

Rite Aid Foundation Launches Prescription Drug Safety Initiative in Seattle-Area High Schools

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In an effort to help address adolescent drug abuse and misuse in the state of Washington, The Rite Aid Foundation is bringing the **Prescription Drug Safety** program, an innovative digital course about prescription drug abuse prevention, to Seattle-area high schools.

The program, developed by **EVERFI**, the nation's leading technology innovator used in one in seven schools nationwide, will be made available to high schools in the Seattle-Tacoma Metro area, which includes King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties, at no cost. Representatives of The Rite Aid Foundation and Washington State announced the launch of the new program during a press conference and demonstration at Evergreen High School.

"We have seen a dramatic increase in prescription drug abuse and misuse, and it has become a national health problem that poses a serious threat to the health, safety and wellbeing of our young people," said Kermit Crawford, president and chief operating officer of Rite Aid Corporation and president of The Rite Aid Foundation. "The Rite Aid Foundation is proud to introduce this important prevention education to Seattle-area students. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in five high school seniors admits to misusing prescription drugs. It's more important than ever to reach out to our students and arm them with the knowledge to prevent abuse before it occurs."

The **Prescription Drug Safety** program uses an evidence-based, public health approach to empower high school students with the skills and knowledge they need to make safe and healthy decisions about prescription drugs. Through interactive scenarios and self-guided activities, students learn the facts about drugs, how to properly use and dispose of them, and how to step in when faced with a situation involving misuse. The course is aligned with the Centers for Disease Control's National Health Education Standards and state academic standards. There is also a microsite with additional resources including parent guides and information on local safe medication disposal.

On average, two people die each day in Washington from opioid overdoses. That includes deaths from prescription and synthetic opioids, as well as heroin. While prescription opioid overdoses are down, overdoses from heroin are on the rise.

"Opioid addiction among Washington students is a growing concern. Studies show more and more young people are abusing prescription drugs," said Ken Turner, Program Supervisor, Health and Physical Education, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). "Prevention education to high school students is a critical piece of solving this epidemic. We are extremely grateful for The Rite Aid Foundation's commitment to help our state's efforts to combat the opioid crisis."

Across Highline Public Schools, the six-lesson online Prescription Drug Safety program is being implemented as part of the health education program. Evergreen High School is the first Seattle-area school to integrate the program into its curriculum. Over the next year, 60 other local high schools will activate the program.

"At Evergreen High School, we strive to provide a well-rounded educational experience that prepares students to live their best lives and this includes health and wellness. As a community-centered school, we partner with numerous community organizations in and outside the school to provide ongoing relevant and meaningful drug and alcohol prevention and intervention programming," said Evergreen High School Principal Jacqueline Downey. "We are thrilled to have the support of The Rite Aid Foundation to provide this program on appropriate prescription drug use that we will use in our health classes."

In addition to the activation in Seattle and Tacoma-area high schools, as part of its commitment to creating safe and healthy environments for children and teens, The Rite Aid Foundation, through its KidCents program, will also fund the introduction of the Prescription Drug Safety program to high schools in Ohio, California, Michigan, Oregon and Pennsylvania. In all, The Rite Aid Foundation made a three-year, \$1.7 million commitment to the Prescription Drug Safety program, which is expected to reach more than 400 high schools.

Through KidCents, members of Rite Aid's loyalty program, **wellness+ rewards**, can round up their in-store or online purchases to the nearest dollar and give their change to one of more than 440 nonprofit organizations focused on improving the health and wellbeing of children. For more information, visit www.kidcents.com.

Since its inception in 2001, The Rite Aid Foundation has awarded more than \$36 million to non-profit organizations. Additionally, Rite Aid, through the efforts of its customers, supplier partners and associates, has also raised more than \$87 million for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals across the country since 1994.

Rite Aid Corporation (NYSE: RAD) is one of the nation's leading drugstore chains with fiscal 2017 annual revenues of \$32.8 billion. Information about Rite Aid, including corporate background and press releases, is available through the company's website at www.riteaid.com.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington state. Led by State School Superintendent Chris Reykdal, OSPI works with the state's 295 school districts to administer basic education programs and implement education reform on behalf of more than one million public school students.

Highline Public Schools serves around 19,000 students grades K-12 in the communities of Burien, Des Moines, Normandy Park, SeaTac and White Center in Washington State. Highline has 32 schools, employs over 2,000 staff members, and offers a wide variety of educational opportunities from early childhood to college preparation. Highline is committed to equity in education, high expectations for all, and partnering with families and the community to ensure all children achieve their potential.

EVERFI, Inc. is the leading education technology company that provides learners of all ages education for the real world, through innovative and scalable digital learning. Founded in 2008, EVERFI has certified over 16 million learners in critical skill areas with more than 4,300 partners in all 50 U.S. States and Canada. EVERFI is an industry convener that builds Networks to tackle the toughest social issues, including the Campus Prevention Network, a coalition of higher education institutions committed to campus sexual assault and alcohol abuse prevention; and the Financial Capability Network, a coalition of industry leaders dedicated to improving financial outcomes for communities across the country. Some of America's leading CEOs and venture capital firms are EVERFI investors including Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos, Google Chairman Eric Schmidt, Twitter founder Evan Williams, TPG Growth, and The Rise Fund.

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