SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

STEVE BELLONE

NOT MY CHILD

SUFFOLK'S DRUG EPIDEMIC

Press Packet

Suffolk County, Rocky Point School District Launch "Not My Child" Substance Abuse PSA

Parent advocates hail trending video as groundbreaking

(HAUPPAUGE, NY – July 1, 2014) County Executive Steve Bellone, in partnership with the Rocky Point School District, announced the launch of a groundbreaking effort to alert parents to the dangers of substance abuse through a compelling public service announcement. Rocky Point School District is serving as the pilot school district, posting the PSA on its parents portal and requiring parents to view it before they can access their children's

"The launch of this groundbreaking campaign to raise awareness is a critical step toward reducing the alarming rates of prescription drug and opiate abuse we have experienced in Suffolk County and across our Nation," said County Executive Steve Bellone. "I want to thank our parent advocates and the Rocky Point School District for having the courage to stand up and speak out about this crisis."

Entitled "Not My Child: Suffolk's Drug Epidemic", the public service announcement can be viewed at www.suffolkcountyny.gov/substanceabuse as well as www.facebook.com/stevebellone. The PSA has received thousands of independent views since it was first made public.

"As a community, we must work together to fight the growing drug epidemic," said Legislator Sarah Anker. "Through the County's partnership with the Rocky Point School District, this Public Service Announcement can alert parents of the warning signs of drug use and also offer them support and direction. I applaud the brave parents for sharing their stories in the video, in the hope that they will save another child's life."

Rocky Point School District is the first school district in Suffolk County to require parents to view the video. Suffolk County officials hope for more districts to follow Rocky Point's advocacy on this issue.

"With the support of our Board of Education, Rocky Point is committed to working with those in our community to combat the issue of substance abuse head-on and has put forth the necessary resources to continue, as well as build upon, our programs," said Rocky Point School District Superintendent Dr. Michael F. Ring. "We are grateful that the County Executive's office has chosen to partner with the district on such an important matter and were honored to be a part of this project. The district looks forward to continuing to develop this partnership in order to benefit the youth and families of our community and thanks all who lent their voices to such an important cause. As we all know, this topic is of growing concern on a local, regional and national level, and I am proud that our school district continues to lead the way in working to combat this issue."

"This video puts a human face on the opiate crisis that is impacting so many families and Suffolk County and underscores the importance of school families and communities working together to combat addiction," said Jeffrey Reynolds, Executive Director of the LI Council on Alcohol & Drug Dependence. "Kudos to the Rocky Point School District and a special thanks to Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone for his leadership in promoting substance abuse prevention and access to treatment. Every parent in Suffolk County should have access to this eye-opening, life-saving information and I hope other districts will consider posting this video on their websites and parent portals."

The development of the video came as a result of the rising rates of substance abuse related deaths. In Suffolk County, there were approximately 82 documented heroin overdose deaths in 2013, compared to 38 in 2010.

Featured in the public service announcement are Suffolk County residents Tracey Budd and Brian Phillips who both lost their children to substance abuse. Both Budd and Phillips volunteered to tell their stories in hopes of preventing the same tragedy that befell their families.

"My hope is for parents to be aware, to not turn a blind eye," said Budd. "Don't be afraid to do your job as a parent - it may save their life."

"Thank you for not being afraid to do this project," said Phillips. "As we move forward, we need to lose the stigma attached to drug addicts. It's a disease that you can recover from on a daily basis."

Bryan Phillips and Tracey Budd, who both lost children to substance abuse, share their stories in "Not My Child: Suffolk's Drug Epidemic."

Rocky Point Parents Required to Watch New Substance Abuse PSA

Parents must now watch a five-minute PSA before gaining access to their child's report card.

By Sonaiya Kelley
July 1, 2014

Before parents of students in the Rocky Point School District can access their child's final report card, they are now required to watch a five-minute public service announcement about the dangers of substance abuse.

"Not My Child: Suffolk's Drug Epidemic," came about as a result of the rising rates of substance-related deaths on the island. In Suffolk County alone, there were approximately 82 documented heroin overdose deaths last year, compared to 38 in 2010.

"The launch of this groundbreaking campaign to raise awareness is a critical step toward reducing the alarming rates of prescription drug and opiate abuse we have experienced in Suffolk County and across our nation," said County Executive Steve Bellone.

The PSA has received thousands of unique views since it was first made public. Featured in the video are Suffolk County residents Tracey Budd and Brian Phillips who both lost children to substance abuse.

"My hope is for parents to be aware, to not turn a blind eye," said Budd. "Don't be afraid to do your job as a parent – it may save their life."

"As a community, we must work together to fight the growing drug epidemic," said Legislator Sarah Anker. "Through the County's partnership with the Rocky Point School District, this public service announcement can alert parents of the warning signs of drug use and also offer them support and direction.

"I applaud the brave parents for sharing their stories in the video, in the hope that they will save another child's life."

Unveiling PSA Created through County Partnership

Members of the Rocky Point School District were joined by Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone during its late June Board of Education to debut a public service announcement created as part of the district's participation in a countywide drug awareness program pilot. The district was selected to take part in this pilot in recognition of its continuing proactive efforts to mitigate teen substance use and abuse as well as assist the county in increasing awareness of this growing epidemic. A copy of the piece can be viewed via the district's Parent Portal, website and by clicking the link below. The district believes the messages included in the PSA are profound and encourage appropriate audiences to review it at their convenience.

http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=3JUEvleXFpI&feature=youtu.be

TIMES BEACON RECORD MEDIA

JUNE 25 2014

Rocky Point releases drug awareness video

By Erika Karp
June 25, 2014

From left, Tracey Budd, Janene Gentile, executive director of the North Shore Youth Council, and Bryan Phillippe at a drug awareness forum last year. File photo by Erika Karp

The Rocky Point school district and Suffolk County officials premiered a raw, heartbreaking and informative drug awareness video at Tuesday's school board meeting, leaving hardly a dry eye in the high school auditorium.

Last March, the district, the county and local parents joined forces in an attempt to spread awareness and help stop the heroin abuse that many communities across the Island are battling. The five-minute public service announcement features parents Tracey Budd, who lost her son Kevin, a 26-year-old Miller Place graduate, to an overdose in September 2012, and Bryan Phillippe, who lost his son Gabe, a 15-year-old from Rocky Point, in April 2010. In the video, Budd and Phillippe share their stories, while addiction facts, warning signs and resources are presented to viewers.

"I think as a mom you tend to always be the one who says, 'No, not my child,'" Budd said in the video.

The video will be posted on the Suffolk County Government YouTube channel on Thursday, and Rocky Point parents who log on to the district's parent portal will have to watch the video before they can view grades and report cards. Superintendent Michael Ring said the district is also looking to present the video at student orientations.

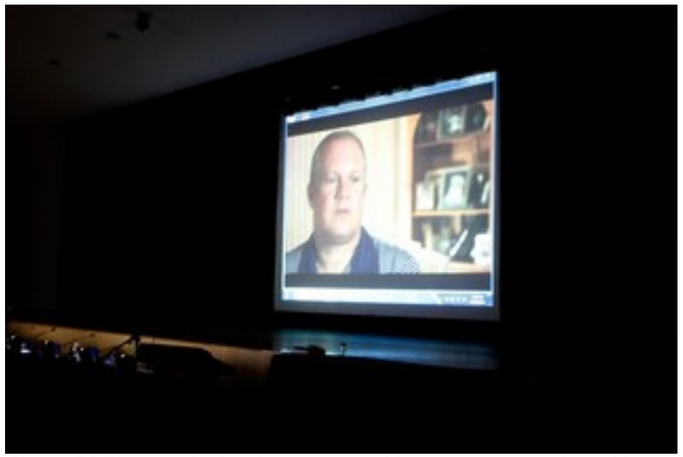
Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said the drug epidemic won't be stopped by law enforcement alone, and entities need to work together to prevent young people from becoming addicted. Bellone said the video would help educate parents.

RockyPoint_drugpsa_0623
Bryan Phillippe, who lost his 15-year-old son, appears in the public service announcement produced by the county and the Rocky Point school district. Photo by Erika Karp
"Heroin abuse, prescription drug abuse, can happen to any child in any community in our country," Bellone said. "And the first and most important thing that parents need to know … [is] that no one is immune to this."

Bellone also praised the Rocky Point school board and Ring for stepping up and not shying away from a taboo issue.

"The challenges are tremendous," Ring said, regarding the uphill battle that school districts and communities are facing.

Ring, who spoke before the New York State Senate Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction earlier this year, said he was pleased to see the state legislature pass a series of bills aimed at addressing the issue, ranging from supporting educational programs in schools to prescription drug take-back programs.



Bryan Phillippe, who lost his 15-year-old son, appears in the public service announcement produced by the county and the Rocky Point school district. Photo by Erika Karp

In addition to working with the county on the video, the district has expanded its substance abuse programs and employs two substance abuse counselors.

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker (D-Mount Sinai) said she believes that communities need to work together to make a difference.

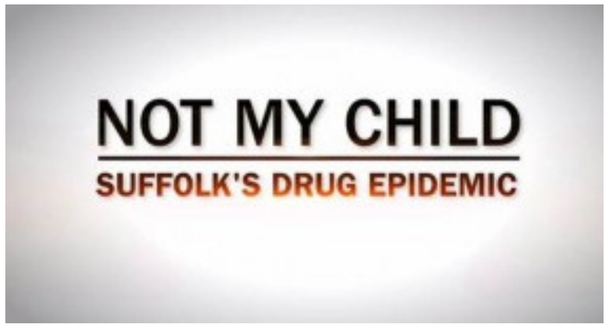
THE HUNTINGTONIAN

AUGUST 8 2014

Not My Child: Suffolk's Drug Epidemic

August 8, 2014

County Executive Steve Bellone, in partnership with the Rocky Point School District, announced the launch of a groundbreaking effort to alert parents to the dangers of substance abuse through a compelling public service announcement. Rocky Point School District is serving as the pilot school district, posting the PSA on its parents portal and requiring parents to view it before they can access their children's final report card.



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The development of the video came as a result of the rising rates of substance abuse related deaths. In Suffolk County, there were approximately 82 documented heroin overdose deaths in 2013, compared to 38 in 2010.

Featured in the public service announcement are Suffolk County residents Tracey Budd and Brian Phillips who both lost their children to substance abuse. Both Budd and Phillips volunteered to tell their stories in hopes of preventing the same tragedy that befell their families.

"My hope is for parents to be aware, to not turn a blind eye," said Budd. "Don't be afraid to do your job as a parent – it may save their life."

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THE HUNTINGTONIAN

AUGUST 10 2014

Not My Child: Suffolk's Drug Epidemic, Part 2

August 10, 2014

Suffolk County Police Second Precinct officers responded to a home to find a young person passed out from an apparent heroin overdose.

This is a scene that has become all too familiar in recent years. What is especially worrisome is the fact that many of heroin's newest addicts are in their teens or early 20s. Many come from middle- or upper-middle-class suburban families.

Possible reasons for the spike in heroin use are its widespread availability and low cost. A bag of heroin can sell for a significantly lower amount than Cocaine and the high induced lasts for several hours longer than the high from Cocaine. Painkillers like Vicodin or OxyContin are usually more costly than heroin.

Several years ago, former County Executive Steve Levy created a task force and resource guide to help combat heroin addiction. The purpose was to bring awareness that this is at epidemic proportions in some neighborhoods including upper middle class suburban areas.

In 2012, a group of local legislators with the support of County Executive Bellone introduced a resolution to train Suffolk county police officers in the administration of Naloxone. This also included supplying sector cars with the drug. Naloxone, more recognized by its trade name, Narcan, is an opioid antagonist that is given to patients with opioid overdose to reverse the effects of the opioid. Patients respond quickly to Narcan, and there are minimal side effects to its use.

Since the program started, more than 800 doses of Narcan have been administered in Suffolk County when police officers arrived on the scene of an apparent drug overdose. Because of the pilot program, they were trained and equipped to deal with the situation. These were mostly young people.

Physical Symptoms of opioid abuse:

- Fatigue, dramatic changes in sleeping patterns
- Persistent cough, frequent illnesses, flu or allergy like symptoms, chest pains
- Red and glassy eyes
- Decrease in short-term memory
- Change in health, personal hygiene, grooming

Physical Symptoms (Heroin Use):

- Constricted, pinpoint pupils
- Nausea, vomiting
- Constipation, cessation of menstruation
- Itching and scratching
- Weight loss
- Needle marks on arms and/or legs
- Dry mouth, runny nose, constant sniffing
- Droopy appearance, as if extremities are "heavy"

Evidence of Heroin Use:

- Burnt gum wrappers, foil
- Burnt spoons, disappearing spoons
- Missing shoelaces (used to tie off arms to inject heroin)
- Pipes, rolling papers, etc.
- Bottles of eye drops used to mask bloodshot, glassy eyes

A few slang terms for heroin: Alquitran, Anti-freeze, Aries, Beast, Big H, Brown Sugar, Brown, Black Tar (type), China White (type), Dope, Dr. Feelgood, H, Junk, Smack, Tigre de Blanco.

These are some of the staggering stats that led County Officials to pass legislation:

- Between 2006 and 2010, Suffolk heroin arrests rose 170 percent, from 486 to 1,315.
- Suffolk County has seen 70 percent more prescriptions for oxycodone than the average for any other state.
- Between 2004 and 2011, the number of overdose victims with oxycodone in their blood jumped 266 percent. In the same time period, the number of overdose deaths attributed to opioids increased 69 percent.
- Between 1996 and 2011, the Suffolk County Drug Court treatment program saw a 425 percent increase in heroin abuse, and a 1,136 percent increase in opioid pill abuse.

Last year a bill that was passed unanimously will now require individuals who have been saved by Narcan to be referred to a treatment center. The new law requires the Suffolk health department to refer those saved by Narcan to area addiction-treatment facilities. A related bill allowing Narcan to be administered by certain civilians, such as parents of addicts and drug-treatment workers, also passed the legislature unanimously.

In Suffolk County there were 82 documented heroin overdose deaths in 2013, compared to 38 in 2010.