



SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION & AWARENESS

Life can be stressful sometimes. Between school, relationships, family responsibilities, extracurriculars, social media, and thinking about the future, it's normal to feel overwhelmed. When stress builds up, some people may turn to substances to cope, fit in, take risks, or escape difficult feelings.

But substance use can affect more than just your physical health. It can impact your brain, mood, memory, decision-making, relationships, and overall well-being. It can also make challenges like stress, anxiety, and depression harder to manage over time.

Substance use prevention isn't just about saying "no." It's about understanding how substances can affect your brain and body, learning healthy ways to cope with life's ups and downs, navigating peer pressure, building supportive relationships, and knowing where to turn when you need help. By developing these skills, you can make choices that support your mental health, keep you safe, and help you stay focused on what matters most to you.



RESOURCES

FREE MIND

Free Mind aims to prevent and reduce drug use and overdose among youth. The campaign was created through research and real conversations with youth, parents, and caregivers.



**DON'T RUN
CALL 911**

Georgia Overdose Prevention: provides information about use, prevention, and available resources in Georgia, including where to access Narcan.



GUIDE, Inc.
Gwinnett United in Drug Education, Inc.
working together for safe and healthy communities

**GUIDE, Inc.
(Gwinnett United**

in Drug Education): provides youth and family prevention and support services.



988 is the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, offering free 24/7 support for mental health emergencies.

ACTIVITY:

Test your knowledge! Decide whether each statement is a myth or a fact before checking the answer.

	FACT	MYTH
Prescription painkillers are safer than other drugs.	☐	☐
Vaping is harmless because it's just water vapor.	☐	☐
Cannabis can affect memory, attention, and decision-making.	☐	☐
Alcohol is a healthy way to manage stress.	☐	☐
If a pill looks like a real medication, it is safe.	☐	☐

Answers: 1. Myth: Taking prescription opioids without a prescription can be dangerous and increase the risk of overdose. 2. Myth: Many vapes contain nicotine, which can affect the developing brain and increase the risk of addiction. 3. Fact: Cannabis can affect memory, attention, learning, and decision-making, especially during adolescence. 4. Myth: Alcohol may temporarily mask difficult feelings, but it can make stress, anxiety, and depression harder to manage over time. 5. Myth: Counterfeit pills can contain fentanyl or other dangerous substances, even if they look like prescription medications.

Reflection:

What is one thing you learned today that you could share with a friend to help them make informed, healthy choices?

Follow for more resources!
[@freeyourfeelsga](https://www.instagram.com/freeyourfeelsga)



"Free Your Feels" is a mental health awareness campaign encouraging Georgia's young people to explore their real **feelings** and **free** them fearlessly.

ACCESS MORE
RESOURCES AT
[FREEYOURFEELS.ORG](https://www.freeyourfeels.org)