

New Lock Boxes Promote Importance of Locking Up Pain Medication

Robbie Mullens with Region 6 Prevention Coordinators Office in Idabel opens new lock boxes that will be used in McCurtain County to promote awareness of the need to lock up pain medication. It has been shown that most teens and young adults who use prescription opiates begin their use by experimenting with pills found in medicine cabinets at home.



National data says nearly one in five teens has tried prescription medication to get high. Nearly three out of 10 teens believe prescription pain relievers, even if not prescribed by a doctor, are not addictive. In June a local forum will be sponsored by the coalition to inform medical personnel, emergency responders and law enforcement of the counties goal to reduce access of prescription drugs and unintentional poisoning deaths.

The McCurtain County Coalition for Change became a certified CHIO (County Health Improvement Organization) last year and began working with various organizations to apply for a \$10,000 Quality Improvement grant offered only to certified CHIO's. There were 10 grants awarded in the State of Oklahoma. Deanne Taylor, SE OK CHIO Coordinator, and RHN of Oklahoma Health Resources Coordinator, worked with Stacie Pace, Director of the Rural Health Network of Oklahoma and was able to work with the seven SE OK certified CHIO's to secure three of the 10 grants for the SE OK quadrant. Those three counties include: Choctaw, McCurtain, and Marshall County. Each grantee will host various events to promote awareness for proper storage and disposal of prescription drugs while providing education material to physicians in each county.