



# Prevention Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2020

\*To schedule any of our **FREE Prevention Programs**, please contact the **Shelocta Office for Armstrong and Indiana Counties** and the **Clarion Office for Clarion County**.

**AICDAC  
Offices**

**Clarion Office:**  
814-226-6350

**Indiana Office:**  
724-463-7860

**Shelocta Office:**  
724-354-2746

**Vine Street  
Office:**  
724-545-1614

## The Great American Smokeout Awareness Holiday



The American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout® is an annual event that encourages and offers support to smokers to make a plan to quit smoking or to quit smoking on the day of the event. By quitting, even for one day, smokers will be taking an important step toward a healthier lifestyle and reducing the risk of cancer.

The American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout® takes place on the third Thursday in November every year. This year the awareness holiday is on November 19, 2020.

According to The American Cancer Society, about 37.8 million Americans smoke cigarettes. About half of all Americans who continue to smoke will have smoking related deaths. Each year more than 480,000 people in the United States die from illnesses caused by smoking. This means each year smoking causes about 1 out of 5 deaths in the US.

## What are the Benefits of Quitting Smoking?

Within minutes of smoking your last cigarette, your body begins to recover.

**After** →



## Blackout Wednesday

The night before Thanksgiving is commonly referred to as Blackout Wednesday. It is associated with a night of binge drinking since very few people work on Thanksgiving and most university students are home to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday with their families, leaving many opportunities for youth to consume alcohol. The Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), showed that 25.7% of youth in Armstrong County reported their willingness to consume alcohol when it is provided by parents or older friends in 2019. Along with 26.7% in Clarion County and 39.6% in Indiana County.

Blackout Wednesday is said to be the worst travel day out of the whole year. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than 800 people died in vehicle crashes on this day from 2013 through 2017. In 2018 alone, 133 people died in alcohol-related crashes from Wednesday at 6 p.m. to Monday morning at 6 a.m.



MADD (Mother's Against Drunk Driving), encourages everyone to spread the word on November 25 by using the hashtag #BoycottBlackoutWednesday. You can also show your support for MADD's Tie One on For Safety campaign and remind everyone that drinking and driving doesn't mix by displaying their iconic red ribbons on your vehicle throughout the holiday.



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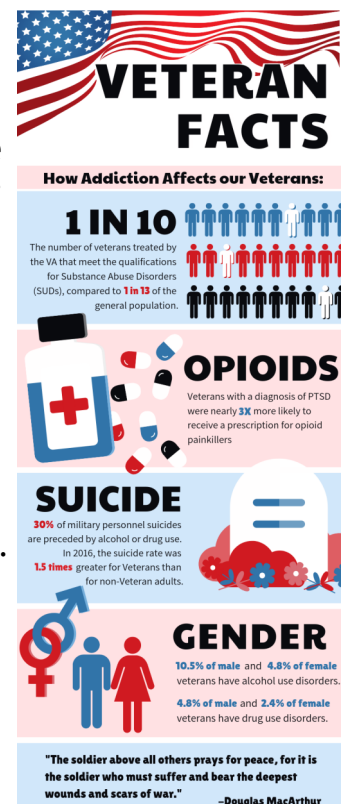
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# Substance Abuse Among Veteran's

Veterans experience a period of readjustment as they leave the military and reintegrate into a civilian lifestyle. Veterans returning to life with family, friends, and their community, can leave them with unique mental health challenges. A number of environmental stressors specific to military personnel have been linked to increased risk of Substance Use Disorders (SUD), among military personnel and veterans, including deployment, combat exposure, and post-deployment civilian/reintegration challenges.

According to SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration), it is estimated that between 37-50% of veterans have been diagnosed with Substance Use Disorders. In addition, 63% diagnosed with SUDs also met criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Substance use often precedes suicidal behavior in the military. About 30% of Army suicides and over 45% of suicide attempts since 2003 involved alcohol or drug use. Also, an estimated 20% of high-risk behavior deaths were attributed to alcohol or drug overdose.

Treatment for various substance use and mental disorders are available through military health systems and have been shown to be effective. Treatments include behavioral interventions and medication when available. All treatments should be individualized, including approved medication options appropriate for patients with alcohol, nicotine, and opioid use.



## Meet Our Staff



Sara Crissman, also known as Miss Sara, has been a Prevention Specialist with Armstrong Indiana Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission since September 2020. She graduated from La Roche University in 2019 with a Bachelor's in Psychology and a minor in Management. Some of her favorite classes were child development and adolescent development, which helped her decide that she wanted a career that allowed her to work with children! Miss Sara's favorite things about being a Prevention Specialist is knowing that she is making an impact on many students and getting to teach valuable information that could change many lives! When she is not working, Miss Sara loves to spend time with her family and friends or read a good book!

