



North Central District Health Department

Proudly Serving the Counties of:
Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce and Rock

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White House Drug Policy Office Awards \$124,999 to Local Coalition to Prevent Youth Substance Use in 9 Counties Across North Central Nebraska

Grants Support Administration Efforts to Emphasize Prevention Among Youth

Washington D.C. – Today, Michael Botticelli, Director of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), announced 697 Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program grants, totaling \$86 million. The grants will provide local community coalitions funding to prevent youth substance use, including prescription drugs, marijuana, tobacco and alcohol. North Central District Health Department from O’Neill, NE was one of the grant recipients and will receive \$124,999 in DFC grant funds to involve and engage their local community to prevent substance use among youth.

“We know that evidence-based prevention efforts are the most effective way to reduce youth substance use and to support the roughly 90 percent of American youth who do not use drugs,” said Michael Botticelli, Director of National Drug Control Policy. “By bringing together schools, businesses, law enforcement, parent groups, and other members of the community, DFC-funded community coalitions are helping to protect youth from the devastating consequences of non-medical prescription drug use, heroin and other substance use.”

“Our goal is to make Antelope, Boyd, Brown, Cherry, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Pierce, and Rock counties safe and healthy environments for our youth,” said Veta Hungerford. “Prevention is a powerful tool to counteract drug use in our community, and we will use this funding to help youth in these counties make healthy choices about substance use.”

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the DFC Program.

“Community coalitions continue to drive winning strategies at the local level to reduce the rate of substance misuse,” said SAMHSA Acting Administrator Kana Enomoto. “SAMHSA is pleased to join the Office of National Drug Control Policy in supporting communities that are bringing citizens together to create healthy and drug free environments for our youth.”

Prescription drug abuse prevention is one of the core measures of effectiveness for local DFC coalitions, and coalitions nationwide have led innovative opioid prevention initiatives. For example:

- In Texas, the Concho Valley C.A.R.E.S. Coalition’s “Mix it, Seal it, Trash it” campaign informs adults about the proper procedure to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs. They have placed two prescription collection units and conduct two prescription take back projects a year.^[i]
- In Arkansas, the TEA Coalition has distributed over 700 medication lockboxes and encouraged residents to lock up their prescription medications to keep them out of the hands of young people.^[ii]
- The Delaware County Heroin Task Force was formed by the District Attorney and County Council Members to raise awareness about the prescription drug and heroin overdose epidemic. This DFC coalition is focusing on the installation of permanent prescription drug disposal boxes and has partnered with local realtors to raise awareness about the importance of locking up prescription medications during open houses.^[iii]

The [DFC’s 2014 National Evaluation Report](#) showed a significant decrease in past 30 day use of prescription drugs among youth in DFC communities. The report also noted increases in the perception of risk, perception of peer disapproval, and perception of parent disapproval in relation to non-medical prescription drug use. The report also found a significant decrease in past 30 day use between the first and most recent data reports for alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use among middle school and high school youth in DFC communities.

North Central District Health Department will specifically work to address the lack of activities and opportunities for youth, parental attitudes of acceptance and social norms, lack of resources to address youth alcohol and tobacco use, and the ease of access to these substances.

Background on the Drug-Free Communities Support Program

The Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program, created by the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997, is the Nation’s leading effort to mobilize communities to prevent youth substance use. Directed by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the DFC Program provides grants to community coalitions to strengthen the infrastructure among local partners to create and sustain a reduction in local youth substance use.

The DFC Program provides grants of up to \$625,000 over five years to community coalitions that facilitate youth and adult participation at the community level in local youth drug use prevention efforts.

According to data for 2013, an estimated 3,700 young people per day between the ages of 12 and 17 used drugs for the first time in the preceding year.^[iv] Additionally, high school seniors are more likely to be current smokers of marijuana than cigarettes and non-medical use of prescription or over-the-counter drugs remains

unacceptably high. ^[v] Parents should also know that 19% of high school seniors in 2014 reported binge drinking (i.e., 5 or more drinks in a row) in the past two weeks.^[vi]

Recognizing that local problems need local solutions, DFC-funded coalitions engage multiple sectors of the community and employ a variety of environmental strategies to address local drug problems. Coalitions are comprised of community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement, and media. By involving the community in a solution-oriented approach, DFC also helps those youth at risk for substance use recognize the majority of our Nation's youth choose not to use drugs.

Additionally, DFC-funded communities have proven to be more effective in addressing these complex social issues and have demonstrated an increase in positive outcomes over communities that do not have DFC's.

Background on the Administration's National Drug Policy

The Obama Administration's drug policy treats the national drug challenge as both a public health and public safety issue. This approach is built upon the latest scientific research demonstrating that addiction is a chronic disease of the brain that can be successfully prevented and treated, and from which one can recover. The Administration has directed Federal agencies to expand community-based efforts to prevent drug use before it begins, empower healthcare workers to intervene early at the first signs of a substance use disorder, expand access to treatment for those who need it, support the millions of Americans in recovery, and pursue "smart on crime" approaches to drug enforcement.

For more information about the Administration efforts to reduce drug use and its consequences, or to learn more about the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/Drug-Free-Communities-Support-Program>

The Office of National Drug Control Policy seeks to foster healthy individuals and safe communities by effectively leading the Nation's effort to reduce drug use and its consequences.

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^[i] DFC 2014 Progress Report

^[ii] DFC 2014 Progress Report

^[iii] DFC 2014 Progress Report

^[iv] SAMHSA. Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables (September 2014).

^[v] University of Michigan. Monitoring the Future Study (December 2014).

^[vi] University of Michigan. Monitoring the Future Study (December 2014).