

# Regional Advisory Board (RAB) of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions

August 2020 Newsletter

## **International Overdose Awareness Day**

International Overdose Awareness Day is a global event held on August 31 each year. It aims to raise awareness of overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death. It also acknowledges the grief felt by families and friends remembering those who have died or had a permanent injury as a result of drug overdose. For more information: <https://www.overdoseday.com>

## **Did You Know?**

**6 Vaping products disguised as everyday items:** hoodies (the string can be a vaping device); cell phone cases; a special pouch in certain backpacks; pens; smart watches; and USB drives. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/teens-and-disguised-vaping-devices>

The CDC shared provisional data showing that there was a **4.8% increase in predicted drug overdose deaths** from December 2018 to December 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

**The DEA is warning of methamphetamine made to look like pastel-colored bits of candy or Flintstone children's vitamins** cropping up in northern Ohio that could be spreading into more of the Midwest. "It's dangerous for adults, and it's definitely dangerous for children," Detroit-based DEA Special Agent in Charge Keith Martin said. Drug traffickers have increasingly produced meth in pill form over the last few years, according to Martin. "You could easily send 1,000 of these in a box," he said, making them convenient to ship in the mail. Most of the meth consumed in the United States is created by criminal organizations in Mexico, according to NIDA. (<https://nypost.com/2020/07/09>)

**FDA prohibits sale of fruit-flavored e-cigarettes.** The FDA told the makers of Puff Bars and other flavored disposable e-cigarettes and e-liquid products that appeal to youth to remove their products from the market. Puff Bar vaporizers look similar to Juul devices. They are sold in fruity flavors, such as watermelon and blueberry ice. Earlier this year, the FDA took some sweet and fruit-flavored e-cigarette products off the market, but they did not restrict sales of disposable e-cigarettes with fruity flavors. The new rule closes that loophole. "The FDA continues to prioritize enforcement against e-cigarette products, specifically those most appealing and accessible to youth," FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn said. "We are concerned about the popularity of these products among youth and want to make clear to all tobacco product manufacturers and retailers that, even during the ongoing pandemic, the FDA is keeping a close watch on the marketplace and will hold companies accountable." ([drugfree.org](http://drugfree.org), 7/23/20)

**Four years after legalization, California has had unexpected (and often disappointing) results.** Few of the promises made before voters passed Prop 64, the ballot initiative that legalized marijuana for recreational use, have been realized.

*Here were the promises:*

- The state expected to collect \$ 643 million in new tax revenue in 2018-2019.
- Thousands of jobs would be created.
- The illicit market would be driven away.
- Social equity would prevail.
- Thousands of pot shops would go into business.

*Here is the reality:*

- Less than half the tax revenue promised for 2018-2019 was realized.
- Only 89 of California's 482 cities allow retail sales, resulting in so-called "pot deserts."
- The state has licensed 310 delivery services and 689 stand-alone dispensaries, approximately one dispensary for every 34,000 Californians. Industry experts recommend one dispensary for every 10,000 residents, but there is one for every 5,500 Oregonians and one for every 4,500 Coloradoans.
- Social equity promises have not been delivered.
- The illicit market is thriving because it is able to sell pot products more cheaply because it pays no taxes. (The Marijuana Report, 7/15/20)

**The Partnership to End Addiction focuses on four truths that need to be shared.**

**1. Addiction is a preventable, treatable disease for which effective care exists.**

Because most people do not know it exists or cannot access it, we must focus on advancing quality addiction care so that everyone who needs help can get help — in treatment, recovery or prevention.

**2. Addiction is not a moral failing.**

We must remind people that they are loved, there is no place for blame, and there is help. Compassion and empathy, when combined with scientific solutions, will save lives and end addiction as we know it.

**3. Addiction is a public health issue; in fact, a public health crisis.**

We must acknowledge that 400 deaths a day is a crisis deserving of our attention. When laws and resources evolve to address this public health issue, we will dramatically improve how well we prevent and treat addiction for millions of people.

**4. When families are engaged, the odds of success increase dramatically.**

We must enable families to find answers and make a difference by serving, supporting and partnering with them.

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