



MEDFIELD HEALTH SERVICES

Medfield Public Schools

March 2024

Dear Families:

In response to the increase in drug and opioid use in Massachusetts, former Governor Charlie Baker signed into law, "An Act relative to substance use, treatment, education and prevention" (H. No. 4056). Among its many components, this law mandates that school districts annually conduct verbal substance use screenings in two grade levels beginning with the 2017-18 school year. The goal of the program is to provide early identification, education and prevention of harm from substance use. School nurses screen all 7th and 9th grade students using the SBIRT protocol (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) developed by the MA Dept of Public Health. Click [here](#) for more information about the SBIRT screening program. The interview style screening is conducted confidentially, in private one-on-one sessions using the [CRAFT + N screening tool](#), the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts.

Students who report not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced. The school nurses will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances. If appropriate, we will offer students a referral to counseling staff. This program focuses on prevention, and students' responses will not lead to any disciplinary action. The results of the screening will not be included in students' academic or health records. In keeping with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 97, information disclosed by students during verbal substance use screening is confidential, and unless a student is in immediate danger, parents will not be notified about the results of this screening without the student's permission.

SBIRT screening for 7th graders will take place beginning the week of March 18th during 7th grade health classes. If you have any questions about this program or prefer your child not participate in the screening, then please click [here](#) to opt your 7th grader(s) out of the screening. The SBIRT program is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the questions.

We encourage all families to talk to their children about substance use. A child's brain is not fully developed during adolescence, and substance use during this time can substantially alter brain functioning for a lifetime often leading to addiction and long term health risks. **Research shows that parental disapproval is the #1 reason adolescents decide not to use drugs or alcohol.** For ideas on how to begin these important conversations, please see this [parent guide](#) and the [SBIRT Resource List 2024](#). Together we can make a difference in the health of our youth!

Please contact us in the Blake Health office at 508-242-8554 or by email if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Tricia & Meghan

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