

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 6, 2017

Harford County Public Schools Expands Faces of Addiction Display to Travel to Eight High Schools This Year

The Faces of Addiction display that was started by Harford Technical High School's Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) organization last year will now travel to nearly every high school in Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) this year as the school system continues to expand its Heroin Grassroots Initiative with the support of Harford County Government's Office of Drug Control Policy. The display includes The Conversation Tree; a Chain of Hope; and a Project Healthy Delivery collection (at Harford Technical High), or a collection for another organization of the school's choosing.

"Harford County Public Schools has imbedded drug education awareness and character education in our curriculum for over 30 years," said Superintendent of Schools Barbara P. Canavan. "The community remembers the DARE program and the strong partnership that was forged when law enforcement worked side by side with our teachers speaking with students about the dangers of drug use. Faces of Addiction is an outstanding initiative that illustrates what can happen when we allow our curriculum to grow with our students. While the Sheriff's Office, Health Department, PTAs and Office of Drug Control Policy support and join us in our drug education efforts, this project is led by the students; it is their passion about educating their peers that has made this possible. Seeing the students desire to reach out to one another, serves as a reminder that we should continue to engage and empower our youth. They want to and they will make a difference."

Eight total high schools will host the display for at least two weeks each:

- Harford Technical High School – Weeks of February 6 and February 13
- Havre de Grace High School – Weeks of February 20 and February 27
- Fallston High School – Weeks of March 6 and March 13
- North Harford High School – Weeks of March 20 and 27
- Bel Air High School – Weeks of April 4, April 10 and April 17
- Patterson Mill High School – Weeks of April 24 and May 1
- Edgewood High School – Weeks of May 8 and May 15
- C. Milton Wright High School – Weeks of May 22 and May 29

The Conversation Tree, a project started by the Albert P. Close Foundation, displays 55 hearts featuring conversation-starting phrases and photos of 29 Harford County residents lost to fatal heroin overdoses.

Each school will create their own Chain of Hope using their school colors, and the chains will be linked together and on display in a final destination to symbolize the strength in uniting together against addiction.

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PAGE TWO: FACES OF ADDICTION

Project Healthy Delivery is a campaign to collect new baby items in original packaging such as pacifiers, bibs, clothes, onesies, diapers, rattles, etc. Nearly 100 babies are born to drug addiction in Harford County each year. Project Healthy Delivery's mission is to give newborns the best chance for a healthy life by reducing substance abuse and addiction among pregnant mothers. Donated items will be used as incentives to help pregnant women remain in treatment programs.

According to the Harford County Sheriff's Office, in 2015, Harford County had 200 heroin overdoses, which ended in 27 fatalities. In 2016, Harford County had 290 heroin overdoses, which ended in 56 fatalities.

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