



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Step of Sarasota's Educational Forum on Prescription Drugs and the Disease of Addiction - A Success.

September 29 – Nearly 60 people attended a free educational forum entitled Prescription Drugs and the Disease of Addiction at the Selby Library downtown Sarasota earlier this month. The event was presented by First Step of Sarasota and Coastal Behavioral Healthcare in recognition of National Alcohol and Drug Abuse Recovery Month.

Three panelists, PJ Brooks, Vice President of First Step's Outpatient Services, Dr. Jerry Thompson, President and CEO of Coastal Behavioral Healthcare and a young woman who became dependant on prescription drugs after suffering injuries in a car accident eight years ago, each provided insight on the topics and answered questions from the audience.

During the presentation, Dr. Thompson stated, "We have a problem in our community with prescription drugs, but the silver lining is that we are raising awareness regarding the issue."

Lynne Ross, Chairperson of First Step's Board of Directors, felt that the program started a great dialogue with the community and she hopes to see the two organizations partner in the future with similar presentations.

Many of the attendees commented that they have loved ones who have been affected by prescription drug abuse and hope to learn how to get help, as well as prevent others from having the same problems.

Coastal Behavioral Healthcare is a non-profit organization providing mental health and addiction treatment, prevention and intervention services for children, adolescents, adults and seniors, through 42 in-patient, outpatient or residential programs in 17 locations in Sarasota, DeSoto, Lee and Charlotte Counties. www.coastalbh.org

First Step of Sarasota is a non-profit provider of substance abuse prevention and recovery programs serving Sarasota, Manatee and DeSoto Counties. Last year, First Step served over 8,500 through prevention programs and nearly 6,000 through detox, residential and outpatient programs. For more information on First Step, please call 941-366-5333 or visit www.fsos.org.

For more information about First Step of Sarasota, or to arrange an interview, contact Grapevine Communications at 941-351-0024 or email tlewis@grapeinc.com. Grapevine Communications is an award-winning advertising, marketing, and public relations firm based in Sarasota and serving clients nationwide.



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PJ Brooks, VP of First Step Outpatient Services, Addressing the Forum.



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