



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

**It is easier to build strong children
than to repair broken men.**

Frederick Douglass

Save the Date: Upcoming Events

- April 11: [Deadline to Submit Film for the HoCo Student Film Festival](#)
- April 17: [Teen Advisory Council Meeting](#)
- April 22: [Drive-Thru Medication & Sharps Disposal Event](#)
- April 25: [Senior Week: Staying Safe in Ocean City Presentation](#)
- Starting May 2: [Free Classes for Parents & Guardians](#)
- May 5: [HoCo Student Film Festival](#)

Who Has the Most Influence on HoCo Kids?

During a recent discussion with the students in [HC DrugFree's Spring 2023 Life Skills class](#), we asked "What do you think influences your decisions the most?" The majority of the students responded that THEIR PARENTS provided the most influence on their decisions.

So, HoCo Parents, remember: Your kids look up to you and they ARE listening even if it doesn't always feel like it.

Our Popular Free Parenting Class is Back by Popular Demand



Guiding Good Choices Free Parenting Classes

Since HoCo students say that parents influence their behavior and decisions, now is a great time for **HoCo Parents, Grandparents and Guardians** to participate in Guiding Good Choices, a FREE parenting class provided by HC DrugFree.

In Guiding Good Choices you'll learn:

- How to encourage your child to adopt healthy attitudes and behaviors
- How to communicate more effectively
- How to build a relationship of trust
- and much more!

[Register now](#) for HC DrugFree's Parenting Classes, which will be held Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.via Zoom. For more information, visit our [website](#).

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

Tell Us YOUR Story

[National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week is March 20-26.](#) The purpose of this event is to improve prevention, awareness, and

education about substance misuse by having conversations about how addiction affects us all.

We each have a unique reason for why we care about drug and alcohol related issues. This National Drug & Alcohol facts week, HC DrugFree wants to share your WHY. But only you can tell your story.



Use this **anonymous** form to share your thoughts about substance misuse prevention. Why do these issues matter to you? What do these topics mean to you personally and/or to the community around you?

If you're stuck, here are some suggested questions to consider:

Why is preventing drug use important for our community?

What can you do to support a friend or loved one with a substance use disorder?

Why do you choose not to use drugs or alcohol?

Youth and adults are welcome to participate.

Tell us your WHY here: <https://bit.ly/MyWhyNDAFW>

Don't Rely on Luck



St. Paddy's Day is almost here. Please celebrate responsibly. Make a plan and don't rely on luck to get you home.

- St. Patrick's Day is one of the deadliest times on U.S. roads; during the 2016-2020 2-day holiday period, 287 lives were lost in drunk-driving crashes
- Arrange for a sober driver or a rideshare service if you're going to consume alcohol; invite friends to stay over if you're hosting a party at home
- A first-time drunk driving offense can cost the you upwards of \$10,000 in fines and legal fees
- On St. Patrick's Day beer sales increase 174% and spirit sales increase 153%

[Learn more](#)

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.

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.



The deadline to submit films is Tuesday April 11, so it's time to say ACTION! [Learn more](#)

Are you Addicted to Sports Betting?



March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month, which is why we would like to spotlight the work of The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling at the University of Maryland School of Medicine with funding from the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration.

As online and mobile sports betting becomes legal in more states around the country, problem gambling centers are receiving calls for help. At the University of Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling, you can get counseling and a referral for treatment.

Visit: <https://www.mdproblemgambling.com/>
Call: 1-800-GAMBLER (Free and Confidential)

GAMBLING NOT FUN ANYMORE?

Help us spread **AWARENESS**
of the risks of gambling and how
to take **ACTION** for help and hope.



MARCH IS

**PROBLEM GAMBLING
AWARENESS MONTH**

Celebrating 20 Years

call, text or chat
24/7 Helpline

1-800-GAMBLER

FREE &
Confidential

In the Know about Gaming Addiction

The graphic features a person's hands holding a smartphone displaying a colorful game interface. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a gaming setup with a monitor and keyboard. The text is overlaid on this image.

HC DrugFree
Empowering the Community

In the *KNOW*...

Gaming Addiction

hcdrugfree.org/gaming

At the recommendation of HC DrugFree's Teen Advisory Council, we made some important updates and clarifications on our Gaming Addiction page.

While the focus remains on Gaming Addiction (or Gaming Disorder) and how to manage unhealthy gaming habits, our resource is also intended to educate about gaming, as a whole. [Learn more](#)

Why Does Proper Medication Disposal Matter?



The toilet is not a trash can

Drugs that are flushed down the toilet may pass through sewage treatment plants and septic tanks. These substances are released into waterways with the wastewater which can lead to adjacent soil and groundwater. Septic tanks systems may release the pharmaceuticals directly into the soil and eventually into groundwater. [Proper disposal of drugs](#) is a straight-forward way for individuals to prevent pollution.

You can make a difference

Children, pets or scavenging animals could find the medication and ingest it. Drugs could be scavenged and illegally sold. Take action to minimize the threat of accidental poisoning or drug abuse. Let's take precautions now to avoid harm to future generations and the environment.

[Learn more](#)

Save the Date: Medication and Sharps Collection

Medication & Sharps Disposal

Saturday April 22 • 10 a.m.-2 p.m.



Safely dispose of:

- Prescription medication
- Over-the-counter medication
- Sharps (syringes, needles, EpiPens, etc.)
- Vitamins
- Pet Medication
- Vape devices (with batteries removed)
- Inhalers
- And more!

HCDrugFree
Empowering the Community
www.hcdrugfree.org

Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot
5305 Village Center Drive, Columbia 21044

Our next safe and convenient drive-thru medication and sharps disposal event will be on **Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.** in the Wilde Lake Village Center Parking Lot near the Swim Center. Free. [Learn more](#)

HC DrugFree is Hiring: Help with New Spring Projects!



New spring projects! Looking for part-time work that has a positive impact on our community? Want a job you feel good about doing? HC DrugFree is hiring!

Pay range based on experience and skills (up to \$24). Currently, positions are mostly but not

entirely remote, so must be willing/able to work from office or attend community events during day, evening and weekends. Potential for advancement. HC DrugFree is grant funded.

To apply please upload a resume and cover letter at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HCDFEmploymentApp>

[Learn more](#)

Donations

HC DrugFree relies on donations from community members like you. [Make your tax-deductible donation today!](#)



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!**



Resources

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

Free Resources for Parents Following a Suicide Attempt: [Click here](#) to download resources document.

Free Bilingual Behavioral Health Resource Directory: [Click here](#) to download the directory.

Help for Depression, Suicidal Thoughts or Other Mental Health Issues:
Call or text 988.

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

Substance Use Disorder Regional Residential Treatment Guide: [Click here](#) to download the guide.

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

For more information, contact

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