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National Prevention Week: How South Carolinians Can Take Action to Prevent Substance Use

Simple steps every community can take to promote healthy, drug-free lifestyles.

Columbia, SC – May 15, 2025 – During [National Prevention Week](#) (May 11-17), the South Carolina [Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services](#) (DAODAS) is calling on individuals, families and communities to take proactive steps to prevent substance use and promote healthier environments across the state.

“Substance use can have broader implications beyond the individual, potentially affecting schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods,” said Michelle Nienhius, Manager of Prevention and Intervention Services at DAODAS. “The good news is that prevention works, and everyone can play a role.”

What Prevention Looks Like

Substance use prevention begins with education, communication and strong community ties. DAODAS encourages South Carolinians to:

- **Talk Early and Often:** Open, age-appropriate [conversations](#) about the risks of substance use – starting at home – can dramatically reduce the likelihood of youth experimentation.
- **Build Protective Environments:** Support afterschool programs, mentorships and positive peer activities that keep young people engaged and resilient.
- **Strengthen Community Norms:** Promote clear, consistent messages that substance misuse is harmful and unacceptable – through schools, faith organizations and civic groups.
- **Reduce Access to Substances:** [Store prescription medications securely](#), dispose of unused drugs properly, and support local policies that limit youth access to alcohol and other substances.
- **Encourage Connection:** Loneliness and disconnection can increase the risk of substance use. Creating inclusive spaces where people feel seen, heard and supported builds community resilience.

Prevention Is a Shared Responsibility

Everyone has a part to play. Parents, teachers, employers and neighbors can each help create a culture of health and prevention. Even small actions – like checking in on a friend,

volunteering at a youth event, or sharing educational resources – can make a lasting impact.

DAODAS remains committed to providing the tools and resources needed to support prevention statewide. **For more information or to access resources, please visit www.daodas.sc.gov or contact DAODAS at (803) 896-5555.**

About DAODAS:

The Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) ensures quality services to prevent or reduce the negative consequences of substance use and addictions through a statewide system of local organizations that provide prevention, treatment, and recovery services. For more information, visit www.daodas.sc.gov.