

News Release

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Lancaster, Ohio—A 2014 survey of more than 2,500 tenth and twelfth graders, encompassing all Fairfield County public schools was conducted by the Fairfield County Family Adult and Children’s First Council and the Prevention Works for a Drug Free Fairfield County Coalition. The 2014 results of this biennial survey illustrate that drug and alcohol use among Fairfield County youth continues to decline.

These results were presented at the Fairfield County Youth Behavior Survey Summit on September 30, 2014. Results of the study suggest that frequent drug use among Fairfield County twelfth graders is on the decline.

The study shows that frequent alcohol use among twelfth graders declined from 21.1% in 2012 to 19.6% in 2014. Frequent Marijuana use also declined from a high of 20.3 in 2010 to 14.2% in 2014. Frequent use of all tobacco products has decreased to an all-time low of 9.9% which is much lower than the national 2013 average of 16.3%. Frequent illegal use of prescription drugs continued to decline in 2014 to a new low of .4%.

The age of onset for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drugs are at their oldest since the Fairfield County Youth Behavior Survey began in 2004.

The study further disclosed that access to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drugs has decreased. Access to prescription drugs for Fairfield County youth dropped to 31.8% of respondents indicating it is very easy/easy to obtain. This is the lowest access to prescription drugs reported since a high of 49% in 2004 and 2006. Information collected regarding synthetic drugs (bath salts, K2, Spice) reveal that access to these substances has dropped as well.

Fairfield County data also shows that parents who establish and enforce rules, have a trusting relationship with their children, and provide opportunities for them to get involved in community and school activities can significantly influence whether or not their children engage in high risk behavior. Eighty-seven and eight-tenths (88%) of high school seniors indicated they had a trusted adult and 71.8% report having a trusted adult at school.

The 2014 Fairfield County Youth Behavior Survey illustrate that a collaborative approach to prevention works and is needed now more than ever. No one sector of the community can single-handedly address adolescent drug and alcohol use or problem behaviors. The reality is parents, schools, businesses, law enforcement, faith based organizations, human services and other sectors working together can and do have a significant, long term impact in prevention adolescent substance abuse and related behaviors.

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