



# OLD COLONY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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April 2022

Dear Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School Grade 9 Families,

This year we are instituting a state-mandated at-risk substance screening program during the week of May 17, 2022, for ninth grade students related to the use of alcohol, marijuana and other substances. In a national survey, 28% of teenagers reported that drugs, alcohol, and tobacco are the most important issues they are facing. Recent research has also shown brains are not fully developed during adolescence and substance use in the early years substantially alters brain functioning for a lifetime.

The Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) program screening process is part of our annual state-mandated screening program. This year we will screen all ninth graders. All screenings are interview based and will be conducted in confidential individual sessions by our professional staff. We will utilize the CRAFFT II screening tool which is the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts.

Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener. The screener will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances or who is at risk for future substance use. If needed, we will refer students to our counseling staff for further evaluation. This program focuses on harm prevention and does not generate disciplinary action. Results of the screening will not be included in your student's school record. Please be aware that the screening results are confidential unless the information disclosed leads to the student being at risk for imminent medical harm or the information requires the screener to fulfill the obligation of a mandated reporter.

If you would like to opt your child out of this screening, please provide the school with written notification by Monday, May 9, 2022. Please contact Caitlin Vandal at [cvandal@oldcolony.us](mailto:cvandal@oldcolony.us) if you have any questions about this program. In addition, screening is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions.

We encourage all parents/guardians to talk with their child about substance use.

Sincerely,  
Michael Parker  
Principal