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Gov. Christie: I'm Waiting For A Non-Stigmatizing Moment Leading To More Success In Addiction Fight

Wednesday, July 19, 2017 Tags: [Addiction Taskforce](#)



Gov. Christie: I'm Waiting For A Non-Stigmatizing Moment Leadin...

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Transcript:

Governor Christie: This is not a problem that any one of us are going to solve on our own. So every person at this table is a link in the chain to help pull people up out of the ditch they're in. And you know, my job, I hope is to make sure that I bring awareness in the public to try to lower stigma which you know is so hard, so hard in dealing with this disease. I'm waiting for that moment, I've said this a number of times to folks, but this is very much like AIDS in my recollection. And you know, I'm waiting kind of for the Magic Johnson moment, you know? When there is someone, some event, that humanizes this to people and say wow it can happen to them. Alright well now I need to be part of the solution. I'm waiting for the marches. You know, remember back and some of you fortunately for you around this table are not old enough to remember. I'm looking at Maria in particular, to remember the marches on Washington and our major cities to demand that the government do something to try to find a treatment for AIDS. And it was men and women of every stripe and variety, every ethnicity, every sexual orientation, who came together and just said this could happen to my family and I want it to not to be a death sentence. I'm waiting for the marches. And I think one of the reasons is we haven't had the non-stigmatizing moment yet. And so part of the reason we're doing the advertising campaign we've done and will renew again this fall, is I think if we do enough talking about it on TV, to tell people addiction is a disease, to tell them that reaching out for help is a sign of strength not a sign of weakness, that this could happen to any family. I can't tell you how many times, and I was so glad to hear Kathryn didn't say this today, which was good. Almost every time that I talk to someone who is in recovery, they say to me, Governor, I come from a good family. And I say to them, well why would you think I think differently. But people believe they've been conditioned to

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believe, that somehow if you become a person with a substance use disorder that it's because you came from a bad place, from a bad family, from parents who didn't love you or weren't there, or siblings who weren't good to you, or that you weren't a good parent. We know this isn't true. You look at a county like this county, which many people across New Jersey would say, wow, what could possibly be happening in Morris County, lots of education, lots of money, not a high level of crime compared to the rest of state, they must have no problems out there at all. I know that for more than 20 years this has been a huge problem in this county. It can happen to any family, to any person, at any time and then, man, are they loving you. Right? That's what we've got to get people to understand. Is that you're folks who need to be admired and supported 365 days a year, not just the day when their life gets thrown upside down. And if we get to that point, I think we're going to have much more success even than we're having already.

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