

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

7 Things Teachers Can Do to Prevent Addiction

The stress of COVID-19 has resulted in a rise in drug and alcohol use and an increase in opioid overdoses. Teachers play an important role in the lives of their students. Learn more today about how to prevent addiction. [Watch the video here.](#)



December Is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

Drugged Driving—What You Should Know. Drug-impaired driving is driving under the influence of over-the-counter medications, prescription drugs, [marijuana](#), or illegal drugs. [Learn more here.](#)

New Guidelines Cover Opioid Use After Children's Surgery

It can be scary for a parent when their child is prescribed opioids to manage pain, and in some cases, this fear may lead to the undertreatment of pediatric pain. HC DrugFree reminds parents to monitor all medication taken by your child and ensure that no child has access to any leftover doses. [Read full article.](#)

Young People's Mental Health in 2020

Mental Health America's (MHA's) new report, Young People's Mental Health in 2020: Hope, Advocacy, and Action for the Future, shares the perspectives of 1,906 14-24-year-olds who completed their Young People's Mental Health Survey. [View the results.](#)

Safety Tips for Older Drivers

Older Driver Safety Awareness Week emphasizes the importance of

recognizing changes in driving abilities and understanding risk factors. Understanding the most common crashes involving older drivers can help avoid high risks situations and conditions. Below are some tips to avoid common crashes **provided by the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration**:

- **Avoid drowsy driving. Drivers become drowsy from exhaustion as well as from changes to medications or certain medical conditions.**
- Avoid distractions so you can make safe driving decisions.

[Read more tips and learn about older driver safety.](#)

Meet TIME's First-Ever Kid of the Year: Gitanjali Rao

"Just 15 years old, Rao has been selected from a field of more than 5,000 nominees as TIME's first ever Kid of the Year. She spoke about her astonishing work using technology to tackle issues ranging from **contaminated drinking water** to **opioid addiction** and **cyberbullying**, and about her mission to create a global community of young innovators to solve problems the world over. Even over video chat, her brilliant mind and generous spirit shone through, along with her inspiring message to other young people: don't try to fix every problem, just focus on one that excites you. 'If I can do it,' she said, 'anybody can do it.' " [Read the full interview here.](#)

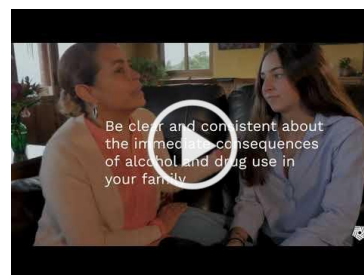
Are You a Friend of HC DrugFree?

Are you a donor to HC DrugFree? Have you made a financial or in-kind gift this year? HC DrugFree depends upon the generosity of individuals, organizations and businesses in the community to support the free education and prevention services that help keep our great community safe. [Please make your tax deductible gift to HC DrugFree today!](#) Any size gift is welcome. Thank you for your support.

Parenting Corner

12 Things Parents Can Do to Prevent Addiction

You can keep your teens safe from addiction. [Watch this video to learn 12 effective strategies to prevent addiction.](#)



Teens and Opioids

Teens have added health risks when it comes to opioid use. Learn more from Dr. Nora Volkow, our country's top addiction expert. [Watch the video here.](#)



How Drugs Alter Brain Development and Affect Teens

Most kids grow dramatically during the adolescent and teen years. Their young brains, particularly the prefrontal cortex that is used to make decisions, are growing and developing, until their mid-20's. [Learn about changes in brain development and function from drug and alcohol abuse here.](#)

Events

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 orpresponse@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 and 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.](#)

Teen Advisory Council Meeting

Monday, January 11, 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! [Click here to access the 2020-21 registration form.](#) 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

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.

Medication Disposal

To safely store and dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medication and sharps (needles, syringes and EpiPens), [visit our website](#) for more information.

For more information, contact

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