

CURRICULUM ON MILITARY SUBJECTS

Strand 3: Cadet Wellness

Level 11

This Strand is composed of the following components:

- A. A Well Cadet
- B. Wellness Techniques
- C. **Obstacles to Wellness**



Table of Contents

C. Obstacles to Wellness 3

- C1. Stress 4
- C2. Sedentary Lifestyle 5
- C3. Malnourishment 6
- C4. Depression / Suicide 8
- C5. Sleep Deprivation 10
- C6. Violence and Anger Management 11
- C7. Bullying / Cyberbullying 12
- C8. Tobacco / Nicotine (Smoking, Vaping, Chewing) 14
- C9. Underage Drinking and Binge Drinking 15
- C10. Abusing Drugs 17
- C11. Sexual Orientation 19

C. Obstacles to Wellness

Objectives

DESIRED OUTCOME (Leadership)

Unit leaders will be able to identify obstacles to wellness in their Cadet peers and subordinates. They will also be able to influence, educate, and lead their fellow cadets by steering them to tools and resources for overcoming these obstacles.

1. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows stress symptoms, cadets will be able to identify the symptoms of stress and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
2. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of a sedentary lifestyle, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
3. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Malnourishment, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
4. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Depression / Suicide, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
5. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Sleep Deprivation, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
6. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Violence / Bullying, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
7. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of STDs, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
8. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Smoking, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
9. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Alcohol abuse, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.
10. Given a scenario about a cadet that shows symptoms of Drug Abuse, cadets will be able to correctly identify the symptoms and recommend some appropriate reduction strategies.

C1. Stress

Too much stress can negatively affect a Cadet's health, even though they might not realize it. They may think illness is to blame for that nagging headache, their frequent insomnia or their decreased productivity at work or school. But stress may actually be the culprit.

Stress symptoms can affect one's body, thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Being able to recognize common stress symptoms in yourself and in your Cadets, can give you a jump on managing them. Stress that's left unchecked can contribute to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes.

Common effects of stress on the body

- Headache
- Muscle tension or pain
- Fatigue
- Stomachache
- Sleep problems

Common effects of stress on the mood

- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Lack of motivation or focus
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Irritability or anger
- Sadness or depression
- Disillusionment

Common effects of stress on behavior

- Overeating or undereating
- Angry outbursts
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Tobacco use
- Social withdrawal
- Exercising less often
- Poor performance in school
- Panic attacks
- Rebellion

Stress Prevention

If you see any of these results of stress in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you're simply just feeling stressed, then review sections **B1-B11**, **B14**, and **B16**. Most of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance counselors are good places to start.

C2. Sedentary Lifestyle

A sedentary lifestyle is defined as a type of lifestyle where a Cadet does not receive regular amounts of physical activity. The National Institute for Health states that teenagers should participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity (most of which is aerobic) each day. Most health professionals are also in agreement that walking 10,000 steps a day (approximately 5 miles) is the ideal goal to set for improving health and reducing the health risks caused by inactivity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 60% to 85% of the population worldwide does not engage in enough activity, making physical inactivity the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality.

- Physical inactivity may increase the risks of certain cancers.
- Physical inactivity may contribute to anxiety and depression.
- Physical inactivity has been shown to be a risk factor for certain cardiovascular diseases.
- People who engage in more physical activity are less likely to develop coronary heart disease.
- People who are more active are less likely to be overweight or obese.
- Sitting too much may cause a decrease in skeletal muscle mass.
- Physical inactivity is linked to high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol levels.

Symptoms of “Sitting Disease”

- Abdominal Obesity
- Easily out of breath
- Lack of muscle tone
- Significant daily “screen time” (Television, video games, computer, social media) [More than 2 hours/day]
- Not Passing physical fitness tests
- Lack of participation in sports or other competitive activities
- Behavioral concerns (Depression, Stress, and Anxiety)

Sedentary Lifestyle Prevention

If you see any of these results of a sedentary lifestyle in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you're simply just feeling lazy, then review sections **B1, B3, B5, B9, B15, and B17**. Most of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance counselors, Commandants, and PE Teachers are good places to start.

C3. Malnourishment

Teenagers are continually growing, and that growth can be dramatically affected by poor nutritional choices. Many teens eat fast-food or processed-food diets that are high in sugar, fat, sodium and lack calcium and iron. Look at the Nutrition Strand to learn more about healthy eating! Here are a few different types of nutritional problems:

Overeating

Most people overeat at Thanksgiving or when they're at a pizza party, but some teens overeat on a regular basis. This can cause a teen to be overweight or obese, which often leads to health problems. Some of the health problems related to overeating and obesity include:

- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Heart Disease
- Kidney Disease
- Bone loss
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Social withdrawal
- Depression

Teens may overeat because they have developed bad eating habits. They eat more than they need to because they are bored, depressed, or simply not thinking about what they're eating. Cadets who are overeating should try to change their eating habits.

Poor eating

Sugar Epidemic

The American Heart Association recommends that teenagers eat less than 6.5 teaspoons or 100 calories from sugar each day. But according to a poll in Family Circle, the average teen takes in about 34 teaspoons of sugar, or 500 calories worth, each day. Here's where most of these disease and obesity causing sugars come from:

- Regular soft drinks
- Sports drinks
- Fruit drinks ('fruit-ades' and fruit punch)
- Syrup
- Candy
- Cakes and cookies
- Dairy desserts and milk products (ice cream, sweetened yogurt, and sweetened milk)

Nutrient Poor

Iron deficiencies cause Cadets (especially female) to be sluggish, tired, weak and have slower cognitive development, decreased immune function and show a decrease in performance at school. Prevention includes eating more lean red meats, poultry, fish and other seafood, egg yolks, raisins, spinach, legumes and iron-fortified breads and cereals.

Calcium deficiencies cause Cadets to have weak bones and be more prone to fractures. The daily recommendation for calcium is 1,300 milligrams, which is about 3 cups of milk. Calcium-rich foods include low-fat dairy foods, leafy greens and calcium fortified products like soy-based foods, cereals and juices.

Anorexia

Anorexia nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by a low weight, fear of gaining weight, a strong desire to be thin, and food restriction. Many people with anorexia see themselves as overweight even though they are in fact underweight. If asked they usually deny they have a problem with low weight. Often, they weigh themselves frequently, eat only small amounts, and only eat certain foods. Some will exercise excessively, force themselves to vomit, or use laxatives to produce weight loss. Complications may include osteoporosis, infertility and heart damage, among others. Women will often stop having menstrual periods.

The cause is not known. There appear to be some genetic components with identical twins more often affected than non-identical twins. Cultural factors also appear to play a role with societies that value thinness having higher rates of disease. Additionally, it occurs more commonly among those involved in activities that value thinness such as high-level athletics, modelling, and dancing.

Symptoms:

- A perfectionist / high achiever in school
- Female (typically)
- Suffers from low self-esteem
- Starvation / not eating

Bulimia

Bulimia nervosa, also known as simply bulimia, is an eating disorder characterized by binge eating followed by purging. Binge eating refers to eating a large amount of food in a short amount of time. Purging refers to the attempts to get rid of the food consumed. This may be done by vomiting or taking laxatives.¹ Other efforts to lose weight may include the use of diuretics, stimulants, water fasting, or excessive exercise.^{1,2} Most people with bulimia are at a normal weight.³ The forcing of vomiting may result in thickened skin on the knuckles and breakdown of the teeth. Bulimia is frequently associated with other mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and problems with drugs or alcohol.¹ There is also a higher risk of suicide and self-harm.⁴

Symptoms:

- Binges on huge quantities of high-caloric food
- Purges by self-induced vomiting and often by using laxatives
- Binges may alternate with severe diets
- Dramatic weight fluctuations
- Long periods of time in the bathroom (may attempt to hide purges with running water)

Malnourishment Prevention

If you see symptoms of malnourishment in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you're simply just feeling like you could eat better, then review sections **B1, B4, B5, B9, B11, B16 (Low Body**

Image) and B17. Most of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance Counselors, Commandants, and PE Teachers are good places to start. If you suspect anorexia or bulimia, professional help should be sought out immediately.

C4. Depression / Suicide

Depression

As teens face strong emotions, the mood swings of puberty, and the many challenges of growing up, they can experience depression. There are some simple ways to avoid minor depression: Good nutrition, daily physical activity, regular medical checkups, stress reducing activities, and talking with knowledgeable people about your problems all help. It's important to be aware of your feelings and to seek professional help if you feel overwhelmed.

Signs of Depression in Teenagers (Adapted From Mayo Clinic)

- Sadness
- Irritability
- Feeling negative and worthless
- Anger
- Poor performance
- Poor attendance at school
- Avoidance of social interaction
- Feeling misunderstood and extremely sensitive
- Using drugs or alcohol
- Eating or sleeping too much
- Self-harm
- Loss of interest in normal activities

According to mayoclinic.org, "Teen depression is a serious mental health problem that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest in activities." It can affect how a teenager thinks, feels and behaves, and it can cause emotional, functional and physical problems. Although depression can happen at any age in life, symptoms can vary between teens and adults.

"Issues such as peer pressure, academic expectations and changing bodies can bring a lot of ups and downs for teens. But for some teens, the lows are more than just temporary feelings — they're a symptom of depression."

Teen depression is not a weakness or something that willpower can fix — it can have serious consequences and requires long-term treatment. "For most teens, depression symptoms ease with treatment such as medication and psychological counseling." Signs and symptoms of depression can include feelings of sadness and crying for no reason, feeling hopeless, getting annoyed easily, frustration or feelings of anger. Losing interest in family events or friends and low self-esteem can be other signs of depression in teenagers.

An important thing to pay attention to is changing behavior. Tiredness, losing energy, neglecting appearances, and self-harm (cutting, burning, extreme diet changes) are big clues that something may be wrong and a teen needs to see professional help. These are difficult signs to accurately distinguish between depression and normal teenage angst, and should never be self-diagnosed. Only medical professionals should accurately diagnose someone with depression.

Depression Prevention

If you see symptoms of depression in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you're simply just feeling down, then review sections **B1-B17** in this strand. All of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance

Counselors, Commandants, and Parents are good places to start. Note, if you suspect severe depression, seek professional help immediately.

Suicide

Ending one's life can sometimes seem like the only solution to a person's problems, and an easy way out. Suicide is a major problem in the teenage years, and for young adults who haven't learned to deal with what life throws at them. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from adversity, and is a life skill that everyone needs.

Scientists have researched suicide and suicide prevention much more extensively because of the rise in awareness about PTSD. There are literally millions of resources about suicide prevention available online. Here are just four websites that can provide information for anyone needing help with suicidal thoughts or feelings. These resources are also helpful for people that fear someone they know or want to help may be suicidal.

1-800-273-8255 Hotline for Suicide Prevention

<http://www.sprc.org/> Suicide Prevention Resource Center

<https://afsp.org/find-support/resources/> American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml> National Institute for Mental Health

<https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/Suicide/resources.html> <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
Center for Disease Control

The military has started paying specifically focused attention to suicide prevention. Since so many Cadets are more likely to join a military branch, this becomes of interest to you as a Cadet leader and to all Cadets in general. Websites such as www.activeheroes.org and www.preventsuicide.army.mil are available for learning more about the military and how service members can find assistance with this difficult issue.

Signs of Suicide (Adapted From Mayo Clinic)

- Talking about suicide "I'm going to kill myself" "I wish I were dead" or "I wish I hadn't been born"
- Getting the means to take your own life, such as buying a gun or stockpiling pills
- Withdrawing from social contact and wanting to be left alone
- Having mood swings, such as being emotionally high one day and deeply discouraged the next
- Being preoccupied with death, dying or violence
- Feeling trapped or hopeless about a situation
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs
- Changing normal routine, including eating or sleeping patterns
- Doing risky or self-destructive things, such as using drugs or driving recklessly
- Giving away belongings or getting affairs in order when there's no other logical explanation for doing this
- Saying goodbye to people as if they won't be seen again
- Personality changes or being severely anxious or agitated, particularly when experiencing some of the warning signs listed above

Potential Suicide Triggers

- Death of a parent
- Divorce of parents
- Feeling like a "pawn" that is being used between feuding, divorced parents
- Joining a new family with a step-parent and step-siblings
- Breaking up with a boyfriend / girlfriend
- Moving to a new community
- Not feeling accepted by peers
- Being ridiculed by classmates
- Feeling misunderstood
- Any experience perceived to be "humiliating"
- Alcohol abuse (binge drinking)
- Drug abuse
- Being bullied by classmates

Suicide Prevention

Section **B16, Suicide** provides more information on how to help yourself and how to help others prevent suicide. **This is not something you should tackle yourself--Seek immediate professional help.**

1-800-273-8255
Hotline for Suicide Prevention

C5. Sleep Deprivation

According to a 2006 National Sleep Foundation poll, more than 87 percent of high school students in the United States get far less than the recommended 8 to 10 hours, and the amount of time they sleep is decreasing. This poses a serious threat to their health, safety and academic success. Sleep deprivation increases the likelihood Cadets suffer many negative consequences, including an inability to concentrate, poor grades, drowsy-driving incidents, anxiety, depression, thoughts of suicide and even suicide attempts. It's a problem that for all teens, rich or poor.

Signs/Risks of Sleep Deprivation

- Irritability
- Sleeping longer on weekends than weekdays
- Difficulty concentrating
- Panic attacks
- Negativity
- Impulsive behavior
- Attending "zero" period
- Video Game bingeing
- Dozing in class
- Relationship problems (Hard to have a good relationship with a grumpy zombie)

Sleep Deprivation Prevention

If you see symptoms of sleep deprivation in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you're simply just feeling tired, then review sections **B1-B5, B8, B9, B11, B14, and B15** in this strand. All of these

sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance Counselors, Commandants, and Parents are good places to start.

C6. Violence and Anger Management

Violence

Youth violence refers to harmful behaviors that can start early and continue into young adulthood. The young person can be a victim, an offender, or a witness to the violence. Youth violence includes various behaviors. Some violent acts—such as bullying, slapping, or hitting—can cause more emotional harm than physical harm. Others, such as robbery and assault (with or without weapons) can lead to serious injury or even death. The ultimate goal is to stop youth violence before it starts.

Violence has an impact on health, even to those who aren't injured. Living in a violent atmosphere causes acute stress that overrides normal activity. Many teens end up joining gangs because it's the only solution they see to protect themselves! Unfortunately, that solution is more likely to hurt the individual than the original threat.

How can you avoid violence? Here are some factors that 'protect' youth:

- Relationship with a responsible adult
- Positive school experiences (like CA Cadet Corps!!)
- Plans and dreams (future orientation)
- Ability to control impulses
- If violence is happening in your life, talk to a responsible adult about it

Sexual Coercion

Unfortunately in our society (and many others), date or acquaintance rape is common. This is defined as being forced to have sexual intercourse by someone you know, as compared to rape by a stranger. This often occurs when the people involved have been drinking and inhibitions are lowered, and can be accompanied by use of date-rape drugs. These drugs can affect you very quickly and cause victims to become weak, confused, and even pass out. You may not remember what happened while you were drugged. Date rape drugs can also cause seizures and even death. The most common date rape drugs -- also called "club drugs" -- are flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), also called roofies; gamma hydroxybutyric acid (GHB), also called liquid ecstasy; and ketamine, also called Special K. These drugs may come as pills, liquids, or powders. Ecstasy (MDMA) has also been used as a date-rape drug.

Protect yourself by not accepting drinks from others, not sharing drinks, watching your drink, and having a non-drinking friend with you to make sure nothing happens. If you suspect you have been exposed to a date rape drug or have been sexually assaulted, call 911 and get to an emergency room immediately.

Anger Management

Teenage anger is a normal part of growing. In fact, anger is as normal of an emotion as happiness. How one chooses to express and deal with that anger is Anger Management. Allowing hormones, fears, and adrenaline to take control of your response is when tempers flare and the problems start.

Signs of Anger Management Problems

- They can't control their aggressive impulses, hit people or get into physical fights

- Frequent explosive outbursts
- They are reflexively oppositional, argue heatedly, and seldom get to resolution
- They are unable to engage in constructive problem solving and do not acknowledge their role in creating the situation, instead feeling constantly victimized and “picked on.”
- They frequently lose friends, alienate adults or are otherwise embroiled in interpersonal conflict.
- They seem preoccupied with revenge or getting back at someone.
- They damage property.
- Repeatedly expresses hatred toward their self or someone else.
- They can’t get over a past situation or occurrence.
- They want to hurt someone else or themselves (or actually do so)

Violence / Anger Management Prevention

If you see symptoms of violence, sexual coercion, or anger management in yourself or in your fellow/subordinate Cadets, or even if you’re simply just feeling like you want to release that anger, then review sections **B12, B1-B4, B7-B8, B11, and B13- B16** in this strand. All of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets. If symptoms or feelings continue then seek professional help. School Guidance Counselors, Commandants, and Parents are good places to start.

C7. Bullying / Cyberbullying

(Adapted from *StopBullying.gov*)

Bullying

Bullying is being mean to another kid over and over again. Bullying often includes:

- Teasing
- Talking about hurting someone
- Spreading rumors
- Leaving kids out on purpose
- Attacking someone by hitting them or yelling at them

Bullying is never ok. Those who bully use power to hurt people. Power does not always mean bigger or stronger. Power can also mean popular or smart. Or, the kid doing the bullying may know a secret about the kid being bullied. Kids who bully can have other problems, too, even when they get older, like using alcohol and drugs, getting into fights, and dropping out of school.

Signs of Bullying

- Kids who are bullied can feel like they are:
 - Different
 - Powerless
 - Unpopular
 - Alone
- Kids who are bullied have a hard time standing up for themselves. They think the kid who bullies them is more powerful than they are. Bullying can make them:
 - Sad, lonely, or nervous
 - Feel sick
 - Have problems at school
 - Bully other kids

Bullying Prevention / Response

All Cadet Corps members should respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior and send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time. Adults should be the ones to stop bullying, but all Cadets should report it to adults: someone's life may be at stake. If you are being bullied, or suspect bullying in one of your fellow/subordinate Cadets, review section **B15** (Especially *Ways to Stop Bullying*), **B7**, and **B16**. All of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets, but bullying should be reported immediately to School Guidance Counselors, Commandants, or some trusted teacher especially if the bully is at school. These adults are all trained to deal with these types of situations.



Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology, including devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Cyberbullying can happen as text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Cyberbullying is Different Kids who are being cyberbullied are often bullied in person as well. Additionally, kids who are cyberbullied have a harder time getting away from the behavior. Cyberbullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It can happen any time of the day or night.

Cyberbullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source. Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.

Effects of Cyberbullying Cell phones and computers themselves are not to blame for cyberbullying. Social media sites can be used for positive activities, like connecting kids with friends and family, helping with school, and for entertainment. But these tools can also be used to hurt other people. Kids who are cyberbullied are more likely to:



- Use alcohol and drugs
- Skip school
- Experience in-person bullying
- Receive poor grades
- Have lower self-esteem
- Have more health problems

Frequency of Cyberbullying:

- The 2013-2014 [School Crime Supplement](#) (National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics) indicates that 7% of students in grades 6–12 experienced cyberbullying.
- The 2013 [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey](#) finds that 15% of high school students (grades 9-12) were electronically bullied in the past year.

- Research on cyberbullying is growing. However, because kids' technology use changes rapidly, it is difficult to design surveys that accurately capture trends.

Cyberbullying Prevention

All Cadet Corps members should respond quickly and consistently to cyber bullying behavior and send the message that it is not acceptable. Cyberbullying is best defeated with prevention through security and privacy. As with bullying, adults should be the ones to stop cyberbullying, but all Cadets should report it to adults: someone's life may be at stake. If you are being cyberbullied, or suspect cyberbullying in one of your fellow/subordinate Cadets, review section **B15** (Especially *How to Beat CyberBullying*), **B7**, and **B16**. All of these sections will help you help yourself, or your Cadets, but cyberbullying is prohibited on most websites and may be illegal so the information should be saved, and reported to an adult.

C8. Tobacco / Nicotine (Smoking, Vaping, Chewing)

According to the CDC in 2014, the products most commonly used by high school students were e-cigarettes (13.4 percent), hookah (9.4 percent), cigarettes (9.2 percent), cigars (8.2 percent), smokeless tobacco (5.5 percent), snus (1.9 percent) and pipes (1.5 percent). Use of multiple tobacco products was common; nearly half of all middle and high school students who were current tobacco users used two or more types of tobacco products. The products most commonly used by middle school students were e-cigarettes (3.9 percent), hookah (2.5 percent), cigarettes (2.5 percent), cigars (1.9 percent), smokeless tobacco (1.6 percent), and pipes (0.6 percent).

Teenagers may view Hookah, vaping, or e-cigarettes as "safe" alternatives to traditional cigarettes. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), American Lung Association, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the American Medical Association (AMA) have stated that these are not safe alternatives to smoking and have many of the same risks including:

- Oral cancer
- Lung cancer
- Stomach cancer
- Cancer of the esophagus
- Reduced lung function
- Decreased fertility

Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death.

- Worldwide, tobacco use causes nearly 6 million deaths per year, and current trends show that tobacco use will cause more than 8 million deaths annually by 2030.
- Cigarette smoking is responsible for more than 480,000 deaths per year in the United States, including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke exposure. This is about one in five deaths annually, or 1,300 deaths every day.
- On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.
- If smoking continues at the current rate among U.S. youth, 5.6 million of today's Americans younger than 18 years of age are expected to die prematurely from a smoking-related illness. This represents about one in every 13 Americans aged 17 years or younger who are alive today.

Smokeless tobacco (chewing or spit tobacco) isn't any healthier, though it's slightly less lethal. It is highly addictive, and causes cancer in the mouth, tongue, cheek, gum, esophagus, and pancreas. Very

high percentages of people who chew get some kind of cancer in these areas, and much quicker than the lung cancer that affects smokers. You can get cancer from chewing tobacco in just 3-4 years.

Signs of Tobacco Use

- Stained teeth
- Stale, smoky odor (especially skin, hair, mouth, and clothes)
- Decreased endurance (Increased blood pressure and pulse rate)
- Increased spending (It's expensive)

Smoking Prevention

Smoking, vaping, and chewing are obstacles to physical wellness. Nicotine is a highly addictive drug that is extremely difficult to quit. The best strategy is a preventive one where you never start in the first place. If, however, you (or someone you know) are already vaping, chewing, or smoking, then sections **B8** (Break bad Habits), **B3** (Meditate), **B4** (Aerobics), and **B1** (Manage your Stress) can be good places to start, but given how addictive nicotine is, quitting outcomes are much better when accomplished with support from aids, therapy, medicine and family support, or some combination thereof. Seek help from a professional.

C9. Underage Drinking and Binge Drinking

Alcohol is one of the most commonly used and abused drugs by people of all ages and backgrounds. There is a long list of long-term health and wellness issues from alcohol abuse, but this section is focused on the immediate effects that can immediately impact cadet wellness.

According to the CDC, youth ages 12 through 20 drink 11 percent of all alcohol consumed in the United States. Although youth drink less often than adults, when they do drink, they drink more. That is because young people consume more than 90 percent of their alcohol by binge drinking. Binge drinking is consuming many drinks on an occasion.

- 5.1 million young people reported binge drinking (for males 5 or more drinks and for females 4 or more drinks on the same occasion within a few hours) at least once in the past month.
- 1.3 million young people reported binge drinking on 5 or more days over the past month.

Signs of Teenage Drinking

- Changes in mood, including anger and irritability
- Academic and/or behavioral problems in school
- Rebelliousness
- Changing groups of friends
- Low energy level
- Less interest in activities and/or care in appearance
- Finding alcohol among a young person's things
- Smelling alcohol on a young person's breath
- Problems concentrating and/or remembering
- Slurred speech
- Coordination problems

Underage Drinking is Dangerous

Information from the National Institute of Health

(<https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/UnderageDrinking/UnderageFact.htm>)

- It causes 4,358 **deaths** per year (CDC)
 - 1,580 deaths from motor vehicle crashes
 - 1,269 from homicides
 - 245 from alcohol poisoning, falls, burns, and drowning
 - 492 from suicides
- It causes many **injuries**
 - Drinking alcohol can cause cadets to have accidents and get hurt.
- Impairs judgment (Increases risk-taking)
 - drinking and driving
 - sexual activity (such as unprotected sex)
 - aggressive or violent behavior
- Increases the risk of physical and sexual assault
 - Underage youth who drink are more likely to carry out or be the victim of a physical or sexual assault after drinking than others their age who do not drink.
- Can lead to other problems
 - Drinking may cause youth to have trouble in school or with the law.
 - Drinking alcohol also is associated with the use of other drugs.
- Increases the risk of alcohol problems later in life
 - Research shows that people who start drinking before the age of 15 are 4 times more likely to meet the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their lives.
- Interferes with brain development
 - Research shows that young people's brains keep developing well into their 20s. Alcohol can alter this development, potentially affecting both brain structure and function. This may cause cognitive or learning problems and/or make the brain more prone to alcohol dependence. This is especially a risk when people start drinking young and drink heavily.

Preventing Underage Drinking (especially binge drinking)

Cadets may drink alcohol because they feel peer pressure to drink, want to try something risky, new, or forbidden, or because they feel stressed. If you observe in your fellow/subordinate cadets, or participate yourself, in underage drinking (especially bingeing), it becomes critical to prevent injury, death, damage, or legal trouble by not drinking and driving or allowing other cadets to do so. You can also review sections **B1**, **B4**, and **B8** to help build up some resistance to the underlying weaknesses that contributed to making bad decisions. There are many resources that require caring adults to intervene and help cadets work on overcoming alcoholism:

- Medical treatment
- Inpatient and outpatient programs
- Therapeutic communities
- Twelve-step programs
- Student Assistance Programs
- Pharmacological approaches

C10. Abusing Drugs

Illicit drug use—which includes the abuse of illegal drugs and/or the misuse of prescription medications or household substances—is something many adolescents engage in occasionally, and a few do regularly. By the 12th grade, about half of adolescents have abused an illicit drug at least once. The most commonly used drug is marijuana but adolescents can find many abused substances, such as prescription medications, glues, and aerosols, in the home.

Signs of Drug Abuse

Behavioral Issues

- Has changed relationships with friends / other cadets
- Uses chewing gum or mints to cover up breath
- Often uses over-the-counter preparations to reduce eye reddening or nasal irritation
- Has cash flow problems
- Drives recklessly, and has car accidents or unexplained dents in the car
- Avoids eye contact
- Locks doors
- Makes secretive phone calls
- Makes endless excuses
- Has the “munchies” or sudden appetite
- Exhibits uncharacteristically loud, obnoxious behavior
- Laughs at nothing
- Has become unusually clumsy: stumbling, lacking coordination, poor balance
- Disappears for long periods of time
- Has periods of sleeplessness or high energy, followed by long periods of “catch up” sleep

Mood & Personality Shifts

- Exhibits mood changes or emotional instability
- Sullen, withdrawn, depressed
- Shows loss of inhibitions
- Silent, uncommunicative
- Hostile, angry, uncooperative
- Deceitful or secretive
- Less motivated
- Unable to focus
- Hyperactive
- Unusually elated

Hygiene & Appearance Problems

- Smell of smoke or other unusual smells on breath or on clothes

- Messy appearance
- Poor hygiene
- Red, flushed cheeks or face
- Track marks on arms or legs (or long sleeves in warm weather to hide marks)
- Burns or soot on fingers or lips (from “joints” or “roaches” burning down)

Health Changes

- Unusually tired
- Lethargic movement
- Unable to speak intelligibly, slurred speech, or rapid-fire speech
- Nosebleeds
- Runny nose, not caused by allergies or a cold
- Frequent sickness
- Sores, spots around mouth
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Wetting lips or excessive thirst (known as “cotton mouth”)
- Sudden or dramatic weight loss or gain
- Skin abrasions/bruises
- Accidents or injuries
- Depression
- Headaches
- Sweatiness

School Concerns

- Absenteeism or loss of interest
- Loss of interest in extracurricular activities, hobbies, or sports
- Failure to fulfill responsibilities at school or work

Drug Abuse Prevention

Many factors and strategies can help Cadets stay drug free: Strong positive connections with parents, family members, fellow Cadets, and religion; having high expectations of all Cadets; Controlling your environment to avoid drug exposure; and developing the confidence to resist peer pressure. If you, or any of your fellow/subordinate Cadets are struggling with, or even just experimenting with drugs, then review sections **B1**, **B4**, and **B8**. Dealing with drug abuse requires professional help from school counselors, parents or parenting groups, family doctors, community health centers, or faith leaders.

C11. Sexual Orientation

This section identifies the wellness concerns for LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer) Cadets. There are some interesting statistics you should know about these students (*from PFLAG NYC*) that will help you to support them in their cadet career.

Reliable estimates indicate that between 4 and 10% of the population is gay. Schools and the Cadet Corps should be a young person's primary center for learning, growing, and building a foundation for success in the world. Growing up and getting through high school can be challenging for any student, but LGBT youth too often face additional obstacles of harassment, abuse, and violence. The statistics are astounding:

- LGBT students are twice as likely to say that they were not planning on completing high school or going on to college.
- Gay teens are 8.4 times more likely to report having attempted suicide and 5.9 times more likely to report high levels of depression compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection.
- LGBT youth who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence are three times more likely to use illegal drugs.
- Half of gay males experience a negative parental reaction when they come out and in 26% of those cases the youth was thrown out of the home.
- Studies indicate that between 25% and 50% of homeless youth are LGBT and on the streets because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- LGBT youth are overrepresented in foster care, juvenile detention, and among homeless youth.
- Nearly a fifth of students are physically assaulted because of their sexual orientation and over a tenth because of their gender expression.
- About two-thirds of LGBT students reported having ever been sexually harassed (e.g., sexual remarks made, being touched inappropriately) in school in the past year.
- The average GPA for students who were frequently physically harassed because of their sexual orientation was half a grade lower than that of other students.



Gender Identification is defined as a person's perception of having a particular gender, which may or may not correspond with their birth sex – one's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither.

Gender identification as a social topic can be confusing, and many people in our society do not embrace the idea that someone may identify as a gender other than how they were born. This causes

controversies over which bathroom to use, pronouns to use to refer to the individual, and general rights to freedom of choice.

Do you know anyone who identifies as a gender that makes them “different”? How do they address it in school, with friends or family? Have you discussed it with them? Frank, open discussion may be useful to understand a concept that is foreign to many.