



DRUG FREE YOUTH IN SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

**STUDENT INFORMATION
AND ACTIVITY BOOKLET**

Spanish version available at
www.dfyinscv.com

This booklet includes:

- Student information about*
- The dangers of drugs*
- The abuse of prescription drugs*
- The dangers of inhalants*
- Peer pressure*
- 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

DRUGS

What is a drug?

A drug is a chemical that affects your body and mind. Some drugs are given to people by doctors when they are sick to make them healthy. Other drugs are illegal, which means it is against the law to buy or use them. The chemicals in illegal drugs impair judgement and physical capabilities.

Why do kids take drugs?

Preteens and teenagers may feel unsure of where they fit in and may experiment with drugs because of peer pressure or to mask painful emotions. Taking drugs make them temporarily forget their problems at first, but it can turn into an uncontrollable addiction and create many more problems for later on.

Why are drugs dangerous for kids?

The rational (thinking) part of a teenager's brain isn't fully developed until age 25. Adult and teen brains work differently. Adults think with the *prefrontal cortex* (the brain's decision-making center) and teens process information with the *amygdala* (the emotional part of the brain).

In teen brains, the connections between the emotional part of the brain and the decision-making part of the brain are still developing—and not necessarily at the same rate. That's why teens often react emotionally to experiences and later can't explain what they were thinking. In fact, they weren't *thinking* as much as they were *feeling*.

How can I tell if someone is using drugs?

Drugs are chemicals that change the way the body and mind work, so you might notice changes in looks or behavior, such as:

- Mood swings; irritable and grumpy, then suddenly happy and bright
- Withdrawn from family and friends
- Loss of interest in hobbies, sports, and other favorite activities
- Changes in sleep patterns; up at night and sleeping during the day
- Red or watery eyes
- Careless about personal grooming
- Runny nose or cough
- Puffy face, blushing, or paleness

Many drugs give people a sense of altered reality when they first take them, but when the drug wears off they may feel sick and have even more problems than they did before they took the drug. Once someone is addicted to drugs, suddenly stopping can cause withdrawal symptoms like vomiting and sweating, making them feel very sick for days.

As you can imagine, teens who decide to abuse drugs compromise their participation and performance at school, in sports, socially, and at home.

BRAIN

POWER

The “do’s” and “don’ts” of healthy brain development

Did you know your brain won’t be fully developed until you are 25 years old? By making good choices now, you will be co-creator in the healthy development of your prefrontal cortex.

The “Do’s”

Challenging tasks: Learning new skills, memory training, writing, recalling, and processing information can stimulate brain development and increase your IQ.

Diet: Power your brain with veggies, fruits, proteins, the right fats and carbohydrates, fish oils, and antioxidants.

Education: The more you learn before you are 25, the more ingrained that information becomes.

Environmental enrichment: Take advantage of enriching resources such as after school activities, smart friends, and learning opportunities.

Exercise: Being active improves blood flow, makes you feel good, and can actually help you grow new brain cells!

Meditation: Meditation enhances your prefrontal cortex (the decision-making center), making you more resilient to stress while improving your attention and clarity of thinking.

Sleep: Eight hours of sleep gives your brain time to recover and rejuvenate.

Socialization: Positive social contacts and friends stimulate brain development.

Relaxation: Allowing yourself to relax reduces stress-provoking brain activity, helping to avoid tension and anxiety.

The “Don’ts”

Alcohol abuse: Drinking disrupts healthy brain development and may damage brain cells in teens.

Drug abuse: Exposure to illegal drugs in the critical years of development can lead to negative consequences in your health and other parts of your life.

Poor diet: A daily diet filled with processed sugars and refined carbohydrates can influence the development of illness and behavior changes in developing brains.

Chronic stress: Stress disrupts the structure of the developing brain and may change its ability to deal with difficult situations in the future.

Relationship troubles: In order to ensure healthy brain development, you need healthy, positive friends, and non-toxic relationships.

Sleep problems: Lack of sleep may inhibit optimal brain development.

Social isolation: Being anti-social can lead to personality and mood changes. Our ability to thrive in social situations depends on establishing positive social contacts during our childhood and teenage years.

O.T.C.

MEDICATIONS

Over-the-counter drugs

It is a mistake to think that **over-the-counter (OTC) medications** and prescription drugs are not dangerous because they are sold in a pharmacy or prescribed by a doctor. In fact, because they are readily available, it is possible to abuse them unintentionally or become addicted to them too.

One example of an OTC medication that is frequently abused is cough medicine. When you have a bad cough and take the correct dosage of liquid or tablets that are recommended on the label, you may see your symptoms reduced. Taking higher doses, on the other hand, can cause problems with your senses, especially vision and hearing, and can lead to confusion, stomach pain, numbness, and even hallucinations (the apparent perception of something not present).

What are the dangers of abusing medications?

Someone who is abusing OTC or prescription drugs will be more likely to have trouble at school, at home, with friends, and even with the law. The likelihood is also higher that someone abusing drugs will commit a crime, be a victim of a crime, or be involved in an accident.

Many drugs have to be prescribed by a doctor because they are highly addictive. Most doctors won't renew a prescription until their patient is examined to make sure addiction is not a problem and other symptoms have not developed.

Using prescription drugs when you are not ill poses serious risks to your health. This risk is even higher when prescription drugs are taken with other substances like alcohol or tobacco, or combined with illegal drugs. Sadly, overdoses leading to death have taken the lives of many people.

Abusing medications can be deadly for anyone. Let's be smart and not start!



The most common result of medication abuse is addiction. People who abuse their prescribed medications can become addicted just as easily as they could to illegal drugs. Over time, addicts need higher and higher dosages or more powerful drugs to feel the same effects. If you are addicted to powerful medications when you are *not* sick, there may be fewer or limited medications strong enough to help you if you *do* get sick.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Prescription medications are drugs that your doctor orders for you from a pharmacy to help treat, cure, or prevent a disease or illness. Some people mistakenly think that prescription drugs are not dangerous because they are prescribed by their doctor, but like illegal drugs, it is just as possible to abuse them or become addicted to them.

Doctors know how much medication to prescribe according to your age and needs. If you're taking the medicine exactly as instructed, you shouldn't worry about becoming addicted. When you take the correct dose of the right medicine, drugs can relieve your symptoms and help get you well.

Tips for taking prescription medication

Prescribing the right medication for you is your doctor's job. You and your parent or guardian's responsibility is to:

- **Keep all doctors' appointments.** Your doctor will need to monitor how well the medicine is working for you and adjust the dose or change the medication as needed.
- **Make a note of the effects the drug has on your body.** Tell your doctor if you feel worse or something doesn't seem right.

- **Keep the instructions your pharmacist gives you.** Reread them to remind yourself about any activities, other drugs, juices, or foods you should avoid while taking the medication. If the information is too long or complicated, ask a parent or your pharmacist to give you the highlights.
- **Don't increase, decrease, or stop taking the dosage.** Check with your doctor's office first, no matter how you're feeling.
- **Never use anyone else's prescription or let anyone else use yours.** Not only are you putting their health at risk, but you could suffer too: Pharmacists won't refill your prescription if they suspect your medication was used up too quickly. It is also a crime to sell, steal, or share prescriptions, and if caught, you may find yourself in court.



Taking medicine when you're well can make you really sick!

ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

Making good choices with medicine

Answer the questions below. Then discuss your answers with a partner. What should you do?

Roll-play or act out how you would handle each situation.

1. You find pills on the counter. They are pretty colors and look like candy. What should you do?

- A.** Eat the pills.
- B.** Don't touch the pills. Tell a parent or guardian.

2. You get a headache at your friend's house. Your friend's mother offers to give you medicine. What should you do?

- A.** Get your parent or guardian's permission first.
- B.** Take the medicine.

3. You take some new medicine your doctor gave you. Then you get sleepy and don't feel very well. What should you do?

- A.** Tell your parent or guardian about the side effect.
- B.** Lie down and go to sleep.

4. You have a sore throat. Your friend offers to give you some medicine that her doctor gave her one time when she had a sore throat. What should you do?

- A.** Take your friend's sore throat medicine.
- B.** Don't take it. Tell your parent or guardian.

5. Your doctor gave you medicine for an ear infection. You've been taking the medicine and now your ear doesn't hurt anymore. You still have some medicine left. What should you do?

- A.** Finish taking the medicine as your doctor instructed.
- B.** Throw the medicine away.

6. You see your little brother or sister sitting on the floor playing with a bottle of pills. What should you do?

- A.** Take the pills away and give them to your parent or guardian.
- B.** Make sure the bottle cap is on tightly and let them keep playing with it.

7. Last night your dad gave you some pain-relieving medicine when you had a headache. The medicine tasted good so you wish you could have more. You're thinking about telling your dad your head hurts again, even though it doesn't. What should you do?

- A.** Sneak more of the medicine when nobody's looking.
- B.** Be happy! Your head does not hurt anymore!

8. What should you do if you feel sick at home?

9. What should you do if you feel sick at school? _____

10. What should you do if you feel sick at a friend's house? _____

11. Can you name one or two trusted adults who are allowed to give you medicine?

INHALANTS

Inhalants are chemicals found in ordinary household or workplace products, such as aerosol cans and solvents, that are purposely inhaled to get a quick “high.” Since the high from inhalants usually lasts only a few minutes, users will often keep on inhaling the product again and again just to continue the high.

Because many inhalants can be found around the house, kids often don’t think about the serious damage that inhaling chemical fumes, even just once, can do to their body and brain.

What happens to your brain and body when you use inhalants?

When inhaled, the chemicals replace the oxygen in your lungs, quickly moving through your bloodstream into your brain. Within seconds, users feel intoxicated and

experience effects similar to those of alcohol, such as slurred speech, lack of coordination, and dizziness. Some users also experience lightheadedness, hallucinations (the apparent perception of something not present), and delusions (believing something that is not true). Nearly all solvents and gases produce *anesthesia* (a numbing, loss of sensation) that can lead to asphyxiation (choking on your own vomit), and unconsciousness.

The dangers of inhalants

Breathing toxic fumes can cause headaches, loss of coordination, slurred speech, vision problems, hallucinations, impaired memory, and personality changes. Even worse, nearly all inhalants produce a dangerous effect by slowing your brain activity down.

Vocabulary: Categories of drugs

Depressants are drugs that slow down normal brain and spinal cord activity, causing slurred speech, shallow breathing, sleepiness, disorientation, and lack of coordination.

Hallucinogens are mind-altering drugs that cause images, sounds, and sensations that seem very real but do not exist.

Inhalants are chemicals found in ordinary household products. When inhaled even just once, the dangerous fumes can be very harmful to the brain and body.

Narcotics are drugs that induce sleep and dull the body’s senses, leaving users unaware and less alert, and can cause sleepiness, or lead to unconsciousness.

Stimulants are drugs that temporarily increase alertness, attention, and energy. They can also elevate the heart rate, respiration, blood pressure, and body temperature, and cause hallucinations, irritability, panic, convulsions, seizures, and death.

PEER PRESSURE

As you grow older, you'll be faced with some challenging decisions. Some don't have a clear right or wrong answer, like choosing whether to play soccer or field hockey. Other decisions involve serious moral questions, such as whether to cut class, try cigarettes, or lie to your parents. Your peers influence your life, even if you don't realize it, just by spending time together. You learn from them and they learn from you. It's human nature to listen to and learn from other people in your age group. It is also normal to want to belong.

Defining peer pressure

Making decisions on your own is hard enough, but when your peers get involved and try to pressure you into doing something you don't want to do, it can be even harder. You may be concerned that if you don't join them, they may exclude you, make fun of you, or call you names.

Sometimes peers influence each other in negative ways. For example, a few kids in

school might try to get you to cheat on an assignment, your soccer friend may try to convince you to be mean to another player and never pass her the ball, or a kid in the neighborhood may tell you that there is nothing wrong with shoplifting.

Powerful, positive peer pressure

When peers get together, they can also pressure each other into doing the right thing! Positive peer pressure can be used to influence bullies into acting nicer towards other kids. Maybe another student in your science class taught you an easy way to remember the planets in the solar system, or someone on the soccer team showed you a cool trick with the ball. You might admire a friend who is always a good sport and try to be more like him or her. Maybe you've told others about a great book you read, and now everyone's reading it. These are just a few examples of how you and your peers can positively influence each other every day.



Positive peer pressure means we can influence each other in positive ways.

KEEPING IT REAL!

Why do people give in to peer pressure?

Some kids give in to peer pressure because they want to be liked, to fit in, or because they worry that other kids might make fun of them if they don't go along with the group.

Others go along because they are curious to try something new. The idea that "everyone's doing it" can influence some kids to leave their better judgment and common sense behind.

Walking away from peer pressure

It is tough to be the only one who says "no" to peer pressure, but you can do it. Paying attention to your own feelings and beliefs about what is right and wrong can help you determine what the right thing to do is.

Inner strength and self-confidence can help you stand firm, walk away, and resist doing something you know is wrong.

It's great to have friends with values similar to yours who will back you up when you don't want to do something. If they are having trouble resisting peer pressure, you can help back them up too. It can be powerful for one kid to join another by simply saying, "I'm with you. Let's go."

Someone in your life has probably told you to choose your friends wisely. Peer pressure is a big reason for their advice. If you choose friends who don't use drugs, cut class, smoke cigarettes, or lie to their parents, then you probably won't do these things either.

You want to make your own choices and stay drug free but sometimes peer pressure is hard to resist. A great tool we use in DFY in SCV is REAL (Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave). Keeping It REAL can help!

KEEPING IT REAL

- R** *Refuse: Say directly that you do not want to do something.*
- E** *Explain: Give an explanation in order to resist something.*
- A** *Avoid: Stay away from certain situations so you don't have to do something you don't want to do.*
- L** *Leave: Leave a situation in order to resist doing something you don't want to do.*

If you continue to face peer pressure and find it difficult to resist, talk to someone you trust. Talking to a parent, teacher, or school counselor can help you feel much better and prepare you for the next time you are faced with a difficult situation.

ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

THINK FIRST!

What would you do in each of these four peer pressure situations?

Use the chart below to think through the best choice.

1. You're studying, and some of your teammates come by. They want you to go behind the building and smoke some cigarettes. "You're not going to nerd out on us, are you?" they ask.

Problem: _____

Consequences: _____

Action: _____

2. You're at the store, wishing you had enough money for a soda. Your friend says, "Just take it! It's no big deal. The clerk's not even looking."

Problem: _____

Consequences: _____

Action: _____

3. Your friends want you to try alcohol for the first time, but you are not sure it is a good choice. "Come on, do it! We're all drinking it," they say.

Problem: _____

Consequences: _____

Action: _____

4. A friend wants you to keep a bag of pills in your backpack because he was called to the office and doesn't want to get caught with it. He says, "If you don't, you can forget about hanging out with me after school."

Problem: _____

Consequences: _____

Action: _____

PROBLEM**What does my friend want me to do?**

Ask yourself:

Is it something good or bad?

Kind or mean?

Healthy or unhealthy?

Legal or illegal?

Is it something I would do if my parents were watching?

CONSEQUENCES**What could happen if I do it?**

Imagine any possible good results:

Will I learn something positive?

Will I be helping someone?

Imagine any possible bad results:

Can I get hurt?

Can I get in trouble?

Can someone else get hurt or in trouble?

ACTION**Should I do it?**

Think about how you'll feel:

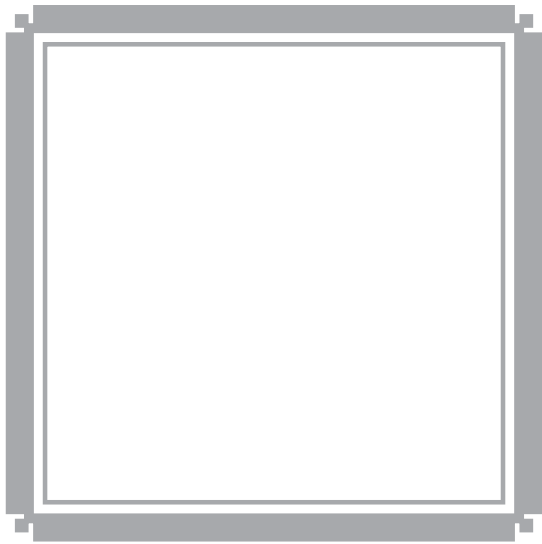
Will I be proud of my choice afterward?

Would my parents be proud of my choice?

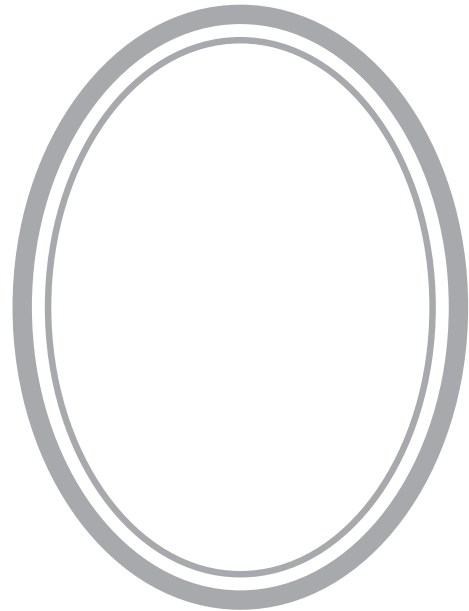
TRUSTED ADULTS

It is important for you to know that abusing prescription drugs or illegal drugs does not solve your problems or make things better. A much better way to handle your problems is to talk to an adult you trust and ask for help.

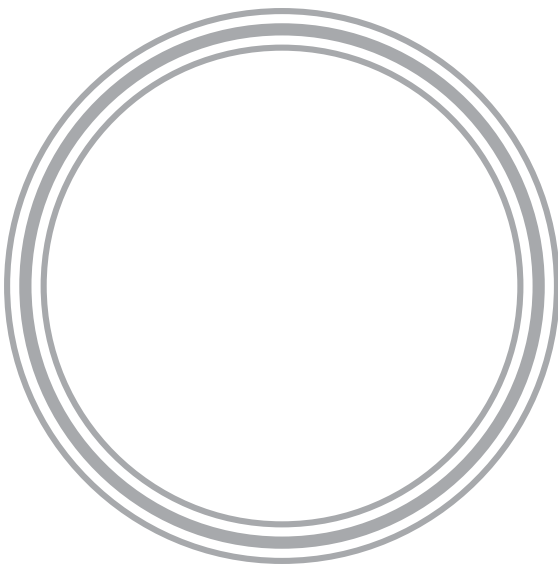
Instructions: Name and draw a picture of four adults who you trust and feel comfortable asking for advice and help.



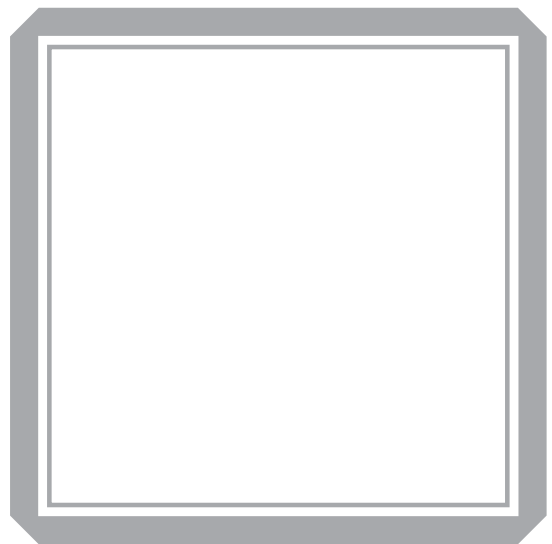
Name: _____



Name: _____



Name: _____



Name: _____

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.**

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	M	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	23	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	V	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	V	42	!

SOLUTIONS

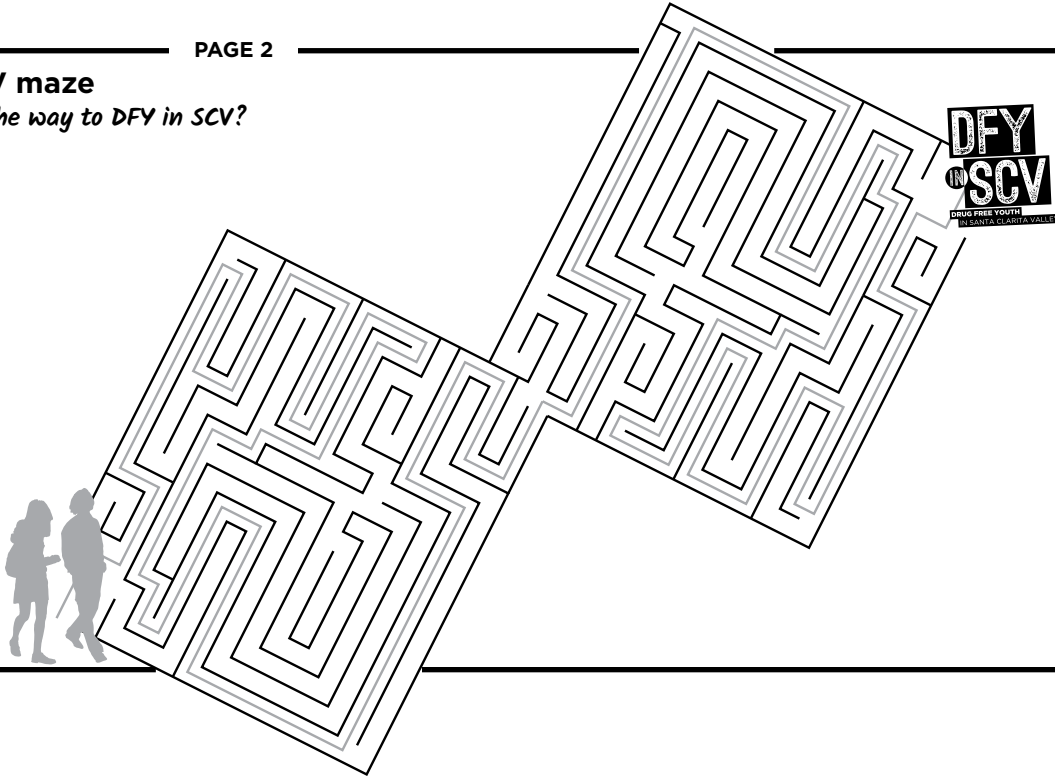
Were you able to solve these activity challenges with the information you've learned in this booklet?

Solving problems can be a challenge. Sometimes you may need help in making good choices. DFY in SCV is always here to help. You've come to the right page for the answers!

PAGE 2

DFY in SCV maze

Can you find the way to DFY in SCV?



PAGE 6

Making good choices with medicine

1. B. DON'T TOUCH THE PILLS. TELL YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN
2. A. CALL YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR PERMISSION FIRST.
3. A. TELL YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.
4. B. DON'T TAKE IT!
5. A. FOLLOW YOUR DOCTOR'S INSTRUCTIONS.
6. A. TAKE THE PILLS AWAY.
7. B. BE HAPPY!
8. GOOD THINKING!
9. CALL YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.
10. CALL YOUR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.
11. THE PERFECT PEOPLE TO CALL!

PAGE 13

Heads Up! word jumble

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. EYE CONTACT | 8. WALKING |
| 2. CROSSING GUARD | 9. FLASHLIGHT |
| 3. STOP SIGN | 10. SAFETY RULES |
| 4. HEADPHONES | 11. CHILDREN |
| 5. SCHOOL BUS | 12. HAND SIGNALS |
| 6. TRAFFIC | 13. WHISTLE |
| 7. PEDESTRIAN | 14. CROSSWALK |

Mystery message:

WE MAKE GOOD CHOICES WHEN WE
CHOOSE TO DRIVE FOCUS LIVE!

MY NOTES

See something, say something!

As you prepare to transition into junior high school, here is another helpful tool for you to use to keep yourself and your friends safe.

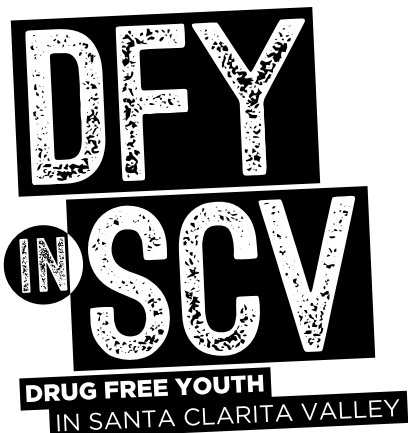
Text-a-Tip

See something, say something! You can text your junior high school administration anonymously about any of the following:

- Crime
- Drug abuse
- Bullying
- Theft
- Gang activity

Junior High School text numbers

- Arroyo Seco JHS 765-831-2754 (ASJH)
- La Mesa JHS 661-524-5166 (LOBO)
- Placerita JHS 661-282-7522 (PLAC)
- Rancho Pico JHS 661-418-7426 (PICO)
- Rio Norte JHS 661-731-3847 (3TIP)
- Sierra Vista JHS 661-724-6478 (64SV)





Information taken from multiple sources, which include the following:

kidshealth.org

drugabuse.gov

webmd.com

drugfreeworld.org



DRUG FREE YOUTH IN SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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