



# Defiance County Partnerships for Success

Volume 1, Issue 1

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## Needs Assessment Committee Members

**Kimberly Moss** (Health Commissioner, Defiance County General Health District) - Chair

**Connie Allgire** (Executive Director, Women and Family Services)

**Sylvia Blakely** (Registered Nurse Classroom Facilitator, Project Respect of NW Ohio)

**Ken Bond** (Executive Director, Five County Alcohol & Drug Program)

**Joe Chrisman** (Pastor, Trinity United Methodist Church)

**Jill Hitzeman** (CFHS Project Director, Health Planning and Promotion Defiance County General Health District)

**Lou Levy** (Communication Director, Four County ADAMhs Board)

**Alice Mack** (Chief Probation Officer, Defiance County Juvenile Probation)

**Kevin Miller** (Superintendent, Hicksville Exempted Village Schools)

**Tina Mohring** (Coordinator, Defiance County Family and Children First Council)

**Clare Overmier** (Supervisor, Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center)

**Holli Seabury** (Coordinator, Defiance County Partnerships for Success)

As the Partnerships for Success process moves into our second phase, we would like to keep you informed of the progress made the past several months by the dedicated members of the Needs Assessment Workgroup. If you have questions, or would like to volunteer for a future workgroup, please contact us.

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## Needs Assessment Workgroup Results

The Needs Assessment Workgroup collected local, state, and national data surrounding Ohio's Commitments to Child Well-Being:

Commitment 1 - Expectant Parents and

Newborns Thrive

Commitment 2 - Infants and Toddlers Thrive

Commitment 3 - Children Are Ready for School

Commitment 4 - Children and Youth Succeed in School

Commitment 5 - Children and Youth Engage in Healthy Behaviors

Commitment 6 - Youth Successfully Transition into Adulthood

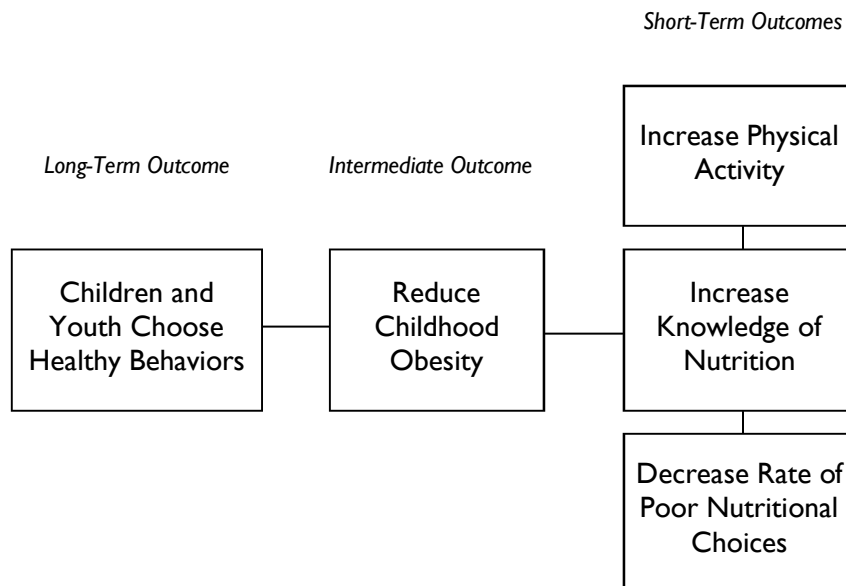
As the group examined the local data they were, for the most part, pleasantly surprised. According to the data less Defiance County youth are drinking, using drugs, and having teen pregnancies than state and national rates. Children are getting a good start in life through early prenatal care, and children are succeeding in school. Local schools are performing at or better than the state rate. Some of this can be attributed to protective factors found in rural areas, but much of these successful rates are a result of the quality work being done by area non-profit agencies and schools.

Data which was concerning to the group included the childhood obesity rate, depression rates, the number of women who smoke while pregnant, and minority high school graduation rates. According to a recent study by the OH Department of

Health, Defiance County has the ninth highest rate of overweight third graders in the state. The group was also concerned with the minority high school graduation rate of 67% (compared to 91.6% of white students). While this rate is not considerably different than the state rate, it was felt that the county would benefit from having a higher minority graduation rate. The self-reported depression rate for teens in Defiance County was not higher than the state rate, however it was higher than the rates reported in surrounding counties. Especially concerning was that 23.4% of pregnant women in Defiance County are smoking, which can lead to premature birth, low birth weight babies, and a host of other problems.

Although there were several areas which concerned the group, it was decided to address childhood obesity because this is a county-wide problem which can be addressed through programming. In addition, the local mental health agencies are working to address the teen depression rates and Women and Family Services has received a grant to work with pregnant women who smoke. Initially childhood obesity didn't seem like a serious problem, but after researching the issue the group found this is a problem with serious lifelong consequences. Most shocking was that because so many of today's children are obese they have become the first generation in written history which is not expected to outlive their parents.

The final product of the Needs Assessment Workgroup is the Logic Chain which will guide the work of future PfS workgroups. The group also produced a comprehensive report of the data collected which is available through the Family & Children First Council. The Resource Assessment Workgroup is now collecting information on programs in Defiance County which address these short-term outcomes.



EXCERPTS FROM THE DEFIANCE COUNTY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Over 23% of pregnant women in Defiance County are smoking while pregnant (compared to 11.4% nationwide). “Cigarette smoking during pregnancy contributes to a number of adverse birth outcomes, including spontaneous abortion, stillbirth, fetal death, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).” Source: Centers for Disease Control**

**Defiance County youth report drinking alcohol less than the state average, driving less while drinking, and beginning to drink at an older age.**

**The rate of births to teen mothers in Defiance County has been decreasing over the past five years and is significantly lower than the state and national rate.**

**Thirty percent of Defiance County teens reported feeling so sad or hopeless for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities. While this rate isn’t substantially different than the national rate (28.5%) it is considerably higher than other local counties (Fulton—23.4%, Henry—15.5%, Williams—16%).**



Over 26% of Defiance County's third graders are overweight—the ninth highest county rate in Ohio. This rate is also significantly higher than the rates in surrounding Northwest Ohio counties (Fulton —14.3%, Henry—14.7%, Paulding —15.5%, Williams—18.8%). Source: A Report on Body Mass Index of Ohio's Third Graders, 2004/2005, Revised, Ohio Department of Health

Although Defiance County youth report using drugs at less than the state rate (with the exception of inhalants), they report being offered or sold illegal drugs at a higher rate than the state average.

“We spend more money on health care per person than any other country in the world and a greater percentage of our gross national product (15%) goes to health care but we rank 30<sup>th</sup> in life expectancy for women and 28<sup>th</sup> for men. Part of the problem is that we consume more calories per capita than the citizens of any other nation in the world and we lead the world in the prevalence of obesity.”

Dave Wallechinsky, Parade Magazine, January 14, 2007

The Defiance County Health Needs Assessment Survey 2005 shows county youth are less active and have higher TV viewing rates than the state. Thirty-eight percent spend three or more hours a day watching TV or engaging in other sedentary behaviors. Forty percent say they have not engaged in at least 30 minutes of physical activity at least 3 times in the past week. Twenty-one percent did not exercise at all, compared to 10% statewide. Thirty-one percent of county youth feel they are overweight.

Over 91% of white youth in the county graduate from high school, compared to only 68.4% of Hispanic students (the state graduation rate for Hispanic students is 67.5%). Source: Ohio Dept of Education



The full Needs Assessment report will be available on local websites and in print in April, 2007. For more information contact the Family & Children First Council.

**FAMILY AND  
CHILDREN FIRST  
COUNCIL**

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Found in all 88 counties in the state of Ohio, the local Family and Children First Councils are a cooperative effort to support families. Under the Ohio Revised Code, the Family and Children First Councils are mandated to:

- Create a coordinated system to promote child development.
- Coordinate services for families who have children with multiple needs.
- Build an improved system to serve Defiance County families.

**Mandated Members**

City of Defiance  
Defiance City Schools  
Defiance County Board of MRDD  
Defiance County Commissioners  
Defiance County General Health District  
Defiance County Job & Family Services  
Defiance County Juvenile Court  
Family Representatives  
Four County ADAMhs Board  
Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission  
Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center  
Ohio Department of Youth Services

**At-Large Members**

Catholic Charities  
Centers for Child & Family Advocacy  
Domestic Violence Task Force  
First Call for Help  
Four County Family Center  
GRADS  
Hicksville Community Center  
OSU Extension Office  
United Way  
Volunteer Connection  
Women & Family Services  
YMCA

**We're on the web at  
[www.defiance-county.com](http://www.defiance-county.com)**

**Learn more about the  
PFS process at  
[www.pfsacademy.org](http://www.pfsacademy.org)**

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**Thank you!**

The Family & Children First Council of Defiance County would like to thank the members of the Needs Assessment Workgroup (listed on page one) for their effort, time and dedication to this important process. We would also like to thank the Defiance County Health Partners for their work on the Defiance County Health Needs Assessment Survey 2005 which was invaluable as a source of local data.