

Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative

May 22, 2020

Hello everyone, we are here to support you in any way we can during these challenging times. This newsletter is designed to provide your family with a variety of educational links, activities, and resources on overall wellness and substance abuse, on a weekly basis. Welcome to week 9!

New Tobacco Law Effective June 1st

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/2019-tobacco-control-law#-new-tobacco-control-law>

Beginning June 1, 2020, the sale of flavored combustible cigarettes and other tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes and flavored chewing tobacco, will be restricted to licensed smoking bars where they may be sold only for on-site consumption. Also taking effect on June 1st is the addition of a 75 percent excise tax on the wholesale price of nicotine vaping products, in addition to the state's 6.25 percent sales tax. Email Ashley Hall of the Northeast Tobacco-Free Community Partnership at ashley.hall@glfhc.org for more information.



Mass.gov

National Institute of Drug Abuse talks about COVID!

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/news-events/news-releases/2020/04/nida-director-outlines-potential-risks-to-people-who-smoke-use-drugs-during-covid-19-pandemic>



National Institute on Drug Abuse

Patients with already compromised lung conditions may be at higher risk for more severe complications from COVID-19. Specifically, people who smoke or vape, or use opioids or methamphetamine may face heightened risk.



Talking With Children

<https://www.facebook.com/samhsa/photos/a.10150704130112507/10157385694352507/?type=3&theater>

Tips for caregivers, parents, and teachers during infectious disease outbreaks. Children may react to anxiety and stress differently than adults. This tip sheet will help you learn common reactions in children, respond in a helpful way and know when to seek support. Download for free here:

https://bit.ly/2V2WEA8?fbclid=IwAR3G0gGY1fNXAMsXHBwKWpQ_-WnvO4tdBfv8Of300LtnZWIn4D3TElep5ql

WHO ARE WE?

SAPC

SAPC is a coalition of eight communities working together to help reduce substance abuse with specific intentions for youth below the age of 18.

Communities include:

Billerica—Mike Higgins
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Trauma, Complex Grief, & How We Heal (Part2)

Last week we touched on how our bodies react to traumatic experiences and how we are each having our own experiences as we live through COVID-19. In addition to learning how to emotionally cope and understand why we are feeling possibly new feelings, we also are likely to have grief associated with loved ones passing away, either related or unrelated to COVID-19.

Either way, the normal grief processes and traditional ceremonies associated with mourning a loved one's death are not currently possible in the same capacity. Funerals are turning to immediate family only or are being post-poned until social distancing advisories are lifted. Loved ones living out of state or at a distance away are unable to come be with family after a death due to travel restrictions. Individuals/families are not able to be with their family or friend while they are sick in hospitals, nursing homes, or hospice care centers, leading not only to individuals not being able to say "goodbye" but also to trauma and grief associated with knowing a loved one is alone. Whatever the struggle is currently, it is important to remember that we are not alone in having to experience these types of loss and lack of mourning processes.

We are challenged to find new ways of having funeral rituals, new practices associated with individual grief of a passing, and not being able to be with our loved one(s) in their final moments. During this pandemic, it is important to not dismiss and push aside your grieving processes just because it does not look like the normal grief processes. As humans, we must move through seven stages of grief. Without moving through each of these stages, we can get "stuck" in a stage which can lead to long-term trauma, responses, and/or changes in mood impacting our life. The seven stages are: shock (protecting ourselves), denial (deeper protection), bargaining (attempting to undo), guilt ("if only..."), sadness (moving from thinking to feelings), anger (urge to take action), and acceptance (sense of peace). We must support ourselves and each other in moving through these stages, and although they might look slightly different currently, it is no less important to process each loss and the traumatic experience.

Remember to acknowledge your feelings and to talk to trusted friends/family about them.

Resources:

- <https://blog.dana-farber.org/insight/2020/04/grieving-during-the-coronavirus-advice-from-a-clinical-psychologist/>
- <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/grief-distance>
- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/bravery-in-bereavement/202004/how-cope-bereavement-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
- <https://childrengrieve.org/about-us/news/208-covid-19> (for children experiencing grief)
- <https://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Managing-Bereavement-Around-COVID-19-HSPH.pdf>

Next Week Look For:

Resources to help you and your family manage through COVID-19 with mental health and substance use resources, strategies, and tools.

Do you have a topic you would like to hear about? Let us know!

- Maria (Tewksbury): 978-382-4989
- Samantha (Wilmington): 978-447-2296