



NEWS

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Contact:

Kaitlyn Foti, Public Information Officer

610-278-3062 kfoti@montcopa.org

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Office of Drug and Alcohol Showcases Unintentional Injury Prevention Program

Norristown, PA (April 13, 2018) – In April each year, the American Public Health Association brings together communities across the U.S. to observe National Public Health Week as a time to recognize the contributions of public health and address issues impacting the nation’s health. One of the biggest public health issues facing Montgomery County residents today is the opioid overdose epidemic.

One of the goals of the Montgomery County Office of Drug and Alcohol is to prevent or delay the initiation of substance use and abuse. And by doing so, The Office of Drug and Alcohol is improving the health of Montgomery County residents.

Over the last year, the Office of Drug and Alcohol has worked to create a more comprehensive drug and alcohol prevention plan by following public health principles and leveraging additional resources to meet the growing substance use issues faced in Montgomery County.

Last Thursday, in support of the National Public Health Week theme of the effects of injury and violence prevention on health, the Office of Drug and Alcohol in partnership with Aldersgate Youth Service Bureau and Abington School District showcased an unintentional injury prevention program called Second Step.

Second Step is a social emotional learning program designed to help kids reach their full potential by teaching them skills like self-regulation. Self-regulation skills help students focus on lessons, participate in classroom activities, get along with peers and make good choices. Students employing self-regulation techniques are able to understand the consequences of their actions leading to better decision making when faced with challenges like peer pressure to try substances, thereby preventing future injury to themselves and/or others as well as the possibility of decreasing future involvement in unhealthy behaviors.

All first grade students in Abington School District are learning the Second Step skills provided by facilitators from Aldersgate Youth Service Bureau. This encompasses 26 classroom spread over all seven elementary schools

reaching approximately 780 students. On Thursday, Laura Spalding taught students in a first grade classroom at Overbrook Elementary listening skills, strategies to calm down and about the feeling worry. A variety of medium was used to teach the lesson including videos, puppets, music and stories.

For more information on the Office of Drug & Alcohol, visit <https://www.montcopa.org/1339/Drug-Alcohol>. For more information on Second Step, visit <http://www.secondstep.org/elementary-school-curriculum>.

Cutlines

NPHW1: Laura Spalding from Aldersgate Youth Service Bureau uses the Second Step curriculum to interact with first grade students at Overbrook Elementary School in the Abington School District.