

SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES TOOLKIT.



 **THE FACTS.** ↑
YOUR FUTURE. ↑

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SUMMARY.

“The Facts. Your Future.” is a new multi-faceted campaign to heighten youth understanding of the dangerous and life-altering effects of substance use.

Through assemblies, healthy conversations, facts and FAQs, “The Facts. Your Future.” campaign is led by First Lady Casey DeSantis to provide Florida’s youth with the facts surrounding substance use and how it can negatively impact lives. The goal is to provide students with factual information on the dangerous impacts of drugs and alcohol so that they can make well-informed, educated decisions about their future.

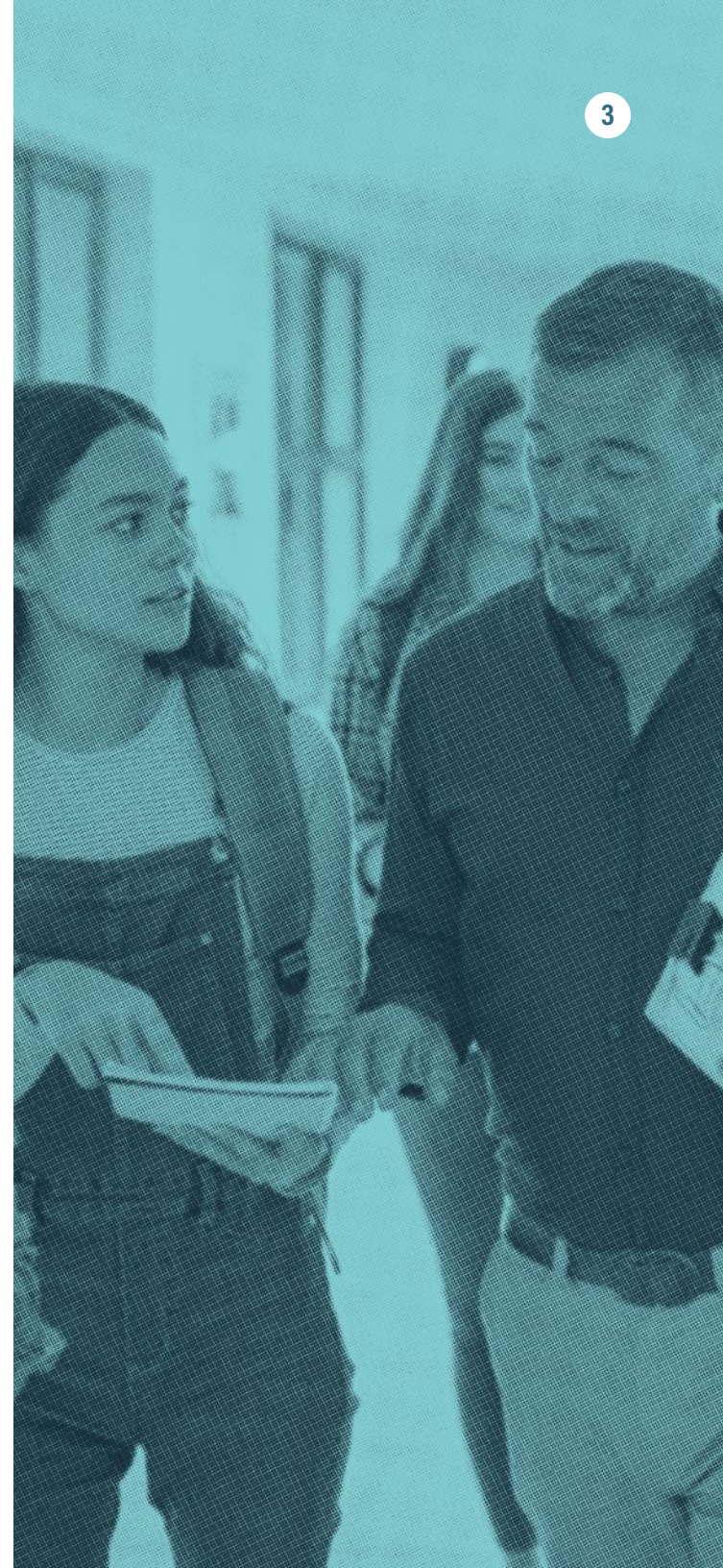
In partnership with school districts, alongside local law enforcement and community health resources, we hope to assist students, parents, and teachers in Florida to prevent substance use disorder.

We strive to help young people get the facts about what drinking and drugs can do to their development and future.

PURPOSE:

Through “The Facts. Your Future.” campaign, the State of Florida is focusing on supporting students statewide to ensure they receive prevention instruction and encouragement to protect and maintain their health, avoid substance misuse, and discourage risky behaviors so they can thrive and flourish for life.

To support schools statewide to kick off the school year or semester, this toolkit provides the resources to host an assembly and extend this initiative through campaign materials. To continue keeping students informed and assist with smart and safe decision making as they grow, the tactics of this toolkit are intentionally broad so that schools may choose to take a hands-on, interactive approach and incorporate different elements throughout the school year, including through social media.



A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH:

1 A SCHOOL ASSEMBLY INITIATIVE.

As a way to directly engage with youth, schools across the state will be provided this toolkit to aid in planning of an interactive assembly program focused on substance use disorder awareness. These assemblies will inform students about the myths of the “common” drugs thought to be harmless, empower them to take control of their lives and make important decisions that will affect their futures. The assemblies can also be a time to recognize those students, teachers, and paraprofessionals that prioritize substance use awareness, prevention and intervention.

Invite your school’s student government, SADD chapters or other campus clubs to join a planning committee to partner with you and help find students who would like to speak or share their stories and contribute ideas to make the assembly interesting, and to help promote it.

2 WEB AND DIGITAL MEDIA MESSAGING AND RESOURCE DISSEMINATION.

The Office of the First Lady, in partnership with the Florida Department of Health and Florida Department of Education, will deploy collateral campaign materials that resonate with youth, including anti-drug messaging that can be distributed on various platforms. These materials focus on the facts behind substance use, long-term effects of specific substances, and help youth say no to drugs and alcohol.

3 HELP SCHOOLS MEET EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS.

This program can be used to meet the youth mental health and substance abuse requirement (Rule 6A-1.094124, Florida Administrative Code, Required Instruction Planning and Reporting) that requires school districts to provide instruction to students in grades K-12 related to youth substance use and abuse health education.



*Together, Florida will empower our students and help them determine how the choices they make today can impact their future opportunities.
#TheFactsYourFutureFL*



THE FACTS ABOUT ILLICIT DRUGS.



Higher risk for HIV/AIDS.

Sharing needles, syringes, or other equipment to inject drugs puts people at high risk for getting or transmitting HIV and other infections. People who inject drugs account for about 1 in 10 HIV diagnoses in the United States.¹



Ecstasy and MDMA can be lethal even after one use.

MDMA can cause a dangerous increase in body temperature that can be fatal. Ecstasy and MDMA can damage brain cells that are involved in thinking and memory, and can damage your kidneys.²



Cocaine typically isn't used alone.

Street dealers often mix it with things like cornstarch, talcum powder, or flour to increase profits. They may also mix it with other drugs such as the stimulant amphetamine or fentanyl—an extremely lethal drug even at very low doses.

Cocaine makes the heart beat faster and blood pressure and body temperature go up.³ It also can make the heart beat abnormally. Cocaine is a type of stimulant that was involved in nearly 1 in 5 overdose deaths during 2017.⁴

DANGER**Long-term effects of cocaine include:**

- Reproductive damage and infertility.
- Paranoia and hallucinations.
- Movement disorders such as Parkinson's.
- Heart attack, stroke, or seizure.⁵

**The effects of meth include:**

- Psychosis including hallucinations, delusions, and paranoia that can last for months or years.
- Deteriorated skin and development of sores.
- Tooth decay and loss.⁶

**Ketamine can cause long-term brain damage⁷**

As a hallucinogenic, ketamine can cause:

- Attention, learning, and memory problems.⁸
- Depression and poor memory.⁸
- Bladder and kidney problems.⁹

1. [cdc.gov/hiv/risk/drugs/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/drugs/index.html)

2. [drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/mdma-ecstasy-abuse/Introduction](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/mdma-ecstasy-abuse/Introduction)

3. [drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/cocaine/what-are-short-term-effects-cocaine-use](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/cocaine/what-are-short-term-effects-cocaine-use)

4. [cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/other-drugs.html](https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/other-drugs.html)

5. [drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/cocaine](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/cocaine)

6. [drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/methamphetamine/what-are-long-term-effects-methamphetamine-misuse](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/methamphetamine/what-are-long-term-effects-methamphetamine-misuse)

7. Wang C, Zheng D, Xu J, Lam W, Yew DT. Brain damages in ketamine addicts as revealed by magnetic resonance imaging. *Front Neuroanat*. 2013;7:23. Published 2013 Jul 17. doi:10.3389/fnana.2013.00023

8. Chan KW, Lee TM, Siu AM, Wong DP, Kam CM, Tsang SK, Chan CC. Effects of chronic ketamine use on frontal and medial temporal cognition. *Addict Behav*. 2013 May;38(5):2128-32. doi: 10.1016/j.addbeh.2013.01.014. Epub 2013 Jan 31. PMID: 23435274.

9. Selby NM, Anderson J, Bungay P, Chesterton LJ, Kolhe NV. Obstructive nephropathy and kidney injury associated with ketamine abuse. *NDT Plus*. 2008;1(5):310-312. doi:10.1093/ndtplus/sfn054

THE FACTS ABOUT OPIOIDS.

Opioids are a type of drug that include pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, morphine, pharmaceutical fentanyl, and many others. However, even when legally and prescribed, they can be highly addictive.¹

Opioids affect both the spinal cord and brain to reduce the intensity of pain-signal perception as well as brain areas that control emotion.² They can also affect the brain to cause euphoria or a high.

Opioids also include illegal drugs such as heroin and synthetic fentanyl. Recent cases of fentanyl-related harm, overdose, and death in the U.S. are linked to illegal fentanyl.³ It is often mixed with heroin or cocaine, sometimes without the user's knowledge, to increase its euphoric effects. It is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine, and easily lethal.⁴

Even though heroin is highly addictive, more people struggle with addiction to prescription pain relievers. Many young people who inject heroin report misuse of prescription opioids before starting to use heroin.⁵

Many people are prescribed opioids out of medical necessity, but opioids can still be dangerous and addictive. Even if someone is prescribed one of these medications—such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, and morphine—misuse of these substances is rampant. Talk to parents, a doctor, a counselor, a teacher, or another adult you trust if you have questions or need help.



10.3 million people aged 12 or older misused opioids in 2018.⁶



Harmful effects of opioid use:

- Extreme drowsiness.
- Confusion.
- Nausea.
- Constipation.
- Slowed breathing.

Over time, opioid use and misuse can lead to insomnia, muscle pain, heart problems, pneumonia, and addiction.⁷



Addiction to prescription opioids is the strongest risk factor for heroin addiction.

Between 2002 and 2013, the rate of heroin-related overdose deaths nearly quadrupled, and more than 8,200 people died in 2013.⁸



Deadly overdoses

Opioids are currently the main driver of drug overdose deaths. Opioids were involved in over 70% of drug overdose deaths in the United States during 2019.⁹



Consequences of opioid abuse:

- Losing a job due to prioritizing substance use over work responsibilities.
- Financial issues stemming from spending too much money on new prescriptions.
- Criminal charges for possessing painkillers without a prescription.
- Damaged relationships with family members, friends and romantic partners.¹⁰

1. store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Teens-The-Truth-About-Opioids/PEP19-08
2. drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/mom_opioids.pdf
3. cdc.gov/opioids/basics/fentanyl.html
4. drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/fentanyl
5. archives.drugabuse.gov/testimonies/2014/americas-addiction-to-opioids-heroin-prescription-drug-abuse#_ftn2

6. samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/medications-counseling-related-conditions/opioid-overdose
7. medlineplus.gov/opioidmisuseandaddiction.html
8. cdc.gov/vitalsigns/heroin/index.html
9. cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/index.html
10. FPO CITATION

THE FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL.

Binge drinking is the most common, costly, and deadly pattern of excessive alcohol use in the United States. Nearly one in five youths aged 12 to 20 years reported drinking alcohol and one in 10 reported binge drinking in the past 30 days.¹



Teens are more likely to binge drink than adults. 25% of underage drinkers say they have five or more drinks at the same party or event.¹



Underage drinking, especially in high amounts through binging, can cause:

- **Changes in brain development** that may have life-long effects.
- **School problems**, such as higher rates of absences or lower grades.
- **Social problems**, such as fighting or lack of participation in youth activities.
- **Legal problems**, such as arrest for driving or physically hurting someone while drunk.
- **Physical problems**, such as hangovers or illnesses.
- **Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and other unintentional injuries**, such as burns, falls, or drowning.
- **Memory problems.**
- **Misuse of other substances.**
- **Alcohol poisoning.¹**



If you need help to stop drinking, talk to your teacher, trusted adult, parent, or a friend.

1. [cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm)



THE FACTS ABOUT VAPING AND NICOTINE.

The spread of e-cigarettes and other vaping devices may be re-normalizing smoking behavior. The increase in popularity of nicotine devices and their widespread availability is reversing the progress made over decades to reduce cigarette smoking, especially among young people. It took decades for the negative effects of smoking to be found. Do you want to be on the wrong side of history?¹



Vaping is not regulated and has not been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), even though vapes are sold as the safer alternative to cigarettes. #FakeMarketingCampaign.²

To put that in perspective, the FDA regulates everything from worms, the food you eat, to the makeup you use, but doesn't yet fully regulate vapes.... Scary, huh?



There is no evidence that the aerosol from these products is safe.

There is growing concern about the long-term health effects of vaporized nicotine and other chemicals in e-cigarettes and other vaping devices. The additives, heavy metals, ultra fine particles, and other ingredients they contain include toxins and carcinogens.³



Nicotine can affect brain development and functioning.

The younger a person is when they begin using nicotine, the greater the risk of addiction. The developing brain is more vulnerable to nicotine's effects including changes in attention and cognition, increased mood disorders and less impulse control.³



Vapes are just as addictive as cigarettes.

Many vapes use even more nicotine. *A single JUUL pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of 20 regular cigarettes! Newer e-cigarettes are also packed with the same amount of nicotine.*⁴



As recently as January 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed 60 deaths involving e-cigarette or vaping product use.⁵



In 2019, about 26% of Florida high school students reported current use of electronic vaping—a 63% increase compared to 2017.⁶



A recent national survey showed that:

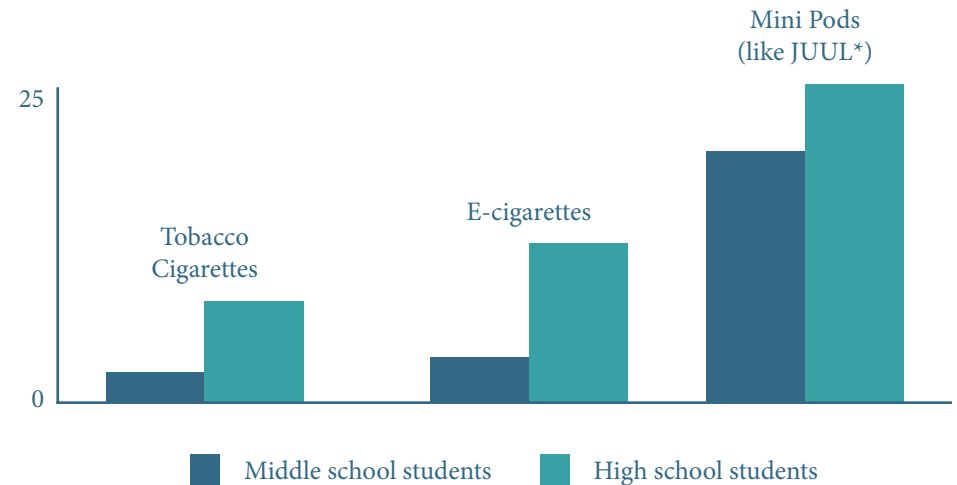
- About 10% of U.S. youth believe e-cigarettes cause no harm.
- 62% believe they cause little or some harm.
- 28% believe they cause a lot of harm when they are used some days but not every day.

That's way up from a study in 2014 where:

- Nearly 20% of young adults believed e-cigarettes cause no harm.
- 53% believed that they are moderately harmful.
- 27% believed they are very harmful.⁷



Who's smoking what?



1. drugfree.org/article/how-vaping-affects-teens-health/
 2. www.fda.gov/news-events/fda-voices-perspectives-fda-leadership-and-experts/how-fda-regulating-e-cigarettes
 3. e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/knowtherisks.html
 4. teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping/vaping-addiction-nicotine-withdrawal

5. cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html
 6. tobaccofreeflorida.com/current-issues/teen-vaping/
 7. e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/getthefacts.html

THE FACTS ABOUT TOBACCO.



Each day, more than 900 kids ages 12-17 use smokeless tobacco for the first time.¹



A single cigarette contains over 44,800 chemicals, 69 of which are known to cause cancer.²



The addiction rate for smoking is higher than the addiction rates for marijuana, alcohol, or cocaine.³



Symptoms of serious nicotine addiction often occur only weeks or even just days after youth “experimentation” with smoking first begins.³



Because adolescence is a critical period of growth and development, exposure to nicotine may have lasting, adverse consequences on brain development.³



Smoking can seriously harm kids while they are still young.³

Immediate effects:

- Bad breath.
- Irritated eyes and throat.
- Increased heartbeat and blood pressure.

Short-term harms:

- Respiratory problems.
- Reduced immune function.
- Increased illness, tooth decay, gum disease and pre-cancerous gene mutations.⁴



Roughly one-third of all youth smokers will eventually die prematurely from a smoking-caused disease.⁴



On average, the life expectancy of a smoker is 10 years less than a nonsmoker.⁵



If the average smoker gave up smoking and instead invested the money in the stock market, in 10 years, they would have \$52,000.



Within 48 hours of quitting smoking, your nerve endings begin to regrow and your senses of smell and taste begin to return to normal.⁶



Why quit?

- **You smell better.**
Your breath, clothes and hair will smell better. Friends may be more willing to be in your car or home.
- **You can smell again.**
Your sense of smell will return. Food will taste better.
- **Stay young.**
Smoking turns your hair gray and causes your skin to sag faster.
- **No more yellow.**
Your fingernails will slowly turn less yellow and your stained teeth will become whiter.
- **Get hired.**
You may have an easier time finding a job.
- **Call me maybe.**
It may be easier to find a date.

1. tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0003.pdf

2. lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/

3. cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/index.htm

4. tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0001.pdf

5. cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/index.htm

6. medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007532.htm

THE FACTS ABOUT MARIJUANA.



Marijuana is the most commonly used addictive drug after tobacco and alcohol.¹

Marijuana affects brain development and changes how the brain works. Marijuana use is associated with nearly five-times increased odds of psychotic disorders including schizophrenia and psychosis, as well as increased risk of lung cancer and heart failure.^{1, 2, 3, 4}



Consequences of marijuana use among adolescents.

Marijuana use among teenagers may impair thinking, memory, and learning functions.² It can cause serious health problems³ especially since it is often intentionally contaminated with other drugs, including fentanyl and ketamine. Just two milligrams of fentanyl is enough to kill you.⁵ Marijuana is also a gateway drug; those who use marijuana are 104 times more likely to use cocaine, three times more likely to use heroin, and nine times more likely to become addicted to opioids.^{6, 7} In one study, 14% of adolescents who used marijuana daily were also addicted to methamphetamine.⁸

DANGER

Long-term effects of marijuana include:⁴

- Increased risk of schizophrenia.
- Increased risk of lung cancer.
- Increased risk of heart failure.
- Increased likelihood of further drug use.
- Problems with memory and learning skills.
- Severe nausea and vomiting.



Short-term effects of marijuana include:⁵

- Decreased athletic and academic performance.⁹
- Psychotic episodes marked by violence and delusion.¹⁰
- Loss of coordination and slower reactions.
- Anxiety, fear, distrust, or panic.
- Faster heart rate.



Medical marijuana is different from the marijuana sold illegally and is highly regulated.¹¹

- Currently medical marijuana and low-THC cannabis is available in Florida only for qualifying patients; however, marijuana remains illegal under federal law.
- Medical marijuana is only available to patients with specified qualifying conditions.
- Medical marijuana issued from licensed Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers in Florida undergoes extensive testing to ensure it is free from contaminants that are unsafe for human consumption.

1. [thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366\(19\)30048-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2215-0366(19)30048-3/fulltext)
 2. [sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780123736253500061](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780123736253500061)
 3. ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2516340/
 4. [heart.org/en/news/2020/08/05/heart-risks-of-marijuana-use-need-more-research](https://www.heart.org/en/news/2020/08/05/heart-risks-of-marijuana-use-need-more-research)
 5. [dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl](https://www.dea.gov/resources/facts-about-fentanyl)
 6. [nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2016/04/26/is-marijuana-a-gateway-drug/marijuana-has-proven-to-be-a-gateway-drug](https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2016/04/26/is-marijuana-a-gateway-drug/marijuana-has-proven-to-be-a-gateway-drug)

7. ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7359408/
 8. bmcpyschiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-019-2403-1
 9. [ncaa.org/news/2019/10/10/emerging-science-on-cannabis-marijuana-implications-for-student-athletes.aspx](https://www.ncaa.org/news/2019/10/10/emerging-science-on-cannabis-marijuana-implications-for-student-athletes.aspx)
 10. [spectatorworld.com/topic/big-dope-cannabis-america-sanity/](https://www.spectatorworld.com/topic/big-dope-cannabis-america-sanity/)
 11. [knowthefactsmmj.com/](https://www.knowthefactsmmj.com/)

CONVERSATION MAP.

Starting conversations about substance use disorder is hard. This messaging map breaks down specific concerns with facts that can help start those conversations, in person or online.

These conversations are broad in nature so that schools may choose how to utilize them. The focus is to empower students to have difficult conversations with their peers. These elements can be used in tandem with assemblies, through individual classroom instruction, after-school events, club meetings, or on social media. By working with your school district, this initiative can potentially help satisfy the youth mental health and substance abuse requirement (Rule 6A-1.094124, Florida Administrative Code, Required Instruction Planning and Reporting) that school districts provide instruction to students in grades K-12 related to youth substance use and abuse health education.

Social media has become the best way for sharing information quickly, so help us spread the facts and counter misinformation.

Using the hashtag, #TheFactsYourFutureFL, schools, students and communities can use the information below to start social media conversations.

MINDSET

**BUT EVERYONE VAPES.
IT CAN'T BE THAT BAD.**

FACT

Take a stand against companies that market addictive products to youth—especially through flavors.

E-cigarette aerosol can contain metals, lead, cancer-causing chemicals, and acrolein, a herbicide primarily used to kill weeds¹... #Gross

Because your brain is still developing, vaping before age 25 intensifies your addiction.

MINDSET**ISN'T IT BETTER THAN CIGARETTES?****FACT**

New e-cigarettes like Puff Bar, JUUL, Stig and HQD contain as much nicotine as two packs of cigarettes... Not so different, huh?²

It's time to cancel the influence of vaping. Get your facts from a reliable source.

Check out thefactsnow.com

MINDSET**IT'S NORMAL TO DRINK****FACT**

Early onset alcohol use is a risk factor for future problems, including heavier use of alcohol and drugs during adolescence and alcohol dependence in adulthood.³

MINDSET**DRINKING IS WHAT EVERYONE DOES FOR FUN.****FACT**

On average, alcohol is a factor in the deaths of approximately 4,300 people under age 21 in the U.S. per year, shortening their lives by an average of 60 years.³

MINDSET**I'M SO OVERWHELMED WITH SCHOOL, LIFE, ETC.****FACT**

The State of Florida has made significant investments to ensure there are school and community-based providers, such as certified school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other licensed mental health professionals available to help our state's children and youth overcome non-academic barriers to academic success.⁴

It's hard to talk about, but confide in an adult you trust. Needing help is not a weakness.

Make sure to share healthy stress coping mechanisms with your students and prioritize mental health at home and school.

MINDSET

BUT I WANT TO BE ACCEPTED...

FACT

Friends don't force friends to make destructive or poor decisions. Knowing the facts can help you make the best decisions for yourself.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, and music, are more likely to build healthy social relationships through a support system with friends who have the same interests. Plus, extracurricular participation improves mental health among students.⁵

MINDSET

I DON'T WANT TO KEEP DOING DRUGS. WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

FACT

Acknowledging that you need help is hard and is the crucial first step to recovery.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information. The referral service is free of charge.

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

MINDSET**I WANT TO QUIT VAPING,
JUULS, OR SMOKING.****FACT**

Contact the Florida Quitline via phone
at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW or online
at [TobaccoFreeFlorida.com](https://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com).

MINDSET**I DON'T KNOW HOW TO
HELP MY FRIEND.****FACT**

Be a friend. Save a life.

Helping a friend who is struggling with substance
use is not easy. It is often difficult to initiate the
conversation.

Encourage your friend to stop using and seek help
from a parent, teacher, or other caring adult.

Reach out to an adult you trust and raise your
concerns if you are worried about a friend, or contact
1-800-662-HELP.

1. Bein K, Leikauf GD. (2011) Acrolein—a pulmonary hazard. Mol Nutr Food Res 55(9):1342-60. doi: 10.1002/mnfr.201100279
2. thefactsnow.com
3. store.samhsa.gov/product/facts-underage-drinking/PEP21-03-10-008

4. fldoe.org/mental-health/
5. sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0091743520303157

SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES.

Middle and High School Template

Using this guide, schools will be able to plan assemblies to provide students with science-based facts so they can make well-informed, educated decisions about their future.

In partnership with health and local resource organizations' leadership, schools should reach out to local sports teams to invite a local celebrity or VIP to discuss why they stopped using drugs/alcohol. A description of the proposed events for middle and high school-aged students follows.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Leading up to the program or event, schools may engage their students via a social media campaign or through projects about what substance misuse means to them. This content features videos, tweets, and posts can be displayed electronically at the start of the event.

LOCATION

Middle or high school auditoriums, gymnasiums, or classrooms.

WHO

Entire school or appropriate age groups.

Reach out to the County or City Health Department to engage the staff alcohol and drug experts to share information that might help inform your Assembly Program, including recent youth drug and alcohol use data, overdose data and DUI data.

Contact Al-Anon or AA or NA in addition to treatment programs for resources for speakers. The activity will include a scenario involving a person in recovery and their story, so the students can understand that these issues can happen to real people.

Your school can also look for resources like the impaired driving simulator to help your peers understand the impact of drug and alcohol use: fatalvision.com/product-category/sidne-vehicle-items/. Work with the PTA or host a fundraiser on your own to bring these resources to your school.

PROGRAM

- 1 *Brief welcome by superintendent or sheriff (5 minutes).*
- 2 *“The Facts. Your Future.” campaign video (3-5 minutes).*
“The Facts. Your Future.” Videos focus on the impacts of substance use among youths, and the true facts behind how using illicit substances has significant impacts on youth.
- 3 *Sheriff or emcee introduces VIP (5 minutes).*
- 4 *Icebreaker.*
 Print and distribute yes/no signs to audience and have the emcees/ speaker ask a series of questions of the youth audience and ask them to answer with the signs. The emcee may choose to have the audience close their eyes to maintain confidentiality among these questions. If there is a large audience, ask for volunteers that will receive a branded “prize.”

Use these questions to give you a sense of what the audience is worried about, then you can deliver information to them about drug use, by showing materials, telling real-life stories through speakers, and having guest experts. Options for questions include:

- Have you been offered drugs?
- Raise your hand if you feel like you know how to say no drugs or alcohol if they are offered to you?
- How many of you have seen the impacts of drugs and alcohol use first hand, maybe in your family or among friends.
- Have any of you have lost friends to drug use?
- Have any of have lost family members to drug use?

5 *VIP speaks and reinforces the importance of knowing the facts to protect your future (10 minutes).*

6 *VIP or emcee introduces guest speaker (15 minutes).*

Guest speaker options, can be an individual who has dealt and overcome substance abuse, and shares their story of rehabilitation.

7 *Q & A session with youth.*

To close the group, use NIDA's "[10 Questions Teens Ask About Drugs and Health](#)" to start a concluding conversation with the group. Present the question, ask the audience what they think the answer might be. Then go through the answers from NIDA and circle the answers that were accurate. This is a good way of showing that previously known information can be misleading or inaccurate, and provide a platform for the students to discuss what they learned. Examples of these questions could include:

1. What is the worst drug?
2. Which is more habit-forming—smoking cigarettes or vaping nicotine?
3. Can marijuana be used as medicine?
4. If a pregnant woman takes drugs/smokes/drinks alcohol, what happens to her baby?
5. How can I help someone with a problem stop taking drugs?
How can I help if they don't want help?
6. Is vaping bad for you even if it's just flavoring?
7. Can you get addicted to ADHD meds?
8. What are bath salts?
9. What are the effects of prescription drugs?
10. Why do people take drugs when they know they're bad?

REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS.

For schools to include in lieu of a VIP guest.

Based on your anticipated audience and number of attendees, you may want to select from the following scenarios to make your workshop more engaging and interactive. This activity will help give attendees a chance to translate what they are learning into practice by exploring how they would respond to different situations. It gives them the opportunity to develop effective strategies to educate teens about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs, help dispel myths and move teens toward positive decision making and health behaviors.

SCENE #1

It's Friday night and you're hanging with friends at a party. Good music, good vibes. Someone nudges you and another friend: "Anyone want to smoke?" One girl responds, "Weed? I'm definitely in. It's legal medicinally, right? No big deal."

● *Reality check.*

The teen brain is actively developing and often does not fully develop until the mid-20s. Marijuana use during this period may have negative effects on the developing brain. These effects include:

- Difficulty thinking and problem solving.
- Problems with memory and learning.
- Impaired coordination.
- Difficulty maintaining attention.

Along with the developing brain, marijuana use in adolescence can also have serious impacts on a teen's school and social life. These effects include:

- Decline in school performance.
- Increased risk of mental health issues.
- Impaired driving.
- Potential for addiction.



● ***Time out.***

Now that you know the facts, and you know it's a bad idea to smoke illicit marijuana as an adolescent, you worry about how you'll look in front of others at the party if you say "no." What if people stop inviting you to parties? Even if the health risks aren't enough, fear of your mother's or father's anger if they smell it on you is reason enough not to smoke.

● ***Now what?***

- **Walk away, or create a diversion.** "I hate this song. Someone give me the aux. Anyone want to come with me?"
- **Give a simple no.** Don't make it a big deal. Be polite. "No, thanks."
- **Pretend you didn't hear.** It's a party, go talk to other people. "I can't believe she's here, I've got to talk to her..."

SCENE #2

You are hanging out with your best friend, checking out each other's web pages. Your friend says, "Wanna try some of my mom's painkillers? It'll be fun." You are surprised and stop what you're doing. "It's not like the meds are illegal. My mom's doctor gave them to her. They're safe for sure," your friend says.

● ***Reality check.***

Your friend seems to believe the myth that prescription drugs are safer to abuse than illegal ones. Wrong.

Prescription drugs such as painkillers or ADHD medications when used for nonmedical reasons or not as prescribed—such as to get high, relieve tension, or just to experiment—are dangerous.

But it's not only addiction that a person risks when abusing prescription painkillers. For example, a single, large dose of painkillers can cause your breathing to slow to dangerous levels.

● **Time out.**

You can't believe your friend is asking you to do this! You know the facts, but then again, you totally trust your friend and feel like maybe it would be OK, even fun. This is your best friend. You do everything together. What would happen if you said "no"? Will your friend stop hanging out with you? Wouldn't it be OK to try it just once? How can you get out of this situation without it becoming a big deal?

● **Now what?**

- **Tell it like it is.** Since this is your best friend, lay it on the line and let your friend know where you are coming from. "That's not for me. Let's just hang out."
- **Be cool and change the subject.** Coming up with another activity can distract people. "I don't really feel like it. Anyway, there's this cool new phone app that lets you add cat pics to photos. Want to download it?"
- **Give an excuse.** It's OK to make an excuse when you are on the spot. "I have to leave soon for dinner."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR YOUTH

FindTreatment.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration database for licensed providers specializing in substance use disorders, addictions and mental illness.

findtreatment.gov

Florida Behavioral Health Association (floridabha.org)

Florida specific search for treatment providers.

floridabha.org/organizational-members/

Department of Children and Families Links to Managing Entities

Connecting people without insurance or who are experiencing poverty to no-cost care.

[myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/
managing-entities/](https://myflfamilies.com/service-programs/samh/managing-entities/)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8255 or text “Jason” to 741741

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Florida Abuse Hotline

1-800-96-ABUSE

myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline

ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS

Stopbullying.gov

stopbullying.gov

STOMP Out Bullying

stompoutbullying.org

Florida Council Against Sexual Violence

Sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking

1-888-956-7273

fcasv.org

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Polaris, funded by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Website includes live chat and local referral directory (city, state, zip code).

1-888-373-7888 or TTY: 711 or text 233733

humantraffickinghotline.org

Love is Respect

Prevent and end abusive teen relationships

1-866-331-9474 or text “loveis” to 22522

loveisrespect.org

National Eating Disorders Association

1-800-931-2237 or text “NEDA” to 741741

nationaleatingdisorders.org

TOBACCO AND NICOTINE RESOURCES

Tobacco Free Florida

tobaccofreeflorida.com

1-877-U-CAN-NOW

Tobacco Free Kids: tobaccofreekids.org

American Lung Association

lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)

swatflorida.com/join-the-movement

The Facts Now

thefactsnow.com

Students Against Nicotine

studnetsagainstnicotine.org

Truth Initiative

truthinitiative.org/thisisquitting

YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER RESOURCES

National Institute of Health—National Institute
of Drug Abuse on Drug Abuse for Teens
teens.drugabuse.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration
samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

CDC
cdc.gov/features/teen-substance-use/index.html

Healthy Children-From American Academy
of Pediatrics
[healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/
substance-abuse/Pages/default.aspx](https://healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/teen/substance-abuse/Pages/default.aspx)

Be Smart, Be Well
Life-story videos, expert interviews, and in-depth
articles on a variety of health topics, including
addiction and drug safety.
besmartbewell.com/addiction/

Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
Reduce substance abuse among adolescents by
supporting families and engaging with teens.
drugfree.org

SMART Recovery
A leading self-empowering addiction recovery
support group. The website provides resources for
teens and youth support programs, meeting locations,
and an online community.
smartrecovery.org/teens/

Drug Rehab
[drugrehab.com/addiction/drugs/crystal-meth/meth-
vs-coke/](https://drugrehab.com/addiction/drugs/crystal-meth/meth-vs-coke/)

Kids Health

kidshealth.org/en/teens/drug-alcohol/?WT.ac=t-nav-drug-alcohol#catdrugs

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

dea.gov/factsheets/ecstasy-or-mdma-also-known-molly

Next Generation Village

nextgenerationvillage.com/drugs/hallucinogens/

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

hhs.gov/opioids/

Addiction Center

addictioncenter.com/opiates/

HELP LINES**211 Florida**

Call 211 for referral to treatment, counseling etc.

Crisis Call Center

1-800-273-8255 or text “ANSWER” to 839863

crisiscallcenter.org

Crisis Text Line

Text “START” to 741-741

crisistextline.org

Lifeline Crisis Chat

Chat with crisis centers across the U.S.

crisischat.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline


1-800-273-TALK (8255)

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

SAMHSA's Helpline

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline

 **THE FACTS.** ↑
YOUR FUTURE. ↓