

HC DrugFree is keeping Howard County *In the KNOW!!!*

New Year's Resolutions for Middle Schoolers

Earlier this week, HC DrugFree held two of the fifteen scheduled Life Skills classes to be held at Dunloggin Middle School. These two classes focused on self-image, self-improvement, and decision-making skills.

Students set New Year's Resolutions which they will work towards accomplishing throughout the duration of this program. They learned about the Three C's of Effective Decision-Making (Clarify, Consider, and Choose) and discussed how they could use this strategy to reach their goals. We are looking forward to the next few months of this class.

This middle school 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.

Thank you to Dunloggin Middle School staff, especially Ms. Debra O'Byrne, and the PTA for partnering with HC DrugFree.

Maryland 2019 Third Quarter Fatal Overdose Data

The Opioid Operational Command Center's 2019 Third Quarter Report outlines Maryland's most recent intoxication fatalities data and provides updates on key elements of our response to the heroin and opioid crisis that is devastating our state. [Click here](#) to read the full report and [click here](#) to read the related press release.

Try Dry January

Dry January is a month of giving up alcohol to start the new year on a healthy, sober note. Women are more at risk for some of the negative effects of alcohol, so they should especially consider taking part. [Click here](#) for tips on how to take a break from drinking and [click here](#) to read more about the health benefits that can occur from cutting back.

Teen Advisory Council (TAC) Meeting: Monday, January 13

TAC Advisors: Ms. Joan Webb Scornaienchi, HC DrugFree's Executive Director, and Ms. Debra O'Byrne, HCPSS administrator, look forward to working with your teens!

Encourage all Howard County high school teens to join HC DrugFree's TAC where they will have a safe place to learn about risk taking, healthy alternatives, discuss what is happening in and around our community and much more. Questions? Call 443-325-0040 or email Admin@hcdrugfree.org.

The next TAC meeting will be held on Monday, January 13 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at The Barn (The Columbia Association's Teen Center) located in The Oakland Mills Village Center. TAC is open to all Howard County high school students (public, private and home school), but students must RSVP to Admin@hcdrugfree.org for each meeting. TAC follows the HCPSS school cancellation policies. Visit the TAC page at <http://www.hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council-1/> to find registration forms. Refreshments provided.

Subtle Signs of Depression

It may be hard to recognize the difference between when you are experiencing normal sadness or depression. It doesn't always begin abruptly; it sometimes comes on slowly with symptoms such as taking more naps than usual or losing interest in activities. [Click here](#) for more subtle signs that may point to depression.



Support Howard County Youth and Families in 2020 by Helping to Provide Drug/Alcohol Prevention and Education

Thank you for donating to HC DrugFree, so we can continue to educate youth and adults and serve the community. [Click here](#) to make your donation.

What You Need to Know about CBD

The FDA has released a list of facts you should know about products containing cannabis-derived compounds. Currently, the FDA has only approved one CBD product and warns that CBD has the potential to harm you. [Click here](#) to read more about the FDA's concerns you should be aware of.

What it's Really like Living with Mental Illness

If someone you know is suffering from a mental illness, it's important to try to understand their situation and how you can help them. [Click here](#) to read about common feelings shared by people suffering from mental illnesses.

Georgia Tech Recruit Suicide

Bryce Gowdy's suicide has started an important conversation about poverty's effect on youth. He was set to start classes at Georgia Tech on January 6th with a full scholarship. Although he seemed to be a very successful young athlete, he was struggling with mental illness and homelessness. [Click here](#) to read more about Bryce and [click here](#) to read about poverty's impact on suicide rates.

Juul Hooks a Generation on Nicotine

Between 2016 and 2018, the number of adult nonsmokers who began using e-cigarettes doubled in the United States. Juul had a huge contribution to that statistic because of the ads it ran on social media, on billboards, and at parties targeted towards young people. [Click here](#) to read more about how Juul's marketing strategy has affected this younger generation.

Suicide Warning Signs

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself.
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.

Suicide is preventable. Call the Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

HC DrugFree Is Proud to Partner with PTSAs/PTAs

Thank you to the following PTSAs/PTAs for donating to HC DrugFree this school year *and let's keep this list growing*. If your PTSA/PTA is not on the list, please encourage them to join us as we work to keep Howard County youth and families informed and safe:

9 High Schools:

Atholton High School PTSA
Centennial High School PTSA
Hammond High School PTSA
Long Reach High School PTSA
Marriotts Ridge High School PTSA
Mt Hebron High School PTSA
Oakland Mills High School PTSA
River Hill High School PTSA
Wilde Lake High School PTSA

9 Middle School PTAs/PTSAs:

Burleigh Manor Middle School PTA
Clarkville Middle School PTA
Dunloggin Middle School PTA
Elkridge Landing Middle School PTA
Folly Quarter Middle School PTA

Resource Directories for Youth and Adults

Howard County has resource directories available to help you find treatment providers and other services. [Click here](#) for health services and [click here](#) for youth services.



Medication Storage

Be sure to safely store or properly dispose of your medication. Storage boxes are available at HC DrugFree's office. Please contact our staff to arrange a time to pick up a box and let us know what other resources you need.



Free Resources

Please contact our staff to let us know what resources you need. We have free magnets with emergency contact information and brochures about drugs including alcohol, marijuana, vaping, cigarettes, etc.



For more information, contact
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