

Constructive Alternative to Teen Suspension Program (CATS)

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Given the positive feedback from students, parents, school administrators, school counsellors and teachers Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS) Youth and Family Program has committed to providing the CATS program for another year to help youth and families and the Richmond School District cope with the challenge of drug and alcohol use at or somehow connect to school for 2019-2020.

Receiving this package could come as a surprise and a shock as it means that your son or daughter or youth in your care has been involved with drugs and / or alcohol at school and is being suspended for that behaviour or is seeking help with an identified issue. We, at RASS, understand how this can be upsetting and can stir up mixed emotions. We are here to help both your teenager and your family cope with this situation. Please know that you are welcome to call us and arrange a counselling session to discuss your current situation as we are here to help at any time. Please expect a call from the CATS facilitator as we are hoping to connect with as many parents as possible while their child is involved with our programs.

Time Commitment for Program

The program consists of **three half days** Monday through Friday. Along with this commitment there are follow-up sessions booked in collaboration with the school and student for either one or three 50 minute counselling sessions dependent on our assessment. Once the follow-up sessions are completed the student's requirement for the CATS program is completed.

Logistics

Upon receiving this letter, your child is expected to attend our program on the first available day at **8:30 am at #105-8080 Anderson Road in Richmond. The program runs until noon for all three days** where upon the youth is then free to leave. Please arrange for pick up or transportation home (bus tickets are available from RASS). The following two days your child does not have to arrive until 8:45 am.

Appointment

You will be contacted to arrange a meeting.

If there are any concerns regarding your youth's involvement with the Constructive Alternative to Teen Suspension Program (CATS) feel free to contact your school counselling department or administration. Please feel free to contact me to inquire about ongoing parent or family support.

Sincerely,

Clarence Chan, M.Soc.Sc., CPGC
Program Coordinator
Constructive Alternative to Teen Suspension Program
Direct line: 604-270-9220 ext 114
Email: info@richmondaddictions.ca
Website: www.richmondaddictions.ca

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10 Strategies for Parents

- 1) **Promote competence and confidence.** Encourage and support interests and activities that your child enjoys and feels successful. Children with high self-worth tend to misuse drugs less.
- 2) **Communicate and connect.** Be curious about youth culture (bands, song lyrics, tattoos, sex, drugs, piercing, etc). Ask curious questions but avoid judging the answers.
- 3) **Get educated.** Familiarize yourself with signs and symptoms of problematic drug use (attend RASS- Education Series)
- 4) **Stop enabling.** Allow your child to experience the natural consequences of their drug using behaviour.
- 5) **Set clear and enforceable limits.** Family rules are most effective when they are reasonable, clear and have pre-determined consequences.
- 6) **Network with other parents.** Get to know your child's friends and their families. Stay actively involved.
- 7) **Increase supervision.** Know where your child is going and who will be there. Establish when they are to be home. If they have friends over, be present and friendly.
- 8) **Monitor money.** How is your child's money being spent?
- 9) **Get support.** Attend a parents' support group (see resource sheet).
- 10) **Practice self-care.** Maintain your life, friendships and interests. Do whatever is necessary to reduce strain in your life.

*Written by Terry Bulych (VCHA, 2006) and adapted by Richmond Addiction Services, 2007

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USEFUL WEBSITES

Drugs and Addiction:

<http://www.richmondaddictions.ca>

- Local resources and information

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/scienceofaddiction/index.html>

<http://www.thecoolspot.gov/index.asp>

<http://www.teencentral.net/>

<http://www.search-institute.org/>

www.camh.net

- Centre for addiction and mental health

www.clubdrugs.org

- Information and resources on club drugs

www.theantidrug.com

- Information on drugs, tips for parents

www.marijuana-info.org

- Information on marijuana

www.nida.nih.gov

- National Institute of Drug Abuse

www.streetdrugs.org

- Information on drugs, tips for parents

<http://netaddiction.com/>

- Center for On-Line Addiction (COLA)

<http://www.teens.drugabuse.gov>

- National Institute of Drug Abuse (US site)

www.streetdrugs.org

- Information and resources

Problem Gambling:

BC Responsible Gambling Web site:

www.bcreponsiblegambling.ca

Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Toronto: www.youthbet.net

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba: www.luckyday.ca

Videogame and Internet Addiction:

<http://www.zurinstitute.com/internetaddiction.html>

<http://www.gamerwidow.com/>

<http://www.netaddiction.com/>

Websites for parents and young people...

<http://www.drugfree.org/the-parent-toolkit/>

<http://www.parentfurther.com/>

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/scienceofaddiction/index.html>

<http://www.thecoolspot.gov/index.asp>

<http://www.teencentral.net/>

<http://www.search-institute.org/>

USEFUL BOOKS:

Hold on to your kids: Why parents need to matter more than peers. Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Mate

Location

105-8080 Anderson Road
Richmond, BC
604-270-9220
Richmond Addiction Services
See you at 8:30 am!

