

Opioid use has dramatically increased over the last few years. It has hit us close to home in Lincoln Park over the last two weeks. Although Lincoln Park has relatively few problems with opioid use, it is probably more than you are aware of.

I am letting you know this in the hopes that you will realize what a problem this issue is, and that you can properly prepare yourself and your family when a problem arises, or even better, prevent one in the first place.

Lincoln Park and Morris County are very active in the war against opioid abuse whether it is overuse of prescription medication or illegal use of heroin and other substances. Lincoln Park has been a “Stigma Free” Morris County community since 2017. Our Health, Recreation and Police Departments all have outreach programs, provide resource information or sponsor programs relative to this epidemic.

We have established a Municipal Alliance program through our Recreation Department which is a community wide drug and alcohol abuse awareness committee comprised of town employees, professionals, educators and other volunteers. Most recently, the Lincoln Park Municipal Alliance, Community Partners for Hope and Lincoln Park Shop-Rite co-sponsored “Rebound – The Chris Herren Story” which was attended by all ages of our community and was standing room only.

I have spoken with our Police Chief and he has pledged his department’s participation in any local and county initiatives that can help those with a problem get the help they need. If anyone is in need of emergency assistance please call 911 and you will get the help you need. The LPEMS is always on call to assist with emergency issues as well.

Our Health Department has a tremendous amount of information available to you both on our website and in printed materials available in Borough Hall. We also have a great relationship with the Opioid Awareness and Suicide Prevention programs at Chilton Medical Center. In fact, this month they are holding a program on administering Narcan which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

Most importantly, it is important that parents speak to children and children feel comfortable to speak to parents. Conversations of this nature may be uncomfortable and awkward, but they are important to have nonetheless. Let your child know that they can speak to you. Let them know their friends can speak to you with you. Let them know the result will be help and love and not punishment. There is always time and room for teaching and discipline, but the primary goal should be helping to get through a problem, or preventing one from occurring in the first place. A phrase that stuck with me after attending the Chris Herren Story is that “the first day is as important as the worst day”. Please don’t ignore something that can be helped immediately before it becomes a problem.

The town newsletter, emailed each month, will now include information on seminars or programs that Morris County or neighboring municipalities hold which are open to our residents as well. Along with all of these initiatives and efforts that the town is making, please explore the following links. I think you will find them very useful.

- [Opioid Use & Misuse Educational Fact Sheet - Keeping Student Athletes Safe](#)
- [Operation Prevention - Parent Toolkit](#)
- [Parent to Parent - for families struggling with alcohol and drug addiction](#)
- [Operation Prevention - The Science of Addiction - The Story of Teens](#)
- [NJ Prevention Network - NJ Impact Coalition](#)
- [CARES - Center for Addiction Recovery Education & Success](#)

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