

Inside this issue of *What's Trending*:

- KMON Amplifies Community Prevention
- Montana Students Lead the Fight Against Vaping
- Why "Just Say No" Isn't Enough
- New Kratom Recovery Support Group in Great Falls
- Prevention Saves Lives—and Money
- Digital Vape Retailer Closes Shop
- Teens underestimate Fentanyl
- New Tobacco & Nicotine Taxes Could Be Coming to Montana

what's trending?

WHAT NORTH CENTRAL MONTANA NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT ALCOHOL & DRUG TRENDS

August 2026, Issue 8

More Voices, More Awareness: Thanks, KMON!

We're encouraged to see local media helping raise awareness about the growing concerns surrounding **recreational nitrous oxide products**. We recently sent out several community alerts highlighting the risks these high-capacity products pose—especially to young people—and it's great to have partners like [KMON](#) helping educate the public as well. The more consistent, evidence-based information our community receives, the better equipped parents, retailers and community members are to recognize these products and understand the serious health risks associated with their misuse. [READ MORE.](#)

Middle Schoolers in Boulder, Montana Create Plan to Fight Youth Vaping

A group of Boulder middle school students is taking on one of the biggest health challenges facing young people today: vaping. Through the Jefferson County Youth Leadership program, these students developed a plan to educate their peers, raise awareness about the risks of vaping and encourage healthier choices. Their creative, youth-driven approach shows how young leaders can make a real impact on issues affecting their schools and communities. [Read more](#) to see how they're turning concern into action.

"Just Say No" didn't work in 1986.

In 2026, it's downright dangerous.

The “Just Say No” campaign became one of the most recognizable substance misuse prevention efforts in American history—but did it actually work? This [thought-provoking article](#) argues that the strategy fell short in the 1980s and offers lessons for today's prevention efforts. As communities face new challenges such as Fentanyl, counterfeit pills and evolving substance use trends, the piece explores why prevention messaging must move beyond simple slogans and focus on what truly helps young people make healthy choices. [Read the full article](#) to learn why many experts believe it's time to rethink how we approach substance misuse prevention.

Looking to quit Kratom? Dynamic Recovery offers a local Kratom Support Group.

If you or someone you know is ready to stop using Kratom, local support is available in Great Falls. Dynamic Recovery offers a Kratom Support Group where participants can connect with others who understand the challenges of quitting, share experiences and receive encouragement in a supportive, judgment-free environment. Recovery doesn't have to happen alone.

Every Thursday @ 10 a.m.
Dynamic Recovery Drop-in Center
220 6th St. S., Suite E
Great Falls, MT 59401



When the Rules Arrive, So Does the Pushback: Research Reveals Tobacco Industry Tactics

Getting a tobacco control policy passed is a major accomplishment—but it doesn't mean the work is over. New research shows that tobacco companies often shift their tactics once a policy is adopted, looking for ways to weaken its impact during implementation. Researchers identified strategies including **token compliance** (appearing to follow the rules without fully embracing them), **circumvention** (finding ways around requirements) and in some cases outright **noncompliance**. As lead author Dr. Britta Matthes noted, *“We often think of industry interference as something that happens before a policy is in place. But our findings show that policy adoption is not the end point.”* The findings highlight why strong implementation and enforcement plans are critical to ensuring tobacco control policies achieve their intended public health benefits.

[READ MORE.](#)

Substance Misuse Prevention Saves Lives & Money

*“Evidence-based interventions to prevent substance use can save society money in medical costs and help individuals remain productive members of society. Such programs can **return [up to] \$65 per every dollar invested** in prevention.”* [READ MORE.](#)

Closing the Digital Vape Shop

[Shopify's decision](#) to remove online vaping stores from its platform is a major step toward closing one of the biggest loopholes fueling youth nicotine addiction. [Truth Initiative](#) praised the

move as a model for the entire e-commerce industry, noting that **nearly 90% of Shopify-hosted online vape stores studied failed to comply with key safeguards such as age verification, shipping requirements or adult signature upon delivery.** While this action is a significant victory, it also sends a clear message: **online marketplaces, payment processors, shippers and retailers all have a responsibility to stop facilitating the sale of illegal nicotine products and help protect young people from addiction.**

Many Teens Still Underestimate Fentanyl's Deadly Risk

The powerful synthetic opioid Fentanyl can kill with just one use. Yet far too many adolescents don't realize how dangerous it is. A majority of 8th-graders and roughly one-third of 10th- and 12th-graders do not believe using Fentanyl once or twice carries a great risk. That misconception is especially concerning because **Fentanyl now plays a role in at least 75% of overdose deaths among adolescents.** Even more alarming, it's often hidden in counterfeit pills that look like legitimate prescription medications, meaning many young people don't even know they're taking it. The bottom line: when it comes to Fentanyl, one mistake can be fatal, making honest, early education more important than ever. [READ MORE.](#)

Stub It Out: Advocates Seek Tobacco Tax Increase in 2027

Montana health advocates are already building momentum for the 2027 legislative session with a proposal to increase taxes on tobacco products and e-cigarettes. Supporters say the measure could help reduce youth nicotine addiction, encourage more people to quit and generate revenue that can be invested in prevention and public health programs. With vaping rates among young people remaining a concern, advocates believe including e-cigarettes in the tax proposal is an important step toward protecting the next generation from nicotine addiction. [Read more](#) about the effort and why supporters see it as a win for healthier Montana communities.

Montana Substance Violation Reporting: What to Know & Where to Go

- **Unlawful or Suspicious Alcohol-Related Activities** - Report violations such as underage drinking or serving/selling to someone who is actually, apparently or obviously intoxicated. [CLICK HERE.](#)
- **Cannabis-Related Issues**
 - For concerns regarding **medical or adult-use cannabis dispensaries**, [CLICK HERE.](#)
 - Report illegal sale or use of **synthetic cannabis** by [CLICKING HERE.](#)
 - If you suspect **illegal sale of consumable hemp products** (not authorized as a food or drug by the FDA), report it by [CLICKING HERE.](#)
- **Tobacco/Nicotine Product Violation** - Report sales to under the age of 21 to keep nicotine and tobacco out of the hands of youth. [CLICK HERE.](#)
- **Montana Clean Indoor Air Act Violations** - Submit violations including vaping, which is now included under the Act. [CLICK HERE.](#)
- **Retailer selling illegal vapes or nicotine pouches?** - Take Action. File a report by [CLICKING HERE.](#) You can do so anonymously. NOTE: There are only a handful of FDA approved (i.e. legal) vapes and pouches. If you see anything besides the following, please take the time to file a report.
 1. **FDA approved vapes:** JUUL, NJOY, VUSE, LOGIC and GLAS (Glas G2, Gold, Sapphire).
 2. **FDA approved nicotine pouches:** ON!, PLUS and ZYN.



Businesses must post clear signage at every public entrance stating that smoking, vaping or marijuana use is not allowed.

Order FREE signs here:

<https://mthhs promotions.rocsoft.com/public/login>
(Quick account setup required)



About SAPA

**What's Trending?
Past Editions**

**Subscribe to
What's Trending?**

Alliance for Youth, Inc | PO Box 2982 | Great Falls, MT 59403 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!