

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ARTS IN SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION FOR LOWELL MIDDLE SCHOOLS

\$10,000 AWARDED BY THE GLHA IN THE 2014-2015 GRANT PERIOD

THE LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS (LPS) REQUESTED FUNDING TO BRING SCHOOL-BASED, SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES TO ALL 7TH AND 8TH GRADE STUDENTS IN SCHOOL YEAR 2014-2015.

FUNDING WAS ALSO REQUESTED TO HOLD A COMMUNITY-WIDE PERFORMANCE, TO ENGAGE PARENTS AND OTHER ADULTS IN SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION WITH THE TARGETED STUDENTS.

- THE DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES WERE DESIGNED TO HELP STUDENTS RECOGNIZE SITUATIONS IN THEIR OWN LIVES, AND SOLUTIONS TO VARIOUS SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE ISSUES.
- EACH PROGRAM PROVIDED EDUCATORS WITH PRE-PROGRAM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, POSTERS, AND OTHER PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS TO SUPPLEMENT THE PERFORMANCES.
- THE EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE PERFORMANCES WERE TO REINFORCE NON-USE BEHAVIOR IN STUDENTS, DEMONSTRATE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-REFUSAL SKILLS, AND TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO GET HELP FROM THE RESOURCES INDICATED.

OUTCOMES

- AS STUDENT SURVEY CONDUCTED AFTER THE PERFORMANCES HAS INDICATED THAT **OVER 50% OF STUDENTS REPORTED LEARNING NEW INFORMATION ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE PREVENTION .**
- **OVER 70% OF THE STUDENTS HAD REPORTED ENJOYING THE PLAY, AND THE DISCUSSION WITH THE ACTORS AFTERWARD.**
- **THE FACULTY HAD REPORTED THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM'S RELEVANCE TO ISSUES ADDRESSED: FOR INSTANCE, HEROIN WAS MADE A PRIORITY OF THE PERFORMANCES, AS MA HAD EXPERIENCED AN ACUTE SPIKE IN HEROIN OVERDOSE- PREVALENCE RATES AT THE TIME OF THIS INITIATIVE (2014).**
- **S TAFF AND FACULTY HAD REPORTED THAT THE STUDENTS WERE VERY ENGAGED IN THE PERFORMANCES**