



*Working for a Healthier  
Community*

# The Valley Prevention News

February 2015

## Hungry Heart Campaign

To create an understanding and open a conversation about the realities of opiate drug addiction, prevention, and those effected in Vermont and the local community.



*“Addicts shouldn’t be in hiding. If you have cancer, the whole world is fighting and rallying for you. I would argue that addiction is a tougher problem to fight as an individual, without facing a negative stigma and having to hide it. This problem more than anything needs community. Addicts should not fight their problems in the dark.”*

*-Dr. Peter Park.*

### **Community Forum**

**Monday, March 23rd: 6:00-8:00pm**

**Old High School Building**

*Come share your thoughts on what our community can do to address the issues of addiction and prevention on a local level.*

*Soup & bread will be served.*

**Please RSVP to 464-2202 or**

**[info@dvcvp.org](mailto:info@dvcvp.org)**

**Additional Hungry Heart Screenings:**

Whitingham Library-3/11/15 @7pm

Petit Memorial Library-3/12/15 @7pm

The Deerfield Valley Community Partnership (DVCP), held a screening of the Hungry Heart film at Memorial Hall in November 2014. The event attracted 85 members of the community from all ages, walks of life, and professions including business owners, students, teachers, folks in recovery, and families. Hungry Heart is a documentary film that provides an intimate look at opiate drug addiction in Vermont through the eyes and office of pediatrician Fred Holmes as he works with patients struggling with the disease of addiction. Hungry Heart has become more than just a documentary. Since its premier in 2013, the film has been screened in multiple states, and has been turned into an educational tool as well as a conversation starter.

Those who attended the screening, watched Dr. Holmes' as he struggles to help patients by prescribing Suboxone, a symptom-blocking drug, and connecting with them through the healing power of conversation. Most importantly, the film showed our community the many faces and diverse population that make up addicts, as well as the painful search for recovery they face. The DVCP's Hungry Heart campaign did not end with one screening. In December, the prevention group held a second gathering that included both a presentation of information and a discussion. Raina Lowell-one of the brave people who shared their story in the film provided an in-person, face-to-face account of the effects of this disease on a productive life, and the ongoing struggle of recovery. The event focused on education and included workshops to gauge the public's awareness, update on local efforts to fight addiction and gather ideas from the public. Dr. Peter Park, a family physician at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center's Deerfield Valley office, led one of the discussion groups which ranged in topics from prevention efforts in local schools, to brain physiology, and medicated treatment. Park also works with those suffering from addiction, and like Dr. Holmes, prescribes Suboxone to patients. "Everyone is touched by opiate addiction," said Park. "Shining a light on this as a social problem is the right thing to do to treat it." Park said that the Hungry Heart film does a good job of showing the human side of addiction, and puts an emphasis on a much needed attitude shift towards addicts themselves, people who he explains are sick. Park believes that along with community conversation, and erasing negative stigmas the first step will need to be creating 12-step support programs locally.

Marijuana legalization is a controversial and multifaceted issue that is now the subject of serious debate. In May 2014, Governor Peter Shumlin signed Act 155 (S. 247), which required the Secretary of Administration to produce a report about various consequences of legalizing marijuana. The Rand Report was prepared in response to that legislation. It aims to inform the debate in Vermont but does not make a recommendation about whether Vermont should change its marijuana laws. You can access the report at: [www.rand.org/t/rr864](http://www.rand.org/t/rr864).

This legislative session Sen. David Zuckerman (D-Chittenden) is expected to introduce a bill that would legalize the sale, production, and consumption of marijuana in Vermont. According to independent political news website Vtdigger.com, the bill is expected to propose taxing recreational marijuana at \$40 an ounce, generating approximately \$25 million in tax revenue from in-state marijuana users alone. As we know, tobacco and alcohol are profitable, but these industries leave the public to clean up the mess made from addiction and abuse of their products. So too it could be with marijuana. Vermonters will have to decide if health and social costs exceed the benefits.



Vermont began allowing the use of medical marijuana in 2004, and decriminalized small amounts of pot in 2013. If this bill passes, Vermont will become the fifth state to legalize marijuana (joining Washington, Colorado, and most recently Oregon and Alaska) and put Vermont on the road to possibly becoming what some believe will be a lucrative east coast tourism destination for marijuana users. While this may be true, is this what we want Vermont to become? There is a real concern in the medical community about the perception of risk, which has decreased over the last year. According to a study by the Colorado Department of Public Health, a survey conducted of 40,000 Colorado teens shows that 54% believe that use of the marijuana poses "a moderate to serious risk" to their health, down from 58% polled before the vote to allow recreational pot sales. According to an article in US News and World Report, this is not only the trend in Colorado, but also nationwide. The 2014 edition of the University of Michigan's annual "Monitoring the Future" survey finds a continued decline in perceptions of risk associated with using marijuana among eighth, 10th and 12th-grade students. In Vermont, only 31% of high school students think people their age greatly risk harming themselves by smoking marijuana regularly. Currently, marijuana prevalence in Vermont is already among the highest in the nation, particularly among our youth and young adults. In fiscal year 2011, over 1,400 Vermonters were treated for marijuana disorders. 68% of those treated were under the age of 25, 25% were under the age of 18. Of the total population of adolescents in treatment, 64.4% were there for an addiction to marijuana/hashish.

Officials involved on both sides of the issue will take a fact-finding trip to Colorado in February to see first-hand whether legalization is right for Vermont. According to Sevendaysvt.com, a big focus of the trip will be hearing the impact that legalization has had on schools, student performance, and student behavior.

### **Twin Valley High School Pride Group participates in Sticker Shock Activity with local retailers**

**Getting the message out: Don't provide alcohol to minors!**



These stickers were placed on all 12 packs of beer to remind community members not to provide alcohol to minors.

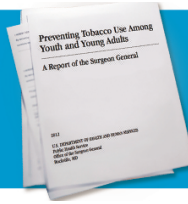
Pictured: Pride members- Caitlin Hunt, Justin Hick, Maddie Howe and Hailey Howe with C&S owner Flo Wilson.

Thank you to C&S, Jacksonville General Store, Mobil Shortstop, First Stop Convenience, and 7-11 for participating in our Sticker Shock Activity to prevent underage drinking!



# COUNTER BALANCE

THE 2012 SURGEON GENERAL'S REPORT CONCLUDED THAT THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE CONSISTENTLY AND COHERENTLY POINTS TO THE INTENTIONAL MARKETING OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO YOUTH AS BEING A CAUSE OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S TOBACCO USE."



## Deerfield Valley Community Partnership

### Steering Committee & Program Staff:

- Carrie Blake
- Dawn Borys
- Bob Edwards
- Keli Gould
- Cindy Hayford
- Andy Hauty
- Kristin Trudeau
- Dario Lussardi
- Karen Molina
- Jen Nilsen
- Arlene Palmer
- Shelley Park
- Lynn Redd
- Rebecca Sweeney

### Upcoming Coalition Meeting Dates

April 27, 2015

May 25, 2015

June 22, 2015

Dinner is served at 5:30

Meeting Starts at 6:00

Join Us!

Everyone's Welcome

Please RSVP to:

[info@dvcv.org](mailto:info@dvcv.org)

or 464-2202

### Guiding Good Choices Workshop For Parents

Tuesdays & Thursdays  
5:30pm-8:00pm

March 31- April 14, 2015 @ TVMHS

You are invited to a five session program that will assist parents in helping their "Twens and Teens" through the many challenges and choices they will make on the road to healthy adulthood.

GGC will be facilitated by Dawn Borys and Kristin Trudeau.

This program has an excellent track record for preventing youth alcohol and drug use.

Parents who participate will receive \$10/class. Dinner & childcare will be provided.

Please call 464-2202 to register or email: [info@dvcv.org](mailto:info@dvcv.org)

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 1,000 TOBACCO RETAILERS IN VERMONT.



RETAIL STORES ARE THE PRIMARY PLACE WHERE TOBACCO COMPANIES RECRUIT NEW TOBACCO USERS, AND NEARLY 90% OF THOSE NEW USERS ARE UNDERAGE YOUTH.

TOBACCO MARKETING INSIDE THE RETAIL ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES ADVERTISEMENTS, BRANDED MERCHANDISE, PRICE PROMOTIONS, AND "POWER WALLS"



THE MORE OFTEN KIDS ARE EXPOSED TO TOBACCO ADVERTISING, THE MORE LIKELY THEY ARE TO START SMOKING. IN FACT, TOBACCO ADVERTISING IS MORE INFLUENTIAL ON TEEN SMOKING THAN PEER PRESSURE.



YOUTH ARE FREQUENTLY EXPOSED TO TOBACCO ADVERTISING IN THE STORE. 70% OF YOUTH VISIT CONVENIENCE STORES AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.



AN ESTIMATED 1/3 OF TEENAGE SMOKING EXPERIMENTATION IS A RESULT OF TOBACCO ADVERTISING.



3,000 YOUTH SMOKE THEIR FIRST CIGARETTE EACH DAY IN THE UNITED STATES - AND 400 VERMONT YOUTH BECOME DAILY SMOKERS EVERY YEAR.

IT'S TIME TO END TOBACCO'S INFLUENCE ON VERMONT'S KIDS.

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

COUNTERBALANCEVT.COM  
[f/COUNTERBALANCEVT](https://www.facebook.com/COUNTERBALANCEVT)



Deerfield Valley  
Community Partnership  
Cindy Hayford,  
Coordinator

P.O. Box 1688  
Wilmington, VT 05363  
(802) 464-2202

Email: [info@dvcp.org](mailto:info@dvcp.org)

We're on the Web!

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



## From the Coordinator's Desk...

The main focus of DVCP's prevention work is **delaying the early onset of all substances-preventing kids from starting to use any kind of drug**. Opiates are obviously an issue in our state and many other states right now. It is clear that youth do not start using substances with heroin. They start with tobacco, marijuana and alcohol. Youth substance abuse prevention involves identifying what exists in our community that contributes to the use of substances (risk factors); and what in our community helps kids stay away from them (protective factors). Our initiatives address these risk factors and work to increase protective factors. We know that availability and easy access to substances is a risk factor. So is perception of harm and perception of use. If youth think a substance is easily available, is harmless and "everyone is using it" they are more likely to try it. We also know that a lack of disapproval of usage contributes to use.

Whether you believe all of the data about marijuana being linked to negative health and social outcomes or not, there is no denying that we do not want our youth, with their developing brains, using marijuana or any other substance. We can assume that marijuana legalization will lead to easier access, higher lack of disapproval, decrease in perceived harm and an increase in perception of use. This has been seen in Colorado and Washington. Early data is not showing an increase in youth use yet, but common sense leads us to believe it will in the long term since adult use *has* increased. If we can prevent youth from using any substances before the age of 21, they will likely not have to deal with any personal addiction issues whether it be alcohol, marijuana or opiates in their lives. This should be considered when deciding to legalize any mind-altering substance.

-Cindy

**If you are interested in attending a DVCP meeting, need information or have questions, please feel free to call me at 802-464-2202.**

PERMITTED  
WILMINGTON, VT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
STANDARD  
PRESORTED

DVCP  
PO Box 1688  
Wilmington, VT 05363