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United Way of Chittenden County and Vermont Department of Health to Host Community Conversation for Parents and Families About Opiate Addiction

OCTOBER 14, 2015 (South Burlington, VT) – United Way of Chittenden County and the Vermont Department of Health will host the next in a series of Community Conversations about solutions for opiate addiction in Chittenden County at 6:30-8:30 pm on October 22, 2015 at Essex High School, 2 Educational Drive, Essex Junction. The topic of this Community Conversation is *For Parents: Keeping Our Kids Safe*; this Conversation will continue community-wide dialogue about opiate abuse and how it affects our children, with a specific focus on Parenting and Prevention. Parents who want to learn more about prevention strategies and communication techniques are encouraged to attend and bring friends and other parents.

The Burlington District Office of the Vermont Department of Health and United Way of Chittenden County are partnering with multiple stakeholders to organize and host this series of community forums designed to raise awareness of issues of opiate addiction in Chittenden County, educate about available resources and engage all sectors of the community in solution-building. Attendees will learn about tools and strategies for talking to their kids and helping children strengthen their own internal resources as a way to navigate the challenges they face in young adulthood.

“We’re anticipating a large turnout of parents and educators at this event. These Community Conversations are a forum to connect and share concerns, learn facts and identify skills and resources to keep our community healthy and safe. It’s up to each of us to take steps in our own families, neighborhoods and collective communities that can together make a difference in tackling this problem,” said United Way Community Impact Manager Raquel Aronhime. “With increased public awareness has come a surge of willful energy from citizens and organizations throughout the state to get involved. We’re proud of our community for stepping up to work together on this.”

As part of their work to advance health and well being in Chittenden County, United Way focuses on the development of strategies that address drug abuse along the continuum of care – including prevention, treatment and recovery. A subsequent November forum will address the unique needs of the family members of addicts and people in recovery, and the stigma that can hamper real productive discussion.

This event is free and open to the public.

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About United Way of Chittenden County:

United Way of Chittenden County unites our whole community to solve complex problems and harness the power of people to create a stronger Chittenden County. United Way convenes advocates, organizations and institutions to address the community's most pressing issues, focusing on the building blocks of a vibrant community: Education, Income and Health. The problems facing our community are complex; they are issues that no single organization or individual alone can solve – real change is possible when nonprofit, public and private sectors work together. United Way has the networks, partnerships and strategic initiatives to improve the lives of our family, friends and neighbors.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.unitedwaycc.org.