I: - Recognizing Signs of Substance Use

**Goal:** To identify early warning signs, know specific substance warning signs, why the need to know is important.

Teacher presents data to show results of research: ~70% of seniors will have tried alcohol, 50% will have taken an illegal drug, 40% will have smoked a cigarette and more than 20% will have used a prescription drug for a non-medical purpose. Opioids like heroin, fentanyl and other prescription drugs are historically used prescription for pain control. As we all know, opioid addiction has become an epidemic health problem. The importance of recognizing early warning signs in youth has become a priority in many families and communities due to the dangerous effects of these drugs on the body and the high risk of addiction in youth.

Activity Title and Instructions: Students, working in groups of 3, will search the internet for specific substances to learn more facts for discussion of warnings signs for each substance they find. Students will report the signs they read about for each substance after returning to large group.

**Examples:** marijuana, hallucinogens: LSD OR PCP, inhalants, heroin and stimulants such as: amphetamines, cocaine, and crystal meth, and vaping.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- How would you improve a youth’s response to using substances early on in social settings?
- What would happen if youth joined together to help avoid becoming addicted to drugs?
- Why do you think youth seek out risky behavior, returning to that thrill over and over again?
- Suppose you could help a friend, what would you do differently since many approaches continue to be ineffective?
- In your opinion, does treatment work for youth that are clearly addicted?