



CESA 5

Juveniles are 25% of the population, but 100% of our future.

# Columbia County Connects Newsletter

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## Adults: Take the 2010 Community Perception Survey!

go to

[www.columbiacountyconnects.org](http://www.columbiacountyconnects.org)

Click on the survey link or contact Laurie at 608/742-8814, #275 and we can mail the survey to you.

Please take this survey by **March 1, 2010** and pass it on to other residents of Columbia County.

Take the Community Perception Survey and help out your community!

**Columbia County Connects Coalition**  
Building connections for a better tomorrow. CESA 5

2010 Community Perception Survey ([www.columbiacountyconnects.org](http://www.columbiacountyconnects.org))  
Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

In your community, how much of a problem are the following?

**9. Alcohol**

Alcohol use by teenagers

Binge drinking by teenagers (Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks within a few hours.)

Alcohol use by adults

Binge drinking by adults (Binge drinking is drinking five or more drinks within a few hours.)

**10. Tobacco**

Tobacco use by teenagers

Tobacco use by adults

**11. Other Drugs**

Marijuana use by teenagers

Marijuana use by adults

Prescription and/or over the counter drug misuse by teenagers

Prescription and/or over the counter drug misuse by adults

**Chance to win an iPod Touch!**

Please feel free to post this newsletter or share it with a friend!

## **Medical Marijuana and Our Kids!**

“Children entering drug abuse treatment routinely report that they heard that 'pot is medicine' and, therefore, believed it to be good for them”.

Medical marijuana is a hot topic in Wisconsin News lately. As our lawmakers debate the issue, one big concern as a coalition, must be how the increased media coverage impacts our youth. Meg McCullough, an instructor for Columbia County’s Juvenile Underage Drinking Offenders (JUDO) Class has noticed an increased interest in the medical marijuana issue by students who take her class. Meg said, “Several times in recent months I have had youth ask me how marijuana can be so bad for them if Wisconsin is looking at legalizing medical marijuana.” We are battling two misperceptions: First, that prescription drugs are legal and therefore safe, and second, that because marijuana is found in nature it is safe.

We need to help our youth realize that it is not safe for someone to take any prescription drug that is not prescribed for them. Looking back at all the recent recalls of prescription drugs,

we know that sometimes prescription drugs are not safe even when someone does have a prescription! Parents need to add this to the list of things they discuss with their children. In addition, when our lawmakers look at legalizing marijuana for medical purposes, they must consider what kind of message is being sent to our youth.

Andrea Barthwell, M.D. and Former Deputy Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, was quoted as saying, “Children entering drug abuse treatment routinely report that they heard that 'pot is medicine' and, therefore, believed it to be good for them” (Chicago Tribune editorial, Feb. 17, 2004). For additional information check out these websites:

<http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/drugs/mouse.html>

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/MarijBroch/teenpg1-2.html>

Our next newsletter looks at what the experts say about legalizing marijuana.

## **Pardeeville’s “Teens in Action” Work to Increase Awareness of Dating Violence**

On January, 6 members of Pardeeville’s Teens In Action youth group spent a day in Baraboo performing their dating violence skit to Baraboo HS sophomore health classes. After the performance, the classes were encouraged to be proactive in healthy relationships by signing a Dating Bill of Rights that helped them see what their rights and responsibilities are in a dating relationship. Jess Ritschke, Hope House, followed up the skit with an interactive discussion on violence in relationships. The Teens In Action group will be performing in breakout sessions at this year’s Link-N-Learn Youth Conference on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

The Senate has passed a resolution designating February as Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. There are many things youth

can do to help raise awareness about dating violence and promote healthy relationships:

\*Hand out small give- away items such as heart shaped lollipops, Hersheys kisses, etc. at prom with messages attached about healthy relationships

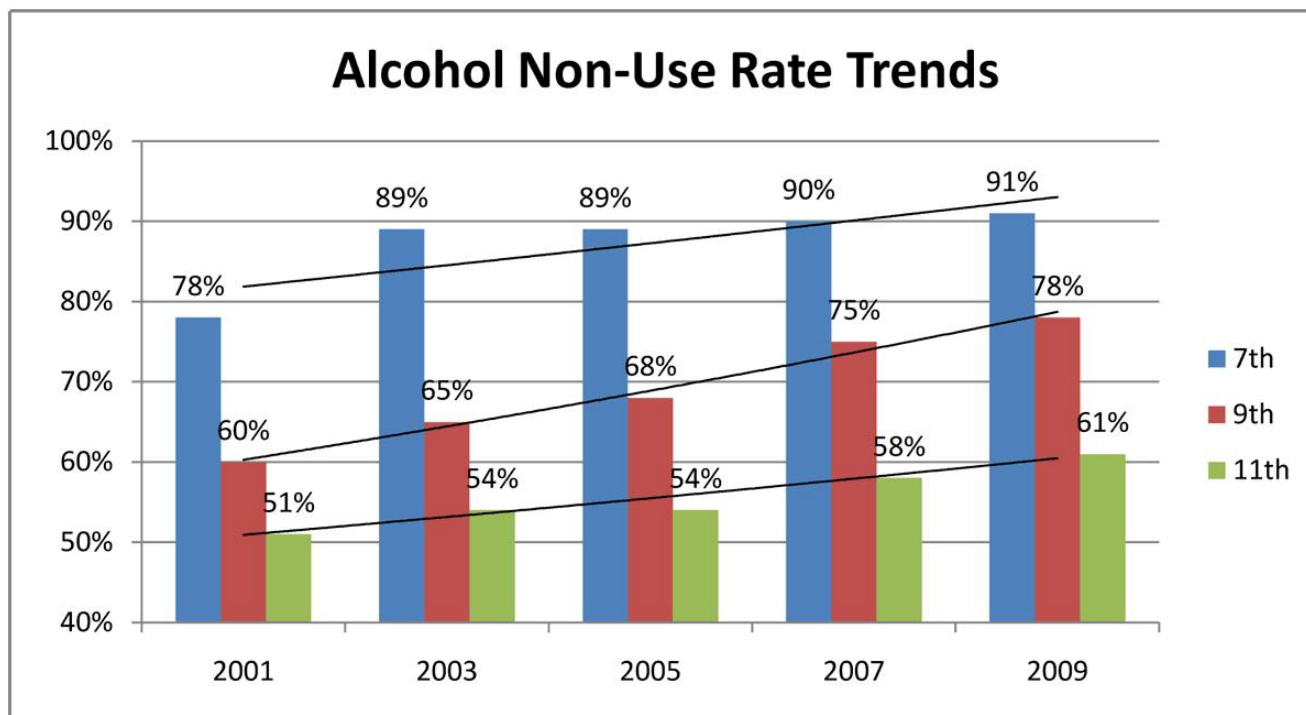
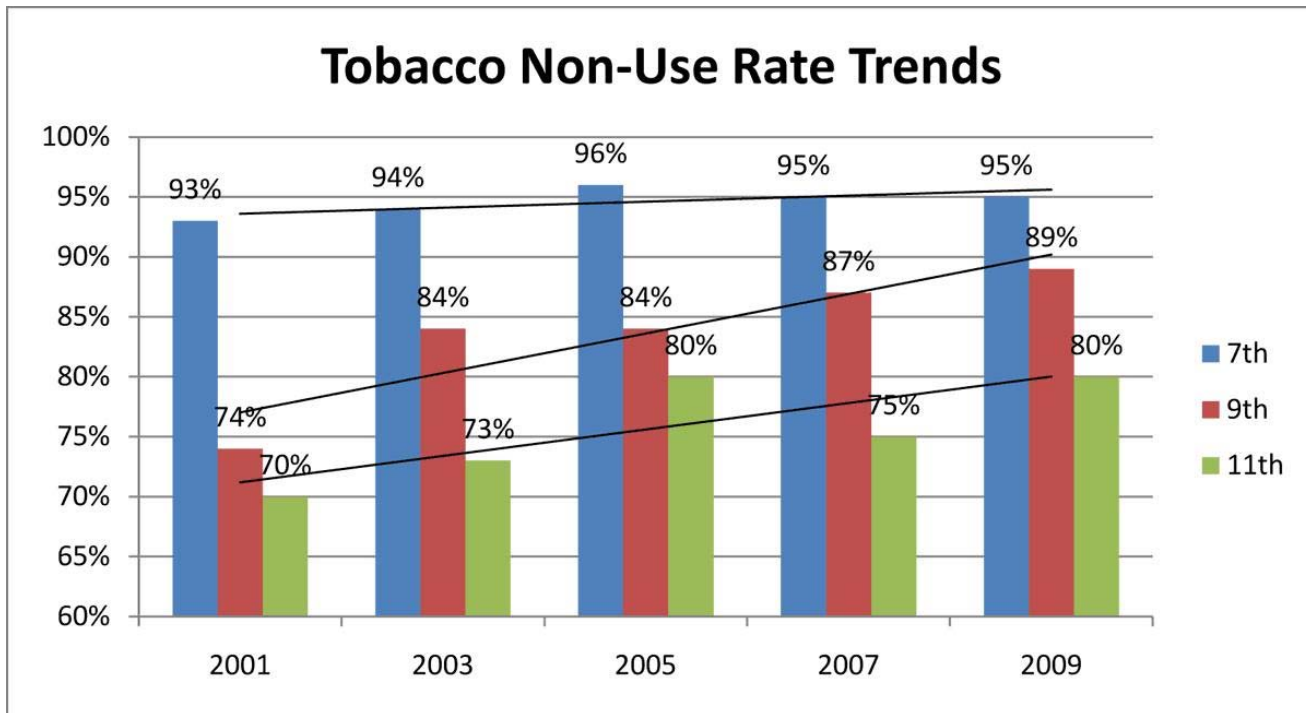
\*Create *Bubbler Babble*-messages near bubblers about healthy relationships  
\*Download posters and quizzes from the [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) resource center to pass out or hang at school

\*Work with the art teacher or art students to create a visual statement against dating abuse, or organize a poster contest or other project to display at school

Go to [www.hopehousesw.org](http://www.hopehousesw.org) for more great ideas. The Hope House is holding their annual benefit on February 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm at the Wintergreen Resort in Wisconsin Dells.

## Youth Non-Use Rate Trends

The charts below show the percentage of students reporting not using alcohol or tobacco in the past 30 days. The questions were asked to students in 7th 9th and 11th grade over the past 8 years.



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*We're on the web:*  
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## Columbia County Connects

The Columbia County Connects Coalition is made up of members that represent school districts and communities throughout the county. This coalition was established through the Columbia County Juvenile Justice Committee.

Funding is provided by Columbia County Health and Human Services, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), a Federal Drug-Free Communities Support grant, Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future and the STOP grant.

The two main programs are Youth Connects (teen leadership) and Community Connects (community education). The 40 Developmental Assets play a major role in our programming. The following are the top 4 assets we are currently addressing:

- **Caring School Climate** - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
- **Safety**-Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.

- **Restraint**-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
- **Youth as Resources**-Young people are given useful roles in the community.

### Community Advocacy

The Community Advocacy Department works with the Community Liaisons to provide community education on prevention, hold responsible beverage server classes for community groups, alcohol compliance checks, coordinate Community Action Teams, work with Project Northland teachers on 6th grade Poster Fairs coordinate Project Northland 7th grade Amazing Alternative activities and media advocacy campaigns.

### Youth Connects

The Youth Connects Coordinator works with the Youth Liaisons in the individual schools in creating service programs and leadership opportunities with students. An adult from each school district supports the local youth efforts.

Please feel free to post this newsletter or share it with a friend!