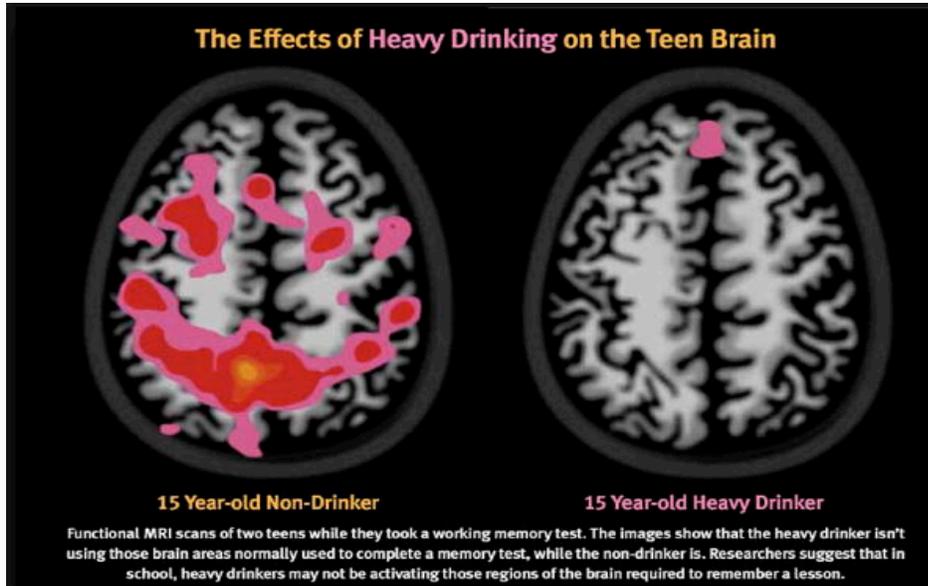


YOUR BRAIN, YOUR CHOICE- Student handout

Why is the nurse asking me about alcohol and other drugs? Asking these questions is part of good health care, just like checking your vision and hearing. Your honest answers can help the nurse give you the best care.

What's the big deal about alcohol and drugs? Your body and brain are still growing. Alcohol and drugs can interfere with the way your brain develops, damaging the parts of your brain that control memory, learning, making decisions and keeping your feelings and desires under control.

WHICH BRAIN DO YOU CHOOSE?



Can drinking or getting high really hurt me? 1 out of every 4 teens who die in car accidents are driving while drunk or high, or riding with people who have been using drugs or alcohol. Teens that drink or use other drugs are more likely to have unsafe sex, which could lead to pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C or sexually transmitted diseases. Alcohol and drugs are connected with the leading causes of death among teenagers- accidental injury, homicide, and suicide.

Who can I talk to about drugs or alcohol? Who can help me if I'm concerned about myself or someone else? Your parents can let you know whether anyone in your family has (or had) problems with alcohol or drugs. Try talking to them. If you need to talk to someone else, try:

- Your school nurse/ school counselor/social worker, or your primary care physician or other trusted adults, like a teacher or coach.
- **Massachusetts Substance Abuse Information and Education Hotline:** free and confidential information and referrals for alcohol and drug abuse problems and related concerns. Services are available Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 10:00 pm; Saturday and Sunday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Language interpreters are available. **Phone: 800-327-5050** or www.helpline-online.com