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Governor Christie: Every Life We Save Is A Life Worthwhile

Thursday, April 3, 2014

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Governor Christie: Every Life We Save Is A Life Worthwhile

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajjM5N6mDfA>

Transcript

Governor Christie: I really believe that the only way to deal with this problem – yeah for the dealers and the violent folks is they have to go to jail –

JoAnn Drickler: Absolutely.

Governor Christie: – and we have strict laws for them. But the problem is that what we're doing with folks like your daughter is either giving probation like you talked about or if they come back repeatedly, we're putting them in jail.

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: Where they don't get treatment.

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: Where drugs get snuck into prison.

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: And they come out just as addicted as they were when they went in. And then we all sit around going: jeez, wonder why they committed another crime?

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JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: Well because they're addicted.

JoAnn Drickler: They're not getting the help they need because this is a demon. This is a devil.

Governor Christie: That's right. Yes. And heroin is – listen everybody – the reason I think heroin has become a bigger epidemic in the last few years begins with folks getting addicted to prescription painkillers.

JoAnn Drickler: Absolutely.

Governor Christie: And what happens is these prescription painkillers are much more expensive to get on the black market than heroin.

JoAnn Drickler: Absolutely.

Governor Christie: And so what happens is when they can't afford to buy Oxycontin anymore they go and they get, you know, 20 bags of heroin which probably only costs them about 100 bucks. And these pills cause them significantly more than that to get the same high. They don't understand that the opiate –

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: – in this heroin is going to be so addictive for so many of them that they are going to be hooked in a way where they not only need detox but they need long-term care –

JoAnn Drickler: Long-term.

Governor Christie: – to treat them.

JoAnn Drickler: People don't really understand. I'm sorry, I didn't meant to interrupt you, but –

Governor Christie: No, they don't understand.

JoAnn Drickler: -- they don't understand it.

Governor Christie: And it's a complicated issue, but one that I've been focused on since I've been Governor because I do understand.

JoAnn Drickler: Ok, good. Thank you.

Governor Christie: And the fact – I spent a number of years on the board, before I became Governor, of an impatient adolescent drug rehabilitation facility. And so I got to see firsthand these children and their families come in.

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: And the destruction that is brought on those families. But, I also got to see these children get the type of treatment that they need, that lives can be changed...The war on drugs was a good idea when it started, but it failed.

JoAnn Drickler: It did.

Governor Christie: It failed miserably because if you don't lower demand there will always be someone to supply that demand if there's a profit to be made, and there is.

JoAnn Drickler: Absolutely.

Governor Christie: So what we need to do – and even if we don't eradicate the problem, which we never will.

JoAnn Drickler: No.

Governor Christie: We're not going to eradicate the drug problem, but every life we save is a life that's worthwhile. There's no life that's disposable. None of these young people, or older folks who get involved in this mess are disposable.

JoAnn Drickler: Exactly.

Governor Christie: And in fact if we can get them treatment, and get them help, what happens is they become better mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, sisters and brothers. They get a job, they pay taxes, they do the things that everybody in this audience tries to do to make your home and our society a better place. And we cannot afford, in my mind, to turn our back to it anymore and say: well, we arrested him, we put him in jail, that's all we can do. I'm sorry, that's just not, to me, an appropriate answer.

JoAnn Drickler: Right. It's not.

Governor Christie: And it's not working. So, let's stop batting our heads against the wall on something that does not work. We know that treatment does work, it doesn't work for everybody.

JoAnn Drickler: Right.

Governor Christie: But, nothing works for everybody. So you know, it's like when I say I want to do different things in education and they say: well, it won't work for everybody. Well man, the people that we save, are saved lives, and everyone of these lives is precious.

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