



PRESS RELEASE

Reading Coalition...improving community collaboration and reducing substance abuse since 2006

RCASA ANNOUNCES REBRAND TO READING COALITION FOR PREVENTION & SUPPORT *The name change positions the coalition to better serve Reading and propel it forward*

READING, MA (12/30/19) – RCASA, a community coalition under the Town of Reading, within the Police Department that focuses on substance abuse prevention in Reading, announced today the coalition’s official rebrand to **Reading Coalition for Prevention & Support**.

Established in 2006, the coalition started as a community initiative focused on improving community collaboration and reducing substance abuse. Since then, the coalition has built capacity within our community to address this complex issue and implemented a number of prevention initiatives, while funded under the Drug Free Communities grant.

Today, the coalition, now funded under the **Town of Reading** within the **Reading Police Department**, offers programs and services, more suited to the new name. According to Bob LeLacheur, Town Manager, “**Reading Coalition for Prevention & Support** captures who we are today and what we are working towards not just with respect to substance abuse prevention but also mental health promotion.” As the coalition rebrands, all initiatives will continue uninterrupted. “Rebranding to **Reading Coalition for Prevention & Support** enables us to connect with a wider audience, continue expanding our programs and services, and ultimately better position us to serve the community” said Erica McNamara, Director of the Reading Coalition.

The Coalition will involve key stakeholders through a monthly Advisory Board gathering. Members have been appointed by the Coalition Director. The Coalition will continue to work closely with town, school, police, local parents and teens as they evolve their prevention efforts. Dr. John Doherty, Superintendent of Schools shared “The coalition continues to be a valued resource in working with our school district.” According to David Clark, Deputy Chief of the **Reading Police Department**, “The Coalition serves a key role within our department. We are one of the few police departments with an embedded coalition and this day-to-day collaboration on substance abuse and mental health is critical to our work.”

About Reading Coalition

The **Reading Coalition for Prevention & Support** is located at the **Reading Police Department** with a mission “to strategically address our substance abuse problem that youth in Reading, Massachusetts abuse alcohol, prescription drugs, nicotine, and other illegal drugs at unacceptably high rates that emerge early in adolescence, happen frequently, and indicate heavy use. To realize our mission, we will promote a healthy community environment using the strategic prevention framework to ensure everyone who lives, works, or goes to school in Reading can enjoy an optimum quality of life.” For more information about the Reading Coalition, its services and how to get involved, visit www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/readingcoalition

###

Erica McNamara, MPH, Director
781.942.6793/ emcnamara@ci.reading.ma.us
www.reading.k12.ma.us/community/readingcoalition
15 Union Street Reading, MA 01867