

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

Your Donation Makes a Difference!

Today is **Giving Tuesday** and we know you have many choices of where to donate today. As a nonprofit organization, HC DrugFree depends on grants and donations from people like you. We are dedicated to providing Howard County with the education and prevention services needed to keep our great community safe. Make your tax deductible donation today! Thank you.



Seltzer Spiked With THC Hits Shelves, Aiming At The 'Canna-Curious'

Cans of lemon seltzer spiked with the psychoactive ingredient in cannabis—and branded with the famous Pabst Blue Ribbon logo — are rolling out in California, in a new sign of the growth of THC-infused drinks. This drink is targeting the "canna-curious" — people who might have some experience with marijuana, but aren't frequent users. [Read more.](#)

Words Matter: Terms to Use and Avoid When Talking About Addiction

The way we talk about substance use disorders matters. Check out this infographic to learn about person-first language, as well as terms to avoid to reduce stigma and negative bias when discussing addiction. [View the PDF.](#)

Stress, Depression and The Holidays: Tips for Coping

Stress and depression can ruin your holidays and hurt your health. Being realistic, planning ahead and seeking support can help ward off stress and depression. [Learn more here.](#)

Prevention Profiles Podcast: Dr. Nora Volkow

Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), is a guest on this episode of Prevention Profiles: Take Five. During her interview, Dr. Volkow talks about the increase in marijuana use among young people, college students and stimulant misuse, and the rise of substance misuse during the pandemic. [Listen to the podcast or read the transcript here.](#)

What Is Vaping?

Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol or vapor made from a liquid or dry material that is heated in an electronic powered device, called an electronic cigarette, or e-cigarette. In addition to nicotine and flavored liquids, marijuana concentrates can also be vaped. [Learn more by downloading the 2-page PDF.](#)

During COVID, Opioid Addiction Continues to be Deadly

Earlier this month it was reported in the *Times* that while fatal overdoses decreased slightly in Carroll County in the month of October compared to the same time last year, non-fatal overdoses increased by 17.5% when comparing October 2019 to October 2020. According to data from the Sheriff's Office, there have been a total of 352 overdoses in Carroll to date in 2020. [Read more.](#)

The Strain of Caregiving

Mental Health America (MHA) released a new report which explores whether family caregivers feel involved in the care of their loved ones, if involvement has an effect on their levels of distress and conflict in providing care, and the hope they have for their loved one's recovery.

This report is an analysis of survey responses from 817 caregivers of a family member or friend living with a mental health condition collected from October 2019-May 2020.

Based on these findings, MHA offers several recommendations for more effective engagement of caregivers, including changes to systems of care that can help to reduce distress and conflict that contribute to the strain of caregiving. [Download the Report](#)

Be an Emotional Support Human

With all of the challenges in our communities right now, it's important to check in on friends and neighbors to hear how they're holding up. The

Horizon Foundation collected some tips to help you get started. Find these tips on the Emotional Support Human website: supporthuman.org



Beer Pong 'Devastating' Neighborhoods Around Campus

Aldermen described Northwestern University officials as negligent for failing to clamp down on off-campus drinking games. [Read full article.](#)

Events

Teen Advisory Council Meeting

Monday, December 7, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Click here to Register for Zoom meeting](#)

TAC is open to all Howard County High School Students! Public School, Private School, and Homeschool students are encouraged to join! To access the 2020-21 school year registration form please [click here](#). Email your registration as well as a photo to admin@hcdrugfree.org or mail a hard copy to: **HC DrugFree**, 5305 Village Center Drive, Suite 206, Wilde Lake Village Center, Columbia, MD 21044

Baltimore Virtual Town Hall on Opioid Awareness

Friday, December 11, 8:00 p.m.

The National Youth Summit on Opioid Awareness in partnership with WBAL-TV Channel 11 presents **What Every Family Needs to Know about Opioids**. The Baltimore Virtual Town Hall on Opioid Awareness is designed to address the growing opioid epidemic by reaching out to our communities to stop addiction before it starts and by promoting healthy choices and educating families about the dangers of opioid misuse. [Learn more here.](#)

Howard County Opioid/Heroin Overdose Prevention Training

Thursday, December 17, 3:00 p.m.

The Howard County Health Department is offering Virtual Opioid Overdose Response (Narcan) Training twice a month. For questions or more information call 410-313-6202 or contact orpreponse@howardcountymd.gov. (You must reside, work or attend school in Howard County to participate.) The next training is Thursday December 17 at 3:00 p.m. [Click here to learn more or register.](#)

Howard County Drug & Alcohol Family Forum

Thursday, December 17, 7:00 p.m.

If you care about someone with a drug or alcohol issue, it can be hard to know where to turn for help. **Join HC DrugFree** and our partners for a virtual family forum on Thursday, December 17 at 7:00 p.m. and hear from local organizations about available treatment options, prevention, and how to get support for your loved one and yourself. [Learn more here.](#)

Parenting Corner

Educational Substance Misuse Videos for Teachers, Parents & Kids

If you're looking to educate yourself and your kids about the effects of substance abuse, Operation Prevention has put together a series of Free science-based videos and learning guides. From Marijuana to Steroids, these videos will make sure that you are IN THE KNOW! [Access Videos Here.](#)

Poison Center Issues Warning About Liquid Nicotine Poisonings

"It takes as little as a sip of liquid nicotine for a young child to get into trouble. This small amount can cause vomiting, rapid heart rate, seizures, breathing difficulty and even death. More than 99% of the liquids used in vapes (also called e-cigs, vape pens and hookah pens) contain nicotine as well as hundreds of other chemicals. The liquid is commonly sweetened and the bottles are decorated with bright colors and images like fruit and desserts, making them especially attractive to young children. It is critical to keep vaping-related products out of the sight and reach of children to prevent poisoning and a trip to the emergency room." [Read the full article here.](#)

Pandemic Causing Alcohol Consumption Rates to Increase for Parents

"In a May survey conducted by the Research Triangle Institute International, researchers polled 993 people from across the United States about their drinking habits before the pandemic hit and after. It found an average person's drinks per day increased 27%; the frequency of a person's drinking that "exceeds drinking guidelines" increased 21%; and binge drinking increased 26%. Researchers also found that being female or Black was associated with significant increases in at least one measure, and respondents with children in the household had greater-than-average increases in all three." [Read the full article.](#)

Guiding Good Choices - Parenting Class Responses

HC DrugFree asked the parents who enrolled in our free fall 2020 Guiding Good Choices parenting classes what motivated them to participate. What will motivate you to sign up for our spring 2021 classes? These are just a few of the answers we received:

"...I could help my children from getting mixed up with drug use."

"We've been through a lot and I don't want my daughter to fall down the wrong path unintentionally."

"To learn how to help my children resist peer pressure and avoid risky behaviors."

"...it would help me educate not only myself but my child on drugs and how not to take them."

"Parenting tips!"

"Learning a way to handle difficult topics within the family."

"Learning routines and guidelines to help children make good choices and reduce risk of drug trials/use."

"The need to reinforce open communication in my house given I grew up in a household where we didn't have open communication."

"To be able to inform my kids on this topic."

"I went through the DARE program with my peers as a kid and always wondered what separated me from the others who made different choices. I wanted to figure out how to apply that knowledge to my own family."

Additional Resources

If You Need Help

If you need help with depression, suicidal thoughts, or other serious mental health issues, please contact:

Grassroots Crisis Intervention: 410-531-6677

The Maryland Crisis Hotline: Dial 211 and then choose option 1

The Crisis Text Line: Text 741741 and a trained counselor will respond

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

The Howard County Health Department: 410-313-6202

Gambling with Your Future

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

For more information, contact

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