

**To:** Ministers Mitzi Hunter, Eric Hoskins, Jane Philpott and Ralph Goodale  
**cc:** Mayor John Tory, Joe Mihevc, Joe Cressy

## Overdose Prevention and Response Education in Schools

We are asking for your leadership in ensuring a coordinated approach at the federal, provincial and municipal levels **before the end of this school year** to ensure that consistent information is provided to all students, teachers and parents regarding the opioid overdose epidemic and how to prevent, recognize and respond to an overdose.

Currently the approach seems to be to react after the deaths of high school students. Lives will be saved with a proactive rather than a reactive response before schools close for the summer. There are excellent materials already available that have been prepared by Fraser Health and Ottawa Public Health.

We understand that this is a tight deadline to meet but a public health emergency requires an urgent response. We hate to see time wasted and inconsistent information as a result of an uncoordinated approach as each public health department prepares its own materials. This should be possible if there is a coordinated response with someone in charge at each level of government and in each school board (public and catholic). Private schools should be required to participate as well. There should be an information evening for parents to explain the materials and teachers should be trained to discuss the materials with their students.

Finally, each school in Canada should be provided with and required to have naloxone on the premises with staff trained in its administration.

We have a section on our website on “What To Tell Your Kids About Drugs” which would be a good resource for parents if the materials include a list of resources:

<https://www.farcana.org/understanding-addiction/drugs/what-to-tell-your-kids-about-drugs/>

Please take urgent action to ensure that our students, teachers and parents are educated about overdose prevention and response before the summer begins.

Sincerely,

Angie Hamilton  
Executive Director  
Families for Addiction Recovery