



Prevention Newsletter

MARCH 2021

***To schedule any of our FREE Prevention Programs, please contact the Shelocta Office for Armstrong and Indiana Counties and the Clarion Office for Clarion County.**

AICDAC Offices

Clarion Office:
814-226-6350

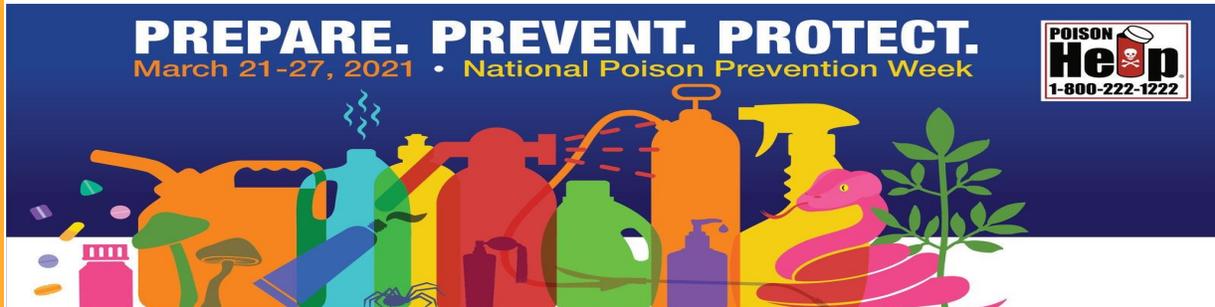
Indiana Office:
724-463-7860

Shelocta Office:
724-354-2746

Vine Street Office:
724-545-1614

National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week

The third week in March is National Inhalant and Poisons Awareness Week and will be celebrated on March 21 through March 27, 2021. This prevention week focuses on providing education, resources, and information on risks of inhalant use. Almost every home in America has items that can be potentially poisonous or dangerous. Being aware of these dangers is important. National Inhalants and Poisons Awareness Week has raised public awareness around inhalant abuse for the last 20 years. Most parents are surprised to learn that “huffing” these cheap and legal products is as popular among middle school students as using marijuana. Studies have shown, that kids are 50% less likely to experiment with inhalants if an adult has spoken to them about the potentially brain damaging and deadly consequences. Research by the National Institute on Drug Abuse has shown that since the mid 2000s, inhalant abuse has been on the decline, though the problem is far from being eliminated. Among young adults, 17,868 abuse inhalants on any given day, with an estimated 500 of them experimenting for the first time. Additionally, the average age of first time inhalant users is 10- years-old. Since educating children and teenagers has proven to work, parents and teachers should understand and be able to communicate the dangers of these poisonous substances.



Why is Inhalant Use Harmful?



One Hit of an Inhalant Can Cause:

- *Nausea and disorientation
- *Limb spasms
- *Loss of consciousness and asphyxiation
- *Death

Inhalant Abuse Over a Lifetime Can Cause:

- *Damage to the area of the brain that controls memory, making it difficult to impossible to learn new things and even carry on simple conversations
- *Hearing loss
- *Speech impediments
- *Bone marrow injury and damage to the central nervous system
- *Addiction
- *Irregular or rapid heart rates

What are the Warning Signs of Inhalant Abuse?

- Paint stains or marks around the mouth, fingers or clothing
- Fingernails colored with correction fluids, such as White-out, or Magic Marker ink
- The presence of butane lighters and refills in the bedroom, backpack or school locker
 - A student who normally sits with a pen or marker near their nose
- Empty inhalant or solvent containers in the bedroom closet, under the bed or tossed in the trash



National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week is an annual health observance week that connects teenagers with scientists and other experts to **SHATTER THE MYTHS®** about drugs and alcohol that teens get from the internet, social media, TV, movies, music, or from friends. It was launched in 2010 by scientists at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to stimulate educational events in communities so teens can learn what science has taught us about drug use and addiction. This event starts March 22 and goes through March 28, 2021. According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) data, 46.3% of students in Armstrong County have used alcohol in their lifetime. Along with 40% of students in Indiana County and 50.5% of students in Clarion County. Also, PAYS data shows that 11.6% of students in Armstrong County have used marijuana in their lifetime. Along with 14.4% of students in Indiana County and 15.6% of students in Clarion County. These drugs generally are more socially acceptable and their use may normalize the larger idea of drug use as acceptable. Another potential risk is their use may "prime" the brain for addiction to other substances. For more information on National Drug and Alcohol Facts week, check out our Facebook pages to participate in fun quizzes everyday during this week!



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Instagram:
AICDAC_Prevention

Twitter:
AICDAC_DrugFree

Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Problem Gambling Awareness Month is a widespread campaign that depends on the participation of National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) state Affiliate, organizational and individual members, state health agencies, gambling companies, recovery groups and a wide range of healthcare organizations and providers. Groups across America hold conferences, air Public Service Announcements, provide counselor trainings, host health screening days, run social media campaigns and many other activities to increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment and recovery services.



**PROBLEM GAMBLING
AWARENESS MONTH**

→ **AWARENESS+ACTION**

The 2021 Problem Gambling Awareness Month theme is "Awareness+ Action" and the goals of this national campaign are to increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment & recovery services and to en-

courage healthcare providers to screen clients for problem gambling.

NATIONAL PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE

1-800-522-4700

Help is available 24/7 and is 100% confidential.

Gambling Awareness Webinar

AICDAC is hosting a **FREE** Problem Gambling Awareness Webinar for Older Adults through Compass Mark. Come join us!

When: March 3, 2021 at 1:00-2:30pm

Where: Virtual

You **MUST** RSVP, please go to the following link to register:
<https://forms.gle/1YPPm144ZdktEj3o8>

During the webinar, Compass Mark will go into detail about problem gambling and why the aging populations is at risk. Learn about the signs of problem gambling and the resources available to help prevent and treat problem gambling in older adults.

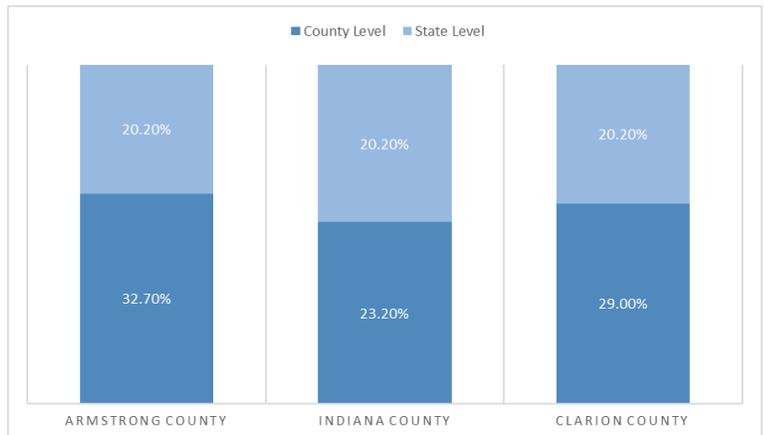
If you have any questions, please contact Terra Cravener at tcravener@aicdac.org or 724-354-2747 Ex. 309



It PAYS To Know

Gambling

Even though gambling activities are legally restricted to adults, there is clear evidence that underage youth actively participate in gambling. Despite being promoted as a harmless form of entertainment, gambling operates on the same reward pathways and the same neurotransmitters as ATOD addiction. According to PAYS data in 2019, 39.8% of students in Armstrong County engaged in gambling for money or anything of value in their lifetime. Along with 32.5% of students in Indiana County and 37.9% of students in Clarion County. The most frequently reported form of gambling in all three counties was lottery [scratch cards, numbers, etc.] To the right is a graph to show the percentage of students who had gambled by using lottery tickets in the past 12 months compared to the percentage of students who had gambled by using lottery tickets in the past 12 months at state level.



Curriculum Spotlight

Leaps and Bounds

Leaps and Bounds is a curriculum developed in support of the Alberta Learning Program of Studies, 2002. This program is made up of several lessons to enhance positive decision making and healthy lifestyle alternatives to alcohol, drugs, and gambling. The purpose of this curriculum is to develop life skills while underlining the importance decisions are in sustaining a healthy lifestyle. Leaps and Bounds is designed with objectives and activities as the lessons for a hands-on informative experience.

Suggested Schedule: 6 classroom sessions

Grades: 3rd -6th grades

More Information: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page2682.aspx>

