

# YOUTH SPEAKS

## IDAHO JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION

### Overwhelmed by Depression?

When you're feeling depressed, it may feel like it's the end of the world. One might stop doing things they used to love, and they may feel hopeless. Coping with depression can be a tough road, and maybe even a long one, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

How do you cope with depression? Find something, anything, that gives you passion and that feeds your soul. Write an entire novel. Paint your own version of the Mona Lisa. The key with these strategies is to flush out the negative thoughts in your mind, and replace them with creative outlets. Writing or drawing isn't for you? There are tons of different healthy coping strategies out there, such as playing a sport, petting a dog, watching your favorite funny movie, petting someone else's dog!

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### Bullying *Being a Better Person*

Bullying is intimidating someone by saying inappropriate things to them or making them do something without having their consent. Often times the bully has had some type of traumatic abuse in their childhood and by bullying someone makes them feel have control

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### Light & Airy

It's a normal day. You woke up and went to school. You're sitting in class, and out of nowhere, that slow bubbling pressure starts to creep into your lower belly. You know what is coming next, so you clench up and do everything in your power to stop the embarrassing blow.

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### What is Idaho Juvenile Justice Councils?

Seven District Councils were created in 1984 as an extension of the Commission to advocate for effective juvenile justice at the local level. In 2006, a Council was formed to serve the Native American Tribes in Idaho.

Council membership is made up of representatives from the community, elected officials, contract providers, juvenile probation officers, and youth members. Each Council develops a tri-annual Action Plan to assess risks, needs, and resources in their communities based on the Balanced Approach framework. The Council network is an integral part of the Juvenile Justice Commission.

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SPRING 2019 YOUTH SPEAKS NEWSLETTER CREATED BY COLLABORATION WITH  
COLLEGE OF WESTERN IDAHO'S PSYCH 201 CHILD DEVELOPMENT STUDENTS

# IDAHO YOUTH SPEAKS

## DEPRESSION CONTINUED

by Kirsten

Of course some of these things can be a big step for someone with depression. Celebrating steps in the right direction is noteworthy, too. Did you get out of bed and get ready for the day despite not wanting to? Congrats, that's a step in the right direction. Steps like these each day will get you really far.

What are some resources that are available for people who are feeling depressed? Sometimes all it takes to feel a little better is to have someone to talk to and vent to. Friends and family members usually are good places to start if someone is looking for someone else to listen. If a friend or family member isn't available to talk to, there are other outside resources for individuals in crisis situations as well. Crisis lines have trained people (not counselors/therapists, just regular people) that are ready to talk at any time, 24/7.

There is also a line you can text if you are not able to talk on the phone or if you don't like talking on the phone.

### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

- their website ([suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)) also has an online chat option, available 24/7
- this lifeline also provides a Spanish speaking line:

**1-888-628-9454**

### Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline: 208-398-4357

- their website ([idahosuicideprevention.org](http://idahosuicideprevention.org)) has an online chat option as well.

Text support is also available at the same number,  
Monday through Friday, from 3pm- midnight

## BULLYING CONTINUED

by Diana

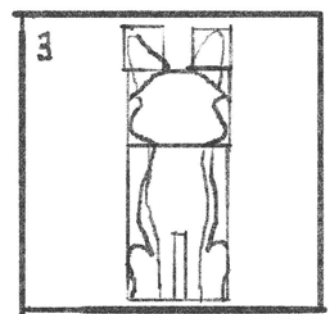
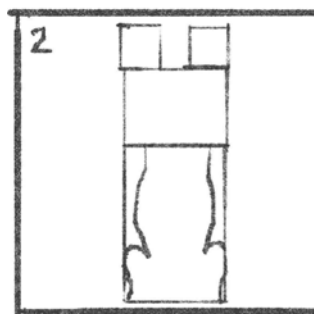
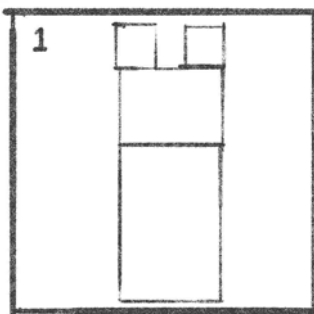
**49%**  
**OF CHILDREN IN GRADES  
4-12 ARE BULLIED**

and power. According to [stopbullying.com](http://stopbullying.com), there is about 49% of children between elementary all the way to high school that reported to have been bullied at least once. I personally was bullied when I was in elementary school because I did not know any English when I first arrived from Mexico. Even though it was very difficult to overcome this obstacle in elementary, I put all my effort every day to learn English fast and get the best grades. And I did, I obtained a diploma every year after that and learned English in less than a year with the help and support of the great teachers there. Until this day all

I have always wanted to do is help others and be more understanding when there is a language barrier and why I chose the career of going into the law enforcement as a social worker to help the community.

Resources to get help is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-HOPE (4673), and seeking help from an adult. Bullying can be challenging, and it is important to reach out for help when needed.

*Draw a happy dog!*



# LIGHT AND AIRY CONT.

by Anonymous

But to no avail. You have just farted in public. Everyone turns to look, so you turn too, trying to make it look like you are also looking for the farting culprit. But the redness in your cheeks gives you away. They know it was you.

At the ripe old age of 7 years old, I was sitting in my second grade classroom. My teacher's name was Mrs. Sowers, a very fitting name, if I do say so myself. Our classroom was a pretty normal size, about 25 to 30 kids. Mrs. Sowers had our desks set up like a normal class with the front of one desk touching the seat of the person in front of you, however rather than having a row between each line of desks, the desks were set up in pairs.

It was late morning, just after lunch. We had just finished with my least favorite subject, math. We were working on our times tables (I always thought those were tough). After math, we always had a quiet reading period. This was a time where Mrs. Sowers would have us read books quietly to ourselves. I went to the bookshelf and picked out what I thought would be an interesting book. After everyone else had grabbed their book of choice, we began to read.

About 5 minutes had gone by and that feeling started creeping in.

I started to feel a bit nervous, the pressure was building, but I felt like I had it under control. The feeling started to pass, so with a sigh of relief, I relaxed and sat back in my chair. In doing so, I bumped the pencil that was sitting on my desk. I watched as it slowly rolled down, and bounced out into the aisle. Without hesitation, I set down my book and leaned out into the aisle to grab the yellow number two pencil that would soon become the reason for my embarrassment.

With my knees out in the aisle, and my rear facing my desk partner, I swiftly bent down. And without any warning, it happened. I farted in class. And it wasn't a quiet fart, it could have been your big old uncle George's fart.

Everyone turned, my desk partner leaned back, the kids

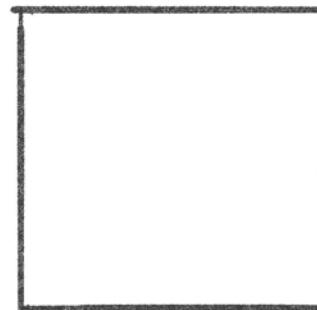
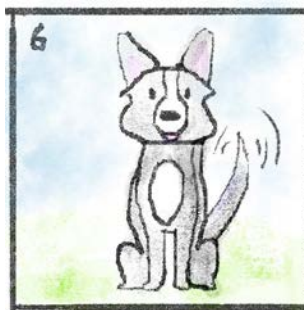
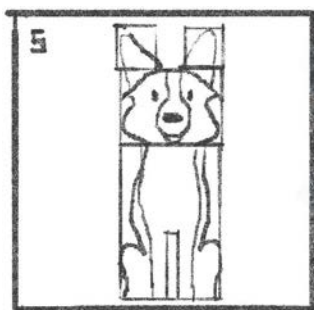
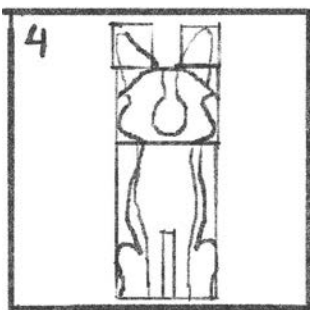
in the desks in front and behind me all whipped around in their seats. They stared at me. What was I going to do! How could I talk myself out of this one!? I sat back up, very red in the face, and looked around. It was as if everyone was looking for an explanation. And through all my panic I came up with an idea. My eyes searched the room and found her; Mrs. Sowers. I would say it was her. And so I did, I blamed the teacher for the fart that was clearly mine.

I don't think anyone actually believed me, how could they? But the moral of the story is that the day continued like any other day. We finished our reading time, and before I knew it we were heading home. The incident was never spoken of again. Nobody cared!

\*\*\*The truth is that embarrassing things happen to people everyday, but how we deal with those embarrassing moments is what is important. When we make a mistake or get embarrassed, would we want someone to make fun of us? No way! If my classmates in second grade all laughed and pointed at me for farting in class, I would have gotten really sad and would have had my feelings hurt. But they didn't, and I was able to go home and not worry about what they would say the next day. It is important to place ourselves in other people's shoes. Imagine that it is you in that embarrassing situation, whatever it may be. You would probably want someone to just tell you that it is okay. It feels good to have a buddy on your side. So next time you see someone in an embarrassing situation, step up and be a friend to them. They will thank you.

Everyone has embarrassing moments no matter how cool you are, or how smart you are. Just remember we are all the same, farts and all!\*\*\*

**Did You Know:**  
The average human farts 14 times a day? #TotallyNorm





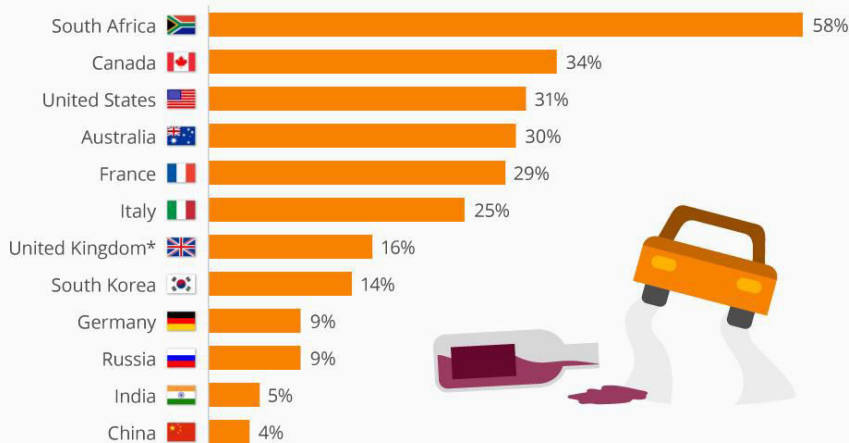
# IDAHO YOUTH SPEAKS

## SUCCESSFUL CHANGE

by Zach

### The World's Worst Countries For Drunk Driving

Percentage of road accident deaths involving alcohol in 2015 (selected countries)



\* Excluding Northern Ireland where the figure is 17%  
Source: Global Status Report On Road Safety 2015

Forbes statista

As a kid I loved football. I loved feeling the adrenaline of tackling an opponent. I started playing tackle football when I was 8 years old. The adrenaline I felt was unlike anything I had felt before. All the energy within my soul was exerted through hard-hitting tackles.



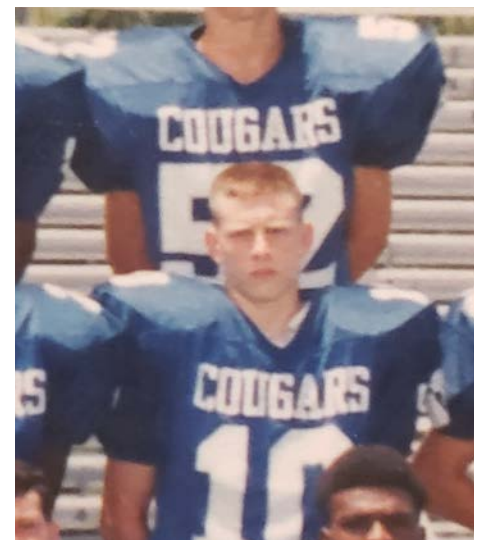
When I got home from football, that energy and enthusiasm was not there. I felt empty. My parents both had their issues. Substance abuse,

physical and emotional abuse were present. I remember waking up every day in a nervous state. I had overwhelming depression and I did not know why I felt the way I did. As I became a teenager, I ended up doing drugs and drinking. I never thought I would. Nevertheless, I began coping with the anxiety and depression by abusing substances. The friends that I did drugs with were also into other illegal activities. I began committing crimes and, in a way, I felt that I was in control of my own life. I could control how I felt through substance

**..SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
COULD ONLY  
CLOUD REALITY  
SO MUCH...**

abuse and I could get my way through criminal behavior. I felt empowered. However, over time I had several negative experiences. The friends I had were not people I could count on. The substance abuse could only cloud reality so much. True meaning did not exist for me. I only felt the impact of counterfeit satisfaction. I also realized, when looking back, I was living to fit into an artificial identity, one that was not truly me. I felt a lack of identity and purpose, and I did not feel motivated to change in a positive way. Consequently, I would erase any thought of change before it became too ingrained in my mind.

When I was 19, a series of events occurred that would change my life



forever. Several miracles occurred in my life within a one week span of time. Without going into too much detail; the first event was a life-threatening experience caused by another individual. The experience was shocking, but I ended up walking away unharmed. A couple of other experiences happened later in that same week. Both of those experiences were nothing short of miraculous. My life could have been changed

# “the potential for change is *limitless.*”

drastically had it not been for my fortunate circumstances. Lastly, I got into a car accident. I have a dizzying memory of my favorite Ford truck rolled over with my unscathed body crawling near the wreckage. As I looked up, I saw a police officer standing above me amongst the wreckage. I was hauled off to the hospital in the ambulance. The whole situation was surreal.

Substance abuse and criminal behavior were integral elements in all of the events listed. While I was in the ambulance, I had a thought as clear as day that came to my mind. I knew that I needed to change my life or I was not going to survive. The thought did not occur because of a rational thinking process, it was clear knowledge, as pure as truth could be.

The feeling I had was so strong that I decided to change my life 100%, without turning back or second guessing. I knew it would be a hard process, but at that point I felt I had nothing to lose. When I got out of the hospital I thought about how I could change. I knew I had to ditch my so-called friends. If I was going to truly change, I could not be around drugs, alcohol or any criminal behaviors, period! I quit all drugs and alcohol right then and there. Also, I decided that I had to do something positive to replace my daily drug habits. I decided to fill this void with weightlifting. The bad influences and habits I had formed needed to be replaced by some form of positive activity. I have lifted weights now for almost 20 years. Not only did I transform my behavior, but I have been able to deadlift over 500 pounds for quite some time now.

The other aspect of my life that I knew I needed to change was from a spiritual aspect. I knew I needed to go to church. I knew the idea was completely foreign to me, but the emotional deficit I had experienced my whole life needed to be fulfilled in a different way. The change was a culture shock at first, but I began to realize that I was in control of my own destiny. The results after almost 20 years have been amazing. Church has given me a purpose that I never had before. Helping others has replaced the counterfeit forms of self-indulgence which were so destructive in my life. Lifting weights has been a great way to increase serotonin levels and stave off addictive and depressive thoughts. Now I have a wonderful marriage and great kids, in contrast to the shallow and meaningless associations with acquaintances from my past. I have interests that I never dreamed of because my potential is not limited by the constraints of drugs and imprisonment.

Everyone who is in a correctional facility has the opportunity to make their own choices, to some degree. Who you are is based on your choices. For me, the answer was going to church, ditching my phony friends, and always staying active in exercise and study. For you the way out might be a little different. Any kind of group that benefits others will help. Any activity that helps replace addictive, negative behaviors will be sufficient. Listening to your conscience is an absolute necessity. The thought that

entered my soul was truth. The inner self cannot be ignored in your process of change. The potential for change is limitless. I never thought when I was enmeshed in crime and drugs that I would someday have a tremendous interest in history and science. I never thought I would get a degree in psychology, nor did I care. Today, it is amazing to see the results of good choices. Similar to the fulfillment I gained through playing football as a youth, I feel a sense of meaning in life. However, the changes I made did take hard work, like training to be a good football player. What changes can you make? What possibilities are ahead of you when you change? How much better can life be for you when you make better choices? What interests can you have that you never thought possible? How would true friendship and happiness feel? How would meaningful accomplishment feel when you change your life? These are the questions I leave you with.



# IDAHO YOUTH SPEAKS

## ADDICTION: BEING THE CHANGE

by Kait

A study by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence stated that 1 in 12 Americans abuse alcohol.<sup>2</sup> Alcoholics don't only exist being blacked out in a bar. They walk amongst us at the grocery store, as the executives at your work, or driving next to us on the freeway. I want to share a story about my mother being a high functional alcoholic and how that has impacted me in life. I want to make this message hit home but I also want to point out the science behind addiction. You can be above statistics by being aware of them.

Addiction is defined as a compulsive physiological need for and use of a habit-forming substance. I chose this simplified definition for two reasons. The first is that addiction is a compulsive physiological need, and second is that it is habit-forming. Physiological needs are a crucial foundation for something called Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. These needs include our basic survival needs like air, food, water, shelter. While addicts are using, they physiologically need their choice of substance in order to survive.

Growing up I used to be so angry and upset that my mom chose to drink beer every night instead of attending our athletic events or watching movies as a family. I could never explain to my friends why my mom couldn't drive me to their house. I would say that my mom wouldn't drive me but the real reason was that she couldn't drive because she was asleep at 6 pm. At 10 years old I didn't understand that she was passed out from the alcohol, I just thought she was taking a nap. When I was in middle school my mom called me the devil. She told me that she drank because of how difficult I was. In both middle school and high school I had suicidal thoughts. I didn't think I deserved to live because I inflicted so much pain onto my mom. I had



### I NEEDED TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE WRATH OF MOM.

no self-worth because I wasn't good enough for my mom. I used to pray to whomever is out there and ask what I had done wrong, or to forgive me and to make me good enough for my mom. I never followed through with suicidal actions because I had my brothers relying on me and I needed to protect them from the wrath of mom.

When I was 15, I got a job right away. Working gave me a reason to be away from home. When I was home, I never knew what type of mom I was going to get. Was it going to be the sloppy emotional mom? The angry, verbally abusive mom? The overcompensating, will buy your forgiveness mom? It was a constant battle field and I didn't know when I'd be hit by a grenade. My mom had mental illness. She had extreme paranoia and she would fall into drunk crying spells. It is very

common for addicts to also have a mental health disorder. When you mix the combo of an untreated mental health disorder with substance abuse, it can be a dark, lonely, hole.

During my junior year of high school my dad was diagnosed with cancer. I needed to step up and take care of my brothers, clean house, work, go to school, and help make meals. I remember that my mom used to preach how precious life is and that we needed to live it to the fullest, and not take anything for granted. Meanwhile, she had a mini fridge as her night stand. She did this so that I couldn't call her out for getting beers all throughout the night. I thought to myself what a coward she was for ruining her health by CHOICE.

Throughout my teenage years I wondered if being emancipated would help with my home life. I wondered what I could do differently to make my mom not drink. I would beg her to stop drinking. She would only get defensive and say that she didn't have a drinking issue; the 18 cans accumulated next to the sink overnight would say otherwise. As I began college, I thought living on my

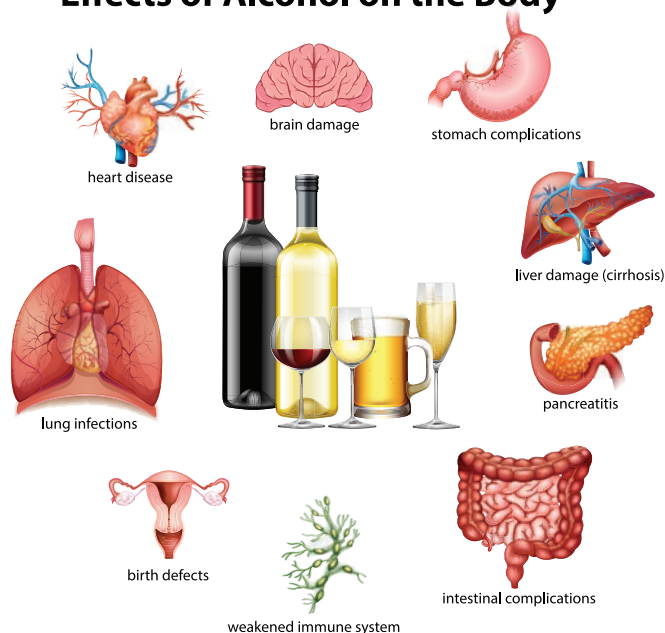
### NEED HELP?

Contact Lines for Life: the free, anonymous lifeline for substance abuse and suicide

Call: 1-800-273-8255 or text '273TALK' to 839863



## Effects of Alcohol on the Body



own would help create a healthy boundary between me and my mom... it didn't. I didn't know how to stop responding to every need of hers. I never felt like I did enough for her. I never heard that I was good enough for her. Those are words and feelings we need growing up.

As a young adult, I had figured out how to dance-the-dance with my mom. I learned how to have a conversation with her and I actually learned why she drank. Long story short, when she was 13, her 14 year old sister died of cancer. My mom was forced to grow-up and be the oldest sister overnight. Also, her parents didn't talk about the death of Lynn. They didn't say her name, they didn't grieve and share their feelings with each other. The lack of learning how to cope with loss, and how to communicate sorrow and depression really hindered my mom's adolescent years. She grew up too fast and was always trying to fill Lynn's shoes. My mom had inner demons and I came to a point where I understood why she drank.

I thought by knowing why she drank that I could convince her to sober up. I thought I could try and make things better and try to wean her off. This is where science comes into play. Psychologically my mom couldn't function without beer. Her body's basic needs depended on alcohol. That sounds crazy, right? Alcohol is the most deadly substance to quit cold turkey; if you stop cold turkey, it

### I THOUGHT TO MYSELF WHAT A COWARD SHE WAS FOR RUINING HER HEALTH BY CHOICE

is strongly advised to do so under medical supervision. Alcoholic's daily consumption alters their balance of brain chemicals. These chemicals control memory, appetite, hormones, the heart, and the bodies ability to remain in homeostasis. When alcoholics cut cold turkey they can likely become dehydrated, have grand mal seizures, irregular heart rhythm, or develop hypothermia.<sup>2</sup> They will

likely become angry and will hallucinate, and often they have memory issues. I've experienced the less severe withdrawal symptoms with my mom, but she only willingly stayed sober for 7 days max. She would be so angry and verbally abusive that my dad would cave into her requests to go buy beer.

I often wondered why she couldn't sober up for me and my siblings. The truth is that addiction is a disease. Unfortunately, it's a very hereditary disease. Children of addicts are 8 times more likely to become an addict.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, diseases can be overcome. If you know that you're cut from your parents' or grandparents' cloth and that they are addicts, you have the upper hand to learn early on what unhealthy habits are and how to overcome the disease. You might not be able to turn off the addictive desires, but there are healthier addictions like working out or having a hobby that keeps your brain busy.

My mom died at the age of 57 from being an alcoholic. Her liver and kidney failed, and she had a septic infection of bacteria running throughout her blood.

Her death happened in the matter of 23 days from the diagnosis of cirrhosis of the liver; which is scarring of the liver making it unable to do its purpose and flush toxins from your body. My mom died with me never hearing that I was good enough, or that it wasn't my fault that she drank. She died before I had a chance to get married or have kids. She died from a disease that I've learned much more about since she passed away.

## SHE ONLY WILLINGLY STAYED SOBER FOR 7 DAYS MAX

I love my mom and I forgive her for her wrong doings to me. I forgive her because she had a disease and she likely didn't remember or know why she acted the ways she did. I've learned and accepted that you can't make an addict sober up. You can't help an addict unless they want help. I know that I'm predisposed to being an addict, so I'm doing everything in my power to be aware of my habits and avoid that lonely hole of addiction. Mental health and addiction often go hand-in-hand, so I'm consciously working on my mental health and I openly talk about it. There is no reason to be ashamed of depression or anxiety. These are real diseases and like most diseases, they can be monitored and controlled.

Whether you're facing addiction yourself, or you have close family members or friends who are addicts, know that you can't fix them and it's not your fault. They have a real disease, but the disease can be controlled if they seek help.

#### References

2 Melemis, S. (2019, April 12). The Genetics of Addiction - Is Addiction a Disease? Retrieved March 10, 2019, from <https://www.addictionsandrecovery.org/is-addiction-a-disease.htm>

1 Watkins, M. (2018, November 26). The Dangers of Quitting Drinking Cold Turkey: Grand Mal Seizures, Dehydration, and More. Retrieved March 10, 2019, from <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/withdrawal-timelines-treatments/cold-turkey>

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# IDAHO YOUTH SPEAKS

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## TURNING 18. WHATS NEXT?

by Anonymous

**T**urning the big 18 is not just a physical journey, it is also very much so a mental and social one. The immediate excitement of turning the big "18" will be short-lived and a short-party in comparison to what comes next. There will be responsibilities associated with your existence immediately. Including but not limited to: legal independence, register to join the military and personal medical decisions and the right to vote. Your relationships will change and your beloved parental units will no longer be able to protect you from serious adult laws.

If your path in life takes you to college, you will be faced with many

social and educational decisions. To pick a degree is not an easy feat- As an "older" college student myself, I recommend seeking out advisors. They are there to help and can connect you to any internal or external the college resource you may need. You will need to surround yourself with the type of students you wish to become. Arriving early and staying late are the keys most would give. When things get tough just remember your educators want you to succeed, if they aren't they didn't do their job.

If your path in life takes you into the workforce, you will be faced with cost of existence decisions and choosing a career you love. Did you know to rent in

many housing units' renters insurance is required? This will protect you and your possessions from most damage and replace what you love dearly. You never plan for a disaster they just happen. To pay for these overhead life costs you will need a job. To be 18 and in the workforce, you will not likely start at the CEO position, you will need to work hard and prove you are an asset to the team to be successful. The days will be long but consistency is key.

Congratulations you are now 18, The world is waiting for you, if you are smart, hardworking and kind I believe you will be successful.

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## LOCAL JUVENILE JUSTICE COUNCILS NEED YOU!

The Idaho Juvenile Justice Commission is a board of Governor - appointed volunteers from each district working to represent the interests of Idaho concerning its youth.

We, the Youth Committee, are the heart and spirit of the Commission, made up of young adults who have experienced the situations that many Idaho youth currently encounter.

Becoming a member of your local District Council is a great way to use your knowledge and experience to improve the Juvenile Justice System in Idaho.

As a member of a district council, you'll have direct input on issues that matter to youth. With a little dedication, you could make a difference for youth in Idaho!

Ready to make your voice heard? Visit [www.ijjc.idaho.gov](http://www.ijjc.idaho.gov) to learn more about your local District Council!

Contact the Idaho Juvenile Justice Commission Youth Committee:  
Katherine Brain, staff  
(208) 334-5100 Ext. 413  
[Katherine.Brain@idjc.idaho.gov](mailto:Katherine.Brain@idjc.idaho.gov)

**IDAHO  
JUVENILE  
JUSTICE  
COMMISSION**



**A WORKING PARTNERSHIP  
FOR IDAHO'S YOUTH**

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