

Department of Justice

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UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE PROVIDES INFORMATION TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

BUFFALO, N.Y.—U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that the U.S. Attorney's Office has once again sent helpful information to the superintendents of school districts across the 17 counties of Western New York. The information provides specific tips designed to alert parents – and to protect young students - from some of the most common dangers facing those in entering middle and high school.

One of the most concerning dangers involves the use and abuse of synthetic and prescription pills. "Our Office has, over the past year, seen an increase in cases involving abuse of synthetic and prescription pills," said U.S. Attorney Hochul. "Some of these cases began with young people overdosing on these dangerous substances, sending them to the hospital. In some cases, the overdose resulted in death."

Another danger that U.S. Attorney Hochul wants educators and parents to be keenly aware of is the equally dangerous threat that exists for young people in the on-line world. "Over the past year, our Office has investigated numerous cases involving children who have been victimized, and in some cases kidnapped, following contact with predators over cellular telephones and in internet chat rooms.

In hopes of minimizing or reducing these threats, the U.S. Attorney's Office has sent a letter and a packet of information to school leaders which identifies several precautions and warnings that both parents and school children can easily reference. These tips include such measures as: monitoring the cell phone and computer usage of your children inside and outside the home; discussing with your children what is appropriate to post online and via text message and what is not; safeguarding all prescription drugs in the home and the proper disposal of old/unneeded medications; and keeping a close eye on any changes in teenagers.

U.S. Attorney Hochul said, “our Office is in a unique position to see the most dangerous and emerging threats facing our school-aged children. Last year, an initial information packet sent to school superintendents provided tips involving computer and prescription pill threats, and was well received. We increased the content this year and encourage all parents and teachers to review it and keep it handy for future use. The public can also visit our website for further information on these serious topics. While our Office will continue to prosecute to the fullest extent those who victimize our children, certainly the best defense is to be aware of and avoid the dangers posed by dangerous narcotics and internet predators.”

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