

National Prevention Week 2013 Is May 12–18

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The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) second annual National Prevention Week runs May 12 through May 18, 2013.

This celebration aims to increase public awareness of, and action around, substance abuse and mental health issues.

This year's theme – *Your voice. Your choice. Make a difference.* – emphasizes that the choices we make each day are important and have a real effect on our health and the well-being of our families and communities.

Each day of National Prevention Week 2013 has a unique focus to recognize states' and communities' prevention efforts and highlight multiple facets of behavioral health:

- May 12: Prevention and Cessation of Tobacco Use
- May 13: Prevention of Underage Drinking
- May 14: Prevention of Prescription Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Use
- May 15: Prevention of Alcohol Abuse
- May 16: Suicide Prevention
- May 17: Promotion of Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Well-being
- May 18: (Communities identify an issue of their choice)

Our nation's states and communities provide many evidence-based programs and strategies promoting mental and emotional well-being and preventing substance abuse. SAMHSA applauds their excellent work in showing that prevention works. As a result of states' and communities' concerted prevention efforts, important progress has been made in many areas, such as in the decline of underage binge and heavy drinking rates between 2002 and 2011. However, much work remains to be done.

- The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke account for an estimated 443,000 deaths, or nearly one of every five deaths each year.
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One quarter of young people between the age of 12 and 20 currently drink alcohol, and an estimated 6 million participated in binge drinking at least once in the last 30 days.

- Approximately 23 million Americans aged 12 or older, or roughly 9 percent of the population in this age group, are current illicit drug users. This includes individuals who use illicit drugs, as well as the approximately 6 million people who report that they currently use prescription drugs for nonmedical purposes.

National Prevention Week 2013 offers a way for everyone to voice their support for prevention and take action to make a difference in their communities.