

HC DrugFree: Keeping Howard County *in the KNOW!*
...knowledge is power, so just say KNOW

"The time is always right to do what is right."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

How Many Adults Have Suicidal Thoughts?

Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Adults

From 2015–2019, an estimated annual average of 10.6 million adults (18 years old or older) in the United States (4.3% of the adult population) reported having had suicidal thoughts in the past year; an estimated 3.1 million adults (1.3% of the adult population) had made a suicide plan in the past year; and an estimated annual average of 1.4 million adults (0.6% of the adult population) reported they made a suicide attempt in the past year. Suicidal thoughts and behaviors are important public health concerns in the U.S. [Click here](#) to read more.

Maryland Young Minds

Resource for Youth and Young Adults

The Office of Suicide Prevention launched MD Young Minds, an extension of the highly acclaimed mental health outreach texting program, MD Mind Health. There is no “right” way to feel. If you need someone to talk to about your emotions, or you are experiencing overwhelming feelings, you are not alone. The Maryland Helpline is available 24/7 to give support and resources. **Call 211 and press 1 or text MDYOUNGMINDS to 898-211**

Tips to Handle Peer Pressure



We've taught our kids to say no, but that's not always good enough. Here are 5 Tips from [Just Think Twice](#) for dealing with constant and repeated pressures to use drugs and alcohol:

1. Stick with your bestie - If you're both on the same page about drug and alcohol use, then always make sure you have each others' backs.
2. Avoid any place that you think someone might pressure you.
3. Be the Sober One - If you find yourself in a situation where others are using alcohol and drugs, offer to be the designated driver to get everyone home safely.
4. Ask a Million Questions - If someone is frequently asking you to use drugs, ask them questions like "How much did you pay for that?" or "Are you sure they don't drug test at your job?" or "Aren't you afraid of getting caught with that?" There really aren't many good reasons for teens to use drugs, and their answers will likely reaffirm your decision to not use drugs.
5. Stick to your script - Have a few responses memorized so that you don't have to think of a response, like "No, I can't - my parents would kill me." or "No, I can't. I'm watching my health." or simply "No, I'm not really into that."



Looking for more ways to help your teen successfully navigate the pressures and challenges of adolescence?

Consider enrolling them in our free [Life Skills classes](#) for grades 6-9 and/or register yourself for our free [parenting classes](#) for parents/guardians of children aged 9ish -14ish.

Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, MDH, and SAMHSA.

Get Help In or Around Howard County

Find Local Mental Health and Substance Use Resources

Behavioral Health Navigation Services provide clients, family members, & professionals with information about the mental health and substance use resources available in Howard County. A Behavioral Health Navigator will assist the client, family member, or provider in determining which services best meet the client's needs & interests. The Navigator will then link the client to community resources/services & will follow-up on the outcome of the referral. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Free Parenting Classes: Register Now!

Guiding Good Choices is an evidence-based, interactive

prevention program that provides families with the skills and knowledge to reduce the risk that their children will use drugs and alcohol or engage in other dangerous behaviors.

This series of five Zoom classes is for parents/guardians or grandparents of 9-14 year olds. If your child is slightly younger or older or you are a Howard County grandparent, please register and HC DrugFree will contact you. Parents/guardians or child must live in Howard County.



Topics include How to Prevent Drug Use in Your Family, How to Develop Healthy Beliefs and Clear Standards, Avoiding Trouble: How to Say No to Drugs, Managing Conflict: How to Control and Express Your Anger Constructively, and How to Strengthen Family Bonds.

Classes will be held **Wednesdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23 and March 2** from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Adults are expected to attend all 5 sessions.

Register at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/GGCFebMar2022

For more information: Email Parenting@HCDrugFree.org or visit our [website](#)

Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, MDH, and SAMHSA.

Life Skills for Students: Register Now!



She can have fun AND make great choices.
Set her up for success with our FREE Life Skills Class.

FREE and back by popular demand!!!

HC DrugFree is providing a highly interactive skills-based program designed to promote positive health and personal development for Howard County youth in grades 6-9. For slightly younger or older students, we will consider each request. We encourage siblings and friends to take these classes together!

This program uses developmentally appropriate, collaborative learning strategies to help students achieve competency in the skills that have been shown to help students resist substance use (tobacco, alcohol and other drugs), violence, and other high-risk behaviors.

To be sure your student receives numerous perspectives, our instructional team consists of dedicated adults and older students sharing situations they may face in high school, college, and beyond.



**Classes will be held via Zoom Tuesdays
February 8, 15, 22, and March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

Registration is required. Please [sign-up](#) ASAP as space is extremely limited!

For more information: Visit our [website](#) or email LifeSkills@hcdrugfree.org

High school and college students who are interested in joining our instructional team to assist with the classes should hurry and email LifeSkills@hcdrugfree.org

Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, MDH, and SAMHSA.

Accepting Applications:

Do you know a college student considering a career in public health, education, drug & alcohol prevention, or who is interested in learning more about the inner workings of nonprofit organizations?

HC DrugFree is looking for a responsible intern for the spring semester to help with some of our programs. We are especially looking for college students to assist with and be positive role models for the middle school students in our Life Skills classes, work with our Teen Advisory Council, and much more. We offer a variety of opportunities to help interns gain experience in areas of interest to them and the flexibility of working virtually from anywhere.

Internship experiences will also be a great addition to a resume and opportunities to share in job interviews, and depending on your school's policies, may be able to count for credit.

Interested college students should email admin@hcdrugfree.org for more information.

Medication and Sharps Collections

Save the date. Our next drive-thru medication and sharps collection is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 30, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In the meantime, how can you make sure you are storing medications and sharps safely to prevent medication misuse?

1. Lock up medications in a safe, cabinet, or lock box to prevent kids and teens from accessing them.
2. Monitor the number of pills or pill packets, track refills, and keep a log to make sure doses are taken correctly.
3. Supervise teens as they begin taking their own medications.



Sober Driving and Living

Maryland Highway Fatalities

Be the sober driving. Impaired driving contributes to about one-third of Maryland's annual highway fatalities. Take advantage of many options available to avoid getting behind the wheel impaired, including: staying sober, calling a friend, or deciding to use a ride share service or public transportation. This reminder was provided by Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office.

Tired of Explaining Why You Don't Drink?

If you don't drink, then you know the many questions and strange looks you receive from your friends and family, especially at parties or events when they want everyone to consume. You aren't alone. [Click here](#) to read more about how the hardest part of being sober can be explaining your reasons to others.

Don't allow others to make you feel tempted, guilty, or disconnected. No, you aren't the only person in the world not drinking!

All Ho Co Teens Invited to Join TAC

HC DrugFree's **Teen Advisory Council** is open to all Howard County High School Students. Public School, Private School, and Homeschool students are encouraged to join! To access the 2021-22 school year registration form please [click here](#). Community service hours available to students, but only if a current TAC registration form is on file with HC DrugFree. Email your registration as well as a photo to admin@hcdrugfree.org or mail a hard copy our office.

Our next TAC meeting will be on Monday, **January 31** from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Register here](#) to receive Zoom link.

Talk to Your Kids About Not Sharing Pills

Many parents recognize the importance of talking to their children about avoiding drugs and alcohol, but may not realize how important it is to talk to kids specifically about prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications. Teaching kids about the nuances of prescription and OTC medications can be hard for them to understand, especially at younger ages where they struggle to understand how something can be helpful and harmful to their health. [Talking to kids about prescription drug abuse](#) is a resource designed to help parents use developmentally appropriate ways to discuss prescription and OTC medications with their children and suggestions on how to get the conversation started.



Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy

Drugs a Problem in the Family for 32% of Americans

Results of a recent Gallup poll indicate that almost 1 in 3 people report that drugs have been a problem in their family, and that number has been on the rise regardless of region, income, education, political party or urbanicity. Americans living in rural areas and in high-income households had the

largest increases, with both having increased by 11%. [Read more.](#)



Get Friends Connected to HC DrugFree

Friends keep friends informed! This newsletter and social media remain the best ways for us to share vital information with you! Please Like & Share our content on social media or forward this newsletter to a friend to help us with our mission of keeping Howard County safe and informed. Invite a friend to [subscribe to our newsletter](#). You can also view previous newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive](#) on our website.

Make Your 2022 Donation Today



[We need YOUR financial support](#) to continue offering FREE services.

[Donate](#)



Additional Resources

Mental Health Crisis? Thoughts of Suicide? Problems with Drugs or Alcohol?

Get Confidential Support from Maryland's HELPLINE whenever you need it. CALL 211, then press 1. TEXT your zip code to TXT-211 (898-211). VISIT 211md.org to chat or find additional resources for housing/shelter, utility assistance, food, domestic violence, legal services, and more.

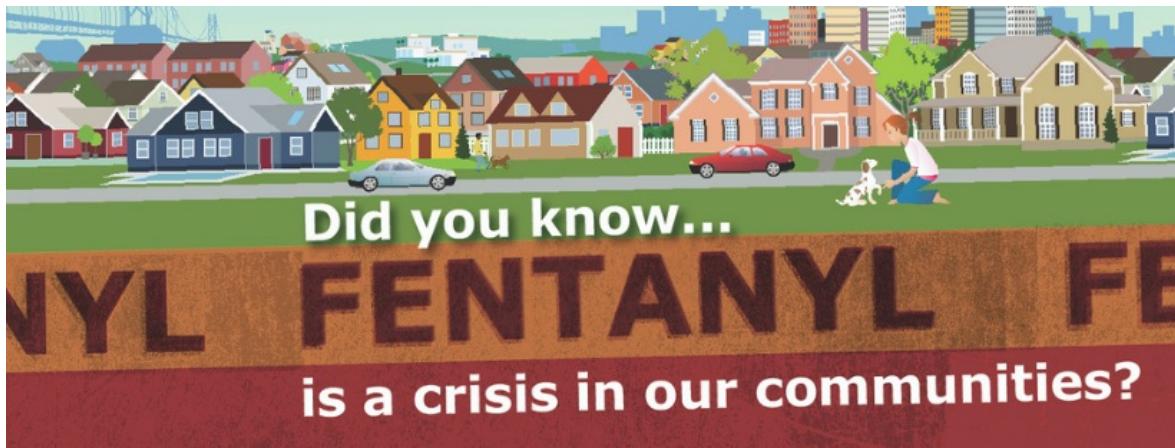


Gambling with Your Future

Call, text or chat 1-800-GAMBLER for free confidential, compassionate help with gambling problems.

Reverse An Opioid Overdose

[Click here](#) to contact the Howard County Health Department to receive a free Narcan kit.



For more information, contact

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