

“Stop Heroin From Killing... You Can Take Action”

Upcoming community meetings will share helpful information concerning local heroin and opiate treatment resources, offer hope to families and friends, dispel stigma and empower families and friends, and encourage a proactive fight against heroin and opiate addiction.

“These upcoming events will be different from others such as the recent *Faces of the Community* programs held earlier in Lake Township because they will offer *action steps* for attendees to implement,” said Fran Gerbig, an event organizer and Health and Wellness Manager for the Stark County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Stark County. “We have identified the problem that exists today with heroin use, but these programs will offer specific ways that family and community members *can respond to and help* those dealing with opiate addiction.”

In addition, client success stories will be shared, and time is planned for questions and answers. Stark County residents can learn more at OpiatePrevention.org, going live soon.

Dates and locations for the events are:

- **May 12, 2015, at Lincoln Theatre, 156 Lincoln Way East, Massillon**
- **May 14, 2015, Lake Performing Arts Hall, Lake High School, 1025 Lake Center St NW, Uniontown**
- **May 28, 2015, at the Minerva Community Center, 123 Brock Avenue, Minerva**
- **June 15, 2015 at Aultman Hospital, Morrow House Auditorium, 2600 6th St SW, Canton**

All community meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. and continue to approximately 8:30 p.m.

Among the speakers will be Stark County Court of Common Pleas Judge Frank Forchione, who will provide a brief update on Stark County’s heroin problem including recent statistics; a representative from the Stark County Sheriff’s office, who will discuss when and if law enforcement should become involved in heroin cases; and county drug treatment professionals who will discuss family care and support for those using heroin.

Other speakers will review the clinical/treatment side of drug use, and offer information about warning signs and symptoms, and strategies to promote safe medication practice.

A highly addictive opioid drug, heroin use has been steadily rising nationally, statewide, and in Stark County. In 2014, the number of people seeking opiate treatment since 2006 has increased

more than 200 percent in Stark County. Southern Stark County has shown as much as a 583 percent increase in people seeking help.

The Stark County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board is tracking this upswing and working with local service providers, safety forces, and area stakeholders to educate the community about the destructive effects and costly medical consequences of heroin use.

These events are being sponsored by the *Stop Heroin From Killing Committee*, the *Opiate Task Force*, the *Stark County Anti-Drug Coalition*, and the *Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Stark County*.