



Upcoming Events

- Save Your Vision Month
- National Nutrition Month
- 14-20—National Sleep Awareness Week
- 14—Potato Chip Day
- 15—Ideas of March
- 17—Corn Beef and Cabbage day
- 21—World Poetry Day
- 22-23—National Drug/Alcohol Fact Week
- 26—Live Long and Prosper Day
- 30—Take a Walk in the Park Day

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What's **SAP**pening

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March / 2021

teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week



The National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week® (NDAFW), links students with scientists and other experts to counteract the myths about drugs and alcohol that teens get from the internet, social media, TV, movies, music, or from friends. It was launched to stimulate educational events in communities so teens can learn about drug and alcohol use and addiction.

Drugs and Alcohol Chat Day: This online chat held between high school students and scientists, gives students the opportunity to ask the questions they most want answers to about drugs, alcohol, and drug use, including drug and alcohol effects, how to help friends or family that are abusing drugs, and what causes addiction. Our expert scientists give them the facts.

Get Activity Ideas: There are many activities that teens, parents, caregivers, and teachers can do that don't involve leaving the house. Here's our favorites:

Take the National Drug & Alcohol IQ Challenge. Test students' knowledge with this short, interactive quiz, available in English and Spanish, that can be used on mobile devices.

Play the Kahoot! games (link is external) with an online class or encourage students to play the games individually.

Share the facts on social media. Social media platforms can be powerful tools to SHATTER THE MYTHS® about drugs and alcohol. Tweet, snap, or post.

Participate in the Drug Facts Challenge!, an interactive game using facts about the brain and addiction, marijuana, vaping, and more.

Use free, resources in classrooms. These include activity ideas on various topics; science- and standards-based classroom lessons and multimedia activities on teens and drugs; and the recently updated Mind Matters series, which helps teachers explain to students the effects of various drugs on the brain and body.

Order Free Materials. To see the full selection and order directly, check out NIDA's publication website. To ensure materials arrive in time for NDAFW, please order no later than 2 weeks prior to your event or activity.
<https://www.drugabuse.gov/nida-publications>

Overdosing on opioids — killed more than 67,000 people in the United States in 2018.

Cannabis dispensaries linked to nearly 30% drop in opioid deaths: study

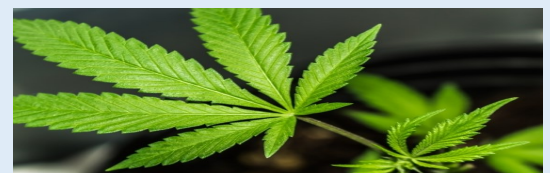
There's evidence that cannabis could help curtail opioid-related addiction and death.

The latest findings in a study published in the British Medical Journal, show a 17% reduction in opioid deaths between 2014 and 2018 in regions with one cannabis dispensary. When the number of shops increased from one to two, there was a fall by 21%. Add a third dispensary, and the rate fell by an additional 8.5%. The more dispensaries a county had, the fewer opioid deaths they suffered, researchers found.

Opioids — such as morphine, fentanyl and the illegal drug heroin — killed more than 67,000 people who overdosed in the United States in

2018. Meanwhile, an estimated 10 million people are thought to misuse prescription-based opioids alone, including oxycodone and hydrocodone, the new paper points out. Fentanyl has become problematic since its introduction to the medical drug market in 1959 and was responsible for more than 46,000 deaths in 2018 — two-thirds of the total confirmed opioid deaths that year.

In their report, study authors Greta Hsu and Balázs Kovács urged “a greater understanding of the impact of cannabis legalization on opioid misuse and public health outcomes before policymakers can weigh the potential benefits against the harms of promoting cannabis legalization.”





The World Sleep Society recommends the following 10 steps to achieve healthy sleep

1. Fix a bedtime and an awakening time.
2. If you are in the habit of taking a nap, do not exceed 45 minutes of daytime sleep.
3. Avoid excessive alcohol ingestion 4 hours before bedtime and do not smoke.
4. Avoid caffeine 6 hours before bedtime. This includes coffee, tea and many sodas, as well as chocolate.
5. Avoid heavy, spicy, or sugary foods 4 hours before bedtime. A light snack before bed is acceptable.
6. Exercise regularly, but not right before bed.
7. Use comfortable bedding.
8. Find a comfortable temperature setting for sleeping and keep the room well ventilated.
9. Block out all distracting noise and eliminate as much light as possible.
10. Reserve the bed for sleep. Don't use the bed as an office, workroom or recreation room.

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Sleep is so important

It is important to remember that sleep is involved with many physiologic systems such as memory consolidation, control of inflammation, hormone regulation, cardiovascular regulation and many other important functions, therefore insufficient sleep duration and poor sleep quality will be associated with several significant adverse health outcomes. Reduced sleep duration has been shown to cause impairments in cognitive and executive function, while poor sleep has been associated with poor mental health.



Is Boredom Good for Us?

Stop me if you've heard this one before: A child, sitting among various toys, activities and games, looks to their parent or caregiver and says "I'm boooooored!" It can be frustrating to feel like children need constant entertaining and structured activities to be satisfied.

Boredom is in the eye of the beholder; meaning that the feeling of boredom is a temporary situation that will pass and is not experienced the same by everyone. Parents are often quick to try to prevent boredom in their children. But allowing your children to feel bored sometimes may actually be good for them.

Research has shown that boredom results from a brain that is craving stimulation and not getting it. Some people crave this more than others, and it is good for our minds to be active much of the time while we're awake. If children (adults too!) become accustomed to having constant stimulation provided to them throughout the day though, their brain gets trained to expect that. When the planned activities stop, their brain tells them "I'm bored!" Depending on the age of your children, they are likely to respond by demanding a quick remedy to this feeling in the form of someone else providing an activity or turning to a screen.

Many studies have shown that most screen time activities are nothing more than distraction and may actually just delay those feelings of boredom. Younger children may act out by getting into trouble, bothering family members or interrupting that important phone call you're on.

Instead of responding by giving into these requests and providing more tailor-made activities, research shows that allowing them to feel bored can be a good thing in the long run. A psychological term called cognitive dissonance is the idea that there is a difference between the

current world and the ideal world that causes us frustration. We are motivated to resolve the dissonance by either changing the world, or the expectation. During times of boredom, when the world does not comply (by having parents offer an easy solution), the brain is challenged to fix the problem. This makes children more likely to come up with their own solutions to their feeling of boredom. Many people would call this being creative! Here are some tips to help capitalize on boredom to improve creativity and self-directed play. HINT: Parents can use some of these strategies for themselves too.

- **Schedule unstructured time into the day.** Insert some boredom into your child's day so you can guide them toward playing creatively.
- **Steer them in the right direction.** If they like art, provide a few mismatched supplies or a bin of random things to work with and let them get to it. If they like to build, take them on a hunt for materials and then see what they come up with.
- **Be ready to tolerate some frustration.** Remember the cognitive dissonance principle? The solution for most kids is to have someone provide an activity for them, not realizing that creative play is often more engaging and satisfying. If they complain about being bored, teach them that this is their brain wanting them to be creative!
- **Set a timer.** Set aside a specific amount of time to entertain themselves. No screens or pre-determined activities. If you are able, leave them alone in an area where they can play and let them sit with their boredom until it motivates them to get playing.
- **Plan a complex activity (if needed).** This could include plans for a blanket fort, how to build a ramp for toy cars or another activity with multiple steps. Don't be too directive about how to do it, but give them the tools or knowledge they need.
- **Let them make a mess.** Sometimes what gets in the way of good creative play is a parent who doesn't want the floor, play area, shoes, etc. to get too dirty, so they cut off the play and return children to their previous state of boredom. Within reason, allow them to make a mess and then get them to help clean up afterward.
- **Praise them.** If you find them engaged in something new or different, let them know how proud you are of them. When they are done, ask them to describe how they came up with the idea or what they were doing. Share in the creativity with them and let them know it is something you value.