

This issue takes a look at several emerging substance use concerns affecting youth, families and communities—from **Kratom showing up in schools** and the impact of **secondhand smoke and parents' drinking**, to Montana's conversation around **tougher DUI laws**. We're also digging into new research on **cannabis edibles and driving** and the latest **synthetic opioids emerging in the illicit drug supply**.

what's trending?

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

October 2026, Issue 10

Could Schools Begin Seeing More Kratom This Year? Unfortunately, Yes.

As the new school year begins, schools may see increased visibility of Kratom and 7-OH products—substances that are becoming more accessible and appearing in forms such as gummies, capsules, drink mixes and liquid shots that can be easy to overlook. Changes in pricing, availability, packaging and regulation make it important for educators, parents and community professionals to know what these products look like and understand the potential risks. Could Kratom be an emerging concern for students this year? [Click here](#) to learn what schools should be watching for and how to stay ahead of the trend.

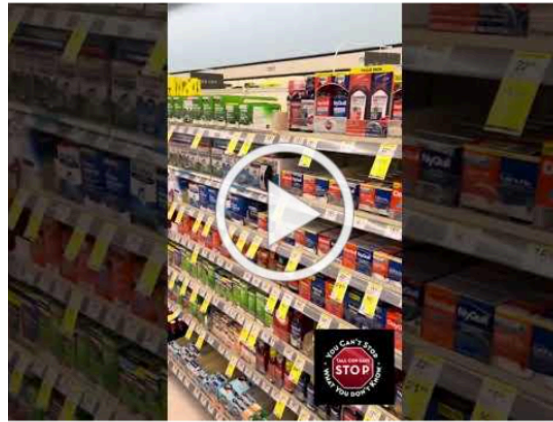
Information courtesy of Jermaine Galloway, "The Tall Cop" of Tall Cop Says Stop™.

More Young Lives Lost. How Many More Will It Take?

Two University of Mississippi students died within hours of each other following a busy football weekend on campus, prompting an investigation by multiple agencies. While authorities have not confirmed that the deaths are connected or that Kratom caused either death, packaged Kratom products were found during both investigations. Officials are urging students to avoid Kratom and other unregulated substances while toxicology testing and the investigations continue. [READ MORE.](#)

Drugstore Highs: What Parents Need to Know

Tall Cop Says Stop™ Drug Store Scan DXM & Propylhexedrine Popularity



Secondhand Smoke Linked to Poor Sleep Quality in Children

Kids exposed to secondhand smoke may not be getting the quality sleep they need. This study found that children exposed to tobacco smoke woke up more often during the night and tended to sleep for less time. Even when sleep apnea or oxygen levels weren't an issue, secondhand smoke was still linked to disrupted sleep. It's another reminder that keeping homes and other spaces smoke-free (& vape-free) can make a real difference in children's health and well-being. [**READ MORE.**](#)

Parents' Drinking Matters

Did you know **teens may be four times more likely to drink when their parents frequently drink or binge drink**? That's one of the findings highlighted in the newly released 2025 STOP Act Report to Congress on the Prevention and Reduction of Underage Drinking. The report is packed with current research and data that help us better understand what influences youth alcohol use—and what families and communities can do to prevent it. [Click here](#) to explore the report and learn more.



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



Is Montana Ready to Get Tougher on DUIs?

Could changes to Montana's DUI laws be coming in the 2027 Legislature? A recent Montana DUI Reform Summit brought together lawmakers, law enforcement, judges, advocates and community leaders to discuss ways to reduce impaired driving—and change the culture surrounding it.

"The point is changing the attitude about what drinking and driving is all about. I equate it to you put on a blindfold, grab a gun and stand in your backyard and just start shooting. And most of your bullets won't hit anything, but all it takes is one. And that's what DUI is like. All it takes is one, and it becomes imperative, and we need to fix that," Representative Steve Kelly (HD-9) said.

What changes could be on the table? [Click here to read more.](#)

Narcan in Montana Schools: Ready When Seconds Matter

Two years after Montana began placing Narcan kits in middle and high schools, state officials say the program is making a difference. With Fentanyl continuing to show up in counterfeit pills and other substances, having Narcan readily available gives schools another tool to respond quickly to a suspected opioid overdose. While Narcan can save a life in an emergency, prevention, education and awareness remain just as important. [Click here to watch the full news story.](#)

How Do Cannabis Edibles Affect Driving?

Everyone is aware of the dangers of drunk driving, but what about cannabis-impaired driving? New research examining cannabis edibles found that THC can affect driving performance in several important ways, including **decreased lane control, greater speed variability and increased reaction time**—especially at the highest dose of 20 mg. Participants also reported feeling less willing to drive and rated their driving ability lower as THC doses increased, even at low doses. The findings are an important reminder that being impaired behind the wheel isn't limited to alcohol. [READ MORE.](#)

Move Over Fentanyl: New Synthetic Opioids Are Emerging

The illicit drug supply continues to change—and new synthetic opioids are emerging. The DEA has temporarily placed four substances—5,6-dichloro bromphine, 5,6-dichloro desmethylchlorphine, N-propionitrile chlorphine and spirochlorphine—into Schedule I, citing an imminent hazard to public safety. These drugs **act similarly to fentanyl and other opioids** and have been found both alone and mixed with other substances, **meaning people may not even know they are being exposed**. Notably, N-propionitrile chlorphine has been identified by DEA testing in 49 fatalities. The temporary scheduling took effect August 27, 2026. [READ MORE.](#)

What's Hidden on Your Kid's Phone?

Nearly 95 percent of teens ages 13–17 have access to a smartphone. While phones are a great way to stay connected, they can also expose young people to real risks—including access to harmful substances. This video series from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) helps parents and other trusted adults understand what to watch for and how to talk with teens about staying safe online. [Watch the video series](#) and check out additional resources for families.



Preventing Underage Substance Abuse in Montana

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: ONI, PLUS and ZYN.



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

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(Quick account setup required)



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