**Did you know? “Children of parents who talk to their teens about drugs are 50% less likely to use.”**

**Resources for Parents and Youth:**

**Local Prevention Efforts and Tips:** Also, please help spread the word by liking and sharing posts from the page on Facebook called: “Mercer and Auglaize Drug Prevention.” [www.facebook.com/MercerCountyDrugPrevention](http://www.facebook.com/MercerCountyDrugPrevention) This was designed for our area to give tips, facts, and local information about how you can help prevent alcohol and other drug issues!

**Start Talking!** *Start Talking!* is a new effort championed by Gov. Kasich and First Lady Karen W. Kasich aimed at preventing drug abuse among Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens – our children. The majority of substance-free adolescents credit parents for the decision not to use illegal substances. Likewise, teachers and other authority figures can have a similar influence on youth and their decision-making. <http://starttalking.ohio.gov> Another good resource for talking to kids at any ages is <http://www.drugfree.org/the-parent-toolkit/age-by-age-advice/>

**Conversation Starters:** Downloadable App Available! Having trouble finding things to talk about with your child? Focus on the Family has a downloadable app (or you can search for it) called “Conversation Starters” (you pick age group and gender and you can flip through questions to strike up conversation). Focus on the Family also has a “Daily Broadcast” App where you can listen to authors and professionals give parenting, marriage and family advice.

**Email Tips:** Sign up for “KNOW! tips” that will come through your email. [www.drugfreeactionalliance.org/know](http://www.drugfreeactionalliance.org/know) The goals of these tips: To increase parental awareness that their children are at risk; To reinforce the knowledge that parental actions make a difference; To enhance and increase communication between parents and their children about substance use; and to empower parents with simple and effective parenting strategies proven to prevent substance use.

**Mercer County Only:**

Contact: Laura Sanford, Prevention Coordinator at Foundations in Celina; [lauras@foundationsbhs.org](mailto:lauras@foundationsbhs.org) or 419-584-1000

**High School Students-Support Group: S.T.O.P. (Students Teaching Others Prevention) Group**- open to all Mercer County High School Students who are alcohol and drug-free or want to be encouraged to “start over” if you’ve “messed up” and need the positive support to do so! Meetings held monthly at various locations. Typically the 2nd Mondays of every month, from 7:30-9 pm at various locations. This group is youth-led, adult guided. S.T.O.P. is a group of Mercer County high school students who come together and learn about ways to stand strong in their belief to be drug free, as well as help prevent bullying and suicide. The members of the S.T.O.P. group also have the opportunity to make a positive impact in their school and community and also be youth leaders for the S.T.A.R. (Students Teaching About Resistance) retreat for middle school students.

For questions or info on future meetings, contact Laura.

**Prevention Retreat:** S.T.A.R. (Students Teaching About Resistance) is a 1 day event held for 6th-8th graders in Mercer County once a year, typically in February or March. For more info, contact Laura at Foundations or check for info in school offices in January.

**Mercer County Prevention Coalition:** Looking for parents and youth to become involved in supporting our mission, “To improve the quality of lives of Mercer County residents by preventing the harmful consequences of substance use and abuse among youth, families, and the larger community.” Contact Laura if you are interested and for future meeting dates.

**Did you know? “Teens that begin drinking at age 15 or younger**

**are 4 times more likely to become an alcoholic than**

**someone who begins drinking at age 21.”**