

**TESTIMONY OUTLINE**  
**HEROIN CRISIS IN PENNSYLVANIA – READING, PA**  
**SANDY GREEN**  
**MAYOR – BOROUGH OF KUTZTOWN**

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you thoughts from community members, Kutztown School District Superintendent and faculty, law enforcement and local officials.

As a community, as a region, as a commonwealth, we need to provide a safe environment for our children and adults. With the increases in accessibility and affordability of heroin, we need to work together to make a difference. Recently, in the Kutztown area, community members, parents, students, business owners, church groups, service organizations, Kutztown School District and Kutztown University faculty and staff, and local government worked together to identify actions that can be taken toward the problem of substance abuse.

The Kutztown Community is currently focusing their efforts on the following:

- 1) Increase Public Education Efforts -- All of us ..... Parents, students, community members and prescribers have a shared responsibility to learn more about this challenge and act to save lives.
- 2) Seek funding resources
- 3) Building Community Partnerships - Community partnerships are a necessary component of any strategy to reduce substance abuse and misuse.
- 4) Community options and activities to involve students and young adults - Seek funding to support a community center designed to give our youth a place to spend their time pursuing positive social activities.
- 5) Taking inventory of existing community resources and investigating opportunities to increase resources
- 6) Communicating our message and resources to those in need.

What we need from the legislators is support in the following areas:

- 1) Provide information on any funding opportunities that may exist.
- 2) Support for substance abuse prevention, intervention and maintenance services. Too often our community members don't have access to the services they need.
- 3) Mandatory guidelines for the prescribing of painkillers. Too many students and adults become heroin addicts because they have become dependent on prescription drugs that are too expensive to sustain.
- 4) Requirements for insurance companies to treat substance abuse as an illness and cover the appropriate treatment.
- 5) Assurance that the resources required to prevent and treat this disease will be available.

Ladies and Gentlemen .... The problem is real, the threat immediate and the situation is not going to get better. As parents and caring adults, we need to take definite action to address the risks of substance abuse in our community and to ensure a safe future for our students.