

Dutchess County Youth Forum on October 23rd

4th Annual Event focuses on Prescription Drug Abuse

Poughkeepsie, NY... The 4th Annual *Dutchess County Youth Forum* will be held on Tuesday, October 23rd from 8:00 am – 2:05 pm at the Dutchess County BOCES Salt Point Campus located at 5 BOCES road in Poughkeepsie. This year's forum is titled *Challenge, Choice, Change: Sculpting a Healthy Future; Making Decisions that Matter for Youth, Families and Communities*.

"This year's forum is an awareness campaign to educate local high school students on how to prevent the misuse of prescription drugs and the serious and often deadly consequences of substance abuse. The forum will demonstrate ways for them to make healthier choices and return to their schools as youth leaders, sharing what they have learned with the larger community" said June Ellen Notaro, Division of Youth Services Director.

The *Dutchess County Youth Forum* is a venue and opportunity for local high school students and adults to come together and engage in critical discussions on issues affecting young people. The event includes panel discussions throughout the day as well as student-led activities designed to empower young people to return to their schools and communities armed with information and resources to educate other teens. More than 100 high school students and adults participate in the annual Youth Forum.

Norah Merritt, Dutchess BOCES Executive Director of Educational Programs stated, "This annual event continues to be successful thanks to all the committee members and participating schools who are invested in building this relationship for the sake of our youth, schools and communities. The Council on Addiction Prevention and Education has been a great partner in organizing the speakers and activities this year. Their expertise in the area of substance abuse prevention and education has been invaluable."

For more information, please call Mary K. Fields at the Youth Bureau at [845-486-3660](tel:845-486-3660).

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