

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Carroll County General Health District

Carroll County General Health District Receives Drug Free Communities Grant

The Carroll County General Health District (CCGHD) was awarded the Drug Free Communities grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce youth substance use and to lead the Empower Carroll Coalition. The Drug Free Communities Grant (DFC) is a 10-year grant that allows communities to tailor youth substance use prevention strategies through multi-sector community involvement. The planning organization for the DFC grant in Carroll County is the Empower Carroll Coalition. The Empower Carroll Coalition is a collaboration of various Carroll County Community organizations, agencies, businesses, and volunteers. The mission of the Empower Carroll Coalition is to empower Carroll County youth and their families by implementing effective substance use prevention strategies through education and awareness. The Empower Carroll Coalition initially is focusing on youth tobacco/vaping prevention, marijuana prevention, and alcohol prevention.

This year, the Empower Carroll Coalition has been working to collect data regarding youth substance use. The Empower Carroll Coalition conducted focus group sessions to gain a better understanding of the accessibility and youth use of tobacco products, alcohol, and marijuana. Previous data collected in the 2019 Carroll County Community Health Assessment (CHA) illustrates that county youth have access and are using substances. According to the 2019 Carroll County CHA among high school students, 26.4% have used marijuana sometime in their life, 43.4% have used a nicotine vape in the past, and 55.5% had drunk alcohol (more than just a few sips) sometime in the past¹.

In May 2023, The Carroll County General Health District partnered with the Carroll County Sheriff's office to conduct tobacco compliance checks. Tobacco compliance checks are done to ensure that tobacco retailers are following the Tobacco 21 Law and not selling tobacco products to underaged youth.

In Carroll County, 95% of the visited tobacco retailers did not sell to an underaged purchaser. Having a high compliance rate among county retailers helps protect youth from easy access to tobacco products. Compliance checks are conducted as a requirement for the Ohio Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Grant through the Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Investigative Unit.

In the future, the coalition plans to develop youth led groups in Carroll County. These youth led groups will provide youth with the opportunity to advocate for substance use prevention and to

develop leadership skills. The Empower Carroll Coalition is also collecting data that will be used to plan strategies to help prevent youth substance use in the county.

The Empower Carroll Coalition strives to make a safe and healthy Drug-Free Carroll County for all youth and their families through community collaboration. Membership in the Empower Carroll Coalition is open to anyone in the community. If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more about the Empower Carroll Coalition, please contact Angela Toth Community Engagement Coordinator for the CCGHD through email: atoth@carroll-lhd.org or by phone: 330-627-4866 ext. 1559.

Want to stay up to date on the Empower Carroll Coalition? Follow our Facebook page at Empower Carroll. The Empower Carroll coalition is also in the process of developing a website that will be titled: www.empowercarroll.com

1. Carroll County Community Health Assessment Youth Behavior Survey. 2019.

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