



What's **SAP**pening

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CENTER FOR HUMANISTIC CHANGE
 STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LIAISONS

September /2024



Upcoming Events

- Suicide Prevention Month
- National Recovery Month
- Healthy Aging Month
- Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- Library Card Sign Month
- **FASD: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder 9/18**
- National Hispanic Heritage Month 9/15-10/15
- National Family Day 9/23

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GRAY DEATH One Touch Could Kill

Deaths from illicit drugs have been on the rise over the last twenty years due to the production of synthetic narcotics, like fentanyl. With this the number of overdose deaths has increased significantly.

A new drug called “Gray Death” has started hitting the streets and creating a public health concern. Gray Death is a combination of any highly potent opioids or other narcotics creating a drug a hundred times more deadly than fentanyl. Carfentanil, one of the drugs found in gray death, is an extremely highly potent drug that can tranquilize an elephant with a speck. This narcotic is then being mixed with other opioids, like fentanyl, to create the highly deadly drug called gray death.

The appearance of this drug is similar to chunks of concrete or concrete mix. The common appearance is on the many dangers, as anyone may touch or move the drug without realization and die. The dangers of gray death come from the potency of the drugs, but also the variability.

Gray death contains small amounts of many different potent opioids, which may cause the opioids to not show up on tests conducted by chemists and coroners, making the understanding and education of the new drug a challenge to professionals. This new drug has become a public health concern with officials warning individuals to not touch the drug but to report it to authorities immediately.

Cracking Down on Illegal E-Cigarettes

On June 10, 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the creation of a federal task force to address the sale of illicit e-cigarettes. The task force will enlist the help of multiple law enforcement partners, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), to tackle the distribution and sale of unauthorized e-cigarettes. If products are found in violation, retailers will have to remove them from the shelves.

With more than 2 million middle and high school students using e-cigarettes, and one in four of those reporting daily use, these initiatives come at a crucial time. As Attorney General Yost stated in his press release, this is a consumer protection issue and these products pose a real danger, especially to young people. Nicotine addiction is harmful to developing brains, and high rates of daily use could put young users at risk for nicotine addiction.

Truth Initiative applauds these actions taken to address illegal e-cigarettes and urges all retailers to act swiftly and in compliance with these regulations to ensure a safer future for our young people.



Meet Andrew D'Angelo, the New Executive Director of CHC

Andrew is a proud native of Queens, NY that joined our team in July after spending 25 years in K-12 education. In his 25 years in K-12 education Andrew was a teacher, board development specialist, elementary and high school principal, and high school president. He is deeply committed to prevention education and helping young people make informed and healthy decisions. Andrew holds a BA from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and a MA from St. Johns University. Andrew relocated to the Lehigh Valley in 2018 and knew he found his forever home in the diverse people and places in and around the area. A couple of fun facts about Andrew are that he is a two-time American Swing dancing champion and has spent 20 years as a competitor, instructor, judge, and choreographer in the swing dancing community. He was also inducted into the National Living Legends of Dance in 2014.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Spend time in nature

Spending time in nature can help you feel more calm and relaxed. Being surrounded by trees, fresh air, and natural scenery can also make you feel more connected to the world and improve your overall mood.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Move your body

Regular physical activity can improve mood, reduce stress and anxiety, and boost self-esteem, which are all important for maintaining good mental health.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Express gratitude

Expressing gratitude can help shift your focus from negative thoughts to positive ones, leading to a more optimistic outlook. Try to write down 3 things you're grateful for every day!



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Breathe deeply

Talking slow, deep breaths, allows your heart rate to slow down and your muscles to relax, leading to a greater sense of calm and tranquility.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Be kind to yourself

Being kind to yourself is an important part of taking care of your mental health, and can help you feel more positive and happy in your day-to-day life.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Doodle, draw, or paint

Art can help you express yourself in a unique and creative way. Art allows for a safe and non-judgmental space to explore and process your emotions.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Listen or play music

Music can help reduce stress and anxiety, boost mood and energy, and provide a sense of comfort and peace. Music provides an outlet for creativity and expression.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Spend time with a friend or loved one

Spending time with someone you care about can help you feel connected, supported, and less alone. It can boost your mood, reduce stress, and provide a sense of belonging and happiness.



RESILIENCE ♥ TIPS

Put your phone away

Putting your phone away can help reduce stress and anxiety, improve sleep, and increase your ability to focus and be present in the moment. Social media can create feelings of social comparison and FOMO which can negatively impact your self-esteem and mental health.



September 18th!

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Program (9/18/24—8-11:00 am) Free / Virtual

Our keynote speaker is Dr. Maude Champagne, an award-winning neuroscientist, social worker and therapist who has received national recognition for her design, implementation and evaluation of multiple programs supporting complex families. She is a highly sought after speaker in the areas of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, attachment, trauma and childhood aggression. We will also be joined by community members that will discuss various resources throughout the Lehigh Valley.

Use Code to Register:





Elementary School Tips



Do's and Don'ts of Back-to-School

Do's:

- **Get back into the Routine:** Start operating on school like hours including getting children to bed earlier and waking up at a similar time as they would for school and performing a getting ready routine.
- **Talk about Challenging Friendships:** Discuss how friendships may change when a new school year begins and it is okay to share friendships.
- **A Trail Run:** Run through a school day from the morning routine, driving to school, and the evening routine. If possible walk around the school to allow the children to develop an understanding of school starting again.
- **Help Manage Commitments:** A child may be overwhelmed if they are involved with many activities, and need help managing. Practice what you preach, show children how to say no to an opportunity if it becomes an over-commitment, and allow them to see we cannot do it all.

Don'ts:

- **Forget to Refuel:** be aware of meals and food during the school year. Keep track of what they are eating at meals so they are well-fed and able to have a successful school day.
- **Share your Anxieties:** Parents want their children to succeed and be social, but placing pressure on children struggling with socializing may cause more anxiety. Instead of asking "Did you make friends today?" ask "How was your day".
- **Be afraid of setbacks:** If your child struggled with mood or anxiety problems the year before and made significant progress, don't be afraid if the new school year creases setbacks. Allow them to have ups and downs when easing back into the school year.
- **Be Afraid of Problems:** Be an advocate for your child. If you see your child struggling speak up and inform the school.

The start of a new school year can be a stressful and anxious time for children, even easy-going children may get nervous for a new school year. Here are some tips to help ease the transition into a new school year:

Back to School Anxiety



- **Take your own Temperature:** The school year is stressful for you too, so check yourself that you are not passing any anxieties onto your children.
- **Listen to Worries:** Actively listen and validate their feelings when children express concern for new teachers, homework, or friends. Children often say more when there is less pressure to talk.
- **Let Someone Know:** If your child needs extra support for a transition let a teacher or school staff know. Asking for a little exposure to the new environment can set them up for success.
- **School Refusal:** If your child starts refusing school consistently problems can occur. You may want to ask questions like, "How much have they been missing" and "How strongly they resist". If they resist harder or have been missing a significant amount of school it might be beneficial to seek assistance.

Selective Mutism & Back-to-School

For children with selective mutism a new classroom can be a challenge. Here are some tips to make the transition easier:

- **Ease them in by visiting the classroom and meeting the teacher for a one-on-one**
- **Make a video of your child speaking at home to show the teacher.** The teacher will gain a better understanding of what your child is capable of.
- **Make Plan B's if your child is not ready to ask to use the bathroom or speak to the teacher.** One way to do this is to use hand signals that both the child and teacher know.
- **Plan check-ins with the teacher to problem-solve together.**

Children and Screens / Free Webinars

9/18/24 Sexual Harassment and Exploitation of Youth Online

10/9/24 ADHD and Digital Media

11/24 (date TBA) Reality vs. Fiction Online

12/24 (date TBA) Digital Therapeutics

Visit: www.childrenandscreens.org/events/asktheexperts-webinars/