You only get one body, so it is your job to take care of it the best that you can.

Trying to say “NO” to things like tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes, street drugs, and alcohol is often difficult, especially when you are a teen and under peer pressure to fit in.

You need to decide what is right for you. Make sure you get ALL the facts before you jump to a decision.

Medications, tobacco, street drugs, and alcohol are all chemicals that cause your body to react in different ways.

There is evidence that e-cigarettes and vape pens contain harmful toxins of their own, such as formaldehyde (a known carcinogen), nitrosamines (linked to cancer) and lead (a neurotoxin).

E-cigarettes and vape pens can be dangerous even when you’re not the one using them. The Surgeon General says secondhand e-cigarette vapor has heavy metals and tiny particles that can harm the lungs. The American Lung Association warns that children and youth should stay away from secondhand e-cigarette and vape pen aerosol.

Ask your pharmacist about the medications you take and what substances might interfere with them and put you at risk for developing serious side effects.

If you are unsure about trying something new, wait awhile and give yourself time to make the decision that is right for you. It may change your life.

Resources you may be interested in:

Vaping and e-cigarettes: drugfree.org/drugs/e-cigarettes-vaping/?gclid=EALalQobChMlYoST4burQIVFQnnCh3cVAY1EAAYASAAEqlUIvD_BwE

Tobacco and Use Prevention Resources: www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/For-Kids-Teens-Tobacco-Education-Resources.aspx

Drugs and Alcohol Information for Teens: kidshealth.org/en/teens/drug-alcohol/

SAMHSA's National Helpline: (800) 662-HELP (4357) or TTY: (800) 487-4889. This helpline is a confidential, free, 24-hour, 365-day-a-year information service. Support is available in English and Spanish for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.

We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children’s programs and services, check out our website at: dssc.uic.edu