changetochill.org for more tools and resources.



- Helps teens **manage stress**, build **resiliency skills**, & explore **healthy choices**.
- Offers **free videos** and **activities** like breathing exercises, movement practices, journaling, and more.
- And now, **new information** on substance use is available.

This is the home page of Change to Chill (CTC). Note the top headers with drop down options to learn more. While the main audience for CTC are youth, there is just as much information for caregivers and educators. Many of the resources are also translated into Spanish. Take some time to explore all of the rich lessons, videos and activities. All free!

SECTION I: Substance use focus areas



Substance Use

- Effects on the brain
- Tobacco/nicotine
 - Including vapes
- Alcohol
- Cannabis
- Opioids
- Substance use disorders



Change to Chill's substance use prevention materials focus on the following substances and topic areas. While this is not an exhaustive list of substances, we know these to be the most commonly used among youth.

Why do many teens choose not to use substances?

Take two minutes, **write down all the ideas** you can think of.

After this time, **share with a partner or in a small group** your ideas.



This slide offers an interactive opportunity for students to engage immediately by sharing their ideas about why young people choose not to use. On the next slide, detailed reasons are provided to share with youth.

Being substance-free matters ...



Feel your **best physically** while staying safe from injuries or addiction



Avoid trouble with the law or a suspension at school



Perform at your best in school, sports and activities



Minimizes mental health challenges like **anxiety, depression, or psychosis**



Promote **healthy brain** development for learning



Keep **trust and positive relationships** with caregivers, friends and teammates.

This slide offers many reasons for adolescents to choose not to use substances.

Connection Activity: A substance use safety plan activity is available to help teens plan ahead on situations with substances, and what to do to reduce risky behaviors or injuries.

Substance use effect on the brain



The adolescent brain is amazing and powerful, yet it is still forming and pruning connections until around **age 25**.

Learn more about substance use effect on the brain by watching this video from Change to Chill.

[What to know about substance use](#)



Watch the video as a class, then ask students to share the key messages that stood out to them.

Connection Activity: There is an exercise (30 minutes) linked to the video which allow youth to form pairs or small groups, watch the video and then answer discussion questions provided.

SECTION II: Specific facts and risks of nicotine, alcohol, cannabis and opioids



Change to Chill offers detailed information on each of these four substances. Due to limited time, this PowerPoint presentation highlights quick facts for adolescents to be introduced to these substances. There is more information accessible on the website which individuals can explore on their own based on interests and needs.

CONNECTION ACTIVITY: One can use a student driven activity called “Seven impact areas of substance use”. This activity places youth into small groups and assigns each group to research CTC for the details of one substance assigned by the instructor. Then the small group can informally present key facts back to the class.

True or False (stand if true, sit if false)



1. Vaping or the use of electronic cigarettes has increased in the last decade because it is safe, producing only a cloud of water vapor.

Answer: False – Vape clouds are made by heating a liquid into an aerosol of tiny particles and chemicals that you inhale deep into your lungs.

2. Alcohol slows down your brain and can affect coordination and decision-making.

Answer: True

3. Cannabis or marijuana is now legal for those over the age of 21 in Minnesota. It is plant based and not addictive, therefore safe for teens.

Answer: False – Cannabis harms the developing brain and can be addictive.

4. The risk of addiction increases significantly when using substances before age 15.

Answer: True

This is a game of True or False for youth to think about substance use facts vs myths. It will involve movement by having students sit or stand or walk to one side of the room if they believe a statement is true and move to the opposite side of the room if a statement is false. You decide on the best type of movement to use based on the set up of the space. For example, sit or stand, or move left and right.

A deeper “thought points” are provide after the true or false statement for the facilitator to considering using with teens to bring forward more discussion or understanding. This can be used optionally. A facilitator guide is available to print for this activity at the CTC website or link here.

Answer key:

False – Vapes have many health risks for teens. Vape clouds are made by heating a liquid into an aerosol of tiny particles and chemicals that you inhale deep into your lungs.

True – Alcohol is a depressant, slowing one’s reaction time and decision-making skills.

False- Cannabis can be very addictive. The potency of THC in products is much greater than in the past. If “hitting” or inhaling from a vape cart, one often doesn’t realize the amount of THC going into their lungs, brain and body.

True – Delaying the onset of use for any substance is helpful in preventing addiction.

Those under the age of 15 starting use are at a very high risk of addiction because of the developing brain.

Connection activity: This true or false activity is also provided in a PDF form for a facilitator to use with youth. More background information on the answers is provided.

Vaping & Nicotine



Types of tobacco products:



E-cigarettes/vaping

Commercial tobacco with nicotine is often consumed today through vapes.



Nicotine pouches

Oral nicotine pouches are a growing trend.



Cigarettes

Teen use of cigarettes is at an all-time low.

Today, **most teens are choosing to not to use any of these products.**
Youth vaping rates have slowly declined – down from ~30% in 2019 to 6% in 2024.
Source: CDC 2024

This slide introduces the various tobacco products on the market. It provides introductory facts.

Not all tobacco is the same

Traditional tobacco is from tobacco plants and contains nicotine.

Culturally, Indigenous people have used traditional tobacco for centuries, spiritually and in ceremonies.

Learn more at Change to Chill under [Native & Indigenous Youth](#)

Commercial tobacco is different as the nicotine is processed with chemical additives, often flavors.

“Lab” Nicotine is synthetically made. Companies use lab made nicotine in vapes and oral pouches.

Remember, NO amount or type of nicotine is safe for your body.

Not all tobacco is the same and it is important to define the types of tobacco.

Change to Chill (CTC) provides detailed information about sacred medicines and traditional tobacco at CTC under Native & Indigenous Youth

NICOTINE: What You Should Know

High levels of nicotine

"Nic Sick"
Nausea,
racing heart,
sleep issues

Addictive

Vape disposal
contaminates
the environment
as toxic waste



← This disposable vape delivers 325 mg of nicotine- over 2000 puffs.

This equals approximately 216 cigarettes or about **11 packs of cigarettes!**

3 puffs on your vape can equal smoking a few cigarettes worth of nicotine.

Youth often underestimate the amount of nicotine in today's products. Use this example of the Loon disposable vape to highlight the amount of nicotine, number of puffs/dose and equivalence to the number of packs of cigarettes. One can experience "Nic Sick" from too much nicotine. Symptoms can include nausea, racing heart, headache, sleep disruptions.

Nicotine & Mental Health

Poll: What % of 15–24 year-olds reported vaping to decrease stress, anxiety or depression?

- A. 80%
- B. 60%
- C. 40%
- D. 20%



Source: Truth Initiative, 9/2021

👉 About 80% of young people (ages 15–24) who had used e-cigarettes said they started vaping to decrease stress, anxiety, or depression.

Source: Truth Initiative report “Colliding Crises: Youth Mental Health and Nicotine Use” 2021

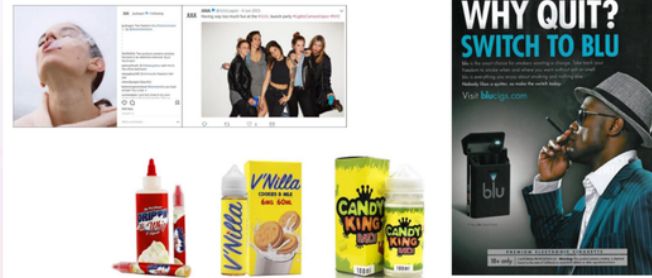
Marketing:

Companies target young people to keep them using for a lifetime

Key Tactics:

- Social media ads portray fun, belonging, & appealing flavors
- Market celebrity branded vapes
- Sponsor music festivals and concerts
- Around \$800 million per year is spent marketing vape products in the U.S. That is ~ \$2 million a day.
(CDC 2021)

Marketing Tactics E-Cigarette Companies Use to Target Youth



Source: Truth Initiative

Key strategies of marketing tactics used by e-cigarette companies to attract youth:

Sponsoring music festivals and concerts:

Advertising on social media:

Flavoring e-cigarettes: The use of fruity flavors in e-cigarettes has been a major appeal to youth, with nearly all young people who reported current e-cigarette use using flavored products.

Smart vapes: The introduction of smart vapes with screens, games, and Bluetooth connectivity has attracted young users, as they offer a gamified experience that can appeal to a younger demographic.

Celebrity-branded e-cigarettes: The presence of celebrity-branded e-cigarettes on the market has also contributed to the appeal of these products to youth.

Hooked on Nicotine: Quitting is possible



If you or anyone you know wants to quit using nicotine, remember:

- Be ready, be mindful, be confident.
- Your body is healing.
- You are not alone. There are many tools and resources to support your quit journey that are **free**.



- Talk with your care circle for additional quitting support & resources.

Mindful quit tool: 4 D's



Drink



Deep breath



Delay craving



Distraction

VAPING: What you need to know



Learn more

Vaping - ChangeToChill



The Change to Chill website offers a lot more information on each substance. This slide provides a link to take the audience to the website for the learners to see and become aware of the extra resources. After a quick view of the website resources, return to the PowerPoint and continue.

Alcohol



Liquor, Seltzers, Beer

Alcohol, when used responsibly and legally by those over the age of 21, can be a part of social connections, celebrations and enjoyment.

However, when abused, alcohol is far from harmless.

What risks can you think of?

Alcohol: Risks and Consequences

Trouble: a ticket, suspensions, DWI- loss of license

Unsafe situations: DWI, unsafe sex, accidents, injury

Long-term harm to your brain

Risk of addiction with use at an early age



ALCOHOL: What you need know



Learn more

Alcohol - ChangeToChill



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Cannabis



Cannabis comes from a plant species containing THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) which is the main compound that produces a 'high' feeling.

Other terms you might hear are marijuana, weed or vaping a "cart" (cartridge). CBD is a product of the cannabis plant, however it doesn't produce a high but is marketed for relaxation, pain or sleep.

It is legal for adults over age 21 in Minnesota. It can be used recreationally or for medical reasons.



THC Gummies, THC Pen, Cannabis

This slide offers general facts and common names about Cannabis.

More:

Cannabis is a species of plant. It can be found naturally around the world and is grown by individuals and organizations on farms and in enclosed labs.

Marijuana is a cannabis product known for its high THC levels. THC is another natural compound found in cannabis. This compound can make users feel "high."

CBD is a natural compound found in cannabis. CBD does not cause a "high" but can still affect the user.

Common names: weed, pot, grass. Learn more about terms and devices from the CDC. Hemp is another part of the cannabis plant that has lower THC levels than marijuana.

Cannabis: Know the Effects





- Effects produce a relaxed or high feeling.
- It harms brain development; diminishes learning, slows reaction time and leads to poor decision making.
- It can make mental health challenges worse, increasing anxiety.
- It can be addictive and cause psychosis or paranoia.

Cannabis Dose Effect:

Varies depending on how it is consumed, how much and how often

This chart compares the impact of vape cartridges vs. edibles.

✓ **5 mg THC = one legal dose**

FEATURE	VAPE (CART)	EDIBLES
How it's used	Inhale vapor from cartridge	Eat/drink (gummies, drinks)
Onset (how fast you feel it)	Fast: 1-5 minutes	Slow: 30 minutes to 2 hours
Typical dose	~2-5 mg per puff	5 mg per serving (legal standard)
Total THC available	 VERY HIGH	 Moderate
	300-900 mg per cart; hundreds of mg of THC	10-50 mg per package or 10 servings
Biggest risk	Taking many hits quickly; consume a lot	Taking multiple servings before it kicks in.

A PDF handout of this information is available at CTC.

Everyone processes cannabis products differently. An individual's weight, metabolism, gender and eating habits can affect how quickly a product gets absorbed into the body.

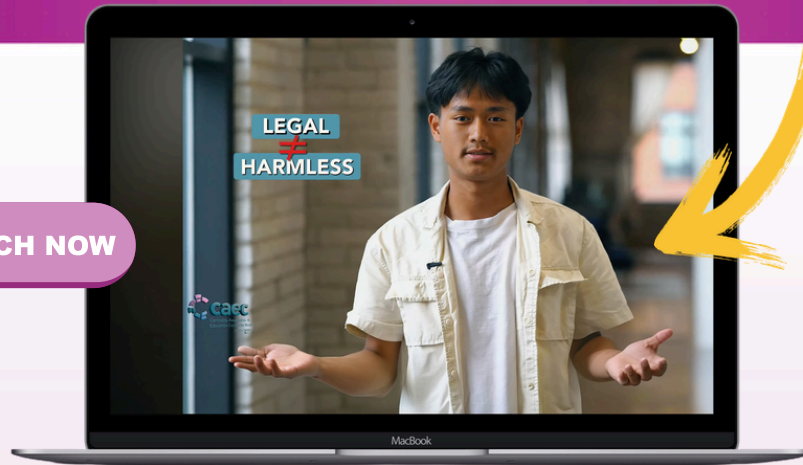
It is important to inform youth of the potency variation of THC in different products, but it is tricky. It depends upon how it is consumed; how much is consumed; and how often. This chart tries to reflect this.

KEY Summary:

- ✓ 5 mg THC = one legal dose
- ✓ Vape carts contain hundreds of mg of THC. Just 1 or 2 puffs can equal a full dose. Edibles can contain anywhere from 10 to 50 mg of THC per package or container. Edibles often take more time before the THC kicks in.
- ✓ Most negative experiences come from taking too much too fast.

Connection Resource: A PDF of this information is available at CTC and can be used as a classroom handout for youth.

Legal doesn't mean harmless



Following the video, share what stood out to **you** in the video?

This short video is 90 seconds long. It shows youth talking about Cannabis and risks.

Poll



What % of 9th graders reported NEVER using any substance (vapes, alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs) in the 2025 Minnesota Student Survey?

- A. 35%
- B. 50%
- C. 72%
- D. 88%

Answer: D



88% of 9th grader reported never using **ANY** substance

Data for other grade levels:

- 90% of 8th graders
- 77% of 11th graders

Often teens perceive high rates of substance use by peers. This can be because of the influence of marketing, portrayed use in social media or just a lack of information.

 **Most teens are choosing to be substance free.** 

CANNABIS: What you need to know



Learn more

Cannabis - ChangeToChill



The Change to Chill website offers a lot more information on each substance. This slide provides a link to take the audience to the website for the learners to see and become aware of the extra resources. After a quick view of the website resources, return to the PowerPoint and continue.

Opioids

Opioids are drugs that can flood your brain with “feel good” chemicals. Many are used for pain management.

Common opioids include Percocet, Oxy, Vicodin, fentanyl, heroin, and morphine.



Opioids: Stay Safe



Opioids can be **very addictive**—even when prescribed by a doctor.

Fentanyl is a very strong opioid. It can be infused into “pressed pills” or other drugs without people knowing it. Even a tiny amount can cause an overdose or death. Don’t use pills or medicine that is not prescribed to you or are from an unknown source.

Knowing signs of an overdose, such as shallow or stopped breathing and blue lips and fingertips, can save a life. Call 911 immediately or administer Narcan.

OPIOIDS: What you need to know



Learn more

Opioids - ChangeToChill



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SECTION III:

Topics

- Substance use disorders
 - Signs and risks for addiction
- Use responsibly & harm reduction
- Navigating addiction in a family member or friend
- Finding support
- Self care



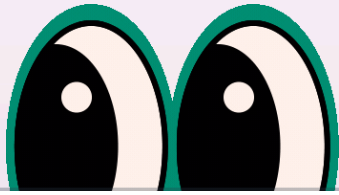
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER: What you need to know



Substance use disorders



Substance use disorders (SUD) are considered a medical condition that affects a person's brain and behavior in a way that makes them unable to control their use of substances. One often needs medical help to overcome a SUD.



Know the signs of SUD

- Strong cravings, going out of one's way to get the substance
- Unable to stop use; withdrawal symptoms
- Poor grades due to difficulty with concentration and memory
- Poor attendance, change in friends, dropout of activities

Substance use disorders is the term used by professionals now for addiction. It's important for youth to know the signs of a SUD and reduce the stigma around asking for help. A SUD is a medical condition requiring professional assistance. One often can not just use will power to stop use. Withdrawal symptoms can be very strong and physically disable someone from normal life activities.

Know your risk for addiction

Early use

Dependence risk increases with use at an early age.

Family history

Addiction is a higher risk if it runs in the family.

Poor coping skills

Using drugs to cope with stress or mental health challenges can create a harmful cycle that can potentially lead to a SUD.

Increased access

Being in environments where substance use is normalized and available may make you more likely to use.

Take the quiz at CTC to determine your risk for a substance use disorder.

And Change to Chill offers a guide to talking about your family history with a caregiver.

Connection Activity: There is a short quiz one can take to assess their risk for addiction. Find this activity at CTC – [link here](#).

Change to Chill also offers a guide to having conversations with a caregiver about your family history. [Link here](#)

Navigating peer pressure: Self advocacy and saying no



There are lots of ways to say no. The trick is to find something that feels authentic to you.

Examples:

- I have a headache right now. I'll pass.
- My parents will be up when I get home. I don't want to get in trouble.
- I have an important game/match/performance coming up. I am not risking getting caught or suspended.



A good friend will accept and support you if you choose not to use.

If one chooses to use – use responsibly, reduce harm



Living substance free is the safest, but if you choose to use:

KNOW EFFECTS	GO LOW, GO SLOW	SAFE PLACES	HYDRATE, EAT
Know the doses and potential risks Don't consume a substance from an unknown source	Go low (amount), go slow letting time pass before consuming more Avoid mixing substances (example: alcohol with medication).	Choose calm, familiar settings with trusted people Don't drive (bike, swim, use machinery, etc.) while under the influence	Take care of the body: Stay hydrated, eat while using Avoid prolonged or binge use.

Learn more about “harm reduction” at Change to Chill

Learn more about “harm reduction” at Change to Chill – (add link to PDF)

Navigating addiction in a family member or friend



Relationships can be challenging if someone you care about has an addiction. Here are some actions to consider to ease the situation. CTC has a PDF with more info.

PUT YOUR SAFETY AND WELL-BEING FIRST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek help in an emergency if there is violence or a safety issue.• Talk openly with a trusted adult.
TALK	Engage and talk only when the person is sober and calm.
BE HONEST—BUT REALISTIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use “I statements” about your feelings, concerns and needs.• Remember, you cannot make them stop using—only they can decide that.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set boundaries (I will not drive with you if you are not sober.)• Explore Change to Chill for mindfulness, journaling, art, movement• Seek therapy or counseling (if available)

Learn more through Change to Chill resource on SUD.

Often a young person can live with a family member experiencing a substance use disorder. Or have a friend they are close to that uses too much. It can be challenging and a deep strain on a relationship. Providing tips on what is in their control to do or not do is powerful information.

Connection Activity: There is a PDF guide that highlights what one can do if they have a family member or friend that is impacted by addiction. This resource is to help a young person know signs of a substance use disorder, ways to minimize relationship harm, and seek support.

Substance Use Disorder: Help is Available



Talk to a trusted adult

**Learn about accessing
support at: [ChangeToChill.org](https://www.changetochange.org)**

Example programs or agencies:

VAPING	ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH	OPIOIDS	SUICIDE OR CRISIS PREVENTION
My life, My Quit American Lung Association	Minnesota Prevention & Recovery Alliance (MnPRA) Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation	Steve Rummier HOPE Network	Call 988 for 24/7 support



Help is always available. Change to Chill offers many resource ideas for families and youth. Start by talking to a trusted adult.

Create a toolbox of stress management skills



**Invest in
social connections**





**Deep breathing and
guided relaxation**



**Creative activities
like journaling or
art**



**Exercise and
spending time in
nature**

 Explore **free** activities and resources through Change to Chill 

Everyone needs to have skills and practices to manage stress and improve their well-being. This slide provides key ways to live one's best life. Change to Chill offers a variety of activities and resources to aid youth in these practices.

Invest in Yourself & Friends



- Know the facts and impact of substance use.
- Learn to manage stress in healthy ways.
- Choose sports, hobbies and friendships over substance use.
- Remember, friends don't let friends use risking injury or addiction.
- Explore more resources and tools at [Change to Chill to thrive](#).