



For Immediate Release

Contact info below

## Three local Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalitions join forces to encourage communities to “Keep our Youth Safe”!

*North to South communities united.*

*Neighbors helping Neighbors Supporting Student Safety.*

**Western New York (September 1, 2022)** – Three local Drug Free Community (DFC) Coalitions; **Amherst Youth & Community Coalition** (Amherst, Williamsville and Sweet Home) **ITAC- It Takes A Community Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition** (Elma, Marilla and Wales) and **Springville Regional Coalition** (Springville, Colden, Town of Concord) have joined forces to create a strong messaging campaign emphasizing **the safe use, safe storage and safe disposal** of medication and substances, reducing potential substance misuse.

This joint campaign message of “**Support Student Safety**” is one **focusing on the youth** of our communities and sends a positive message of “**neighbors helping neighbors**” communicating a consistent message of “**Take It to the Box**” across geographic regions. From north to south, we are united in a mission and purpose to keep our children safe.

This unique collaboration engages a variety of community stakeholders: youth, local businesses, educational institutions, parents, residents, law enforcement and judiciary, as well as youth-serving organizations in a **Supporting Student Safety messaging campaign**. Pizzerias, restaurants, pharmacies, and grocery stores in our targeted areas will share this message with their customers by attaching stickers to pizza boxes, take out containers, and pharmacy bags. Residents, businesses, schools and other establishments will display lawn signs and banners with the message. Bookmarks and 4x5 magnets will be distributed at local school, educational and community events or venues. All messaging materials display the same image and message from North to South!

Coalition members are concerned that ease of access of substances to young people creates a situation which increases the potential for young people to misuse substances. Relatedly, statistics reveal a correlation between mental illness and substance misuse suggesting that 30-45% of youth with mental health disorders also report substance use disorder. This educational campaign will address that situation and encourage those who have a legitimate reason to use substances protect our young people through safe use, safe storage, and safe disposal.

The objective of this project is to **increase the use of drop boxes**, broadening knowledge, increasing awareness, building skills, and addressing community attitudes. Working together, **Amherst Youth & Community Coalition, ITAC and Springville Regional Coalition** submitted a request for and received

grant monies from the Western Regional Addiction Resource Collaborative to fund the **“Support Student Safety- Take It to the Box”** messaging campaign.

For more information:

**Amherst Youth and Community Coalition- [www.amherst.ny.us](http://www.amherst.ny.us)**

**Springville Regional Coalition- Facebook- SRSCoalition**

**- ITAC- It Takes a Community Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coalition**

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