

DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

A community resource to help prevent youth substance use in Ashland

Ashland's Kids Have...

Decisions at Every Turn

Prevent Youth Substance Use

FALL 2015

A LETTER FROM THE COALITION

Dear Ashland Community,

It is my honor to introduce the Fall 2015 edition of the Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) Coalition newsletter. I hope these stories, resources and updates are useful as we continue the work to create a safe and healthy Ashland community. I am a strong supporter of DAET, and I was proud to advocate earlier this year for funding in the state budget for this important initiative. It was a pleasure joining Ashland parents, teachers, health professionals and other stakeholders at the DAET retreat last month.

Our Commonwealth's prosperity depends on healthy communities. As State Senator representing Ashland at the State House for over a decade, I have worked to make sure all of our children and families have access to the resources and opportunities they need to grow and thrive. The Fiscal Year 2016 budget, my first as Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, makes targeted investments in public health prevention and treatment initiatives, including efforts to address the state's substance abuse crisis.

Too many families in our community and across the Commonwealth struggle with the heart-breaking consequences of substance abuse and addiction. In the budget, I was proud to continue the Senate's mission to break the cycle of addiction. We invest in substance abuse prevention, recovery and treatment, including \$20,000 for the Decisions at Every Turn Coalition, to support the coalition in the important work of substance abuse prevention among our young people.

Public awareness, community resources and educational programming are key for encouraging healthy decision-making and preventing addiction. Let's keep working together to combat the substance abuse crisis in our community. If I can ever be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to call my State House office at (617) 722-1640 or email me at Karen.Spilka@masenate.gov.

Warm Regards,

Karen Spilka

State Senator, 2nd Middlesex and Norfolk

ROOTS & WINGS



*"To our children, we give two things,
one is roots, the other is wings."*

The use of "roots and wings" to describe the gifts children need to thrive dates back to the 1920's, but its significance is just as meaningful today – maybe more so. The initial phrase was used to inspire parents to instill values, traditions and choices that foster life-long curiosity, responsibility and independence.

Parents were encouraged to teach children to be strong, allow them to make choices, and to provide the tools to help them learn from failure and try again. Today "roots and wings" can serve to inspire an entire community to assume a collective responsibility to provide essential encouragement and support to all our children.

The DAET Coalition is proud to be part of a collaborative community which understands that positive outcomes in the well-being of our youngest community members are achieved when children are empowered to make choices and allowed to make mistakes. They learn best from adult support and encouragement, and having the opportunity to grow and learn from their experiences.

Ashland is doing an amazing job to provide the "roots" that anchor our children. Our sound substance abuse policies, positive school environments, rewarding community programs, and positive parenting norms that promote healthy decision-making and fair consequences are a testament to this. In turn, these practices have cultivated the "wings" for endless possibilities and the desire to grow and reach ones fullest potential.

It is important to continue to work together to provide the best for our children and feel confident that we are sending our capable young people out to make a positive difference in the world.



Why do YOU support Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn Coalition?

"I support DAET because it is important for Ashland to work together as a community to combat problems."

~ Ben Dunn, President, Ashland Youth Soccer

SIGN UP FOR THE DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

To receive notice about the next online issue, join our email list at: CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org

DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

A community resource to help prevent youth substance use in Ashland



AROUND ASHLAND

Around Ashland celebrates the collaborative energies of our community partners who work with us and within the broader community to provide a positive environment for Ashland youth. This issue features the DAET Coalition Policy Working Group.

Over the past year and a half, the Decisions at Every Turn Coalition has held two Community Discussions and has convened several key stakeholders to discuss the development of an Intervention and Education (Diversion) Program for Ashland youth. The Coalition's Policy Working Group, made up of representatives from the Coalition, Ashland Police Department, Ashland School administration and guidance staff, School Committee, MetroWest YMCA, and Ashland Youth & Family Services, has held several meetings to learn from other communities and the Middlesex County DA's Office to help inform the development of our program in Ashland.

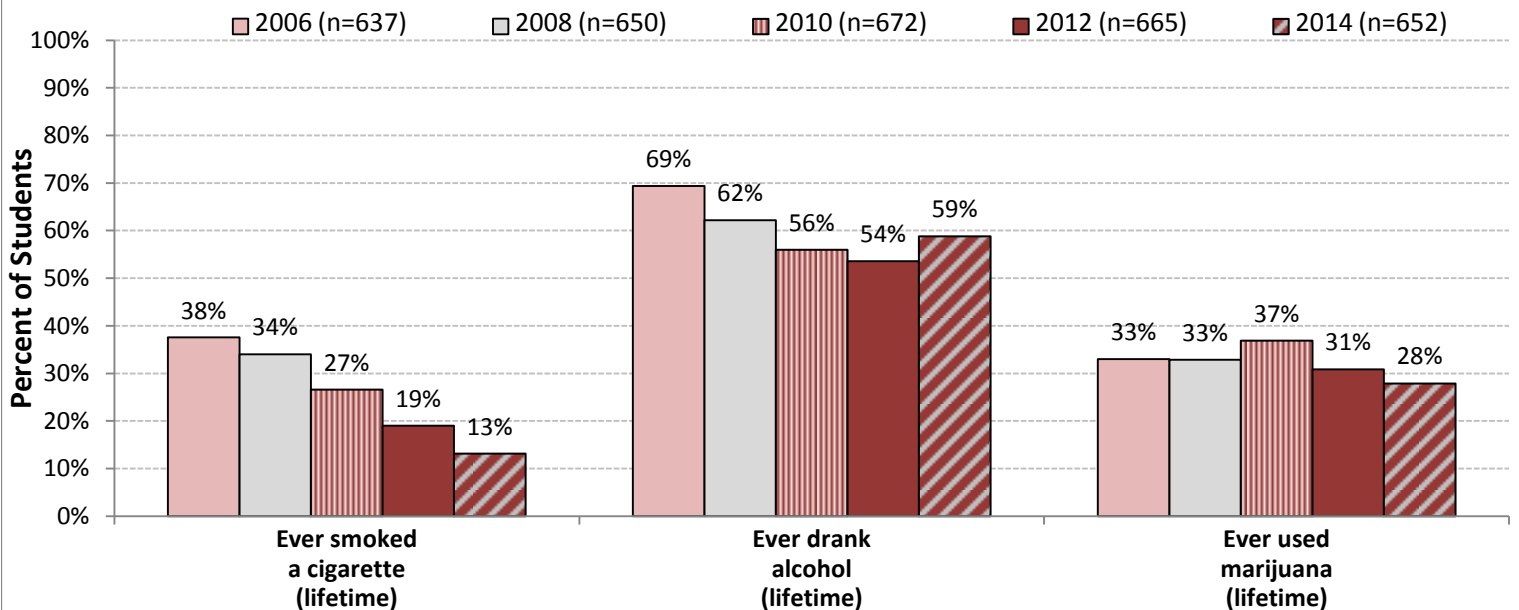
This program will offer juvenile criminal offenders (of crimes determined by the court to be eligible for the program) the opportunity to complete an alternative program to avoid a criminal record. The goal of this program is to allow Ashland youth to access education regarding good decision-making and the impact of substance use with an opportunity for mental health/substance use screening and professional intervention as needed.

As we prepare to launch our pilot community-based Diversion Program, the Coalition will be using DFC funds to train Ashland Police Officers in best practices associated with Diversion Programs and interactions with youth. We hope to be ready to offer a pilot program this Fall. If you are interested in hearing more about the development of Ashland's Diversion Program, please contact Amy Turncliff at Amy.Turncliff@AshlandDecisions.org.

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

Cigarette and marijuana use by Ashland High School students have shown a steady decline in recent years, while alcohol use shows a slight uptick after a 6-year decrease.

Trends in Lifetime Substance Use, 2006-2014
Ashland High School Students (Grades 9-12)
MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey



- Recent tobacco regulations adopted by the Ashland Board of Health and supported by the Coalition help prevent youth access to tobacco and nicotine delivery items.
- Community Programming and the STAND social norms campaign both address youth marijuana prevention. Coalition efforts will continue to focus on strategies to reduce youth use.
- Despite a recent increase in reported lifetime use of alcohol by Ashland high school students, Ashland's reported lifetime use is lower than Massachusetts (63%) and the U.S. (66%), but slightly higher than the MetroWest region (54%). Reducing youth alcohol use has been identified as a priority area for Years 3-5 of the Coalition's Strategic Plan.

COALITION REWIND

June

- Conducted focus groups with AHS students to solicit feedback on Year 1 of the STAND social norms campaign
- The Leadership Team met to assess the Coalition's activities and gather input for our sustainability plan
- Published "Tips for a Safe Summer" in the June issue of Ashland Directions
- Published the Summer 2015 DAET Coalition Newsletter (available at Ashlanddecisions.org/quarterly-newsletter.html)

July

- One staff member and two coalition members attended the CADCA Mid-Year trainings
- Published "A Celebration of Community Collaboration" in the July issue of Ashland Directions

August

- Hosted a table under the Community Tent at Ashland Farmer's Market

September

- Published "A Look at what we have Planned for Year 3" in the September issue of Ashland Directions
- Hosted the first DAET Coalition Retreat to work on strategic planning and developing action plans for priority areas

OPIOID PREVENTION

In the Summer 2015 issue of the *DAET Coalition Newsletter* we brought some much needed attention to the emerging opiate epidemic. The Coalition recognizes the devastating consequences that opioid use can have on individuals, families and the broader community and are in a position to help facilitate discussions and prevention initiatives right here in Ashland. We are directing new efforts towards opioid prevention, particularly by bridging the prevention and recovery communities. Working in partnership, we can help prevent youth opioid use and better support those in treatment and recovery.

We are happy to report steps we will take toward this goal:

- Several coalition members will attend the highly regarded training Words Can Work: Engaging Youth in Preventing Opioid Addiction on November 12-13 where they will learn how to effectively communicate with youth about opioids and learn strategies for engaging youth in substance abuse prevention activities, coalitions and policy change.
- The Coalition will begin to develop opioid prevention and resource materials to assist community members in preventing opioid abuse, recognizing and responding to a potential opioid overdose and to offer resources for support and treatment.

If you are interested in participating in discussions regarding youth opioid prevention, have information to share, or ideas for resource materials, email Kristin.French@AshlandDecisions.org.



Having fun at the Ashland Farmer's Market

We were happy to have so many families visit the DAET table to share what their healthy choice is!

HEY, PARENTS ... DID YOU KNOW?

2 out of 3 AHS students say parents should **talk** with them about the importance of **not using alcohol**.

Source :2014 PCN Survey

These DAET Coalition resources can help start the conversation:

www.ashlanddecisions.org/parent-tip-sheets.html

CALLING ALL ASHLAND TEENS

Come to our afternoon Coalition meetings planned especially for youth.

(See back page for details)

DAET COALITION NEWSLETTER

A community resource to help prevent youth substance use in Ashland



COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING



Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn (DAET) Coalition and the Friends of the Ashland Public Library are pleased to be co-hosting programs for parents and the community. Programs will provide parents with strategies, the opportunity to collect new skills, and get answers to compelling questions. Programs are free and open to all. For questions about programs at the library, please contact president@friendsoftheapl.com. For questions about programs at other locations, please direct inquiries to CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org.

| Topic | Speaker | Date, Location, Audience |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Mental Health World Café | Laurie Jo Wallace, MA | Date: Tuesday, October 27 Time: 7:00-9:00 pm Location: Ashland High School Library Audience: Parents, Guardians, Youth, Community |
| Medication Safety | Elizabeth Byrnes, PhD | Date: Friday, October 30 Time: 9:30 am Location: Ashland Senior Center Audience: Adults 62+, family of older adults |
| Mindfulness Tools | Lisa Campbell | Date: Thursday, January 7 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of all aged children |
| So Much to Worry About: What is Causing Anxiety in Our Youth, Why We Should Be Concerned, and What We Can Do | Carolyn Chapman and Kerry Luoma | Date: Thursday, January 21 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of all aged children |
| Social Emotional Learning and Resilience Building | Susan Rivers | Date: Thursday, February 11 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland High School Auditorium Audience: Parents of all aged children, Community |
| Ready, Set, Go! Using Unstructured Time: How to Support Learning in Young Children without Pushing | Courtney Arsenault, MS | Date: Tuesday, February 23 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of Pre-K to Grade 4 |
| Nutrition | Lisa Beaudin | Date: Thursday, March 3 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Community |
| Pre-prom/Senior Week Program | Middlesex County AD | Date: Tuesday, May 10 Time: 7-8:30 pm Location: Ashland High School Auditorium Audience: AHS Juniors/Seniors and parents |

COME TO A COALITION MEETING

Coalition meetings are open to anyone in the community. Come learn about the Coalition, our current initiatives, and volunteer opportunities. New members are welcome! An orientation meeting can be made by prior arrangement.

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| October 13* | 2:30 – 4:00 PM | March 8 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM |
| November 10 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM | April* 12 | 2:30 – 4:00 PM |
| December 8 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM | May 10 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM |
| January* 12 | 2:30 – 4:00 PM | June 14 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM |
| February 9 | 5:30 – 7:00 PM | | |

The Coalition meets monthly on Tuesdays. Administration Building, Ashland Middle School - Room #5
*Meetings will be held from 2:30PM – 4PM and youth are encouraged to attend.

Ashland's Decisions at Every Turn Coalition | 65 E. Union Street, Ashland, MA 01702
CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org | www.AshlandDecisions.org | 508-881-0177 x8284