

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

Hardships often prepare ordinary people for extraordinary destiny.

C.S. Lewis

Fentanyl Seized in Maryland Could Have Killed Millions

A Maryland family is accused of running an operation that would have distributed large amounts of drugs, including fentanyl, across our state. A police search resulted in the recovery of more than 5 kilograms of fentanyl, more than 500 grams of heroin, and more than 7 kilograms of cocaine and cocaine base. "The organization had enough fentanyl to kill millions of Marylanders," said Attorney General Frosh. [Read more.](#)

Join HC DrugFree and The Council of Elders

Substance Abuse Prevention
The Council of Elders Community Academy



Saturday, March 12, 2022 • 9–10:30 a.m.
This session will provide information regarding substance abuse prevention and behavioral health within the Howard County community. Representatives from HC Drug Free will provide resources and education on prevention, risk factors, warning signs, and treatment. This session is for families of students at the elementary, middle, or high school level and will be held virtually.

Please register at:
<https://tinyurl.com/2p9dn8f>

Sponsored by:



Join HC DrugFree's team at the Howard County Public School System/The Council of Elders (TCOE) Virtual Community Academy for "Substance Abuse Prevention" on **Saturday, March 12** from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Participants in this virtual community academy will receive information regarding substance use prevention and behavioral health within the Howard County community. Representatives from HC DrugFree will provide resources and education on prevention, risk factors, warning signs, and treatment. [Click here](#) to download and print flyer.

This session is open to parents/guardians of students at all levels and is free to attend. [Register online.](#) After registering, participants will receive an email with a link to the session. This program is part of a [series of workshops](#) sponsored by HCPSS and The Council of Elders.

March is Problem Gambling Month so we want to remind you that there is only one way to play... responsibly.

Playing Maryland Lottery games can be a fun and exciting form of entertainment. While most people play responsibly and within their means, some have trouble setting and maintaining limits. For those individuals, what starts out as entertainment can adversely impact their finances and their relationships with family and friends. If you believe that you or someone you know has a gambling problem, the Maryland Lottery wants you to know that help is available and only a phone call — or a click — away.

Be a Low-Risk Player. Remember, Lottery games are for entertainment, not a way to make money. Decide on a loss limit prior to playing and stick to it. Never borrow money to gamble (using a credit card is a form of borrowing). Remember, there is no special method or ability that gives you an advantage with games of chance. Play with money set aside for entertainment, never with money for everyday expenses. Make sure to include other forms of entertainment in your life.

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

Another Successful Parenting Class Wraps Up

As another successful series of Guiding Good Choices parenting classes comes to a close, it is important to reflect on what was learned. Beyond the topics addressed by the curriculum, this class raised some very practical and pertinent questions that many parents experience and just aren't sure how to handle.

For example, the class discussed the difference between bribing your children to do something and using positive reinforcement, how and when to negotiate and compromise with your children (and when not to), how to address issues with siblings who may be at developmentally different stages, how to respond when your attempts to engage your adolescent are met with the "I don't know" and shoulder-shrug responses, and why adolescents try to avoid serious conversations through silliness and what parents can do to work with the silliness to get to the serious without losing them.

If you are reading through this list and can relate, consider registering for the next series of parenting classes. For more information, [click here](#).

Register for Series #2 Parenting Classes

Spring Series 2 Classes will be held on Wednesdays, March 30, April 6, 27, and May 4, 11 from 10:30 a.m. to noon. [Register here](#).

For more information: Visit our [website](#) or email Parenting@HCDrugFree.org. Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, MD Department of



Ho Co Teens Didn't Have All the Answers

Prior to volunteering for the Life Skills class, the older student volunteers were given the opportunity to test their own knowledge about drug and alcohol use and other topics from the Life Skills course. While some of the older students are new to the program, others have volunteered previously and are familiar with the content. In spite of that familiarity, not one of our volunteers got all of the answers correct. This made us realize the importance of reminding and reinforcing this important information on an on-going basis because everyone forgot something.

To the parents out there who believe their kids are “fine” because they’ve talked with them before about drugs and alcohol or because they learned that in Health class, don’t be so sure. As teen brains develop, connections that don’t get used frequently sometimes get re-routed or replaced, resulting in forgetting things that they haven’t thought of in a while. Make sure to keep your expectations for their behavior in the front of their minds by telling them on a regular basis what is and is not OK.

And if you feel your adolescent would benefit from hearing it from someone else, then register them for the Life Skills program for students in grades 6-9, or as a volunteer for students in 9th grade up through college. For more information on upcoming classes, [click here](#).

Mentoring Makes a Difference

We often hear about the role of peers in teens' decisions to use or not use substances, but what about adults? Natural mentors, such as coaches, teachers, older family members, or neighbors can also influence how teens perceive substance use. [Read more](#).

Life Skills Classes: Register Now!

Free Life Skills Class for HoCo Students



Life Skills Classes Spring Series 2 will be held May 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31 and June 2 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. If you would like to register your child, please complete [this form](#).

For more information: Email LifeSkills@hcdrugfree.org or visit our [website](#)
Funding provided by the Howard County Health Department, MD Department of Health, and SAMHSA.

Internship Opportunity

Accepting applications. Do you know a college student considering a career in public health, education, drug & alcohol prevention, or who is interested in learning more about the inner workings of nonprofit organizations?

HC DrugFree is looking for a responsible intern for the spring semester to help with some of our programs. We are especially looking for college students to assist with and be positive role models for the middle school students in our Life Skills classes. We offer a variety of opportunities to help interns gain experience in areas of interest to them and the flexibility of working virtually from anywhere. Internship experiences will also be a great addition to a resume and opportunities to share in job interviews, and depending on your school's policies, may be able to count for credit.

Interested college students should email admin@hcdrugfree.org for more information.

Celebrities Go Public about Mental Health Struggles

Celebrities are increasingly going public with their mental health struggles, using their fame to help destigmatize seeking help. Gymnastics superstar Simone Biles withdrew from the Olympic Games, Prince Harry shared about his decades-long battle with trauma and grief, and actress Selena Gomez sought help for anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder. Do their public struggles make it easier for others to seek help? [Read more.](#)

Drugs Adding to The Opioid Crisis

Para-fluorofentanyl and metonitazene are being seen by medical examiners looking into overdose deaths. They

In the KNOW...

About Opioid Misuse



often are taken with — or mixed with — illicit fentanyl, the drug mainly responsible for the more than 100,000 U.S. overdose deaths in the last year. [Click here](#) for more information.

Did you know?



Like other substance use disorders, opioid use disorder is a chronic brain disease that causes people to continue to use opioids in spite of the detrimental effects opioid use has on their life



Reference: Opioid use disorder [Internet]. Yale Medicine. Yale Medicine; 2020 [cited 2023Feb11]. Available from: <https://www.yalemedicine.org/conditions/opioid-use-disorder#text=Like%20other%20substance%20use%20disorders%20from%20overdoses%20involving%20opioids>



Enter Student Film Festival

Be sure to enter HC DrugFree's Ho Co Film Fest video contest category. The deadline for students to submit films is April 18. [Click here](#) to read more about our Public Service Announcement (PSA) category submissions requirements or email your questions to Admin@hcdrugfree.org. To submit films, visit the [HoCo Film Fest website](#) view past films while on that site. We hope to see you at the HoCo Film Fest on Friday, May 6 at 7 p.m. at the Miller Library. Good luck!



Teens Welcome! TAC Meeting March 21

HC DrugFree's next Teen Advisory Council (TAC) meeting will be held on Monday, March 21 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. [Register here](#) to receive Zoom link for the March meeting. 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](#). Community service hours available to students, but only if a current TAC registration form is on file with HC DrugFree. Email your registration to admin@hcdrugfree.org or mail a hard copy our office.

Medication and Sharps Collections

Our next drive-thru medication and sharps collection is scheduled for Saturday,

April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Wilde Lake Village Center parking lot near The UPS Store, Swim Center and tennis courts. Save the date. More information will be shared.

Please Donate Today



We need YOUR financial support to continue offering FREE services.

[Donate](#)



Additional Resources

Mental Health Crisis? Thoughts of Suicide? Problems with Drugs or Alcohol? Call 211, then press 1. Text your zip code to TXT-211 (898-211). Visit 211md.org to chat or find additional resources for housing/shelter, utility assistance, food, domestic violence, legal services, and more.

Quit Smoking: Call 1-800-QuitNow (1-800-784-8669) for 24/7 for free and confidential assistance or visit www.smokingstopshere.com.

Reverse Opioid Overdose: [Click here](#) to contact the Howard County Health Department to receive free training and Narcan kit.

For more information, contact

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