Safety for All Ages

Naperville is often recognized as a premier community in which to live, work, raise a family and retire. As a town that appeals to residents in all stages of life, it's important for the City to provide services that positively impact the lives of all its residents. This month, our "A Safer Naper" campaign highlights several programs and safety guidelines that span all stages of life.

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

Young Children

- Parents should begin to teach their children basic Personal Safety rules such as:
    - How to safely cross the street.
        - Look left, right and then left again
        - Walk within the crosswalk
        - Always cross with an adult's assistance
    - Bike Safety
        - Always wear a helmet
        - Ride on the sidewalk until 10 years old
        - Watch out for pedestrians, they have the right of way
        - Look for cars backing out of driveways
        - Walk bikes across intersections
    - Say No, Go, and Tell
        - Teach children that if anyone approaches them and offers them a ride, asks for directions, or makes them feel uncomfortable, they need to say "NO", get away from the situation or person (GO), and TELL a trusted adult.
        - Discuss who trusted adults may be: teachers, parents, a friend's parent, neighbors, police and fire personnel, etc.
    - Remind children to "check first" before going anywhere with anyone, or accepting anything from anyone.

Teens/Young Adults

- Stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings. Avoid distractions
    - Don't allow your phone to be a distraction
    - Know where you are going ahead of time
    - Only one earbud in when walking, jogging, biking
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will return
- Avoid places you can't be seen or heard. Stay in well-traveled areas
- Walk confidently with your head up
- Know and follow the laws concerning alcohol, drugs and parties
- Always travel with another person; there is safety in numbers
- Don't accept rides or gifts from people you don't know well
- Trust your instincts; if you are uncomfortable around a person or location, stay away!

Adults

Same tips as teens/young adults, plus:

- Make sure your family and office know your itinerary in detail

- Know ahead of time where to get help. Run scenarios in your head of things that could happen and ways you could avoid or react in those situations.
- Keep your purse close to your body and your wallet in your front pocket
- Park in well-lit areas
- Be wary of anyone you have only met online, and if meeting someone from the internet be sure to bring someone with you
- If you will be returning after dark, have an interior light set on a timer so that there will be a light on in your home when you return
- Don't leave a note on your door for package deliveries or other visitors
- Never leave an extra house key under the doormat, in a flower pot or in a milk cooler
- Keep garage doors closed and locked, even if you are home, and never leave the door from the garage to your house unlocked
- Teach your children about personal safety

The Naperville Police Department has combined "tried and true" radio technology with specially-trained response team members to build an effective, life-saving program to locate missing persons of all ages who have communication limitations, memory difficulties or other diagnoses. Naperville residents of any age are eligible for the Fastrack program, which is recommended for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease, Down Syndrome or Autism or who are at risk of wandering with communication difficulties. Click here to learn more about the Fastrack program.

OCCUPANT SAFETY TIPS

A leading cause of death in the United States is traffic crashes, and many of these deaths can be prevented if the all occupants of a vehicle simply buckle up. Regardless of age, every person needs to be properly buckled up when in a motor vehicle.

Young Children

- The Child Passenger Protection Act requires that all children under age 8 be properly secured in an appropriate child safety restraint system. Keep children in the back seat at least through age 12.
    - **Newborn-Age 2:** Children under 2 must be properly secured in a rear-facing child restraint system unless they weigh more than 40 pounds or are more than 40 inches tall.
    - **Ages 2-4:** Children should remain in a rear-facing safety seat for as long as possible, or until they are at the upper height or weight limit of the seat. When a child out-grows a rear-facing safety seat, he or she may transition to a forward-facing seat with a harness system.
    - **Ages 4-8:** Children should be secured in a forward-facing safety seat with an internal harness system until they reach the upper height or weight limit allowed by the car seat manufacturer. When a child outgrows the forward-facing seat, he or she may transition to a belt-positioning booster seat.
    - **Ages 8-12:** Children should stay in a belt-positioning booster seat until they are tall enough to properly fit in an adult lap/shoulder belt.

Find more child passenger safety requirements information on the Illinois Secretary of State's website. Additional information can also be found on the Illinois Department of Transportation's website.

Teens/Adults

- Every driver and passenger of a motor vehicle operated on a street or highway is required to wear a properly adjusted and fastened seat safety belt. They need to be worn all the time, not just on long trips!
    - A shoulder harness is worn across the shoulder and chest with minimal, if any slack. The shoulder harness should not be worn under the arm or behind the back, as this could cause serious internal injuries in a crash.
    - The lap belt should be adjusted so that it is snug and lies low across your hips after fastening. If you have an automatic shoulder belt, be sure to buckle your lap belt as well. Otherwise, in a collision you could slide out of the belt and be hurt or killed.
    - You should be seated upright with your back against the seat and feet on the floor. Improper seating positions, such as slouching or resting one's feet on the dashboard can result in reduced effectiveness of the vehicle's restraint system and possibly result in injury.
    - Seat belts should be worn even if the vehicle is equipped with air bags. While air bags are good protection against hitting the steering wheel, dashboard or windshield, they do not protect you if you are hit from the side or rear or if the vehicle rolls over. In addition, an air bag will not keep you behind the wheel in these situations.

(See the source information)

- If you're pregnant, make sure you know how to position your seat and wear a seat belt to maximize your safety and the safety of your unborn child. Click here to see NHTSA's instructional diagram of recommendations for pregnant drivers and passengers.

SAFE DRIVING TIPS

With all the new technology in today's vehicles, staying focused on our driving has never been so important. Being killed in a traffic crash is still on the list of top ten causes of death in the United States. To reduce this, we all need to remember these safe driving tips.

Teens

Obtaining your driver's license is a day that we all remember. That feeling of freedom, however, comes with major responsibilities. Remember:

- Brand new 16-year-old drivers are expected to be able to make all the split-second decisions of a seasoned driver.
- Teens live in a world of technology and must remember to put their phone down while driving. More than half of teens drivers reported using a cell phone while driving in the past 30 days. Learn more about teens and distracted driving.
- Being an inexperienced driver and being under the influence of alcohol is a very dangerous combination. Alcohol in your system slows your reaction time, affects your motor skills, reduces concentration and decreases vision --- all necessary skills needed to drive a motor vehicle.

So, what can we all do to help reduce the number a traffic crashes teen drivers are involved in?

- The Naperville Police Department speaks with students in their Driver's Education classes.
- Parents need to be good examples for their teen drivers and set expectations for them and as well as consequences for failing to meet set expectations.

Find more information about teen driver safety.

Adults
Just because we are older does not mean the rules that applied to us as teens no longer apply to us. The safe driving tips we practiced during our teenage years will keep us safe as an adult, as well.

As adults, we drive to get to and from work, family commitments and social engagements. Driving safely to arrive at our destination should be our focus.

- Speeding to make up time because we are running late puts you and everyone around you in danger. Speeding increases your risk of being involved in a traffic crash because there is less time and distance available to respond. If your drive at 35 mph, you will travel 51 feet per second. At 55 mph, you travel 80 feet per second. At 75 mph, you will travel 109 feet per second. Most people's reaction time is 1.5 seconds, which means that at 55 mph, you will travel 120 feet before you react to a situation.
- Distracted driving and being under the influence are also dangers to adult drivers, just as teen drivers. We maybe older, but it does not make us invincible to the dangers of unsafe driving.

Seniors
Being older does not automatically mean your driving days are over. But we need to remember our reaction time becomes slower. Family members need to keep an eye on their loved ones to ensure their ability to be safe on the road. Some things to watch for are:

- Getting lost on familiar routes.
- Taking medications that might affect driving safely.
- Noticing new dents or scratches to their vehicle.

The Naperville Police Department partners with AARP to offer a classroom driver refresher course, designed for drivers age 50 and older, several times a year. Click here for more information on upcoming AARP Smart Driver classes.

Find more safety information for mature drivers.

MEDICATION SAFETY TIPS

Children

According to the Center for Disease Control, **"About 60,000 young children end up in emergency rooms each year because they got into medicines while an adult wasn't looking**." Instead of hoping this will never happen in your home, make it a guarantee with these few, simple steps!

- **Put medicines up, away and out of children's sight and reach –** Children are curious and like to put all sorts of things in their mouths. Putting medicines and vitamins in a storage place that a

child cannot reach or see will eliminate the opportunity for a child to get into something that could hurt them.

- **Put medicines away every time –** As easy as it may be to think, "I can put this away later" or "Why should I put it away when I need it again in a few hours?", taking the extra minute to put medicines away can be the difference in ensuring your child's safety.

- **Make sure the safety cap is locked –** Those pesky caps aren't just meant to infuriate you … they are a vital tool in ensuring the safety for your loved ones. Always keep the caps of your medications and vitamins locked and secured when not in use.

- **Teach your children about medicine safety –** To ease the struggle to get your child to take their medicine, it can seem helpful to tell them that it is candy. However, we recommend you avoid this tactic as it can heighten their interest in the medication, leading them to want to seek out and consume more. Instead, try to talk to them about the importance of taking their medications and why you or a trusted adult are the only ones who can provide this medication to them.

- **Tell your guests about medicine safety –** As guests enter your home, it's important to ask them to keep their medications hidden and out of sight rather than in their purse or coat jacket.

- **Be prepared in case of an emergency –** If you think your child might have gotten into medication or vitamins, **call the Poison Control Center at 800-222-1222 or 911 right away for assistance**. If you are not sure, call anyway; these resources are always happy to help you in a case of emergency.

Teens

Having a conversation with your teen(s) about drinking and drug use doesn't have to be as scary or difficult as you may fear. A willingness to have this conversation is a portrayal of the love and concern you have for your teen, showing that you care about their well-being and future.

Try steering the conversation away from consequences and punishments to praise and support for why they may choose not to use. For example, many students decide not to drink alcohol or use drugs due to athletic involvement or working toward future goals like going to college. Centering the conversation on the positives in your teen's life will not only make the conversation easier but will be empowering for their future, as well.

Feel free to explore this website provided by The Community Alliance for Prevention to help you start this important conversation with your teen today.

Young Adults

With college back in full swing, now is the best time to discuss drug and alcohol use with your young adults. According to the College Prescription Drug Study (CPDS) through Ohio State University, the top five most frequently reported reasons for misuse of medications are below.

Top 5 Reasons for Non-Medical Use of Prescription Drugs

Pain Medications	Sedatives	Stimulants
Get high (43.1%)	Sleep (52.8%)	Study or improve grades (79.2%)
Relieve pain (40.2%)	Relieve anxiety (48.7%)	See what it was like (22.6%)
See what it was like (34.2%)	Get high (34.4%)	Enhance social situations (21.9%)
Relieve anxiety (31.1%)	See what it was like (26.7%)	Get high (15.0%)
Sleep (26.8%)	Feel better (19.8%)	Like way they feel (12.4%)

College is known to be a time of experimentation and new experiences; however, substances can oftentimes be misused as a means of coping with a variety of issues, as noted above. It's important to proactively address the stressors in a young adult's life and encourage alternative, healthier forms of management to reduce the likelihood of substance misuse. Normalizing and speaking openly about stress and feelings of anxiety help to reduce any associated stigmas and make it more likely for the young adult to seek professional help.

For assistance in how to best help the college-aged loved ones in your life, visit the National Institute of Drug Abuse's College Aged and Young Adult website.

Adults

When asked to describe a common "addict," it is easy for stereotypes to flood the mind. However, alcohol and drug use disorders affect all populations without bias and, in many cases, our stereotypes are proven wrong. According to the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, the largest increase in drug overdose deaths from 1999 to 2017 occurred among adults aged 55-64, increasing almost 6-fold during those years (NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality, 2018).

When thinking about how to support our loved ones, neighbors and community, it is important to remember that diseases like addiction are very real issues face by every community, including Naperville. To best support those struggling with an alcohol or substance use disorder, remember to keep an open mind, be supportive and offer resources. For continued support, feel free to utilize the Connect for Life Program offered by the Naperville Police Department.

Older Adults

It can be hard to think of our senior loved ones struggling with alcohol or substance use, however, it may be more common than you think. According to the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA), alcohol and prescription drug abuse affects up to 17% of adults over the age of 60.

Addiction among seniors is often underestimated and under-diagnosed, preventing this population from getting the help they may need.

Potential Reasons for Misuse:	Possible Reasons for Misdiagnosis:	Signs of Possible Substance and/or Alcohol Abuse:
• Retirement • Death of a family member, spouse, pet or close friend • Loss of income or financial strains • Relocation or placement in a nursing home • Trouble sleeping • Family conflict • Mental or physical health decline (depression, memory loss, major surgeries, etc.)	• Mimic symptoms of other medical diagnosis, such as diabetes, depression or dementia • Thinking the senior's mental or physical health is declining • Lack of education on effects of seemingly harmless medications prescribed by a physician • Feelings that there is nothing that can be done for a senior due to their age • The "That's just grandma or grandpa being grandma or grandpa" mindset	• Memory problems • Changes in sleeping habits • Unexplained bruises • Irritability, sadness, depression • Unexplained chronic pain • Changes in eating habits • Wanting to be alone often • Failing to bathe or keep clean • Losing touch with loved ones • Lack of interest in usual activities

If you are concerned about an older adult in your life that may be misusing alcohol or drugs, contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration at 800–662–HELP (4357) or visit www.samhsa.gov/find-help.

Naperville Resource: Prescription Drug Drop Box Program

Unused or expired prescription drugs can pose a significant health hazard to the lives of toddlers, teens, adults and seniors who may inadvertently consume them. Safely and anonymously dispose of unused/expired prescription or over-the-counter medication through the City's Prescription Drug Drop Box Program.

Find a Drop Box Near You

Naperville Resource: Connect for Life

Alcohol and substance abuse disorders affect people of all ages. If you or someone you know is struggling with addition, the Naperville Police Department's Connect for Life program might be able to help get that person into treatment.

Learn more about Connect for Life

RIGHT SIDEBAR: You're Invited!

Get additional safety information, explore public safety vehicles/equipment and witness demonstrations by Naperville Police and Fire Departments at the Public Safety Open House on Saturday, September 21.
LINK TO MORE DETAILS