

We are super excited to be heading into our 6th annual celebration of Substance Use Prevention in the Quabbin District! While the title and the schedule of the week has changed over the years, the message has stayed the same. Youth in our communities are worth making healthy choices in their lives, and our community wants to help them make those choices!

It is amazing to think that this year's graduating class has had this message as part of their middle and high school experience! You can feel that there is a change in the culture in the students; students choosing to not use substance is far more accepted and common than in the past. While we have a ways to go to get to the levels we hope for in our area, we are moving the dial- thanks to the help and support of our entire community.

This weekend we will be out decorating our Quabbin communities, and we invite you to join us! If you are able to volunteer your time to decorate, please reply to this email and I can connect you with our community decorating leaders. If you are not able to join us this weekend, we invite you to support our work in your own area, by putting a purple ribbon on your own mailbox or front door, adding a purple image to your social media with a message of support, or adding purple to your local business. We hope to get our decorations out early again this year, so that others in our community can learn what our message is, and join us for events over the week of March 2-7th.

This year we plan to have 2 events for our community. The first, on Tuesday March 3rd at 6pm we will hold a discussion on vaping. This growing concern for our youth, as well as for adults, has received a fair amount of recent news coverage, due to new regulations at the state and federal level, the ban on sales, the new health concerns, and unclear information for many parents and adults. We will also be looking how the tobacco industry has used old tried and true marketing tactics to target youth. We look forward to welcoming Melinda Calianos, Program Coordinator, Hampshire Franklin Tobacco-Free Community Partnership to lead this discussion.

Join us at 6pm on Tuesday March 3rd at the Quabbin Educational Office, 872 South Street, Barre

On Thursday March 5th at 6pm we will hold a "Your Story Matters" and ice cream social event. This event has had a lasting impression on many of our community members, young and old. Whether you are a person in recovery who wants to share your story with the wider community, or if you are a community member who wants to learn more about the experiences of your neighbors, we hope you will join us.

*"This was one of the first events I went to, and being able to tell regular community members my experiences, and the truth of my recovery life was an eye opening experience for me. As a long time recovery member I have told my story many times, but always to others in recovery, to share it with the general public was a whole new level of ownership and acceptance. I can't say how much I gained by being a part of that event, thank you"*

*"My boys went to this event a few years ago, they still talk about it, and what they learned that night. It put a whole new face to the struggles of substance use, and the reality of it can be anyone. Thank you."*

We hope you will join us at the Barre Senior Center for this amazing event, at 6pm on Thursday March 5th. Ice cream sponsored by Wholesome Foods and Becki's Bistro.

Thank you to all of our volunteers and supporters for all that you do throughout the year, but especially for this amazing week each year!

For more information and photos from our week, please follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/QuabbinDrugResponse/> or on Instagram as @Q-DRUG