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January 19, 2026

## Straight Talk

Welcome to the latest edition of the **Steered Straight Newsletter**—and to a defining moment in our mission.

As we move boldly into 2026, our purpose remains clear but more urgent than ever: to educate, inspire, and empower young people to make positive, life-changing choices. That mission hasn't changed—but it has intensified. And we have no plans of stopping.

Across the country, Michael DeLeon and the Steered Straight team continue to stand on the front lines, reaching communities, families, and young people who need truth, hope, and direction now more than ever. This year, Michael has even more reason to fight—and that fight fuels everything we do.

We are deeply grateful to have you with us on this journey. Your support makes this work possible, and in 2026, we are asking you to stand with Michael, with Steered Straight, and with every life we are committed to impacting. Together, we will continue to inform, educate, and inspire—relentlessly.



### **Hello to you all and to 2026. This year is personal.**

As many of you know, I'm fighting cancer for the third time right now. And while this is *my* battle, it's also a reminder of why we fight every single day at **Steered Straight**.

I'm asking you to fight **with me** and **for me**—but more importantly, for **our kids**, and for every person battling something that can take over their life if it isn't confronted head-on.

We all talk about prevention.

We all say children are our future.

But too often, we don't truly pay attention until the warning signs are screaming—until crisis forces us to look.

In 2026, let's stop waiting for crisis.

Let's give the most important issues the attention they deserve *before* lives are changed forever.

Let's push forward together to make real change—for ourselves and for our future... **our children**.

And let's hold those responsible for the vaping and drug epidemics **accountable**. Let's educate the heck out of everyone—parents,

kids, schools, communities—so the poison never goes in their mouths to begin with.

I feel more passionate than ever about protecting the people I love so dearly. This fight has only strengthened my resolve.

I'm still standing.  
I'm still fighting.  
And I'm not doing it alone.

Let's make 2026 the year we confront the hardest issues head-on—and refuse to look away.

**Together, we can make a difference.**

**- Michael DeLeon**

**Founder, Steered Straight**

## Road Warrior



## How the Miles Make a Difference

Michael always leaves the places he presents to as a changed person. He gets so many Blessings from what we do and the powerful message we carry. The positive feedback and love receives is what keeps him going! This week has been beyond special! All the amazing people in Alaska uplifted Michael this week like never before. Maybe it has a little to do with his personal cancer battle too, but he feels we made an incredible impact on many people! GOD'S MISSION!!!

How beautiful is it when a staff member at one of the schools Michael presented at reaches out to invite him to speak at their local NA meeting? Great people who all want to live their best lives and create the best environment for their children and families! Sharing Hope and Strength everywhere he can!!! Honored!!!

Steered Straight

## In The News



### Possible New Vape Restrictions in Tennessee

By Thunderbolt Newsroom / January 16, 2026

The Tennessee Legislature is strongly considering restricting the retail sale of nitrous oxide products in vape shops.

Public health researchers are seeing a rise in serious injuries and deaths nationwide. Under the Tennessee proposed law, vape shops caught selling nitrous oxide would face escalating fines.

Repeat violations could result in the suspension or revocation of licenses. Manufacturers who knowingly distribute banned products could be fined up to \$10,000 per product.

Often referred to as *laughing gas*, nitrous oxide has long been used in medical and dental settings and is legally sold as a culinary product, most commonly in whipped cream canisters.

But researchers said the versions now widely available in smoke and vape shops are repackaged, flavored and marketed for recreational use, with dangerous consequences.

### On the Road to Recovery

Steered Straight and Recovery Army sat down with Joe Ramirez. Joe's story of addiction isn't typical. Joe describes himself as a "late bloomer" as far as his using and addiction goes. He started drinking around the

age of 16 and found a sense of feeling really normal and very good about himself. After high school he started drinking and smoking marijuana every day. Joe and his girlfriend were expecting a child and they were kind of wild times. He felt he should do something more responsible so he joined the Marine Corps. Joe ended up with the military police and became a certified breathalyzer operator. He would refuse coming in to administer tests because he himself had been drinking. He would use when he was off of work but had to be extra careful because they would test him, but it didn't stop him. His usage and an accident landed him in jail. To see what else transpired, how he spiraled, and what finally led Joe to sobriety please click the link below and hear his story in his own words.

To see more stories of hope and inspiration please visit:

[www.recoveryarmy.com](http://www.recoveryarmy.com)



STEERED STRAIGHT

## TABLE TALKS

Michael has created workbooks for parents and children that guide them in managing relationships and discussing difficult topics beyond drug and alcohol abuse. Each month, he focuses on a different subjects and offers many different topics of conversation and activities you can do with your children to help foster that deep connection and communication that is so vital.



**Table Talks and Dashboard Conversations** is an in-depth conversation guide for parents and kids. You can order through [Amazon](#) or the [Steered Straight website](#).

## The Month of January: Drug Epidemic Month

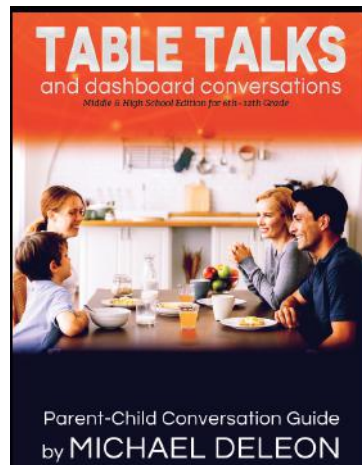
The focus of January is the drug epidemic. Through this month we will highlight certain aspects of the drug epidemic and what to discuss with your children but make no mistake, the drug epidemic is a 12 month, 365 days a year problem and should always be on the table for discussion.

**This week of January I would like to encourage you to have a conversation with your child about the dangers of taking a medication that is not prescribed to them. Help them think this through. For one it is illegal but it is dangerous! We can't know what is in any pill, prescription or not, unless it came directly from the pharmacy.**

**Today people can buy a pill press and press anything into a pill. It is a scary world we live in. I would steer them away from taking anything unless it is handed out by you, the parent, or another trusted adult you tell them it is okay to take over the counter medication from. Let them know that you are always there for them to talk to. Grow closer with them by having this valuable discussion.**

Please educate yourself and have these valuable conversations with your kids. It can literally change their lives!

Spend the week connecting, educating, and building your kids up! The more we open up with kids, the more they will open up to the important adults in their lives.



## Headlines We Are Following

[vapes-are-3000-times-dirtier-than-a-toilet-seat-and-that-adds-to-what-already-makes-them-a-serious-health-threat](#)

[when-a-tennessee-sheriff-warns-about-teens-and-kratom-every-state-should-pay-attention](#)

[why-parents-are-being-shut-out-of-life-saving-drug-information-and-why-that-should-outrage-every-one-of-us](#)

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## Contact Steered Straight

Michael and his team of professional Steered Straight speakers are eager to meet you in person and make a profound impact on your students, staff, and community. To bring their inspiring message to your next event, contact Steered Straight to schedule.

[CONTACT STEERED STRAIGHT](#)



## Follow On Social Media



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Watch now on TikTok

@steeredstraight

**Click on the photo to view the post!**

Michael in his element on Instagram. He had presentations all day and evening. Impacted the entire village...Staff workshops, middle and elementary schools, a parent night. So much information and a non-stop whirlwind of prevention education.

A great reminder on TikTok....Does your school have a vaping issue? Let's stomp out vaping and let Steered Straight help! Bring one of our amazing presentations to your school.

Michael DeLeon and the team at Steered Straight are working hard to ensure this generation gets what they need to change the world. No other program like it and no one delivers the message better. All for the kids! Follow Michael and Steered Straight on social media so you don't miss a beat!

#steeredstraight #motivator #explore #advice #drugfree #antivaping #recovery #quitvaping #stayinyourlane



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