

conversation starters

SPRING 2023

The newsletter of PreventEd

Recreational Cannabis is Now Legal in Missouri. Here's How to Talk to Your Kids About It.

By Nichole Dawsey



Nichole Dawsey
Executive Director

With Amendment 3 taking effect, parents in Missouri now have a new conversation to navigate: adult cannabis use.

Talking about drugs and alcohol with your kids is never fun, but it's truly one of the most important conversations you can have. As we head toward a new reality in Missouri — one where adult-use recreational cannabis will

become part of our community's fabric — it's time to develop your family's narrative on cannabis. I hope to prepare families for what's to come: lots of flashy advertisements about cannabis scattered around the city, endless news stories, the development of dispensaries in our neighborhoods, and more and more young people attempting to access cannabis.

Parents: it's up to you to equip your child with the knowledge they need to make informed, healthy decisions. Having these conversations early and often will pave the way for your child to understand the dangers and risks of cannabis use.

- **Talking about cannabis doesn't mean your child will use it.** Many parents I know are worried that having the conversation will cause their child to become more curious and want to try cannabis. However, pretending that cannabis doesn't exist will only create secrets. Open, honest conversations will give them the tools and knowledge to make informed, confident decisions. Research suggests that having conversations with your kids about the risks of substance misuse actually cuts their chance of future misuse in half.

- **Be honest and approachable.** Talk to your child or teen about the new legalization laws and what the future holds for Missouri. You don't need to hold a serious formal family meeting—you can simply share details on recreational cannabis use and potential risks as it comes up in your daily routines. Maybe it's a TV show where a character is smoking a blunt or a song that alludes to being high. These moments are opportunities to start

a conversation with your child in an organic way, encouraging them to share what they know and answer any questions they may have.

- **Make an exit plan together.** With the

legalization of recreational cannabis in Missouri,

more young people will find opportunities to access it, and it will likely become more prevalent at high school parties and social gatherings. Talk with your teen about an exit plan if they're offered cannabis. This is a great way to establish clear boundaries and set your own expectations.

- **Remind your child that just because recreational cannabis is legal doesn't mean it's safe.** Studies show that many teens underestimate the risks associated with cannabis use. Provide information on the development and maturity of the brain and share a few details on how cannabis negatively impacts teens, like problems with memory and learning, difficulty paying attention, and challenges at school. Be clear that it can permanently alter the brain.

- **Discuss cannabis advertising.** When you come across billboards or ads about cannabis, use it as an opportunity to talk about how marketing can impact a person's opinion. One study found that the more cannabis ads that a teen sees, the more likely they are to take a positive view of cannabis and try it. Present your child with facts and encourage them to do their own research if they're curious.

To help navigate these difficult conversations, visit talkaboutitmo.com for age-specific talking kits on broaching the subject. 

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The Impact of Peer Support

By Terisha Friedmann

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In December, Peer Specialists received double the typical amount of referrals.

Holidays are difficult—especially with a substance use disorder. Thanks to PreventEd’s Certified Peer Specialists, this holiday season those reaching out in Franklin County found a connection.

In December, Peer Specialists received double the typical amount of referrals. Peer support services are so effective because they can extend the reach of treatment beyond the clinical setting into the everyday environment of those seeking a successful, sustained recovery process.

Our Peer Specialists meet clients where they are and assist them in taking all the steps needed to access medication and medication-assisted treatment without the common barriers that they are used to. These barriers usually include limited providers, no phone or internet access, transportation, and insurance. Over the holidays we successfully assisted 10 new clients in accessing peer support services and medication-assisted treatment and helped them with mentoring and setting goals for the new year. Those clients were very grateful for our peer program being available when they needed it the most.

If you or someone you know needs access to services for a substance use disorder in Franklin or Lincoln Counties and would like to talk with a Certified Peer Specialist, visit prevented.org/peers.

New Funding Awarded to Serve St. Charles County

By Kim Sherony

PreventEd, along with other community partners, has been awarded 2023 funding for school-based prevention through the Community and Children’s Resource Board of St. Charles County (CCRB). While PreventEd has long served children in St. Charles County through our prevention programming, this funding from CCRB will allow us to expand our efforts to reach even more youth in this area. The funding is specific to K-5 programming in the Francis Howell School District.

PreventEd’s evidence-based programming is designed to prevent children from substance use by equipping them with the knowledge to change their attitudes and behaviors toward substances and fostering the leadership skills to share this knowledge with their peers. K-5 lessons focus on topics related to peaceful conflict resolution, friendship making skills, healthy decision making and drug specific education starting at 5th grade. We are excited to partner with CCRB of St. Charles County to expand our prevention efforts in the community and serve even more children with our universal prevention programs.



Anticipated impacts to the community include:

1. Increase in resilience in participating St. Charles K-5 children.
2. Increase in leadership skills in participating St. Charles K-5 children.
3. Increase in knowledge about substances in participating St. Charles K-5 children and their teachers.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Lisa Lorenz

By Alicia Smith



If you have a Monday morning PreventEd call, you’ve met one of our volunteers. Lisa Lorenz is a responsible desk worker at her team member’s with a smile she inputs makes copy assembling rescue kit

In her previous career, Lisa climbed the corporate ladder in a marketing role with Panera Bread. Following the sale and the purchase of the company by a global company, Lisa left a job that had anchored her for almost 10 years. She purchased a women’s boutique located in Webster Groves, Never Enough Boutique; the purchase made sense as she had the skills for retail success.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

Min Liu, Ph.D.

SIUE Professor of Communication/Chinese

By Alicia Smith



Min Liu has served on the St. Charles County Community Advisory Board for several years. She is a first generation immigrant, a proud naturalized citizen, and the mother of two school-age children.

Min began her career in academia at the Communication Department at Illinois University – Urbana

As a Chinese-American professor in a Midwestern university, it is important to Dr. Liu that students understand the importance of her culture. The Chinese culture is not a monolith, it is ethnically diverse but racially homogeneous. From regional, religious, educational, and socio-economic differences as examples. The differences serve as a teaching tool and a time for cultural understanding and outreach.

Min’s educational lessons on Chinese culture and stereotypes. At first glance, one

Tributes and Contributions

SEPTEMBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022

Individuals

Doug and Chelle Dohrmann
Jaidan Adams
Susan Aiello
Stacy Ance
Michelle Anne
ANONYMOUS
Jenny and Dan Armbruster
Marilyn and Terry Bader
Hannah Bailey
Heidi Bartels
J.P. Bartmess
Matt and Amber Bauersachs
Kelly Baumgarten
Bonnie Bausano
Kenajo Bell
Kristin Bengtson and
Bronson Rhoads
Nancy Bengtson
Dan Bertel
Jeanette Bessen
Ross Beveridge
Allison Blackwell
Michael Bobroff
Taylor Bodine
Robin Boyd
Libby and Steve Brim
Diane Carroll
Marco and Beth Castaneda
Debra and Russell Cavitt
Alvia Chambers
Alexandra Church
Cindy and Chris Connelly
Samantha Constantin
Abigail Cook
Jenn Cullen Dettmann
Dr. Kanika Cunningham
Ryan Daugherty
Nichole Dawsey and
Jake Phelps
Sarah Dieter
Alex Easton
Maggie Elmy
Tom Etling
Mike and Sue Foley
Adrienne Forbes
Thomas and Cheryl Fox
Evona Franceschelli
Terisha Friedmann
Cliff Gallagher
Elizabeth George
Prue Gershman
Danielle Gilbert
Carol Giles-Straight
Lauren Giljum
Jill Goldstein Sloan
Rubi Gonzales
Danielle Graf
Kylah Brown Green
Teri Grigg
James Gulbrandsen
Robert Gulino
Erinne Haberl
Jordan Hampton
Anne Hannon
Sonia Herrero
Sandy Herrmann
Tom and Anne Herrmann
Caroline Holke
Julie and Fred Hook
Paul Horlacher
Makensie Howe
Kim Hudson
Pam Hughes
Amy Huster
Dan Jarvis

Emily Johnson
Diane Johnston
Devon Kaltmayer
Anna Kiwala
Ryan Kneip
Daniel R Kootman
Brenda Kosark
Barb Krafve
Paul and Joan Kutz
Dawn and Tony Lammert
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Merissa Larson
Lisa Lawson
Tim and Marigene Lorson
Susan Lynch
Tracey Mack
Morgan Madison
Larisa Malley
F. Stafford H. Manion
Ken Manwarring
Bailey Martin
Dennis and Maggie McCarthy
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Lindsay McMenamin
Damian McMullin
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Bronwyn Miller
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Brock Smith
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Danielle Smith
Matthew Soderberg
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NJ and Bob Sterneck
John and Mary Straub
Linzi Sweetin
Julie Taylor
Rylee Thurman
Alex Toppmeyer
Kaylee Vanatta
Wendy Voyer

Molly Waters
Gerald Watson
David Weber and Val Tripi
Tracy Weidel
Kathryn Weigel
Richard and Josephine Weil
Jacque White
Tim Wiethop
Laura Wilkerson
Kevin Wingenbach
Chelsea Wire
Amanda Wozniak
Jane and George Young
Stacie Zellin and Jared Opsal

Corporations, Foundations, and Organizations
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Russell Sabor Foundation
Surround Care
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Washington University in St. Louis
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Ellis and Patti Fitzwalter

Kevin Lewis
Laura Medrano

Susan Lord
Geri Peters

Vinny LoRusso
Elizabeth Lee

Nicky Vigna
Vance and Gee Vigna

Warren Work
Debra Townsend

Kara Lynn Wrice
The karalynnwrice Foundation
School District of Webster Groves

Gina and Nick Yocco
Malva Yocco

Continued on the back panel

The Impact of Peer Support

By Terisha Friedmann

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Lisa Lorenz

By Alicia Smith



If you have attended an early Monday meeting or event at PreventEd, you’ve probably met one of our very dedicated volunteers, Lisa Lorenz. She is responsible for the reception desk where she greets guests, team members and callers with a smile. Additionally, she inputs prevention data, makes copies and is a pro at assembling the red overdose rescue kits.

In her previous career, Lisa climbed the corporate ladder in a marketing role with Panera Bread. Following a reorganization and the purchase of the company by a global holding company, Lisa left a job that had anchored her for almost 25 years. Lisa purchased a women’s boutique located in Webster Groves called Never Enough Boutique; the purchase made sense because she had the skills for retail success.

As great as it appeared, the reality was a different story. It was extremely scary making a career change without the support system she had acquired over the years on her former job. Stress, uncertainty and crushed self-esteem were easy to numb with alcohol. Lisa realized that she was using alcohol to escape and the consequences became increasingly evident. Her mental health, physical well-being and relationships suffered. Lisa’s journey to sobriety started with education as she made up her mind she was going to stop drinking. She absorbed herself for many months by reading everything she could about alcohol misuse and focusing on all the benefits of sobriety. Lisa has been in recovery for more than four years!

Lisa is a married mother of two children. Her daughter is in her freshman year of college and her son recently started his first job after completing his undergraduate studies in Engineering. As a recent empty nester, Lisa volunteers as a way to give back to the community and to celebrate her sobriety.

If you are in the building on a Monday, please stop by, say hello and introduce yourself.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Min Liu, Ph.D.

SIUE Professor of Communication/Chinese Service Center Advisor

By Alicia Smith



Min Liu has served on the PreventEd Community Advisory Board for one year. She is a first generation Chinese-American; proud naturalized citizen; and a married mother of two school-aged students.

Min began her career in the Communication Department at Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville in 2007.

As a Chinese-American professor in a Midwestern university it is important to Dr. Liu that students understand the diversity within her culture. The Chinese culture is not a monolith. China is ethnically diverse but racially homogeneous. There can be regional, religious, educational, and socio-economic differences as examples. The differences serve as a teaching opportunity and a time for cultural understanding and outreach.

Min’s educational lessons on Chinese culture always include discussions on stereotypes. At first glance, one could consider

stereotypes including studious behavior, excellent/top grades, great in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) classes, and Ivy League bound to be complimentary. These characteristics, with some moderation are positive. Part of Dr. Liu’s discussions with students cover the negative side effects of the listed stereotypes such as toxic competitiveness, parental pressure, success at all costs, behavioral health issues, suicide rates, and abnormal measures of success.

Success for her includes the importance of family love and closeness, honoring cultural traditions, community service, and expanding the definition of educational and career success through early family conversations. Her work in dispelling and changing stereotypes brought her to PreventEd and our work with Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA). Min encourages her students to enroll in the module so that they can know the warning signs and behaviors in themselves and others. Her insistence on scheduling and recruitment for the program is her way of giving back to the next generation and their families.



Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

An enthusiastic group of PreventEd team members and their families spent the holiday painting several rooms in a women’s recovery house. They really brightened up the place! As they say, teamwork makes the dream work!

YOP Tax Credits Available

We have 50% YOP tax credits available for eligible donations! These are tax credits for 50% of your donation that decrease your tax liability. For more information on making a YOP eligible gift, reach out to Mike Foley at mfoley@prevented.org or (314) 962-3456 ext. 353.



WHAT ARE YOP TAX CREDITS?

Scan the QR code to learn more about how YOP tax credits work or visit prevented.org/donate

What did Teen Institute mean for me?

It was an awesome experience, especially being from a small, rural community. I met people from all over the STL area and made lasting friendships. It also helped prepare me for college. It can be easy to get caught up in unhealthy habits and mentalities in college, and TI helped me navigate certain situations with confidence. Lastly, TI taught me to empathize with people that have had a completely different life than I have. Some people put on a brave face through battles I never would have been aware of. I strongly recommend TI for all high school kids. It will change their lives for the better!

- Ben Holtmeyer

Ready to apply?

Apply online today by May 26, 2023 at prevented.org/teeninstitute



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New Funding Awarded to Serve St. Charles County • Community Advisory Board Member: Min Liu

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Roger and Peggy Scheppers
Katie Otto

Nichole Dawsey

Barb Krafve

Dru and Katie Jacobs

Kristie and Mike Cromie
Cara and Brian Baldwin
Rebekah Nelson

Bill Sunderman

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Henry Watkins

John and Diane Hefe

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Volunteers

Easter Seals Team
Rachel Federman
Laura Greiner
Ann Joseph
Barb Krafve
Lisa Lorenz
Violet Olsen

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PreventEd's Spring Awards Luncheon is April 28!

Join us to celebrate local professionals making a big impact in the field of substance use disorder. Tickets are available at prevented.org/spring-awards.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for exemplary work in the field of alcohol and drug misuse? If so, let us know! Nominate them for the **2023 Helen B. Madden Award**. The nomination form can also be found at the link above.

If you have donated and your name does not appear on this list, please contact Mike Foley at mfoley@prevented.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit our website for the most up-to-date event information and registration: prevented.org/events