

December 1, 2015



December 2, 2015

Special Education Day



December 10, 2015

WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY



January

National Mentoring Month

National Drug Facts Week



## THE USE OF FLAKKA IS ON THE RISE

Flakka (a.k.a. gravel) is a synthetic cathinone drug that is increasing in popularity. Right now, Florida is being hit the hardest. Flakka or alpha-PDP, is a cousin to the drug found in baths salts and takes the form of a white or pink, foul smelling crystal. It can be:

- eaten,
- snorted,
- injected, or
- vaporized in an e-cigarette.



Vaporizing, which sends the drug very rapidly into the bloodstream, may make it very easy to overdose.

"It's so difficult to control the exact dose," Jim Hall, a drug abuse epidemiologist at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, FL, previously told CNN. "Just a little bit of difference in how much is consumed can be the difference between getting high and dying. It's that critical ([www.ibtimes.com](http://www.ibtimes.com))."

Like other similar drugs, flakka can cause a condition called *excited delirium* that involves hyper-stimulation, paranoia, and hallucinations that can lead to violent aggression and self-injury. The drug has been linked to deaths by suicide as well as heart attack. It can also dangerously raise the body temperature and lead to kidney damage or kidney failure ([www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)).

As Flakka is very inexpensive, its use is on the rise. "Flakka is manufactured in China and India and can be bought online for as little as \$3 to \$5, making it an attractive alternative to cocaine. CNN reports that dealers often target young and poor people and try to recruit homeless people to buy and sell the drug.

While flakka is still legal in the U.S., the DEA has placed a temporary ban on it. Distributors work around this by placing a "not for human consumption" label on the drug.

For more information about Flakka, please visit the following resources:

[www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov) ; <http://www.ibtimes.com/what-flakka-synthetic-drug-emerges-new-york-2172402>

## December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month

Teens are curious about the world around them. Everything seems like an adventure so they take risks, sometimes with devastating results. The combination of driving and alcohol can be deadly. Alcohol can trigger some signs of feeling overconfident and being able to handle anything, however it's just the opposite. **Driving under the influence of alcohol contributes to poor judgment, impaired vision, reduced reaction times and difficulty in understanding sensory information.**

Driving safety is not priority while under the influence and can cause serious repercussions.

**Driver safety education is important to young drivers.** Encouraging students to join their local SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter helps encourage positive behavior. SADD increases the awareness of the negative impact of destructive decisions such as driving under the influence. The organization also provides support to those who do not drink alcohol. Statistics show more than five million high school students binge drink more than once a month and those who begin drinking before the age of 15 are at high risk to become alcoholics. Early prevention and awareness are important. You can use the following resources to help promote teen safe driving in your school: **Pennsylvania Teen Safe Driving Resource Guide** (<http://www.justdrivepa.org/Resources/pateendrivingguide.pdf>) and **MADD** (Mothers Against Drunk Driving, <http://www.madd.org/>).

## ***STRESS!***

*Stress is the trash of modern life-we all generate it but if you do not dispose of it properly, it will pile up and take over your life!*

*~Life Coach, Danzae Pace~*

Stress, just like trash, is a part of life for everyone; however, our complex modern society has greatly increased the amount of stress both children and adults are exposed to on a daily basis and it can be contagious. During this holiday season, levels of stress are especially great.

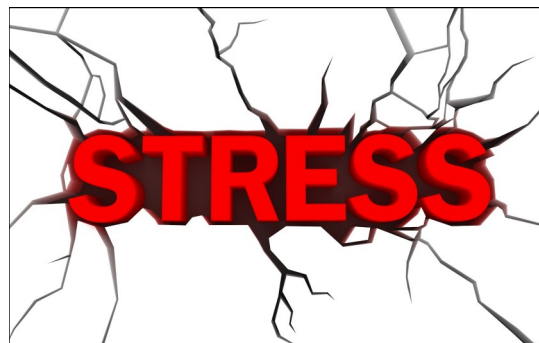
Adults often fail to recognize the incidence and magnitude of stress in the lives of children. Studies have shown that “parents perceive children as having lower levels of stress than children perceive themselves as having” (Humphrey, *Helping Children Manage Stress*, 1998, p.8). A 2014 study by the American Psychological Association shows that teen stress rivals that of adults and this suggests that the negative physical consequences of stress and the unhealthy behaviors associated with stress may begin manifesting early in people’s lives. In fact, teens reported that their stress level during the school year far exceeded what they believed to be healthy. 31% of teens reported feeling overwhelmed and 30% reported feeling depressed or sad due to stress. More than one-third of teens report fatigue or feeling tired (36%) and 23% reported skipping a meal due to stress. ([www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)) Younger children also report stress due to disrupted homes, blended families, and both parents working outside the home. The increased exposure to violence, both real and on the screen, also produces stress as does being over-scheduled. Common stress producers for teens include: failing a class or exam, judgment or evaluation by others, dating, problems with peers and parents, the constant pressure of social media and bullying.

“It is essential that adults understand the damaging effects of stress on children’s health, behavior and learning and in turn, value the benefits of a calm, relaxed state,” according to Victoria Tennant, M.Ed. A stress reaction causes physical changes to the body and brain. The sympathetic nervous system releases norepinephrine, a stimulant, into the brain and adrenalin into the body. This causes increased muscle tension, blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate and blood flow to the muscles. Our metabolism also rises; however, our digestive process slows. Cortisol, a stress hormone, is secreted to cause a release of glucose and inhibit protein uptake by 70% while breaking down protein to supply energy to the muscles. While these physical reactions to stress are designed to help us with the “flight or fight” response, long term exposure to constant stress damages our physical and mental health, and can negatively affect a child’s capacity to learn.

While stress may be unavoidable for both adults and children, adults can assist children in learning techniques to calm themselves, such as mindfulness, relaxation exercise, and deep breathing. Learning to handle stress in a healthy way in childhood is a skill that can have positive effects that last a lifetime.

The following websites can provide some helpful resources:

<http://psychcentral.com/lib/7-tips-for-helping-your-child-manage-stress/>  
[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)      [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)



*From your SAP Liaisons and the entire staff at CHC!*



### **Student Assistance Program Liaisons**

Mattie Hubbard—[mhubbard@thehc.org](mailto:mhubbard@thehc.org)

Katrina McKnight—[kmcknight@thehc.org](mailto:kmcknight@thehc.org)

Amanda Yost—[ayost@thehc.org](mailto:ayost@thehc.org)

[www.thehc.org](http://www.thehc.org)

610-443-1595

100A Cascade Drive

Allentown, PA 18109

