

PREVENTIONPRESS

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IN THE NEWS

Coming Soon! Howell's Heroin Prevention Public Service Announcement: *Stop Heroin. Start Talking. Say No.*



Kristopher King from E Video Productions and Ralph Hoffman, Alliance coordinator

The Howell-Farmingdale Alliance, in coordination with the Howell Township Police Department and Howell public schools, is in the process of filming a community-based heroin prevention public service announcement (PSA) to educate parents and young people about the current heroin epidemic and its direct impact right here in Howell.

“Our goal is to bring to life the heroin epidemic and remind our citizens that Howell is by no means exempt from this nationwide tragedy. The PSA will focus on personal stories and accounts, with all of the filming done right here in Howell,” commented Alliance coordinator Ralph Hoffman. “It is here, it is real, and it is devastating.” In 2012, Howell placed in the top 5% out of all 565 NJ towns for residents admitted to treatment providers for heroin and opiate abuse.

On July 30th, Hoffman spearheaded a roundtable discussion with Howell School District’s assistant superintendent, Patty Callender and substance abuse and bullying coordinator, Jeanna Corrigan; Howell High School’s student assistance counselor, Camille Mussari; Captain Leonard “Tom” Connors of the Howell Township Police Department; Jeffrey Mayfield, Howell Township’s deputy township manager; and Kristopher King from E Video Productions. Open communication and the ex-

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Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet and Save a Life: *Howell Alliance Premieres Project Medicine Drop Disposal Bags*



Getting rid of your unwanted, unused prescription painkillers can save a life. “Keeping opioids [prescription painkillers] around is like keeping a loaded gun in your medicine cabinet,” said Dr. Richard Blondell, director of the National Center for Addiction Training

at the State University of New York in Buffalo, in the September, 2014 issue of *Consumer Reports* cover story, “America’s Scary Pain Pill Habit.” According to Dr. Blondell’s research, most teens addicted to prescription pain pills start with medications obtained from their own homes or through friends.

This summer, the Howell-Farmingdale Alliance launched its Project Medicine Drop prescription disposal bag initiative, becoming the first municipal Alliance in NJ to offer its citizens the disposal bags. Members of the Howell-Farmingdale Alliance created the disposal bag initiative in conjunction with Douglas Collier, the drug initiative coordinator for the NJ Office of the Attorney General.

In 2011, the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs started its Project Medicine Drop program to fight prescription drug abuse. Former attorney general Paula T. Dow commented about the program, “For too many NJ teenagers, addiction begins in the medicine cabinet... Many people mistakenly believe prescription painkillers are less dangerous and less addictive than cocaine or heroin – but they are tragically wrong. The fight against addiction must therefore begin at home.”

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COVER STORIES CONTINUED

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changing of thoughts, information, ideas, and knowledge from multiple perspectives across the community expanded upon the PSA's purpose and message, presenting the realities of the heroin crisis in Howell and addressing what needs to be done to save lives.

E Video Productions will be filming and producing the PSA, with interviews and location shoots conducted across the Howell community throughout the month of August. The PSA is slated to premiere at Howell's elementary, middle, and high school back-to-school nights and will later be shown to students in the Howell schools. It will also air on Howell's local television channel; a link to the video will be posted on the Howell Township website and will be distributed to Howell residents via a community email blast.

"We will seize every opportunity we can to reach our citizens with this PSA and its powerful, extremely important message against heroin that simply cannot be ignored," shared Hoffman. "The PSA is a coming together of real people and organizations from across our community to join forces against heroin. Showing the devastation from the heroin epidemic that has impacted families and kids in Howell living right next door will bring to light the harsh realities of heroin."

Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet and Save a Life: *Howell Alliance Premieres Project Medicine Drop Disposal Bags*

In the United States, 2,500 youths every day take a prescription pain reliever to intentionally get high for the very first time (Office of National Drug Control Policy). In addition, 40 Americans die each day from an overdose caused by prescription painkiller abuse (U.S. Centers for Disease Control).

The Project Medicine Drop box is permanently located in the Howell Police Department at 300 Old Tavern Road, with anonymous drop off available 24/7, 365 days a year, no questions asked. Disposal can be made with or without the disposal bags.

"We created the bags to educate and remind our citizens that they can help save lives by properly disposing of unwanted prescriptions. It is quick and simple with the bags and drop box," said Howell-Farmingdale Alliance coordinator Ralph Hoffman. The bag is small enough to mount on your refrigerator or bulletin board as a constant reminder.

Disposal bags are available at the Howell Township Municipal Building (4567 Route 9), community and school-based events, participating local pharmacies, and through the Howell-Farmingdale Alliance (732-938-4500 ext.4012). Call the Alliance with any questions or for more information; visit Project Medicine Drop online at:

www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/meddrop.

Remember, your participation can help save a life.

Prevention Tips:

What Can I Do? What Should I Know?

Know the Signs of Opiate Abuse:

Partnership for a Drug Free NJ (www.drugfreenj.org/talknownj/) provides parents with an interactive quiz, "How Much Do You Know About the Effects of Opiates on Your Child?" It reveals the signs and symptoms of opiates and prescription painkillers. There is also an informative video, "Moms Know Best: A Crucial Message for Parents," featuring Howell parent Abby Boxman whose son accidentally overdosed and died on July 13, 2011. Here are some warning signs that your child might be abusing opiates: depression, irritability, lowered motivation, itching, fatigue, nodding off, nausea, confusion, anxiety attacks, euphoria, and dilated pupils. Stay informed and communicate with your kids.

IN OUR COMMUNITY

The mission of the Howell-Farmingdale Alliance is to eliminate drug addiction, underage drinking, and tobacco use by our community members by collaborating with other sectors from across our community (police, government representatives, educators, businesses, community service groups, and the public) to promote public awareness and education about the problem; to provide a viable network of public outreach resources to combat addiction; and to extend life skills training opportunities to empower youth to make the right choices when confronted with life-impacting decisions. To accomplish our mission, we will fundraise and apply for available grants and donations.

Howell High School's SADD

This past June, six soon-to-be seniors from the Howell High School chapter of SADD attended the SADD National Convention in Washington D.C. At the convention, the Howell SADD representatives presented the Heroes & Cool Kids mentoring program they conducted in the Howell middle schools over the past two years.

"It was a real honor for these kids to stand up in front of other SADD groups from around the country and share what they learned about mentoring," commented Camille Mussari, Howell High School student assistance counselor and SADD advisor.



Syndee Wurtz, Annie Griffith, and Lexi Seeburger with advisor Camille Mussari at the SADD national convention.

Howell Celebrates National Night Out Against Crime



Ramtown Fire Company members Scarlato and Murphy and probationary member Burke perform a car extrication demonstration.

On August 5th, the Howell community celebrated a successful National Night Out Against Crime, a nationwide, annual tradition that has been in existence for 31 years. National Night Out promotes safe communities and now involves over 37.8 million people and 16,124 communities.

Attendees from the Howell community included the Howell-Farmingdale Alliance; the fire, police, and first aid departments; Howell PAL; the mayor and town council; Howell's Office of Emergency Management; and many local businesses, volunteer organizations, non-profits, and community citizens.

The Howell Police Department conducted a canine demonstration, and the Ramtown Fire Company performed a car extrication demonstration, a reminder of the dangerous and deadly consequences from hazardous behavior behind the wheel. "Most kids think, 'It will never happen to me,'" shared 2nd assistant chief Tom Connolly. "but in reality, we do too many of these in Howell, about 8 to 12 a year. The accidents happen for a variety of reasons, including speeding, driving while intoxicated, and texting while driving."

Upcoming Events

September 9, 2014: Howell Township School District elementary and middle school *back-to-school nights* begin. Find your school's date and time: <http://www.howell.k12.nj.us/>.

September 18, 2014, 6:30 p.m.: Howell High School and other Freehold Regional High School District high schools will host *back-to-school night*.

Reminder! Howell PAL offers many programs to keep our youth constructively active and busy after school and in the evening while promoting socialization, physical activity, interests, and hobbies. Visit www.howellpal.org to learn more and register.

“Save the date!”

April 27, 2015: The Howell-Farmingdale Alliance and Howell Optimist Club will host their *20th anniversary Mayor's Cup Golf Outing* at Eagle Oaks Country Club. The Alliance's fundraised money will be used for drug prevention efforts in our community, including our fight against the heroin epidemic. Contact Alliance coordinator Ralph Hoffman to participate (732-938-4500 ext. 4012).



**Empty your medicine cabinet and save a life!
Drop unwanted prescriptions in the Project Medicine Drop box at the Howell Police Department. Anonymous and available 24-7.**

Thank you to our sponsor, who makes this newsletter possible.



**For more information and volunteer opportunities visit:
www.twp.howell.nj.us
click on Departments, then Municipal Alliance.**

Howell Farmingdale
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