

Programming/Resources for Students & Families

Opioid Impact



The Mendon-Upton Regional School District is deeply committed to the instruction of good decision-making and prosocial behaviors for all students in grades K-12. Over the past several years the district has been adding programming to address the social-emotional well-being of children. We consider this programming as a protective factor against the threat of the opioid crisis. The district's programming includes:

- All four schools participate in the **Rachel's Challenge Program** (<http://rachelschallenge.org/>), which provide a sustainable, evidence-based framework for positive climate and culture in our schools. Fully implemented, partner schools achieve statistically significant gains in community engagement, faculty/student relationships, leadership potential, and school climate; along with reductions in bullying, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.
- Nipmuc Regional High School has hosted Chris Herren and the **Herren Project** (<http://www.theherrenproject.org/>) to address students at the high school. School staff and students have embraced the Project Purple Initiative, a national anti-substance abuse initiative that empowers youth to stand up to substance abuse, promotes positive decision making and encourages teens to make a difference in their community.
- Nipmuc also has a solid working relationship with the **Worcester County Sherriff and District Attorney** offices. Over the last two years Assistant DA Julie Lesure has presented on substance abuse and consequences of drug and alcohol use. Sherriff Lew Evangelidis has presented his "Face2Face" Program which provides students with important information about the way drugs and alcohol can impact their lives. (<http://worcestercountysheriff.com/2012/05/03/face2face-with-sheriff-evangelidis/>) Each presentation is followed up with advisory lessons for all students on the science of addiction, stigma and peer influences.
- This year Miscoe Hill Middle School invited former Patriot **Chris Sullivan** to speak with students and parents to share his personal story of addiction, focusing on behaviors, good decision making, managing, and also touching upon the drug epidemic (heroin/opioid) that is prevalent in Massachusetts and the country.
- Miscoe Hill and Nipmuc also hold "**Wellness Weeks**" twice per school year. (<http://nipmucwellness.weebly.com/>). The purpose of these school-wide events is to promote coping skills and create positive wellness practices amongst all students to decrease anxiety, depression, and stress. Practices and habits-of-mind are followed up with purposeful advisory lessons through the school year.
- All of the district nurses have been trained in the **SBIRT** (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) Protocol, an evidence-based screening used to identify, reduce, and prevent problematic use, abuse, and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs. (<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/SBIRT>) This non-invasive screening started this school year, starting with 10th grade students who were screened during yearly health screenings by the school nurse.

For more information- please contact the following staff:

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