

Read on for some highlights between April 1, 2014 and October 31, 2014!



Coalition members present at joint meeting of the Merrimack Town Council and Merrimack School Board. Left to right: Deborah Woelflein, Principal, Merrimack Middle School, Betsy Houde, The Youth Council, Detective Tom Prentice, Merrimack Police Department.

New Grant Awarded for 5-Year Plan

Thanks to significant amounts of time and planning on the part of all coalition members, Merrimack Safeguard was awarded an additional \$625,000 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) to implement our 5-year Action Plan.

“This is an exciting and ambitious plan,” said Project Director Betsy Houde. “We seek to engage a variety of new partners including parent/teacher groups, a broader network of faith leaders, Neighborhood Watch groups, Merrimack Friends and Families and more.”

Our theme for the next five years is “Be Responsible, Merrimack!” We plan to connect with multiple stakeholders in town to identify what it means to be responsible – as youth, adults, employers, employees, government officials, civic leaders and so forth. Stay tuned for more information!

Merrimack SADD Wins Prestigious Award

New Futures awarded Merrimack SADD the *2014 Youth In Action Award* during their October 15th recognition event. The award is designed to encourage youth to become involved in advocacy. According to Advocacy Director, Tricia Lucas, SADD was honored for its community outreach, mock DUI program and their efforts in spring 2014 by then SADD President Adam Floyd and '14 Class President Nick Masella to testify against allowing alcohol advertising on billboards.

Floyd and Masella raised concerns that alcohol advertisements on billboards in Merrimack would encourage underage alcohol use, present a risk to people in recovery, and deface the New Hampshire image. The bill was voted down.

Congratulations to 2014-15 SADD and President Renee Murray! We look forward to working with you again this year.



72% of Merrimack teens agree that their parents have clear rules and standards for their behavior.

TIP:

- Start a conversation to show how much you care! Our young people need strong, positive role models and clear rules.
- It's never too early to begin conversations that can influence your child's choices as he or she gets older! More information is available at www.DrugFreeNH.org.

20% of our teens rode in a vehicle driven by a driver who had been drinking alcohol. (in the past 30 days)

TIP:

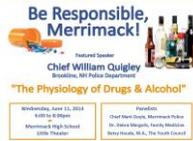
- As an adult, it's important to know how much alcohol you can safely consume before getting behind the wheel of a car.
- It typically takes at least an hour to absorb one 12 ounce beer, one 6 ounce glass of wine or one ounce of hard liquor. Talk to your healthcare provider for details. Be responsible!

Town Hall Meeting Draws Concerned Parents

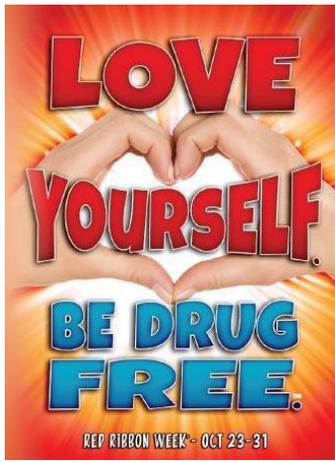
Brookline Police Chief William Quigley drew a group of interested parents to learn about the physiology of alcohol and other drugs. According to Chief Quigley, the best way parents can equip themselves to address concerns with their children is to be aware of the observable signs and effects of alcohol and drugs.

As dependence on alcohol or other drugs increases, youth become more sneaky, often hiding drugs in little-used areas such as drop ceilings, the back of closets, hollowed out books and other unusual places.

Today's ADDICTS started using as KIDS –
It's time to pay attention... NOW!



The presentation was followed by panel members Merrimack Police Chief Mark Doyle, Dr. Deborah Margolis and Betsy Houde, The Youth Council. Research shows that treatment works and recovery is possible. The earlier a teen's issues can be flagged, the greater chance he or she has for long term success.



Red Ribbon Week Celebrated October 23-31, 2014

Each year Merrimack Safeguard celebrates Red Ribbon week with a variety of events and activities involving red ribbons to remind people about the danger of drug use. Red Ribbon Week began after the murder of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena in 1985.

Agent Camarena had been working undercover in Guadalajara, Mexico for over four years on the trail of the country's biggest marijuana and cocaine traffickers. He was extremely close to unlocking a multi-billion dollar drug pipeline, but before he was able to expose the drug trafficking operations to the public, he was kidnapped and murdered.

This year's theme poster *Love Yourself Be Drug Free* offers one more way to start a conversation with your children and friends about making healthy, responsible choices.

Red Ribbon Activities 2014

Have you seen the red tulips planted all over Merrimack? Over the last three years, they have been planted at Town Hall, the Public Library, John O'Leary Adult Community Center, Merrimack Police Department, and at each of our six public schools. This season, Detective Prentice has been out once again Planting the Promise with 300 new tulip bulbs with a team from the Middle School! Let us know next spring where you see our red tulips!



F.A.S.T.E.R. Parent Support Group

(Families Advocating Substance Treatment, Education & Recovery)



Peer Support Groups for Parents of Children, Teens and Young Adults with Substance Use Issues

The group is held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday every month
6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
at St. Joseph's Hospital
172 Kinsley Street, Nashua
Contact Sue at (603) 351-8356

Thank you for all that you do to help Merrimack youth and families make positive choices!

For more information, please contact:

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Betsy Houde, Project Director
The Youth Council
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www.MerrimackSafeguard.org



Thank you St. James UMC

Merrimack Safeguard meetings continue to be held at St. James United Methodist Church, 646 Daniel Webster Highway, Merrimack (across from the Homestead) in their spacious gathering room.

Please consider joining us – **typically on the first Thursday of every month** – from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. All are welcome.