

State of West Virginia  
Office of the Attorney General

Patrick Morrissey  
Attorney General

(304) 558-2021  
Fax (304) 558-0140

January 29, 2019

Superintendent Deborah Akers

Mercer County Schools

1403 Honaker Ave.

Princeton, WV 24740

Re: WV Attorney General's Kids Kick Opioids Contest

Dear Superintendent Akers:

Thank you for your county's participation in last year's Kids Kick Opioids public service announcement ("PSA") contest. It is our pleasure to announce that the contest is starting for all grade school and middle school students in the state. Last year, we reached over 70 schools and 2,300 students and we would like to build on that success this year.

We could not have accomplished this feat without individuals like you and we would be grateful if you reminded your principals of this great opportunity for their students. The student, or students, with the best PSA, as chosen by a panel of judges, will have their entry featured in a statewide newspaper opioid awareness campaign. Regional grade school and middle school winners will have their entries featured inside the state capitol building.

This contest comes as our state is in the midst of an opioid epidemic. In 2017, over 1,000 West Virginians lost their lives to a drug overdose. Many of these were opioid-related. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, West Virginia led the nation in an age-adjusted drug overdose rate in 2017 with 57.8 deaths per 100,000 residents. Our state also has one of the highest opioid prescribing rates. Statistics like these are why our office has made fighting the overprescribing of opioids a top priority.

Our office is heavily involved in combating the overprescribing and misuse of prescription opioids on multiple fronts: criminal and civil prosecution, prescriber and dispenser education, patient empowerment and education, regulatory licensing enforcement, community outreach, aligning insurance and financial incentives, calling for improved legislation and increasing treatment for addiction. We are especially excited about our partnership with the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission to bring awareness of prescription opioid

State Capitol Building 1, Room E-26, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25305

abuse to high school athletes and their parents. Younger students are also exposed to prescription opioids and should be made aware of the risks.

Any student submissions should be submitted by April 5th, and can either be scanned and emailed to [AGPSA.contest@wvago.gov](mailto:AGPSA.contest@wvago.gov) or mailed to the Attorney General's Office at the address above. Students can work on the PSA individually or in groups.

We have included a fact sheet, rules and entry form for the contest, and copies of the previous two winning entries. We will follow up with an electronic packet with our entry form and other resources, but there is no reason to put off participation until then.

We hope that you will reach out to the middle school and grade school principals in your county about the opportunity for their students to participate in the contest and gain important knowledge about prescription drugs.

Thank you for the great work you do with the students of this state. We enjoyed going through all the great entries last year and are excited to receive a number of entries from your county again this year. Please do not hesitate to call (304) 558-2021 or email our Chief Deputy Attorney General Anthony Martin at [Anthony.P.Martin@wvago.gov](mailto:Anthony.P.Martin@wvago.gov) with any questions about the contest.

Best Regards,



Patrick Morrisey  
West Virginia Attorney General



# West Virginia Attorney General's Office

## KIDS KICK OPIOIDS

### West Virginia Attorney General's Youth Opioid Awareness PSA Contest Rules for Submission

#### Who?

This contest is open to all grade school and middle school students throughout the state of West Virginia. Winners will be picked by a panel of judges. The top state-wide submission will be featured in the West Virginia Attorney General's next statewide newspaper PSA. Regional winning submissions for grade school and middle school will also be selected for display in the state capitol building.

#### What?

The theme is raising awareness about prescription opioid abuse. The submission may be a poem, cartoon, drawing, letter or anything else that you think would promote awareness. Submissions must fit within the box on the following page. Students may work individually or in groups.



I Twisted My Knee

What Opioids Did to Me

You'll Never Believe

#### When/Where?

Entries must be submitted by April 5th. Submissions may be sent by mail to:

West Virginia Attorney General  
1900 Kanawha Blvd E.  
State Capitol Bldg. 1, Room 26-E  
Charleston, WV 25305

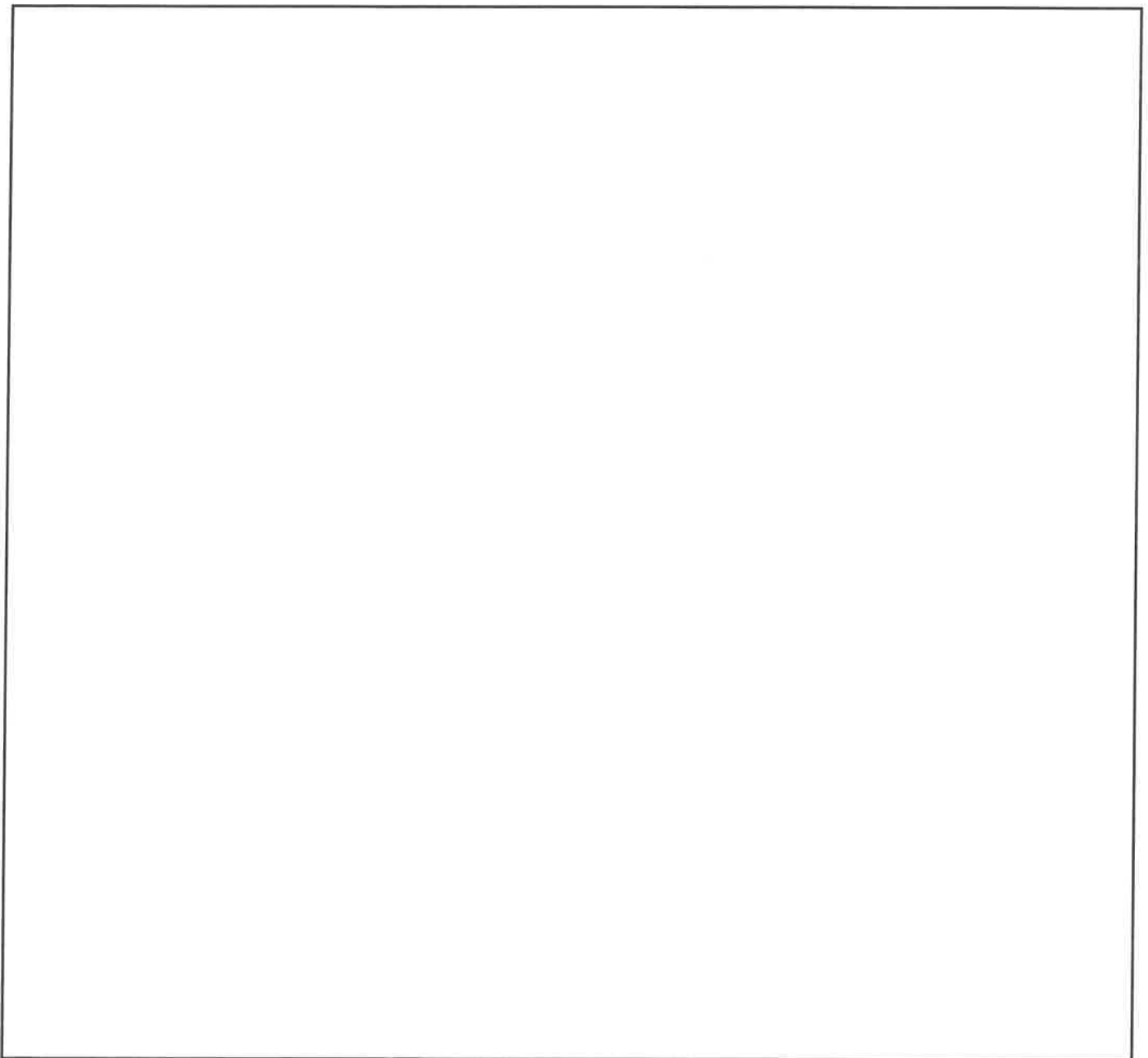
Or by email to [AGPSA.contest@wvago.gov](mailto:AGPSA.contest@wvago.gov)

# Kids Kick Opioids

West Virginia Attorney General's  
3rd Annual  
Youth Opioid Awareness PSA Contest

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the lower half of the page. It is intended for the student to draw or write their PSA entry.



# West Virginia Attorney General's Office

## Kids Kick Opioids

### West Virginia Attorney General's Youth Opioid Awareness PSA Contest

#### IMPORTANT FACTS TO REMEMBER



#### What is the problem with opioids?

- Prescription opioids are powerful narcotic painkillers
- Prescription opioids have similar chemical properties and addiction risks as heroin
- Prescription opioids provide temporary relief but do nothing to address the underlying injury
- Prescription opioids can have serious side effects including coma, addiction, overdose, and even death

#### How have opioids affected West Virginia?

- In 2016, West Virginia had 19 counties in the CDC's top bracket for drug overdose deaths
- 23 percent of frequent non-medicinal users of prescription opioids also reported using heroin
- In 2017, there were 57.8 drug overdose deaths per 100,000 West Virginia residents, the HIGHEST rate in the country and more than twice the national average of 21.7 per 100,000
- Students who use a prescription opioid before 12th grade are 33 percent more likely to face an opioid addiction as an adult

# West Virginia Attorney General's 2016 Kids Kick Opioids PSA Contest



This is a picture of me and my daddy and my little brother. I love my daddy so much. Then the next week my daddy died from taking drugs. I cried and cried. I miss my daddy. I want to hug and kiss him every day. It is very sad when kids don't have their daddy to play with now.

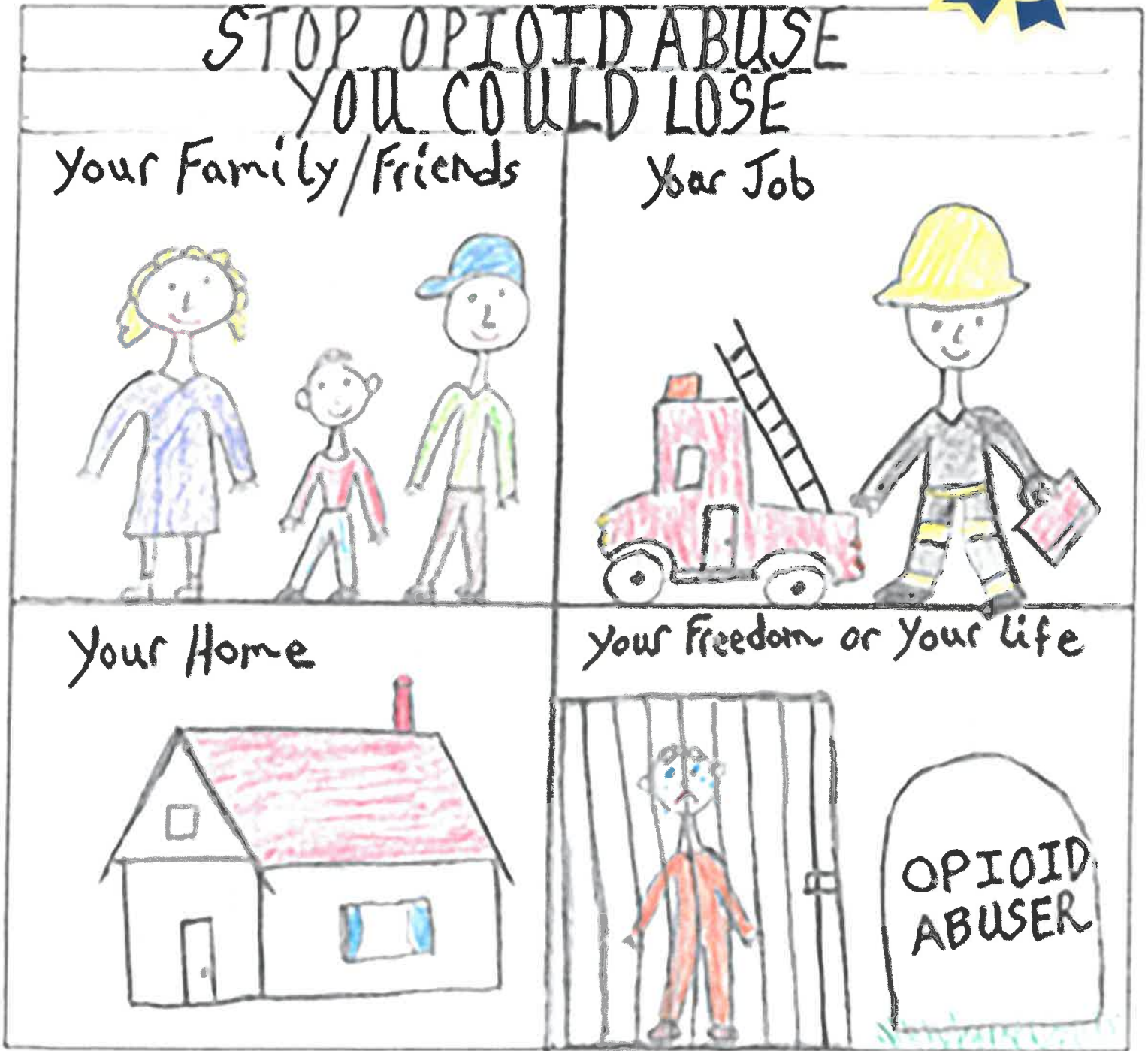
I still cry when I think about my daddy.  
xo

**DON'T TAKE DRUGS.**

Jacey Rose Chalmers

Rosemont Elementary School

# West Virginia Attorney General's 2018 Kids Kick Opioids PSA Contest



Blake Pacitto

Lashmeet-Matoaka Elementary School