



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

10.20.17 - Sen. Fred Akshar Joins Local Organizations to Announce Funding for Heroin and Opioid Education, Prevention and Counseling

FRED AKSHAR October 20, 2017

| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION, HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION**



Senator Fred Akshar joined representatives from Lourdes Youth Services, Chenango County Behavioral Health, the Addiction Center of Broome County (ACBC) and CASA-Trinity to announce \$385,000 in state funds for heroin and opioid education, prevention and counseling.

The funding includes:

- \$175,000 to Lourdes Youth Services for school-based prevention counseling including The Project to Reduce Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use that's a collaboration with six school districts - Binghamton, BOCES East Learning Center, Chenango Forks, Deposit, Maine-Endwell and Whitney Point
- \$95,000 to CASA-Trinity for school-based prevention counseling and an opioid and heroin awareness campaign
- \$70,000 to Chenango County Behavioral Health for ALL-STARS Prevention and Education Curriculum that targets students between the ages of 11 and 13 years old
- \$25,000 to Addiction Center of Broome County for a kitchen expansion, security upgrades and ambulatory detox

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“Thank you to our local organizations that educate our young people on the dangers of opioid abuse and provide services to those suffering from addiction,” said Senator Fred Akshar. “We must continue to work together as a community and invest more in education, prevention, counseling and treatment to fight this epidemic. I'm glad I could play a small role in securing funding for these organizations that are on the front-lines of the heroin and opioid crisis.”

Jill Alford-Hammitt, Lourdes Substance Abuse Prevention Program Manager said, “We are very excited to be partnering with Senator Akshar to continue the Lourdes Student Assistance Program at Binghamton, BOCES ELC, Chenango Forks, Deposit and Maine-Endwell High Schools, and to expand the program to the Whitney Point School District in 2018. The Student Assistance Program is a school-based prevention counseling program that operates in nine schools districts (8 high schools and 1 middle school). The NYS Office of

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) provides certification and oversight for the alcohol and drug prevention programs operated by Lourdes Youth Services. Nine Student Assistance Counselors work at school sites to provide free prevention counseling services to students addressing issues such as poor attendance, poor academic performance, alcohol and/or drug use, problem gambling, and family and peer problems. Other services, such as staff education and consultation are also provided to the school by the counselor."

Ann Domingos CEO of CASA-Trinity and Christina Olevano, Prevention Supervisor said, "CASA-Trinity Prevention program in Tioga County is excited to partner with Senator Akshar to provide targeted substance abuse prevention on an awareness campaign, with a focus on prescription opioid and heroin use prevention. With this initiative, CASA-Trinity Prevention Services aims to work closely with local schools, law enforcement, media, and other key community stakeholders. Without Senator's support, there would be many community members that we would not be able to reach."

Ruth Roberts, Director of Community Services for Chenango County Community Mental Hygiene Services said, "We must pay more attention to the importance of Prevention. This involves bringing together parents, the schools, the faith community, community partners and governmental agencies who all have a vested interest in preventing substance abuse in their communities. We also need to make every effort to eliminate any barriers, in real time, to accessing treatment and services when an addiction is identified. This too requires an "all hands on deck" approach. Along with easing access, we need to do everything we can to eliminate the stigma that is too often getting in the way of asking and receiving help. It takes an enormous amount of courage to boldly work on recovery."

Carmela Pirich Executive Director of the Addiction Center of Broome County, Inc. said, "The Addiction Center of Broome County, Inc. has been serving the community since 1975. ACBC

focuses on treatment for individuals with substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health to provide integrated treatment. We are very appreciative of Senator Akshar's advocacy and support to help our organization continue to serve the community and to help our patients with their recovery process. The funding will be used for improvements to our kitchen, where many of our patients come to eat breakfast, and information management."