

# 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 2014

## A LETTER FROM THE COALITION

Dear Ashland Community,

Welcome to the first DAET Coalition Newsletter from the Decisions at Every Turn Coalition (Ashland's Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition)! If you haven't heard, the Coalition is a community-based group with stakeholders throughout Ashland (e.g., parents, students, police, Board of Health, schools, business community, town organizations, volunteer organizations and others). We are dedicated to creating a safe and healthy Ashland by working as a community to prevent, reduce, and solve the problems that can lead to youth substance abuse.

We are thrilled to be starting our second year as a federal Drug Free Communities (DFC) - funded coalition; please check out our website at [www.AshlandDecisions.org](http://www.AshlandDecisions.org) and always feel free to contact us with questions and comments. We hope you will enjoy our quarterly newsletters. The Winter, Spring and Summer issues will only be available online. Join our mailing list at [CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org](mailto:CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org) to receive future issues. Please consider joining us for a Coalition meeting or event during the upcoming year. We would love to meet you.

Kindly,

Amy Turncliff  
DFC Project Director  
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Website: [www.AshlandDecisions.org](http://www.AshlandDecisions.org)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS!

October is National Prevention Month. In recognition of efforts to reduce and prevent substance use among Ashland youth, the Coalition launched **Parenting for Prevention**, a new resource for parents.

**Parenting for Prevention** is a series of information tip sheets covering a range of topics central to parenting for positive youth health.

Now available at: <http://www.AshlandDecisions.org/parent-tip-sheets.html>

- **Alcohol**
- **Marijuana**
- **How to Talk to Your Kids at Any Age About Alcohol, Other Drugs & Making Good Decisions**

New tip sheets will be added every month. Check back often.

## FIVE WAYS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR KIDS AND BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Research shows that children who feel more connected to their family have a lower risk of substance use. Spending time together helps strengthen family bonds, builds trust, and provides an opportunity for conversation. Small gestures can have a large impact on building and sustaining a positive relationship between parents and kids and can have a lasting positive influence as children age. Here are some ideas:

### **Make Conversation a Habit**

Find everyday opportunities to talk with your child. Ask about what they are doing in school or go for a walk and let your child take the lead in the conversation. Regular conversation helps your child develop their communication skills and shows them that they can talk with you about anything.

### **Support Positive Choices**

Help your child learn to make positive choices by acknowledging appropriate decisions. When they choose a healthy snack, or turn off the TV and open a book, tell them they are making good decisions. Let your child know you are proud of them when they help a classmate or try a new activity even though their friends are doing something different. Teens may be dealing with peer pressure to make choices that are unsafe or unhealthy. Help your teen identify the possible consequences of their decisions. Sharing your positive experiences in resisting peer pressure and reiterating family values builds trust with your teen and teaches them to make choices that are good for them.

### **Be a Good Listener**

Create a safe environment for your child to come to you with a question or a concern. Assure your child that he/she can always be honest with you. Listen to your child vent. Rephrase their comments to indicate you've heard what he/she is saying. Give nonverbal support by nodding and smiling. Ask questions. Oftentimes children do not want advice, but just want to be able to share their feelings. Thank them for coming to you and trusting you.

### **Create a Special Family Ritual**

Have your children come up with a fun idea for a regular routine that the whole family can participate in. Start a Friday movie night. Or choose Sunday for everyone to make dinner together. How about a walk at the park on Saturday?

### **Eat Dinner as a Family**

Eating together provides an opportunity for conversation, sharing, connection and simply being together. In fact, kids who eat dinner with their family regularly are at a lower risk for substance use.

*For more ideas, see our Resource section of the newsletter.*

Adapted from: <http://childcare.about.com/od/volunteerism/tp/relations.htm>

**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 Ashland Police Department.**

*The Ashland Police Department has worked closely with Decisions at Every Turn to promote a healthier environment for our community. Our recent collaborative efforts reflect a broad strategy about our commitment to ensuring responsible decisions not only among the youth but the entire community in regards to drug and alcohol use. Recent efforts have included several presentations to High School students regarding the current public health epidemic on opiate use and addiction. The presentations were well received and were representative of our extended partnership with the Ashland Schools to educate our youth regarding risky choices. A follow-up interactive educational workshop was also held for parents regarding underage alcohol use, social host laws and drug use.*

*All police officers received training in, and now carry NARCAN, an injectable medication used to reverse the effects of opiate overdoses. Officers have already saved a local young man's life with this technique.*

*A secure prescription medication collection box has been placed in the lobby of the police station allowing any resident to drop off unused/unwanted prescriptions for proper disposal. An additional "sharps" collection box has also been added to our lobby for the safe disposal of needles.*

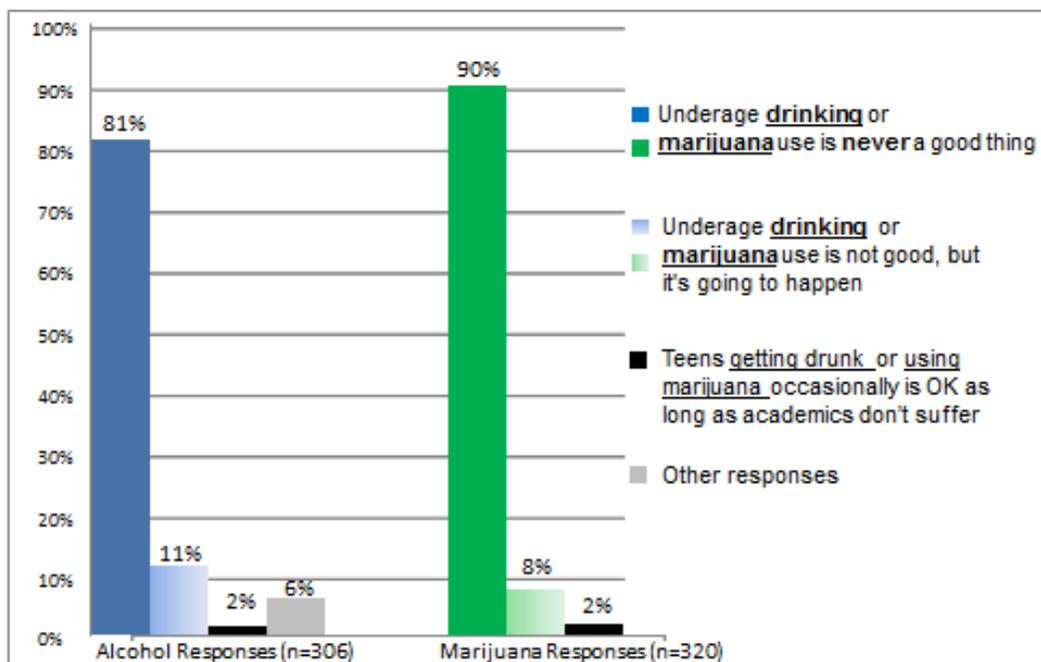
*Decisions at Every Turn has sponsored several of our officers to receive specialized training in laws and regulations specific to monitoring businesses that carry and serve alcohol. We have also jointly conducted educational compliance seminars for all liquor license holders in town. A separate component was conducted for the Board of Selectman to focus on liquor law violation hearings and sanctions. We have made it clear to all establishments that sell and/or serve alcohol that we will remain vigilant to ensure underage people are not served alcohol and that of-age customers are not over-served. The Police Department is thankful to collaborate with our partner Decisions at Every Turn to support our multi-faceted strategy aimed at the reduction and prevention of substance abuse in our town.*



Sincerely,  
 Craig Davis  
 Chief of Police

**SURVEY SNAPSHOT**

**Most Ashland Parents Answering Our Spring 2014 Survey Think Use of Alcohol or Marijuana by Teens is Never a Good Thing**



## COALITION REWIND

Volunteer members & community partners have been busy expanding the Coalition's outreach through a variety of initiatives that increase awareness about youth substance use and encourage community-wide discussions to keep Ashland youth healthy and safe.

### April

- Published an open letter in *Ashland Directions* from DAET, Chief Davis and BOH Director, Mark Oram regarding opiates
- Chief Davis of the APD spoke with all Ashland High School students about opiate addiction and overdoses
- DAET created talking points for parents to follow-up with students after assembly
- Created Social Norms campaign survey
- Administered Social Norms survey to AHS students
- Delivered Social Norms presentation to AHS staff
- Prescription Drug Drop Box installed at Ashland Police Department (Chief Davis)
- Supported Drug Take Back Day

### May

- Hosted Community Discussion
- Supported SADD Sticker Shock campaign
- Conducted a parent opinion survey on underage alcohol and substance use
- Sponsored attendance of two APD officers at "alcohol compliance check training"

### June

- Co-sponsored an Alcohol Retailer Training for liquor license holders and Selectmen with the APD
- Re-instituted Alcohol.edu at AHS through the 2017 school calendar year
- Presented ATOD and parenting information at 8th Grade Transition Evening at AHS
- Hosted Sector member breakfast

### July

- Developed Coalition marketing materials (newsletter, Parenting for Prevention tips sheets, Coalition orientation packet, Coalition brochure)

### August

- Created Community Programming series
- Planned for participation at Ashland Farmers Market and Ashland Day

## HOST A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION!

One of the best ways you can protect a child from using alcohol and other drugs is by talking openly and honestly with them. But where do you start? How do you know what to say? And where can you learn the facts? At a *Community Conversation!*



*Community Conversations* are small informal discussions that emphasize:

- Learning about youth substance abuse
- Understanding the effects of substances on the developing brain
- Education about proven prevention strategies
- Open dialogue & idea sharing on how to keep kids healthy and alcohol and drug-free

This year DAET is placing a special focus on reaching parents and other caring adults through *Community Conversations* and is **setting a goal to connect with 200 parents!**

While our goal to deliver prevention information to 200 parents is important, the true benefit is the potential for positive change at the community level. As parents talk with one another about their ideas and expectations for their own children, these conversations help support a community norm towards healthy and substance-free Ashland youth.

To host a *Community Conversation* or to learn more email [CommunityConversations@AshlandDecisions.org](mailto:CommunityConversations@AshlandDecisions.org) or visit [www.AshlandDecisions.org/host-a-community-conversation.html](http://www.AshlandDecisions.org/host-a-community-conversation.html)

## RESOURCES

### The Family Dinner Project

<http://thefamilydinnerproject.org/resources/faq/>

### The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids

<http://www.drugfree.org>

### CASAColumbia Family Day

<http://casafamilyday.org/familyday/about-family-day/>

### Parent Further

<http://www.parentfurther.com/>

## DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR FUTURE DAET COALITION NEWSLETTERS

This will be the only print issue this year. To receive notice about the next three quarterly online issues, join our email list at:

[CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org](mailto:CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org)

**COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING**



DAET and the Friends of Ashland Public Library are pleased to be co-hosting an ongoing parenting workshop series as well as community programming. Library sessions will provide parents with tips and talking points and the opportunity to collect new skills, share challenges, and get answers to compelling questions. Programs and parent workshops are free and open to all. For questions about programs at the library, please contact [president@friendsoftheapl.com](mailto:president@friendsoftheapl.com). Please direct other inquiries to [CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org](mailto:CoalitionInfo@AshlandDecisions.org).

Topic	Speaker	Date, Location, Audience
<b>Raising Resilient Children and Adolescents</b>	Dr. Robert Brooks	Date: Tue. October 14 Time: 7:00-8:30pm Location: AHS-Auditorium Audience: Parents of all aged children
<b>Community Discussion:</b> Diversion - What Will Work in Ashland?	Panel	Date: Thurs. Nov 13 Time: 7-9pm Location: AHS, Cafeteria Audience: Community
<b>Positive Approaches to Power Struggles</b>	Jane Greenstein	Date: Wed. January 21 Time: 7-8:30pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of all aged children
<b>Understanding The Teen Brain</b>	Dr. Elizabeth Byrnes	Date: Wed. February 4 Time: 7-8:30pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of Middle and High School
<b>The Digital Age: Safety and Time Restrictions</b>	TBD	Date: Wed. March 25 Time: 7-8:30pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of Middle and High School
<b>Community Discussion:</b> Youth Event	Rick Cresta, LICSW, MPH	Date: Mon. April 13 Time: 7-9pm Location: AHS, Cafeteria Audience: Youth in Grades 7-12
<b>Understanding Youth Marijuana Use:</b> Parent Discussion	Rick Cresta, LICSW, MPH	Date: Mon. April 28 Time: 7-9 PM Location: AHS, Cafeteria Audience: Parents of all aged children
<b>Ready, Set, Go!</b> Using Unstructured Time: How to Support Learning in Young Children without Pushing	Courtney Arsenault	Date: Thursday May 7 Time: 7-8:30pm Location: Ashland Public Library Audience: Parents of Pre-k to Grade 4

**2014 - 2015 COALITION MEETING DATES**

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 21	January 13	April 14
November 18	February 10	May 12
December 16	March 10	June 9

All meetings are held on Tuesday evening  
 Ashland Middle School  
 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM