

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 9, 2017**

**State Health Officials Discuss Opioid Abuse and  
Other Important Topics with Local Students in  
Observance of “Teen Health Week”**

*Governor’s proclamation declares January 9-13 Teen Health  
Week*

**Harrisburg, PA** – In recognition of Teen Health Week, Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine and Deputy Secretary for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Dr. Loren Robinson today joined local students and medical experts in the Capitol Rotunda to discuss how teens across the commonwealth can improve their health.

“Talking and being open to young people about relationships, diet, exercise, self-harm, substance use, and violence is the first step in curbing or stopping destructive behaviors,” said Dr. Robinson. “It is important to destigmatize issues such as the opioid epidemic to these students and help them understand that they are not alone and there is no shame in getting help.”

Students read the proclamation from Governor Tom Wolf declaring January 9-13 to be Teen Health Week. This is the second annual Pennsylvania Teen Health Week and remains the only statewide observance for teen health in the country. Pennsylvania’s Teen Health Week is unique in that it focuses on a holistic view of teen health rather than a specific issue.

“The habits you develop for your health and well-being as a young person will be the habits that you take with you into adulthood,” said Dr. Levine. “Additionally, as a teenager, your body is still growing, so making healthy decisions is vital to proper development. We want you to build a strong foundation that will benefit you now and for the rest of your lives.”

In addition to the Department of Health speakers, Drs. Laura Offutt and Robert Sharrar spoke to the audience of local school students about teen health. Dr. Sharrar is an expert in preventive medicine. Dr. Offutt is the founder and creator of Teen Health Week.

This year's Pennsylvania Teen Health Week daily activities are focused around specific themes:

- Monday, January 9: Healthy diet and exercise
- Tuesday, January 10: Violence
- Wednesday, January 11: Mental health
- Thursday, January 12: Sexual development and health
- Friday, January 13: Substance use and abuse

For more information on Teen Health Week, or to access resources for teen health improvement, visit the Department of Health website at [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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