

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

DEA: Maryland Battling Meth Surge

On November 13, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) released a warning that the Hagerstown area of Western Maryland is experiencing a surge in methamphetamine (meth) cases with more meth labs in that area this year than the last 5 years. Before you think, "but not in Howard County," as we so often like to think, yes, meth can be found in Howard County and across the state.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that almost 10,500 people died from meth-related drug overdoses in 2017. [Click here](#) to read the DEA's new release.

Oklahoma School Encourages Other Schools to Install Vape Sensors

In an effort to be proactive and better guide students before they make decisions to use vapes and/or participate in other disruptive behaviors including altercations, an Oklahoma school district installed Halo Smart Sensors. Each sensor costs \$1,000 and alerts staff when triggered.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Warning to Federal Employees and Those with Security Clearance: CBD Use May Put Jobs in Jeopardy

Although CBD is legal to use, it may cause you to fail a drug test and lose your job. CBD is often used for relaxation or pain relief, but federal law allows it to contain trace amounts of THC, which is the psychoactive compound in marijuana. The federal division overseeing drug testing for federal employees asked its agencies "to inform applicants and employees of the risk that using such products may result in a positive marijuana test" because testing systems can't determine whether THC originated from CBD or marijuana.

To read about how using CBD oil to treat back pain cost one former federal law enforcement officer his job, [click here](#).

Healthy 16 Year Old Athlete became 17 Year Old with Double Lung Transplant

Dr. Hassan Nemeh, the surgeon leading the team performing the first double lung transplant on a vaping patient in the U.S., said the 17 year old patient faced imminent death without the surgery. Dr. Nemeh is urging parents and teens to be aware of the dangers of vaping and to understand that this is a preventable tragedy. Vapes are causing irreversible damage.

So far, vaping is believed to have caused more than 2,000 illnesses and nearly 40 deaths in the U.S.

[Click here](#) to read more about how this previously healthy teen old found himself a transplant patient.

In The Spirit of Thanksgiving, Howard County Teens Share Slogans to Live By

At a recent Howard County meeting, teens shared slogans to live by.

- Learn to dance through the storms.
- Make a goal, get it done, then repeat.
- Make the most out of every situation.
- I'm lovin' it.
- Life is great, so don't let drugs ruin it.
- This is not a dress rehearsal.
- You can and you will.
- Ogres are like onions; they have layers.
- You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.
- If you ain't first, you're last.
- Just do it!
- Let go of the little things.
- Don't lose hope; because when the sun goes down, the stars come out.
- Laziness leads to efficiency.
- Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get.

They also shared slogans for HC DrugFree to share with middle schoolers.

- One second or one decision can change your life forever.
 - It's okay to say no.
 - There is always help if you need it.
 - I am not alone.
 - Know what you are capable of.
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Thank You to PTSAs/PTAs Donating to HC DrugFree

Last school year, all Howard County Public High School PTSAs and many middle school PTAs donated to HC DrugFree. Thank you to the following PTSAs/PTAs for hurrying to donate to HC DrugFree this school year. Let's keep this list growing:

High Schools PTSAs:

Long Reach High School PTSA
Oakland Mills High School PTSA
River Hill High School PTSA
Wilde Lake High School PTSA

Middle School PTAs:

Burleigh Manor Middle School PTA
Clarkville Middle School PTA
Dunloggin Middle School PTA
Elkridge Landing Middle School PTA
Folly Quarter Middle School PTA
Glenwood Middle School PTA
Mayfield Woods Middle School PTA
Murray Hill Middle School PTA
Patuxent Valley Middle School PTA

If your PTA or PTSA is not on the list, please encourage them to donate and feel free to contact us for more information. Thank you!

Sober People Owe No Apologies

Are you feeling the pressure of the upcoming holidays? No, I don't mean the pressure to shop more, eat more, or socialize with people you may not like. I mean the pressure to get everyone to drink to loosen up...or the pressure to have to explain why you don't drink.

As you are preparing to host gatherings in your home/office or attend others' events and mingle with new and old friends, think if you too will be "sober shaming" others not needing or not wanting to drink to have fun.

[Click here](#) to read more.

How to Talk to Teens about Vaping

If you're worried that your teen may be vaping, you're not alone. Vapes are easy to conceal and can be confused with other gadgets like flash drives, so it may be hard to tell if your child is using one without having a conversation about it.

It's important to talk to your children to let them know about the dangers of vaping and how they can avoid peer pressure. For advice about productive ways to start the conversation, what to say, as well as what not to say, [click here](#).

Given a Painkiller Prescription? Females Especially, Take Note:

According to an article from Johns Hopkins Medicine, "Women are at increased risk of becoming dependent on or addicted to opioids. Additionally, while the death rate from prescription drug overdoses dramatically increased overall from 1999 to 2010, it rose 400 percent in women compared to 265 percent in men." To read the article and understand why, [click here](#).

Teen Meeting: Monday, December 16

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

Encourage all Howard County high school teens to join 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, December 16 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. Registration forms can be found on the TAC page at <http://www.hcdrugfree.org/teen-advisory-council-1/>. Refreshments provided.

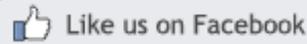
Horizon Foundation's Emotional Support Campaign

One in five adults in America experiences a mental illness in a given year, and there continues to be a significant need for mental health support. In 2018, Howard County residents made 2,831 emergency department visits related to a mental health condition - indicating that many community members aren't receiving mental health care until it is

an emergency. Studies show that there is an average delay of eight to 10 years between the onset of symptoms and intervention.

[Click here](#) to read more about the Horizon Foundation's Emotional Support Campaign.

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Donate to HC DrugFree or Sponsor an Event

HC DrugFree depends upon the generosity of individuals, PTSAs/PTAs, organizations, and businesses in the community to support our free services to the community. Please donate today. Any size gift is welcome. Consider contacting us to sponsor an event or make a one-time or monthly donation. Thank you for your support.

HC DrugFree is a 501(c)(3). [Donate online](#) or mail checks to HC DrugFree.

Help Is Available 24/7 In Howard County

HC DrugFree encourages you to contact Grassroots Crisis Intervention if you need help. They offer a 24-hour crisis hotline, walk-in crisis counseling, a mobile crisis team, substance use services, emergency shelter, and more. Call 410-531-6677 or go to 6700 Freetown Road (next to Atholton High School) in Columbia, 21044.



For more information, contact
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