

Allston-Brighton Businesses and Organizations Support Youth Coalition Art Project

Locally Created 'Above the Influence' Poster Displayed Throughout Community

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June 4, 2014

More than 40 businesses and organizations in Allston-Brighton are displaying a poster created by the Youth Coalition of the Allston-Brighton Substance Abuse Task Force (**ABSATF**). Youth Coalition members created the poster to depict positive influences in their lives that help them say no to the negative influences, such as alcohol and drugs. Their artwork, inspired by conversations with Allston-Brighton youth during focus groups, is also on display on three billboards and promoted at community events this spring. The project is part of the national "Above the Influence" (ATI) campaign.

In ABSATF Youth Coalition-led discussions at the Oak Square YMCA and Charlesview Residences, youth groups consistently identified sports, friends, music, art, health, school, family and love as positive influences in their lives. The Youth Coalition worked with consultant Emily Bhargava of the Connection Lab to create the final project which has been replicated on billboards and posters. Youth Coalition members have spent the last few weeks asking local businesses if they would display the poster to spread the positive message.

"I feel like I have the power to impact our community for the better," said Julia Roberto, Youth Coalition member. "Just being able to raise awareness and spread this idea of staying above the influence and hope into our community is rewarding within itself. I just hope to spread awareness of a major problem in our community [substance abuse] and get the discussion of solutions to this out there."

The following businesses and organizations are displaying the ATI poster: 3 Scoops, Amanda's Flowers, Bangkok Bistro, Bonchon, Boston College Neighborhood Center, Boston Fire Department in Oak Square, Brighton Barber, Brighton Eye Associates, Brighton Insurance Agency, Brighton Marine Health Center, Brighton Pharmacy, Café Nation, Centre Salon, Daniel's Bakery, Dunkin Donuts of Brighton Center, Dunkin Donuts of Oak Square, Europe Today Furniture, Eyebrow Threading, Faneuil Branch of the Boston Public Library, F.I. Patnode Insurance Agency, Gavin Foundation, GNC, Harvard Allston Education Portal, Honan Branch of the Boston Public Library, Jackson Mann Community Center, Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center, Kiki's Kwik-Mart, Massachusetts Organization for Addiction Recovery (MOAR), OMG Optical, Pic A Pasta, Pizza Etc., Proper Slice, Rock City Pizza, Rogers Park, St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, Starbucks, Supercuts, Tar Park, Thai North, Treats, Universal Hair Care, Wah Foong Electronics, and Yamato Japanese Restaurant.

In addition to the posters and billboards, the Youth Coalition brought the ATI message to youth during several community events including the Oak Square YMCA Healthy Family Day,

Charlesview Family Resource Day, Boston Police Department D-14 Child Safety Day and a Road to the Right Track session.

“It was a fun experience being able to express our ideas and creativity and to be a positive influence to the youth in our community,” said another Youth Coalition member who wished to remain anonymous. “I hope to make a difference and promote healthy decision making.”

The ABSATF Youth Coalition is made up of 11 members, ranging in age from 14 to 17, who live in Allston-Brighton. The coalition was part of a group that raised awareness of alcohol ads effects on teens, thus leading to a ban of alcohol advertising on MBTA property in 2012. The group continues its awareness efforts and hopes to effect an alcohol advertising ban on City of Boston property. Last year the group completed its first ATI project which was a quilt that hung in public places around Allston-Brighton.

About the Above the Influence (ATI) campaign

The Above the Influence brand remains one of the most widely recognized youth brands in the country and continues to strengthen teen anti-drug beliefs. ATI speaks in a voice relevant to today’s teens – encouraging them to live “above the influence” of drugs and alcohol and reject the use of any substance that gets in the way of their goals in life.

In addition to national-level television and Internet advertising, the Campaign maintains a strong online presence – routinely communicating with nearly 300,000 teens via its ATI Facebook page, as well as online at AboveTheInfluence.com and the [Above the Influence YouTube channel](#). Findings from the Media Campaign’s Youth Ad Tracking Survey of teens indicate that not only are 85 percent of teens aware of Above the Influence advertising, but 75 percent of teens – regardless of gender or ethnicity – say Above the Influence speaks to them.

Additional evidence for the effectiveness of the "Above the Influence" national campaign recently appeared in two peer-reviewed journals, [Prevention Science](#) and the [American Journal of Public Health](#). The analyses showed that youth who reported exposure to the ATI campaign were less likely to begin use of marijuana compared to those not exposed to the ATI campaign – a finding consistent with the Media Campaign's own year-round Youth Ad Tracking Survey results.

About the Allston-Brighton Substance Abuse Task Force

The Allston-Brighton Substance Abuse Task Force is a coalition of community agencies and residents that mobilizes youth, families, community members and leaders to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth and adults in our community. The Task Force has made significant strides over the years, becoming a recognized leader and community resource for tackling important issues such as underage drinking and prescription drug abuse. For more visit www.abdrugfree.org. Follow ABSATF on Twitter @abdrugfree. Follow the ABSATF Youth Coalition on Twitter and Instagram @abyouth.

Source: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/about-anti-drug-media-campaign>