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National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week: 5 Myths About Substance Use Debunked

South Carolina DAODAS Aims to Dispel Common Misconceptions and Reduce Stigma Around Addiction

Columbia, SC – March 19, 2025 – As part of National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week, the [South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services](#) (DAODAS) is addressing some of the most common myths surrounding substance use. Misinformation about drugs and alcohol can contribute to stigma, prevent individuals from seeking help and lead to dangerous misconceptions about addiction and recovery.

“Breaking down myths with science-based facts is critical in helping families, schools, and communities better understand substance use,” said Michelle Nienhius, Manager of Prevention and Intervention Services at DAODAS. “By addressing these misconceptions, we can create a more informed and supportive environment for those struggling with substance use disorders.”

5 Common Myths About Substance Use – Debunked

Myth #1: Addiction is a choice.

Fact: Addiction is a complex disease that affects brain function and behavior. While the initial decision to use a substance may be voluntary, repeated use alters brain chemistry, making it difficult for individuals to stop without help.

Myth #2: Prescription drugs are safer than illegal drugs.

Fact: Just because a medication is prescribed does not mean it is safe for recreational use. Opioid painkillers, stimulants and sedatives can be highly addictive and just as dangerous as illicit drugs when misused.

Myth #3: Only certain types of people develop substance use disorders.

Fact: Addiction does not discriminate. It affects people of all ages, backgrounds and income levels. Genetics, environment and mental health play significant roles in determining risk factors.

Myth #4: You have to hit “rock bottom” before seeking treatment.

Fact: The earlier someone seeks help, the better their chances of recovery. Treatment is most effective when started before addiction leads to severe health, legal or social consequences.

Myth #5: There is nothing parents can do to prevent teen substance use.

Fact: Parents play a crucial role in prevention. Open conversations, setting clear expectations and modeling healthy behaviors significantly reduce the risk of teen substance misuse.

What South Carolinians Can Do

DAODAS encourages individuals, parents, educators and community leaders to engage in open, fact-based discussions about substance use. This includes:

- Educating youth and families about the realities of substance use and addiction.
- Supporting prevention programs in schools and communities.
- Encouraging those struggling with addiction to seek treatment and support.

Resources & Support

DAODAS provides statewide prevention, treatment and recovery resources for individuals and families impacted by substance use disorders.

For more information or to access resources, please visit www.daodas.sc.gov or contact DAODAS at (803) 896-5555.

Join the Conversation! Follow DAODAS on [social media](#) and use #NDAFW to help spread the facts about substance use.

About DAODAS:

The Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) is the South Carolina government agency charged with ensuring 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.