



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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East Providence Prevention Coalition joins forces with the US Attorney's Office – District of Rhode Island and other agencies to launch “Circles and Silence”

EAST PROVIDENCE, RI –The East Providence Prevention Coalition (EPPC), in partnership with Family Care Community Partnerships (FCCP) and the East Providence Health Equity Zone (EP HEZ) announces the presentation of “Circles and Silence.”

The Rhode Island-based “Circles and Silence” film is a 15-minute opioid educational video, which is narrated by a diverse group of young adults whose personal true-life stories are mirror images of topics that impact our community including: *opioids, dependency, treatment, recovery, and life*. The film, for ages 14 plus, will be featured at the Weaver Library, 41 Grove Ave. in East Providence on Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022 from 7-8 p.m.*

David Neill, an investigator with the U.S. Attorney's Office – District of Rhode Island and a panel of co-presenters will share their stories with the audience at the completion of the film. Neill, together with the U.S. Attorney's Office – District of Rhode Island, worked closely with

Los Angeles Movie Director and Producer David Belino to produce the short educational film, which has been nominated for five Emmy Awards.

The film, which addresses a number of opioid-related topics impacting Rhode Island is based on personal stories that will hit home to many residents.

The stories featured in the film are only part of the overall opioid story. Here are just a few opioid-related facts impacting our community.

- One in four teens have reported using a medication not prescribed to them
- A total of 6.4 percent of our East Providence youth say they have used pain pills and 3 percent say they have used heroin in the last 30 days.
- There were 22 overdose-related Emergency Department visits in the last four weeks
- Last year alone, East Providence reported 10 overdose fatalities.

“Parents are one of the greatest tools in prevention,” Bethanie Rado, East Providence Prevention Coalition Drug Free Communities (DFC) Youth & Media Relations Coordinator said. “It is never too early to start having conversations and arming yourself with information.”

Join us as we follow Jessica, Mirasia, Meko, Shannon, Megan, Andrade and Anna Bess on their individual life journeys, where we learn that no two persons' Circle of Life is the same.

About David Neill:

David Neill served 25 years with the Rhode Island State Police and retired with the rank of Major. His passion to investigate and learn about substance use disorders and illicit drug sales was unprecedented. He testified in both State and Federal Courts as an expert in narcotic trafficking investigations. Since retiring, the United States Attorney's Office hired David as its Crime Prevention and Community Outreach Coordinator. David works closely with the State's Substance Use Prevention Coalitions, the Governor's Opioid Task Force, Rhode Island Student Assistance Services, Middle and High Schools, and a host of Recovery Partners.

About Co-Presenters:

***Meko**, a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist at Amos House, has been living in long-term recovery from opioid use disorder for more than four years. He is pursuing a career in social work with a concentration on working with prisoners who suffer with substance use disorder. “To believe a person can recover when they are unaware of their own potential, is profoundly humanizing,” he said. The hope that this truth creates is the foundation to Meko's life's work.*

***Megan**, now in long-term recovery having had her life unravel from her use of marijuana and alcohol, which led to her dependence on opioids and “a life of hopelessness, pain, misery and despair.” Today, Megan is a certified peer recovery specialist and assistant manager of Anchor recovery's Mobile Outreach Recovery Efforts, supporting individuals affected by substance use disorder.*

***Deborah**, a mom who shares her heartfelt, powerful story about her late son Peter's opioid dependency.*

** Space is limited, so please arrive early. Due to the delicate and sensitive nature of the information presented, mental health counselors and licensed clinicians will be available to anyone looking to continue the conversation after the presentation. EPPC, FCCP and EP HEZ will have community resource materials available as well.*