

Chelmsford Board of Health

Substance Use Disorder Education and Prevention

\$6,600 was awarded by the GLHA during grant cycle 2014-2015

Background

- The 2013 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment reported substance abuse as the #3 public health concern in the area.
- Additionally, the Chelmsford Police Dept. had reported an increasing concern for opioid use at the time: In 2012 there were a reported 27 drug-related arrests with 7 heroin items seized; between a 2-month period in 2014, there were 6 drug-related deaths with 10 heroin items seized. If this trend had continued, it would result in a 33% increase in drug related arrests with over a 700% increase in heroin items seized.

Program Aspirations

To provide a designated full week in October top Substance Use Disorder education and prevention programs. Students, parents, and the community at large were the main priorities of this initiative.

A secondary goal of this program was to inspire other communities to design their own 'Substance Abuse and Education week', and to design their own educational programs.

Outcomes

- Approximately 4,400 people were reached through the various programs scheduled. Any of the programs that were not taking place in the schools were open to all surrounding communities as well.
- The target population of students were able to be successfully reached; of the 1,600 students at Chelmsford High School, 1,000 were in attendance for the CHS Wellness Fair, and the presentation by Jeff Yalden.
- Cliff Crosby, a speaker, had 900 middle-school students in attendance for his presentation.
- Many surrounding communities had not only gotten engaged in promoting this week, but had decided to start their own programming as well.