



The History and Mission of Lunenburg ROAR

Susan Diamantopoulos 2018

The Lunenburg ROAR Task force is a group of concerned citizens who came together last spring 2017 to ask the question “what we can do to make a difference in Lunenburg with regards to the current Opioid Crisis?” It is made up of clergy, The Lunenburg Boys & Girls Club, Lunenburg fire and police departments, educators, medical and clinical practitioners, and community members at large. We have brainstormed, visited other communities to attend programs, and observed what they were doing regarding Substance Use education, awareness and resources. Some of us in the group have been personally affected by the opioid problem, or addiction in general. We were all learning.

- **If you know someone or are related to someone who is struggling with substance use, you are not alone. In Central Mass alone last year, we have lost over 100 people, statewide well over 1,000 and across our country 64,000 deaths associated with opioid related overdoses in 2016. This truly is a national crisis and at epidemic proportions.**
- **If you have not been touched somehow by it, you are unusual.**
- **This problem does not discriminate., no matter your socioeconomic status, race, religion or education.**

The disease of addiction is real, it is devastating to the individual as well as their loved ones and it is happening in Lunenburg with those we know and love.

The 3 main goals of ROAR are to:

continuously

- **Increase awareness** of the disease of substance use and addiction
- **Provide fact-based information** to encourage healthy choices and safe decision making
- **Provide information about support and resources** to those in active addiction or in recovery, as well as their families, and members of our community and beyond.

Over the past year ROAR has presented three major programs for the community of Lunenburg. They are as follows:

October 24, 2017

Our “Opioid Forum” was very well received by our community with about 220 people in attendance. We showed the Wahlberg film “If Only” and had a diverse panel of guests, which included a parent whose child died from an overdose, a doctor specializing in substance abuse recovery, two young adults recovering from substance, representatives from our police and fire department, and a clinician who started a support program for families struggling with this issue, and the founder of a recovery program. We had about fifteen vendors sharing information.

March 15, 2018

“Substance Use: How Families Can Help” was our second event with about 60 people present. It was a more intimate gathering than our forum. Cathy Tellides Jaffee, PhD, Clinical Psychologist specializing in substance use issues, and an Instructor in Psychology at Harvard Medical School as well as a clinical Associate at Mclean hospital, was our presenter. Dr. Jaffee covered an amazing amount of material in one evening, in a clear and engaging format.

April 12, 2018

“Well Being and Resilience at Scale” was our third event. Retired Army Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum shared her personal story about being capture during the Persian Gulf War. She described how her resiliency and positive thought got her through the ordeal when she returned home. The goal of the event was to help build mental health and resilience town wide. These skills may help in the prevention of substance abuse.

We are proposing the following program for next fall:

November 1, 2018

“The Physiology of Addiction”, by Dr. Ruth Potee, is the next program we would like to present. We would learn more about how substances and addictive behaviors impact the brain and how the brain is injured by prolonged exposure to these substances and behaviors. The teenage brain is especially susceptible because it is still developing.

The Lunenburg **R**esources for **O**pioid **A**wareness and **R**ecovery Task Force (“**ROAR**”) Invites Area Residents to an Opioid Forum

Lunenburg ROAR Task Force announces a community forum and screening of the film “If Only”, seeking to raise awareness of the nationwide opioid crisis and its effects in our area.

“If Only” was co-written and co-produced by James Wahlberg with help from Recovery Centers of America and the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation. More information about the film can be found at www.ifonlymovie.org.

Our **goal** is not to scare people, but to educate the community about the great risks involved with substance use. Starting conversations is the first step in tackling this crisis.

WHEN: Tuesday, October 24, from 6:00 – 8:30pm

WHERE: Lunenburg Middle High School Auditorium,
1079 Massachusetts Ave., Lunenburg

AUDIENCE: Community members, faculty and staff, parents, middle school and high school students, preferably accompanied by their parents

PANEL:

- ◆ Parent of a child who died from an overdose
- ◆ Lunenburg young adults in long term recovery
- ◆ Mike Duggan, founder of Wicked Sober
- ◆ Lunenburg Police & Fire officers
- ◆ Dr. Brian O’Connor, Addiction Specialist from Middlesex Recovery



PURPOSE:

- ◆ **Increase awareness** of the problem of substance abuse and addiction.
- ◆ **Provide fact-based information** to encourage healthy choices and safe decisions
- ◆ **Provide information about support and resources** to those in active addiction or in recovery, as well as their families, and members of the community.

Our task force is called "**ROAR**" = **Resources for Opioid Awareness and Recovery**. Our group is a collaboration of three churches in town, our Superintendent of Schools, the Police Department, and the Boys & Girls Club as well as some "at large" citizens of Lunenburg.

Addiction support and treatment **vendors** will be available before the forum starts.

Childcare provided by Lunenburg Boys & Girls Club.

For more info: Facebook.com/LunenburgROAR

NOV 1

Act First,
Think Later

This is Normal Development

Preference
for Physical
Activity and
Sensation
Seeking

More Risky
Impulsive
Behavior



Emotions Felt
Very
Intensely

DR. RUTH POTEE

Less than
Optimal
Planning

Less
Consideration
of Negative
Consequences

Strongly
Influenced by
Friends and
Peers

“SUBSTANCE USE & THE TEEN BRAIN”

At Lunenburg Middle/Senior High School, 6:30pm

Physiology of Addiction

An overview of how substances and addictive behaviors impact the brain and how the brain is injured by prolonged exposure to these substances and behaviors. This talk focuses on the three predisposing factors that put individuals at risk for addiction: genetics, early exposure during brain development and history of childhood trauma.



Dr. Ruth Potee practices family medicine in Greenfield, MA, and was honored by the Franklin district Medical Society as the 2015 Community Clinician of the Year. She is Chair of the Healthcare Solutions Opioid Task Force of Franklin County. Dr. Potee has addressed professional and community audiences on related topics throughout the

Sponsored by Lunenburg ROAR and Walmart

Learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/LunenburgROAR/>
lunenburg.roar@gmail.com



This is a test!

Can you find hidden drugs in a teen's bedroom?



Hidden in Plain Sight is educational display showcasing various common household items that can be involved in at-risk behaviors and might be found in a teenager's bedroom.

The focus of this display is to help adults identify items of concern, raise awareness of youth at-risk behaviors and present strategies to help improve communication and discussion.

Presented by the Office of District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.