

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Building Family Resilience in a World of Booze, Bongs, and Benzos

Wednesday, February 8th, 2017

New Canaan Town Hall, Town Meeting Room

7:00 – 8:30 pm; Program begins promptly at 7:00pm

Fueled by enormous levels of stress and peer pressure, local teens are drinking more alcohol and smoking more pot, using each other's ADHD medications, and mixing in easily accessible prescription benzodiazepines (such as Xanax and Valium). Used to party, soothe, and unwind, alcohol, pot, and benzos are *everywhere*. Their very familiarity—among both kids and parents—can give families a false sense of control over these substances.

A new town-wide forum, *Building Family Resilience in a World of Booze, Bongs, and Benzos*, continues the conversation from last year's panel on opioids by providing practical skills and tools to help develop resilience—coping skills that help safeguard against depression, abuse, and addiction.

Resilience is one of our strongest individual assets for supporting health and emotional wellbeing, and it's never too late or too early for this essential skill building to begin. *How can I talk with my child without both of us melting down? My child may be drinking or using drugs, but how can I know and what should I do? What are some ways to model good behavior? When is it time to get help?* Answers to these and more can be found in the strategies presented by this expert panel from the fields of counseling, medicine, and public health.

On February 8th in the New Canaan Town Hall Meeting Room, the program, which will begin promptly at 7:00 pm, will be moderated by Carrie Bernier, executive director of the Community Fund of Darien. Dr. Frank Bartolomeo, director of Behavioral Health Services at the Southfield Center for Development, will speak about peer pressure and describe fundamental steps to building strong self-esteem. Dr. Jamie Murray, a pediatrician and Masters candidate at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, will talk about parental behavior and the importance of strong, positive adult role models. Tracy Masella LCSW, Silver Hill Hospital's program manager for the Adolescent Transitional Living Program, will discuss how to effectively set boundaries that work for your family's situation. And Certified Recovery Life Coach Kathy Brown will illustrate practical strategies for building resilience by enacting real-world role plays.

The forum will conclude with time for audience Q&A. All adults and teens are welcome.

Building Family Resilience in a World of Booze, Bongs, and Benzos is a skill-building event sponsored by New Canaan Health and Human Services and the New Canaan League of Women Voters. Supporting partners are Silver Hill Hospital, Communities 4 Action, Recovery Coaching

for Families, Southwest Regional Mental Health Board, and New Canaan Coalition for Youth and Families.

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