

# AUTUMN: Celebrate Recovery



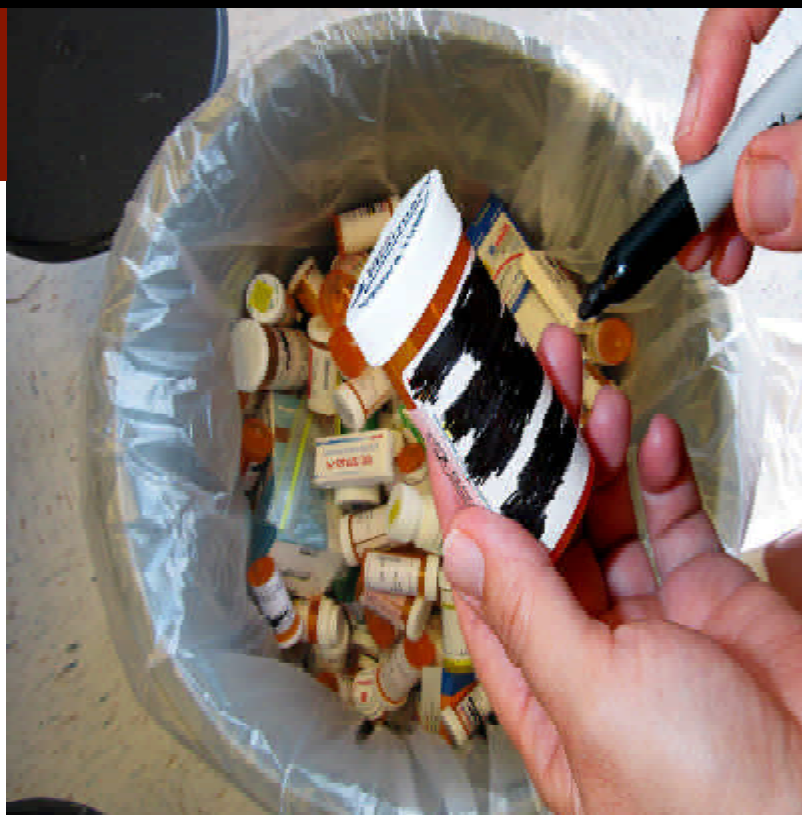
Families  
celebrate  
together:  
A community  
affair!



## Spice Facts

Legal substance  
and Teens ...

National  
Prescription  
Drugs  
Take-Back Day



## Families celebrate together: A community affair! Recovering from addiction is possible!



"Substance abuse is a chronic, relapsing disease," said Susan Bower, Director of HHSA's Alcohol and Drug Services. "The good news is that it is treatable. I applaud those who are embarking on the road to recovery and encourage them to continue on that same path."

### Help is available

County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Alcohol and Drug Services funds a variety of free and low-cost services for teens and their families.

If you or someone you know needs help with substance abuse or mental health, call for information: 24/7 Access and Crisis Line:

**1 800 479 3339**

Trained counselors are available to assist 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Problems caused by alcohol and drug abuse can seem overwhelming for individuals, families, and communities. In fact, addiction is our nation's number one health problem. According to the 2009 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 22.5 million people age 12 or older were classified with substance use dependence. On top of that, 11 million people 18 years or older were diagnosed with a serious mental health problem. Sadly, the two challenges often go hand in hand. During fiscal year 2010-2011, nearly 12,200 people in San Diego County alone were admitted into County-funded treatment centers. Approximately 10,300 were adults and about 1,900 were 18 years of age and under.

Every year, thousands of people enter and complete drug treatment programs throughout San Diego County. Chances are, you know someone right here in San Diego County who is struggling to maintain a clean and healthy lifestyle. This September, National Recovery Happens Month, hundreds of people in recovery, along with their friends, family and other supporters, celebrated their successes at the "Recovery: A Community Affair," event in Balboa Park. The event was sponsored by San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and its many prevention and treatment partners, to encourage community members to participate, and help fight the stigma that can prevent people with addiction or mental illness from getting the help they need.

Typically, about one third of people who enter treatment complete their program, one third drop out, and one third make some progress toward recovery. The good news is that recovery does happen. Every day, someone finds their way to wellness through personal courage, spirituality, and the support of a caring community.



"Giving people the tools to live drug-free lifestyles and helping them to lead healthy lives is one of the goals of the County's Live Well, San Diego! campaign," said

HHSA Director Nick Macchione. "Addiction does not simply affect the individual addict. It affects children and families. Drug addiction ultimately impacts entire communities."

In addition to an extensive resource fair, there were various performances, a classic car display, an art exhibit with artwork, photos and poetry interpreting how recovery has impacted individuals or their loved ones, people were also taking their picture with others important to them in their recovery story.

There are millions of Americans whose lives have been transformed through recovery. Help spread the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective and that people can, and do, recover. To learn about other various activities and events, and read recovery stories on our website: [www.sdads.org](http://www.sdads.org).

# Legal substance and teens in emergency departments

American  
Academy of  
Pediatrics



## SPICE FACTS

By The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

Poison control centers received more than 2,200 calls about "bath salts" and more than 2,000 calls about synthetic marijuana in the first five months of 2011.

Fake marijuana and cocaine substitutes sold as "bath salts," "plant food" or "pond water cleaner" are among substances that can be in teens' hands with the click of a button online or in a stop at a local gas station.

Users inject, snort or eat the substance. Bath salt/plant food products contain methylenedioxypyrovalerone (MDPV) or methylmethcathinone (mephedrone). Because they are not being sold for human consumption, these products are not considered to be a drug or controlled substance by the Food and Drug Administration, but the chemicals in the fake marijuana cause a rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure and nausea, according to AAPCC. Users may also experience agitation, hallucinations, extreme paranoia, delusions lasting for days, and even death. These are the users who are turning up in emergency departments across the United States, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC).

Synthetic marijuana is made in a laboratory and is marketed as incense with such names as Spice, K2, Genie, Yucatan Fire, Sense, Smoke, Skunk and Zohai. Many states are trying to make it illegal to sell these products and others, such as the hallucinogenic Salvia divinorum plant and 2CE powder, which can be bought online.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises parents who find these products or suspect their child has used them to get high to seek help from a qualified professional.

For questions about possible exposure to these and other substances, contact your local poison center at 800-222-1222.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) was founded in 1930 by 35 pediatricians to work on pediatric healthcare standards. It currently has 60,000 members in primary care and sub-specialist areas. Qualified pediatricians can become fellows of the Academy.

The information in this article was provided by The American Academy of Pediatrics and was published on AAP News, Vol.32 - No.7, 2011. The information may be freely copied and distributed with proper attribution.

"Spice" is used to describe a diverse family of herbal mixtures marketed under many names, including K2, fake marijuana, Yucatan Fire, Skunk, Moon Rocks, and others. These products contain dried, shredded plant material and presumably, chemical additives that are responsible for their psychoactive (mind-altering) effects. Some of these compounds, however, bind more strongly to the receptors, which could lead to a much more powerful and unpredictable effect. Notably, these compounds have not been fully characterized for their effects, and more important, their toxicity, in humans.

While Spice products are labeled "not for human consumption" they are marketed to people who are interested in herbal alternatives to marijuana (cannabis) with marketing labels that often make unverified claims that Spice products contain up to 3.0 grams of a natural psychoactive material taken from a variety of plants.

Use of Spice can lead to a variety of mood and perceptual effects. Spice users report experiences similar to those produced by marijuana, and regular users may experience withdrawal and addiction symptoms. Patients who have been taken to Poison Control Centers present symptoms including rapid heart rate, vomiting, agitation, confusion, and hallucinations.

## SPICE ABUSE PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS

Because the chemical composition of the various products sold as Spice is unknown, it is likely that some varieties also contain substances with dramatically different effects than those expected by the user. There is also concern about the presence of harmful heavy metal residues in Spice mixtures.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) recently banned five synthetic cannabinoids by placing them in Schedule I status under the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I status means that the substance is considered to have a high potential for abuse and no known medical benefits; and as such, it is illegal to possess or sell products that contain the substance. This ban went into effect December 2010.



## The Role of Pediatrician

U.S. NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

Substance abuse remains a major public health concern, and pediatricians are uniquely positioned to assist their patients and families with its prevention, detection, and treatment. The American Academy of Pediatrics has highlighted the importance of such issues in a variety of ways, including its guidelines for preventive services.

The harmful consequences of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use are a concern of medical professionals who care for infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. Thus, pediatricians should include discussion of substance abuse as a part of routine health care, starting with the prenatal visit, and as part of ongoing anticipatory guidance. Knowledge of the nature and extent of the consequences of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use as well as the physical, psychological, and social consequences is essential for pediatricians.

Pediatricians should incorporate substance-abuse prevention into daily practice, acquire the skills necessary to identify young people at risk of substance abuse, and provide or facilitate assessment, intervention, and treatment as necessary.

## Parents as a role model

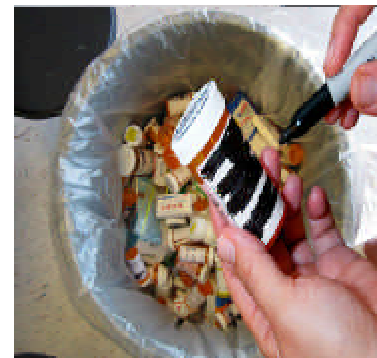
It is probably one of a parent's worst nightmares to find out that their child suffers from a drug addiction. Due to an increasing number of teens and even younger children indulging in drug use, parents need to be more vigilant about the signs of addiction in their kids. Sometimes the child picks up the drug habit by observing similar habits in his or her parent. Studies have shown that children who witness their parents consuming alcohol or drugs are more likely to develop an addiction when compared to children whose parents don't drink or use drugs. Parents who are suffering from alcoholism or drug abuse are most likely to display high levels of aggression at home. Such behavior often leads to poor parent-child interactions. The likelihood of child abuse in such households is also very high.

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## National Prescription Drugs Take-Back Day

Prescription drugs are the second most commonly abused category of drugs, behind marijuana and ahead of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and other drugs. The National Institutes of Health estimates that nearly 20 percent of people in the United States have used prescription drugs for non-medical reasons. Most abusers of prescription drugs take them right out of the family medicine cabinet. So it is important to properly dispose of medications that are no longer needed.

Unused prescriptions must be handled carefully to keep them from falling into the wrong hands or into our water supply. Do not flush them down the toilet, put them down the drain, or simply throw them in the trash can. In order to dispose of unwanted medications properly, the medication should be taken out of its



container and mixed with used coffee grounds or kitty litter before putting them in the trash. But the safest way to dispose of unwanted medication is to drop it off—bottle and all—at one of the collection centers provided by local law enforcement and the federal Drug Enforcement Agency on National Take Back Day.

National Take-Back day occurs on Saturday, October 29th. This is the third year of the annual event. It is an event that provides citizens across the country with the opportunity to properly dispose of old and unwanted medications. It's a free, anonymous and legal way to get rid of potentially dangerous prescription drugs that have been cluttering medicine cabinets. Properly disposing of these medications protects the environment, and most important, protects all of us.

"The amount of prescription drugs turned in by the American public during the first two Take-Back events is simply staggering—309 tons—and represents a clear need for a convenient way to rid homes of unwanted or expired prescription drugs," said DEA Administrator Michele M. Leonhart.

"The unprecedented amount of prescription drugs turned in by citizens will keep dangerous, addictive drugs from being abused. I commend the DEA for its successful nationwide prescription drug take-back day and for their work to make it easier for communities to stay healthy, while safeguarding the environment." said Gil Kerlikowske, Director of National Drug Control Policy.

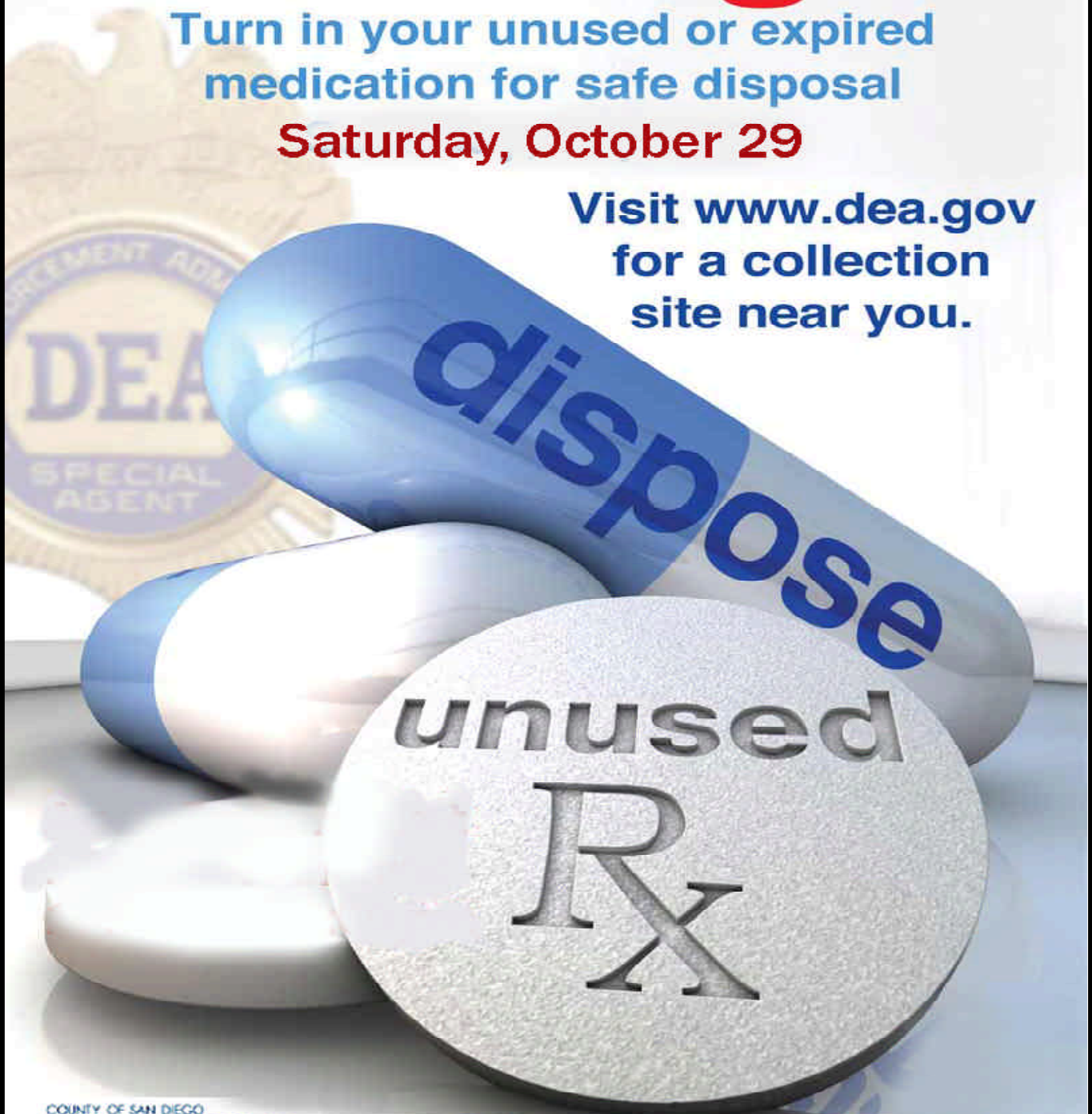
In case you miss the National Take-Back Day, San Diego County Sheriff has established year round drop off sites at all County Sheriff Stations and detention facilities. Please call the San Diego County Sheriff at: (858) 565-5200 for more information, or visit their website at: <http://www.sdsheriff.net/oxycontin/dropbox.html>.

# Got **Drugs?**

Turn in your unused or expired  
medication for safe disposal

**Saturday, October 29**

Visit [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov)  
for a collection  
site near you.



For more information please visit: [www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov), or  
call the San Diego Division of Drug Enforcement  
Agency at (858) 616- 4100