

SBIRT *in Colorado*



RESOURCES

for schools or
organizations working
with young people

Because the brain does not fully develop until at least age 25, adolescents are at a higher risk of experiencing health problems related to alcohol and other substance use than any other age group.¹ Parents and other trusted adults play an extremely important role in preventing youth substance use.

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment, SBIRT, is a prevention and early intervention practice proven to identify, reduce, and prevent the use of alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, and other substances.² The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends screening all adolescents for substance use.³

Screening and Brief Intervention is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and more. When combined with community-level prevention strategies, SBIRT helps to prevent disease, injury, death, and other negative consequences of alcohol and other substance use in individuals, families, and communities.

SBIRT *in Colorado* has created a number of resources that can be shared with schools and organizations who are implementing SBIRT. These resources include tools to inform parents and caregivers about the screenings and conversations that they will use with adolescents to discuss and help prevent youth substance use.



 **SBIRTcolorado.org**

¹ Committee on Substance Use and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) <https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/sbirt>

³ <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/1/e20161211#sec-3>

RESOURCES TO SHARE

- **A letter** – A letter that can be shared with parents explaining the SBIRT process.
- **An email** – An e-mail that can be shared with parents explaining the SBIRT process.
- **A blog post/newspaper article** – A blog/newsletter that can be shared with parents explaining the SBIRT process.
- **Contract for Life** – An agreement that teens will never accept a ride from a driver who has been drinking alcohol or using other substances.
- **Identifying Early Warning Signs: Addressing youth substance use** – The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation strategy focusing on screening and early intervention.
- **Responsibility Grows Here** – The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Marijuana Education Campaign.
- **Self-Screening Tool Site** – A confidential website that allows users to complete validated screening tools in the privacy of their own home, and then receive feedback on their risk levels.
- **Twelve Talks** – Jefferson County Communities that Care guide to twelve important talks to have with adolescents.
- **Alcohol Screening and Brief Intervention for Youth: A Practitioner's Guide** – National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse guide to conducting fast, effective alcohol screens and interventions with adolescents.
- **One Degree: Shift The Influence Adult-Youth conversation simulation** – Virtual simulation that allows the user to practice having difficult conversations and learn to approach the topic of substance use with adolescents they care about.
- **Standards for Youth Engagement** – Kaiser Permanente and CDPHE introduction to Positive Youth Development.
- **SBIRT in Colorado Adolescent Resources site** – Additional Adolescent SBIRT resources from SBIRT in Colorado.
- **Additional Parent/Teen resources** – Adolescent SBIRT resources from Boston Children's Hospital Center for Adolescent Substance Abuse Research.

LETTER

Dear Parent,

Because the brain does not fully develop until at least age 25, adolescents are at a higher risk of experiencing health problems related to alcohol and other substance use than any other age group.¹ The earlier that a young person begins using alcohol, the greater their risk is of developing an alcohol use disorder later in life. The most common causes of death during adolescence are injury, suicide and homicide, all of which can be linked to alcohol use. Underage alcohol use is also associated with harmful effects on normal brain development and functioning, increased chance of risky sexual behavior, physical and sexual assaults, injuries, alcohol use disorder, blackouts, alcohol overdose, and other negative consequences.² Parents and other trusted adults play an extremely important role in preventing adolescent alcohol and substance use.

In an effort to prevent substance use among our students, we will begin to use an evidence-based practice called Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in our [school/program](#).

SBIRT is an early intervention practice proven to identify, reduce, and prevent use of alcohol and other substances.³

Screening and Brief Intervention is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), among others. When combined with community level prevention strategies, SBIRT helps to prevent disease, injury, death, and other negative consequences of alcohol and other substance use in individuals, families, and communities.

During the SBIRT process, students will first answer a few short screening questions to identify any alcohol, marijuana, nicotine or other substance use. Next, a trained staff member will have a brief, personalized conversation, based on the student's screening results. This conversation is meant to either increase the student's desire to make changes in their substance use or to positively reinforce the choices made by students who are not using any substances, and to connect the student with additional school or community resources as needed ([e.g. social worker, BH, PCP, others the site could fill in](#))

In addition to staff having conversations with students, parents and caregivers can be allies as well. The One Degree: Shift the Influence campaign allows parents and others to learn the basics of a motivational conversation by practicing with virtual avatars. This simulation is free to use, and can be accessed at www.ShiftTheInfluence.org or by downloading from the Apple or Google Play stores.

More information on SBIRT can be found at www.SBIRTColorado.org

For more information please contact [_____](#)

¹ Committee on Substance Use and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015

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EMAIL

Subject Line: Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)

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In an effort to prevent substance use among our students, we will begin using an evidence-based practice called Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in our [school/program](#).

SBIRT is an evidence-based practice designed to identify, reduce, and prevent the use of alcohol and other substances.³

During the SBIRT process, students will first answer a few short screening questions to identify any alcohol, marijuana, nicotine or other substance use. Next, a trained staff member will have a brief, personalized conversation, based on the student's screening results. This conversation is meant to either increase the student's desire to make changes in their substance use or to positively reinforce the choices made by students who are not using any substances, and connect the student with additional school or community resources as needed.

In addition to conversations between staff and students, parents and caregivers can be allies as well. The One Degree: Shift the Influence campaign allows parents and caregivers to learn the basics of a motivational conversation by practicing with virtual humans. This simulation is free to use, and can be accessed at www.ShiftTheInfluence.org or by downloading from the Apple or Google Play stores.

More information on SBIRT can be found at www.SBIRTColorado.org

For more information please contact [\[redacted\]](#)

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BLOG/NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Headline – **(Site Name)** to begin using SBIRT with all of our students to increase health and well-being.

As adults, we all want to see the young people we care about grow up healthy, without the pressure of feeling like they need to use alcohol or other substances. Talking with a young person about alcohol and other substances can seem difficult, but having the conversation can have a meaningful impact.

(Site Name) has decided to implement Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) with all of our students. SBIRT is a prevention and early intervention practice that has been proven to identify, reduce, and prevent alcohol and other substance use.¹ For adolescents who are using, conversations about substance use show that pediatric care providers are sincerely concerned about the health of their patients, and research suggests that youth have positive impressions of providers who are willing to discuss sensitive issues like substance use (Brown and Wissow, 2009).²

During this process, students will answer a few short screening questions to identify any alcohol, marijuana, nicotine or other substance use. Next, a trained staff member will have a brief, personalized conversation, based on the student's screening results. This conversation is meant to either increase the student's desire to make changes in their substance use or to positively reinforce the choices made by students who are not using any substances. If indicated, the staff person will help connect the student to additional resources within the school or community.

For more information please contact [_____](#)

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