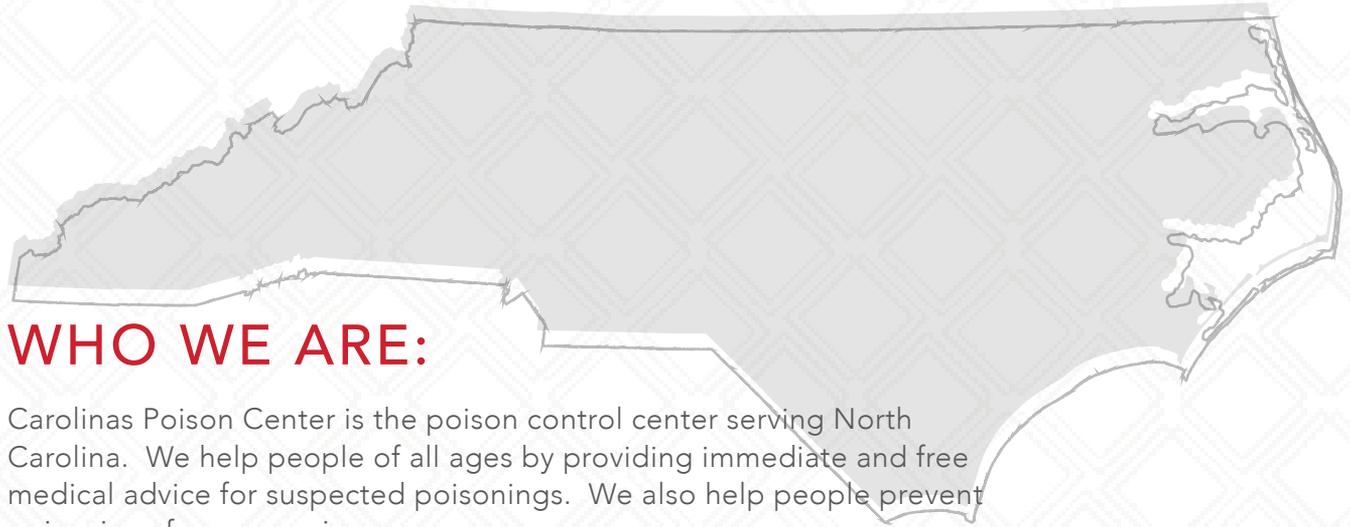


**CAROLINAS POISON CENTER**  
**BIENNIAL REPORT 2016 | 2017**



**POISON**  
**He****p**<sup>®</sup>  
**1-800-222-1222**



## WHO WE ARE:

Carolinas Poison Center is the poison control center serving North Carolina. We help people of all ages by providing immediate and free medical advice for suspected poisonings. We also help people prevent poisonings from occurring.

However, many people are unsure of what to do, or how serious an exposure might be, when they or a loved one encounter something that's potentially poisonous.

We hope this report will help you get to know the poison control center and learn why we are the first and best choice for poisoning care.

*Carolinas Poison Center—providing the right care, at the right time, in the right setting.*



## Did You Know?

- The Carolinas Poison Center is here 24/7/365 to answer your questions.
- Nurses and pharmacists provide the advice when someone contacts the center.
- There's often no need to call 911 or go to the hospital. We provide advice right on the spot that lets you know whether the situation can be handled at home.



*"I just want to thank the woman I spoke to. I didn't know what to do, and she helped me."*

-Mom of a 2-year-old who called when her child got the wrong medicine.

# Carolinas Poison Center BY THE NUMBERS

2016-2017



**151,405**  
CALLS  
ANSWERED



**2 out of 3 Patients**  
ARE MANAGED AT HOME.



**\$14 MILLION**

Amount saved in averting unnecessary ER/  
urgent care visits or ambulance transports.\*



\* 2017 caller survey conducted by Carolinas Poison Center

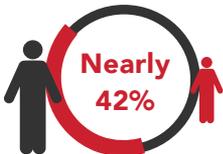


**23%** of contacts were from other nurses, pharmacists, or doctors seeking help for patients they were treating.

**6 OUT OF EVERY 10**



calls concerned a pharmaceutical substance.



of cases were about **ADULTS** aged 20 or older who were exposed to a possible poison.

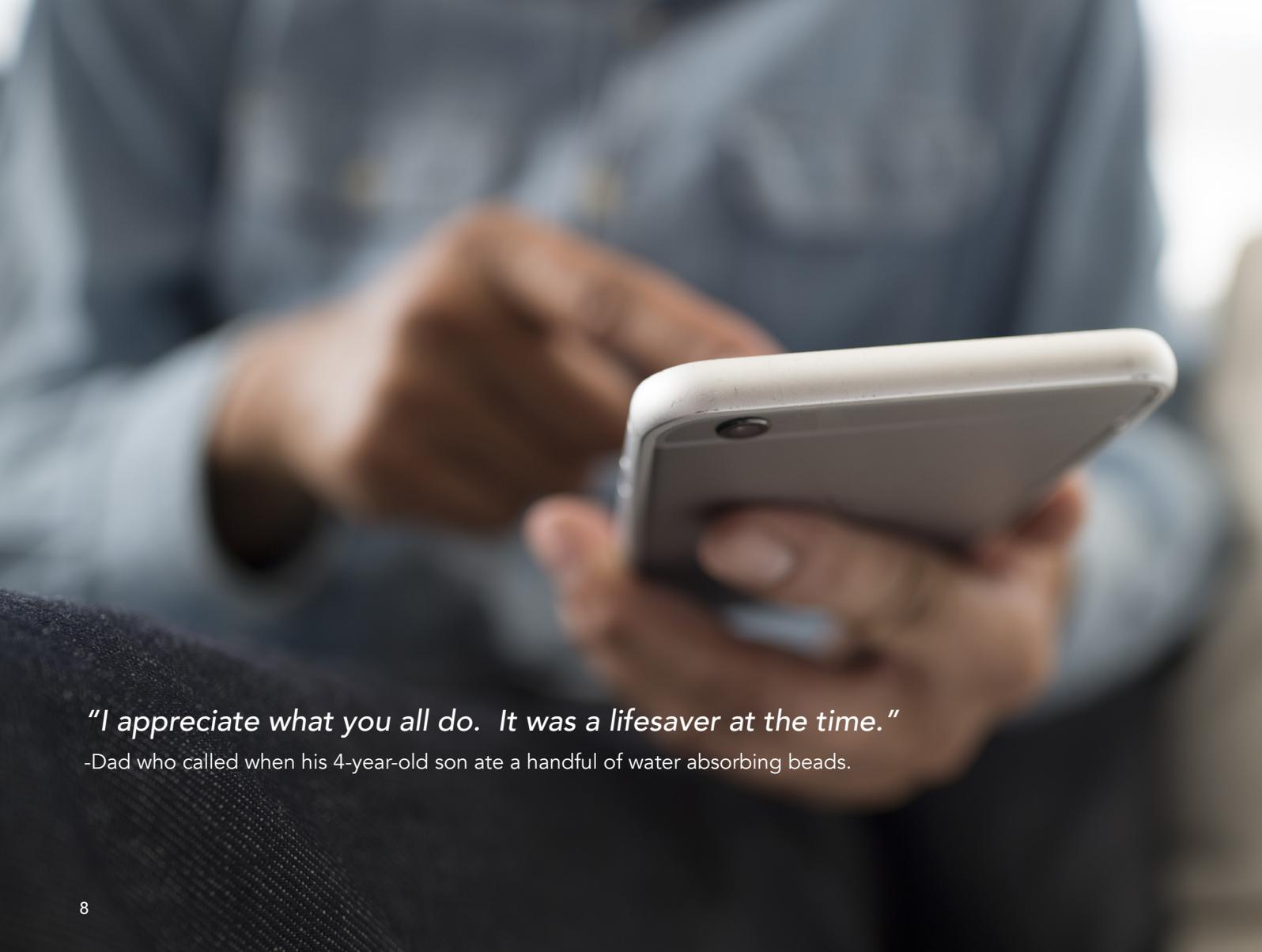
**#1 SUBSTANCE**



people contact the center about:

**PAIN RELIEVERS**

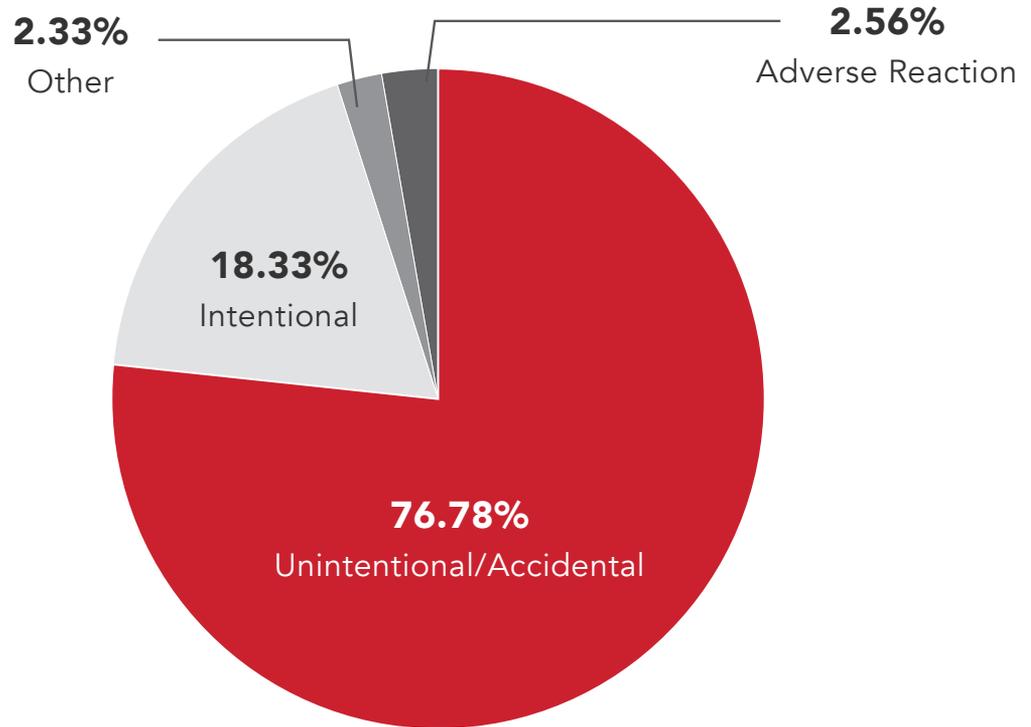
*(over-the-counter and prescription)*



*"I appreciate what you all do. It was a lifesaver at the time."*

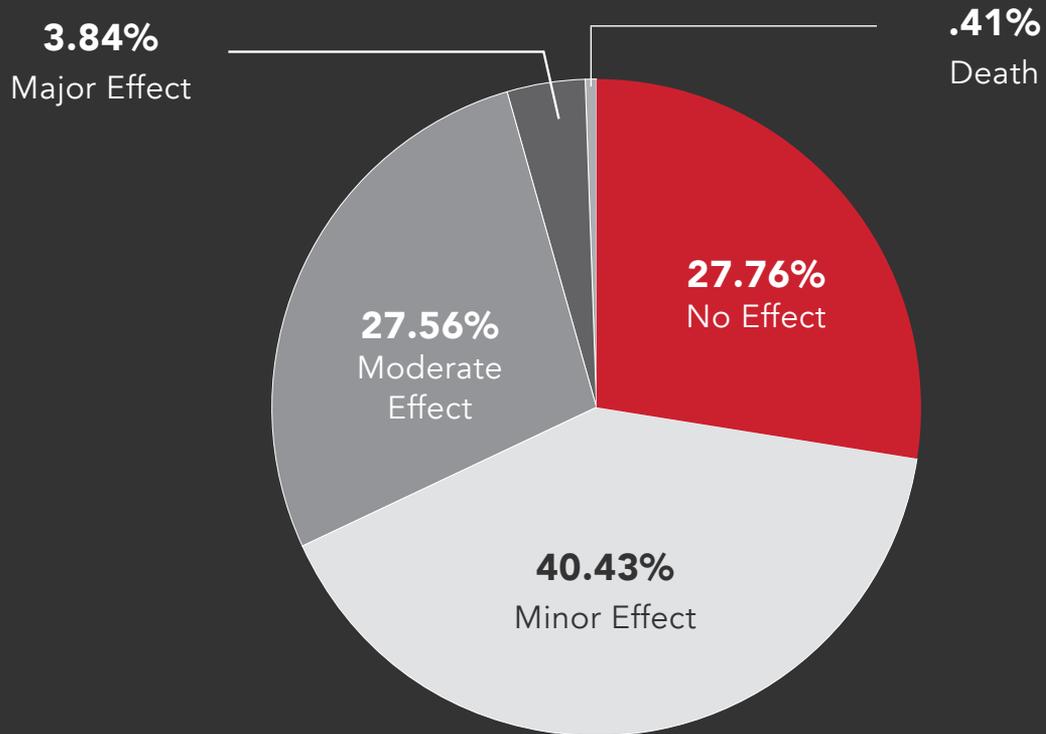
-Dad who called when his 4-year-old son ate a handful of water absorbing beads.

# WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR THE EXPOSURE?



# WHAT EFFECT DID THE EXPOSURE HAVE ON THE PERSON?

Includes cases followed to a known outcome



*"I thank you kindly."*

-Senior adult who called when he took his morning pills along with his wife's pills by mistake.



# Technology Breakthrough



On November 1, 2017, Carolinas Poison Center launched an online chat service, allowing people to chat their concern or question in real time to a nurse or pharmacist at the center. Teens all the way to senior adults chatted with us, and they needed help for the same reasons callers do. Chatters were people who took the wrong medicine or were worried about children who ate something they shouldn't have. Even some healthcare providers used chat to ask us how to manage poisoned patients. During the last two months of 2017, the poison center took 108 chats.

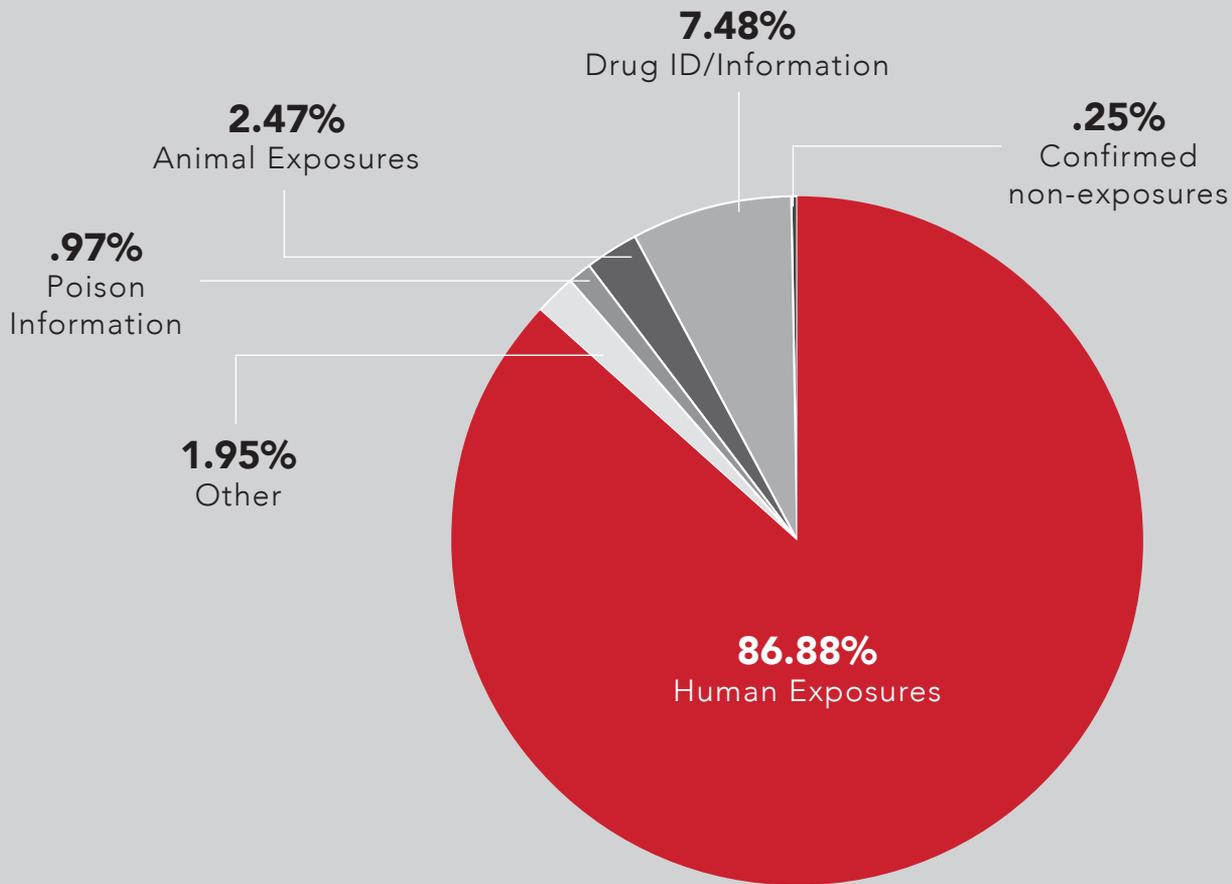
Carolinas Poison Center sought to promote this service through the creation of animated Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and online banners. The PSAs featured poison exposures that are common in both childhood and adulthood and can be viewed in the Videos & PSAs section of [www.NCPoisonCenter.org](http://www.NCPoisonCenter.org).

People can also get help online through webPOISONCONTROL<sup>®</sup>, a triage tool created by poison control experts. The tool helps determine the best course of action for the situation at hand. It gives users advice about when they can safely stay at home, when they should call poison control for further help, or when they should go to an Emergency Room. In 2016-2017, there were 3,289 cases from North Carolinians who used the online webPOISONCONTROL<sup>®</sup> tool.

Now with the option to either call, chat, or use the online triage tool, people can choose to receive trusted advice in the way that's most convenient for them.

# CALL TYPE

What prompted a contact to the center?



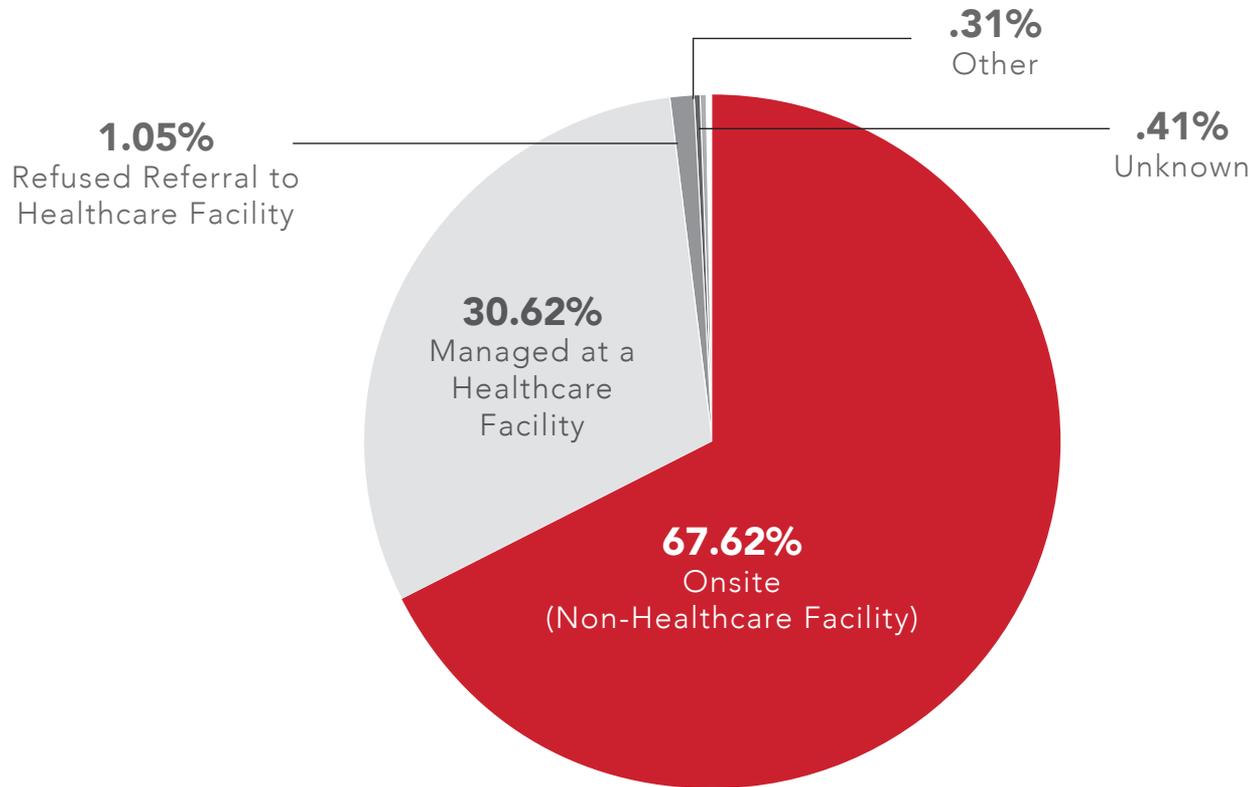
*“What a great service for our communities.  
Thank you so much.”*

-A daughter-in-law chatted with us when her father-in-law accidentally took too many digestive pills.



# MANAGEMENT SITE

Where was the care provided?



## Spotlight on Poisonings: e-cigarettes

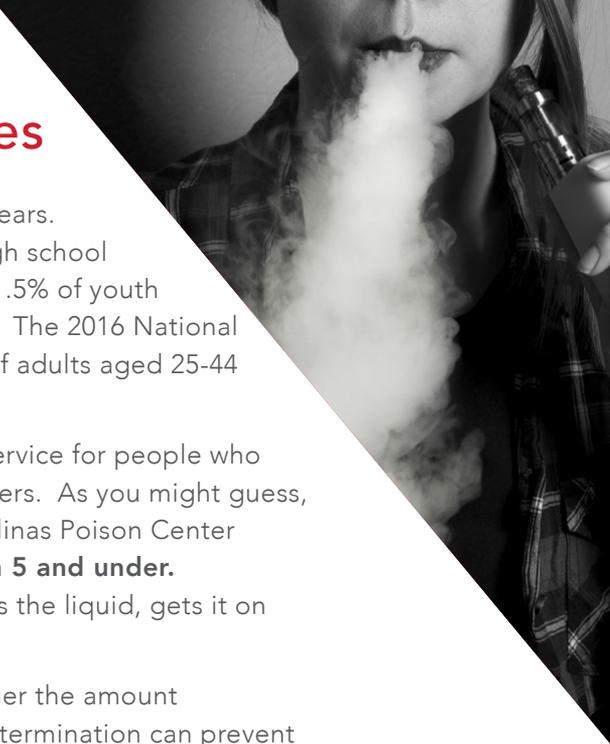
The use of e-cigarettes has continued to increase over the last several years. According to the 2017 National Youth Tobacco Survey, nearly 12% of high school students say they've used e-cigarettes in the last 30 days. In 2011, only 1.5% of youth reported use. Adult use of e-cigarettes is incrementally increasing, too. The 2016 National Health Interview Study found that 4.7% of adults aged 18-24 and 4.2% of adults aged 25-44 use e-cigarettes.

Poison control centers have emerged as an immediate medical triage service for people who have been unintentionally exposed to the liquid nicotine "vaped" by users. As you might guess, young children are most at risk for these exposures. In 2016-2017, Carolinas Poison Center received **224 calls about e-cigarettes, and 70% pertained to children 5 and under.**

Exposures to liquid nicotine can occur when someone tastes or swallows the liquid, gets it on the skin, or gets it in the eyes.

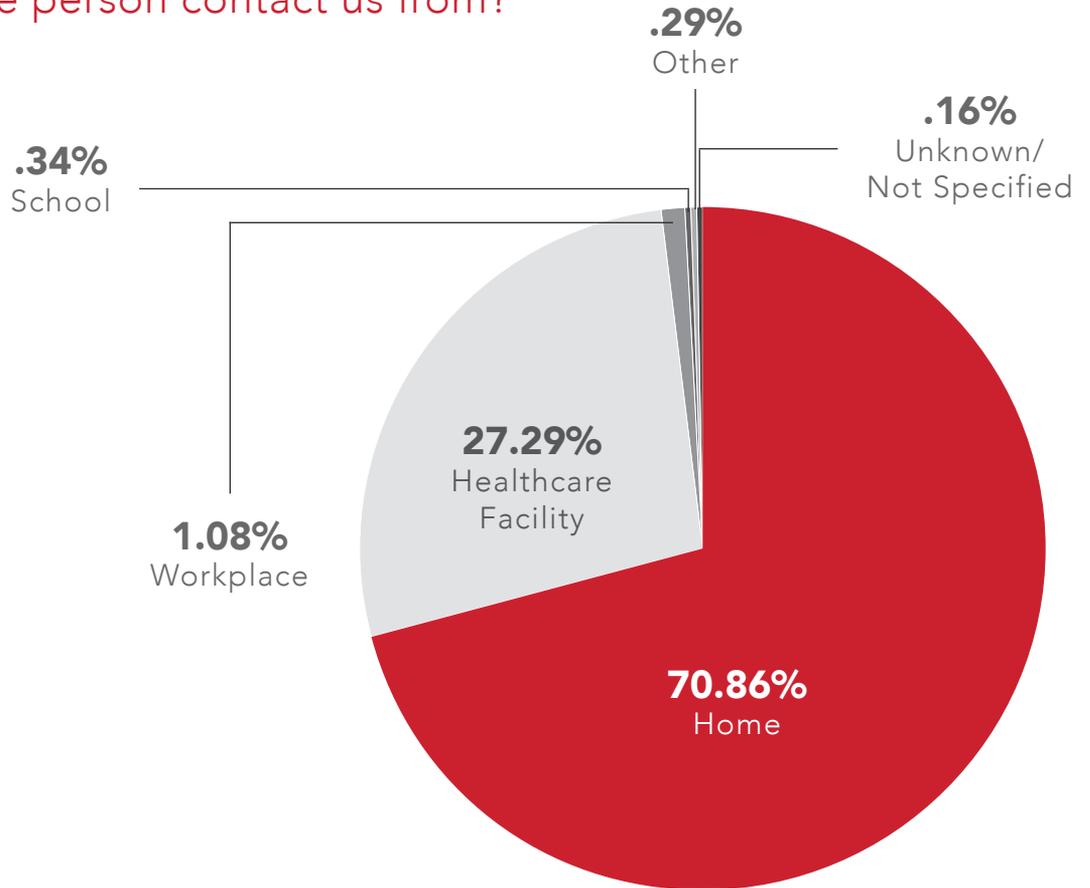
When exposures happen, Carolinas Poison Center can determine whether the amount swallowed or absorbed is dangerous. In many cases, this immediate determination can prevent an unnecessary visit to the Emergency Room. In 2016-2017, about 60% of e-cigarette exposures managed by the poison control center did not need hospital care.

Carolinas Poison Center also seeks to prevent e-cigarette exposures from occurring by providing awareness about the significance of the exposures along with safe storage practices. Visit the e-cigarette fact sheet at **[www.NCPoisonCenter.org](http://www.NCPoisonCenter.org)** for more information.



# CALLER SITE

Where did the person contact us from?



# What substances did people contact us about the most?

<b>DRUGS</b>	<b># of Cases</b>
Analgesics (over-the-counter and prescription pain relievers)	<b>24,578</b>
Sedatives/hypnotics/antipsychotics (like anxiety medications and sleep aids)	<b>12,231</b>
Cardiovascular drugs (heart and blood pressure medications)	<b>9,574</b>
Antidepressants	<b>9,159</b>
Antihistamines	<b>8,855</b>
<b>NON-DRUGS</b>	<b># of Cases</b>
Household cleaning products	<b>11,748</b>
Cosmetics/personal care products	<b>10,149</b>
Pesticides	<b>6,701</b>
Foreign objects (like silica gel packs, glow sticks, toys, and coins)	<b>5,867</b>
Alcohols	<b>4,932</b>

# Silver Anniversary

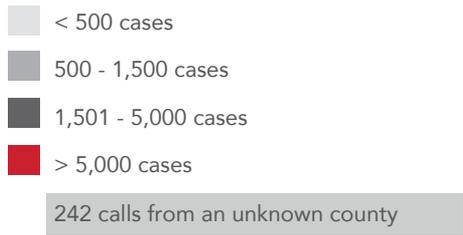
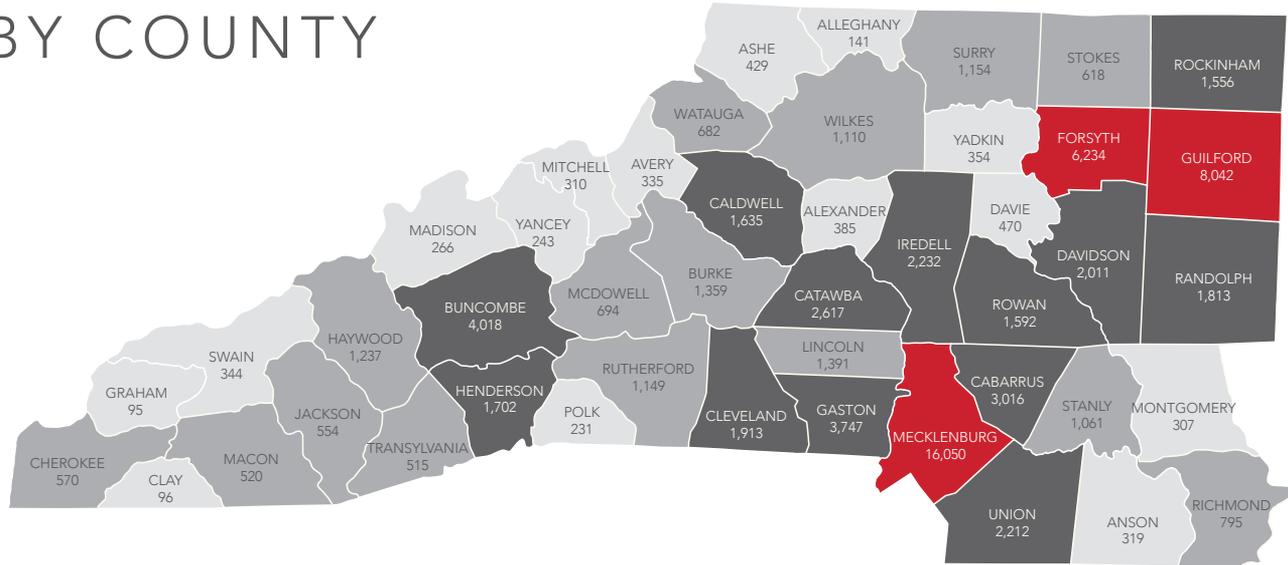
In 2017, Carolinas Poison Center celebrated 25 years of serving North Carolinians. While the capacity and technology to reach patients has changed, the mission and passion to care for them has not.

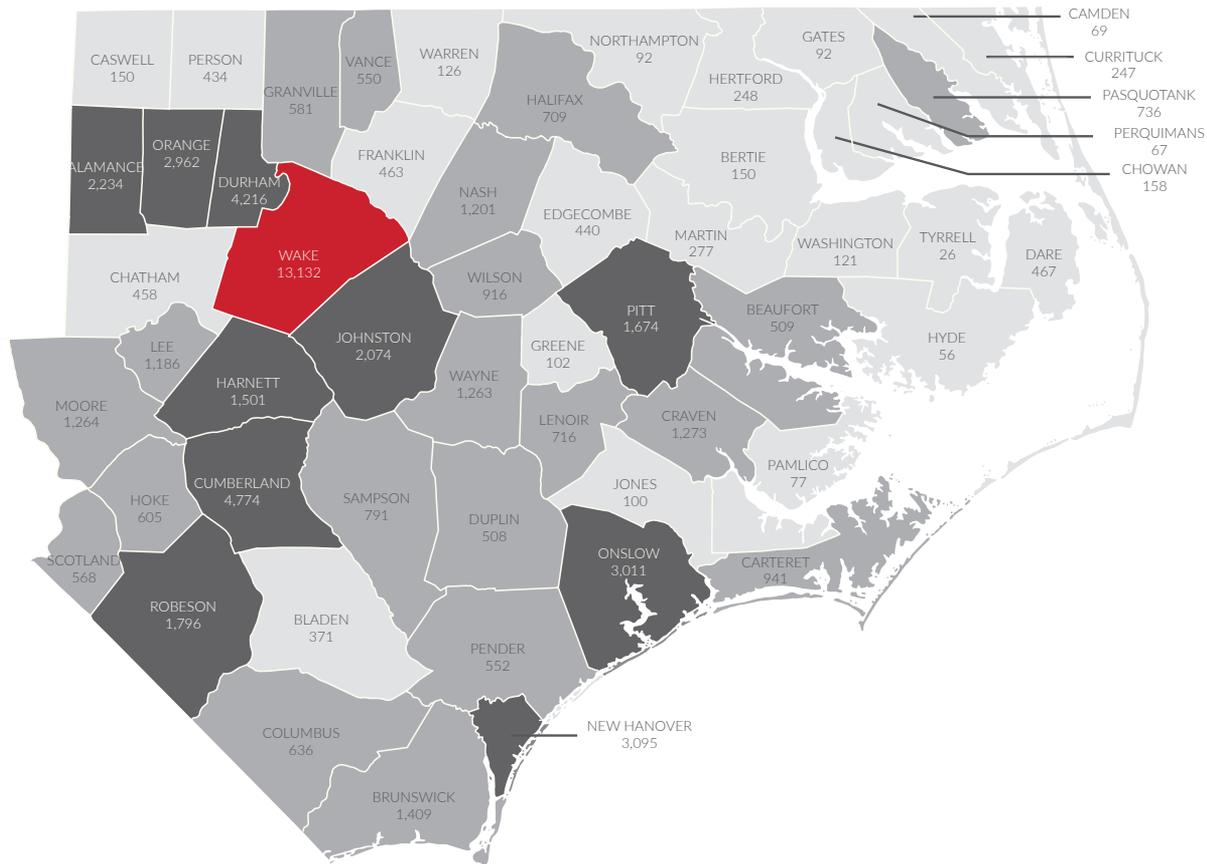
Initially, the Center opened in July of 1992 with only five nurses and pharmacists answering the phones. The original service area included only a handful of counties, but in three short years, the territory expanded to cover the entire state. Today, the center averages over 75,000 contacts a year and employs 17 nurses and pharmacists and several other clinical and administrative directors.

Since Carolinas Poison Center's inception, we've taken over two million calls and have been available to the residents of North Carolina 24 hours a day, 7 days a week free of charge. We're proud to be a part of protecting and improving the health of North Carolinians for the last quarter century.



# CASE VOLUME BY COUNTY





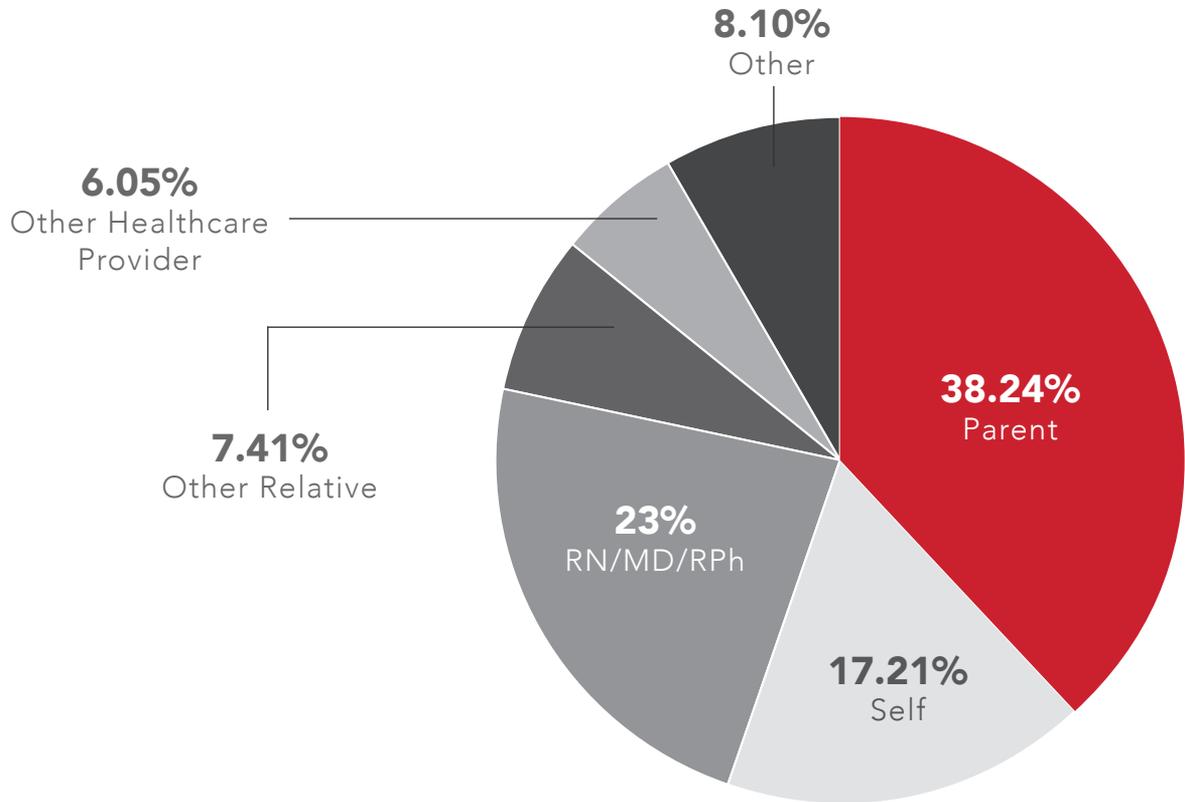


*"You guys helped me so much when I was panicking."*

-Mom who called when her 5-year-old swallowed a lithium button battery.

# RELATION TO PATIENT

Who contacted us on behalf of the patient?



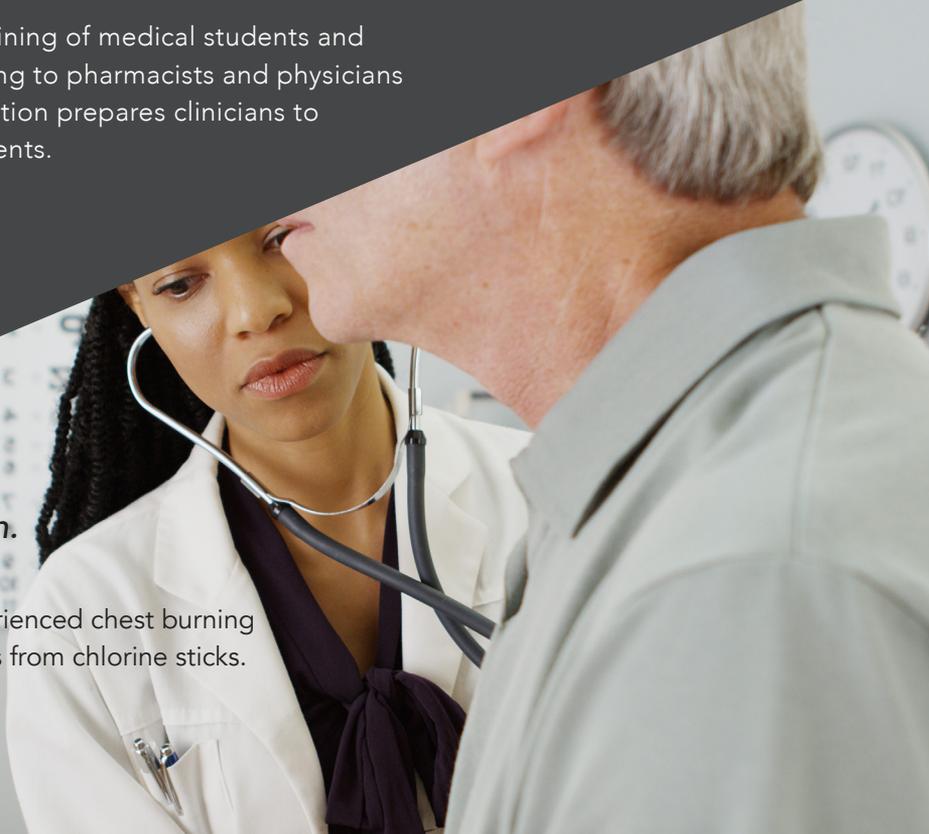
## Helping Other Clinicians

Carolinas Poison Center primarily helps the public with poisoning exposures, but healthcare providers rely on our advice as well. An increasing number of calls and chats come from other healthcare providers who are looking for treatment advice for their poisoned patients. In fact, 1 in 4 contacts to the poison control center in 2016-17 came from another healthcare provider.

Carolinas Poison Center also invests in the training of medical students and fellows. The center provides toxicology training to pharmacists and physicians through fellowships and rotations. This education prepares clinicians to recognize, assess, and manage poisoned patients.

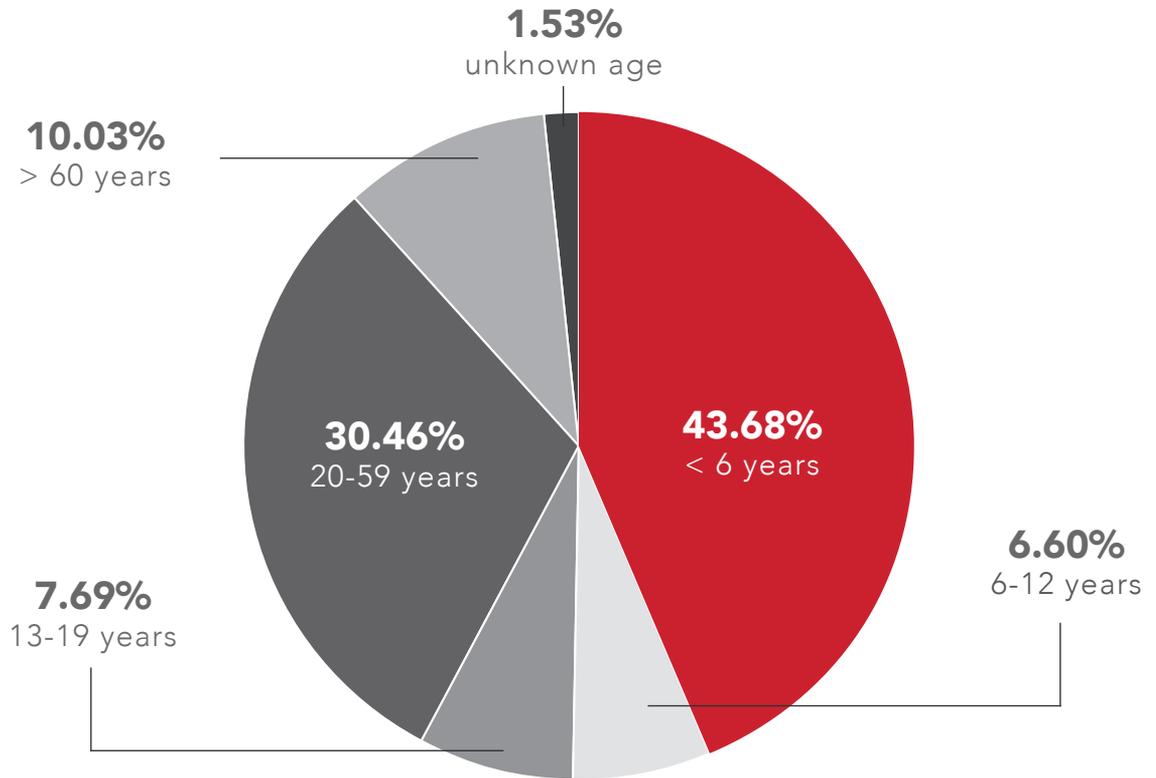
*"Thank you for checking back on him.  
We appreciate what you guys do."*

-A nurse who called when an adult patient experienced chest burning and excessive coughing after inhaling the fumes from chlorine sticks.



# PATIENT AGE

What was the age of the patient?



# Partners in Public Health

As a statewide entity, Carolinas Poison Center can quickly detect poisoning trends or outbreaks across North Carolina. Carolinas Poison Center partners with public health in responding to dangerous poisoning trends like the insurgence of synthetic cannabinoids or contaminated heroin.

The poison control center is integrated with health agencies and coalitions like the NC Division of Public Health, the Child Fatality Taskforce, local health departments, and other opioid workgroups to coordinate efforts surrounding the approach, treatment, and prevention of poisonings.

In addition, Carolinas Poison Center sends data to the North Carolina Disease Event Tracking and Epidemiologic Collection Tool (NC DETECT) to assist epidemiologists with identifying poisoning outbreaks. The Carolinas Poison Center also sends data to the American Association of Poison Control Centers (AAPCC) National Poison Data System (NPDS). All U.S. poison control centers across the country send their data for the AAPCC to track and monitor poison exposures nationwide.

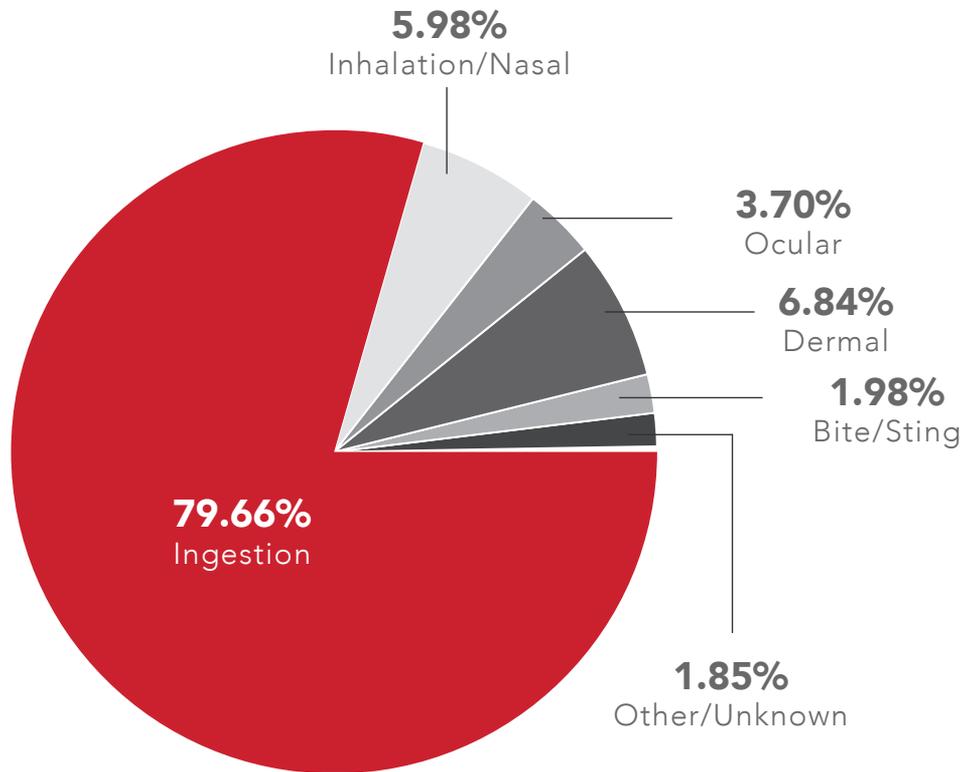


*"Thank you for making this not so stressful."*

-Mom who called when her child got a  
taste of dishwashing detergent.

# EXPOSURE ROUTE

What was/were the route(s) of exposure?





## Preventing Poisonings

One of our priorities is to help prevent poisonings from occurring. In fact, the mission of Carolinas Poison Center is “to serve the people and healthcare professionals of North Carolina by providing information and assistance in the prevention, treatment, and surveillance of poisonings and overdoses.”

Carolinas Poison Center emphasizes community-based poison prevention by...

- providing in-person education about poison prevention behaviors and techniques
- maintaining online education curriculum for community, public health, or school-based educators
- training others to deliver poison prevention education in their communities
- offering education materials to North Carolinians through our online store: **[www.PoisonShop.org](http://www.PoisonShop.org)**.

# THE TOP 5 Most Distributed Education Materials in 2016-2017



**Poison Help Magnet**  
37,765 distributed



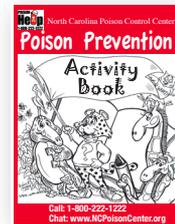
**Mini Magnet**  
12,290 distributed



**Poison Safety Brochure**  
11,923 distributed



**Snake Brochure**  
11,142 distributed



**Children's Activity Book**  
10,047 distributed

## PUBLIC EDUCATION STATISTICS for 2016-2017:

Number of education material orders: **2,461**

Materials distributed: **151,916 units**

Store page views: **88,175**

Education events/conferences attended: **35**

**Want help by chat?**

Visit [www.NCPoisonCenter.org](http://www.NCPoisonCenter.org) and click on the "Chat" circle.

**Want help by using the online triage tool?**

Visit [www.webPOISONCONTROL.org](http://www.webPOISONCONTROL.org)®.

**Want help by phone?**

Call 1-800-222-1222.



**CAROLINAS POISON CENTER**  
serving all of North Carolina

[www.NCPoisonCenter.org](http://www.NCPoisonCenter.org)

**1-800-222-1222**

