



## **THP Project Purple Initiative**

Project Purple is an initiative of The Herren Project, a non-profit foundation established by former NBA basketball player, Chris Herren that assists individuals and families struggling with addiction. Project Purple was launched to break the stigma of addiction, bring awareness to the dangers of substance abuse and encourage positive decision making to navigate life's challenges.

The THP Project Purple concept was developed when Chris spoke at a local high school in 2011 and in the front row of students a few were wearing Purple shirts. After Chris shared his story, one of the purple shirts raised her hand and stood up to speak. As snickering and laughter could be heard throughout the auditorium, the student said "Thank you Mr. Herren for validating what we do. We are the sober students of this high school and each year we take a pledge to not use drugs or alcohol." Chris was captured by the courage it took to stand up and share the symbolism of the purple shirts. He was inspired by their courage to make a difference for adolescents across the United States.

### **Mission:**

The THP Project Purple Initiative empowers youth to stand up and make a difference. Going Purple gives students motivation and support as they embrace a message of education and awareness. Students learn that they do not need drugs and alcohol to meet life's challenges; that they are perfect the way they are.

### **Beliefs:**

*We believe in the power of good choices.*

*We believe that every child deserves to grow up to be who they are meant to be.*

*We believe through education and motivation negative peer pressure can be changed to positive peer pressure.*

*We believe that all students are most impacted and motivated by their peers.*

*We believe that students seek the truth.*

*We believe that students have the power to take a stand and make a difference.*

*We believe that students have it within themselves to take a stand against substance abuse.*

*We believe that students want to and can make healthy choices.*

*We believe that students want to show compassion and support one another.*

### **The Stats:**

- In the US in 2008, almost one third of adolescents ages 12 to 17 drank alcohol in the past year. - SAMHSA, 2010
- 1 in 6 Teens has used a prescription drug in order to get high or change their mood. – The Partnership at Drugfree.org
- In an average day 4,365 used an illicit drug for the first time – SAMHSA, 2010
- Every day, more than 2,000 kids use a prescription medicine to get high for the first time. – The Partnership at Drugfree.org
- 90% of addictions get their start in the teenage years. – The Partnership at Drugfree.org
- One person dies every 19 minutes from a drug overdose in the United States. – The Partnership at Drugfree.org
- Kids who drink alcohol before the age of 15 are 5x more likely to develop alcohol abuse or dependency. – NCADD

### **The Project:**

- The THP Project Purple light first shown bright on April 24, 2012 in the City of Boston to bring awareness to the issue of substance abuse. The Prudential Tower, State House and many landmarks were lit purple in support.
- Since January of 2013 it is estimated hundreds of thousands of people nationwide have embraced the message and wore Purple! THP Project Purple teams, fundraisers and programs continue to develop nationwide expanding the THP Project Purple message and reach.
- Many top college teams, professional athletes and the NBA stand in support of the THP Project Purple initiative.
- The Herren Project has developed strategic relationships with Partnership@DrugFree.org and other national organizations, such as NIDA dedicated to developing educational and prevention programs targeted towards substance abuse.
- Support materials including THP's Project Purple App, a comprehensive Tool Kit, targeted video messages and new programs are being developed geared towards education and prevention.

[www.THProjectPurple.org](http://www.THProjectPurple.org)