



## Press Release

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### Fort Bend Drug Symposium brings nationally recognized experts and over 200 guest attendees to the Gulf Coast Region

**Sugar Land, TX** – On April 20, 2016, The Fort Bend Drug Symposium convened a panel of national experts at the Fort Bend ISD Annex. Speakers addressed prescription drugs, marijuana, synthetic drugs, and cutting edge prevention strategies.

Mr. Tom Gorman, Director of the Rocky Mountain HIDTA of the White House Office of National Office on Drug Control Policy, presented on the impacts to public health and safety in Colorado since marijuana legalization. Dr. Susan Dalterio, Professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio, spoke on the health and psychological effects of prescription drug misuse. And other topics included synthetic drug awareness, social norms about teen drug use, and community solutions to the problem.

It was a half-day event organized by the Fort Bend Community Prevention Coalition (FBCPC) and co-sponsored by the Houston High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse, and the Fort Bend Independent School District. Community Prevention Partners included: Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Westpark Springs, Kemah Palms Recovery, Lifeway International, William H. Reading, MD, Memorial Hermann PaRC, Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Special Programs, Sugar Land Town Square, Skeeters, Minute Maid, Minute Coffee, Papamex, and Bush's Chicken.

Coalition Coordinator Payal Patani said, "The FBCPC serves a vital role in protecting the health and welfare of all people in our larger community. Our volunteers are dedicated to reducing substance abuse among youth."

The Region 6 Prevention Resource Center reports that teen drug use is more prevalent in our Health and Human Service region than state averages. 41% of local teens have used marijuana by 12<sup>th</sup> grade and 24% have abused prescriptions. PRC 6 Evaluator Emily Dean says, "The risk for addiction increases significantly when substance use begins in adolescence, from 1 in 10 among adults to 1 in 6 among teens." Parental involvement and community awareness are key factors to prevention. Dean adds, "The symposium added a great source of information for parents and community leaders."

#### **About the Fort Bend Community Prevention Coalition and the Prevention Resource Center 6**

The FBCPC is a coalition for youth substance abuse prevention, a program of the Department of State Health Services and the Fort Bend Regional Council. The FBCPC also receives funding from the national Drug Free Communities program. The FBCPC seeks to build capacity for community-level changes that result in fewer young people becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol. [www.fortbendcpc.org](http://www.fortbendcpc.org)

The PRC6 is a program of the Texas Department of State Health Services and The Council on Recovery. The PRC collects data and report on youth substance use and related community factors in 13 counties surrounding Houston. The PRC's mission is to provide a foundation of information for evidence-based prevention strategies. The PRC collaborates with regional coalitions, including the FBCPC. [www.prc6.org](http://www.prc6.org)



To learn more about the Fort Bend Drug Symposium, please contact:

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