



Chelsea
Community
Hospital

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Chelsea, Michigan 48118-1399

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FOUNDATION MAKES YOUTH PROGRAM A REALITY

CHELSEA, MI – The Coghlan Family Foundation, co-founded by Michael and Suzanne Coghlan of Saline, has brought to life a long-time vision of preventing youth substance abuse in Chelsea. Because of the Foundation’s generous support and creative efforts, a new program has been launched that is aimed at reducing high-risk behavior in 10-15-year-olds in Chelsea.

The program, known as SRSLY (“seriously” as it is spelled in text messages), is a result of the Coghlan’s strong interest in preventing teen substance abuse. The couple had a desire to see a more in-depth, effective program that would also become a model for other communities in curbing teen drinking and drug use.

“My wife and I feel strongly about the negative impact that teen substance abuse has, not only on the individual, but also the community as a whole,” said Michael Coghlan. “We felt it was important for our Foundation to find a strong partner that shared our vision – and Chelsea Community Hospital was clearly the right choice.”

SRSLY has been developed in collaboration with many local organizations, including Chelsea Community Hospital, the Chelsea schools, local law enforcement, area churches, McKune Memorial Library, the Chamber of Commerce, and concerned parents. Together, this group of representatives is known as the Chelsea Community Youth Coalition (CCYC).

“We want people to know that we take the issue of underage drinking and drug use seriously,” said Nancy Siegrist, Director of Behavioral Health Services at Chelsea Community Hospital. Siegrist has been working the CCYC over the past 18 months while SRSLY has been in development.

“This September, we will be rolling out a campaign with a clear message that says young people are an important part of this community, and their decisions directly impact their health and safety,” said Prevention Program Director Reiley Lewis, MPH. “The program will focus on the root causes of underage drinking and drug use.

“SRSLY will incorporate elements from prevention programs that have been proven effective in other communities, such as education, skill building, social marketing, enforcement, and creating opportunities for substance-free activities and entertainment,” Lewis added. “The goal is to create environmental change that makes it easy for parents and kids to make healthy choices about drug and alcohol use.”



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According to data collected from the school district, alcohol use (including binge drinking) and marijuana use are on the rise among younger teens in Chelsea. There is also a perception that there is little or no risk in drug and alcohol use, and that adults in this community approve of underage drinking.

“Adolescents are participating in a variety of high risk behaviors today more than ever,” said Andrew Ingall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Chelsea School District. “It’s not just a problem in their homes or with the schools: we need to work on this together, as a community. This is a great beginning.”

Dr. Jim O’Neill and his wife, Angela O’Neill, Chelsea parents and owners of O’Neill Consulting, conducted a needs assessment earlier this summer in order to define the problem and identify key risk factors in this community. The O’Neill’s have worked with more than 50 schools, community coalitions, and human service agencies in southeastern Michigan.

“Research shows that coalitions are very effective in reducing underage drinking and related youth risk behaviors when multiple sectors of the community offer a variety of prevention strategies,” said Dr. O’Neill.

“It’s exciting to be part of this important initiative right here in our town,” said Mrs. O’Neill. “Chelsea has the right mix of resources and dedicated individuals to make this collaborative extremely successful.”

For more information about SRSLY, contact Reiley Lewis, MPH, at (734) 475-4078 or rlewis@srslychelsea.org.

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Chelsea Community Hospital is an independent, non-profit medical facility established in 1970. Located in Chelsea, Michigan, CCH is nationally recognized for both quality of care and patient satisfaction by national ranking organization Press Ganey, and is accredited by the Joint Commission. CCH attracts more than 300 physicians in almost all disciplines. Services include a Surgery Center, comprehensive orthopedic services, a Women’s Health Center led by one of America’s Best Doctors, a full continuum of mental health and substance abuse services, a nationally recognized Head Pain Treatment Program, and a 24-hour ER. Please visit www.cch.org for more information on the many programs and services offered at CCH.