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Governor Christie: My Friend Fell Victim To Addiction

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Governor Christie: My Friend Fell Victim To Addiction


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6c-Gcl-nGQ&feature=youtu.be>

Transcript:

Governor Christie: I had three great friends in law school. You know, when you go to graduate school and you're pressured like you are and worried like you are when you first get there, if you find a few people that you can cling onto and share your same worries and the same pressures you create friendships for life, and these three fellows that I became friends with in law school, we all wound up getting married around the same time, we all started having children around the same time. We went on vacations as single people, as new married couples, and then as new parents every year. And I watched the smartest one of the four of us, the one who was the associate editor of the law review, the one who had the best GPA, the one who got the best job, the one who married a doctor, the one who had three beautiful daughters, become addicted to Percocet eight years ago. And the three of us who were his friends went at his mother's request and did an intervention with him and got him into treatment, and that was the first of twelve different treatment facilities he went to over the next eight years, on the wagon for a while and then off. Lost his job, lost his home, divorced by his wife, lost touch with all three of his daughters, and no matter how many different ways we tried to help him, desperately tried to help him and had hope, he continued to lose the struggle against this awful disease. As depression came alcohol got involved as well, just accelerating the problem and making it worse. His wife is my doctor, and I would see her for my annual checkups in the last few years and ask her, have you heard from him? And I'd hear from him maybe once every twelve, fourteen months, get a voicemail on my cellphone, leave me a phone number. I'd call him back and then maybe sometimes get a call back, sometimes not, and you live, and I know the parents in this room have gone through this know exactly what I mean. You live with both the absolute certainty and the incredible hope that you don't get a phone call telling you that they've finally lost their fight. Well, two months ago on a Sunday morning I got that phone call that my friend, 52 years old, was dead in a motel room in West Orange with an empty bottle of Percocet and an empty quart of vodka in the room. There was no note and there was no explanation.

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We don't know exactly why it happened or even precisely when it happened, but it happened, and I sat at his funeral a couple of days later across the aisle from his ex-wife and his nineteen year old, fifteen year old, and eleven year old daughter, and know that forever their lives have been altered. We can't guarantee a good result for everybody. Conrad's got hard work that he's done already and that he's got ahead of him. We pray for him and for everybody who's here that they have the strength and the help to be able to beat their disease every day one day at a time. But here's a guy who had all the money in the world, lived in a beautiful house, a gorgeous wife, three beautiful daughters, a loving mother, two loving sisters, and some great friends who all tried to help him and we couldn't. This is an insidious thing everybody. It's, not easy, and we don't have all the answers. But this building and the building it will join is our best hope. It's our best hope. See, I believe that every life is precious and that no life is disposable. And it's easy when life is going well to love and to understand and support. It's only when crisis comes that it becomes harder. Well we need to continue to support these folks in crisis and try to make sure that we give them what they need to make the right choices and to live their lives in a really productive way. I've said every time I come to Daytop that it's one of the most special places in New Jersey because it's a place on earth where miracles happen. And for us mere mortals, the opportunity, the opportunity to see miracles happen in person is a gift from God. So let us continue to work together to make a difference. Let's keep our voices loud and strong in favor of this approach to dealing with this problem, and you can always count on me to be a friend and a supporter to the efforts that are being made by all of you on behalf of your children and everyone else's children. And so let's work together and let's make sure we make a difference in this state and across the country. Thank you all very much.

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