

HC DrugFree

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

**An arrow can only be shot by pulling it backward.
So when life is dragging you back with difficulties, it means that it's
going to launch you into something great.
So just focus, and keep aiming.**

- Paulo Coelho

Dates to Remember

July: [Make a Difference to Children Month, Minority Mental Health Month](#)

July 15-25: [Life Skills Classes for HoCo Students](#)

August 6: [National Night Out](#)

August 21: [National Fentanyl Prevention and Awareness Day](#)

August 31: [National Overdose Awareness Day](#)

HoCo Opioid-Related Data

Do you want to know more about opioid-related data in our community? The Howard County Health Department's dashboard provides a snapshot of current opioid-related data as provided by the Howard County Police Department.

Overdoses and deaths due to substance misuse have been rising steadily over the past two decades and this tool is used to help identify trends and how prevention/treatment programs can be better used. Note: substances may include fentanyl, carfentanyl, prescription opioids, heroin, heroin/fentanyl mix, opioid analogues and other opioid substances.

[Learn More](#)

Thank You to Our Teen Volunteers

On July 17, Howard County teens volunteered their time to represent HC DrugFree at a Leadership U event for high school juniors held at Howard

Community College.

Our teen team shared about HC DrugFree's free services and volunteer opportunities and answered many questions.

Thank you to our volunteers!



Create Healthy Screen Time Habits

Would you like to see your kids spending less time on their screens this summer? Do you need a break from your screens?

Summer is a good time to build healthy habits, so try these simple steps:

1. **Model Healthy Behaviors:** Show your kids how to use social media responsibly.
2. **Delay Access:** Wait as long as possible before allowing your kids to access social media.
3. **Set Boundaries:** Establish clear guidelines for social media use.
4. **Prioritize Sleep:** Keep devices out of bedrooms to ensure quality sleep.
5. **Implement Tech-Free Times:** Have device-free times during meals, homework, and bedtime.
6. **Communicate:** Discuss social media rules and risks with your kids. Keep the conversations going. These are not "one and done" conversations. Share your concerns, and as always, listen to what your kids (of any age) have to say.

Even when you think your kids aren't watching or listening, they are learning from you.

We're Halfway!

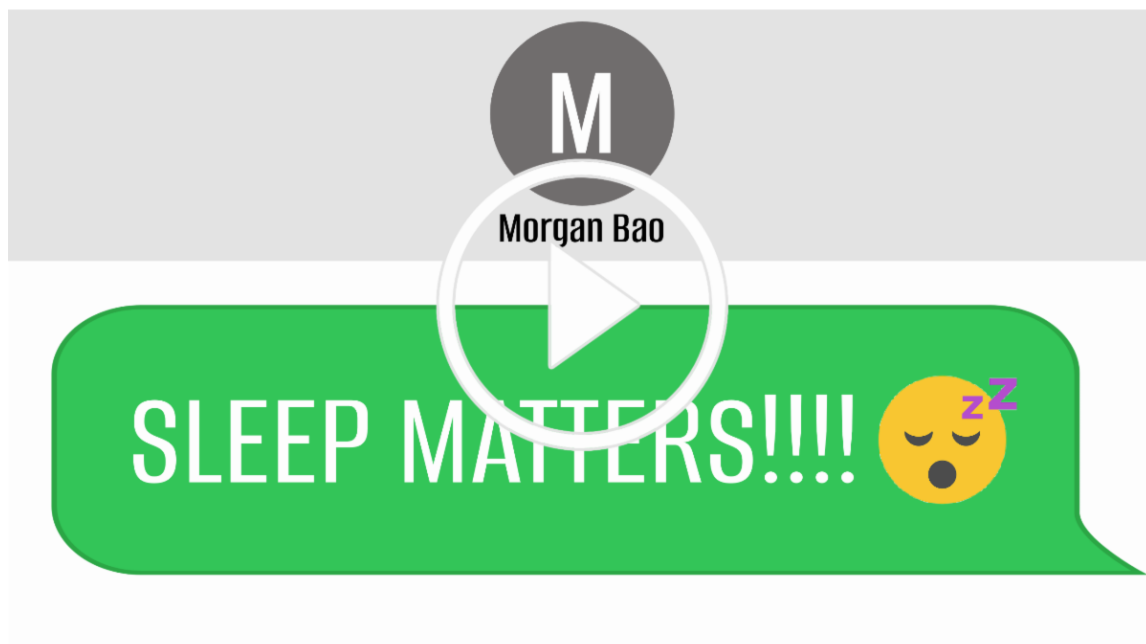


HC DrugFree's summer Life Skills classes began on Monday, July 15, and we are halfway through the series taught by three Howard County college students. High school students are actively participating and serving as role models and assistants. As always, we encourage friends and siblings to attend together. For this series, our youngest student is a 4th grade sibling of a middle school student.

The students are learning to avoid risky behaviors while learning how to keep their friends - and maybe become the leader of the group to guide their friends and siblings away from danger.

Registration is now closed, but your middle school, high school, or college student might want to join us in Spring 2025 for our next series. Be sure to keep an eye on our current events.

New HoCo Teen Video! TAC Talks: Sleep Matters!!!!



[Watch Video](#)

TAC Talks is a collection of video segments, developed with the creativity and

insights of [HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council](#), and presented in the style of TED Talks, hence the name TAC Talks. Originally presented as a part of a community program, they are now available as smaller segments by topic.

This TAC Talk on **Sleep Matters** is presented by Teen Advisory Council member Morgan Bao.

Teens & Weed: What You Need to Know

Cannabis affects youth differently from adults.

The health risks are greater:

- Tetrahydrocannabinol or THC — the part that makes you feel high — acts directly on the brain, which continues to develop until about age 25.
- Regular cannabis use during teen years and early adulthood may harm memory, learning, and attention — and effects may be long term.
- Frequent cannabis use during youth and adolescence has been linked with worse mental health symptoms such as depression and anxiety as well as an increased risk of addiction.



[Download the Fact Sheet](#)

Face Fentanyl & Face Death



[Watch Video](#)

Fentanyl, a potent synthetic opioid, has become a pressing issue nationwide. It is found in many street drugs and is virtually undetectable. It is a silent killer, threatening youth and adult lives daily.

Keep You Family Safe This Summer

In the KNOW... Medication Storage



Store medication out of reach and out of sight



Use child safety caps



Keep a medication inventory



Utilize a medication lockbox



Speak to family and guests about medication safety

Are you IN THE KNOW about proper medication storage? [Learn more](#)

Donate Today

Please become a [Friend of HC DrugFree](#) so we can continue providing FREE programs and resources to the Howard County community. We appreciate your financial support.

[Donate Now](#)

Or mail your **donation** to HC DrugFree's office:

HC DrugFree
5305 Village Center Drive, Suite 206
Wilde Lake Village Center
Columbia, Maryland 21044

Resources

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:

Marylanders who are experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis should call or text 988. Learn more at [988.maryland.gov](https://www.988.maryland.gov). Maryland veterans and their loved ones can call 988 and press 1 to transfer to the Veterans Crisis Line. Press 2 for Spanish. Press 3 for LGBTQIA+ support.



Free Narcan Training:

The Howard County Health Department offers a free training so you can be prepared in case of an opioid overdose. Sign up for your free training and Narcan kit today: [Learn More](#)



[Additional Resources](#)

For more information, contact

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