

Whereas, The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene reported that more than 80 percent of drug overdose deaths from January 2017 to July 2017 included opioid use; and

Whereas, As the National Institute on Drug Abuse notes, drug consumption at an early age is a predictive factor of the development of a substance addiction, and most individuals with a substance use disorder began using substances prior to age 18; and

Whereas, The Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration acknowledged that one out of four teenagers believe prescription drugs can be taken to assist with studying, and according to a media source, some teenagers misuse prescription opioids because they believe it will help them with their school work; and

Whereas, As reported by the New York Daily News, in 2017, the Realization Center, an addiction treatment program in New York City, observed that they were treating almost double the amount of high school students for drug addiction at the time than in previous years, including drug addictions to opioids; and

Whereas, Data from the New York City Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2015 shows that 7 percent of New York City high school students misused prescription opioid analgesics, and 3 percent of youth reported that they had used heroin previously; and

Whereas, The use of opioids can be life threatening for teens, and research conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics shows that in 2015, drug overdoses for youth ages 15-19, nationwide, were highest for opioid usage; and

Whereas, Research based interventions such as social supports and educational activities can help prevent early misuse of drugs, and numerous school districts across the country have adopted health curriculums that address the misuse of opioids among youth; and

Whereas, New York City's Department of Education contracts with the HealthSmart program to provide health education to middle school and high school students; and

Whereas, While HealthSmart includes information about drug addiction, the middle school and high

school curricula fail to provide minimal information about opioid addiction; and

Whereas, It is imperative that New York City students are informed about the risk factors and preventative measures concerning opioid usage, especially at a time in which there is a growing opioid crisis; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York City Department of Education to include drug awareness education concerning opioids in the school curriculum.

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2/5/18
KJ