INSIDE: Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care

Together A-Z

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Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

Just Say “Know”

By Stephanie Siete, Director of Community Education, Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI)

Let's check in on the latest trends…Rx, E-cigs, Powdered Alcohol, Vapes, Dabs, BHO…What?

A teen engaging in risky behavior is not a new phenomenon. We tend to chalk it up to a rite of passage and something that might be expected. But are these unwritten rules something we should accept in today’s day and age?

The drug world has changed and we want you to know the latest.

As a community, we ask parents and loved ones to challenge the typical norms and help to protect our youth. We believe awareness is the key to challenging norms that may favor drug and alcohol use and we also know that knowledge will provide you with the tools to empower you. Teens are at a critical stage in their life and they need our guidance. Adolescents are making adult decisions based on limited years of life experience and that ever famous teen brain, which is not fully developed until the age of 25. Early onset of drug use and risky behaviors often put youth at serious risk very early in life. Some of these choices will lead them down a path of addiction and some may never bounce back. We have an opportunity to turn that around.

So what’s the good news?

We can make a difference. Drug and alcohol abuse will always be a threat, so awareness is your tool. Emerging drug trends that we have never seen in our time, have posed a serious risk for our youth and so much is still unknown. Synthetic drugs like spice, bath salts (cathinones), kratom and 25i-nbome are a new breed of drugs in recent years. Prescription medication has existed as a form of treatment for decades, but abuse, addiction and death have been on a massive incline in the new millennium. Even our gateway or “kiddie” drugs have changed in terms of device and potency. Cigarettes are now battery powered, marijuana looks like honey and a concept of powdered alcohol has arrived.

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Problem 1: Most don’t know the dangers.

Problem 2: Most don’t know the dangers.

We have become a prescription (Rx) drug crazed society. According to the National Safety Council, the United States makes up 4.6% of the world’s population and has been consuming 80% of the global opioid supply and 99% of the hydrocodone. To put that into perspective, in 2010, enough prescription painkillers were provided to medicate every American around the clock for an entire month. (National Safety Council, 3/13/2014, Seven Startling Facts about Prescription Painkillers, www.nsc.org/Pages/Seven-startling-facts-about-prescription-painkillers-aspx)

In Arizona, we saw 575 million pills prescribed in 2013 (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Statistical Analysis Center). We don’t lack availability or accessibility for that matter. More than 70 percent of people who abused prescription pain relievers report getting them from friends or relatives. Only about 5 percent got the painkillers from a drug dealer or from the internet. (National Safety Council, 3/13/2014, Seven Startling Facts about Prescription Painkillers, www.nsc.org/Pages/Seven-startling-facts-about-prescription-painkillers-aspx)

Problem 1: The Rx drugs are here.

Problem 2: Most don’t know the dangers.

Teens are curious about doctor prescribed medication and everyday people are being offered Rx meds as the best way to manage their pain. Our television commercials

Veterans Healing With Horsepower

by Shannon K. Spellman, M.S.W., LCSW, LMFT, LISAC

Why would veterans benefit from hanging out in an arena with a bunch of horses and engaging in this therapeutic modality referred to here as equine assisted healing? Well, it’s actually a very effective, non-threatening, non-stigmatizing method for coping with stress, grief and loss, relationship problems, addictions, PTSD, deployment separation issues, and adjustment problems to returning home. We hear firsthand from veterans how powerful being around horses has been for them.

Paul Knutson served in the United States Army as an Infantryman from 28 January 2003 to 20 April 2011. He deployed with 1st Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from January 2004 to April 2005, and October 2006 to January 2008. Paul was wounded in 2004 in an ambush and was awarded the Purple Heart. During his tours, Paul and his teams were subjected to several improvised explosive Devices. As a result, Paul has been diagnosed with Mild Concussion Syndrome and Traumatic Brain Injury. After his second tour, Paul broke his back in training and was subsequently medically retired from the Army. Paul is now pursuing a college education and could no longer perform my duties as a soldier. I was lost and had no direction because I had planned on spending my life in the military. Transitioning into the civilian workforce was a daunting task as there wasn’t any structure anymore that I could rely on. Even after gaining employment, I wasn’t happy because I didn’t understand my role in this new chapter of my life and I certainly didn’t my role in this new chapter of my life and I certainly didn’t

For some veterans, exposure to traumatic events experienced or witnessed during military service can result in difficulties that come creeping back up months or years later into one’s memories.

HORSEPOWER continued page 3
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