

Setting Boundaries with Alcohol and Other Drugs

Welcome! This toolkit is your essential guide to *Setting Boundaries with Alcohol and Other Drugs*

The contents of this toolkit aim to empower you with insights and practical strategies for navigating your relationship with alcohol and other drugs. Whether you're looking to not start using substances, reduce your own consumption, reassess your habits, or support someone in their sobriety journey, RISE Drug Free MKE is here to provide guidance and resources to help maintain a healthy lifestyle.



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Before You Go Out For The Night

checklist:

- Ask yourself why
 - Before everything, ask yourself why you are drinking in the first place.
 - Are you drinking to avoid feelings of stress, sadness, anxiety, or anger? Alcohol can often make those negative feelings more intense, providing only temporary comfort.
 - Are you drinking to fit in? You may be surprised how many of your peers are not drinking.
- Who's driving?
 - Will someone from the group be your designated driver (DD)? Or will you have to call a ride share? Will you take the bus or another form of public transportation?
 - Have a backup plan in case your DD bails or ends up drinking.
- Don't forget to eat
 - Eating high protein foods, like a burger or salmon, before or during the festivities will slow intoxication and keep you level headed for a bit longer.
- Set a limit before you go
 - Determine a number of drinks that you feel comfortable consuming and stick to it! Designate a trusted friend to help you stick to your drink limit.
 - Keep in mind that binge drinking is defined as 5 or more drinks for men, and 4 or more drinks for women in a single setting.
- Avoid the pre-game
 - It's understandable that sometimes the pre-game may be saving you money from purchasing drinks at the bar or helps get you in the party mode, but it can also set you up to go beyond your limit for the night before you even leave the house.
 - Alcohol is not a pre-requisite for fun. If you want to join the party but avoid the liquor, fill your cup with a non-alcoholic drink, like juice, soda, or a mocktail, and no one will be able to tell what you're drinking.

A Safer Night Out

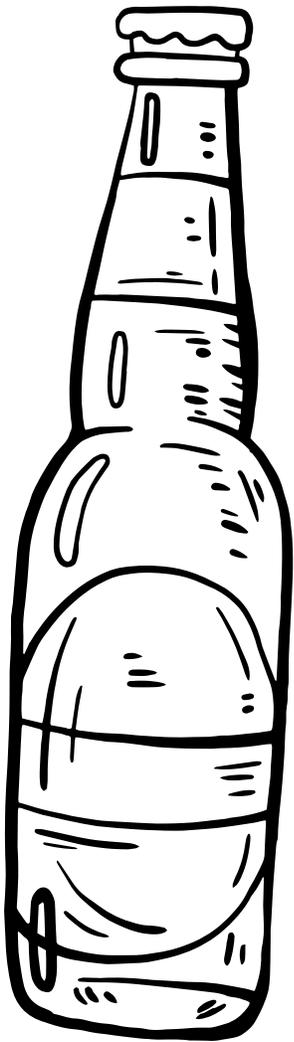


while you're out

- Pace yourself:
 - Do your best to keep your alcoholic beverages to 1 drink or less per hour. This will not only help you stick to your limit, but also give your liver time to process the alcohol.
 - There is no need to chug or slam your drinks, especially by playing drinking games. Sipping will still allow you to feel the buzz, while keeping you present.
 - Avoid taking shots. You can't feel them right away and may end up drinking more than expected.
- Hydrate:
 - Have your drink next to a glass of water or alternate between an alcoholic beverage and a non-alcoholic beverage to help pace yourself. Staying hydrated also helps keep the hangover away.
 - Many places have delicious mocktail options that you can enjoy.
- Stay safe:
 - Keep track of your drink and what you are drinking. If a stranger hands you a drink, politely decline. If you don't know what is in a drink at a party, choose another option.
- Avoid mixing:
 - Mixing alcohol and other substances, such as prescription medication, weed, ecstasy, etc., can lead to negative and sometimes dangerous effects. This includes blacking out and liver or kidney failure.
 - Even mixing alcohol with caffeine or energy drinks can lead to severe dehydration and increase your heart rate.



What is a **standard** drink?



12 ounces | 5% ABV beer



1.5 ounces | 40% ABV spirits



5 ounces | 12% ABV wine

But sometimes it's not as clear.

Maybe the bar has a 2 ounce standard pour. Maybe the spirit you've selected is stronger than 40% ABV. Maybe your beer came in a glass that looks way bigger than the typical bottle.

Not every glass or cup holds that same about. For example, a Red Solo Cup ranges from 12 ounces to 18 ounces.

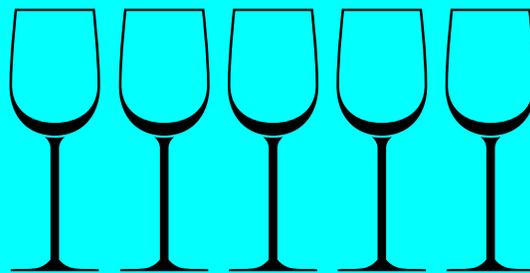
Always keep track of what and how much you're consuming.



What is binge drinking?



+



+

For women, 4 or more drinks consumed on an occasion is binge drinking.

For men, 5 or more drinks consumed on an occasion is binge drinking.

short-term health risks

- Injuries
 - Motor vehicle crashes
 - Falls
 - Drownings
 - Burns
- Violence
 - Homicide
 - Suicide
 - Sexual assault
 - Intimate partner violence
- Alcohol poisoning
- Reproductive health
 - Risky sexual behaviors
 - Unintended pregnancy
 - Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV
 - Miscarriage
 - Stillbirth
 - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders

What is heavy drinking?

long-term health risks



For women, 8 or more drinks per week is considered heavy drinking.



For men, 15 or more drinks per week is considered heavy drinking.

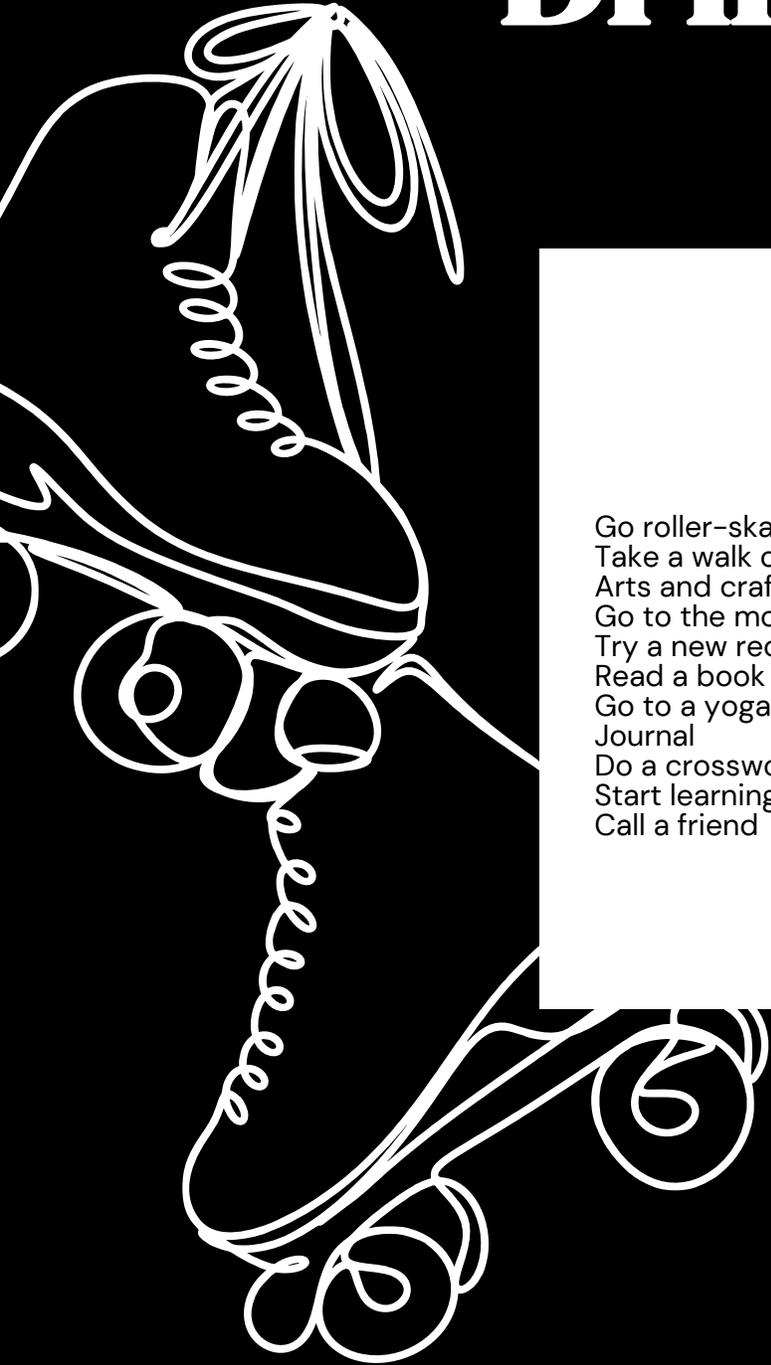
- Chronic diseases
 - High blood pressure
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Liver disease
 - Digestive problems
- Cancers
 - Breast
 - Mouth and throat
 - Liver
 - Colon and rectum
 - Esophagus
 - Voice box
- Learning and memory problems
 - Dementia
 - Poor school performance
- Mental health
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
- Social problems
 - Family problems
 - Job-related problems
 - Unemployment
 - Legal issues
 - Loss of drivers license
- Alcohol use disorders

don't drink at all if

- You are or may become pregnant.
- You are younger than 21.
- You take a medication that does not mix with alcohol

Source: [cdc.gov/alcohol](https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol)

Alternatives to Drinking



add your own!

- Go roller-skating
- Take a walk outside
- Arts and crafts
- Go to the movies
- Try a new recipe
- Read a book
- Go to a yoga class
- Journal
- Do a crossword puzzle
- Start learning a new language
- Call a friend



Mocktail Recipes

roseberry mule

Ingredients:

- 6 - 8 Blueberries
- 1 Lime
- 1 Sprig Rosemary
- Ginger Beer

Instructions:

- Muddle 3 -4 blueberries in glass with 1/2 of lime squeezed into mixture.
- Shake blueberry lime mixture in glass with ice
- Top with ginger beer
- Garnish with a sprig of rosemary, 3 -4 blueberries and lime wedge

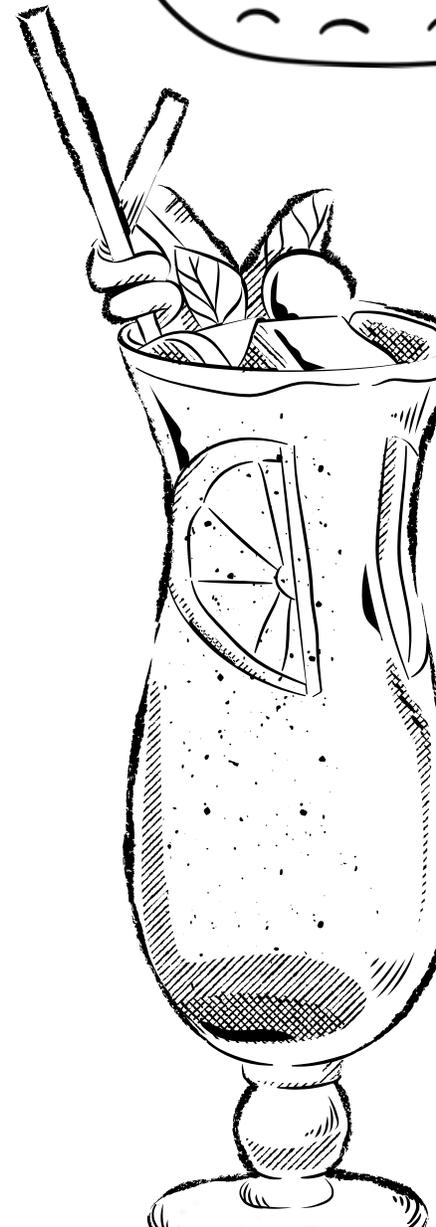
RISE refresher

Ingredients:

- 1-1.5oz Monin Blue Curacao
- 3.5 oz Pineapple Nectar (or juice)
- 2 oz Coconut Water
- 2 oz Seltzer Water
- Fresh Squeezed Lemon
- Garnish-Maraschino Cherries and Pineapple

Instructions:

- Fill the glass with ice
- Add 1 oz Monin Blue Curacao , 3.5 oz Pineapple Nectar, 2 oz Coconut Water, and 2 oz Seltzer Water to the glass
- Top with fresh squeezed lemon juice
- Garnish with Maraschino Cherries and Pineapple



Traditional vs. Commercial Tobacco

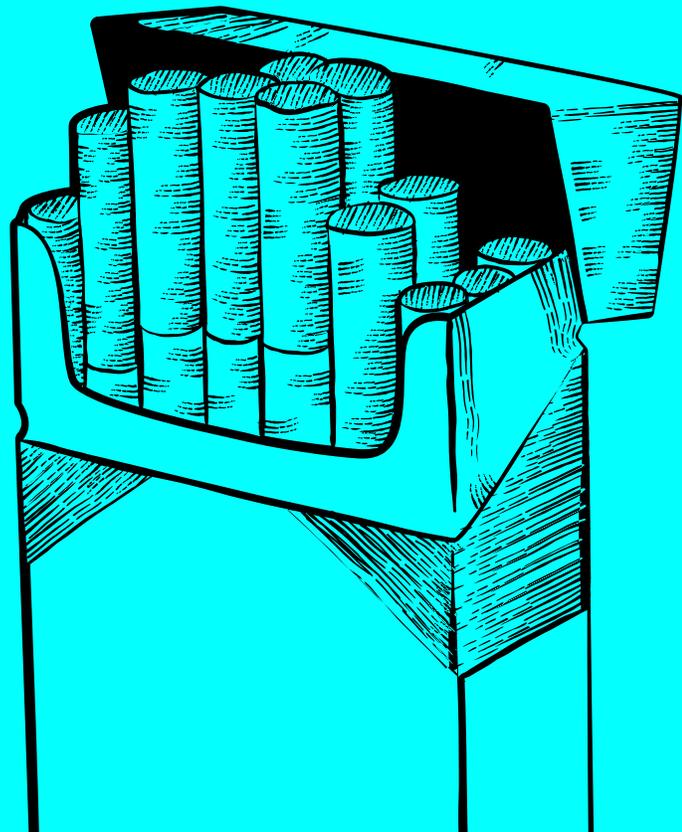
a note on language

Traditional Tobacco vs. Commercial Tobacco

Traditional and commercial tobacco are different in the way they are planted and grown, harvested, prepared, and used.

Traditional tobacco is tobacco and/or other plant mixtures grown or harvest and used by American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) for ceremonial or medicinal purposes.

Commercial tobacco is produced for recreational use by corporations, contains chemical additives and is linked with death and disease.



in the state of wisconsin

13,800

high school students smoke

664,500

adults smoke

7,900

adults die each year from smoking



Sources: [Keep It Sacred National Native Network](#) | [Tobacco Free Kids](#)

e-cigarettes

Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are providing a new way to deliver the addictive substance nicotine without burning tobacco.

The liquid solution used in e-cigarettes typically contains nicotine, propylene glycol, glycerin or some other solvent, and other additives.

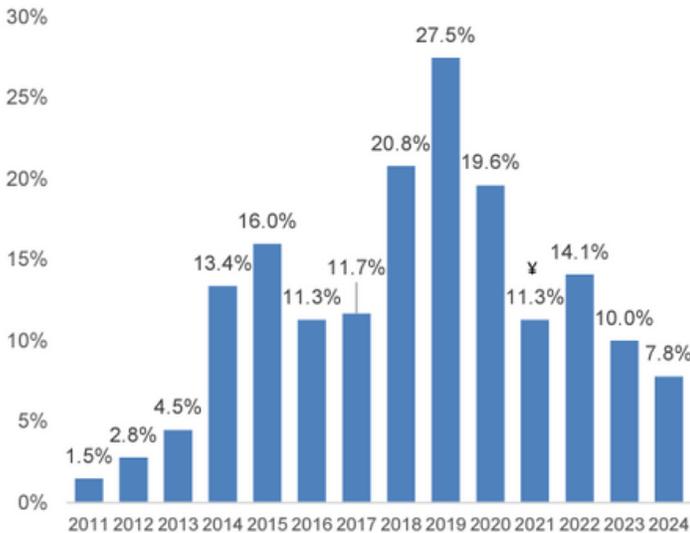
Over time, the nicotine content in the liquids used in e-cigarettes has increased so that now the market is dominated by high-nicotine products.

Many e-cigarettes and their refill liquids also come in sweet flavors, such as fruit punch, orange soda, and strawberry, which have long been considered attractive to kids.

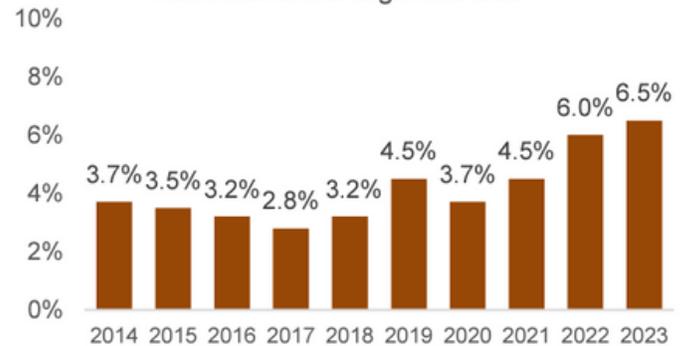
In the U.S., in 2024, **42.1%** of high school e-cigarette users reported vaping on 20 or more days/month, and **29.7%** reported daily use.

In the U.S., in 2023, 6.5% of adults (18+ years old) currently used e-cigarettes every day or some days

High School Current E-Cigarette Use



Adult Current E-Cigarette Use



Marijuana

or is it cannabis?

Though often used interchangeably, marijuana aren't exactly the same thing.

The word "cannabis" refers to all products derived from the plant *Cannabis sativa*. The cannabis plant contains about 540 chemical substances.

The word "marijuana" refers to parts of or products from the plant *Cannabis sativa* that contain substantial amounts of THC.

Cannabis plants that contain very little THC are, under U.S. law, considered "industrial hemp" rather than marijuana.

Consuming marijuana during your teen and young adult years creates many negative consequences for brain and emotional development, the ability to get a job or a college scholarship, or simply to pursue your life goals.

Cannabis products with THC can cause changes in mood, thoughts, and perceptions of reality.

Frequent or heavy use has been linked to problems in cognitive functions, such as learning and memory, attention, processing speed, perceptual motor function, and language.

marijuana + mental health

During RISE Drug Free MKE's needs assessments, we have determined that marijuana use continues to be a negative factor in the lives of our community's youth. While the vast majority of Milwaukee County middle and high school students say they have not consumed marijuana in the past 30 days, the fact is that many adolescents have a benign or beneficial view of marijuana. When we surveyed students in the 53206 zip code and asked why you used marijuana, the top replies were "to deal with anxiety," "to numb pain from trauma," "to deal with loss," and "stop suicidal thoughts."

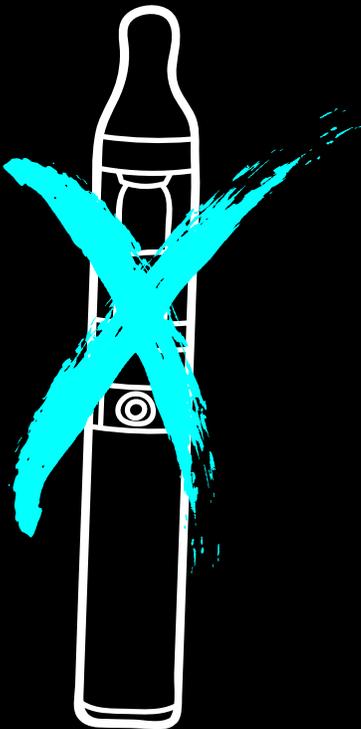
It's important that young people know there are alternative and healthier ways to cope with negative emotions. This may include:

- Physical Activities: sports or exercise can release endorphins
- Mindfulness Practices: meditation or yoga can help manage stress
- Social Support: confiding in friends or family can foster a sense of belonging
- Create Outlets: art, music, writing, etc. can help you express emotions
- Professional Support: counseling or therapy can provide strategies to deal with trauma

Delta-8

We've all seen these products in convenient stores, but do we really know what they are?

"Delta-8 tetrahydrocannabinol, also known as delta-8 THC, is a psychoactive substance found in the Cannabis sativa plant, of which marijuana and hemp are two varieties. Delta-8 THC is one of over 100 cannabinoids produced naturally by the cannabis plant but is not found in significant amounts in the cannabis plant. As a result, concentrated amounts of delta-8 THC are typically manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD)" (U.S. Food and Drug Administration).



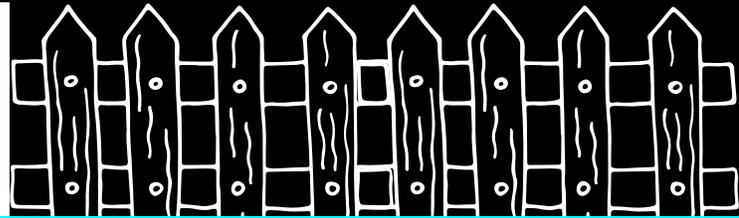
5 things to know

- Delta-8 THC products have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA for safe use and may be marketed in ways that put the public health at risk.
- The FDA has received adverse event reports involving delta-8 THC-containing products.
- Delta-8 THC has psychoactive and intoxicating effects.
- Delta-8 THC products often involve use of potentially harmful chemicals to create the concentrations of delta-8 THC claimed in the marketplace.
- Delta-8 THC products should be kept out of reach of children and pets.

Source: [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#)

Setting Boundaries

Setting boundaries with alcohol and other drugs is about establishing limits for yourself in order to help you feel safe. It's about balancing each aspect in your life that deserves your full attention and energy. Whether it's work or school, friends or family, basketball or pottery, setting boundaries with alcohol and other drugs is crucial to your success in achieving your dreams.



Be Clear About Your Boundaries.

Write down clear and concise boundaries. Avoid using ambiguous phrases like "I won't drink that much tonight" and opt in for something like "I will only have two drinks tonight."

Practice Saying No.

You always have the right to say "no" and you don't owe anyone an explanation. Here are some responses if someone offers you a drink or a joint:

- No, thank you.
- Not at this time.
- I've decided not to.
- I don't want to.

Boundaries Are to Protect, Not Control.

Don't think of boundaries as things you're not allowed to do. If you set your boundaries in advance, maintaining those boundaries is an act of trust and respect in ourselves.

Hold Yourself Accountable.

When discussing boundaries with people, a key component is having reasonable consequences when someone crosses your boundary. Hold yourself to the same standards that you would hold someone else.

What is harm reduction?

"Harm reduction is an evidence-based approach that is critical to engaging with people who use drugs and equipping them with life-saving tools and information to create positive change in their lives and potentially save their lives. Harm reduction is a key pillar in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Overdose Prevention Strategy" ([Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)).

Established in 2011, the RISE Drug Free MKE coalition exists to raise awareness to elevate youth in Milwaukee County through education, and to lift the entire community out of harms caused by substance use. With out coalition partners we will RISE to provide youth with Resources for Inclusive Substance Education. RISE is more than a name: It is a call to action, and a promise of the direction we're moving in as a community, together.

RISE Drug Free MKE prioritizes policies, practices, and programs that address major substance use issues in our community, including marijuana use among youth, problematic drinking, and prescription drug (mis)use



use vs. misuse

Substance **use** refers to the responsible consumption of substances, such as enjoying an occasional glass of red wine with dinner or taking the medication that the doctor prescribed.

Substance **misuse** involves unhealthy and illegal behaviors. For example, college culture often promotes binge drinking, leading to dangerous situations and long-term health consequences. Similarly, prescription medications can easily fall into the wrong hands, leading to misuse, addiction, and overdose.

"Harm reduction is a public health approach that aims to reduce the negative consequences associated with drug use. It's based on the principle that people who use drugs are deserving of respect and access to services, regardless of their drug use. Rather than focusing solely on abstinence, harm reduction strategies prioritize preventing overdose, suicide with firearms, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, and other health risks" ([Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services](#)).

Safe Storage and Proper Disposal

We all want to feel safe in our own homes and to protect our loved ones from harm.

We can all take one more step to protect our friends and family, and that's by keeping them away from medications that are not meant for them. Fortunately, it's easy to do and could save their lives or prevent them from becoming hooked on substances. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), here's what you can do:

store your medication safely:

- **Location:** Medication should be stored in a locked cabinet or lock box or locked pouch to keep it out of reach for kids, teens, and adults.
- **Original Containers:** Keep medication in their original containers with labels intact to make sure you're taking it as intended.
- **Regular Inventory:** Make sure you have the right amount and nothing is missing.

get rid of your unwanted medication:

- **Drug Take-Back Days:** Participate in National Drug Take-Back Days which provide a safe and convenient way to dispose of unused and unwanted medication.
- **Permanent Drug Drop Boxes:** Prescription and over-the-counter medications can be disposed of in a permanent drop box, which you can find in most pharmacies. Go to takebackmymeds.com for a map of locations in Milwaukee.
- **Deactivation Products:** Deactivation pouches can be used to destroy medication you don't want anymore. Just follow the simple steps and toss the whole kit in the garbage.

Milwaukee County Harm Reduction Vending Machine

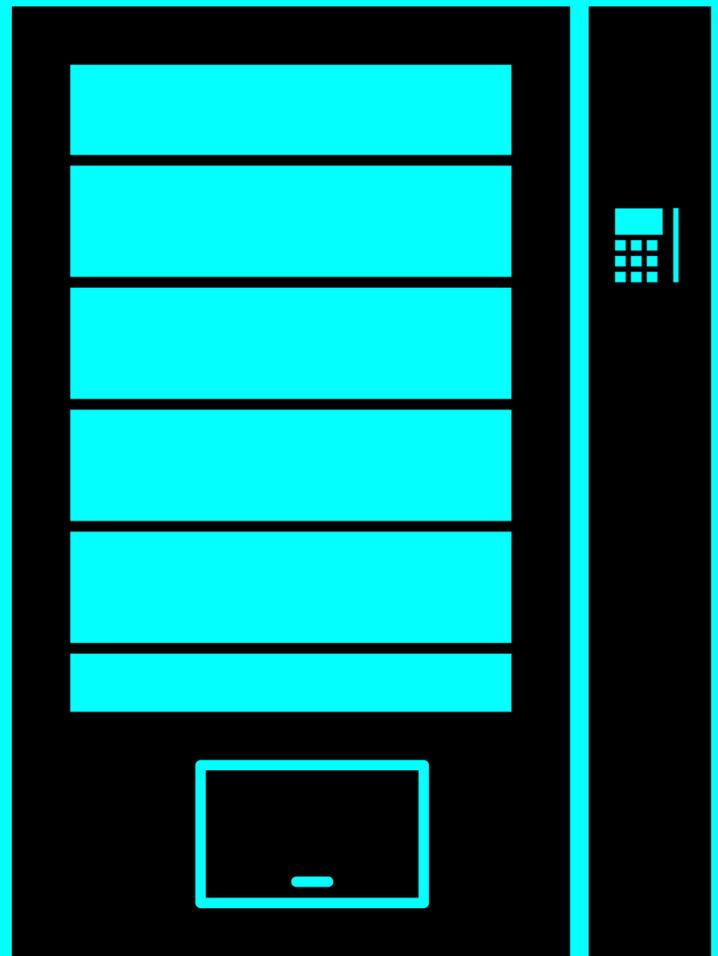
The Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Services Harm Reduction Vending Machine initiative is a cross-sector education and dissemination partnership for harm reduction supplies. Government agencies, colleges, businesses and nonprofits educate the public on using harm reduction supplies and increase residential access to supplies that can reverse an overdose, test dugs, lock up guns and medication and destroy prescription drugs.

There is a Harm Reduction Vending Machine in the lobby of Community Advocates downtown Milwaukee at 728 N. James Lovell Street. Anyone can access the items during regular business hours Monday through Friday, no questions asked.

Use this link to find a Harm Reduction Vending Machine near you!
<https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/DHHS/BHD/Harm-Reduction-Vending-Machines#map>

what's in the vending machine?

- Nasal Naloxone: reverses opioid overdoses
- Fentanyl Test Strips: test substances for the presence of Fentanyl and Xylazine
- Medication Deactivation Bags: allow for safe disposal of unused or expired medications
- Medication Lock Bags: keep prescription medications safer
- Gun Locks: prevent accidents and unauthorized use



What does an overdose look like?

signs of an overdose:

- Unresponsive to outside stimulus
- Awake, but unable to talk
- Breathing is very slow and shallow, erratic, or has stopped
- Vomiting
- Face is very pale and clammy
- Fingernails and lips turn blue or purple black

what to do if someone is overdosing

- Call 911 immediately
- Administer an overdose reversal medication like naloxone Try to keep the person awake and talking
- Lay the person on their side to prevent choking
- Stay with the person until emergency assistance arrives

RE/SOURCES

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) - Alcohol](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) - Prescription Safety](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) - Stop Overdose](#)
- [Keep It Sacred](#)
- [Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services](#)
- [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](#)
- [National Harm Reduction Coalition](#)
- [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)
- [RISE Drug Free MKE](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [Take Back My Meds](#)
- [Tobacco Free Kids](#)
- [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#)
- [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#)

