



# Did You Know?

July 2019

**International Day of Friendship:** July 30<sup>th</sup> marks a day to celebrate the relationships in our lives. International Day of Friendship “recognizes that friendship between individuals, countries, and cultures can inspire peace efforts and build bridges between communities.” The day also emphasizes the importance of conversations. Positive relationships and support are paramount in the success of prevention, treatment and recovery. Campaigns, such as JustTellOne, often tote conversation as the starting point to treatment.

## What You Should Know:

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports alcohol use (with a BAC at or above the legal limit) can be linked to 22% of deaths caused by suicide. It also mentions that 20% of suicides show the presence of opiates (painkillers and heroin), 10.2% involve marijuana use, 4.6% can be linked to cocaine use, and amphetamines have been found to be present in 3.4% of suicides.
- According to the National Institute of Mental Health, in 2014 20.2 million U.S. adults suffered from a substance use disorder and 7.9 million had both a substance use disorder and another mental illness.
- On average, nearly 129 people commit suicide every day in the United States. This daily total closely reflects the yearly suicide rate in Erie County.
- Genetics, family history, and past trauma are all considered risk-factors that increase the vulnerability of both mental health and substance use disorders.
- The National Bureau of Economic Research states, “There is a definite connection between mental illness and the use of addictive substances. Individuals with an existing mental illness consume roughly 38 percent of all alcohol, 44 percent of all cocaine, and 40 percent of all cigarettes. Furthermore, the people who have ever experienced mental illness consume about 69 percent of all the alcohol, 84 percent of all the cocaine, and 68 percent of all cigarettes.”

## What You Can Do:

- **Start The Conversation:** Regardless of the struggle an individual may need to overcome, they do not have to face it alone. At times it may seem daunting to start a dialogue on potential health disorders, but it doesn't have to be. Help doesn't come just to those who make grand announcements, or to those who post their struggles publically on the internet. Help is available to all. Help can start as small as just telling one person.
- **Trust in the Process and the Person:** Finding that one person or core group of friends that you can confide in is extremely important. Human connection leads to hope, and can be the catalyst for treatment. A support system can help keep those in treatment accountable. Remember that with both mental health and substance use disorders, treatment is ongoing. With any disease, even in remission, signs and symptoms must be monitored. Relapse is a normal part of the recovery process, and long-term treatment plans are necessary to sustain positive outcomes.
- **Resources:** If you fear that you or a loved one might be at risk for or is suffering from a mental health or substance use disorder, seek help and contact your local prevention agency. The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse can be reached by dialing 716-831-2298. Also, campaigns such as JustTellOne can be extremely helpful when taking the first steps toward recovery.



Information obtained from: [www.justtellone.org](http://www.justtellone.org); [www.nationaltoday.com](http://www.nationaltoday.com); [www.nber.org](http://www.nber.org); [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov); [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

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The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc., publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. ECCPASA • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • [www.eccpasa.org](http://www.eccpasa.org)