



**EAST-CENTRAL DISTRICT  
Health Department**  
**PLATTE, COLFAX, BOONE & NANCE**  
*Better Health Through Partnerships*



**East Central District Health Department**  
**Second Annual Youth Substance Community Compliance Report**  
**September 2015**

**INTRODUCTION**

East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) has had a Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program for nearly ten years. As part of this program, alcohol compliance checks have been conducted among alcohol retailers in the district to determine the level of compliance. This report addresses the response of enforcement of public health laws to address the use of alcohol which can have a major impact on individuals, families, and communities (The Community Guide, 2015).

Effects of substance abuse contribute to physical, mental, social and public health problems such as teenage pregnancy, crime, domestic violence, motor vehicle crashes, and physical fights (The Community Guide, 2015). This report touches on one of our strategic areas chosen by those participating in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) of 2012 that was supported by data from the 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

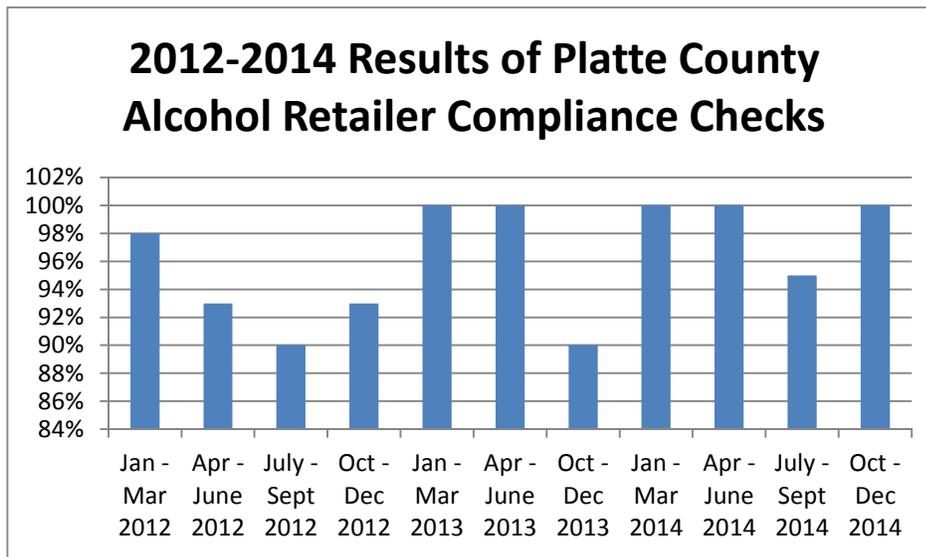
This document includes four sections:

- I. Results of Compliance Checks
- II. Youth Substance Abuse Data From the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
- III. Community Health Improvement Plans
- IV. Summary

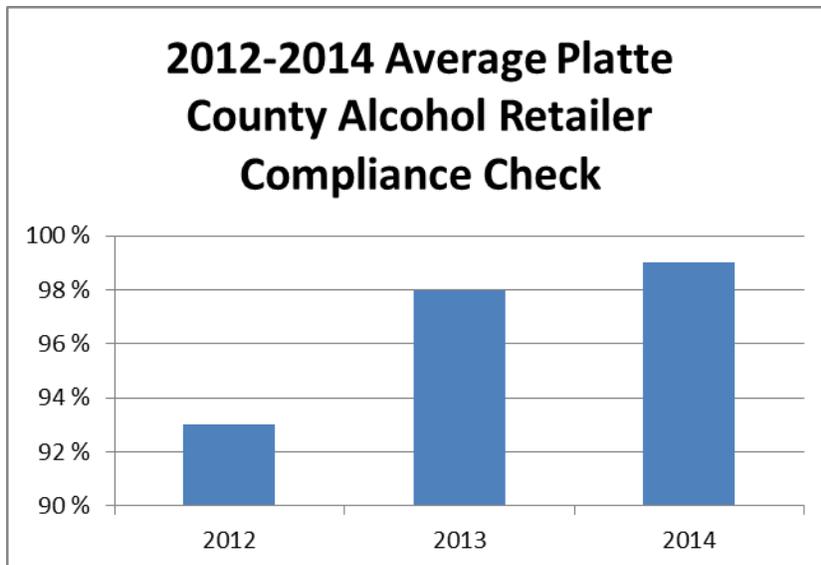
## I. Results of Compliance Checks

### Compliance Check Data from Platte County

The first graph displays the alcohol retailer compliance rate on a quarterly basis for the time frame of the three year period of 2012-2014 for Platte County. Note that during the quarter of July through September 2013 compliance checks were not conducted. Rates did vary in the three year time frame with no rates lower than 90% compliance, which was the result of both the July through September 2012 and October through December 2013. The highest rate of compliance, 100%, was from five of the eleven quarters within the three years.



If we look at the annual percentage of retailer compliance during the 2012-2014 enforcement checks, we can see that over the last three years, compliance has gradually increased among retailers from a 2012 percentage of 93%, to 96% in 2013, and 98.5% in 2014. This chart reflects that with consistent alcohol compliance checks, retailers comply with the law to a greater extent. Colfax, Platte, and Nance counties have had alcohol compliance checks in the timeframe of 2011-2013



As can be seen with the above chart, aggregate data from the 2012-2014 ECDHD retailer compliance checks suggests that these checks are a proven strategy to ensure the law is enforced which will aid in reducing the availability of alcohol to underage youth in the district (The Community Guide, 2015).

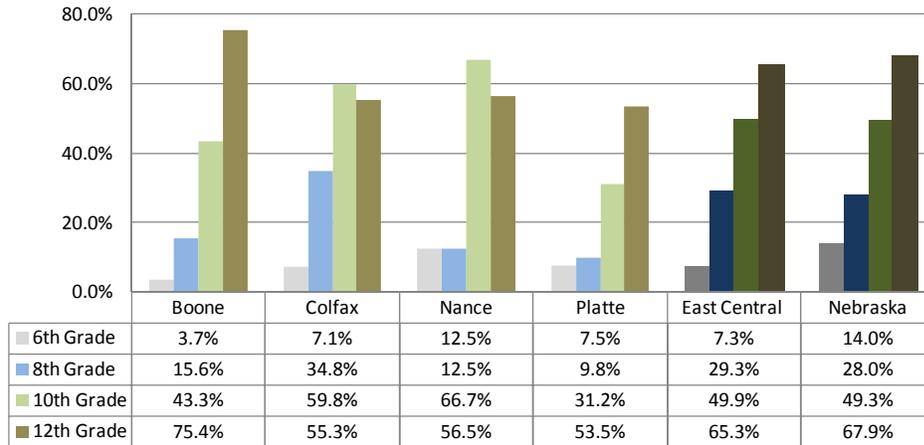
## **II. Youth Substance Abuse Data from the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)**

Youth substance abuse is one of the eight CHIP strategic areas for the ECDHD, this report deals with one component of the work being done in addressing the issue of the enforcement of alcohol compliance checks. It is important for the reader to understand some background information, which is included below.

### **Substance Abuse/ Youth Substance Abuse / Youth Substance Abuse Prevention**

Complaints and concerns about youth alcohol substance abuse are widely documented in the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). In particular, data to support the need for this as a strategic area is included in the 2012 CHNA (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011) on pages 98-108. For example, one data set that depicts lifetime alcohol use among students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> in Boone County is noted in the following chart. Boone County has a 12<sup>th</sup> grade lifetime alcohol use of 75.4%, which is higher than both the district at 65.3% and the state of Nebraska at 67.9%. Eighth and tenth graders in Colfax County have a rate that is higher than both the district and the state, while Nance County 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders have a higher lifetime alcohol use rate than the district and the state. Overall, the district of East Central has a higher 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade lifetime alcohol usage rate than is found in the state of Nebraska (Schmeckle Research Inc 2011).

### Lifetime Alcohol Use

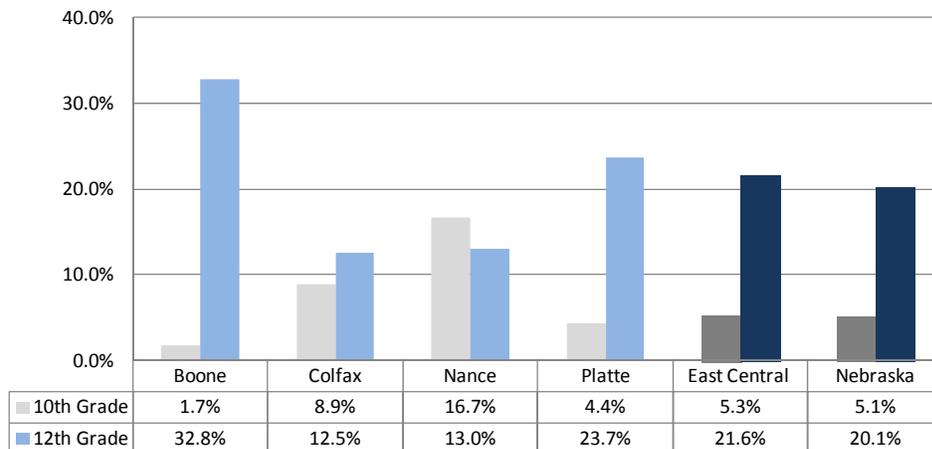


Source: Nebraska Partners in Prevention 2010 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey

Another data set which is listed below illustrates what 30-day binge rates look like in Platte County. Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a row. Colfax (5.4%) and Nance (6.3%) have a higher 8<sup>th</sup> grade 30-day binge drinking rate than the state (3.8%). Boone (15.0%) and Nance (25.6%) 10<sup>th</sup> graders have a higher 30-day binge rate than the district (11.6%) and the state (13.4%). Twelfth graders in Boone (32.8%), Nance (30.4%), and Platte (30.7%) have a higher rate than the district (27.6%) and the state (25.6%) (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

One additional data set indicates that 12th graders in Boone (32.8%) and Platte (23.7%) were more likely to drive impaired than what was found in the district (21.6%) and the state (20.1%). Tenth graders in Colfax (8.9%) and Nance (16.7%) were found to drive impaired at higher rates when compared to the district (5.3%) and the state (5.1%). Nance County 10<sup>th</sup> graders had a threefold increase in impaired driving when compared to the state (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

### Impaired Driving



Source: Nebraska Partners in Prevention 2010 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey

The data set below indicates that overall there has been a reduction in the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the four county district who have driven under the influence of alcohol from 2003 to 2012. However, the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> graders who had driven under the influence in 2012 was slightly higher in the district (4.5%) as compared to the state (4.0%) (Schmeckle Research 2011).

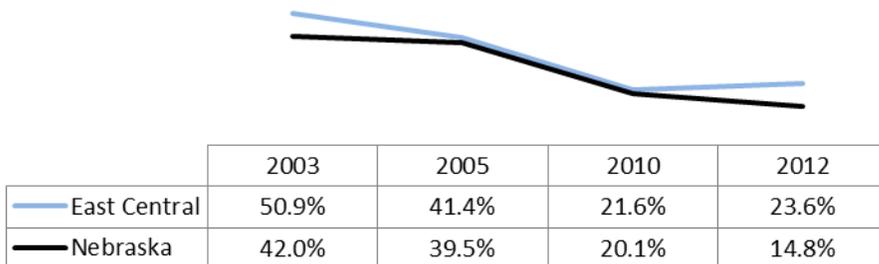
**Drove a Vehicle Under the Influence of Alcohol in the Past 12 Months among 10th Graders (2003 to 2012)**



Source: 2010-2012 NPRPFSS

The data set below indicates that the rate of 12<sup>th</sup> graders who drive a vehicle under the influence of alcohol in the district (23.6%) is significantly higher than the state average (14.8%).

**Drove a Vehicle Under the Influence of Alcohol in the Past 12 Months among 12th Graders (2003 to 2012)**



Source: 2010-2012 NPRPFSS

**III. Conclusions from the CHIPs**

Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs) regarding youth substance abuse were developed for Boone and Platte Counties after the release of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) data above. The individual county CHIPs are carried out by local coalitions under the direction of the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program at East Central District Health Department (ECDHD). This department works toward decreasing youth substance

abuse rates and it does so in partnership with Healthy People 2020 objectives as listed on its website. The Healthy People 2020 goal for Substance Abuse is “to reduce substance abuse to protect the health, safety, and quality of life for all, especially children” (Healthy People, 2015).

During the Platte and Boone County CHIP processes, substance abuse was discussed at length and its relationship with other district and county wide problems. These problems included teenage pregnancy rates, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle crashes, aggression and fighting, and crime and suicide. It was felt that by addressing substance abuse, many of these other community problems would be addressed as well.

- a) Service Gap Analysis- The following was identified during the CHIP meeting as a gap for substance abuse enforcement:
  - i) Funding for effective programming to include compliance checks.
  
- b) Assets and resources identified for enforcement:
  - i) Back to Basics Coalition which has the following agencies or businesses represented:
    - Region 4 Behavioral Health Systems
    - Columbus Counseling Services, LLC.
    - Columbus Police Department
    - Columbus Public Schools
    - Platte County Sheriff
    - Columbus Community Hospital
    - City of Columbus
    - Columbus YMCA
    - Good Neighbor Community Health Center
    - Keep Columbus Beautiful
    - East Central District Health Department Minority Health Program
    - East Central District Health Department Tobacco Free Platte/Colfax County
    - Kevin Harm, Nurse Practitioner
    - Concerned citizens
    - Walgreens
    - Jackson Services
    - Platte County Diversion
    - Youth for Christ
    - Boone County Health Center which represents the CARES team in Boone County. This group is comprised of members from the school, faith, business, local government, parent, and medical sectors serving Boone County.
  
- c) Funding for the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program is currently received by two different grants. In the past, SPF-SIG (Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant) funding awarded East Central District Health Department (ECDHD)

with funds for the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program. This SPIF-SIG funding ended September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. In the place of SPIF-SIG, new funding was obtained from Maternal Child Health (MCH) in the amount of \$150,000 from the time period of October of 2012 through September of 2014 for activities in both Platte and Boone County. During this time frame, the Columbus Community Hospital donated \$25,000 to the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program to continue its work on preventing youth substance abuse. Currently, Region 4 Behavioral Health Systems has provided ECDHD with funds from July 2014 to June 2015 in the amount of \$35,000 for this program. Another new funding source designated solely for Platte County is that of Partnership For Success (PFS) in the amount \$30,935 for the time period of October 2014 through September 2015.

With adequate enforcement the community will address the following selected Healthy People 2020 Objectives related to this strategic area (Healthy People, 2015):

- i) Reduce the proportion of adolescents who report that they rode, during the previous 30 days, with a driver who had been drinking alcohol.
- ii) Reduce the proportion of adults who drank excessively in the previous 30 days.
- iii) Decrease the rate of alcohol-impaired driving (.08+ blood alcohol content [BAC]) fatalities.

Selected Evidenced Based Interventions that Support Enforcement. There are proven actions that can be taken to decrease alcohol available to youth and they are as follows:

- i) Decrease the rate of alcohol-impaired driving (.08+ blood alcohol content [BAC]) fatalities.

These programs provide education and training to servers of alcoholic beverages with the goal of altering their serving practices to prevent customer intoxication and alcohol-impaired driving. Practices may include offering customers food with drinks, delaying service to rapid drinkers, refusing service to intoxicated or underage consumers, and discouraging intoxicated customers from driving (County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2015).

- ii) Preventing Excessive Alcohol Consumption: Enhanced Enforcement of Laws Prohibiting Sales to Minors.

Enhanced enforcement programs initiate or increase the frequency of retailer compliance checks for laws against the sale of alcohol to minors in a community. Known as Compliance Checks, this is a strategy in which underage youth, making no attempt to conceal their age or lie about their age, attempt to purchase alcohol from a licensed retailer (The Community Guide, 2015). Compliance checks are conducted by and coordinated with local law enforcement and violators receive legal or administrative sanctions. Results of retailer compliance checks are published in the Columbus Telegram, the districts largest local newspaper.

- iii) Multi-component interventions to reduce alcohol-impaired driving can include any or all of a number of components, such as sobriety checkpoints, training in responsible beverage service, and limiting access to alcohol.

- iv) Reducing Alcohol-impaired Driving: Sobriety Checkpoints. At sobriety checkpoints, law enforcement officers use a system to stop drivers to assess their level of alcohol impairment.

#### Responsible Beverage Server Training (RBST)

RBST is an education program for owners and managers to make positive policy changes in establishments (County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2015). Examples of policy changes that support the overall goal of reducing youth substance abuse include training requiring identification checks for customers that look under age, eliminating alcohol promotions which may appeal to youth, holding regular meetings for staff and/or providing educational information to patrons.

The community coalition has prepared to work on this strategy, in the first quarter of 2012, a group of five individuals in the Platte County community was trained as RBST trainers (four law enforcement and the staff member identified in that grant as project manager). Each trainer license is valid for one year and is renewable if each trainer provides one class. The coalitions have the needed trainers, and a limited supply of trainee books and supplies in stock to meet the needs for a small number of start-up classes to be held in the future. In 2012, two RBST classes were conducted and 29 individuals were trained. In 2013, the popularity of the class grew as eight classes were provided and 64 individuals were trained on RBST. The number of RBST trainers also increased by three, two of which were from the Columbus Police Department and one from the Platte County Sheriff's Department. In 2014, six classes were provided and 60 individuals were trained.

#### Sobriety Checkpoints

Reducing the number of impaired drivers should correlate positively with accidents and thereby increase the safety of these minors. One effective way of reducing alcohol impaired driving is the use of law enforcement officers to stop drivers and gauge their level of alcohol impairment at checkpoints. Law enforcement officers in Platte County and the Columbus Police Department have held sobriety checks in the past in connection with the health department.

In 2013, sobriety checkpoints yielded 314 contacts, 68 warnings, 2 arrests and 14 citations (2 of these contacts, or 14%, were alcohol violations such as open container).

#### **IV. Summary**

Youth alcohol substance abuse is a public health issue ECDHD has been working on for years. ECDHD continues to work on trying to change the statistics shown in this report for a healthier community, healthier youth. Data from the 2012-2014 alcohol compliance checks indicate that with consistent checks, retailers tend to be in greater compliance.

ECDHD leads a monthly youth substance abuse prevention coalition known as Back to BASICS (Bringing Awareness to Substance Abuse Issues in our Communities). ECDHD also educates adults on the importance of being positive role models for the youth in our community. Being a

positive role model for youth includes educating our youth on the dangers associated with underage use as well as showing responsible usage among those who choose to use alcohol. ECDHD believes that it is important to engage youth at a young age about the dangers and risks associated with underage alcohol use and for parents to stand strong and united in their zero tolerance of underage alcohol consumption. Through education we hope to empower parents to realize how strong their voice and influence is with their own children, as well as the importance of positive influences and role models in the other adults who spend time working with our youth. If you are interesting in learning more about Back to BASICS and/or becoming a member of the coalition, contact East Central District Health Department at 402-563-9656 and ask to speak with Caitlin Pleas.

## References

- County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. (2015). *Responsible beverage server training*. Retrieved from <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/responsible-beverage-server-training-rbsrbst>
- Healthy People 2020. (2015). *Substance abuse*. Retrived from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/substance-abuse>
- The Community Guide. (2015). *Preventing excessive alcohol consumption: Evidence based interventions for your community*. Retrieved from <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/What-Works-Alcohol-factsheet.pdf>
- Schmeckle Research Inc. (2011). *Comprehensive community health needs assessment: Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte counties, Nebraska*.