

# DART Prevention Coalition

OCTOBER IS SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION MONTH

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# Substance Use Prevention Month



DART Prevention Coalition  
Taking Aim at Substance Use in Ocean County

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SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION MONTH TWO-PAGER

# Substance Use Prevention Month

## What is Substance Use Prevention?

Substance use prevention aims to educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use of drugs and the development of substance use disorders across the lifespan.

Substance use prevention is essential for fostering healthier communities. Effective prevention programs educate individuals about the risks of substance use and promote healthy coping strategies. By investing in prevention, communities can create supportive environments that empower individuals to make informed choices, leading to stronger, healthier communities.

**SAMHSA Prevention Framework (SPF)** The Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration uses the Strategic Prevention Framework to guide substance use prevention work. The Strategic Prevention Framework emphasizes a data-driven approach that assesses community needs, builds capacity and implements evidence-based interventions to foster healthy communities.



### Five Guiding Principles

- 1. Assessment:** Identify local prevention needs based on data
- 2. Capacity:** Build local resources and readiness to address prevention needs
- 3. Planning:** Find out what works to address prevention needs and how to do it
- 4. Implementation:** Deliver evidence-based programs and practices as intended
- 5. Evaluation:** Examine the process and outcomes of programs and practices

Source: [samhsa.gov/sptac/strategic-prevention-framework](http://samhsa.gov/sptac/strategic-prevention-framework)

The Strategic Prevention Framework operates around creating culturally competent interventions and focuses on implementing interventions that will achieve long-term community change.

Cultural competence is the ability of an individual or organization to understand, interact and engage with all people within the served community who may have different backgrounds and life experiences.

Sustainability is the process of building an adaptive and effective system that achieves and maintains desired long-term results.



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## The Importance of Prevention

Prevention is crucial in addressing substance misuse as it reduces the likelihood of addiction and its associated negative consequences for individuals and communities. By prioritizing prevention, communities can enhance resilience, reduce risk factors and promote well-being among their populations.

## What Drives Our Work in Prevention

### CADCA's Seven Strategies for Community Change

1. Provide Information
2. Enhance Skills
3. Provide Support
4. Change Access / Barriers
5. Change Consequences, Incentives/Disincentives
6. Change Physical Design
7. Modify & Change Policies

The DART Prevention Coalition of Ocean County uses CADCA's seven strategies for community change to create a structured, evidence-based approach to addressing substance use issues in our community. These strategies help build capacity, foster collaboration among key leaders and ensure that programs and initiatives are tailored to our community's needs. By following these strategies, we can mobilize resources, engage community members and achieve sustainable change.

## What are Risk and Protective Factors?

Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of adverse outcomes.

Protective factors are characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of adverse outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact.

Risk factors increase the likelihood of substance use, while protective factors can mitigate these risks. Understanding the intercorrelation of risk and protective factors is essential for substance use prevention efforts. It allows communities to identify and strengthen protective factors while addressing and reducing risk factors, helping to create healthier environments that support individuals in making positive choices.

## Interested in learning more about our initiatives?

Please reach out to [amy.piacentedesch@rwjbh.org](mailto:amy.piacentedesch@rwjbh.org) with any questions regarding our prevention initiatives.

## DART's Prevention Efforts in Ocean County

### Trainings

- Marijuana, vaping and medication management trainings
- Young Athletes and Opioids training
- TIPS Trainings (Responsible Beverage Server Trainings)

### Campaigns and Initiatives

- Project Sticker Shock
- Safe medication disposal kits
- Prevention toolkits, fact cards, infographics and awareness campaigns
- Permanent metal signage for young athletes, recovery access and smoke-free areas

### Community Coalitions and Groups

- Youth Prevention Coalitions in county middle schools and high schools
- Substance use prevention efforts in faith-based communities through the Southern Ocean County Interfaith Advocacy & Leadership (SOCIAL) Network

### Data Collection and Policy Change

- Collecting data to guide initiatives and efforts in our communities
- Assistance in changing local policies, school policies and ordinances related to substance use

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October is **Substance Use Prevention Month**

Prevention  
**strengthens**  
**protective factors**  
and  
**reduces risk factors**  
in individuals,  
families, schools  
and communities.



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# October is **Substance Use Prevention Month**

**The goal is to**  
prevent substance use  
from the beginning,  
prevent the  
progression of use  
and reduce harm.



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**HOW TO TALK ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE**



## HOW TO TALK ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE: Start the Conversation, Stop the Risk

Having conversations about substance use allows you to learn more about different types of substances and their impact, talk through potential risks and find ways to minimize harm from substance use. These conversations are also an opportunity to establish attitudes and boundaries regarding substance use.

### How to Talk to a Friend Who is Using Substances



#### Be Kind and Accepting

Even if you don't accept their behavior, show that you care by speaking with kindness and understanding. You want to use respectful language and empathize with their situation.

#### Listen More than You Talk

- Try to listen without interrupting or judging the person.
- Offer a non-judgmental listening ear.
- For example, you can ask, "How can I support you?"

#### Set Clear Boundaries

Communicate through your actions as well as your words. Remain consistent in your message so that they don't misunderstand what you want or expect of them.



### How to Talk to a Family Member Who is Using Substances

#### Express How You Feel

- Explain your concerns using "I" statements.
- Explain how you feel. "I feel..."
- Example: "I feel, I am concerned about..."
- "When this happens, I feel..."

#### Listen

- It is important to listen non-judgmentally.
- Offer support where you can, discuss treatment options if they are open to it, and let them know you are there for them.

### How to Talk to a Child Who is Using Substances

#### Create a Safe Space to Talk

Remain calm, put phones away, consider writing down your goals for the conversation before sitting down with your child.



#### Things to Consider

- Express how much you care. Explain that the reason you're talking and asking questions is because you want them to be healthy, safe and happy.
- Let your child know you value their honesty and are willing to listen without judgment.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Let them know you're listening.
- Offer empathy and compassion.
- Demonstrate understanding, and show your child you get it.
- Clearly state any evidence you've found.
- Give lots of praise and positive feedback.
- Reassure your child that you can always be counted on for support and that your child can confide in you whenever needed.
- Thank your child for talking with you.

**Click Here to Download and Share the Tip  
Sheet**



Looking for Previous Awareness Campaign Materials?

Check out our **DART Resources** portal page for past awareness campaigns, one-pagers, fact cards, and more! | [rwjbh.org/dartresources](http://rwjbh.org/dartresources)



Find these Awareness Campaign images (and more) on our Facebook!  
**DART Prevention Coalition of Ocean County** | [facebook.com/DARTCoalition](https://facebook.com/DARTCoalition)

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