

Can there be good news in the heroin/opioid epidemic?

A local coalition is beginning to transform an area known locally as Needle Park where heroin drug addicts hang out

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, October 2, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- There are areas in every major city where drug addicts hang out and cry for help before their drugs take over completely and the coroner's office is called.

Several years ago a Washington, DC, drug education coalition seeking to help curtail the drug problem there, met at "Needle Park," more properly called Marvin Gaye Park, to hold their annual community awareness event. Arriving early in the morning to set up their booths, coalition partners were met by police and yellow tape. Heroin had taken another life under the park's bridge the night before.



Police, government and community partners gather at Marvin Gaye Park to help with drug education and community services

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*Thalia Ghiglia, Faith Liaison
for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World DC*

Last week the coalition again held their annual event at Marvin Gaye Park under more pleasant circumstances. This year there was no police presence or yellow tape. In its place, the Foundation for a Drug-Free World DC chapter joined the US Attorney's Office, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), the Department of Behavioral Health, East of the River Family Strengthening Collaborative, Hillcrest Children and Family Center, and DJ Flava of WKYS Radio to bring awareness of the heroin and opioid epidemic with services, resources, food, music and drug education material.

In 2016 and 2017, overdose deaths due to fentanyl-laced heroin hit DC hard. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, DC had the highest increase in overdose deaths among urban areas during those years. In 2018, more people died from overdoses than from homicides in DC.

After being a hotbed of heroin activity and overdose deaths in Washington, DC, for some years, Marvin Gaye Park is seeing some change in 2019. The number of deaths is beginning to drop.

“With much effort and strong government and community partnerships, we are beginning to make a dent in what's happening. We absolutely need to keep pushing and continue to get

information and resources out, not only to addicts, but to the youth. I am certain that eventually with continued drug education and community services we will be able take this heroin/opioid monster down," said Thalia Ghiglia, Church of Scientology National Affairs Office Faith Liaison for the Foundation for a Drug-Free World DC Chapter.

The Foundation for a Drug-Free World is an international nonprofit public benefit corporation that empowers youth and adults with factual information about drugs so they can make informed decisions and live drug-free. For more information, please see www.drugfreeworld.org.

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DC Fire Official with Drug-Free World's Thalia Ghiglia



Sharing Drug-Free World drug education material with local citizens



Community leaders join with Drug-Free World volunteers to help the community



The Drug-Free World table is a popular place

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