

# MIDDLETOWN ALLIANCE

## MIDDLETOWN ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER



### Welcome to the Middletown Alliance Newsletter!

Family members are valuable partners in our shared mission of helping our youth and communities thrive and succeed. It's not always easy to navigate the current drug and alcohol trends or have difficult conversations with loved ones. This newsletter will include Alliance information as well as varying topics, tips, and resources about substance use, mental health, and other at-risk behaviors.



### WHO IS THE MIDDLETOWN ALLIANCE?

The Middletown Alliance is a community-based volunteer organization. Through education and awareness, The Alliance works to prevent substance use disorders, underage drinking, alcohol use disorders, vaping, and other at-risk behaviors. The Alliance aims to eliminate the stigma of mental health disorder and substance use disorders through the events and programs they implement.

### CONNECT WITH US!



Scan the QR code to visit our website or go to:  
[www.middletownnj.org/alliance](http://www.middletownnj.org/alliance)



@Middletownalliance



Middletown Alliance page

### TOPICS COVERED IN THIS ISSUE:



**What it means to be sober curious**



**How to safely dispose of vapes/e-cigarettes**



**Supporting loved ones in recovery during the holidays**



**2ndfloor- NJ youth help line**

### NEXT MIDDLETOWN ALLIANCE MEETING:

**Saturday, November 16th**

The Alliance now meets in person every other month on the third Saturday of the month from 8:30-9:30 AM at the Training Room in Town Hall (1 Kings Highway).





## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SOBER CURIOUS

**Sober curious means that you've chosen to avoid alcohol or drink less alcohol for personal or wellness reasons.**

It involves curiosity about the reasons fueling your desire to drink and the way alcohol affects your life.

Unlike people who stay sober because of dependency or addiction, sober curious people may not necessarily meet criteria for an alcohol use disorder or intend to give up alcohol permanently. Experimenting with drinking less has numerous health benefits and can improve mental health as well!

### Health benefits:

**Improves mood, sleep, and productivity**

**Improves fitness endurance and stamina**

**Can help with weight loss and clearer skin**

**Can reduce risk of anxiety and depression**

**Can reduce heart disease, stroke, and cancers**

Wondering whether giving up drinking might have a positive impact on your life? More and more people are starting to take a closer look at the role alcohol plays in their lives!



### Getting started:

Practicing a sober curious lifestyle can look different for everyone; there is no right or wrong way to be sober curious. Some people may choose to limit their drinking to certain days of the week, while others may choose to abstain from it temporarily or permanently. However much you want to reduce your alcohol consumption and for how long is up to you entirely. No matter what your goals are, here are a few tips to cut back:

- ◆ **Get support and find people to help keep you accountable.**
- ◆ **Try drinks with a lower ABV or mocktails**
- ◆ **Pick up a new healthy hobby to help fill your time and stick to your goals**
- ◆ **Implement low-risk drinking strategies such as:**
  - **Alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic drinks like water; stay hydrated!**
  - **Space your drinks out**
  - **Eat before and while you are drinking**
  - **Don't mix alcohol with caffeine**

**Read the Healthline article at:**

<https://www.healthline.com/health/alcohol/sober-curious#the-basics>

**healthline**





# Save Our Planet: How to Safely Dispose of E- Cigarettes

**Source:** United States Environmental Protection Agency

## Do NOT put e-cigarettes in your household trash or recycling



The lithium batteries can become damaged and cause fires.



Nicotine is toxic and poses a risk to both workers and the environment.



## DO take e-cigarettes to your household hazardous waste collection site



Many towns and counties have collection programs for household hazardous waste. Search online for household hazardous waste collections near you or contact your local solid waste agency.



Typically, household hazardous waste collections are free for residents.



The e-cigarettes will be managed safely and prevent fires and releases of harmful chemicals to the environment.



# E-cigarettes contain nicotine and lithium batteries

✓ E-cigarettes are sometimes called e-cigs, vapes, vape pens, e-hookahs, and electronic nicotine delivery systems or ENDS. Some e-cigarettes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. Some look like USB flash drives, pens, and other everyday items.

✓ E-cigarettes contain nicotine and lithium batteries, making them hazardous waste.



✓ Nicotine is toxic. Liquid nicotine in e-cigarettes can be easily absorbed by the skin, potentially causing nicotine poisoning with symptoms that include difficulty breathing, fainting, or seizures. Nicotine can also harm fish and other aquatic organisms.

✓ Lithium batteries can catch fire, especially when damaged. When placed in household trash and recycling bins, lithium batteries often get damaged by trash compactors and can cause fires during transportation and at waste and recycling facilities.

**Taking your e-cigarette waste to a household hazardous waste collection site is the best way to ensure that your hazardous waste does not:**

- ✓ Cause a fire
- ✓ Expose first responders and other workers to toxic chemicals
- ✓ Release toxic chemicals into the environment

# SUPPORTING YOUR LOVED ONES IN RECOVERY DURING THE HOLIDAYS



TOGETHER  
★ in ★  
RECOVERY

Holidays often bring about triggers and temptations for individuals in recovery. Some may have isolated themselves around the holidays in the past, so their first instinct is to disconnect. If it is a holiday where they would usually drink alcohol, their first thought might be to pick up a drink.

**Supporting someone you love in their sobriety around the holidays may present some challenges, but it can also be a meaningful and rewarding experience. Here are eight ways to support your loved one in their recovery around the holidays:**

1

**Educate and Learn:** Try to learn about addiction and recovery and what challenges come with each. Understanding this journey can help you empathize with your loved one.

5

**Encourage Connection:** Attending a support group with your loved one or encouraging them to go before or after a holiday event can be beneficial and help them process their emotions.

2

**Communicate and Offer Support:** Let your loved one know that you're there to support them. A large part of support is asking about their wants/needs and practicing patience.

6

**Respect Their Boundaries:** If your loved one has set boundaries, respect their decision and help to accommodate such limits.

3

**Encourage Sober Entertainment:** Planning activities that don't involve alcohol can show your loved one that they can enjoy the holidays without it. Examples: puzzles, museum trips, decorating, board games, etc.

7

**Encourage Self-Care:** Lack of sleep, hunger, or stress can make people more irritable. Paying particular attention to these feelings and prioritizing self-care around the holidays can be pivotal.

4

**Avoid Potential Triggers:** Be mindful of where you celebrate or spend the holidays. If your loved one associates a specific place or situation with substance use, look for alternatives.

8

**Offer Distractions:** Your loved one may benefit from distractions when feeling down, tempted, or anxious. Engage in activities they might enjoy or talk about topics that interest them. If you notice your loved one struggling, you can ask them to take a walk to chat!



**Addiction Center**  
Your guide for addiction and recovery





# 2NDFLOOR NJ YOUTH HELP LINE

**2NDFLOOR is a confidential and anonymous helpline for New Jersey's youth and young adults. They are here to help you find solutions to the problems that you face and we are available 24/7 365 days a year.**

- ✓ Text or call 24/7 to 1888-222-2228
- ✓ Explore the 2NDFLOOR App! It is a safe space for New Jersey youth to receive 1:1 confidential chat support, communicate directly with peers on our message boards, or find daily inspiration.
- ✓ Topics of support include: substance abuse, mental health, dating, bullying, sexuality, school, disordered eating, family, health & fitness, stress, and social media.
- ✓ 2NDFLOOR is confidential and anonymous, but are required by law to report hurting yourself/others or abuse to the appropriate authorities. If you or someone you know is struggling or having thoughts of suicide, call 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. In life-threatening situations, call 911.



<https://www.2ndfloor.org/>



## MIDDLETOWN ALLIANCE CONTACT INFO:



**Chairperson Kim Kratz:**  
[kkratz@middletownnj.org](mailto:kkratz@middletownnj.org)



**Coordinator Erika McKee:**  
[emckee@middletownnj.org](mailto:emckee@middletownnj.org)



**732-615-2277**

## IF YOU HAVE UNWANTED, UNUSED, OR EXPIRED MEDICATION (NO NEEDLES OR SYRINGES):

**Anonymously drop off in the "Project Medicine Drop Box" in the lobby of the Middletown Township Police Station.**

Address: Middletown Township Police Department,  
1 Kings Highway Middletown, NJ 07733

## VIEW OUR STRESS- RELIEF RESOURCES!

Visit our website or scan the QR code to view children, teen, and adult stress relief tips, coping mechanisms, apps, and videos!



## NOVEMBER 21ST IS THE GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT!

Visit us from 9-3 pm the Town Hall lobby for quitting smoking resources and giveaways! For more information on quitting smoking and vaping, visit our website or scan the QR code!

