

## **SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Sturgis Charter Public School, in accordance with Mass General Laws (c.71, s.96) and with recommendations and guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has developed and will implement a policy regarding substance use prevention and education for our students. Sturgis Charter Public School will notify parents and guardians of all students in our school of the policy regarding substance use prevention and will post the policy on the school's website.

The use and/or abuse of any substance including alcohol and illegal drugs (including steroids), as well as the inappropriate use and/or abuse of legal substances (inhalants, electric cigarettes, herbal supplements, prescription medications, dietary aids and over-the-counter medications) is strictly prohibited on school grounds. Any possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia, legal substances intended for misuse or alcoholic beverages on the school grounds, at school functions or on school buses is prohibited at all times.

### **Goals**

Implementation of an evidenced-based substance abuse curriculum for grades 9-12 that teaches self-management, social, legal, health consequences and refusal skills that will empower students to make healthy choices and avoid alcohol and substance use.

Provide parents, guardians and community members' ongoing educational opportunities and resources to prevent substance use.

### **Leadership**

Leadership at all levels will play a critical role in developing and implementing the substance use prevention and education policy. This is accomplished by utilizing a team approach involving school administrators, Board of Trustees, teachers, nurses, counselors, city and county law enforcement officials, students, families and outside community agencies.

### **Professional Development**

Sturgis Charter Public School staff will be provided training opportunities to ensure they are aware of policies and procedures for alcohol and substance use prevention, education, identification, and intervention.

### **Access to Resources and Services**

School counseling personnel, nursing services and contracted community agencies will work closely in identifying and referring students with substance abuse issues. Sturgis Charter Public School has an identified team of social-emotional support staff including the Principal, School Psychologist, School Counselors, School Nurse, and school adjustment counselor(s). They are available for students in need of assessment, counseling and referral. Community based providers are available for referral and intervention as needed.

### **Academic and Non-Academic Strategies**

In accordance with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Frameworks, Sturgis Charter Public School will provide developmentally appropriate, evidence based alcohol, tobacco and drug education and prevention programs in grades 9-12. Students will be provided with informational handouts provided by the MIAA - Substance Abuse Prevention Facts for Teens and Parents. Sturgis Charter Public School presently employs a Nurse who is responsible for various health and wellness initiatives dealing with behavioral health and substance abuse issues. Students in grades 9 will participate in state mandated SBIRT (Student Brief Intervention Referral and Treatment). This verbal screening tool will be used to help keep all students healthy and provide appropriate prevention, intervention and referral for possible substance abuse by a trained screener.

## **Policies and Protocols**

Sturgis Charter Public School has policies in place for: voluntary admission of drug or alcohol problem, appearing under the influence, distribution or possession of drugs and prohibiting substance or tobacco use, on school property or at any school sponsored or school related activity, function or program whether on or off school property. Any student charged with a violation of these policies may be expelled or suspended in accordance with the Sturgis Charter Public School Code of Discipline and M.G. L Discipline Code. School staff will discuss these policies annually with students, and policies will be posted on the school's web site and in the Sturgis Charter Public School Student Handbook, which requires parents' signature to ensure they have received this handbook annually.

## **Procedures**

The following steps will be taken in response to student use of substances:

1. If a student voluntarily confides a drug or alcohol problem to any staff member, staff will consult immediately with a school counselor, school nurse, or building administrator, who will then consult the Principal to develop recommendations. In such instances, the school will work with the student and family to address the drug or alcohol problem. The student may be required to attend meetings of an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment.
2. If a school administrator has reasonable grounds to suspect, through direct observation, that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, an assessment will be made. The student may be removed from class, and parental contact will occur immediately, along with a medical referral. The Barnstable Police may be informed of the incident.
3. When a student is determined to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but no contraband is found, the Principal or designee will immediately notify parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents before the student returns to school. The student may be required to attend meetings of an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment. In addition, the student will be subject to a maximum of ten days suspension from school.
4. If a student is found to be in possession of a drug or alcohol, the Principal or designee will notify parents and a conference will be held with the student and parents. The substance will be sealed and labeled with the date and time of confiscation and noted in the incident report. If it is a legal substance, it may be given to the parent or disposed of at the parent's request. If the substance is illegal, it will be turned over to the Barnstable Police Department. The student may be required to attend an approved alcohol or drug recovery program or other appropriate treatment and may be subject to expulsion under the Sturgis Charter Public School's code of discipline school.
5. If a student is found to be selling, distributing or in possession of a quantity sufficient to be charged with the intent to distribute drugs or alcohol, the Principal or designee will immediately notify the parent and the police for mandatory removal of the student. There will be an Out of School Suspension and the student may be subject to expulsion pursuant to the school's code of discipline. The Barnstable Police may be notified regarding the sale of drugs in proximity to school buildings.

## **Community Liaisons**

The school will maintain liaisons with rehabilitation, treatment, judicial, law enforcement, and legislative agencies to help ensure that the total community capability is brought to bear on the elimination of substance abuse problems. Specific groups and organizations include:

- Barnstable Police Department
- Barnstable District Attorney's Office

## Collaboration with Families

Sturgis Charter Public School believes that families are essential partners in our efforts to prevent substance abuse. Sturgis is committed to providing ongoing informational and educational parent programming during the school year.

### *Resources / Supports*

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If you are concerned about a Sturgis Charter Public School student and the possible use of drugs or alcohol, we encourage you to contact our school nurse, one of our school counselors and/or the Principal.

The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) is a searchable registry of more than 350 substance abuse and mental health interventions that have been reviewed by the U.S Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Parents and or guardians may find the following helpful:

- [Talking to Your Kids about Marijuana](#) -- Mass Public Health Blog
- [Parent Power](#)- Mass.gov Health & Human Services
- [Alcohol Use and Your Kids](#) - Mass Public Health
- [Prevention Tips for your Middle School Aged Child](#) - Mass.gov Health & Human Services
- <http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov> - National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments
- <http://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/> - DEA
- [Office of Adolescent Health](#) - U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
- [Adolescent Substance Abuse Program](#)- Boston Children's Hospital
- [Peer Pressure](#) - American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

### Seeking Help for your Child

If you are concerned about your child's use of alcohol, other drugs or misuse of prescriptions, the Department's Bureau of Substance Abuse Services can help.

For free and confidential information and referral services for youth and young adults (up to age 24) who are experiencing a problem with alcohol, or other drugs, contact [BSAS' Youth Central Intake & Care Coordination service](#):