

# Start Talking!

*Building a Drug-Free Future*



## **START TALKING!: BUILDING A DRUG-FREE FUTURE** ***Ohio's Youth Drug Abuse Prevention Initiative***

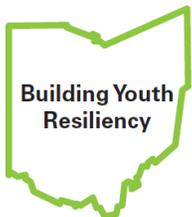
Drug abuse is a public health epidemic across the nation, and Ohio is not immune. In 2011, drug overdoses were the leading cause of accidental deaths in our state, with one Ohioan dying from a drug overdose every five hours. Under Governor John R. Kasich's leadership, Ohio has made attacking the drug problem a priority. Efforts are underway to broaden public and professional education, particularly regarding the prescribing and abuse of opioids; law enforcement has ramped up interdiction efforts on our highways and in our communities; and treatment options and recovery supports have been expanded to help those struggling with addiction regain control of their lives. The next phase of this statewide, multi-pronged approach is the launch of *Start Talking!* – Ohio's new youth drug prevention initiative.

*Start Talking!* is an effort championed by Gov. Kasich and First Lady Karen W. Kasich aimed at preventing drug abuse among Ohio's most vulnerable citizens – our children. Research shows when children talk about substance abuse with parents and other adults, they are up to 50 percent less likely to use. This initiative encourages Ohioans to embrace prevention-focused programs aimed at raising awareness and encouraging conversation, all in an effort to stop drug abuse before it starts.

### **START TALKING! PROGRAMMING**



**5 Minutes for Life** is led by the Ohio Highway Patrol and the Ohio National Guard, in partnership with high schools and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). Patrol and National Guard members talk to student athletes and encourage them to become ambassadors who lead peer-to-peer conversations that promote healthy lifestyles. The statewide partnership involves all 58 Patrol Posts, more than 800 OHSAA-member high schools and Ohio National Guard Service members from around the state.



**Building Youth Resiliency** and encouraging good behavioral health among young people are both essential to enhancing their ability to resist substance abuse and addiction. The Office of Ohio First Lady Karen W. Kasich, in partnership with other state agencies, is seeking applications to assist local communities in utilizing evidence-based programs to help youth resist substance use. This initiative will give communities and schools the tools to develop student's resiliency so they have the courage to push back against peer pressure.



**Know!** is a drug prevention and awareness partnership developed by the Drug-Free Action Alliance that targets parents and caregivers of middle school students and empowers them to raise their children substance-free. Its goal is to increase communication between parents and their children about substance abuse. This is achieved through free twice-monthly emails that offer Parent Tips to families to help them talk about this subject. In addition, Know! offers free twice-monthly emails to educators and community leaders on TEACHable Moments that can help reinforce the prevention messaging from parents.



**Parents360 Rx** is a component of PACT360 – Police and Communities Together – a national community education program developed by the Partnership at Drugfree.org that has demonstrated significantly increased knowledge of substance abuse among adults, thereby enhancing confidence in their ability to speak with teens about the subject. As a result, more conversations have happened at home and in the community to deter drug use. Ohio is disseminating Parents360 Rx Action Toolkits to assist parents and school leaders in hosting discussions locally to support prevention efforts in their communities. The free toolkit consists of a video, discussion guide and tools for decreasing the risk of children taking illegal drugs or abusing prescription medicines.

To learn more and get involved, visit <http://StartTalking.Ohio.Gov>