



Media Contact:
Joy Mosenfelder
jmosenfelder@vpi.org
W: 617-541-0222 x646
C: (978) 866-9234

PRESS RELEASE

VICTORY PROGRAMS PARTNERS WITH ORGANIZERS OF THE BOSTON ANARCHO PUNK FEST

Christopher Richard, Project Coordinator of Victory Programs' Drug User Health Project, gave presentations on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose using the highly-effective overdose reversal drug, naloxone (Narcan) on Sunday, August 20 and Monday, August 21, 2017 during the Boston Anarcho Punk Fest.

Boston (August 28, 2017) – On August 20 and 21, with punk music blaring in the background from the Anarcho Punk Fest held at the Democracy Center in Cambridge, MA, Christopher Richard Project Coordinator of Victory Programs' Drug User Health Project demonstrated to engaged audiences of festival attendees how to save a life from an opioid overdose. Christopher's one hour presentation is a crash course in all things overdose related and covers the basics: what is an overdose, what can a person overdose on, what are the different types of opioids and how to tell if someone is overdosing; before delving into the nitty gritty of how to respond when someone overdosing on opioids.

Participants in the two workshops learned how to recognize an opioid overdose and the steps to take when someone is overdosing, including how to determine if someone is non-responsive, how to assess the scene for additional dangers, what to do before administering naloxone (Narcan) and what the Massachusetts' Good Samaritan Law does and does not provide protection from. Those at high risk for experiencing and/or witnessing an overdose were given the opportunity to enroll in the Massachusetts Naloxone Pilot Program and receive their own Narcan rescue kit. Those who opted out were educated on how they could access naloxone through their local pharmacy. Individuals can obtain naloxone through their insurance at any Massachusetts pharmacy without a prescription. The drug works by removing opioids from receptors in the brain. It effectively reverses the overdose by allowing the individual's body to resume normal control of circulation and breathing until emergency services or first responders can arrive. Civilians using naloxone and rescue breathing to assist someone experiencing an overdose should still contact 911 as there is always a risk of the person falling back into an overdose state. Connecting the individual with a higher level of care is vital to keeping them safe.

Victory Programs' Drug User Health Project is part of the agency's Mobile Prevention Team, a group of staff members who provide mobile education, navigation and peer support services to community members and groups. If you would like to learn more about the Mobile Prevention Team, the Drug User Health Project or discuss having a presentation for your group please call 617-927-0836 or visit www.vpi.org. Photos from the event are available [here](#).

About Victory Programs

Victory Programs has more than 40 years of experience opening doors to hope, health and housing for individuals and families in need. Since its inception in 1975, the agency has expanded to 19 health, housing and prevention programs providing shelter and recovery services to more than 2,300 people annually. Victory Programs has a storied history of responding to emerging needs in the community – from being one of the first agencies in Massachusetts to allow HIV positive clients into its addiction recovery programs in 1981 to launching a mobile prevention unit in 2015 to reach individuals and families in the community and better serve their needs. Throughout its organizational growth, Victory Programs' commitment to those struggling with homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction and chronic illnesses like HIV/AIDS always remains its top priority.

About the Mobile Prevention Team Drug User Health Project

The Drug User Health Project is one of the pilot locations for the State of Massachusetts' Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution work. The Drug User Health Project conducts trainings with partner organizations including Pine Street Shattuck Shelter, Rosie's Place, St. Francis House, Women's Lunch Place, Health Care Resource Centers and local community groups as well as internal trainings for Victory Programs' clients. Individuals who have been through the trainings can obtain naloxone directly from the Drug User Health Project Outreach Educators or through any Massachusetts pharmacy and are protected by Massachusetts Good Samaritan laws. To date, the Drug User Health Project has enrolled 600 individuals in the Overdose Education and Naloxone Distribution pilot program.