



**PARENTS
USE
YOUR
POWER**

September 2016

**81%
of students
are
alcohol-free
(30 day data)**

**Conversation
starter of the
month—
“Anything
funny happen
today?”**



*For more info
about the event,
go to
[snow.360youth
services.org](http://snow.360youth
services.org)*



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How The Power of Choice Campaign Affects Your Student

The Power of Choice is a community-wide substance abuse prevention campaign. It was created to reduce the number of youth in our community who use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. This has been accomplished by using a social norms marketing campaign, which recognizes that most local teens are alcohol, tobacco, and drug-free. Data are compiled through a survey that District 203 & 204 high school students have been taking since 2003.

The Power of Choice campaign is very successful. Over the last 13 years, we have shared key findings with students and seen a shift in perception. This shift in perception has resulted in a reduction of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use by teens. The Power of Choice recognizes students for their healthy choices and reinforces these decisions with posters, Stall Street Journals, classroom presentations and invites teens to help create its messages with lunchroom student voting on posters & wording.

We are starting off this year with new data from the Spring 2016 Illinois Youth Survey. The theme for this year is “I am the author of my own story”. Topics for the upcoming year include: coping strong, modeling strong, stressors, resolutions, change, becoming more independent, communication and where to go for help.

Research shows that teens who learn the risks of alcohol and other drugs from their parents are 50% less likely to use than those who do not. Part of the campaign is monthly newsletters to help parents talk to their teens about alcohol and other drugs. We also have a website, ThePowerofChoice.info where parents can learn about available parent resources, how to network with other parents, and many related topics.

Be sure to check in every month for current newsletters and updated info on our website. Past newsletters are also available on our website. You can [like us on Facebook](#) and [visit us on Twitter](#).

Parent Tips:

- ◇ Spend time and talk with your teen. It is not only the content of the message that is important, but the consistency. Have discussions with your teen, asking about their thoughts and concerns about drugs and alcohol, as well as expressing your views and expectations.
- ◇ Your teen should always tell you where they are going, who they will be with and when they will be home. It is not an invasion of privacy but rather common courtesy.
- ◇ Notice changes in your teen. Educate yourself about the signs and symptoms of drug use.
- ◇ Encourage positive behaviors that make your teens feel good about themselves such as playing a team sport or musical instrument, joining a dance or theater group, or volunteering.
- ◇ Network with other parents and monitor your teen’s cell phone and computer activity.
- ◇ [Act swiftly and with certainty when something unacceptable happens. If your teen is not following the rules at home, be consistently clear, kind and definite in response to unacceptable behavior so they will see that you really won’t tolerate it.](#)

Results from 2016 Illinois Youth Survey taken by 11,774 District 203 & 204 high school students:

- ◆ 81% are alcohol-free
- ◆ 89% are marijuana-free
- ◆ 97% are tobacco-free
(30 day data)

How can we be sure this data is accurate?

The Power of Choice website answers this question a few different ways in the [FAQ section](#).

Find out what we mean by the phrase:
Health is quiet.

You make a big difference! Comparing Stats: Then vs. Now

When I choose not to drink, it’s because:

I don’t want to get in trouble with my parents.	2016: 75%	2003: 69%
I don’t want to disappoint my parents.	2016: 77%	2003: 67%
I don’t want to deal with the legal consequences if I get caught.	2016: 82%	2005: 72%
I don’t want to jeopardize my future plans.	2016: 86%	2005: 68%

[See more data comparisons](#)

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ThePowerOfChoice.Info

