Township of Wyckoff

Municipal Focus on Drug Abuse

Enhanced Resources to Fight Drug Abuse

September 25, 2015 - The use of illegal and harmful drugs throughout the country has reached epidemic proportions. As this problem grows in our own communities, we can no longer rely on national, state or county level programs to address the issue. Too many of our residents are suffering from the disease of drug addiction and too many lives have been lost, particularly young lives, to the scourge of drug abuse. It is time for us to increase and combine resources on the local municipal level to fight this problem like our lives counted on it, because they do.

Currently, we all individually fight drug abuse through the valiant efforts of our police forces, Municipal Alliances, public schools and Bergen County programs. Yesterday Wyckoff announced that they are working together on enhancing resources and working with relevant parties to stem the rising tide of drug abuse in our communities.

To that end, Township of Wyckoff will work with our neighboring towns to develop plans and take actions such as the following.

- The formation of a steering committee, which includes elected officials, police chiefs and municipal alliance chairs to help direct actions and track, report and identify the problem, which allows us to measure our progress against tangible benchmarks.
- The dedication of a pool of funds through annual appropriations from each town and the regional school board and the exploration of grant opportunities from the State.
- The hiring of an independent resource that is professional in the area of drug abuse and mental illness and has knowledge and access to outside resources to help those afflicted. This resource would be available to on a confidential basis to deal with families or individuals in a respectful manner.
- The establishment of a pre-announced enforcement programs such as are routinely conducted for traffic safety issues. Enhanced policing along with education is essential.
- The establishment of a “drug amnesty” program, which would allow families or individuals to seek help from our trained police officers without the fear of being arrested or prosecuted.
- Enhancement of public education through websites, social media, school presentations, town hall meetings, etc. Greater public awareness of the problem and the potential solutions will help stem the tide.
- Petitioning our legislative representatives to enact legislation requiring mandatory substance abuse counseling by a professional addition counselor in order to be released from treatment facility after being brought in for an overdose.

We are committed to fight this epidemic because this is not just one individual, one family, one town, but our entire community at large. It would be easy to ignore this and make believe it doesn’t exist, but it does, and we are determined to work together to address it and win the battle.

Kevin J. Rooney
Mayor
Township of Wyckoff