Name of Committee: **Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee**

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**The SUP committee is accepting applications for members interested in ensuring that students have the resources and supports they need to live substance free and access to treatment when needed.**

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**: Educate families, students, and the community at large about substance use prevalence, risks and ways to prevent substance use among students. Advocate for services for students who have substance use issues and help ensure the continuation of recovery academic programs.

**Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee Activities**

* The Committee met on September 21st to review the plan of work (a part of the Health & Wellness Committee Plan of Work) and recruitment of other members. Meetings will continue at least monthly.
* [SUPRE](https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/studentservices/mentalhealth/restorative-justice-project.aspx): The Substance Use Prevention Subcommittee continues to partner with several outside groups and agencies toward prevention efforts and to address current substance use by MCPS students. MCPS was to begin their first cohort in the SUPRE diversion program this week, however, the students changed their minds, and the class was canceled. Apparently, there will now be a new director working on the program as well.
* The committee will work closely with Montgomery County Opioid Intervention Taskforce to create the in school, youth ambassador program in high schools.
* The committee continues to work closely with in partnership with AODAAC, MADD, Arise & Flourish and others to educate families and students on the cycle and signs of addiction, and the pathways to recovery.
* [Arise & Flourish](http://www.ariseandflourish.org/) has now returned to schools with their amazing speaker series.
* The [C.O.P.E. Trailer](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/howdoI/community-opioid-prevention-education.html) (mock teen bedroom) is making public appearances!

**If you are interested in learning more about hosting either Arise & Flourish or the COPE Trailer at your school or event, please contact the Laura Mitchell.**

**DID YOU KNOW?** Maryland schools are required to provide an age appropriate “program of drug **ADDICTION AND PREVENTION**education” to public school students to begin “before 6th grade”.

The “[Start Talking Maryland Act](https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:dd8077f3-6e2e-45cb-9fcd-da78f1970111)”  requires that teachers “trained in the field of drug addiction and prevention education” provide  “instruction related to heroin and opioid addiction and prevention, including information relating to the lethal effect of fentanyl” in grade level bands of 3rd-5th, 6th-8th, and 9th-12th grades. The same law requires that schools possess and be trained to administer naloxone (Narcan), an overdose reversal medication.

[Arise & Flourish](http://www.ariseandflourish.org/) is returning to schools with their amazing speakers and lessons that connect with students. All speakers are persons in long term recovery from substance use disorders who are willing to share their stories to spare our children and their loved ones the agony that accompanies substance use. No one wants to think it will be their child, but the grim statistics tell the true story, no one is immune. A record 98,000 people lost their life due to overdose last year. That is a very grim record. The numbers in Montgomery County Youth Risk Behavior Survey prove that MCPS students are using substances at concerning rates as well, even before the pandemic.

Talking with students about substance use is one of the best prevention tools we have. Real talk, about real-life events like injury and illness, and feelings like anxiety, stress, lack of belonging, and shame often litter the path to substance use. By sharing their stories, Arise & Flourish speakers connect with students in a way that is both comforting – in knowing that they are not alone with those feelings – and cautionary that experimenting with substances to escape, or cope is very risky. The speakers also share hope with their personal stories of recovery. It's a great prevention and education service, one is not currently provided, except by Arise & Flourish.

Before I moved to Montgomery County in 2016, we spent $15,000 to bring an amazing speaker to Wicomico County to do these talks (4 schools and an evening parent/community talk). It was amazing and effective - 5 years later, that speaker is still contacted by students and referring them to me to help them find resources. We have heard stories from several of the students that heard those talks. Stories of recovery and resilience. It was worth every dime, but it was expensive.

Several of their speakers were part of our virtual spring (pre prom) seminar, and they offered “Learn & Earn” opportunities online throughout the pandemic. Now, they are ready to visit your secondary schools! Please talk with your school wellness team and/or principal about hosting an assembly at your school. For Arise & Flourish, this is a volunteer labor of love and they share their stories for the price of lunch!

The C.O.P.E. Trailer is on the move again too!! The [Community Opioid Prevention & Education Trailer](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/howdoI/community-opioid-prevention-education.html) is a mock teen bedroom that adults can tour to learn about signs of potential substance use that may be “hidden in plain sight”. The tours are conducted by trained MCPD employees and volunteers and delivered in both English and Spanish. If you are interested in hosting the C.O.P.E. Trailer as a stand alone service or in conjunction with a resource fair or other event, please contact the MCCPTA Substance Use Prevention Committee for assistance.

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