**2016-17 CCH Drug and Alcohol Policy**

***Testimonials from CCH and Community Stakeholders***

“As a proud alum, parent of an alum, former School Board member and lifelong supporter of CCH, I am very encouraged with the new substance abuse prevention program.  Over the years we have discussed and debated the need for such a program.  I can assure every current and future student that our focus has always been for their health and welfare.  This program not only discourages drug/alcohol use but also provides guidance and support should a problem arise.  Parental involvement and example will be key aspects of its success.”

Ed Fritz, R.N.

CCH Class of 1974

Former member, CCH School Board

St. Elizabeth’s Healthcare

“As a long-time member of the Northern Kentucky Medical Community and Covington Catholic's Substance Abuse Prevention Committee, I view the new substance abuse prevention program as a proactive and compassionate step to addressing the growing drug abuse problem in our society. This program not only serves as a deterrent but facilitates parents in the early detection and intervention of a potential drug use problem in the most confidential way. Our intentions are not meant to be punitive but to assist and give guidance to our young men in making the right choices as they embark on life's journey.”

Robert F. Otte M.D.

CCH Class of 1981

“As superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Covington, I endorse and support the resolve and courage displayed by Mr. Rowe and the Covington Catholic High School community to foster a drug-free environment through a mandatory drug testing program. This program confirms Covington Catholic’s commitment to high expectations for student behavior and to help students make healthy choices. It also advances its efforts to intervene and help students who might be vulnerable to drug use and addiction. In addition to this type of effort, we, as Catholic school educators and parents, continue to ask God to watch over and help our students and children make good choices, as Christ gives us strength.”

Mike Clines

Superintendent

Diocese of Covington

“Schools must address and meet the challenges of changing social trends in order to provide a safe and healthy learning environment.  I am proud that Covington Catholic has taken the initiative to implement a substance abuse policy that will benefit and support both its students and their families.  This policy is clear, comprehensive, and fair.  It reflects many months of work by the substance abuse prevention sub-committee of the school board and the professional advice of many community members.

Implementation of the policy continues the Covington Catholic mission to educate young men spiritually, academically, physically, and socially.”

Carol Rasp

CCH Teacher and Department Chair

“Covington Catholic High School’s adoption of a drug testing provision is a proactive step to ensure a healthy and safe environment for its students and the Covington Catholic community. The policy is respectful, fair, and caring. I’m proud that Covington Catholic is taking this step to provide a positive environment in which its young men can truly thrive spiritually, academically, physically, and socially.”

John Hodge

2015-16 School Board President

“Although we do not have a ‘drug problem’ at Covington Catholic, the School Board and Substance Abuse Prevention Committee were not oblivious to the reported increases in the use of heroin and other controlled substances by the Northern Kentucky community at large. We began asking ourselves what we could do to protect our students from these dangers.  After years of prayer, study, and countless meetings and discussions with medical personnel, substance abuse counselors, and legal professionals, a decision was made to recommend to the administration a school-wide drug testing program.  The result is a program the entire Colonel Community can be proud of.  Our program is not intended to “punish” young men who have used drugs.  Rather, it has been designed to proactively identify those students who may need help with their substance abuse issues, and to get them into treatment.  We want each student at our school to be healthy and well so that he can develop into the man God calls him to be.”

Lee Metzger

CCH Class of 2003

Substance Abuse Prevention Committee

2014-2015 School Board President

Attorney with Adams, Stepner, Woltermann & Dusing, PLLC

“St Elizabeth Healthcare supports the cutting edge efforts of Covington Catholic High School to lead its students and the community with this initiative that will strengthen the overall health and wellbeing of Northern Kentucky.”

Tina LeGris, MSW, LCSW, CEAP

Director, Business Health Services

St. Elizabeth Healthcare

“We should not ignore the ever-increasing dangers our students face in our society today, including many that stem from substance abuse.  So I strongly support Covington Catholic’s effort to provide the deterrence, the resources, and the positive reinforcement that will empower its students to make good choices and avoid these dangers.”

Eddie Eviston

Head Football Coach

Covington Catholic High School

“As educators we value our role in the lives of our students. We realize that parents are the primary teachers in a young man’s life but we work to assist them in our capacity. The CCH drug policy enables us to guide, to assist and to share our understanding of the difficulties of adolescence in a healthy and positive manner. This plan is not meant to be punitive, it hopes to enable the formation of a self-confident, healthy and well-adjusted young man. “

Tim Haders

CCH Art Teacher & Department Chair

“I have been in Law Enforcement for more than 14 years, [and] for the last 12 years I have been teaching DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) to local Elementary children. I enthusiastically watch these children learn and demonstrate firm tools to resist the pressure from their peers when asked to try drugs. Let’s give them one more tool to avoid drug use, mandatory drug testing. Those same children as teenagers can say when asked, “Nah, I can’t! We have drug testing at school!” I think this would be a great follow up to the DARE program for High Schools.”

Tim Pangallo

CCH Parent

Patrol Officer

City of Fort Mitchell Police

“I believe [mandatory drug testing] will help serve as a deterrent for drug use.   As a responsible educator, Covington Catholic has the best interest of the student in mind when implementing such a program.”

Fr. Matt Cushing

Pastor Saint Anthony Parish

Chaplain, Covington Catholic High School

“I have been associated with Covington Catholic High School as its Pastoral Administrator since 2007.  I remember attending the first board meeting and being impressed that there was a standing committee called “The Substance Abuse Prevention Committee.”  I was impressed that the administration (the principal and the board) of Covington Catholic was taking [the concern of substance abuse] so seriously that there was a standing committee that met monthly and that reported at every meeting.  Doctor Bob Otte was the chair of the committee then and was passionate about getting parents and students to appreciate the severity of the problem of substance abuse in Northern Kentucky.  In his work as a pediatrician, he has seen much of the results of substance abuse clinically.  He was emphatic that substance abuse–including drugs like heroin–is not just a problem of the inner city.

At Saint Agnes, in recent years, we have had the funerals of several younger people whose deaths were related to substance abuse.  In particular I remember the words from the eulogy a father wrote for his daughter.  Addressing her friends, he took them to task for not doing anything to help her with her drug addiction.

We all can remember the power and effects of pressure from our peers on our decision-making, particularly when we were young and learning our way.   I would think that anything that we can do to encourage students to decide to “not go there” and “just say no” should be encouraged.

 I think everyone would agree that prevention in the first place is an important strategy.  This prevention can and should include so-called “entry drugs.”  Mandatory drug testing gives young people a real reason to decline any controlled substance when offered.  It also provides the means of discovery necessary to help those who may already have a problem and get them the help and support they need, earlier rather than later.”

Father Mark Keene

Pastor Saint Agnes Parish

Pastoral Administrator, Covington Catholic HS

“After almost two school years of careful planning, Drug Free Clubs of America is excited to launch this new "All-In" implementation strategy with Covington Catholic High School.  We will be monitoring the program closely, and are optimistic that this evolved framework may serve as a benchmark for additional schools with similar educational cultures in the future.”

Angie Ferguson

Executive Director

Drug Free Clubs of America

“There are few situations more heartbreaking for a parent than to have a child suffer from addiction. Parents often cannot see [their child’s drug use]. I believe that if a program of this nature would have been in place when my son was in high school, we could have gotten him the help he needed a lot sooner.”

Parent of a Northern Kentucky Young Adult who battled addiction as a high school student

**Note**: The policy and additional explanatory materials are available on the CovCath website at covcath.org/drugfreepolicy.