



## Upcoming Events

### November

- National Family Caregivers Month
- National Healthy Skin Month
- Prematurity Awareness Month
- World Prematurity Day (11/17/19)
- Great American Smoke-out (11/21/19)
- International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day (11/23/19)
- National Family Health History Day (11/28/19)

#### Location:

555 Union Boulevard  
Allentown, PA 18109

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**"I like a teacher  
who gives you  
something to take  
home to think  
about besides  
homework."**

**- Lily Tomlin**

## Kratom has been linked to numerous deaths, but it's legal in Pennsylvania and likely will remain so.

Kratom, a popular herb sold in stores across the Lehigh Valley, has been classified as a dangerous opioid by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, but it remains legal in Pennsylvania with no signs of change on the horizon.

The debate over whether kratom is a deadly drug to regulate closely or health-giving supplement to market widely is playing out in statehouses, at news conferences, and in social media. As many as 5 million people in this country use kratom. It is derived from the leaves of a Southeast Asian tree that is part of the coffee family. It is sold online, in gas stations and in smoke shops, and is typically brewed as a tea, chewed, smoked or ingested in capsules.

Advocates say it helps relieve pain, alleviate migraines, and can even help with opioid withdrawal. The gold-standard research approach to finding benefits may have already been eclipsed by the billion-dollar market and demand by consumers seeking a relatively inexpensive, "natural" remedy for pain and anxiety.

"The trouble with kratom is that it is so unknown," said Roseann B. Termini, a professor at Widener University School of Law who specializes in food and drug law. In 2016, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency tried to reclassify kratom as a Schedule 1 drug, similar to heroin or marijuana, a step other nations have taken. Six states: Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin, have banned kratom.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has said the active ingredient in kratom, mitragynine, is an addictive substance that acts on the brain's opioid receptors, and therefore is an opioid. There are no FDA-approved uses for the product. And, there have been problems with salmonella and heavy metal contamination.

A recent study analyzed more than 1,800 kratom exposure cases that were reported to the National Poison Data System. They reported 11 deaths, two that happened after a kratom-only exposure. There were also seven infants who were exposed to kratom, five of whom were experiencing withdrawal, according to the report. In 2016 and 2017, the herbal product was listed as the primary cause of death for six Ohioans.

Last fall, the Ohio Board of Pharmacy found kratom had a high potential for abuse, had no proven therapeutic use, and posed a risk to the public health. The group proposed that kratom be listed as a Schedule 1 Controlled Substance. Neighboring Indiana banned the herbal product in 2014 at the same time other synthetic drugs were outlawed. That was before the kratom association was founded.

**There are more effective ways than kratom to address detox  
and treatment for opioid use disorder.**

### GREEN VEIN KRATOM



**11 deaths -  
two that happened after  
a kratom-only exposure**

**7 infants exposed -  
to kratom, five of whom  
experienced withdrawal**

**6 dead in Ohio -  
from Kratom**



## Concentrated cannabis is much stronger than weed and more popular with teens

Recreational marijuana was legalized in Washington state in 2012, and saw over 44 million purchases of the drug by 2017. Typical cannabis flowers made up the bulk of those sales—but cannabis concentrate quickly became the fastest growing product on the market, and sales increased by nearly 150 percent between 2014 and 2016. Concentrates, also referred to as wax, shatter, and dab, have particularly high levels of THC, the psychoactive component of cannabis.

Noting the increased sales of concentrate, Madeline Meier, an assistant professor in the department of psychology at Arizona State University, was interested in seeing if broader use of concentrates among adults purchasing the products legally was mirrored by any trends in cannabis use for adolescents and teenagers. In a study published this week, Meier found that nearly a quarter of all eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students surveyed in Arizona had used concentrate at one point. “The cannabis landscape is changing quickly,” she says. “There are new products out there.”



## Benefits of Mindfulness in Education

Research finds that mindfulness practice decreases stress and anxiety, increases attention, strengthens compassion, improves interpersonal relationships, and many other benefits. Numerous studies show improved attention, including better performance on objective tasks that measure attention.

**Mindfulness with Teachers** / Teachers who learned mindfulness reported greater efficacy in doing their jobs, and had more emotionally supportive classrooms and better classroom organization based on independent observations.

**Mindfulness with Students** / Studies find that youth benefit in terms of improved cognitive outcomes, social-emotional skills, and well-being. Such benefits may lead to long-term improvements in life. For example, social skills in kindergarten predict improved education. More employment opportunities and overall well-being outcomes in adulthood.

**Emotion Regulation** / Mindfulness is associated with emotion regulation across a number of studies. Mindfulness creates changes in the brain that correspond to less reactivity, and better ability to engage in tasks even when emotions are activated.

**Compassion** / People randomly assigned to mindfulness training are more likely to help someone in need and have greater self-compassion.

**Calming** / Studies find that mindfulness reduces feelings of stress and improves anxiety and distress when placed in a stressful social situation.

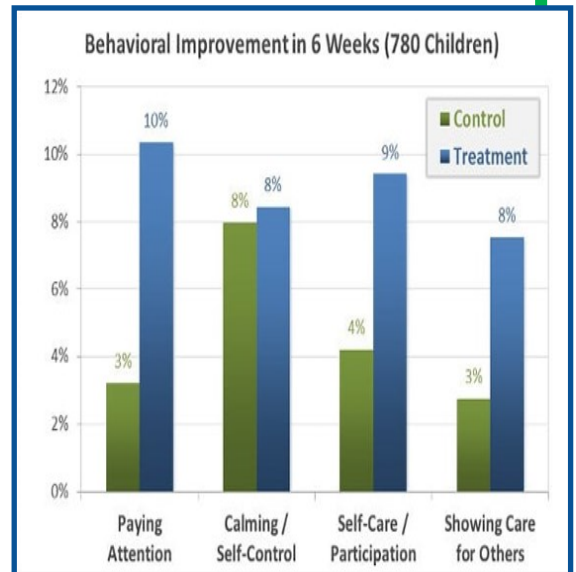
**Survey Shows:** Schools using mindfulness have conducted pre and post surveys to test for significant improvements on validated measures. The infographics below summarize the results from these two types of surveys from participants.

### Benefits for Educators

- 98% Recommend mindfulness to others
- 77% Are more satisfied with their jobs
- 80% Deliver curriculum with more ease
- 82% Connect better with students

### What Educators See in Their Students

- 83% See improved focus
- 89% See better emotion regulation
- 76% See more compassion
- 79% See improved engagement



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