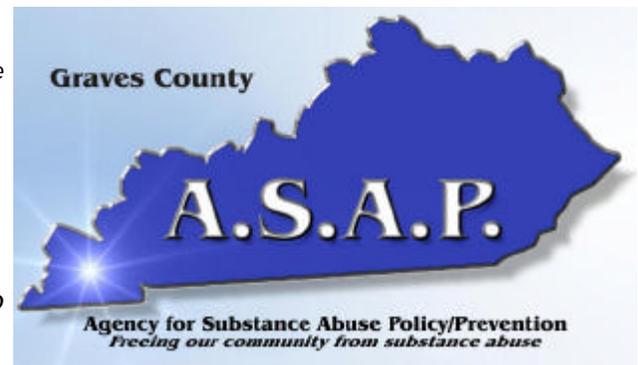


Our Vision - Freeing our community from substance abuse

Our Mission - The Graves County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy board will help our community be free of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) by helping change the culture that approves of and supports ATOD. This will be accomplished by working with concerned community partners to educate, treat, and prevent ATOD use.

www.gcasap.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Graves Agency for Substance Abuse Prevention gets \$625K 5-year Drug Free Communities Award

Written by Paul Schaumburg, Community Relations Director, Graves County Schools - paul.schaumburg@graves.kyschools.us

(Mayfield, KY) - The Graves County Agency for Substance Abuse Prevention (ASAP) announced on Tuesday, Sept. 10, that it is a recipient of a \$125,000 per year grant from the drug free communities (DFC) support program for each of the next five years, totaling some \$625,000. Those funds are earmarked for involving and engaging the local community to prevent substance use among youth. Gil Kerlikowske, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy announced the award among some \$19.8 million in new Drug-Free Communities Support Program grants to some 147 communities and some 19 new DFC mentoring grants across the United States. The newly-announced awards are in addition to the \$59.4 million in continuation coalitions.

"This is going to enable us to hire someone full-time to coordinate the substance abuse prevention initiatives in our community," said Joseph Williams, the program director of the Graves County ASAP, who contributed to writing the grant. "We have posted the position through the Mayfield Career Center/Employment Office and expect fill the position sometime in October. The grant funding begins on October 1st."

"We will do a great deal of training among those involved in our organization and the school systems to make the needle move in regards to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription drugs. We also will focus on other drug issues that come and go from time to time, such as synthetic drugs and the recent rise in heroin use."

"We have a great deal of really good programs already in our community focusing on drug abuse prevention," Williams continued, "We will identify those programs and come alongside them to support and promote those programs."

Williams explained, "We have a number of people in our community who really don't understand the degree to which substance use and abuse take place among young people, for example. We have a Kentucky Incentives for Prevention survey that is given every two years to Mayfield and Graves County students. This helps us to know the substance use rates for students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. We'll help the community to become more aware of what exactly youth are using. The results of the last survey

helped us target those four substances which have the highest use rates in our youth. Those surveys are designed in such a way to get to the truth in self-reporting, so we believe they are reliable."

"When we find that a program is working in an area of the country comprised of a rural population similar to ours, we figure that program is worth examining, and exploring the use of it locally." Williams said. "We also hope to better guide our youth who are looking for risk and adventure to pursue far safer and more positive outlets such as sports, music, drama, and many outdoor hobbies that are available."

"President Obama believes in the pursuit of an America built to last – a nation with an educated, skilled workforce that has the knowledge, energy, and expertise to succeed in a highly-competitive global marketplace," said Kerlikowske. "For too many young people, this future is clouded by drug use, which inhibits their ability to remain healthy and safe and to achieve their full potential. We congratulate this coalition on its work to raise a generation of young people equipped to remain drug-free and ready to meet the challenges and successfully compete in the 21st century."

"The Graves County Agency for Substance Abuse Policy/Prevention has been meeting since the summer of 2005," Williams noted. "We have been funded in the past from a small grant from the State of Kentucky resulting from the Tobacco Settlement Funds. A couple of our recent successes are advocating for the synthetic drug ordinance in the City and County and the smoking ordinance for certain public places in the City of Mayfield."

"The key to preventing substance abuse is harnessing the talents, resources, and interests of all segments of our local communities," said Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration administrator Pamela S. Hyde. "America's families, schools, places of worship, healthcare providers, community centers, and other civic organizations all play an essential role in helping our youth avoid illicit substance use. SAMHSA's partnership with the Office of National Drug Control Policy in supporting community coalitions has proven effective in uniting communities to develop effective approaches for fostering drug-free environments for young people across our nation."

The goals of the coalition are: (1) to establish and strengthen collaboration among Graves County ASAP's partner-organizations in support of the community's effort to prevent and reduce youth substance use; and (2) to reduce substance use among youth in Mayfield and Graves County and (3) over time to reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the issues in our community that increase substance abuse and promoting factors that reduce substance abuse.

The coalition plans to achieve its goals by implementing a comprehensive prevention strategy with parents, youth, and community partners.

The DFC Program was created by the Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997 and reauthorized by Congress in 2001 and 2006. Since 1998, ONDCP has awarded nearly 2,000 DGC grants to local communities all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, Palau, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

To learn more about the Office of National Drug Control Policy or the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/ONDCP.

To apply for the Graves ASAP project coordinator full-time position, register and setup a free account at <https://focuscareer.ky.gov/career/> look for "Project Coordinator, Mayfield, KY" Job ID -

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