

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

Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Save the Date: Upcoming Events

- February 6: [Teen Advisory Council meeting](#)
- February 7 - March 28: [Life Skills Classes](#) (Grades 6-9)
- March 6: [Teen Advisory Council meeting](#)
- May 5: [HoCo Student Film Festival](#)
- April 22: [Drive-Thru Medication & Sharps Disposal Event](#)

Count Your Blessings in 2023

If you are looking for a creative way to practice gratitude in 2023 and set yourself up for an uplifting walk down memory lane next year, try this out:

Take an empty jar or box and place it somewhere you'll see it every day. Feel free to decorate it in a way that feels right to you. Then, as good things happen in your life throughout the year, write them on a piece of paper, fold it up, and place it in your chosen container.

There is nothing too big or too small to take note of - whether it's an act of kindness, something beautiful you observed, or a text from a friend - write it down!

Next New Year, take the time to read each note and reflect on the sweet moments you experienced in 2023!

HC DrugFree's team wishes you a year filled with cherished memories.

Free Life Skills Classes for HoCo Students



HC DrugFree is providing another series of *FUN* and interactive skills-based classes designed to promote positive health and personal development for students entering **grades 6 to 9**. We encourage siblings and friends to take these classes together, so if you have slightly younger or older students, please let us know and we will consider them as well. Classes will be held **Tuesdays, February 7 - March 28** on Zoom. [Learn more](#)

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

College Students Wanted for Paid Positions

Accepting Applications.

Looking for college students raised in Howard County and available to assist online from college.

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? How about a college student who is a good role model and likes working with younger students?

HC DrugFree is looking for responsible students to help with some of our programs. We offer a variety of opportunities to gain experience with the flexibility of working virtually from anywhere. Our experiences will also be a great addition to a resume, applications, and future job interviews.

We are looking for college students to teach and/or assist with our Life Skills classes for middle school students **Tuesdays, February 7, 14, 21, 28 & March 7, 14, 21, 28.**

HC DrugFree plans to hire 2-3 college students for this paid opportunity.

Interested college students should complete this [survey](#).

High School Volunteers Wanted

Accepting Applications.

Do you know a high school student who is a good role model and likes working with younger students?

HC DrugFree is looking for responsible students to help with some of our programs. We offer a variety of opportunities to gain experience with the flexibility of working virtually from anywhere. Our experiences will also be a great addition to a resume, a college application, and future job interviews.

Community service hours available.

We are looking for high school students to assist with and be positive role models for the middle school students in our Life Skills classes **Tuesdays, February 7, 14, 21, 28 & March 7, 14, 21, 28.**

Interested high school students should complete this [survey](#).

HoCo Student Film Festival

The 19th Annual HoCo Student Film Festival will be held on Friday, May 5 at the Miller Library in Ellicott City. Films are due by April 11.



HC DrugFree is sponsoring a PSA category with the theme of 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. [Learn more](#)

Gaming Addiction

In the *KNOW*...

Gaming Addiction

hcdrugfree.org/gaming

Between computers, gaming consoles, and cell phones, games are within reach for nearly everyone at any time. For some it's a harmless pastime, but for others it may become a serious problem or even an addiction. What can we do to manage gaming, especially among students, to prevent it from going too far? [Learn more](#)

The Link Between Social Media and Substances



Many of us use social networks to build relationships and stay connected with

our family and friends, but there is a darker side to social media that can influence the way teens and young adults think about substance use. Some teens even use coded language to communicate about substance misuse.

Did you know that certain emojis have secret meanings? You may want to take note if you've noticed your teen using any of the following emojis: ☑️❄️☑️☑️

Watch the video to find out what they mean![Watch Now](#)

Medication Storage/Disposal



We know that parents can't be everywhere all at once, so keep your children safe by storing medication out of sight and out of reach! [Watch Now](#)

Remember:

- Children are curious and put all sorts of things in their mouths. Even if you turn your back for less than a minute, they can quickly get into things that could hurt them.
- Pick a storage place in your home that children cannot reach or see. Different families may have different places. Walk around your house and choose the safest place to keep your medicines and vitamins.

[Learn more](#)

Your Donations Make a Difference

Your generosity allows HC DrugFree to offer the programs, resources, and events that help make Howard County a safer, wiser, and more connected community. Make a difference with your dollars: [Make your tax-deductible](#)

[donation today!](#)



Save the Date: Medication and Sharps Collection



SAVE THE DATE!

Medication & Sharps Disposal

Saturday, April 22 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

HCDrugFree
Empowering the Community

Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot

5305 Village Center Drive, Columbia 21044

www.hcdrugfree.org

Safely dispose of:

- Prescription Medication
- Over-the-counter meds
- Sharps (Syringes, Needles, Epi-Pens, etc.)
- Vitamins
- Vape Devices
- Inhalers
- Pet Medication
- ...and more!

Our next drive-thru medication and sharps collection is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Wilde Lake Village Center parking lot in Columbia. More information to come! [Learn more](#)

Follow and Like Us on Social Media

Join our social media community for more content and easy ways to share important and potentially life-saving information with your friends and network.

Remember: **Knowledge is Power** and together we can help keep our community informed, safe, and **IN THE KNOW!**



Get Friends Connected to HC DrugFree

Friends keep friends informed! This newsletter and social media remain the best ways for us to share vital information with you! Please Like & Share our content on social media or forward this newsletter to a friend to help us with our mission of keeping Howard County safe and informed. Invite a friend to [subscribe to our newsletter](#). You can also view previous newsletters in the [Newsletter Archive](#) on our website.

Resources



Thoughts of Suicide?

Mental Health Crisis?

Substance Use Crisis?

**Call or Text
988**

HCDrugFree
Empowering the Community

The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States.

<https://988lifeline.org/>



Veterans: Confidential crisis support is available 24/7 for Veterans and their loved ones. <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

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

Free Bilingual Behavioral Health Resource Directory: [Click here](#) to

download the directory. Please verify that the provider accepts your insurance or provides sliding scale fees before scheduling.

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

Free Resources for Parents Following a Suicide Attempt: What to expect during recovery, safety planning, warning signs and risk factors. [Click here](#) to download resources document.

Substance Use Disorder Regional Residential Treatment Guide from Howard County Health Department [Download](#)

Additional Resources: [HC DrugFree Hotlines & Resources Page](#)

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