



# MEDINA COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

## Probate and Juvenile Divisions

93 Public Square, Room 104, Medina, Ohio 44256

KEVIN W. DUNN  
Judge

MEDIA RELEASE

October 26, 2016

## Medina High School Hosts Opioid Forum Addressing Heroin Epidemic in Medina County



Judge Dunn shares statistics of heroin use of court-involved youth in Medina County at the MHS Opioid Epidemic forum.

MEDINA – Heroin is an equal opportunity killer. It does not discriminate, crossing socio-economic and racial lines. That was the message at the October 25 Ohio’s Opioid Epidemic forum at Medina High School.

Judge Kevin W. Dunn joined a panel with Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent in Charge Timothy Plancon, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio Carole Rendon, Director of the Medina County Drug Task Force Gary Hubbard, and parent of an addict, Fred DiMarco. The panel spoke to approximately 60 attendees about the dangers of the drug, the alarming increase in use and availability, and

how community involvement can help.

“Opiates have not avoided a single state or metropolitan area in our country,” Plancon said, citing nearly 47,000 overdose deaths in 2014. Hubbard added that there have been 198 reported overdoses in Medina County this year, resulting in 29 deaths.

Youth in Medina County are not exempt. Since 2010, Judge Dunn reports 44 court-involved youth have tested positive for opiates, with just 14 percent of those youth originally charged with an opiate-related offense. That means youth who come to Court on a simple truancy or disorderly conduct charge are escalating and using opiates.

“This epidemic requires constant supervision and effort from the community,” Judge Dunn said. “Don’t let your kids get close enough to the drug to be at risk. Teach them about the dangers early.”

Judge Dunn also urged parents to take advantage of county programs, such as Hidden in Plain Sight, a traveling exhibit to help parents notice warning signs of risky behaviors that can be found in their child’s bedroom.

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Contact: Kristyn Cooke, 330.764.8751

To learn more about the Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court or Court programs, visit our websites at [www.MedinaJuvenile.org](http://www.MedinaJuvenile.org) and [www.MedinaProbate.org](http://www.MedinaProbate.org).

All panelists agreed that community communication and early prevention is key to decreasing opiate abuse. Attorney Rendon suggests those prescribed an opioid request only the necessary quantity needed and safely discard any remaining doses at county D.U.M.P. locations. Since October 2011, more than nine tons of medication have been collected in the unused medication disposal boxes.

“Ending this epidemic will take continual education, starting at a young age,” DiMarco said. “The courts can’t do it alone, the police can’t do it alone, but collectively, we can.”

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