



It is that time of year again ~ **Red Ribbon Week** in our schools ~ time to encourage students to take the pledge to live #DrugFree. Honestly, previously I thought of Red Ribbon Week as a joke. I didn't see how having Pajama Day or Silly Sock Day helped educate our kids about the dangers of substance abuse. And now I join others, standing before hundreds of 5th and 6th graders, telling Tristan's story and encouraging students to make good choices, live clean and speak up about drugs to encourage their friends to say no to drugs and say YES to life. What a different perspective I now have! Red Ribbon Week is not the sole solution to reversing our country's opioid epidemic by any means, but if executed correctly, it is one element of early prevention and education served up to students. Last year the Attorney General launched Prescription For Life, a digital education tool for High Schools to educate students about the opioid epidemic. SAD will continue to work with our Drug Free Community Coalitions and Region Prevention Providers across Arkansas to provide additional substance abuse education to our youth. In the meantime, I'll gladly stand in front of any assembly, at any school, and encourage them to make healthy choices, #LiveFree of Drugs and say YES to life!

Speaking of education, August 31st was **International Overdose Awareness Day**. Speakup was honored to be asked to speak to the community of Harrison, AR and share our story. It was a beautiful candlelight vigil with almost 100 residents out in force to learn more about overdose. I gave my talk and encouraged the community to have the courageous conversations needed to help reduce the rate of addiction and overdose. But I was the one who received a powerful education that night. A young lady who shared the stage with me told her story of using and recovery. She spoke of the havoc addiction wreaks on individuals and families and the strength and courage it takes to live in recovery. Kristina is an amazing and brave young woman whose story is all too familiar. But Kristina, with the love and support of her family, and her strong faith in God, is raising two beautiful children with her wonderful husband and is speaking up about the dangers of substance abuse in the hopes that others will choose to **#LiveClean**.



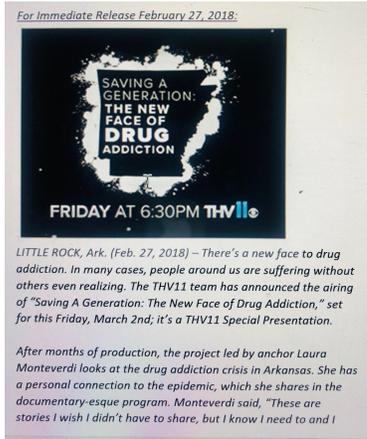
Continuing the topic of education, did you know that one of the signs of an opioid induced overdose is a snoring or gurgling sound? There are many other signs which vary slightly depending on the specific drug involved. Education is key to knowing what to look for. And if you are concerned that someone you know is at

risk of overdose, along with encouraging them to seek help before it's too late, consider keeping Naloxone on hand. This product can be purchased at your pharmacy, temporarily reverses the affects of overdose until medical treatment is received and is proving crucial to saving lives. Thanks to efforts from **Arkansas Drug Director Kirk Lane** and his team, to date, in Arkansas, 150 lives have been saved since the Naloxone project was started in December, 2016.

ICYMI: The National Safety Council, in partnership with the Attorney General's Office, Walmart and several other partners brought the traveling **Prescribed To Death** exhibit to the University of Arkansas in early October. The walls of this powerful memorial boast 22,000 pills with faces carved in them to represent the tens of thousands of individuals lost in this country to the opioid epidemic. Tristan's name along with several other local young men #gone2soon were added to growing list of names. Thank you to **Andy Agar** for sharing his emotional story about his young son, Jake Agar, who passed away from a fentanyl overdose a few years ago in Fayetteville.



CONGRATULATIONS to our friend **Laura Monteverdi** for the EMMY received for her collection of stories Saving A Generation: The new face of drug addiction. Laura bravely shares her own story and helped others in our state talk openly about the heartache of losing children to addiction and drug overdose. Parker, Jake, Chelsea ... the list here in Arkansas is long. But in our country we lost over 72,000 last year to overdose - almost 197 people every day which is



equivalent to crashing one commercial airplane every day for 365 days. Arkansas is the second most over-prescribed state behind Alabama. According to Stan Jones, Special Agent with the DEA out of Nashville, "we are seeing teenagers and middle school age young people who are not only becoming addicted but who are dying." The DEA has seen an increase in dangerous synthetic opioids like Fentanyl but says that this epidemic started largely due to overprescribing by pain clinics.

Laura can also be seen with Jimmy McGill, Director Lane and others on the state's recently released "Drop It In The Box" video that encourages Arkansas to drop all unused prescription drugs into local drop boxes or take them to your

local Prescription Drug Take Back event that will happen on October 27th from 10am - 2pm.

<https://youtu.be/fUjL0fsshJk> [cid:image001.jpg@01D45B2E.ACDFD340]

<file:///E:/WORK/ARTAKEBACK.org/VIDEO%20SHOOT/lts%20the%20FINAL%20Drop%20Box.mp4>

A list of permanent drop boxes and take back events can be by entering your zip code at www.artakeback.org.

For those of you who are here in Bentonville or NWA, please plan to join us for

Tristan's Trail Dedication and Bike Drive
October 28, 2018 @ 1pm

Trail Head off Tiger Blvd is located behind Bentonville Boys&Girls Club / Bentonville School's Administration Building

Join us for the dedication and stay to ride the trail. We will be providing bikes to several local organizations that support our active biking community so please consider bringing your previously ridden bikes, a new bike or cash and help us support those who provide bikes to those with a desire to get out and ride. Both youth and adult bikes are appreciated.



We have started holding regular video / phone conferences for those who wish to join our Prevention and Advocacy Council. Whether it's being a part of community events with a booth to provide information, sharing your personal story, being trained as a Parent Coach or advocating for common sense laws to drive positive social change, there are many ways that you can get involved in your area. If you would like to participate please contact me by email or phone and we'll add you to the list.

With thanks and gratitude,
 Gina & Pat Tadd & Tina

Jake & Koby



Speakup About Drugs

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