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coalitionnews

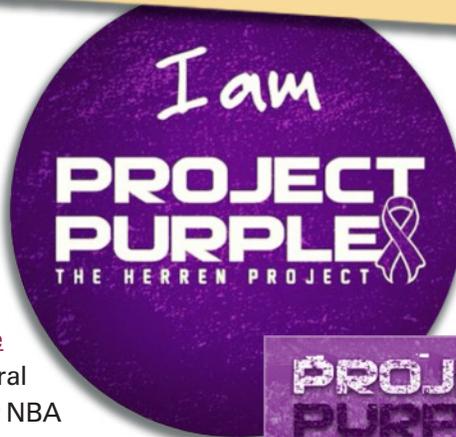
Prevention news and information from the Tiverton Prevention Coalition

Tiverton Residents and Businesses Invited to Paint the Town Purple

Make sure you have something purple to wear, purple ribbons for your mailboxes or maybe a purple spotlight in front of your home. [Project Purple](#) is coming to Tiverton for five days in January. It's all about showing pride for Tiverton teens that make safe, healthy decisions every day.

"Too often we hear more about the kids who use alcohol and other drugs and forget that most Tiverton teens don't go down that road," Coalition Coordinator Rebecca Elwell said. "They're subject to the same influences, affected by the same peer pressure, but most Tiverton teens make healthy decisions around alcohol and drugs. The Coalition is sponsoring Project Purple this year as a way for the whole town to celebrate these kids — just by adding a little splash of purple to our clothes, homes and businesses over a five day period in January."

Project Purple, an initiative of [The Herren Project](#), was inspired by several courageous teens. Chris Herren, a former NBA basketball player who struggled with substance abuse throughout his basketball career, was speaking at a high school assembly. He noticed that the students in the front row were all wearing purple shirts. After he shared his struggle with addiction, one of the "purple



shirts" raised her hand and stood up to speak. Snickering and laughter could be heard in the auditorium. The student said, "Thank you, Mr. Herren, for validating what we do. We are the sober students of this high school and each year we take a pledge to not use drugs or alcohol."

Chris was captured by the courage it took to stand up and share — all somehow symbolized in a purple shirt. Project Purple was born.

Tiverton will join what is now the nationwide Project Purple Campaign from January 26 to 30, 2015 — hoping to paint the town purple. Some town residents, like Police Chief Thomas Blakey, are already thinking purple. The Chief hinted at the last Coalition meeting that residents may see a "splash" of purple on town cruisers that week.





REBECCA'S notes

At the time of year when we think about people and things we really value, I'm feeling very grateful for the support of so many people from Tiverton who help to make Tiverton a model community, when it comes to raising our kids.

Each month, parents, teachers, mental health professionals, clergy, Town representatives and other volunteers make time in their schedules to attend the Coalition meetings. More people than I can count have helped turn "prevention strategies" into creative educational programs for Tiverton students and the community at large. Most of all, I'm grateful for the fast-growing number of Tiverton kids who have joined Coalition-sponsored programs like *Above the Influence*, *Life of an Athlete* and our home-grown *Tiger Pride* and *UnMarketing Weed* — all programs that support teens who choose to "be who they are, celebrate life, support one another and stand together against substance abuse," as the Project Purple message says. And they're good role models for younger kids — and a big part of making Tiverton a safer, healthier place to raise kids. I love my work in Tiverton. I appreciate your support. *Enjoy the Holidays!*

Holidays, Alcohol and Teens



Holidays are a time for family celebrations — but they're also a time of increased risk for families with teens.

On an [average December day](#), more than 11,000 young people, aged 12 to 17, will use alcohol for

the first time, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Sadly, it also reports, "Some of these young adults will not make it to the new year, as nearly [400 young people](#) under age 21 die from alcohol-related causes every month."

The good news is that parents and other caring adults can reduce the risk that kids might drink. Simply, parents

can lock and monitor their alcohol at home, which is the number one source of alcohol for kids who start experimenting. There are also many good online resources, such as [StopAlcoholAbuse.gov](#), [SAMHSA's Underage Drinking page](#) and "[Talk. They Hear You.](#)"

As Frances Harding, Director of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention said, "Underage drinking prevention is a gift that we can give our young people during the holidays and throughout the year."

Navy Seals and Tiger Pride

Leaders are developed NOT born and real leadership comes through practice. That's the message 17 members of THS Tiger Pride heard on November 17 when they joined other student athletes from Portsmouth and Middletown high schools for a day of leadership and teamwork training led by retired Navy Seals.



In addition to presentations and roundtable group work, the students spent two hours in physical training designed to strengthen their communication and leadership skills. The event was a follow-up to *Life of an Athlete*, a program the Coalition sponsored last year.

More than knowledge and skills, the Tiger Pride cohort came home with some bragging rights. THS students earned first place in the physical challenge part of the program. *Go Tigers!*

