



NEWS RELEASE

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The DEA and Partners Hold 20th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

CHICAGO, IL April 1 2021 The Drug Enforcement Agency's next National Prescription Drug Take Back Day takes place April 24th, 2021 from 10 AM to 2 PM. This day aims to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible way of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the public about the potential abuse of medications. Individuals can dispose of unused or expired prescription and non-prescription medicine at designated drop-off locations throughout the state of Illinois.

The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day addresses a crucial public safety and public health issue. According to the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.9 million Americans misused controlled prescription drugs. The study shows that a majority of abused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet. According to the most recent DEA national drug threat assessment report and per the Chicago Field Division Office, controlled prescription drug availability in Illinois remains stable and at high levels.

"That is why it is so important to safely dispose of unused or expired medicine," commented Karel Homrig, Executive Director of Prevention First. "National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is a great opportunity for communities to make a big difference in opioid misuse."

Those participating in Drug Take Back Day can visit takebackday.dea.gov to locate a collection site or call the DEA Diversion Control Division Registration Call Center at 1-800-882-9539 for more information about these collection sites. Authorized collection sites may be retail, hospital, or clinic pharmacies; and/or law enforcement facilities.

All personal information on pill bottle labels and medicine packaging must be removed before being dropped off. Medicine collected at the take back locations will be destroyed. For safety reasons, there are a few, select medicines with specific instructions to immediately flush down the toilet only if a drug take back option is not readily available.

During the last Prescription Drug Take Back Day on October 24, 2020, Illinois offered 290 drop-off sites, collected 17,372 pounds of unused prescription medication, and engaged 55 law enforcement agencies. This year, the DEA and partners look forward to spreading greater awareness around potential abuse of medication and safely disposing of even more prescription medicine.

Learn more about safe medication use at prevention.org/a-dose-of-truth/safe-use/.

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“The hard work over the past year by our staff, clients and partners is much more than just a rebrand. This process offered us an opportunity to revisit our diversity, inclusion and equity philosophy, framework and polices. As an organization we commit to leading with integrity, to challenge dominate and destructive narratives, center community and champion equity.” Diana Derige, Prevention First Board Chair

“The work we do has evolved. In the 1980s, we were challenged with a growing number of youth misusing alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and now we tackle a broad range of prescription drug misuse issues in Illinois, and the ever-changing complexities of cannabis legalization in the state, while it remains illegal on the federal level,” said Homrig. “We have also worked to educate organizations and women about the dangers of alcohol and marijuana use during pregnancy,” added Homrig. We also use our extensive knowledge of assessing training needs and coordinating training for substance use treatment and recovery and teen pregnancy prevention professionals.

Prevention First is currently implementing statewide public awareness campaigns including A Dose of Truth, Let’s Talk Cannabis, and a youth substance use prevention campaign. Free toolkits from previous campaigns, such as Ending Opioid Misuse, Naloxone Now, and Guard and Discard, are available through its web site.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today if it weren’t for Prevention First. Prevention First gave me the opportunity to change lives and make a difference in my community.” Tula Goodwin-Beene, Prevention Specialist at Family Guidance Centers, Inc.

In recognition of its evolution and commitment to innovation, Prevention First’s brand overhaul includes a visual redesign with a more modern look, a refreshed color palette, sunlight bursts, and a logo with a star that points upward, symbolizing the future, guidance, and hope.

Prevention First is rolling out their new brand across its website, webinars, training programs, and educational resources. The result is a new brand that honors its deep roots while framing Prevention First as a nonprofit focused on creating a healthier Illinois for decades to come.

Preview Prevention First’s new visual identity here: www.prevention.org

About Prevention First

Prevention First advances efforts to promote healthy behaviors and prevent substance misuse in every community through a variety of evidence-based and collaborative approaches, including training, support, and public awareness.

We are the leading organization for knowledge-building and the dissemination of evidence-based prevention strategies and believe that evidence-based approaches are the most effective paths to building communities and proactively support health and well-being.

All of Prevention First’s resource centers, including the Alcohol Policy Resource Center, Youth Prevention Resource Center, and prevention campaign assets can be found at Prevention.org.