

# Facilitators Guide

## **Straight Forward: The Truth About Addiction**

### **Date and Time:**

**Please arrive:**

**Event Start time:**

**Key contacts:**

### **(2 min) Welcome:**

Hello, welcome, thank everyone for coming, link to current event/activity happening in school or community; introduce facilitator.

### **(5 min) Opening remarks:**

#### **Main points to cover:**

- Overview of the event agenda
- Provide background as to why the event is occurring; connect to YRBS and other local data on substance use and decreasing perception of harm associated with Rx drugs, vaping/tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana;
- Main message: Addiction is preventable;
- Why the film was made: documentary was produced in 2017 by Wisconsin Eye (non-profit private public affairs network), all the people you will see in the film are real people from Wisconsin sharing their personal stories; the goal is to show it to every middle and high school student in Wisconsin. The film can be found in its entirety on the Wisconsin Eye website. Straight Forward premiered at Oconomowoc High School in September 2017 to more than a thousand students, parents, educators and community members. The sponsors of the film which include Aurora Health Care, Kwik Trip, Driftless Recovery Services, SC Johnson Foundation and others who are greatly concerned about the devastating effect of opioid addiction in our communities;
- Stress that the film has serious content.
- Point out the resources present to support questions/needs (speakers, resource table, handouts, Q&A session after the film).
- Many people have personal experiences with substance use and addiction and the content of the film may make you feel sad and emotional. The reason to have these tough conversations is because preventing substance use before it starts is the most effective way to staying healthy but if you know someone who is struggling with substance use recovery is possible. Remind everyone the purpose of this event is to help parents and students have a conversation about substance use.

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**(35 min) Straight Forward Film:** Here is the link to the abridged version of the film: <https://youtu.be/QGI2TRBwtNA>. The full film is 50 min. We have shortened the film in order to allow ample time for discussion with a 90-120min event. The main omission of this version is the chapter on Naxolone/Narcan.

**Handouts:** We have created a one-page handout for parents and students to help facilitate conversations. There is also a template to create a resource list for your community. The handouts can be distributed prior to film showing.

**Question Box:** Cut small slips of paper for anonymous questions from the audience. Have a container for collecting questions. Consider planting some basic questions to get the group started, for example: Is vaping dangerous?

**(3 Min) Break following the film:** Give a bathroom break, state that the content can be heavy and have audience stand up, stretch, shoulder rolls, touch toes (small activity to release emotions)

**(20-25 min) Speakers:** Allocate time for each speaker to address an important part of the film. Here are some ideas for discussion:

**Health Educator:** Give an overview of the “conversation starters” handout. Go through each section of the handout so parents feel comfortable with the content and how to use it.

**Mental Health Speaker:** An area of the film that will likely be new to parents and students is the reference to ACEs. The film describes the ACES study starting at 20:22 (film link above). Give brief overview of the ACE study and stress that having a high score increases your risk for all kinds of health problems including substance use **but** that having a high ACE score does not necessarily doom you to poor health. Explain that we can all build our resiliency and our ability to cope with stress and adversity in healthy ways. It is important to reach out for help.

**School Representative:** A representative from the school could link the content of the film to school curricula in substance use education. Discuss the importance of relationships, what to do if you are a student and you are concerned about another student. What system does the school have for reporting suspected substance use?

**(20 min) Questions:** Open for parent discussion and questions. Be sure everyone knows that their question can be asked anonymously.

**(2min) Closing remarks:** Reiterate that addiction is preventable and it starts with you/me/us together, we must communicate with each other including caring adults to

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youth and youth to caring adults, we all can be a caring adult, the later you start to use any substance, the more protected you are from addiction. Thank you!