

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

New! Purchasing Deadly Drugs from the "Safety" of Your Home

Please take a few minutes to watch these videos because **even educated, loving, and involved parents and grandparents may not be aware of what's happening within their otherwise "safe" homes.**

Recently Dr. Laura Berman, well-known relationship therapist, opened up about the tragic loss of her 16 year-old son, Samuel, after he "stupidly" (Dr. Laura's word) took drugs laced with deadly fentanyl.

Samuel, like many deceased youth before him, may not have known that he was taking fentanyl. It is believed that he was targeted by a drug dealer on Snapchat - all from within the "safety" of the family's home.

[Watch the Dr. Oz segment.](#)

[Watch the Tamron Hall segment.](#)



Substance Misuse and Eating Disorders

Millions of Americans either have, or at one point in their lives had, an eating disorder. Unfortunately, many people struggle with an eating disorder and substance misuse at the same time. In fact, a 2003 study from the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse revealed that 50% of people with an eating disorder also misused alcohol and illicit substances. [Read more.](#)

Tobacco Smoke Puts Children at Risk for High Blood Pressure

Researchers found 6% of children who were exposed to tobacco smoke had high blood pressure compared to 4% in children who weren't exposed, [according to a study](#) published in JAMA Network Open. [Read more.](#)

Doctors Threatened for Not Prescribing Opioids

Doctors say they're facing increasing threats of violence for refusing to prescribe opioids or trying to wean patients off the addictive painkillers. [Read more.](#)

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

For most, gambling can be fun. But for some, gambling can get out of control. KNOW the signs of a gambling problem:

- Preoccupied with gambling (i.e., reliving past gambling experiences, planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble)
- Secretive about his/her gambling habits, and defensive when confronted
- Increasing bet amounts when gambling in order to achieve the desired excitement ("high")
- Trying unsuccessfully to control, cut back, or stop gambling
- Restless or irritable when not gambling
- Gambling to escape problems
- Trying to win back losses by more gambling
- Lying to family and others about the extent of gambling
- Jeopardizing or losing relationships, jobs, education or career opportunities because of gambling
- Relying on others to bail him or her out to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by gambling

Take action for help and hope. Call or text 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537) or visit helpmygamblingproblem.org [Learn more here.](#)

Howard County Teens Exploring Mindfulness

Catherine Panzer, a Howard County Public School System psychologist, joined the high school students at HC DrugFree's recent Teen Advisory Council (TAC) meeting. Teens were asked what they thought mindfulness was and we received multiple answers:

- Spiritual awareness
- Knowing what to do or say
- Being aware of your own feelings
- Being aware of how other people feel
- Being aware of your surroundings
- Wellness and mental health

While Ms. Panzer, acknowledged that many of these things were part of mindfulness, she defined it more simply: [Taking life one moment at a time](#)

"Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us."

Ms. Panzer's workshop included discussions on Self-Care, Grounding Techniques, Mental Training, and Breathing Exercises, all designed to help us be more aware of ourselves. Being more mindful is incredibly helpful for kids and adults so we hope you will check out some of the resources below:

[Virtual Calming Room](#)

[Mindful: Healthy Mind, Healthy Life](#)

[Headspace Videos](#)

Events

Virtual Overdose Response Training

Learn how to save a life after an overdose! Free Narcan kits are available to attendees via appointment at the Howard County Health Department. Pre-registration is required. Upcoming training dates: Tuesday, **March 16** at 6:00 p.m. and Tuesday, **March 25** at 3:00 p.m. [Register here.](#)

Howard County Family Forum - March 18

Please join HC DrugFree and our partners for another Family Forum! This virtual family forum is scheduled for Thursday, March 18 at 7:00 p.m. Hear from local organizations about prevention, treatment options, and how to get support for your loved one and yourself. [Learn more & register here.](#)

Teen Advisory Council Meeting - April 12

HC DrugFree's next Teen Advisory Council (TAC) meeting is scheduled for **Monday, April 12 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** [Click here to register for the April Zoom meeting](#)

Save the Date for the May 17 meeting, too. TAC is open to all Howard County High School Students. Public School, Private School, and Homeschool students are encouraged to join! To access the 2020-21 school year registration form please [click here](#). 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, Columbia, MD 21044

HoCo Student Film Fest Deadline - April 17

The 17th Annual HoCo Student Film Fest is coming up and, once again, [HC DrugFree has our own category - KNOW: Kids Nurturing Others Wisely](#). This category was chosen to showcase ways that teens can encourage one

another through mental health challenges, dealing with peer pressure, and most of all, how to avoid substance (drugs, alcohol, nicotine) misuse. Target audiences can include (but are not limited to): Parents/guardians or grandparents of middle school students, school staff and students. [Deadline to submit your film](#): Saturday, April 17 at 11:59 p.m. The Film Fest will be held on Friday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m

HC DrugFree's Drug Take Back Day - April 24

Save the date for our semi-annual [drive-thru medication and sharps collection](#) which will be held on Saturday, April 24th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. More information coming soon!

Parenting Corner

"47" on Zoom for Life Skills Class

This past Wednesday, 47 of us were on Zoom for our most recent Life Skills class. HC DrugFree's series of 15 FREE weekly classes began on Wednesday, January 27 and will run thru early May. The registration is CLOSED.



The evidence-based curriculum is designed for students in grades 6 to 9. The integrated approach helps youth learn to avoid risky behaviors and develop personal, interpersonal, and drug resistance skills.

If your student didn't register before this series of Life Skills classes CLOSED, HC DrugFree plans to offer another free series this coming summer. Registration updates will be shared in future newsletters.

Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, the Maryland Department of Health and SAMHSA.

Become A Friend of HC DrugFree

Your Donation Saves Lives!

As a nonprofit organization, 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 consider becoming a Friend of HC DrugFree by making a donation in any of the following amounts:

- \$10 student
- \$25 individual
- \$50 family

\$50 nonprofit organizations
\$100 business
Sponsors starting as low as \$500.

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



Additional Resources

Help for Depression, Suicidal Thoughts or Other Mental Health Issues

If you need help, 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

Emotional Support Human

Provided by [The Horizon Foundation](#): When someone you care about is hurting, it's natural to want to help them. But, that person might not always tell you something is wrong—and you might be unsure about how to reach out.

Sponsored by the Horizon Foundation. [Learn how to be an Emotional Support Human here.](#)

Gambling with Your Future

Call, text or chat 1-800-GAMBLER for free confidential, compassionate help with gambling problems.

Medication Disposal and Storage

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. 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.

For more information, contact

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