

Dear Faith Leader:

There's a crisis gripping our region and our state. It impacts all of us. Everyone knows someone who has been devastated by the Heroin Crisis. **Do a Google search for heroin and here's what you see:**

Ohio is one of the most affected states by the heroin crisis. Hundreds are dying each month in the State of Ohio. Thousands are dealing with the grip of addiction. Family... and neighbors... and friends are over-whelmed and distraught. It is a crisis raging out of control.

BREAKING THE SILENCE & STIGMA

Over the past year, a group of civic and faith leaders have been **working together to create solutions for all affected by this crisis.** In all our conversations and meetings, one recurring struggle keeps emerging - namely - a key part of the crisis (and actually the way to solve the crisis) is to **break the silence and the stigma about the heroin epidemic**, along with helping people suffering, to have the permission to talk openly about what's taking place in their homes and families.

One vehicle we've created is a website of resources and information that can help facilitate the right questions, good resources, regional programs and support, and more. **It's known as: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com.**

CONVERSATION IS GREATER THAN HEROIN

As faith leaders, we are asking all religious leaders in our region to use the week of April 23, 2017 to educate, inform and encourage your community to learn more and join in the effort to end this epidemic. **There are three things we are asking you to do:**

- **Incorporate a prayer** at your services.
- **Talk briefly about the crisis** in your announcements or preaching.
- **Include the enclosed information** on your website and bulletin/publication.

During this same period of time, our faith-based efforts will be reinforced by the local media outlets (TV, radio, newspaper, billboards, digital, social media, etc.). Our mission is quite simple, to raise the level of awareness of the crisis, break the silence around the epidemic, and begin to work together to support recovery and family-support programs throughout our region. **Your involvement can make all the difference.**

Please find enclosed a fact sheet, along with some sample articles that can be placed on your website, bulletins, newsletter, and e-newsletters.

Understanding is greater than heroin. Together we are greater than heroin. Can we work together to break the silence and open up the pathways to hope, help and healing?

WHO WE ARE

Greater than Heroin is a group of civic and faith leaders from Northeast Ohio committed to addressing the heroin epidemic through understanding, collaboration, and awareness.

- **Understanding** through care, compassion, and prayerful support.
- **Collaboration** through community engagement and coalition building.
- **Awareness** through community education and resources

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Heroin epidemic: At least 46 fatal overdoses in Cuyahoga County in ...
[fox8.com/.../heroin-epidemic-at-least-46-fatal-overdoses-in-cuyahoga-county-in-janu...](#)
Feb 6, 2017 - CLEVELAND, Ohio -The heroin epidemic continues to turn deadly in the Cleveland area. According to the Cuyahoga County medical examiner, there were at least 46 fatal overdoses in January due to heroin, fentanyl or a combination of the two. ... Over this past weekend, at least 14 ...

Kasich signs bills to fight heroin epidemic - The Blade
[www.toledoblade.com/.../Gov-John-Kasich-today-signed-another-bill-targeting-Ohio...](#)
Jan 4, 2017 - Ohio led the nation in opioid overdose deaths in 2015 ... John Kasich today signed another bill targeting Ohio's opiate and heroin epidemic.

The Heroin Epidemic in One Mother's Ohio Town - New Life House
[https://newlifehouse.com/heroin-epidemic-one-mothers-ohio-town/](#)
The heroin epidemic in Dublin, Ohio is out of control. One mother describes how the drug has taken hold of youth and what is being done to stop the spread.

Heroin overdoses reported in Ohio as state battles epidemic - CNN.com
[www.cnn.com/2016/09/11/health/akron-ohio-overdose-deaths/](#)
Sep 12, 2016 - Ohio authorities reported at least 21 heroin overdoses in Akron as the state battles a drug epidemic.
You visited this page on 3/22/17.

PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

April 15/16

THERE'S HOPE

Many in our region are struggling with the pain and devastation caused by the heroin epidemic. As you've read in the paper and on the internet, and seen on the news, it's a painful struggle that is gripping our region and our state. There is always hope and there are pathways to find help. **If you, or someone you know, is struggling with addiction or needs help in supporting a family member, go to: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com.** It's a website prepared by civic and faith leaders across our region to help show the way to hope and recovery.

April 22/23

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

One of the most difficult struggles for those who have family members using and/or addicted to drugs, especially heroin, is silence. **They often have no one to talk to about their pain and the heavy burden on their hearts. We can change that together.** There's a crisis raging in our state. The heroin epidemic is wreaking havoc on hundreds and thousands of individuals and families across our region. Learn more so that you can be that person others can turn to in their time of need. Go to: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com. Understanding is greater than this crisis. **TOGETHER** we are **GREATER** than heroin. Each of us can be a source of hope, help and healing to someone in need.

April 29/30

EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING

As our region grapples with the heroin epidemic there are a few things that each of us can do. **This weekend is Drug Take-Back Day.** Take a few minutes to bring all your unused and unwanted prescription drugs to your local police or sheriff's department. It will keep you home and our environment safe. All of us can also learn more about the epidemic. Go to: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com/facts. Please remember in prayer all those who are suffering from this terrible addiction and for their families and loved ones.

Anytime

UNDERSTANDING MAKES THE DIFFERENCE!

Understanding is key to addressing the heroin crisis that is crippling our region and our state. Take some time to learn the facts about this crisis. **Go to: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com.** Understanding is greater than heroin. Together we are greater than this crisis.

Anytime

UNDERSTANDING IS THE KEY!

There's a crisis in our region. Hundreds are dying and thousands are impacted by the heroin epidemic. It's not something we want to talk about but we need to. Take a few minutes to learn more by watching some helpful (and hopeful) videos. **Go to: www.GreaterThanHeroin.com/video.** Understanding the crisis is key to making our community stronger, healthier and holier.



www.GreaterThanHeroin.com

929 Pearl Road, Brunswick, OH 44212 • feedback@GreaterThanHeroin.com • 330.460.7393

TALKING POINTS

- The heroin epidemic **has reached crisis levels** in our country and in our State.
- **Ohio is at the epicenter** of this crisis.
- They estimate that **900 people will die** in Ohio this year because of heroin overdose.
- In 2016, **Ohio had the most deaths related to heroin** in the country: one in 9 heroin deaths across the US happened in Ohio. (Source: www.dispatch.com).
- A March 16th Washington Post story reported that Ohio is resorting to using cold-storage trailers as morgues because **they can't keep up** with the number of drug deaths. (Source: www.washingtonpost.com).
- **Most people know someone who is addicted**, or has a family member or co-worker who has suffered as the result of this crisis.
- Most heroin addicts begin their path of addiction because of **pain medication**.
- **We need to break the silence**. So many hold their struggle and/or their pain to themselves out of fear or shame.
- Understanding both the crisis and pain of addiction is the **first step to breaking the grip** of this epidemic.
- Many **recovery resources and opportunities** are available to help in our region and state.
- **We can all do a few things:**
 - Make certain that all Opiates prescribed to them by physicians are kept in a secure location away from children and the public.
 - Safely dispose of opiates at your local County Sheriff's office.
 - Pray for those who struggle.
 - Pray for those who are working to protect us.
 - Learn more by going to www.GreaterThanHeroin.com
 - Reach out to your minister/pastor/religious leader for guidance.
- **Saturday, April 29 is Drug Take Back Day**. Take a few minutes to clean out your old/unused pain medications and drop them off to the local police or sheriff's department.
- All faith leaders in our region are being asked to **bring attention and awareness** to this painful and difficult issue.
- **Together we are stronger than this epidemic**. We can make a difference and bring help and hope to all in need.

FIND THESE TOOLS ON THE WEBSITE

HELP US SPREAD
THE MESSAGE.

Find logos, ads, flyers,
posters, videos and more at
www.GreaterThanHeroin.com/Tools

We have great marketing tools available
for use for print or include on your
own websites with a link back to www.GreaterThanHeroin.com.

The First Step to ending the Crisis
awareness
SUNDAY
Understanding is Greater Than Heroin. **4.23.17**

Spring
CLEANING
4.29.17
National Rx Drug Take-Back Day

Many do not UNDERSTAND why or how other people become addicted to drugs. It is often mistakenly assumed that drug abusers lack moral principles or willpower and that they could stop using drugs simply by choosing to change their behavior.

In reality, drug addiction is a complex disease, and quitting takes more than good intentions or a strong will. In fact, because drugs change the brain in ways that foster compulsive drug abuse, quitting is difficult, even for those who are ready to do so.

– National Institute on Drug Abuse

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BE THE CHANGE.

**Each of us knows someone impacted by heroin:
a friend, family member or colleague.**

**Visit the website for more information and resources
on how you can help, get help or learn more.**

Understanding. Collaboration. Awareness.

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