

Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist Newsletter January 2021



2021 New Year, “SMART”-er Goals

Here we are, mid-January and this is about the time of year many of us find ourselves struggling to keep those New Year's Resolutions. Why? Though goal-setting is important and a valuable practice, it isn't necessarily intuitive. It is easy to get carried away and forget that the goal itself is the *pinnacle* of the achievement, but not the only piece of the “aspirational pie”. Imagine a ladder... if your goal is to get to the top of the ladder, how does that happen? Do you jump from the ground and automatically land on the top rung? Of course not, when we climb ladders, we take them a rung at a time, as that is the most efficient and surest way to make it to the top. Goal setting/resolution-building is much like climbing a ladder, multiple steps are involved to reach the top. Goal-setting is best done though the creation of a plan, especially using the *SMART* goals method. What are *SMART* goals?

1. S – Be specific. Know exactly what your goal is, for example, instead of “I will eat healthier meals” define exactly what “healthier meals” means.
2. M – Measurable. Be sure that you have a way to measure your progress. For example, “eat more fruit” becomes “eat 2 or more servings of fruit each day”.
3. A – Achievable. Create small, achievable goals for yourself along the way that will provide positive reinforcement as you move forward fueling your personal desire to continue to move forward. (The small achievable goals also help you create a way to make your goal measurable.)
4. R – Realistic. If your goal is to eat healthier meals and you try to never eat a desert again, you may be setting yourself up for failure. It is great to shoot for the stars, don't get me wrong, but we often fail in achieving resolutions when we make them unrealistic.
5. T – Timely. Make sure that this is a goal that is achievable within the time frame you have allotted. The most successful, intelligent, motivated person in the world may make a goal to get a PhD, however if their deadline to achieve the goal is in the next year and they've yet to take a class, obviously this is not a timely goal.

How does this relate to your son/daughter? As adults, it is easy to forget that our ability to think long-term, weigh consequences, and problem-solve, is far more well-developed than those same abilities in our teens. When it comes to goal-setting, we have been setting goals all of our lives. We have learned what works and what doesn't work for us. Teens lack that wealth of life experience to pull from, so explaining the necessity of developing well-defined goals consisting of small achievable parts in lieu of lofty, overly-difficult, and ambiguous goals is a great skill to teach your adolescent. A positive starting point is to ask your teen what they have achieved in the past year that they are proud of, no matter how small and give them time to review their successes. Then walk them through the things goals they didn't reach and work as a team to evaluate how the goals could be tweaked using the SMART method to make them more achievable. It is often helpful to have someone to hold us accountable, so perhaps creating goals together and planning to discuss progress on a monthly basis may be a good way to open up some new conversations with your teen. [Click here for a downloadable SMART goal worksheet.](#)

VAPE FREE FAIRFAX

The Fairfax County Health Department, Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board and Fairfax County Public Schools have partnered to implement the Truth Initiative's This is Quitting program. This is Quitting is a teen and young adult-focused vaping cessation text messaging program based on the best scientific evidence from the combusted tobacco cessation literature, input from the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center, and formative research with young adult current and former vapers. To view the press release about this program, [click here](#). For more information about the program, click here.

SAPS INTRODUCTION

Did you know Chantilly has its own *Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist* to address substance abuse concerns among students?

My name is Carrie Glasgow and I am the Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist (SAPS) for CHS. If you need support for a student or have concerns you'd like to discuss, please feel free to reach out to me via email at caglasgow@fcps.edu or by phone at **540 300-6951**.



For general questions about the FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program, please contact the

Office of Student Safety & Wellness (571) 423-4270.