



WHERE FAMILIES COME FOR HELP



MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

2nd annual NATIONAL DRUG DROP-OFF MONTH IN AUGUST LAUNCHES WITH NEW CAMPAIGN FROM DRUG FREE KIDS CANADA

Record amount of unused and expired medications recuperated in 2018

OTTAWA, JULY 31, 2019 – 828 tonnes of unused and expired medicine – That’s a 14% increase in the amount recuperated by local pharmacies in Canada last year.

Drug Free Kids Canada has been promoting the need for Canadians to secure their medications and return all leftovers to their pharmacies since 2013. “ The returned amounts have continued to increase as more parents are becoming aware of the importance of returning unused drugs left in the medicine cabinet as they can easily be accessed by children and can harm our kids.” **Chantal Vallerand, Executive Director of DFK Canada**

An Ontario study* reveals that one-in-seven (close to 14%) of high school students report using a prescription drug nonmedically. 55% of those kids reported accessing opioids at home.

(*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.

- 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 multinational campaign developed by ad agency FCB in Montreal. “The Pill Fairy” campaign cleverly relies on humour to generate positive emotions, make parents stop and think, and get them to do the right thing.



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“While Canadian pharmacies accept unused medication for safe disposal every day of the year, National Drug Drop-Off Month is also an opportunity for us to remind Canadians about the harms associated with misuse – especially as we all grapple with the opioid crisis in our communities across Canada. Unused opioids in the home could be accidentally ingested by children, used by family members or even stolen and diverted to the black market. Please take a few minutes this August to clear out your medicine cabinet of unused, unwanted or expired medications and make the short trip to your local pharmacy.” **Christine Hrudka, Chair, Canadian Pharmacists Association**

“With the current opioid crisis, Drug Free Kids Canada’s initiative is timely. Too many kids can access and misuse drugs from the family medicine cabinet. We hope National Drop-off month will create the opportunity to start a dialogue between teens and their parents on medication misuse.” **Bertrand Bolduc, President, Ordre des pharmaciens du Québec**

“We commend Drug Free Kids Canada for their efforts to ensure the safety of Canada’s children. I urge parents to return unused or leftover prescription drugs like opioids, methamphetamines and sedatives to their local pharmacies. Police officers in all corners of this country have seen the devastating impact of the misuse of prescription drugs. We can all play a part in preventing this misuse and in keeping these drugs out of the hands of kids.” **Chief Constable Adam Palmer, President, Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police**

“People are taking action. They’re returning health products such as medications, needles and syringes to HPSA network of community pharmacies, Get involved, and help safeguard family members, public workers and the environment. Pharmacists are providing this important community service and helping us ensure the proper disposal of your products.” **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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