

**For Immediate Release
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In May 2010, Our Futures in Licking County conducted a survey among students in 6, 8, 10 and 12th grades concerning alcohol, drug and tobacco use. 5,078 students representing 7 of 10 school districts in Licking County completed the nationally used Pride Survey. The data reveals some promising results in the reduction of alcohol use and access to alcohol and tobacco by youth.

The data shows that monthly alcohol use by Licking County 8th, 10th and 12th graders declined from May 2009 to May 2010. The decline was significant for 8th and 12th grades with a 5 percentage point drop in both grades. Declines in marijuana and cigarette use were significant for 8th graders, although changes in the use of these substances were not significant for students in other grade levels.

Among the other key findings, fewer kids said alcohol, tobacco and marijuana is easy to obtain. The data reveals a 9 percentage point drop from May 2009 to May 2010 in access to tobacco, and an 8 percentage point drop in access to alcohol for high school students.

Wendy Williams Executive Director of the Community Mental Health and Recovery Board for Licking and Knox Counties. Williams said “One of the things that we know is that the younger kids start using the more likely it is they will develop an addictive disorder in adulthood, so anything we can do to delay onset is going to help that child mature at a normal level”

Our Futures in Licking County is working with Dr. Dennis Embry, president of Paxis Institute, to create a healthier Licking County by improving educational, social, safety and economic environments. During the 2009-10 school year, Our Futures began two evidence-based strategies designed to reduce ATOD use, behavior problems, and child maltreatment:

- Reward and Reminder campaign: 67 local alcohol vendors were checked for compliance with underage sales laws
- Triple P parenting program: 37 providers were trained and certified to deliver Triple P to families with children ages 0-12.

During the 2010-11 school year Our Futures will implement several other evidence-based strategies in an effort to create a healthier Licking County.

The full Pride Survey report for Licking County is available at www.OurFutures.org
General information about the Pride Survey can be found at www.pridesurveys.com

For more information, please call Dr. Lewis Mollica, Community Impact Coordinator Community Mental Health & Recovery Board at 740-522-1232 or Dr. Dennis Embry, Pres./CEO Paxis Institute 520-299-6770.

