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# coalitionnews

Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

## Renowned Psychologist/Comedian to Talk about Parenting Teens on Jan 31



### DR. MATT BELLACE

*“Young people need to feel empowered in their schools and communities. It is not enough to ask them to stay away from drugs and alcohol, we need to show them there are positive things they can do for themselves and others. They must all be leaders in their lives.”*

**What do you get when you combine a clinical psychologist and a stand-up comedian? Simple: Dr. Matt Bellace and a very unordinary boot camp for parents!**

Dr. Matt Bellace, a neuropsychologist, motivational speaker and comedian, weaves all these areas of expertise, along with personal stories and comedy, into a presentation you won't soon forget. He has enlightened and entertained thousands of parents and teens across the country by deftly combining humor, science and audience participation to share his very powerful message: we need to support

young people in both words and actions if we want them to make healthy choices for themselves.

Dr. Bellace, who earned his Ph.D. at Drexel University in Pennsylvania, recognizes that one of the most challenging times for parents occurs while their children go through adolescence. His presentation on January 31 will focus on how parents can communicate with their teens — without arguing! Based on the latest research in adolescent brain development, Dr. Bellace presents real-life examples, with a good dose of humor and audience interaction, that show how to engage teens in conversations about responsibility, healthy coping skills, alcohol and other drug use.

Since 1993, Dr. Bellace has presented keynotes and workshops to students, parents and educators on the topic of drug and alcohol prevention. He will address Tiverton Middle and High School students in assemblies during the day, and then speak to parents in the evening. His presentations have been received in over 40 states and Canada over the past decade. For more information about Dr. Bellace, visit his website: [www.mattbellace.com](http://www.mattbellace.com).

Parents, mark your calendars: Jan. 31, 7 to 8:30 pm, Tiverton High School Auditorium. It's free. It's great entertainment. And it's sure to deliver new insights into how to keep teens healthy and safe — and laughing.

### ***Around the Country: Rx***

The Partnership® at [Drug Free.org](http://DrugFree.org) reported that poisoning deaths among teenagers rose 91 percent between 2000 and 2009, primarily due to prescription drug abuse. The troubling statistics come from a study of unintentional injury deaths among persons 0-19 years from 2000-2009, published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2012. *(continued on back)*



## REBECCA'S notes

*“Opium has medical value, and it is called morphine. Marijuana has medical value, too — but just as we don’t smoke opium to receive beneficial effects, we need not smoke marijuana to get its medical value.” — Project SAM*

This Project SAM quote represents my thoughts on the medical marijuana debate. Science has learned more about marijuana in the past 20 years than in the preceding two centuries. Despite what is known, there is a major disconnect between scientific knowledge and the public’s understanding of the drug

Over the past two decades, the idea of marijuana as medicine has become increasingly popular. Citizens of several U.S. states have voted by referenda to allow the use of smoked marijuana as medicine. RI is now a medical marijuana state; local prevention experts fear the lack of state regulations on the growing and distribution of medical marijuana will only add to RI’s growing youth marijuana use.

In debating medical marijuana, supporters often refer to their own experiences with marijuana, rather than to scientific evidence. No matter what people think about the drug and the policies surrounding it, it is vitally important to be up-to-date on the science of marijuana use and addiction.

Sifting through the rhetoric can be time consuming, but an abundance of scientific studies exist from which to gain information about marijuana use and its public-health implications. The Coalition seeks to bring information, resources, and support to the community. Please contact me directly if you want to weigh in on the debate.

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### **Around the Country** *(continued from page 1)*

The good news is that death rates from unintentional injuries of children and teenagers decreased by almost 30 percent between 2000 and 2009, in large part because of a major drop in motor vehicle deaths, according to the [Los Angeles Times](#). The bad news: drug deaths rose. According to the CDC, the percentage of poisoning deaths among teens ages 15 to 19 with prescription drugs as a contribut-

ing cause rose from 30 percent in 2000, to 57 percent in 2009.

The CDC stated that drug poisoning deaths among teens could be reduced by appropriate prescribing, proper storage and disposal, discouraging sharing of medication, and state-based prescription drug monitoring programs.

### **Practicing Prevention: Take Back**

Tiverton Police Chief Thomas Blakey has turned the DEA’s National Prescription [Drug Take-Back Day](#) into a 365 day a year opportunity. Chief Blakey is having a secure drop box installed at the Tiverton Police Department at 20 Industrial Way that enables residents to safely dispose of unused prescription drugs 24/7, no questions asked.

Working with the Tiverton Prevention Coalition, the Tiverton Police Department became one of more than 5,263 locations across the country in 2012 that collected a total



of 488,395 pounds (244 tons) of prescription medications from members of the public. When added to the collections from DEA’s previous four Take-Back events, more than 2 million pounds (1,018 tons) of prescription medications were removed from circulation.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services, more than six million Americans abuse prescription drugs. That same study revealed more than 70 percent of people abusing prescription pain relievers got them through friends or relatives, a statistic that includes raiding the family medicine cabinet.

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**Comments? Questions? Interests?**  
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