

Kiwanis Grant Helps Fight Drug Abuse - Letter

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Last week's article "School Board Gets First Look At Latest Student Substance Use Survey Results" carried both good news as well as some concerning news. With the opiate epidemic that so many towns across our country have been facing, we must realize that there continues to be a long road ahead of us in saving our next generation from the scourge of addiction. However, Sandwich has been successful in making inroads recently, and that is reflected in the online survey taken by the STEM Academy and high school students during the 2015-2106 academic year. To see that both alcohol and marijuana usage by Sandwich teens has dropped since the 2012 survey gives us hope for the future, for we all know that these are the "gateway" drugs to opiate usage.

According to Melissa Janiszewski, opioid prevention program specialist for Barnstable County, the 10 percent drop in marijuana usage is in direct correlation to the inclusion of "Botvin Lifeskills" training that students have been receiving within the health classes in school, and this decrease is unique to Sandwich.

What is not known by most residents in town, however, is that access to "Botvin Lifeskills" in our schools has been made possible due to the kindness of the Kiwanis Club of Sandwich. As a staff member of Caron Treatment Centers, which has provided the prevention programs locally, but more importantly, as a mother who is passionate about substance abuse prevention for our children, I originally wrote a grant to the club in 2012. The Kiwanis Levreault Grant Committee funded the program that very first year, and with its initial success, continues to do so to this day. To see these results reflected in just a few short years has been quite amazing and extremely impactful to our community.

As a grant recipient, I was so impressed by the dedication, passion and hard work of each and every Kiwanis Club member that I joined the club myself! If you know a club member personally, please show them your gratitude as well for everything they do on behalf of our children. Bravo to an amazing group of folks!

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