

PRESS RELEASE



Cook County DEPT. of Public Health

**BUILDING
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Cook County and Village of Maywood join forces to address substance use

Awareness and education series engages schools, faith groups, businesses and outreach workers in solutions

MAYWOOD, IL – Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) Chief Operating Officer Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Village of Maywood Mayor Nathaniel George Booker, and Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives Emanuel (Chris) Welch held a press conference at West40 Remote School on Tuesday to announce a series of discussions, trainings and gatherings with residents and other key stakeholders, to address substance use in Maywood and the surrounding communities. Also present as a show of regional support were: Proviso Township Supervisor Mike Corrigan, Oak Park Village President Vicki Scaman, Village of Broadview Mayor Katrina Thompson, Village of Elmwood Park Mayor Angelo (Skip) Saviano and Village of Westchester Mayor Greg Hribal.

“As we focus on elements of a healthy community, we recognize that the Village of Maywood ranks among the highest in communities impacted by substance use in the western suburbs,” said Mayor Booker. “Partnering with Cook County Department of Public Health allows us to broaden our focus to address the root causes.”

Opioids are among the substances of concern. “About 2,300 suburban Cook County residents died from opioid-involved overdoses between 2016 and 2022,” said Hasbrouck. “Our data shows communities with higher rates of opioid-involved overdose deaths have lower median household incomes and higher poverty rates.”

“Substance use is often driven by exposure to violence and trauma,” he said. “It is important to recognize that, while people of all ages, races and economic positions can experience substance use disorder, communities of color shoulder a higher burden of illnesses and deaths overall, as a result of racist policies and inequitable investments in education, economic development and infrastructure.”

Recent CCDPH data shows that in suburban Cook County:

- 22% of high school students stated they were current drinkers
- 23% of adults reported binge drinking, which is defined as consuming more than 4 drinks in one sitting for women and more than 5 drinks in one sitting for men.
- In students who ever used marijuana, the percentage of first use before age 13 was 26% for Blacks, 16% for Hispanics, and 8% for Whites.

The Substance Use Awareness and Education Series began July 30th and will continue throughout the month of August to gather community input and provide prevention and treatment resources. After the press conference, a luncheon was held for school and faith leaders.

“Working with schools is important because educators work closely with youth and families every day and they understand what assets are already in place and what gaps still need to be addressed,” said Cook County Commissioner Tara Stamps, who has most of Maywood in her district.

The luncheon was followed by a meeting with first responders to discuss street and business outreach.

“Engaging and working closely with first responders allows our leaders to get a better understanding of what they are seeing on the front lines, and what steps we can take to help them when responding to those in need,” said Speaker Welch. “Their expertise helps us focus life-saving resources where they are needed most in order to build safer, stronger communities.”

Later in the afternoon, [Black Men United](#), a group of about 65 Maywood/Bellwood peacekeepers gathered for a naloxone education training led by CCDPH staff. Black Men United is a national service organization focused on restoring and rebuilding health, wealth and education in Black communities across America, under the leadership of Black men.

A reception was held in the evening for business leaders, who were given colorful, branded Get Naloxone boxes. The boxes contained naloxone for businesses to display in plain sight for residents who want to pick it up at no cost. Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can safely reverse an opioid overdose.

In August, CCDPH will join Mayor Booker for substance use conversations with the community, including coffee with older adults, and the Let’s Talk Maywood Community Tour, taking place at parks and other locations on August 13th, 15th, 27th and 29th. Residents will have a chance to learn more about substance use prevention and treatment resources, and how to use naloxone.

“There’s not a one-size-fits-all solution for every community. I would like to thank Mayor Booker and CCDPH for bringing community voices together to co-create solutions to substance use in Maywood,” said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle.

Mayor Booker echoed this, saying, “Collaboration and partnerships are essential to building healthier communities, and we look forward to combating substance use and moving Maywood forward together.”

CCDPH plans to hold similar awareness and education series in other suburban communities over the next year. For more information about Maywood events, see the [Maywood Community Calendar](#). To learn more about naloxone, visit getnaloxonecookcounty.com.

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