

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

### Maryland 2021 First Quarter Report

The Maryland Opioid Operational Command Center released the 2021 First Quarter Report. The rate of fatal overdoses in Maryland increased in the first three months of 2021 as compared to the same time in 2020. There were 682 unintentional intoxication fatalities involving all substances during this time, a 5.7 percent increase from this time last year. Of these deaths, nearly 90 percent (612) involved opioids. [View report.](#)

### US Overdose Deaths Hit Record 93,000 Last Year

Overdose deaths hit 93,000 during last year's pandemic. That's up 29% from 72,000 drug overdose deaths the previous year. [Read more.](#)

### NFL Tight End Raises Awareness

Professional football player Darren Waller and former California Representative (and former wife of performer Sonny Bono), the Honorable Mary Bono are teaming up for a new public awareness campaign. [Hear the interview.](#)

### New! Howard County Youth Blog Post

I'm a college student who graduated from HCPSS a few years ago. I regularly heard stories from friends and saw posts on social media about teenage parties. Despite not attending these parties, word quickly got around of everything that happened. Drinking, vaping, and smoking marijuana were all popular activities. Typically, a few people would bring these substances and share with partygoers.

During the school day, I also saw teens vaping in the classroom, bathroom, and outside of the school building. I graduated high school before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and when vape devices were more available to teens.

A recent study funded by NIH suggested that although high school seniors' use of alcohol and marijuana did not have any significant change during the pandemic, vaping decreased among this population. [View the NIH news](#)

[release for this article](#). The authors attributed some of the decline in vaping to the age restrictions of purchasing vape devices (from 18 to 21) and the negative publicity surrounding teen vaping. In addition to limiting the supply of these substances, educating teens is an important step to raise awareness of substance use and abuse. [Read other blog posts written by Ho Co youth](#).

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## Our Teen Advisory Council Is Open To Howard County Teens!



Thank you to our summer college intern and former Teen Advisory Council (TAC) member, Claire O'Shaughnessy, for making this video.

Is your Howard County teen looking for a meaningful AND fun way to earn their community service hours, all while making our community a better place to live? HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) may provide the perfect opportunity.

TAC 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](#).

Email your registration as well as a photo to [admin@hcdrugfree.org](mailto:admin@hcdrugfree.org) or mail a hard copy to:

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

Click on the flier to download a printable PDF to share with students looking for a safe experience with students across Howard County.

Community service hours available to students, but only if a current 2021-22 Teen Advisory Council registration form is on file with HC DrugFree.

Remember to submit a selfie or school photo too.

## Teen Advisory Council

### WHAT IS THE TEEN ADVISORY COUNCIL?

HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) is composed of Howard County high school students who meet monthly during the school year to discuss teen use of alcohol and other drugs and to develop educational messages that promote our vision of a county where teens are drug-free by choice.

**QUICK TIP:** All Howard County high school students (public, private, and home school, etc.) are welcome to participate!

### WHAT DOES TAC DO?

In addition to participating in monthly meetings, TAC members volunteer at programs and events throughout the school year, including HC DrugFree's twice a year Medication & Sharps collection event!

**QUICK TIP:** The next Medication & Sharps collection is on Saturday, October 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### HOW TO REGISTER FOR TAC

Visit us at [www.hcdrugfree.org](http://www.hcdrugfree.org) and select the Teen Advisory Council option under Teens/Youth on the menu. Download the registration form, fill it out, and submit via email or mail!

**QUICK TIP:** The next TAC Meeting will be held in September so don't wait, register today!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL [ADMIN@HCDRUGFREE.ORG](mailto:ADMIN@HCDRUGFREE.ORG)  
[www.hcdrugfree.org](http://www.hcdrugfree.org)

**“Don't be afraid to start over. This time you're not starting from scratch, you're starting from experience.”**

**Unknown**

## [Interesting C-SPAN Interview!](#) Efforts to Legalize Marijuana

Kevin Sabet with the anti-legalization group, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), talked about efforts on both the federal and state level to legalize the drug. [Play C-SPAN interview.](#)

## High Potency Weed Linked To Psychotic Episodes & Mysterious Vomiting Illness In Young Users

Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome, known to health care workers as scromiting, is increasing frequency and involves severe vomiting. Scromiting cases have increased as pot has become far more powerful. Twenty years ago, THC, the main psychoactive ingredient, was at 2-3%, but today's products can have THC levels as high as 90%. Some ER doctors are also seeing an increase in patients with psychotic episodes believed to be due to high THC levels. [Read more.](#)

## Alcohol Use Linked To More Than 740,000 Cancer Cases

At least 4% of the world's newly diagnosed cases of esophageal, mouth, larynx, colon, rectum, liver and breast cancers in 2020, or 741,300 people, can be attributed to drinking alcohol, according to a study in the July 13 edition of [Lancet Oncology](#). [Read more.](#)

## Medication and Sharps Disposal

Save the date for HC DrugFree's next free and convenient drive-thru medication and sharps collection: Saturday, October 23, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Wilde Lake Village Center parking lot.

How and where you keep your medication can make a big difference when it comes to medication safety. Every year, two million people end up in the hospital due to drug-related injuries. This might include medication errors, adverse drug reactions, allergic reactions, or overdoses. Safe and secure storage of your prescription medicine can help avoid accidental injuries. Please keep reading this newsletter for updates. To safely store and dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medication and sharps (needles, syringes and EpiPens), [please visit our website](#) for more information.

## Serving The Howard County Community



[Please make your much-appreciated tax deductible gift to HC DrugFree today!](#)



For more information, contact

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