

prevent opiate abuse

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18 Rhode Island Communities to Participate in American Medicine Chest Challenge *Collection of Unused and Expired Prescription Drugs to Stop Opiate Abuse*

PROVIDENCE, RI- On November 14, several Rhode Island communities will join hundreds of others across the country in the American Medicine Chest Challenge - a national collection effort to prevent prescription drug abuse.

Coordinated by The American Medicine Chest Challenge in conjunction with Prevent Opiate Abuse RI and police and community representatives, the National Awareness Day is designed to raise awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse. Rhode Islander's are encouraged to drop of their used and expired medications at one of eighteen locations throughout the state.

Locations can be found here:

<http://www.americanmedicinechest.com/>

(map and dropbox location list attached to this release)



"This is a great opportunity for residents of Rhode Island to properly dispose of their prescription drugs," said Prevent Opiate Abuse RI's Rob Horowitz. "In Rhode Island, nearly one-in-five 12th graders have used painkillers without a doctor's prescription, according to RI Kids Count. Over the period of a month, roughly 7 million Americans use prescription drugs for non-medical reasons."

The most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health shows prescription medicines to be the most abused drugs by Americans, other than marijuana and found that 70% of people who abuse prescription pain relievers say they got them from friends or relatives. A recent study on drug use by teens by the Partnership for a Drug Free America (PDFA) found that one in 9 children are abusing prescription pain relievers to get high.

"Removing unused prescription drugs from your household is something we all can do to combat drug addiction. Our Drug Takeback bin at the Public Safety Complex is

open this Saturday and every day of the year to Providence residents," said Peter Asen, Director of Providence's Healthy Communities Office. "Please, do you part to combat drug abuse by safely and responsibly disposing of unused prescription drugs."

"With the American Medicine Chest Challenge we are calling on residents to see their medicine cabinets through new eyes -- as an access point for potential misuse and abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicine by young people," said American Medicine Chest Challenge Chief Executive Officer Angelo M. Valente. "This Challenge will raise awareness about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs and reduce the availability of potent drugs that lead kids down a path to addiction."

Residents are also encouraged to take the Five-Step American Medicine Chest Challenge:

- Take inventory of your prescription and over-the-counter medicine.
- Secure your medicine chest.
- Dispose of your unused, unwanted, and expired medicine in your home or at an American Medicine Chest Challenge Disposal site.
- Take your medicine(s) exactly as prescribed.
- Talk to your children about the dangers of prescription drug abuse.

American Medicine Chest Challenge has gained the national support of PhRMA, the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), and Covanta.

About:

The "American Medicine Chest Challenge" is a community-based public health initiative, with law enforcement partnership, designed to raise awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and provide a nationwide day of disposal — at a collection site or in the home — of unused, unwanted, and expired medicine, held on the second Saturday of November each year in communities across the country.

Prevent Opiate Abuse, originally organized in New Jersey, is dedicated to significantly reducing the abuse of prescription opiate based painkillers through advancing initiatives, both governmental and non-governmental, that are effective and by doing so establishing a model that can be adapted throughout the nation. According to the Center for Disease Control & Prevention, prescription drug abuse and the related problem of heroin addiction has become an epidemic causing nearly 20,000 deaths annually. It is the nation's fastest-growing drug problem. We are in it for the long-haul and committed to the all out multi-dimensional effort required to produce results.

