



Mission Statement:

As a grassroots community coalition, our mission is to build a healthy safe and drug free community. Our commitment through the Coalition is to change attitudes, encourage action, and mobilize stakeholders around the issues of underage drinking, impaired driving and substance misuse. We achieve this through education, advocacy, policy change and environmental change.

Membership in the Coalition:

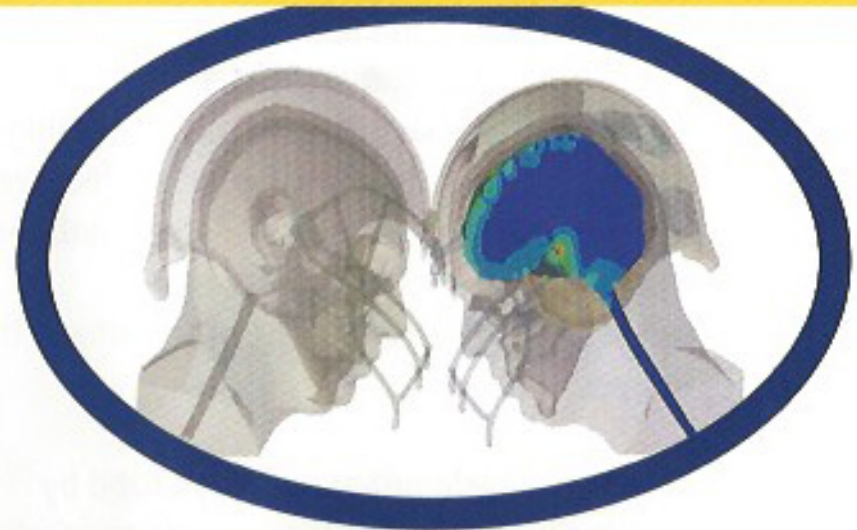
Membership is open to any Community member or organization in the LTHS region that wishes to participate in developing and implementing strategies to reduce substance abuse and misuse in Lyons Township region. <http://www.ltmhc.org/substance-abuse-prevention-coalition>

Thanks To Our Contributing Sponsors:

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For more information or to get involved, contact the Coalition President:
Cynthia Frymark at 708-351-3698 or ckfrymark@me.com

TEEN BRAINS AT RISK!



TREATMENT IS REQUIRED FOR BOTH CONCUSSIONS AND TEEN ALCOHOL USE.

Research shows a lifelong impact on brain development from teen drinking.

Source: NIDA

ALCOHOL AND THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

Alcohol can cause alterations in the structure and function of the developing brain, which continues to mature into a person's mid 20s, and it may have consequences reaching far beyond adolescence. These changes in the brain affect everything from emerging sexuality to emotionality and judgment. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. Drinking alcohol over a long period of time can damage the frontal lobes forever.

In adolescence, brain development is characterized by dramatic changes to the brain's structure, neuron connectivity (i.e., "wiring"), and physiology. These changes in the brain affect everything from emerging sexuality to emotionality and judgment.

Not all parts of the adolescent brain mature at the same time, which may put an adolescent at a disadvantage in certain situations. For example, the limbic areas of the brain mature earlier than the frontal lobes. The limbic areas regulate emotions and are associated with an adolescent's lowered sensitivity to risk. The frontal lobes are responsible for self-regulation, judgment, reasoning, problem-solving, and impulse control. Differences in maturation among parts of the brain can result in impulsive decisions or actions and a disregard for consequences.

HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS THE BRAIN

Alcohol affects an adolescent's brain development in many ways. The effects of underage drinking on specific brain activities are explained below. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. Alcohol can appear to be a stimulant because, initially, it depresses the part of the brain that controls inhibitions.

CEREBRAL CORTEX

Alcohol slows down the cerebral cortex as it works with information from a person's senses.

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM

When a person thinks of something he wants his body to do, the central nervous system—the brain and the spinal cord—sends a signal to that part of the body. Alcohol slows down the central nervous system, making the person think, speak, and move slower.

FRONTAL LOBES

The brain's frontal lobes are important for planning, forming ideas, making decisions, and using self-control. When alcohol affects the frontal lobes of the brain, a person may find it hard to control his or her emotions and urges. The person may act without thinking or even become violent. Drinking alcohol over a long period of time can damage the frontal lobes forever.