

Decisions At Every Turn Coalition Community Newsletter

An Ashland community resource helping support young people & their caregivers in creating a safe & healthy Ashland for all.



Fall
2024



Hello Ashland Prevention Partners,

This August and September, The Decisions at Every Turn Coalition recognized both National Recovery Month and International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31. These times of recognition were created to bring awareness to themes of prevention, while also alerting our community to the robust resources available to those in need. In this newsletter, you will find a number of resources directing Ashland and local residents to seek support in that time of need. Recovery is always possible, whether that be from substance use addiction or mental illness. Often, all it takes is the willingness to engage in change processes, something humans are inherently capable of.

This past month also marked the return to school for Ashland youth and their support networks. If one word were to define this stretch of time each year, it would be BUSY! As the Youth and Community Coordinator for both Ashland's Department of Prevention and Human Services and The Decisions at Every Turn Coalition, I engage daily with Ashland's young people to explore what matters to them most. My office at AHS has been its own type of busy with students and staff exploring our educational prevention resources, collecting supportive materials for the classroom, and reporting on what problems in Ashland they seek to prevent. With this framework, the hope is students feel less alone and that they have a voice in what the future of their community will look like for themselves and future students.

When life gets busy as it does this time of year, it is often hard to slow down to have the conversations that matter, especially when it comes to preparing our kids for the future. For those not familiar with the work we do at DAET, we have spent over a decade of grant-funded work to facilitate prevention-based educational resources, events, and initiatives for our Ashland community. Through this, we have been able to break down the barriers between youth and caregivers that make conversations about healthy choices difficult to have.

Now is the time to talk to the young person in your household about making healthy choices. Parents and caregivers, do not underestimate the power of your positive influence! Communicate your expectations early and often about what healthy choices look like and what to do if they ever find themselves in an unsafe situation. Being busy is never an excuse and with DAET resources here to support you, you can make even small moments impactful.

Visit our website, Facebook, or Instagram to stay up to date on all the exciting things happening this year with DAET, including our library of *Parenting for Prevention* tip sheets on our website to support you with the facts on how to get talking to your youth.

Here's to a great year,
Eliza Dodge Usen
Youth & Community Coordinator for DAET

Upcoming Events

October:

Red Ribbon Week @AMS
October 23-31

November:

Great American Smokeout
November 21

December:

National Impaired Driving
Prevention Month

January:

MLK Day of Service-
January 20

February:

Kindness Week-February
10-14

March:

Drug & Alcohol Facts
Week
March 17-23

April:

National Alcohol
Awareness Month

May:

Mental Health Awareness
Month

Want to get involved?
email
edodge@ashlandmass.com

Visit our Website-
AshlandDecisions.org

Like us on Facebook-
Decisions At Every
Turn

Follow us on
Instagram-
[@AshlandDecisions](https://www.instagram.com/AshlandDecisions)

why should you sign up FOR THE Decisions at Every Turn PREVENTION E-NEWSLETTER?

Because prevention is a life-long practice! The DAET e-newsletter is a prevention education resource for parents, caregivers, community adults, service providers or others who have a role in supporting youth of any age.

Delivered to your in-box monthly!

Each issue will ...

- Feature supportive, educational prevention resources.
- Provide strategies for supporting kids, teens, and their care networks.
- Share information about upcoming DAET & community events
- Highlight prevention news & education



PRE-K

During the preschool years kids begin to learn the importance of healthy routines. These years are critical for introducing habits that lay the foundation for health and wellness.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kids at this age are exploring independence and discovering their individuality, but are still closely tied to family and comforting routines. They are beginning to absorb messages from peers, school and the media.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Pre-teens are figuring out their place in the world. While friends' opinions are gaining power, parents still have the most influence on their decisions. That's why it is important to keep talking with them about their mental health and making healthy choices, especially about substance use.



HIGH SCHOOL

This is a critical time in helping youth make positive choices. Through the teen years, young people will have to make plenty of choices about drug use and whether they should give into peer pressure or their own curiosity. Your clear and consistent messages about not using alcohol and other drugs and your reasons why can help prevent teen use and associated negative health and mental health outcomes.



SIGN UP
HERE



DON'T MISS OUT ON WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ASHLAND TO SUPPORT PREVENTION!

DAET is dedicated to supporting safe and healthy Ashland kids & teens by helping to prevent, reduce, and address high risk behaviors, while increasing behavioral health outcomes such as positive mental health, social emotional wellbeing and low substance use rates.

WWW.ASHLANDDECISIONS.ORG

*Ashland
recognizes & remembers*

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY & NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

Find Treatment

Substance Abuse &
Mental Health
Services
Administration

US Department of
Health and
Human Services



Facts on Effective Treatment for Opioid Addiction

NATIONAL INSTITUTE
ON DRUG ABUSE (NIH)

ON WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28TH, DAET PARTNERED WITH ASHLAND'S DEPARTMENT OF PREVENTION & HUMAN SERVICES, HEALTH DEPARTMENT, AND ASHLAND FIRE & POLICE DEPARTMENTS TO STAKE 2,125 FLAGS IN MEMORY OF THE LIVES LOST TO DRUG OVERDOSE IN 2023.

THIS MEMORIAL, PLACED IN FRONT OF THE ASHLAND PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING, WAS CREATED TO REMIND OUR COMMUNITY NOT ONLY OF THE LIVES LOST TO OVERDOSE, BUT ALSO SHARE THAT #TOGETHERWECAN PREVENT THE RISK FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD TO SUBSTANCE USE & OVERDOSE.

THIS RESOURCE WAS CREATED BY DAET TO HELP ASHLAND RESIDENTS STRUGGLING WITH DRUG USE UNDERSTAND THAT HELP IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE, AND IS OFTEN JUST A CALL OR MESSAGE AWAY.

National Helpline
1-800-662-4357

Find treatment near you
www.FindTreatment.gov

THIS INCLUDES-

- BEHAVIORAL HEALTH TREATMENT
- BUPRENORPHINE TREATMENT
- METHADONE CENTERS

MA Specific Recovery
MOAR

Massachusetts Organization for Addiction &
Recovery

617-423-6627

en español y portugués

STOP ACT GRANT AWARDED TO DAET!

We are excited to announce that the Town of Ashland was recently awarded a SAMHSA STOP Act grant to help prevent and reduce alcohol use among youth and young adults ages 12-20. Formally known as the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grant, the funding award - \$240,000 over four years - will assist DAET with addressing norms regarding alcohol use among youth and reducing opportunities and the negative consequences associated with underage use. Further, the STOP project will elevate our efforts to develop strategies to support students who are at a greater risk for alcohol use and misuse.

As part of our 4-year Strategic Plan, we will prioritize Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and conduct an audit of our processes and programs; implement a community-wide alcohol prevention campaign; build prevention capacity among stakeholders and residents; deliver student and adult prevention education; and look at policy as a protective factor for preventing alcohol use.

There will be opportunities for public involvement! These initiatives will welcome (and require!) parent, caregiver and other community adult participation in a variety of ways including focus groups, volunteer working groups, listening sessions, and more. Prevention requires local solutions and you are the experts on what we need as a community to keep our kids and teens safe and healthy. Watch for more information on how to get involved soon. You can also email Kristin at kfrench@ashlandmass.com to express your interest.

Meet Aniah! DAET's 2024-2025 Master of Social Work Intern!

My name is Aniah Weaks and I'm excited to be your intern this next year! I'm currently in my second and final year of my Master's of Social Work program at Boston College where I'm studying Macro Social Work with an emphasis in Children, Youth and Families. I previously graduated from Pepperdine University with a Bachelor's in Psychology and minor in Social Work.

Intentionality has always been a word that draws me to the work that we do. Intentionality in building community, in creating connections, and intentionality in caring about each other in holistic ways. Working alongside DAET to support the needs of Ashland's youth is the pinnacle of intentionality — as it's a group of people founded on the ideals of working together to cultivate a community that promotes healthy choices for the youth. When we share in the common value of intentionality as the foundation for this work, I wholeheartedly believe that good things can and will happen.

As I was reflecting on the type of work that I wanted to do and the community that I wanted to spend my time with during my final year of school, I found Ashland to be a perfect fit for my goals and ambitions. I hope during this time I will continue to grow, learn, and delve more into my passions of social work and along the way I can work with others to create meaningful change for the individuals in this community. While my time may be brief, I hope my impact and learning is not.

My desire is to continuously discover new insights throughout this process, especially regarding the work I may want to do in the future and what it, personally and professionally, means for me to say that I'm a social worker, while also finding ways to bring my experiences, background, and knowledge to the table. With this, I believe this will be a year filled with collaboration, challenging myself to step outside my comfort zone, and meaningful work that positively impacts the lives of others.



TOWN OF ASHLAND PARENTING COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE

A comprehensive list of services that Ashland residents may access for support **year round**. Support services include food security, mental health, substance use, healthy relationships, parenting, employment, legal assistance and other needs.

Scan the QR Code with your phone camera & click the pop-up link to visit webpages.

Ashland
Department
of Prevention &
Human Services



Ashland
Food
Pantry



DAET Family &
Community
Mental Health
Resource Guide



Parents
Helping
Parents



Services offered by
Department of
Prevention & Human
Services



Wayside
Family Resource
Center



DAET
Resources
for Parents



Parenting for
prevention Tip
Sheets

