

JOANNE PETERSON
Founder, Executive Director, Learn to Cope Inc.

Joanne Peterson is the Founder and Executive Director of Learn to Cope which was started in 2004 she is also a parent of a son in long term recovery from opiate addiction which began with Oxy Contin. Learn to Cope is a unique solutions-based support, advocacy and educational peer lead organization for family members of those addicted to opiates and other drugs. Learn to Cope has a website which provides a support forum with close to 3000 registered families locally and nationally as well as four chapters on the South and North shores of Massachusetts with its fifth and sixth chapters, at Mass General Boston and the city of Quincy in September 2011. LTC provides peer support and education with the focus on coping with the danger, stress and emotions related to this situation. LTC provides informational resources regarding the disease of addiction and realistic strategies for treatment and recovery, based on the real-world experiences of members, training on Overdose prevention and how to save the lives of family members if they should see the symptoms. LTC has been successful in getting many young people the treatment they need and off the streets and also helps families to cope and recover.

Joanne is a member on the panel for the Brandeis Center of Excellence team for the Prescription Pill Monitoring program.

Learn to Cope has been recognized Nationally by Time Magazine, the New York Times, Renew magazine, A&E'S Intervention, NPR Radio, Cape Cod Times, Brockton Enterprises Wasted Youth" series, Geraldo at Large, Fox News, Boston Globe, Boston Herald, WCVB TVS Chronicle and most recently participated in a follow up documentary for the Emmy winning Current TV'S Vanguard OxyContin Express called Gateway to Heroin which will premiered on June 20th 2011. Joanne has testified numerous times at the State House in Boston as well as in Congress in Washington DC and at several FDA meetings. Joanne also was one of the 19 who testified at the Purdue Pharma sentencing in Federal Court in Abingdon Virginia in 2007. Joanne has received many awards for community support, advocacy and education on the dangers of prescription drugs including two official citations from the Massachusetts Senate and Governor Deval Patrick.