



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

# **RITCHIE SECURES FUNDING TO CONTINUE ANTI-DRUG ABUSE PROGRAMS IN OSWEGO COUNTY SCHOOLS**

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State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced she has secured \$40,000 in special funding to help continue anti-drug abuse counseling and education programs in Oswego County school districts.

“When it comes to making sure children don’t use drugs, knowledge is power,” said Senator Ritchie.

“Through these in school programs, we’re getting the message to them at a young age that drugs destroy lives. This funding is helping to arm students with vital information about the dangers of drug abuse, and ultimately, is stopping the spread of illegal substances in our communities.”

In recent years, budget cuts eliminated anti-drug programs in some Oswego County schools, until last year when Senator Ritchie secured \$40,000 to restore anti-drug abuse counseling and education programs to all districts. Funding announced Thursday will help to ensure the programs—which are administered through Farnham Family Services, a not-for-profit, medically supervised, outpatient drug and alcohol treatment, intervention and prevention clinic—remain in schools throughout the county.

“Fighting drug abuse in our communities is a team effort, and we’re proud to partner with Senator Ritchie and our local schools not only to make sure students know the dangers of drugs, but also to be there for those who are teetering on the edge of

going down a path of substance abuse,” said Penny Morley Prevention Services Director at Farnham Family Services.

“Studies have shown that the longer we can prevent young people from using illegal substances, tobacco or prescription pills, the less likely they are to have issues with abuse later in their lifetime. We thank Senator Ritchie for her support of our efforts, and look forward to continuing to provide students with the resources they need to live lives free of drugs.”

As a member of the Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction, Senator Ritchie has been continuing to work to stop the spread of illegal substances in the region she represents, as well as across the state. Last year, she hosted a Heroin and Opioid Abuse Forum where drug treatment experts, law enforcement, recovering addicts and friends and families of users offered their suggestions for combating the drug problem. At the forum, participants identified the need for increased anti-drug abuse education in schools.

In addition, last year her legislation to expand insurance coverage for treating heroin addiction was signed into law. Access to treatment was one of other major issues identified at her forum, and this measure was part of an 11 bill package aimed at preventing and combating abuse.