

LATEST NEWS

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CRIME: Franklin Circuit Court indictments (March 5)

EDUCATION: Thompson honored with Betty and David Jones Sr. Legacy Award

NEWS: 'A tribute to brave souls': Hundreds reenact March on Frankfort



'Just Say Yes' summit brings community together to address youth substance abuse

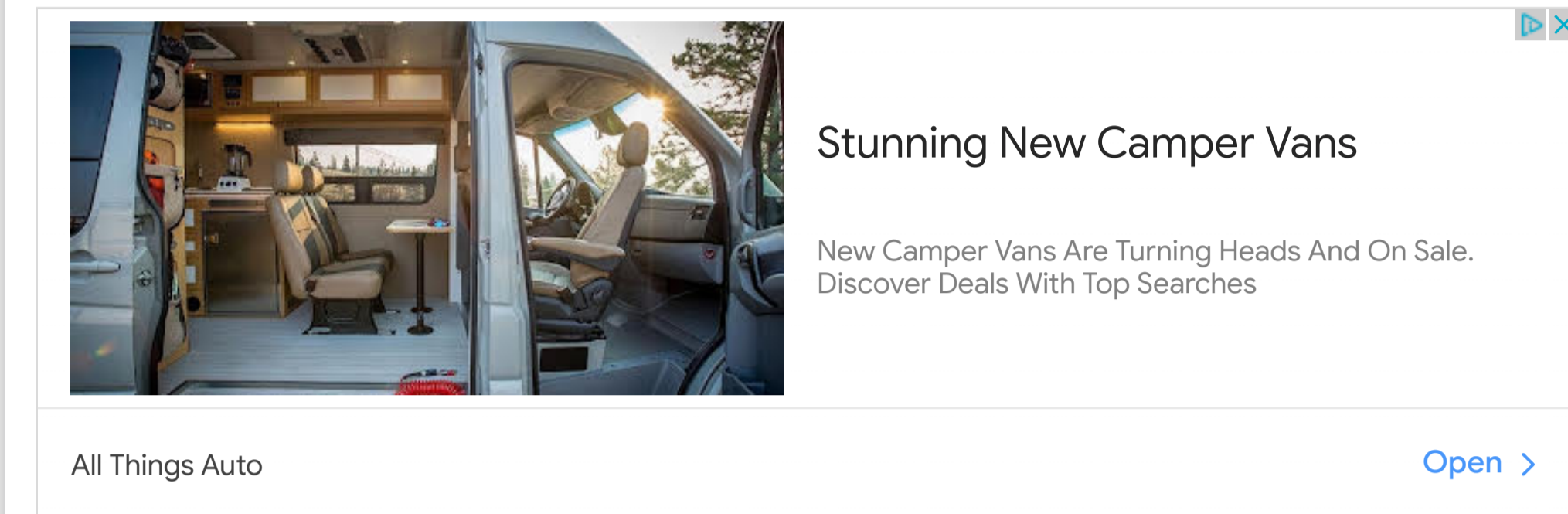
Sep 28, 2019 Updated Sep 28, 2019 0

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Frankfort community members, educators, elected officials and other stakeholders attended several workshops and lectures to learn more about preventing youth substance abuse.

Yes Arts, which was formally Hands Healing HeArts, brought together residents to hear and discuss research about preventing youth drug abuse with the Just Say Yes: Solutions for Substance Youth Prevention summit on Thursday and Friday.

Many of the workshops focused on research by Dr. Harvey Milkman, a professor emeritus of psychology at Metropolitan State University of Denver and an international expert on addiction and youth substance use prevention. Milkman is well known for being a consultant to Iceland during a time when it turned around widespread teen substance abuse in the country.



"You have to have a critical mass. I think that not everybody will be on board, but if you have a critical mass of policymakers, practitioners and parent organizations. Schools have to buy into it," Milkman said.

One of the next steps for Frankfort would be to get clear data on its youth but at a very local level, possibly by school or neighborhoods. Milkman suggested doing completely anonymous surveys of kids about their habits and lives.

Once there is a clear picture of what is going on in the community, then the community can make a more effective substance prevention program that is geared toward kids. Such a program would include building skills and engagement. The Icelandic Model has three pillars of success — evidence-based practice, using a community-based approach and creating and maintaining a dialogue among research, policy and practice.

Amelia Berry, who is the executive director of Yes Arts, heard Milkman speak at a previous conference and invited him to come to Frankfort. The group is already looking to collect data, as it did during one of the sessions for parents and teachers, about Frankfort.

Berry said the most data available now is through the KIP survey, or Kentucky Incentives for Prevention, which is used by school districts throughout the state. However, it does ask some of the questions that were addressed in the Icelandic model, like how much time a child spent with a trusted adult.

Berry said that one common theme that she has heard repeatedly at meetings like On the Table and in her role as a Frankfort Independent Schools board member is that more activities are needed for kids outside of school.

"My gut feeling that kind of gave me the audacity to invite him here for this depth of work is my feeling that our community has been crying out for this," Berry said.

Milkman said that if other community members were unable to attend a workshop, they should reach out to Yes Arts and get involved.

Jenni Nelson, a family resource coordinator at Franklin County High School, brought a group of students involved with the Capital City Youth Coalition to a workshop on Thursday. Nelson said that it was important for students to be aware of these kinds of issues and look for ways to address them.

"I think it's critical for our kids to know this stuff and be exposed to this type of thinking across the board," Nelson said.

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Tags: Substance Abuse, Harvey Milkman, Iceland, Family Network Coordinator, Jenni Nelson, Executive Director, Metropolitan State University, Franklin County High School, Community, Professional Experience, Board Member, Capital City Youth Coalition, Kentucky, Executive Of Yes Arts, Metropolitan State University Of Denver, Amelia Berry, Yes Arts

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Yes
No
Don't know

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Quiz

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27
32
37
39

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