



WHERE FAMILIES COME FOR HELP



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

DRUG FREE KIDS CANADA ANNOUNCES AUGUST AS NATIONAL DRUG DROP-OFF MONTH

Record amount of unused and expired medications recuperated in 2017

TORONTO, JULY 31, 2018 – 725 tonnes of unused and expired medicine – That’s the amount recuperated by local pharmacies in Canada last year.

Drug Free Kids Canada has been promoting the need for Canadians to [secure their meds](#) and return all leftovers to their pharmacies since 2013. Marc Paris, Executive Director of DFK Canada says *the returned amounts have continued to increase over the years as more parents are becoming aware of the dangers of leaving unused drugs in the medicine cabinet that can easily be accessed by children and can harm our kids.*

An Ontario study* reveals that one-in-seven (13.7%) secondary students report using a prescription drug nonmedically in the past year. This represents in Ontario alone, 91,100 students in grades 9 through 12. The most common source to obtain opioids was from a parent or sibling (*OSDUHS 2017 CAMH).

The goal of the National Drug Drop-off month is to highlight the issue of the problematic use of prescription drugs by teens and emphasize the need for Canadians to clear their households of any unused and expired prescription drugs as well as over-the-counter (OTC) medicines, and to drop them off at their local pharmacy for environmentally safe disposal.

Several organizations are joining Drug Free Kids to promote National Drug Drop-off Month.

- Health Canada
- Canadian Pharmacists Association
- L’Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec
- Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
- Health Products Stewardship Association

By working together, DFK Canada and its partners are promoting best practices when it comes to medicine use, conservation and disposal and helping to change behaviours in Canadians’ day-to-day lives.

National Drug Drop-off month is being supported by a [national multimedia campaign](#) already in market and developed by ad agency Cundari Toronto.

"National Drug Drop-off month is an opportunity to remind Canadians of the importance of properly disposing of unused and expired prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines. By returning these medications to our local pharmacies, we can reduce the risk of these substances being improperly used by teens and other people and keep pharmaceuticals out of our eco-systems. Working together, we can all help address problematic substance use in Canada." - **The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health**



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“Every day pharmacies accept unused prescription medication for safe disposal and with over 10,000 pharmacies across the country we are conveniently located close to home in each and every community. While Canada’s pharmacists are there for you every day of the year, we are proud to support National Drug Drop-Off Month this August to highlight the issue, reduce the volume of prescription drugs available for misuse and inform Canadians of the harms associated with improper use of prescription drug. We all have a role to play and I urge Canadians to take a few minutes this August to clear out their medicine cabinets of unused, unwanted or expired medications and make the short trip to your local pharmacy.” - Christine Hrudka, Chair, Canadian Pharmacists Association

“Prescription Drugs misuse is gradually surpassing the use of other illegal drugs all over the world but also in Canada including in Quebec. Too often, people are not aware of the dangers related to keeping unused medicine in their home. The National Drug Drop-Off Month is the opportunity to open the dialogue on this important topic.” – Bertrand Bolduc, President, Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec

“The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) is joining with a number of partner organizations to raise awareness of the disturbing problematic use of prescription drugs by youth which is a shared responsibility. Together, we can all play a role in safeguarding our families just by simply clearing out our medicine cabinets of unused and unwanted prescriptions and delivering them to a local pharmacy. We thank Drug Free Kids Canada for its continuing leadership in delivering this important message and assisting us all in reducing the unintended and tragic consequences that can result from prescription drug misuse.” – Directeur Mario Harel, President, CACP

“Take Action: Protect yourself and others by storing medications more safely, and returning any expired, unused, or unwanted drugs as soon as possible. To learn more or for more options in your community, visit www.medicationsreturn.ca” Ginette Vanasse, Director General, Health Products Stewardship Association

About Drug Free Kids Canada

Drug Free Kids Canada is a private sector, non-profit organization that creates and disseminates drug education and prevention messages with the help of their partners in advertising, research and media. DFK also offers parents valuable tools and practical tips on how to start the conversation with their kids at DrugFreeKidsCanada.org.

For more information:

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