

**What stays with you from the speakers?**

- The emphasis on the fact that opioid/drug addiction affects the community as a whole
- Candidates do not usually discuss drug addiction; therefore, it was nice to see some show interest
- Saddened/surprised by the statistics on drug use by teens and young adults
- Drug addiction treatment is not as advanced as it should be. In other words, it should be improved
- THEMES:
  - Statistics are surprising
    - Surprising to see that the percentage of students who used opioid + other drugs has increased over the years
    - Substance abuse/drug addiction not only harms the user, but also affects the community as well
    - Drug addicts
      - Necessary treatment should be provided
      - Different measures should be taken depending on the situation
      - Periodic checkups
- It's a crisis
- Treated differently than other illnesses
- 7% of high school students admitted to use of heroin
- Accessibility of services
- Grades of students stayed the same
  - How do they do it and then get to the point where they need help but can't get it?
- Adults are the same as students
- Braking the stigma
- The culture has changed but society hasn't
- Surprised that heroin use is up + others are down
- Heroin use is a medical condition
- Attendance
- Comprehension work down in reading
- Surprised that more parents are not present=apathy
- The parents really can't be the case workers. How difficult it is to deal with their issue
- The statistic that 7% of high school students reported using heroin which equaled to 74 students
- I was shocked to see that heroin use is closely connected to tobacco use
- Mental health stigma. Addiction is a mental health issue
- Great to see cross section
- THEME:
  - How we deal with pain
  - We use alcohol
- 7% of high school students in Reading are using heroin. How grades are higher than expected
- Work/effort of speakers
- THEME:
  - Mother of addict felt un-welcome at hospital, went in @ 10pm left @3am (@ER)
  - E.R did not treat fairly, unkind (Melrose/Wakefield)
  - Insurance only takes into treatment so far
- Doctors over prescribing; sports injury
- Mental health funding
- Fragmented services system
- Lack of ways to ID users
- 7% of H.S. students us heroin
- Need case mgs. After hospitalization of O.d.'s.

**Barriers/concerns?**

- "Addiction create criminals"

- You must remember that addiction is a disease/illness
  - No one wakes up and says, “Today I will become a drug addict”
- Money/funding
  - Money is needed to fund recovery programs for drug/alcohol addicts
- “Addicts are the most manipulative people”
  - They can find the “ins and outs” to hide their addiction/recent use
- Insignificant education on addicts
- Conservative attitudes -> change of attitude needed
- Lost hope for addicts to recover
- THEMES:
  - Heroin addiction
  - More recognition from the court systems that heroin addicts are killers
    - Selling drugs, effecting the community, killing
  - No funding for narcotics detecting
  - Peer-pressure
  - Barriers/concerns
    - Insurance
    - Parental denial/addict’s denial
    - High risk users-how to stop use beforehand
    - Medication safety
    - Embarrassments from drug users/relatives
    - Hospital programs-not suited for immediate care
    - Easy access to drugs
- Money to increase police services for addiction
- More access to treatment
- Youth’s speaking up
- Adult’s/youth’s at different levels of social media/communication styles
- How many students use hookah pens/bring alcohol to school
- Information is shared but it doesn’t go anywhere
- Trying to get parents involved
  - The only ones that really have kids that have a problem get involved
- Slow moving in getting things passed
- Acceptance of the problem
- The only person that can motivate themselves to quit is themselves. Outsiders can provide support, but the person is the final motivation.
- THEME:
  - Connection between crimes and heroin use
  - Parental denial
  - People who don’t want help
- “Disease” of denial
- What does a heroin abuser look like?
  - Recognizing who the heroin abuser is.
- Understand the “disease” concept
- Attitude towards heroin dependent people
- Education-lack of
- How easily accessible it is (heroin)
- People are not aware/ as connected than they should be to this issue
- Difficulty of open dialogue-often a “reaction” rather than pro-action \$(\$)
- Prevention messages consistently and over time )training\_
- Helping those who have nothing & no one
- Challenges of “gateway” drugs
- Legalization of MJ
- Adolescent invincibility
- Drug dealer punishment

- “domestic terrorists murders”
- THEME:
  - Regular conversation w/ frontline folks (police coalition leaders) + legislative folks
- Help is not there
- E.R judged man who overdosed
- After hours of stabilization they discharged him
- Parents taking responsibility for finding beds for children
- Need more connections
- Health card department of health patient x2 Alderman
- Knowledge of the issues + lack of educational ups
- Hospitals programing not always geared towards immediate treatment-funding
- Peer pressure
- Stress of youth
- Availability + costs
- Stealing prescriptions drugs from friends +family
- Stemming the flow
- Helping the addict that doesn’t want help
- Families that deny there is a problem
- The ease to acquire the drug

### **Opportunities/possibilities**

- More coverage and resources needed
- To clarify current bills/ laws
- Beds: gender specific age specific
  - Services for youth/adults
- Women
  - If women seek treatment, what happens to her children, her possessions, etc?
- Individual packaging (medication)
- Better access to screening for youth
  - For exa: nurses should do screening
    - Helps prevent youth from becoming addicts
    - Gives care to high risk addicts
- Prevention! Prevention! Prevention
- THEMES:
  - Drug companies make money by over-prescribing medication to patients
    - All about the \$
    - Disregards the patient’s health
  - Youth clubs/groups
    - These should be created and sustained
    - For exa: SBIRT – prevention programs
  - Better treatment and facilities
  - School led programs
    - Less MCAS; more Health Ed
  - Funding
    - Support after arrest; treatment; prevention
- Awareness
- Reach out to as many as possible and decrease the numbers of addicts
- More funding
- Limit stigma
- Review and make changes to the judicial system
  - It’s not simply one part. It’s the whole picture
  - Get all of the agencies to work better together
- Drug registry must have to register in the state system
- Alternative pain managements
- Education of dentists (over prescription of pain-killers)

- Treatment, education, “combo centers”
- Alternative therapy coverage by insurance (i.e. acupuncture)
- Changing the media portrayal and glorification
- Treat as a mental issue v.s criminal
- More accurate reporting
- Address
- Grandparent support group
- Melrose “guiding good choices”
- Youth/peer leadership connected to coalitions
- S-BIRT (Single Bnef Instant recommended Treatment)
- Drug courts
- Librarians participate in behavioral health training
- THEME:
  - Treatment Funding
  - Recreation funding
  - Severe \_sure accountability for dealers
  - Support for families
  - Youth education + participation in prevention
- Bail bonds-man
- Judges make higher bails
- Regional approaches to: change, treatment, prevention, planning
- Rx-restrictions-database
- School Ed programs- less MCAS more Health Ed
- Providing better primary prevention
- Behavior Heath treatment
  - Continuum of care
- Development of “treatment teams”
- Arrests for possessions convertin from criminal court to drug court
- Are laws getting more lenient for drug dealers
- If everybody gets conditions for release (in court), so how do we get to them?
- Communication needs to be better local to state -> police to legislators
- Regular opportunity for police/teachers/healthcare workers/etc to check in w/ representatives about what’s going well, what isn’t, ideas for change, etc