



Annual Report Summary 2019 -2020

Drug Free Hendry County (DFHC) strives to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our community. To empower both youth and adults in Hendry and Glades Counties to reject harmful substances by increasing education, motivation, collaboration, and awareness to create a safe and healthy community.

We pride ourselves in our efforts to increase Health Equity and prevention within our underserved populations of Hendry and Glades Counties. DFHC operates with collaboration from our community, agencies, businesses, organizations, and individuals to continue to make an everlasting impact on our community that encourages those to promote and live a drug free lifestyle.



After Hurricane Irma left Drug Free Hendry displaced for 2 years, DFHC was able to return to their home office at The Florida Department of Health in Hendry County.

At that point we returned to normal operations until March of 2020.

We participated in numerous outreach events to promote and educate the population on the importance of drug free lifestyles.

An important aspect of Drug Free Hendry County is our social norms campaign, Live Positive 863. This initiative encourages youth in Hendry and Glades Counties to live positive lifestyles by engaging in positive relationships, activities, and behaviors.

Here at Drug Free Hendry County, we believe that supporting youth in making positive life choices will help prevent them from falling down the path of risky behaviors like using drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. Adverse childhood experiences can lead youth down the wrong paths, so we do our best to promote positive choices and positive paths for our youth.

Students are nominated to be chosen as one of Drug Free Hendry Counties “Live Positive 863!” winners.

Youth are presented on social media, websites, and posters throughout the counties to encourage others to live positive just like they do.

This program allows for youth who are nominated by their principals to mentor their peers and transform the perception to make others realize that most youth are *not* using drugs and/or alcohol.



Here are the winners from our latest LivePositive863! campaign.

Students are nominated from Clewiston High School, LaBelle High School and Moore Haven Juniors Senior High School and complete a packet which includes information such as their GPA, attendance record, extracurricular activities, letters of support from both teachers and community leaders, and an essay. Winners chosen based on those packets from our committee.



Drug Free Hendry teams with local partnerships within our community and many other local organizations within Hendry and Glades Counties.

The Hendry County Tobacco Free Partnership (HCTFP) and Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) are two that we partner with often.

This year, Students Working Against Tobacco and Drug Free Hendry participated in LaBelle's 54th Annual Swamp Cabbage Festival Parade on Saturday, February 22, 2020.

This event gave us a unique opportunity to provide Drug Free information to thousands of people along the parade route. Youth and our volunteers walked the route of the parade which is attended by thousands of people and is highly anticipated in Hendry County.

Together, the youth took time out of their weekend and away from the entertainment of the parade to support their roles in DFHC and SWAT. The youth consider Swamp Cabbage a very fun way to encourage the population to remain drug, tobacco, and alcohol free. We have already secured a plan to work together with SWAT in the coming year on this important outreach!



Edwin Melendez, Hendry Drug Free Program Coordinator attended the 8th Annual Drug Prevention Summit.



One of the keynote speakers was Vice Admiral Jerome M. Adams, M.D., M.P.H., Surgeon General of the United States.

Dr. Adams' motto as Surgeon General is "better health through better partnerships." He is committed to strengthening relationships with all members of the health community, and forging new partnerships with members from the business, faith, education, and public safety and national security communities.

The goal of this summit was to increase awareness of the impacts of drug use and abuse, enhance knowledge of how to reduce access, change social norms and encourage discussion of current policies. The summit focused on implementing successful prevention strategies and providing tools to empower communities to advocate for sound drug policies. Some of the agenda topics included: Prevention of Drug Impaired Driving, Identifying, Assessing, and Treating Opioid Misuse, and Identifying Trauma Exposed Children.

Drug Free Hendry attended the annual Kiwanis Kids Day on Saturday November 16th at Barron Park.

The event focused on activities for the kids but also gave local agencies the opportunity to interact with children and parents. Over 400 people attended this event. Drug Free Hendry gave out Red Ribbon Week coloring books and crayons as well as Red Ribbon stickers, pens and bracelets.

Kiwanis Kids Day - Its all about the kids!





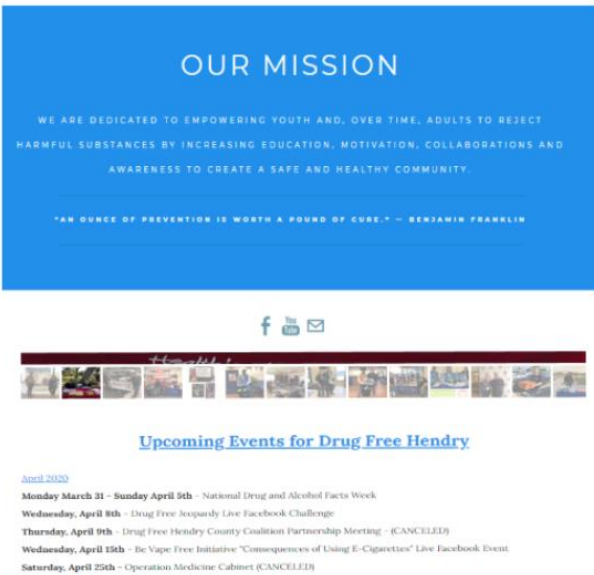
Drug Free Hendry participated in the Back to School Bash in LaBelle. Students and parents had the opportunity to learn about drug use prevention.

Community partners came together for this event to help students of all ages get ready for school by providing school supplies and backpacks.



Over 300 backpacks with school supplies were given out.

Although the effects from COVID-19 has been difficult, we have been able to maintain not only the relationship with our partners, but also maintain our prevention outreach efforts through the Drug Free Hendry Facebook Page, The DrugFreeHendry.org Website and multiple Zoom and GoToMeetings.



One successful platform we introduced this year was the launch of DFHC's website page DrugFreeHendry.org

The website is updated with upcoming events for Drug Free Hendry, the Live Positive Campaign, COVID assistance and a full list of resources including videos, websites, phone numbers and hotline information for all the community partners that we collaborate with.

Contact information for both the program director Andrea May and the program coordinator Edwin Melendez is listed on the website for residents and all partners of DFHC.

Drug Free Hendry challenged its Facebook community with interactive Facebook live events One example was the Drug Facts Jeopardy Style Challenge.

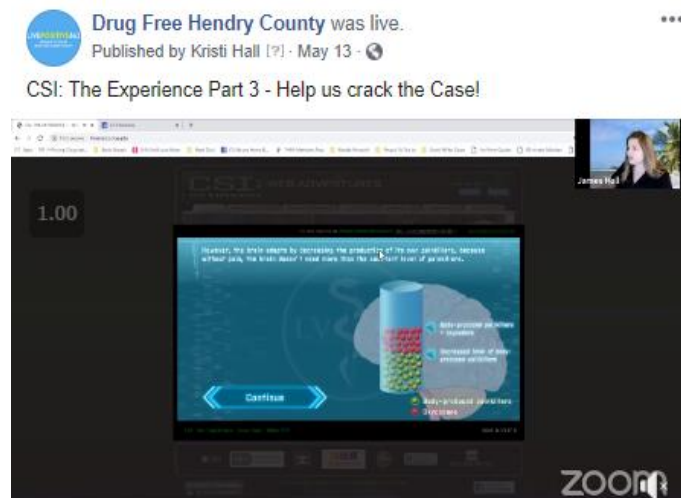
With nearly 270 people reached via the Drug Free Hendry's Facebook page, this was a great success and a fun way to bring our outreach efforts into the community during this time when social distancing is required.

It is imperative to us at Drug Free Hendry to remain a constant source of prevention education for the counties that we serve!

Play Drug Facts Challenge w/ Drug Free Hendry



Drug Free Hendry also took advantage of the internet during NDAFW, as most parents are home and children are utilizing e-learning.



Each day during the week of March 30-April 5, 2020 we shared lessons, games, tutorials and challenges to help "SHATTER THE MYTHS" about drugs.

During this week we worked hard to counteract the myths about drugs and alcohol that teens get from the internet, social media, TV, movies, music and from their friends.