



WAYLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

201 Main Street, Wayland, MA 01778-4599
Telephone: 508-655-6670 Fax: 508-655-2548

Elizabeth C. Gavron, Principal

George Benzie, Assistant Principal

January 23, 2018

Dear WMS families:

As a fellow parent in the Wayland community, I know that you are interested and deeply invested in the health and well-being of your own child/children, as well as the other young people in our community. On whole we can be proud to say that we have a very healthy community. The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey data ([link to survey](#)) consistently demonstrates that a very small number of our students try alcohol, marijuana and other drugs, as they begin transitioning to high school and by the end of high school, more students report substance use.

The Wayland school community joins you in caring about our students' physical and emotional health. In order to help prevent students from starting to use substances we have a research-based health education curriculum grounded in healthy decision making. Additionally, beginning this year, the Wayland Middle School guidance team and Wayland Cares staff will be providing an interview-based screening for all 8th grade students about the use of alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. This state-mandated screening, called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment), utilizes the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts, the CRAFFT. Student screening sessions will be brief (approximately 5-10 minutes) and conducted confidentially in private, one-on-one sessions conducted by our guidance staff and Wayland Cares staff with every 8th grade student. It is important to know that in order to screen all of our 8th grade students in an efficient way, students will be assigned an SBIRT screener randomly. Therefore, by allowing your student to participate, you understand that your student may be screening with a different counselor or clinician than their own 8th grade guidance counselor.

Importantly, students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener. The screener will provide resource and referral information to any student who reports using substances or is at risk for future substance use. If needed, and if SBIRT screeners agree, the student will be referred for further evaluation and parents will be informed of the concern. Results of the screening will not be included in your student's school record, nor will results be shared with any staff other than the SBIRT Team. The SBIRT Team is comprised of WMS school counselors, our METCO coordinator, our school social worker, and Wayland Cares Staff, all of whom have been trained in SBIRT. **Jason Verhoosky of Wayland Cares will join us for a parent coffee on Tuesday, February 6, 2018 from 9:00 - 10:00 AM to further discuss SBIRT.**

As with any school screening, you have the right to opt your child out of the screening. Please contact Principal Betsy Gavron via email (betsy_gavron@wayland.k12.ma.us) if you wish to exclude your child from this screening by **Wednesday, March 7, 2018**. Additionally, screening is voluntary, and students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions. **SBIRT screenings will be conducted during the week of March 12.**

One way to prevent youth substance use is to talk with your student about your family's thoughts and expectations regarding substance use. Research shows that parents' influence is the primary reason young people decide not to drink alcohol and engage in substance use. For ideas on how to begin these conversations, please refer to the Wayland Cares website at Waylandcares.org. Together, schools and parents CAN make a positive difference for the youth in Wayland.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth C. Gavron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "E" and "G".

Betsy Gavron