



Dear Parent or Guardian:

We know that, as a parent/guardian, you desire the best resources for your child and the young people in our community. The 2024 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (www.nrsd.net) shows that a small number of Nashoba students try tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs in middle school. By the end of high school, many more students report substance use. Research shows the younger a person is when they begin using alcohol or drugs the more likely they are to abuse substances in the future.

In March of 2016, the Massachusetts Legislature passed House Bill No. 4056 which outlines the requirements for public schools in the Commonwealth to engage in substance use prevention and education including the use of a verbal screening process called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) in all middle and high schools. To prevent students from starting to use substances or at least to delay the start of use, our *nursing, counseling, and social worker staff will be providing interview-based screening for 7th grade students on November 13th and 14th* about the use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. The screening utilizes the most common substance-use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts, the CRAFFT+N.

Student screening sessions will be brief (approximately 5 minutes) and conducted confidentially in a private, one-on-one session. Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener if no further follow-up is required. The screening staff will provide brief counseling to any student who reports using substances or is at risk for future substance use. **Although what your child discusses with the screener is confidential, we will inform you if your student's health or safety is at imminent risk.** The results of the screening will not be included in your student's school record.

As with any school-based screening, you may opt your child out by emailing the school nurse, Karin Frostholt, at kfrostholt@nrsd.net. Your child will also be given the opportunity to opt out of the screening when he/she meets with the screener. If you have questions, please contact a member of the screening team.

Please share this letter with your child. One way to prevent youth substance use is to talk with your child about substance use. For ideas on how to begin these conversations, please refer to the Family Checkup resource located on the Health Services page on the district website: www.nrsd.net. The link to Health Services may be found under the District tab, and then click on Resources. Together, schools and parents CAN make a difference for our youth.

Sincerely,

Karin Frostholt, RN, NCSN

Stephanie Williams, M.S., NCC

Nicole Johnson, LMHC, M.Ed.