



DVD/TV PROGRAM EXPLORES ISSUE OF CONNECTICUT YOUTH PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE “ON DEMAND”

Feature Showcases Panel Discussion at Central Connecticut State University with Insight from Experts, including Jill Spineti of The Governor's Prevention Partnership and Candy Finnigan of A&E's "Intervention"

BERLIN, CT – (June 22, 2010) – Parents, educators and community officials charged with caring for youth across the state struggle with how to handle the topic of prescription drug abuse amongst that at-risk population. Many adults even dismiss the problem, thinking that prescription drug abuse isn't an issue with their kids or downplaying the danger because the drugs were prescribed by a doctor, leading to the misperception that they are safer than “street” drugs.

The facts, though, say something different. Law enforcement, school administrators, prevention experts and treatment providers have reported a significant rise in youth prescription drug abuse rates. In fact, The Partnership for a Drug-Free America's 21st annual Teen Survey (The Partnership Attitude Tracking Study - PATS), released in March 2010, found that 63 percent of high school students believe it's easy to get prescription drugs from their parents' medicine cabinets; this statistic is 13 percent higher than just one year ago. Connecticut reflects this nationwide problem, with nearly one in 10 middle and high school students in the state reporting the misuse of prescription drugs, according to The Governor's Prevention Partnership.

The dangers are real, and the numbers are sobering. The facts are explored in a candid panel and audience discussion that was presented by The Governor's Prevention Partnership, Comcast and A&E Network at Central Connecticut State University. The discussion, now available as a DVD and On Demand to Comcast subscribers, revealed local statistics about youth drug abuse and advice on how to communicate, guide and educate youth to lead a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

The panel discussion, which took place in March, was moderated by Steve Pasierb, President of The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, and featured notable contributors, including Candy Finnigan of A&E's “Intervention”; Jill Spineti, President and CEO of The Governor's Prevention Partnership; Brian Crowell of the Drug Enforcement Administration; Stephen C. Rogers, M.D., of Connecticut Children's Medical Center; Dr. Samuel Silverman of the Rushford Treatment Center; and high school and college students. Panelists explored how and why youth are experimenting with prescription drugs, what the warning signs are and what needs to be done to prevent the problem.

“The benefits of this prescription drug abuse forum will be far-reaching,” said Jill Spineti, President of The Governor's Prevention Partnership. “From school superintendents to community leaders and parents, the clear message is to prevent prescription drug abuse among youth by understanding the warnings signs, talking with youth who may be experimenting with prescription drugs and acting to ensure their safety and well-being. We look forward to an aggressive effort to get this program viewed by as many parents, school and community officials as possible.” Spineti urges people to log onto The Governor's Prevention Partnership Web site, www.preventionworksct.org/rxinfo to order a copy of the program on DVD.

“We thank both The Governor's Prevention Partnership and A&E Network for their partnership in hosting this forum and for helping to educate the community on the issue of prescription drug abuse,” said Doug Guthrie, Senior Vice President for Comcast's Western New England Region, which includes Connecticut. “We are proud to leverage our On Demand technology to encourage even more families to discuss this important issue at home.”



Digital cable customers can access the program for free from the On Demand menu by selecting the “Get Local” category, followed by “Comcast Cares” and “Drug Abuse Forum.” The 90-minute program, produced by Comcast, will be available for viewing through the end of July.

About The Governor’s Prevention Partnership

A not-for-profit partnership between state government and business leaders with a mission to keep Connecticut’s youth safe, successful and drug-free today for a stronger workforce tomorrow, The Governor’s Prevention Partnership has four key initiatives: The Connecticut Mentoring Partnership which establishes and supports youth mentoring programs across the state; The Operation Respect, CT Initiative which focuses on giving schools and communities the tools to create positive school climates and bully-free communities; The Connecticut Youth Wellness Initiative focused on prevention of underage drinking, drug and prescription drug abuse; and The Media Partnership which creates direct relationships with media to raise awareness of each initiative. The Partnership works in collaboration with local, regional and statewide providers and its efforts impact youth in every community in Connecticut. Co-chaired by Governor M. Jodi Rell and Don Langer, President of AmeriChoice by United Healthcare, The Partnership has worked since 1989 to maximize youth development and create Connecticut’s work force of the future.

For more information about prescription drug abuse, call The Governor’s Prevention Partnership directly at 860-523-8042 or visit www.preventionworksct.org/rxinfo.

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