



**DRUG FREE YOUTH** IN SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

**STUDENT INFORMATION  
AND ACTIVITY BOOKLET**

Spanish version available at  
[www.dfyinscv.com](http://www.dfyinscv.com)

*This booklet includes:*

*Student information about*

- *The risks of electronic cigarettes, vaping, and marijuana*
- *Discussion questions*
- *Activities for students*



# GOOD CHOICES

**DFY in SCV** (Drug Free Youth in Santa Clarita Valley)

is a free, school-based, voluntary, anti-drug program in elementary schools, junior high schools, and high schools. The mission of DFY in SCV is to educate and empower students to make good choices, leading towards positive and healthy behaviors.

The curriculum teaches communication and lifelong skills appropriate for each grade level to combat negative peer pressure and easy-to-remember strategies to say no to drugs and alcohol.



[www.dfyinscv.com](http://www.dfyinscv.com)

# ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

## Alcohol and tobacco

Although **alcohol** is legal for adults 21 years of age or older to purchase and consume, it is the drug most abused by teens. No matter your age, the effects that alcohol have on your health do not vary.

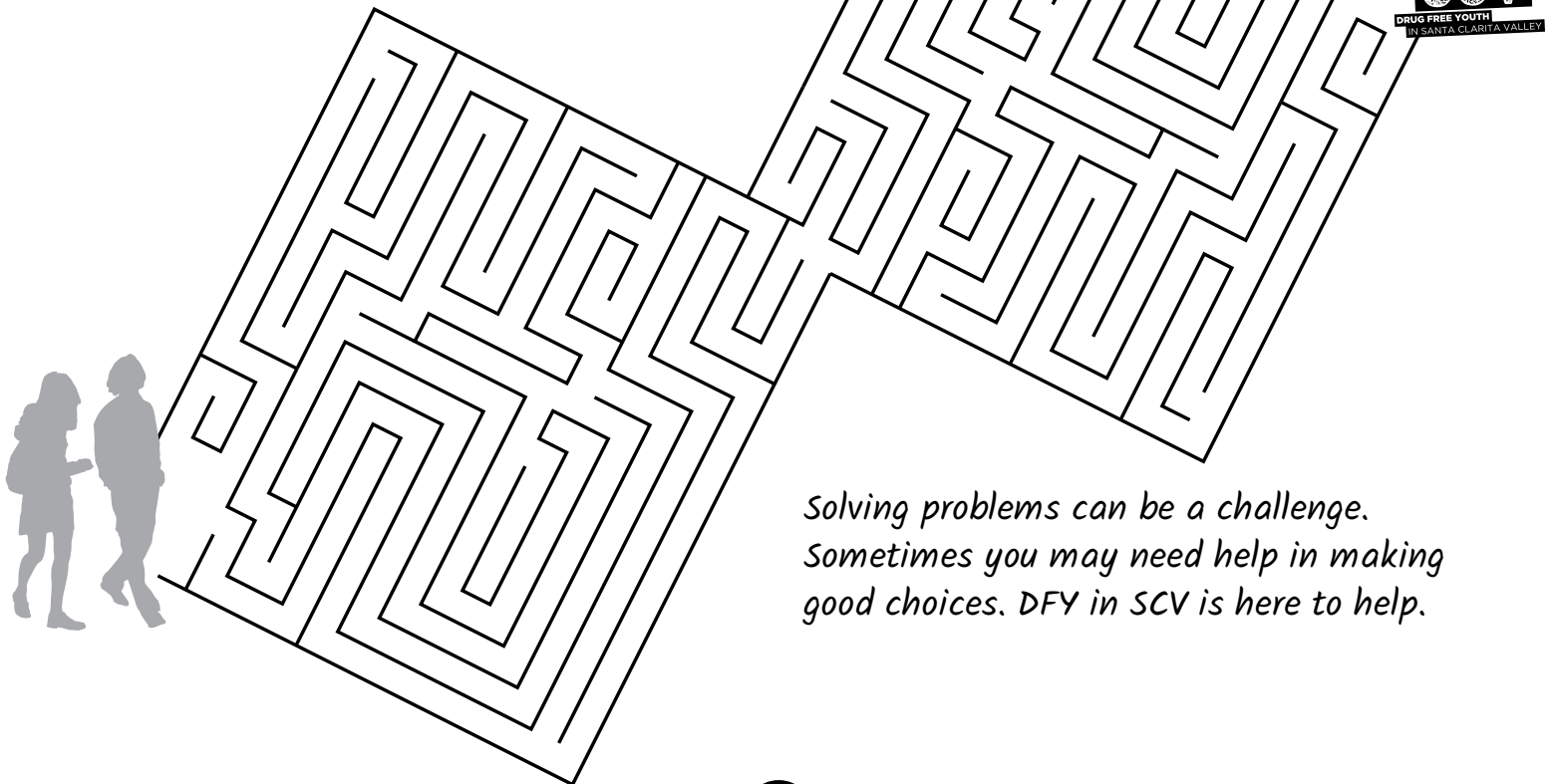
Alcohol is a depressant that slows down or depresses the brain resulting in difficulty walking, blurred vision, slurred speech, slowed reaction times, and impaired memory. Like many drugs, alcohol changes your ability to think clearly and make good choices.

### ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Can you find the way to DFY in SCV?*

Another legal but dangerous drug is **tobacco**.

Tobacco contains nicotine, a chemical that is highly addictive. This means that if you start to use nicotine, your body and mind can become dependent on it in order to complete daily tasks. The nicotine and other poisonous **chemicals** in tobacco may cause a variety of health complications. Smoking can permanently damage the lungs, heart, liver, kidneys, brain, and other parts of your body.



*Solving problems can be a challenge. Sometimes you may need help in making good choices. DFY in SCV is here to help.*

# ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES AND VAPING

## What is an electronic cigarette?

**Electronic cigarettes** (or **e-cigarettes**) and **vape pens** are devices that have become a popular new trend in recent years. They are battery-powered and are often designed to look and feel like tobacco cigarettes.

Electronic cigarettes and vape pens don't burn tobacco, which means that users do not inhale the same amounts of poisonous tar and carbon monoxide found in traditional cigarettes. Instead, vapers purchase bottles of **eliquid** (or **ejuice**), which can contain highly-addictive **nicotine** mixed into water with flavoring and other chemicals. When 'smoked', a heating device in the electronic cigarette converts the eliquid into a gas **vapor** which is inhaled into the lungs and exhaled into the air, producing the illusion of smoke.

Many bottles of eliquid—even small ones—contain enough nicotine to kill an adult.

Vaping liquids may be flavored to taste like fruit, candy, or other foods and drinks that appeal to kids, and often have pictures of chocolate, cupcakes, or even ice cream on their labels. However, most contain nicotine which can make the eliquids poisonous even before they are heated in an electronic cigarette. If eliquid makes contact with your skin, the toxic nicotine can be absorbed and make you ill.

Poison-control agencies have seen a rise in the number of emergency calls concerning eliquid poisoning in victims as young as preschoolers.

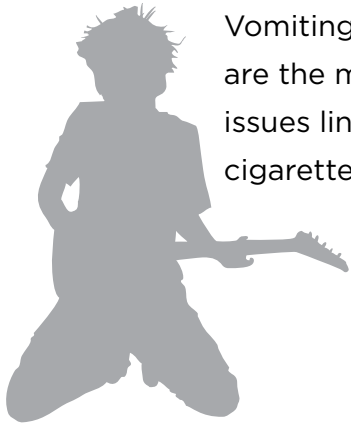
### FACT:

*The nicotine inhaled and exhaled in vaping devices and electronic cigarettes is as harmful to your health—and to the health of those around you—as the nicotine in tobacco smoke.*



### Health consequences of electronic cigarettes and vaping

Surveys have shown that many kids assume vaping is a harmless alternative to smoking tobacco, yet, this is false.



Vomiting, nausea, and eye irritation are the most common health issues linked to inhaling electronic cigarettes, but anyone using an electronic cigarette is exposing their body to unhealthy **chemicals**. When users inhale, the gases and particles in the vapor are

absorbed through their lungs directly into their system which can damage lung tissue, cause inflammation, and impair their body's natural ability to fight respiratory infections.

Electronic cigarettes and vaping liquids containing nicotine affect the **brain**, nervous system, immune system (which helps us resist getting sick), and the heart, leading to increased blood pressure and heart rate. The larger the dose of nicotine, the more a person's blood pressure and heart rate increases. This can lead to an abnormal heart rate known as an **arrhythmia**. In some cases, large amounts of nicotine consumption have caused heart failure and death.

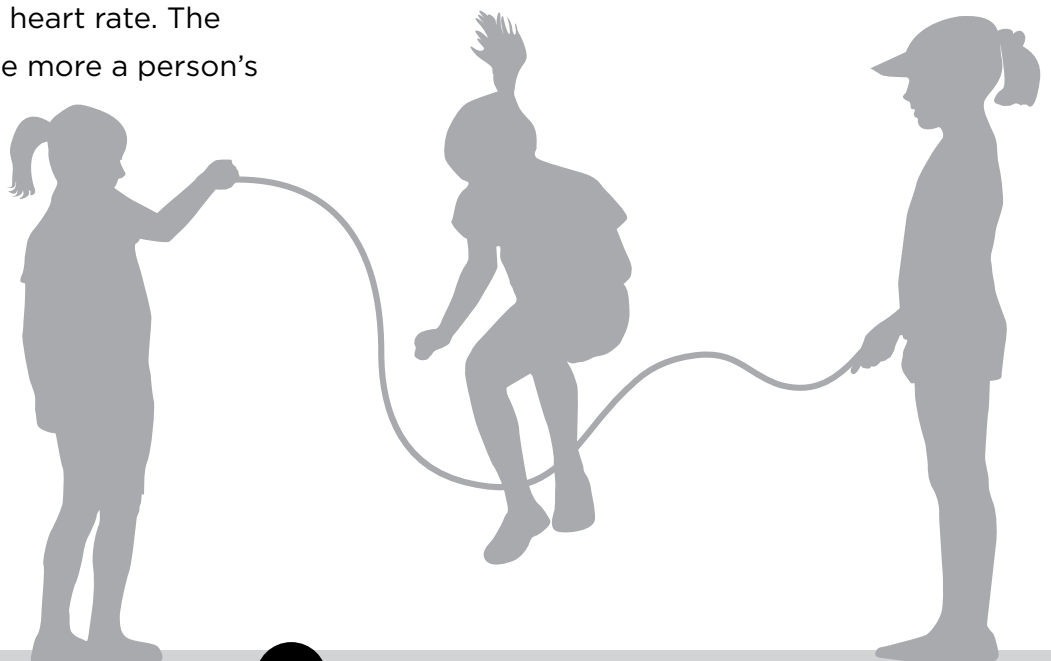
Electronic cigarettes have also been marketed to smokers as a way to help them quit, but instead, evidence shows there is actually an increased health risk for people who vape, as well as to the people around them.

Like tobacco smoke, second-hand consumption of the vapor containing nicotine that is exhaled from these devices can cause health complications to everyone who directly or indirectly breathes it.

#### ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Instead of drugs, here are five fun things I'd rather do with my friends:*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_





## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Let's test your knowledge about tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and vaping.*

*Instructions: Fill in, check, or circle your answers to each question.*

1. Name three health problems caused by smoking:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. ☐ TRUE OR ☐ FALSE: Electronic cigarettes are safe.

3. ☐ TRUE OR ☐ FALSE: Vaping is safe around children.

4. ☐ TRUE OR ☐ FALSE: The nicotine in eliquid is safer than the nicotine in tobacco.

5. Electronic cigarettes were originally marketed to help smokers:

- A. stop their smoking habit and start a vaping habit.
- B. try another habit-forming behavior.
- C. quit smoking.

6. The legal age in California to purchase and use electronic cigarettes or vape pens is:

- A. any age if you have enough money to buy them.
- B. when you get your driver's license.
- C. 21 years old.

7. Name one strategy you can use to resist pressure from others to vape or try an electronic cigarette.

\_\_\_\_\_

8. List three reasons why staying smoke-free is a good choice for you.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Alcohol is a depressant. How do depressants affect your brain?

- A. They slow your brain down, making it difficult to think or act clearly.
- B. They effect your balance and make it challenging to walk in a straight line.
- C. They blur your vision and slur your speech.
- D. All of the above.

# MARIJUANA

## What is marijuana?

**Marijuana** is a shredded, green-brown mix of dried stems and leaves from the hemp plant.

Marijuana is usually rolled into cigarette paper and smoked like a cigarette. Unlike tobacco, it contains tetrahydrocannabinol [tet-rah-hi-drə-kə-na-bə-nol] or **THC**, which is a powerful chemical compound that alters a person's mind. When marijuana is smoked, the THC quickly passes through the lungs into the bloodstream, to the brain, and other parts of the body. When THC connects with receptors on nerve cells in the parts of the brain that control pleasure and sensory perception (hearing, vision, taste, smell, and touch), it causes the marijuana "high." THC also connects with receptors on nerve cells in other parts of the brain. Those parts of the brain affect thinking, memory, coordination, and concentration, which can cause unwanted side effects, such as:

- difficulty thinking and problem solving
- problems with memory and learning
- loss of balance and coordination
- distorted perception

Being high on marijuana can make it dangerous to do responsible things like driving a car, crossing the street, riding a bike, or babysitting.

## What is it like to be high?

Marijuana is a **mind-altering** drug and is considered a hallucinogen. A hallucinogen is a drug that causes users to see images, hear sounds, and feel sensations that seem very real to them but do not exist. Under the influence of marijuana, their perception of the world around them becomes heightened and distorted. Colors may seem brighter, music may become hypnotic, sad things may seem hysterically funny.

Marijuana affects everyone differently. Users don't know the potency of the THC it contains or how it will affect them until they've smoked it. They may experience rapid, intense emotional swings, food cravings, or nightmarish images. Good or bad, they're not in control of their own mind and body. These side effects are temporary, but they can be very traumatic.

### ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Studies show that young people think marijuana is not harmful because in some states it is legal for adults.*

*What do you think?*

☐ HARMFUL   ☐ NOT HARMFUL

*Explain your choice:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# MARIJUANA

## Short-term effects

- Marijuana makes it hard to concentrate and keep track of time. People who use it have difficulty with memory and find it hard to solve problems and learn.
- Marijuana raises your heart rate and blood pressure. Some people get red eyes, dry mouths, become sleepy, or very hungry. The drug can also make some people paranoid and think that someone is out to hurt them or is plotting against them.
- Smoking marijuana is as tough on your throat and lungs as cigarettes are. Coughs, wheezing, frequent colds, and respiratory (airway and lung) infections, like bronchitis are common with continued use.

## Long-term effects

People who use marijuana over a long period of time can have more lasting side effects such as:

- **Changes in the brain.** Marijuana increases the inability or difficulty to remember simple things, multitask, and pay attention.
- **Respiratory problems.** Marijuana use can lead to respiratory system issues—like more mucus, a chronic cough, and bronchitis.
- **Immune system problems.** The use of marijuana may make it harder for the body to fight off infections.
- **Emotional problems.** People who use marijuana are more likely to experience depression, low **self-esteem**, or anxiety.

## WHERE MARIJUANA AFFECTS YOUR BRAIN

*Science has proven that smoking marijuana on a regular basis can hinder the development of the brain, lower performance in sports and in school, and increase the risk for addiction.*

### HYPOTHALAMUS

*Appetite, hormonal levels*

### BASAL GANGLIA

*Motor control, planning, start and stop of action*

### VENTRAL STRIATUM

*Prediction and feeling of reward*

### AMYGDALA

*Anxiety, emotion, and fear*

### NEOCORTEX

*Higher cognitive functions and integration of sensory information*

### HIPPOCAMPUS

*Memory and learning facts, sequences, and places*

### CEREBELLUM

*Motor control and coordination*

### BRAIN STEM / SPINAL CORD

*Vomiting reflex and sensation of pain*

# MARIJUANA

## Other problems

**Criminal charges.** Most states have laws against using, growing, or selling marijuana. Under the federal laws of the United States, possessing marijuana is punishable by a maximum fine of \$1,000 and one year in jail.

**Career problems.** People convicted for **possession** of marijuana may end up with criminal records that hurt their future plans for college or finding a job.

**Drug testing.** Employers often test for drug use as part of the hiring process. Marijuana can show up on a drug test for several weeks or months after it was last used.

**Withdrawal symptoms.** People who use marijuana for a while can have **withdrawal** symptoms when they try to quit. They may feel irritable, anxious, or depressed, have trouble sleeping, or may not have an appetite.

## Medical use of marijuana

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved pills containing THC as a medicinal option for people suffering with pain, nausea, muscle stiffness, or problems with movement. Taking THC in pill form may help these patients get relief from chronic pain. There's not enough research yet to know if smoking marijuana is more helpful for pain management than taking THC as a pill. Scientists are still studying this. As with any **medicine**, it is best to follow the instructions of a **doctor** or other medical professional.

## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Let's show everyone we will just say "NO!" to electronic cigarettes, vaping, and marijuana.*

### Design a pledge poster

Review the information on pages 3 through 8 and think of three reasons why living a drug-free lifestyle is a good choice for you.

Your **pledge** poster should include:

1. "I PROMISE TO BE DRUG-FREE!"
2. Your written **promise** to be electronic cigarette, vaping, and marijuana-free.
3. Your three reasons why it's best to live a drug-free lifestyle.

Examples:

- Your promise to respect yourself by keeping your body **healthy** and your mind sharp.
  - Your promise to be involved in social activities, **school**, hobbies, or sports.
  - Your promise to be the best YOU ever.
4. Add drawings or cut pictures from magazines that show healthy **lifestyle** choices and things you enjoy.
  5. Sign your name and the date at the bottom of your poster as a pledge to yourself and your friends to stay drug-free.
  6. Display your pledge poster in your classroom or at home during red ribbon week.



# REDEFINE THE NEW NORMAL!

Knowing who you are inside can keep you strong if you're faced with peer pressure and need to make difficult choices. We all have days when we may doubt ourselves and feel disappointed, lonely, or sad, but fortunately, our self-esteem isn't unchangable. Changing the way you *think* about yourself can change the way you *feel* about yourself.

When you feel good about yourself, you'll be **confident** in the choices you make and those around you will feel good about themselves too.

The best ways to build yourself up are:

- Think of something you'd like to do, make a plan for doing it, and begin.
- Remind yourself that trying your best doesn't mean you have to be perfect.
- Don't compare yourself to others—everyone excels at different things.
- Try new activities and give yourself credit for your talents.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Change what you're able to change and be okay with what you can't change.
- Be proud of your opinions and ideas. Don't be afraid to voice them!

- Make a difference by helping others. **Volunteer**, contribute, participate!
- **Exercise!** You'll relieve stress and be healthier too.
- Relax and have fun.
- Spend time with people who **love** you.
- Find friends who make **good choices** and do safe things you all enjoy.
- Focus on the good.
- Feel good about yourself just the way you are.

Let's redefine the new normal by creating a **drug-free** culture and influencing others by making good choices!



## ELECTRONICS

**Don't get addicted to electronic devices!**

When you text **friends** or play video games, your brain releases a feel-good chemical called **dopamine**. It is the same rush that compels drug addicts to take more drugs, whether they want to or not. Dopamine is released whenever you expect a reward (such as scoring points or receiving a text back from your friend), so it's easy to see how anyone can get addicted to gaming and electronic devices.

You may have a problem if you are constantly checking social media or are so addicted to a game that you choose to play it over

everything else. Besides taking time away from your family, friends, and schoolwork (hurting your relationships and grades), this habit can also make you sick. Kids who are addicted to video games are more likely to gain weight and feel depressed or anxious. They may not learn basic social skills, like how to make friends or talk to people. They may stay up late playing and not get enough sleep to be their best during the day. They may get angry at loved ones when told to stop or if the game is taken away. The same goes for TV or computers: too much screen time can put kids at risk for an unhealthy lifestyle as well.

## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

**NO CLICKING!** Put down that phone or tablet, turn off the TV, shut down the computer!

*Can you add to our list of fun things to do instead?*

1. **Game night!** Invite your friends over for cards or board games. Have you played Monopoly® lately?
2. **Read a book!** Check out what's new that interests you at the library.
3. **Bike or hike!** Explore the trails on the paseos or in our local mountains.
4. **Volunteer!** Sign up to volunteer at City events or help out a neighbor in need.
5. **Join a team or club!** Or start one!

6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_





## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*It's word search time! How many of the words listed below can you find?*

*Answers may be forward, backward, or diagonal.*

*(Hint: Words used are highlighted in bold throughout this booklet.)*

R O P A V N G C I G A R E T T E S N E S  
F E U E L O V E N I T O C I N I A T C M  
S N Z P L E D G E U B P P O L P J B L E  
E I B Q G Y M P X A E L I Q U I D H H L  
S M M N W G T Q G O O D C H O I C E S B  
I A I S F I L S F P O S S E S S I O N O  
C P N L S P T Y E W Y Y X J B G V J C R  
R O D A Z I R H M F Q E Y I M Z S R M P  
E D A C S C G R D J I N C E Q S I N C W  
C N L I C M R D C R M L E C R M U Z V F  
X Y T M H E D N T A A T A B I U Z V C A  
E H E E O W V B R N S W C N N M N W I D  
H T R H O C F I E E K O A I S C M M N R  
L L I C L R J S F N N L A L V H H M O U  
Q A N X I U I L R F I R M E R T F X R G  
B E G E A M E H I O B C Y E Y F A H T F  
N H N N O S F D H X T L I H B E N C C R  
U D A R O D E U N H N C R D B O Q N E E  
S S P E T N M J U K Y R O M E C G V L E  
K R E E T N U L O V A F F D W M F L E Q

**Word bank:**

- |              |                |                 |               |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| • ARRHYTHMIA | • DOPAMINE     | • LIFESTYLE     | • PROBLEMS    |
| • BRAIN      | • DRUG-FREE    | • LOVE          | • PROMISE     |
| • CHEMICALS  | • ELECTRONIC   | • MARIJUANA     | • SCHOOL      |
| • CIGARETTES | • ELIQUID      | • MEDICINE      | • SELF-ESTEEM |
| • CONFIDENT  | • EXCERCISE    | • MIND-ALTERING | • THC         |
| • CRIMINAL   | • FRIENDS      | • NICOTINE      | • VAPOR       |
| • DOCTOR     | • GOOD CHOICES | • PLEDGE        | • VOLUNTEER   |
|              | • HEALTHY      | • POSSESSION    | • WITHDRAWAL  |

**DRIVE FOCUS LIVE!**

## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

*Making good choices is also important for traffic safety before and after school.*

*In the safety tips below, circle all the good choices  
and cross out the choices that aren't very wise.*



1. **Always cross the street:**
  - A. at corner traffic signals or stop signs.
  - B. in designated crosswalks.
  - C. with crossing guards.
  - D. anywhere if you're late.
2. **When a car approaches the crosswalk it is important to:**
  - A. make eye contact with the driver.
  - B. make sure the driver sees you.
  - C. run across the street in front of the car really, really, really fast.
3. **Crossing the street while using electronic devices is never okay unless:**
  - A. you are texting your BFF.
  - B. you're on the phone talking with your grandma.
  - C. you've got headphones on listening to a cool song.
  - D. you put all your devices away and pay attention.
4. **Always walk on sidewalks. If there are no sidewalks, it is best to walk on the side of the road:**
  - A. facing oncoming traffic.
  - B. facing away from oncoming traffic.
  - C. where there are the most Pokémon to catch.
5. **Before crossing the street you should always:**
  - A. look left, right, and left again to check for approaching cars.
  - B. be aware of cars that are turning or backing up.
  - C. cross without looking because it's the driver's responsibility to see you.
6. **It is never okay to run out into the street or cross between parked cars because:**
  - A. oncoming traffic can't see you coming.
  - B. darting into the street accounts for the majority of child pedestrian fatalities.
  - C. Spider-Man can't swoop down and save everyone.
7. **When walking to or from school, it is smart to:**
  - A. never walk alone.
  - B. walk with a school friend, family member, or trusted neighbor.
  - C. accept a ride from a friendly stranger.
8. **If you're walking when it's dark outside or hard to see, it is best to:**
  - A. wear white or bright-colored clothing.
  - B. have on reflective gear.
  - C. carry a flashlight.
  - D. sneak up behind people and say, "Boo!"
9. **When waiting for the school bus you should:**
  - A. never wait in the roadway.
  - B. know the safety rules for waiting at the bus stop, getting on and off the bus, and riding the bus.
  - C. be aware of what is going on around you.
  - D. be proud of yourself for making good choices!

**Safety tips to share  
with your parents**

- Respect the crossing guards!
- Crossing guards help children safely cross the street at key locations.
- Teach your child to pay attention to the crossing guard's whistle, stop sign, and hand signals.
- When you're driving, remember: **Children safely crossing the street in the crosswalk are ALWAYS our number one priority.**

## ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

## HEADS UP!

You can do your part to reduce traffic-related collisions and fatalities by being a heads up pedestrian.

Unscramble these words to reveal the mystery message!  
Copy the letters in the numbered boxes to their matching numbered box below.  
(Hint: words used can be found on page 12.)

1. YEE CAOTCTN

22		7	20						

2. NORSCSIG DAURG

26	27							38	3	31

3. POTS NIGS

29	12						

4. SHDOHPEANE

					18	36		2	

5. HOOSLC SUB

14		8	30				16

6. CIFFTRA

32						10	

7. PAETIDNERS

19	9	28							

8. LGKINAW

1					33		

9. THALFSGIHL

35					39			6	

10. SATFEY ESLUR

					15										34

11. DERHNCIL

23	24							5	

12. DANH SLSINGA

11								41						40

13. STWEHLI

17					13		42

14. WASLOCRKS

37				25			21		4

Make good choices whenever traffic is present. Don't walk distracted!

## Mystery message!

1	2																			
23	23	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	!



[illegible]



Information taken from multiple sources, which include the following:

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

[tobaccofreekids.org](http://tobaccofreekids.org)

[kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org)



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