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“LET’S BE BLUNT” ANTI-MARIJUANA INITIATIVE SET TO LAUNCH
Youth-developed Campaign Aims to Prevent Drug and Marijuana Use and Drug Addiction

MILWAUKEE, WI— With marijuana use and heroin overdoses among youth at an all-time high, “*Let’s Be Blunt*,” a youth anti-marijuana campaign, is set to kick off **July 10, 2017** in Milwaukee. The campaign—which relies heavily on using social media platforms includes messages and images created by local youth, aimed at deterring their peers from smoking marijuana and using drugs.

Middle and high-school students created this innovative campaign during a drug-free youth education summit this past spring. The goal of the campaign is to engage youth living in Greater Milwaukee, between the ages of 12-17, who may be current marijuana users or have friends and/or family members who are users. Research shows that youth typically start experimenting with drugs like marijuana around the ages of 12 to 13, so youth suggested using social media as one of the most effective vehicles to reach them and their peers.

In addition, during the drug-free summit, as part of a media blitz contest, youth were encouraged to submit ideas around #noneedforweed and #letsbeblunt and include the most effective ways to reach their peers using messaging that would resonate with the target audience. Three winning teams were selected and their images and messages were used to create this year’s *Let’s Be Blunt* Campaign. In addition to social media, images will also be displayed on Milwaukee County buses beginning the week of July 10.

“Young people who start using marijuana as teenagers need to know how this behavior impacts them long term. How drug use may affect how their brain, their thinking, memory, and learning functions,” said Kari Lerch, Deputy Director, Community Advocates-Public Policy Institute. “We must continue to push positive messages to young people, to educate and inform them on how to live their best lives, free of all drugs.”

To help Milwaukee’s youth avoid life-long substance abuse and beat the odds for the intergenerational poverty and incarceration, the Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP) is focusing its efforts on strategic and targeted substance abuse intervention as part of its broader mission. Visit www.letsbebluntmke.org for more information.

About the Milwaukee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (MCSAP): MCSAP Coalition’s mission is to improve the quality of lives in our community by preventing the harmful consequences of substance use and abuse among youth, families, and the larger community. Established in 2011, the MCSAP Coalition is a countywide initiative with a vision of bringing together resources, wisdom, talents and passion to create a happy and healthy community. MCSAP addresses policies, practices and programs in our two current priority areas: marijuana use among youth and fatal drug overdose, with a particular emphasis on prescription drugs.

