Watching the news and hearing about the amount of deaths occurring due to drugs is very alarming. Did you know that most adolescents who abuse drugs have a co-occurring disorder? According to SAMHSA’s (substance abuse and mental health services administration) latest annual national report that was released September 14th, 2018, “In 2017, the percentage of adolescents aged 12 to 17 who used illicit drugs in the past year was higher among those with a past year MDE (major depressive disorder) than it was among those without a past year MDE (29.3 vs. 14.3 percent). An estimated 345,000 adolescents (1.4 percent of all adolescents) had an SUD (substance use disorder) and an MDE in the past year”.

Prevention and education will help reduce the impact of drug abuse and mental illness on this community. This is done by students bringing information to the forefront and not allowing for students to not be informed of the dangers, treatments, and support services available for people suffering with addiction and or a mental illness. Together we can **“Be Proud to Be the Change**!!!

If this alliance sounds like something you want to get involved in, please speak with Mrs. Busco. You can find her in her office in the basement or you can contact her by email [lbusco@manasquan.k12.nj.org](mailto:lbusco@manasquan.k12.nj.org) or calling her (732) 528-8820x1048.