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## THE COMMUNITY IS INVITED TO ATTEND BREAKING THE SILENCE: ADDICTION IN OUR COMMUNITY



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**FORT WALTON BEACH, Fla.—** The Okaloosa County Anti-Drug Coalition, the Walton County Prevention Coalition, the Okaloosa County Alliance for Drug Endangered Children and Communities and other community partners are hosting Breaking the Silence: Addiction in Our Community on Jan. 30 at 6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge in Fort Walton Beach, 1335 Miracle Strip Parkway SE. The event will feature expert speakers and a panel of people who have experienced the impacts of addiction in their lives. This event is free and open to the community.

“Addiction and drug abuse continue to impact our community,” said Dr. Karen Chapman, Director of the Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County. “Opioid-related deaths are a contributing factor to Okaloosa County’s 1.4-year decline in life expectancy since 2010-12.”

In 2017 there were 2,455 drug arrests, 43 drug-related causes of death and 30 opioid-related causes of death in Okaloosa County.<sup>1</sup>

From 2008-13 Okaloosa County was historically lower than the state of Florida’s rate of unintentional injury deaths due to drug poisoning. Beginning in 2013, Okaloosa County’s rate began trending upward, eventually surpassing the state’s rate in 2015.<sup>2</sup>

DOH-Okaloosa is a member of the Okaloosa County Anti-Drug Coalition and the Okaloosa County Alliance for Drug Endangered Children and Communities. These groups are comprised of multidisciplinary community members. For more information contact [HealthyOkaloosa@flhealth.gov](mailto:HealthyOkaloosa@flhealth.gov).

### About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county community efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Florida Health CHARTS. (2010-2019). Retrieved from:  
<http://www.flhealthcharts.com/ChartsReports/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=ChartsProfiles.OpioidUseDashboard>

<sup>2</sup> Florida Health CHARTS. (2010-2019). Retrieved from:  
<http://www.flhealthcharts.com/charts/OtherIndicators/NonVitalIndDataViewer.aspx?cid=9870>