

## We Need New Model of Preventing the Heroin/Opioid Health Crisis in Wisconsin Youth

Written by Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Robert Kraig  
Thursday, 18 September 2014 11:55 -

---

<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/drugaddicts-young-s5.jpg>



***Healthy Youth, Bright Futures Coalition launches during National Recovery Month to showcase prevention efforts to curb youth drug and alcohol misuse in Wisconsin.***

---

STATEWIDE - As Wisconsin faces an increasing public health crisis surrounding heroin, opioid and other substance misuse, today the Healthy Youth, Bright Futures Coalition marks Recovery Month by highlighting efforts underway in Wisconsin schools to curb drug and alcohol misuse by meeting youth where they are. Recovery Month brings a national focus on the societal benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery for mental and substance use disorders.

Substance use disorder is widely seen as a crisis. Wisconsin saw a record [227 heroin-related deaths in 2013](#). In Milwaukee alone, reported heroin use among teens has increased nearly 30% from 2011 to 2013, according to a recent survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control. By treating this issue as the public health crisis it is, the coalition seeks to address the epidemic in ways law enforcement alone cannot.

Five school districts in Southeastern Wisconsin, including Racine Unified and Waukesha school districts are combating alcohol, heroin and opioid misuse by implementing a solution called SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment). These districts follow the Hartford Union and Kewaskum school districts in Washington County, the first to implement the solution in Wisconsin.

The SBIRT model has been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), Wisconsin State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (SCAODA) and other medical authorities across the country.

“Addressing Wisconsin’s public health crisis of heroin and other substance misuse cannot rely solely on a law-enforcement approach,” said Citizen Action of Wisconsin Executive Director Robert Kraig. “Right now, schools in Southeastern Wisconsin are meeting youth where they

## **We Need New Model of Preventing the Heroin/Opioid Health Crisis in Wisconsin Youth**

Written by Citizen Action of Wisconsin, Robert Kraig  
Thursday, 18 September 2014 11:55 -

---

are, using prevention and early intervention programs to combat dangerous substance misuse and addressing directly the heroin/opioid health crisis jeopardizing the future of Wisconsin youth.”

The Healthy Youth, Bright Futures Coalition for the Prevention of Youth Addiction in Wisconsin includes Citizen Action of Wisconsin Education Fund, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, IMPACT, Wisconsin Initiative to Promote Healthy Lifestyles, Elevate, Inc, Flow One Lean Consulting, and Community Advocates.

For more information on the coalition’s efforts, contact Citizen Action of Wisconsin Health Care Organizer Erik Kirkstein, [\(414\)-520-1377](tel:(414)520-1377) [erik.kirkstein@citizenactionwi.org](mailto:erik.kirkstein@citizenactionwi.org)