



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT FOR INJURY PREVENTION COORDINATORS

POISON PREVENTION

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All materials in this toolkit are developed by the American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) and may be adapted with credit for local use.

Toolkit Overview

Purpose: The purpose of this toolkit is to provide consistent, evidence-informed messaging and ready-to-use materials to prevent poison injuries across Pennsylvania. Poisoning, including exposures to household chemicals, medications, recreational substances, toxic plants, and environmental hazards, remains a leading cause of preventable injury and death in the Commonwealth.

This toolkit equips partners with practical communication tools to:

- Increase awareness of poisoning risks
- Promote safe storage and prevention behaviors
- Encourage early action during suspected poisoning
- Reduce stigma surrounding substance-related poisonings
- Connect Pennsylvanians to lifesaving resources

At the core of this campaign is a simple, lifesaving action:

☎ Call 1-800-222-1222 for Poison Help — free, confidential, and available 24/7.

Target Audience:

- Healthcare providers and hospital systems
- Injury prevention professionals
- Public health departments
- Schools and childcare providers
- Community organizations and faith-based groups
- Employers and workplace safety leaders
- Media partners
- Families and caregivers

The materials can be adapted for rural, suburban, and urban Pennsylvania communities.

Key Messages

1. Poisoning is preventable.
2. Safe storage saves lives.
3. Environmental hazards are often invisible.
4. Substance-related poisonings require awareness, not stigma.
5. Help is always available.

Messaging Framework

• **Core Message**

- Poisoning is preventable. Simple steps taken today can protect Pennsylvania families tomorrow.

• **Supporting Pillars and Audience Focus**

- **Prevention Starts at Home:** Families, caregivers
- **Awareness Reduces Risk:** Community members, schools
- **Environmental Safety Matters in Pennsylvania:** Homeowners, landlords, policymakers
- **Substance-Related Poisonings Are Preventable:** Healthcare providers, parents, adults
- **Immediate Action Saves Lives:** All audiences

• **Tone & Voice Guidance**

- Clear and action-oriented
- Non-alarmist but urgent when appropriate
- Trauma-informed
- Free of stigma
- Inclusive of all Pennsylvania communities
- Avoid blame-based language. Focus on prevention behaviors and solutions.
- 📌 Call to Action (Standardized Language)
 - “Suspected poisoning? Call the Poison Help Line at 1-800-222-1222. Free. Confidential. Available 24/7. If the person is unconscious or not breathing, call 911 immediately.”

Outreach Tools

 Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

- **Sample radio script (15-30 seconds)**

15 Seconds

Everyday items like medications and cleaning products can cause serious harm if not stored safely.

Lock them up and keep them out of reach.

If you suspect poisoning, call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222.

Free. Confidential. Available 24/7.

Brought to you by [Organization Name].

30 Seconds

Most poisonings happen at home — from medications, cleaning products, or even carbon monoxide.

Protect your family by locking up medicines and chemicals, keeping products in original containers, and installing carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home.

If you think someone has been poisoned, don't wait. Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222.

It's free, confidential, and available 24/7.

If the person is unconscious or not breathing, call 911 immediately.

This message is brought to you by [Organization Name].

Outreach Tools

The ATSPA offers rackcards to the public for free on our website.

Outreach Tools

Social Media Toolkit

• Sample posts for Facebook

Post 1 — Safe Homes

Poison Prevention begins at home!

- ◆ Keep chemicals and meds locked up.
 - ◆ Use organization tools and locks to protect children and pets.
- ☎ Poison Help: 1-800-222-1222 #PaSafety #PoisonPrevention

Post 2 — Outdoor Safety

Spring means more outdoor time in PA — watch out for poison ivy, wild mushrooms, and toxic plants!

Learn plant safety tips and protect your family.

☎ 1-800-222-1222 #OutdoorSafety #InjuryPrevention

Post 3 — Substance Awareness

Pennsylvania's overdose rate remains high — know the signs, secure substances, and learn naloxone basics.

Poison Help 1-800-222-1222 #SubstanceSafety #PublicHealth

• Sample posts for X

Tweet 1

April is Poison Prevention Month! Keep meds and chemicals locked and labeled for safety.

☎ 1-800-222-1222 #PaTrauma #PoisonPrevention

Tweet 2

Carbon monoxide is silent but deadly — install CO detectors on every level of your home!

☎ 911 or [[Poison Help] 1-800-222-1222] #COAwareness



Tweet 3

Poisonous plants and wild mushrooms can harm families — learn to identify hazards.

☎ 1-800-222-1222 #EnvironmentalHealth



PREVENT ENVIRONMENTAL POISONING

- INSTALL CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS IN YOUR HOME AND CHECK THEM REGULARLY.
- TEST FOR LEAD IF YOU LIVE IN AN OLDER HOME AND AVOID PEELING PAINT.
- WEAR PROTECTIVE GEAR IF WORKING WITH HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES.
- ENSURE PROPER VENTILATION WHEN USING CHEMICALS INDOORS.




PREVENT FOOD AND PLANT POISONING

- COOK FOOD TO PROPER TEMPERATURES AND STORE IT SAFELY.
- WASH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THOROUGHLY BEFORE EATING.
- LEARN TO IDENTIFY POISONOUS PLANTS AND MUSHROOMS, ESPECIALLY WHEN HIKING OR FORAGING.
- KEEP HOUSEPLANTS OUT OF REACH OF PETS AND SMALL CHILDREN.




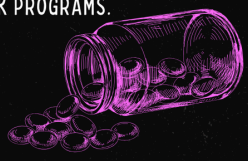
POISON PREVENTION RESOURCES

- POISON CONTROL CENTERS: WWW.POISONHELP.ORG
- CDC – POISONING PREVENTION: WWW.CDC.GOV
- FDA – SAFE MEDICATION USE: WWW.FDA.GOV
- EPA – HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL SAFETY: WWW.EPA.GOV
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION – NATIONAL HELPLINE: CALL 1-800-662-HELP (4357) OR VISIT WWW.SAMHSA.GOV
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE (NIDA) – DRUG USE & OVERDOSE PREVENTION: WWW.DRUGABUSE.GOV





PREVENT MEDICATION POISONING

- ALWAYS STORE MEDICATIONS IN CHILD-PROOF CONTAINERS AND KEEP THEM OUT OF REACH.
- NEVER SHARE PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.
- FOLLOW DOSING INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.
- DISPOSE OF EXPIRED OR UNUSED MEDICATIONS SAFELY THROUGH TAKE-BACK PROGRAMS.



PREVENT CHEMICAL POISONING

- STORE CHEMICALS IN THEIR ORIGINAL CONTAINERS AND OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.
- KEEP ALL HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS LOCKED AWAY WHEN NOT IN USE.
- FOLLOW THE LABEL INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY WHEN USING CHEMICALS.
- ENSURE PROPER VENTILATION WHEN USING STRONG CLEANING PRODUCTS.



PREVENT RECREATIONAL DRUG POISONING

- AVOID USING ILLICIT DRUGS OR BUYING PILLS FROM UNKNOWN SOURCES.
- IF PRESCRIBED OPIOIDS, USE THEM EXACTLY AS DIRECTED.
- CARRY NALOXONE (NARCAN) IF YOU OR A LOVED ONE ARE AT RISK OF OPIOID OVERDOSE.
- SEEK HELP FOR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS— TREATMENT AND SUPPORT ARE AVAILABLE.



Outreach Tools

 Press & Promotion Materials - Sample press release for local media

[ORGANIZATION NAME] Encourages Community Action During Poison Prevention Awareness Month

[City, State] — [Organization Name] is joining national and statewide partners to raise awareness during Poison Prevention Awareness Month and encourage families, caregivers, and community members to take simple steps that can prevent serious injury or death.

Poisoning remains a leading cause of injury across the United States, impacting individuals of all ages. Most poison exposures occur in the home and involve everyday items such as medications, household cleaning products, plants, recreational substances, or environmental hazards like carbon monoxide.

“Many people are surprised to learn that common household products can pose serious risks if not stored or used properly,” said [Name, Title]. “The good news is that most poisonings are preventable with safe storage, awareness, and quick action.”

Common Poison Risks in Homes and Communities

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications
- Cleaning supplies and laundry pods
- Cannabis edibles and recreational substances
- Toxic plants and wild mushrooms
- Carbon monoxide and other environmental hazards

Young children are especially vulnerable due to their natural curiosity, but adults can also be at risk from medication errors, substance misuse, or environmental exposures.

Actionable Steps to Prevent Poisoning

[Organization Name] encourages residents to take the following prevention steps:

Practice Safe Storage

- Keep medications, chemicals, and substances locked and out of reach.
- Store products in their original containers with labels intact.
- Never store chemicals in food or drink containers.

Use Medications Safely

- Follow dosing instructions carefully.
- Use proper measuring tools.
- Never share prescriptions.
- Dispose of unused medications at approved take-back locations.

Know Outdoor Hazards

- Learn to identify toxic plants in your area.
- Never consume wild mushrooms.
- Supervise children during outdoor activities.

Protect Against Environmental Exposures

- Install carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home.
- Test older homes for lead.
- Address water damage promptly to prevent mold growth.

If you suspect someone has been poisoned:

 Call the Poison Help Line immediately at 1-800-222-1222.

The service is free, confidential, and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For more information or to access prevention resources, visit:

[Website URL]

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About [Organization Name]

[Insert a brief 2–3 sentence description of your organization and mission.]

