



NATICK BOARD OF HEALTH
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Media Advisory

**Hidden in Plain Sight: Spot Risky BehaviorS at Natick Mall
A Community Initiative to Help Adults Recognize Signs of Youth Substance Use**

WHAT: The Hidden in Plain Sight initiative helps parents and other caring adults spot signs of risky behaviors using an interactive display of a teen or young adult's bedroom. Specially trained volunteer "tour guides" from MetroWest community coalitions will walk participants through the display, providing education about adolescent development and common signs of substance use.

This exhibit encourages parents and other caring adults to communicate with young people about their lives, their relationships, and their emotional wellness because a strong relationship between a young person and a caring adult can be a powerful protective factor to prevent substance use.

The initiative is sponsored the Town of Natick, the Natick 180 Coalition, Natick Mall, SOAR (Supporting Outreach & Addiction Recovery) Natick, Wegmans Natick, Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn Coalition, Dover & Sherborn Regional School District, Framingham Health Department, Framingham FORCE (Fostering Opioid Recovery, Compassion & Education), Holliston Drug & Alcohol Awareness Coalition, Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention, Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention, Medfield Cares About Prevention, MetroWest Caring Adults Network, Northborough & Southborough Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

WHY: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is in the midst of an opioid epidemic, with an estimated 2,033 opioid related deaths in 2018 and an estimated 497 opioid related deaths between January and March 2019.*

Studies have shown that youth use of substances like alcohol, marijuana and prescription pain medication is associated with increased risk of addiction to heroin and other opioids.

WHEN: Hidden in Plain Sight is open to the public September 10th-September 26th.

- Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 10:00 AM-2:00 PM
- Tuesdays and Thursdays: 4:00 PM-8:00 PM
- Saturdays and Sundays: 12:00-4:00 PM

Kick-off celebration will occur at the display Tuesday, September 10th, 9:00 AM-11:00 AM. (Speakers TBA)

WHO: Hidden in Plain Sight is open to all members of the public over the age of 21.

WHERE: Natick Mall, 1245 Worcester Street, Natick, MA 01760; located at the top of escalator between Tilly's and Hollister

CONTACT: Please contact Katie Sugarman, csugarman@natickma.org if you are interested in covering the event.

**Source: MA Department of Public Health,*
<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2019/05/15/Opioid-related-Overdose-Deaths-among-MA-Residents-May-2019.pdf>