

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

### **Warning to Howard County: Fake Heroin Causing Gangrene in MD**

If your Maryland family members or friends inject heroin, please warn them that a substance found in the area is causing deep tissue damage, including gangrene. [Click here](#) to read Frederick County Health Department's update, or [click here](#) to visit Harford County Health Department's Facebook post.

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### **Teach Your Children to be Indistractable**

A Stanford University instructor encourages parents to empower children to be "indistractable" so they are not controlled and coerced by others. Distraction can be a problem as technology is becoming more pervasive and persuasive. [Click here](#) to read more.

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### **Drug Overdose Deaths in 2019**

While the CDC's final numbers won't be released until later this year or early next year, early reports are showing U.S. drug overdose deaths increased almost 5% between 2018 and 2019.

The projected number of fatal overdoses, 70,980, is the highest total ever recorded. A majority of states saw an increase in overdose deaths. South Dakota saw the largest jump, with a 50% increase in deaths over the previous year. The powerful synthetic opioid fentanyl and other synthetic opioids were involved in half of the reported deaths. [Click here](#) to read more.

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### **Increased Screen Time: More Cyberbullying**

COVID-19 has caused most of us, including our kids, to be on our devices more than ever. The more time a young person is online, the more they are at risk for cyber bullying. Often, the effects of cyberbullying can last longer than parents expect. [Click here](#) to read more.

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### **Be Cool**

Summer is here and so is the heat. Remember to:

- Drink plenty of fluids and don't wait until you're thirsty.
- Stay away from sugary and alcoholic drinks.
- Replace salt and minerals with sports drinks.

- Keep pets hydrated too!

[Click here](#) to learn more about what to do in extreme heat.

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### **KNOW the Danger Signs: Alcohol Overdoses**

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), alcohol overdose is caused by drinking too much alcohol too quickly. This can overwhelm the body's ability to process the alcohol and may cause areas of the brain that control basic life-support functions - such as breathing, heart rate and temperature control - to shut down. Alcohol overdose can lead to permanent brain damage and even death.

The signs of alcohol overdose include:

- mental confusion
- difficulty remaining conscious
- vomiting
- seizure
- trouble breathing
- slow heart rate
- clammy skin
- dulled responses such as no gag reflex
- extremely low body temperature

Act quickly. Dial 911 and do NOT leave the person alone. [Click here](#) to read more.

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### **Doctors and Dentist Still Prescribing Opioids**

According to the National Public Radio (NPR), doctors and other health care providers still prescribe highly addictive pain medications at rates widely considered unsafe.

In 2018, the last year for which complete data is available, more than 1 in 5 Americans had an opioid prescription filled, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That same year, roughly 40 Americans died each day after taking prescription opioids. [Click here](#) to read more.

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### **KNOW the Most Popular Illicit Drug Worldwide**

Information from Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA):

Cannabis, commonly called marijuana, is the most popular illicit drug worldwide: an estimated 3.8% of the global population aged 15-64 consumed cannabis in 2017 (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019). In the United States, the percentage of people aged 12 or older who have used cannabis in the past year has steadily increased from 11% in 2002 to 15.9% in 2018 (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2019).

According to SAMHSA, the numbers for past year cannabis use have gone down among youth ages 12-17, but nearly doubled among adults 26 or older

from 7% reporting use to 13.3% (2019). The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) found that marijuana use in grades 8, 10, and 12 combined have gone up 2% in the last three years (Johnston, et al., 2020).

Concurrently, public opinion has shifted in the past two decades; the proportion of adults in the U.S. who support marijuana legalization has increased from 31% in 2000 to 67% in 2019 (Pew Research Center Fact Tank, 2019). The number of states that have some form of legalized cannabis use has also increased during the same period.

[Click here](#) for a printable PDF.

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## Register Howard County High School Students

Get your high school student involved with HC DrugFree. [Click here](#) to complete the NEW 2020-21 school year Teen Advisory Council (TAC) registration form. Signed TAC registration forms are due each year. TAC is open to all Howard County high school students. Community service hours available.

Email a signed PDF 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. Be sure to include a photo.

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