



East Central District Health Department

2016 Calendar Year Tobacco Report

Report date: March 2017

INTRODUCTION

East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) has had a tobacco prevention program since 2001. In addition, for more than ten years tobacco enforcement checks have been conducted to determine the level of compliance in Platte and Colfax counties. This is the fourth annual report addressing the response of enforcement of public health laws to address tobacco use, which is a risk factor for both cancer and heart disease.

We know that tobacco causes lung diseases, heart disease, and cancer and is involved with premature birth, stillbirth, low birth weight, and infant death. Secondhand smoke is also known to cause lung cancer and heart disease in adults. In infants and children, secondhand smoke is correlated with ear infections, severe asthma attacks, and respiratory infections (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2014b).

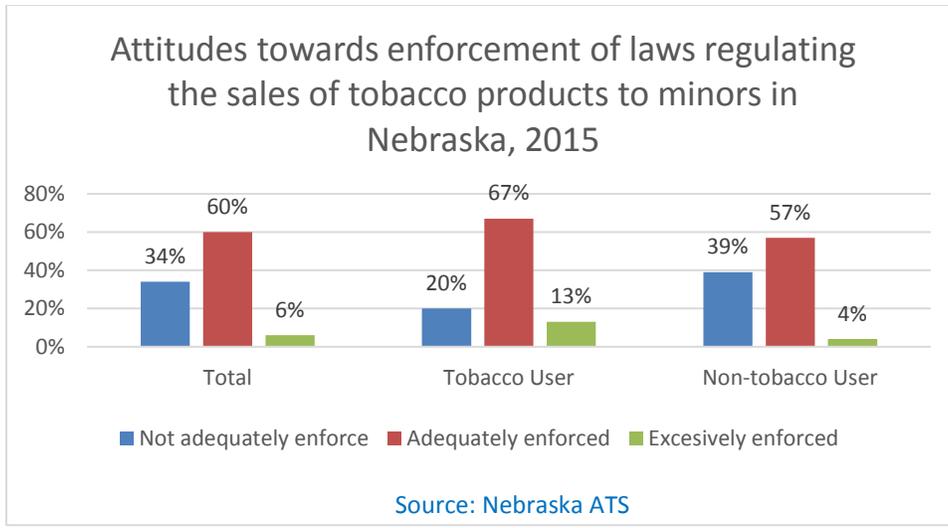
The Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA) of 2011 and 2014, listed tobacco use as one of several 'risky behaviors' noted by our community. Data found in the 2011 CHNA indicated that the district has, in some counties, higher than the state average use of tobacco among its population (BRFSS, 2015). Youth substance abuse, which includes alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, is one of the five CHNA strategic areas for the ECDHD for 2015 to 2018. This report deals with one component of the work being done in addressing the issue - the enforcement of tobacco compliance checks. Work in this area is done through community coalitions. This report touches upon four areas in regard to tobacco:

1. Youth Tobacco Use Data
2. Results of Compliance Checks
3. Community Health Improvement Plans
4. Summary

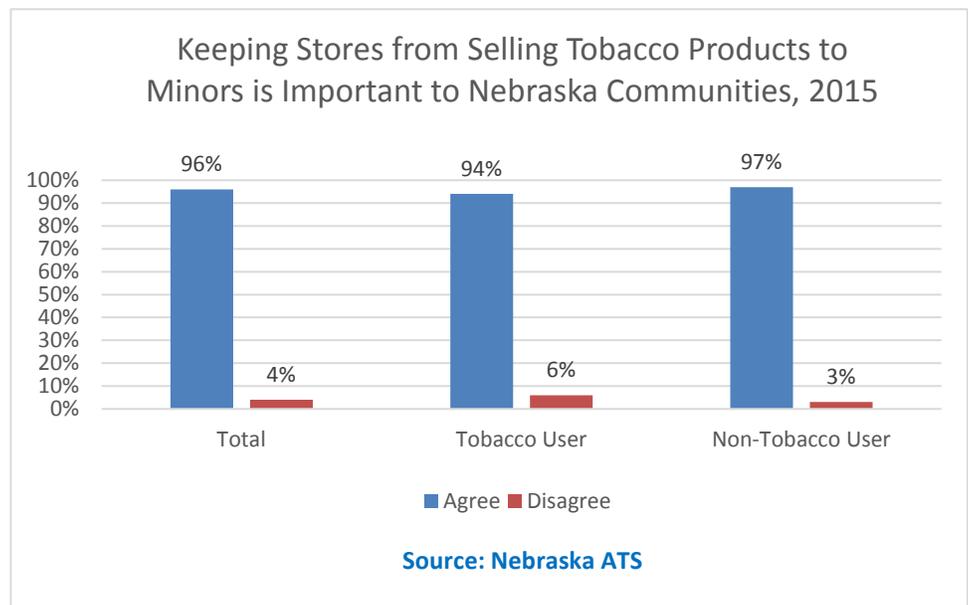
I. YOUTH TOBACCO DATA

Attitudes towards Enforcement of Laws Regulating the Sales of Tobacco Products:

According to the 2016 Data and Trends Report, 60% of Nebraskans agreed that laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors have been adequately enforced. The report stated that non-tobacco users (39%) were more likely than tobacco users (20%) to think that laws have not been adequately enforced.



Almost all Nebraskans (96%) agreed that keeping stores from selling tobacco products to minors is important for communities.

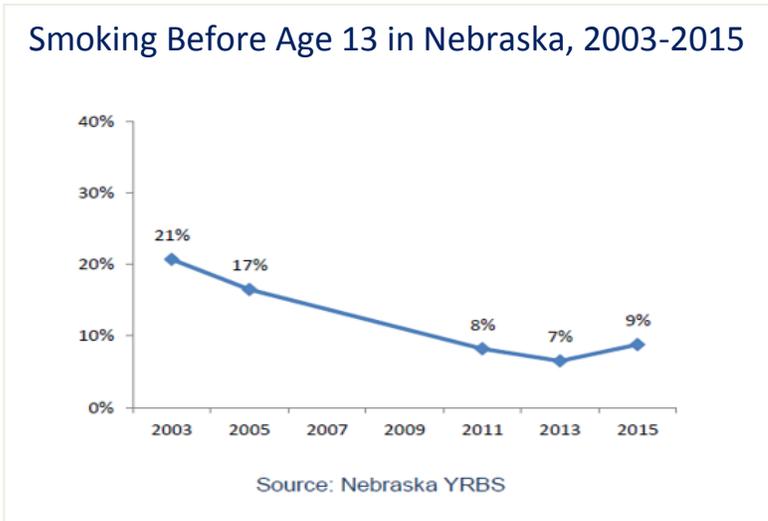


Tobacco Use and Tobacco Prevention

Complaints and concerns through written surveys in the community about tobacco are documented in the 2011 and 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). In particular, data to support the need for this as a strategic area is included in the 2011 CHNA on pages 98-108 (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011). Tobacco use can lead to immediate and long-term damage for both youth and young adults. One of the most serious health effects is nicotine addiction, which can lead to prolonged tobacco use and severe health consequences.

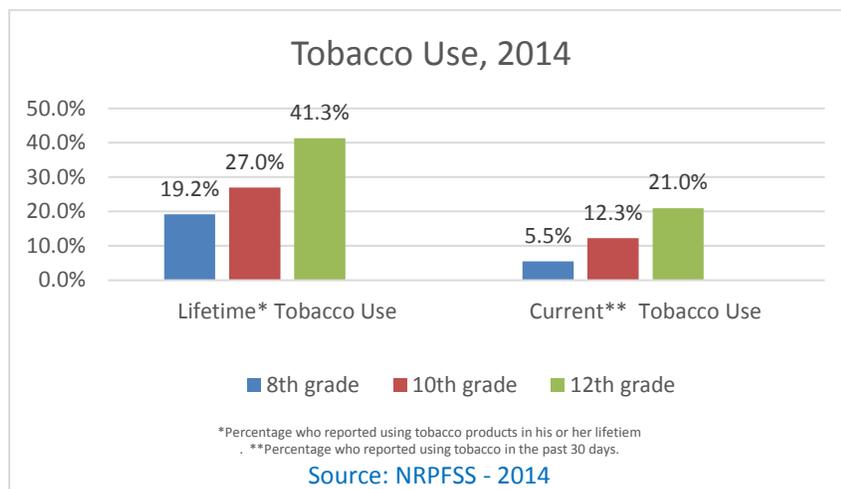
According to the US Surgeon General's Report, the earlier an individual starts using tobacco, the more likely they are to be a heavy user and more nicotine addicted. We know that nearly 9 out of 10 adult smokers started before the age of 18 and 99% started by the age of 26. (U.S. DHHS, 2014)

In Nebraska, nine percent (9%) of students reported smoking a whole cigarette before the age of 13. Since 2003, we have seen a decline when nearly one in five students (21%) reported smoking a whole cigarette before they were 13.



Lifetime Tobacco Use

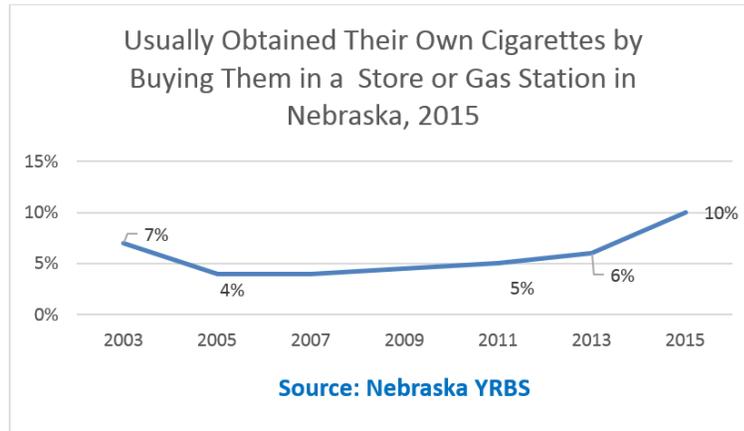
The graph below shows the lifetime tobacco use and current tobacco use for those students who took the Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey in 2014 for our health district.



Those who reported using a tobacco product during the last 30 days and having tried cigarettes and e-cigarettes during their lifetime increased by grade. This graph shows that during the sophomore (10th) year there is a significant increase in tobacco use in Nebraska. Almost half of seniors surveyed reported having tried e-cigarettes.

Obtaining Cigarettes

In Nebraska, the sale of any tobacco product to a minor under the age of 18 is illegal. The percentage of high school students in the state who currently smoked cigarettes under the age of 18 and purchased cigarettes directly from a store has stayed between four to seven percent from 2003-2013 and significantly increased to 10% in 2015. This highlights the need to continue to conduct compliance checks.



Youth Perception of Parental Disapproval

According to the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment, youth in the district report that their parents would disapprove of them using cigarettes at a rate comparable to the rest of the state (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

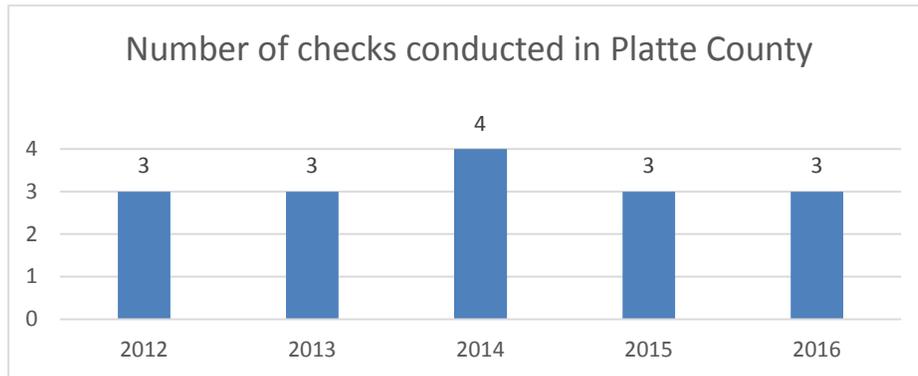
Percent of Youth Who Report Their Parents Would Say it is Very Wrong for Them to Use Cigarettes			
	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Boone	86.7%	88.1%	68.9%
Colfax	82.7%	80.0%	68.0%
Nance	93.8%	75.0%	59.1%
Platte	87.8%	80.2%	65.2%
East Central	86.0%	81.2%	66.1%
Nebraska	87.7%	80.2%	66.2%

II. RESULTS OF COMPLIANCE CHECKS FOR ENFORCEMENT

Compliance check data from Platte and Colfax counties is listed first by county, followed by aggregate data.

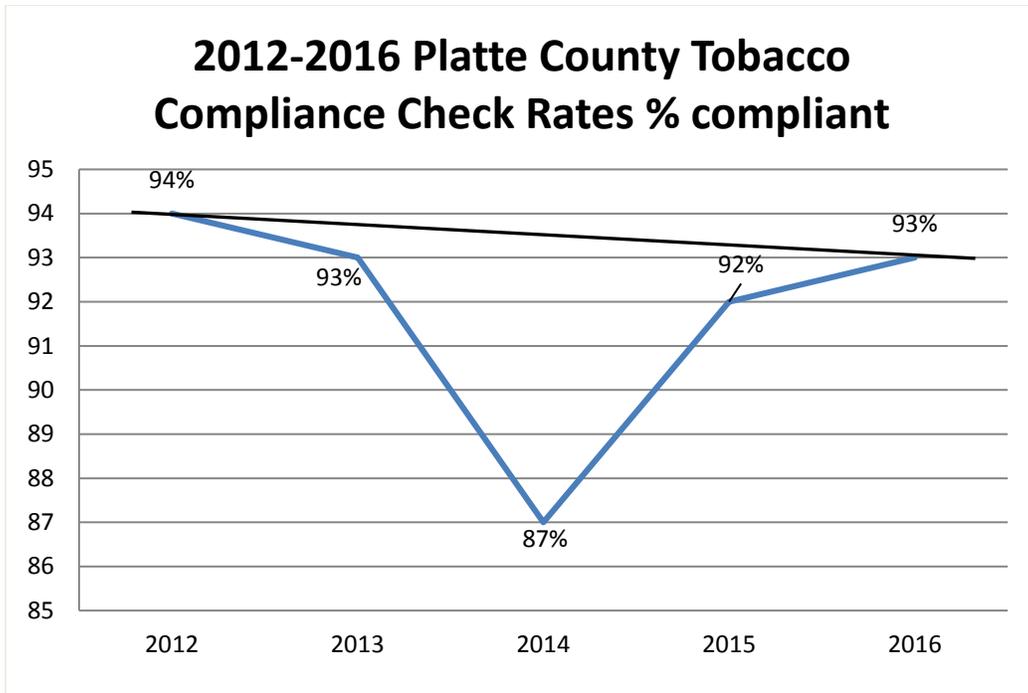
Compliance Check Data from Platte County

The chart below indicates the retailer compliance rate on a yearly basis for the time frame for the five year period of 2012-2016. The frequency of tobacco compliance checks in Platte County varied. In 2012, 2013, 2015 and 2016, checks were conducted in only three quarters. In 2014 checks were conducted in all four quarters.



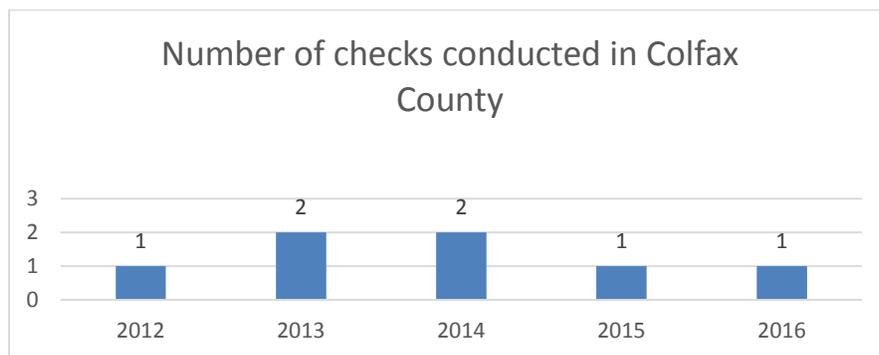
Looking at the annual percentage of retailer compliance during the 2012-2016 enforcement checks, it can be seen that over the last five years, compliance gradually decreased among retailers from 94% in 2012 to 93% in 2013 followed by a lower compliance in 2014 of 87%. However, in 2015 compliance increased to 92% and in 2016 to 93%. In 2016, 44 businesses were checked with three businesses being non-compliant with the law and selling tobacco to a minor.

The enforcement of existing laws to prohibit the sale of tobacco to youth is an evidence-based strategy to reduce the sale of tobacco to youth (CDC, 2014a).



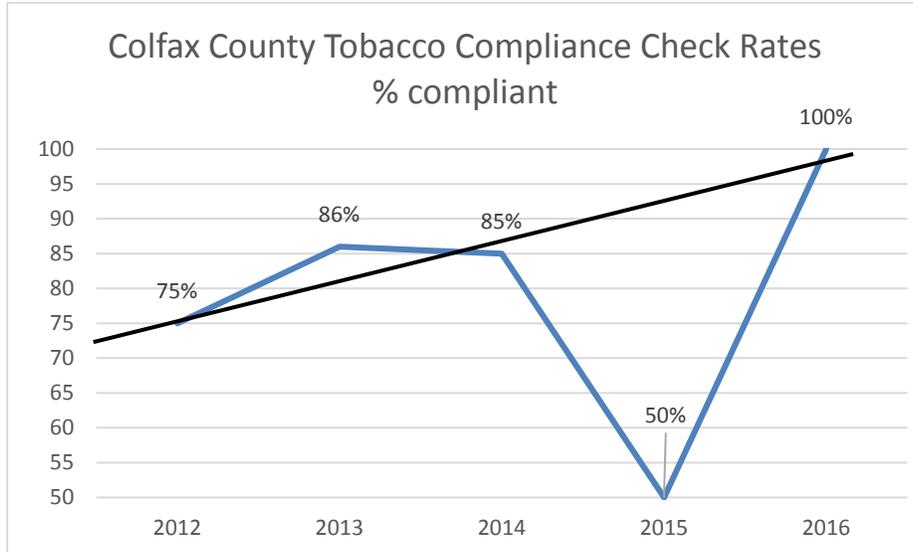
Compliance Check Data from Colfax County

Tobacco retailer compliance checks in Colfax County for the period of 2012–2016 occurred in one quarter in 2012, 2015, and 2016; checks occurred in two quarters in 2013 and 2014. We were unable to conduct compliance checks in every quarter during any of the reporting period. The lowest percentage of compliance during this five year time frame was 50% in 2015; the highest compliance rates of 100% occurred in April–June 2012, April–June 2014 and April–June 2016.

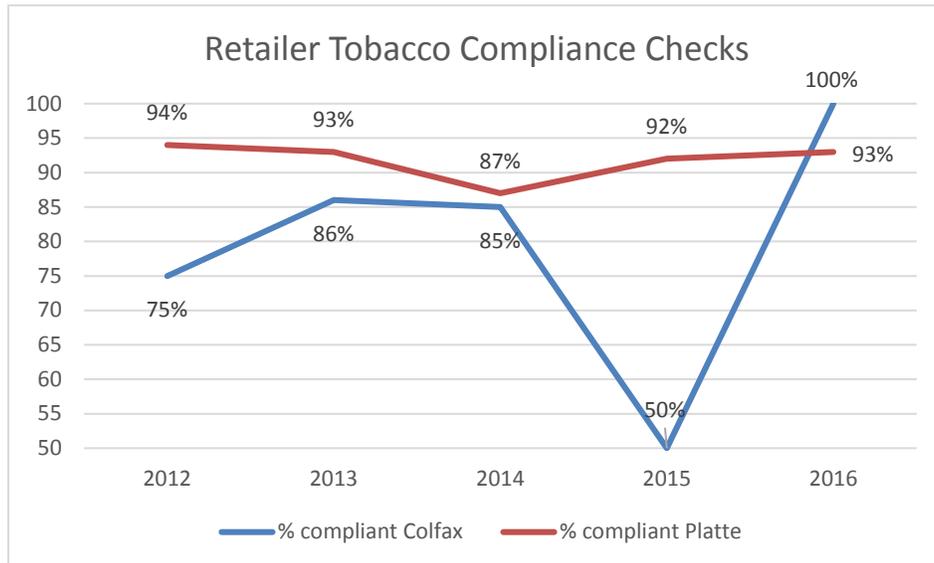


Looking at the overall annual compliance rate for the years 2012-2016 for Colfax County, in 2012 the compliance check average was 75%. In 2013, two quarterly checks were conducted which resulted in a slight improvement in compliance from 2012 with an average of 86%. The average compliance rate in 2014 was 85% which was a result from the two quarterly checks

that were conducted. In 2015, the year with one of the lowest number of compliance checks, resulted in the lowest level of compliance of 50% on average. In 2016, only one check was conducted which resulted in a 100% compliance rate. The black line in the chart indicates a trend line.

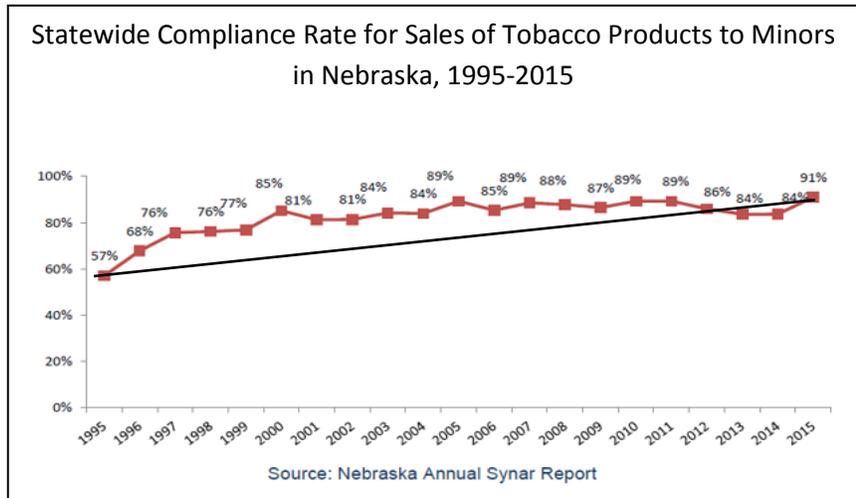


Below is a chart that compares the results of Platte and Colfax counties from 2012 to 2016.



Compliance Check Data
from Nebraska State
Patrol

The Nebraska State Patrol also conducts random, unannounced compliance checks on tobacco retailers. In 2015, the state wide tobacco sale compliance rate increased and recorded the highest rate (91%) to date. This met the goal of a statewide violation rate under 10%.



If we compare the statewide violation rate goal of being under 10% to that of Colfax County, we find that for each year from 2012 through 2015, the Colfax County violation rate did not meet the statewide goal.

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 in 2012 and substance abuse in general was chosen as topic for 2015 in Platte County. The individual county CHIPs are carried out by local coalitions under the direction of the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program. The ECDHD has a Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program that specifically addresses tobacco prevention and reducing the exposure of secondhand smoke.

During the Platte and Boone County CHIP process, substance abuse and its relationship with other district and countywide issues was discussed at length. These issues include teenage pregnancy rates, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle crashes, aggression and fighting, and crime and suicide. While tobacco itself is typically not considered a drug which may lower inhibitions and can affect and influence youth's decision making skills, it is considered a 'gateway' substance; meaning that using tobacco opens the door for other substances to be used (National Institutes of Health, 2011). It was felt that by addressing alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, many of these other community issues would be addressed as well.

The Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program at East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) works toward decreasing unfavorable tobacco use data in youth, 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 2020, 2015a) while a goal for Tobacco Prevention is “*to reduce tobacco use by adolescents*” (Healthy People 2020, 2015b).

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) Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition has the following agencies or businesses represented:

- Region 4 Behavioral Health System
- Peace Lutheran Church
- Columbus Police Department
- Columbus Public Schools
- Columbus Community Hospital
- Platte County Sheriff
- City of Columbus
- Good Neighbor Community Health Center
- Keep Columbus Beautiful
- East Central District Health Department Cancer Prevention Program
- East Central District Health Department Tobacco Free Platte/Colfax County
- East Central District Health Department Women Infant and Children (WIC) Program
- Kevin Harm, Nurse Practitioner
- Center for Survivors
- Time 4 Change
- Concerned citizens
- Walgreens
- Jackson Services
- Platte County Diversion
- Youth for Christ
- Boone County Health Center

ii) Colfax County Tobacco Prevention Coalition has the following agencies or individuals represented:

- Cargill Meat Solutions
- City of Schuyler
- CHI Health
- Schuyler Middle School
- Schuyler Police Department
- ECDHD Cancer Prevention Program

c) Funding for the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax Counties Program is received from Tobacco Free Nebraska. A total of \$94,360 for both counties has been awarded for

tobacco prevention for the period of July 2015-June 2017. However, none of this funding is allotted for tobacco compliance checks.

- d) With adequate enforcement, the community will address the selected *Healthy People 2020* objective related to this strategic area (Healthy People 2020, 2015b):
 - i) Reduce the illegal sales rate to minors through enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.
- e) Selected Evidenced Based Interventions that Support Enforcement. There are proven actions that can be taken to decrease tobacco available to youth, and is as follows:
 - i) Enhanced enforcement programs initiate or increase the frequency of retailer compliance for laws against the sale of tobacco to minors in a community. Known as “Compliance Checks”, this is a strategy in which youth under the age of 18, making no attempt to conceal their age or lie about their age, attempt to purchase tobacco from a licensed retailer (CDC, 2014a). 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. In collaboration with Back to BASICS (Bringing Awareness to Substance Abuse Issues in our Communities), the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program will conduct, at a minimum, biannual compliance checks. Compliance checks will be funded by Back to BASICS and overseen by Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax Counties.

IV. SUMMARY

Compliance checks are an important evidence-based strategy in preventing illegal tobacco use in our communities (CDC, 2014a). In Platte County, it appears that compliance has increased slightly. In Colfax County, the data indicates that compliance is fluctuating with 75% in 2012, 86% in 2013, 85% in 2014, 50% in 2015 and 100% in 2016. When working with such a small number of businesses, the data can be moved significantly by only one retailer. Collectively, the results of Platte and Colfax data indicate retailer compliance during 2012-2016 hovers at about 89%, which compares almost equally to the 2011-2013 data of 90% compliance. However, the 2015 rates in Colfax County were the lowest that have been seen, at 50% compliance, while the 2016 rates were the highest the health district has seen at 100%.

ECDHD is committed to collaborating with law enforcement in the future in regard to tobacco retailer compliance checks. These checks have been, and will continue to be, part of the health districts efforts to decrease youth substance abuse rates. ECDHD continues to work on trying to change the statistics shown in this report for a healthier community and healthier youth.

ECDHD leads a Tobacco Free Colfax coalition in Colfax County and a Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition in Platte County. The coalitions in both counties are formed of agencies and/or interested citizens that meet on a monthly basis to work toward decreasing the rates of tobacco usage in adults and youth. In Platte County, the Tobacco Free coalition that existed as its own coalition for years, merged in 2016 with the agency’s larger Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition known as Back to BASICS. During this monthly meeting, the coordinator for the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Tobacco Free program reports out on tobacco education efforts, progress on work plan goals, and results of recent compliance checks.

Equally important as reporting out on activities is that of gathering input from coalition members on the strategic planning and strategy implementation of the program.

Being a positive role model for youth includes educating our youth on the dangers associated with underage tobacco use. ECDHD believes that it is important to educate youth at a young age about the dangers and risks associated with tobacco use. Through this education we hope to empower youth to make healthy choices and for parents to positively influence their children and be a role model for other adults who spend time working with youth. If you are interested in learning more about the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax coalitions, call East Central District Health Department at 402-563-9656 and ask to speak with Jamie Rodriguez, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014a). *Best practices for comprehensive tobacco control programs*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.

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Schmeeckle Research Inc. (2011). *Comprehensive community health needs assessment: Boone, Colfax, Nance, and Platte counties, Nebraska*.

Data Sources Used to Compile this Report

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) – A comprehensive, annual health survey of adults ages 18 and over on risk factors such as alcohol use, tobacco use, obesity, physical activity, health screening, economic stresses, access to health care, mental health, physical health, cancer, diabetes, and many other areas impacting public health.

Data and Trends on Tobacco Use in Nebraska 2016 - This report provides a comprehensive data and trend summary for tobacco use in Nebraska. The report is the results of a collaboration with multiple state government agencies and the Social Science Behavioral Research Consortium (SBSRC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

East Central District Health Department Community Health Survey - A community survey conducted by the East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) in 2011 and 2014 around issues such as health concerns, health risk factors, perceived quality of life, access to medical care, and community well-being.

Nebraska Adult Tobacco Survey (ATS)-The Nebraska Adult Tobacco Survey is a population based on-going telephone survey. The Nebraska ATS is a state-developed random-digit-dialing (RDD) telephone survey. The survey provides tobacco-related information on Nebraska's adult population not captured through the BRFSS. In 2015, the ATS implemented cell phone sampling and a new weighting methodology. It is not recommended a direct comparison.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services- A wide array of data around births, causes of mortality, causes of hospitalization, access to social programs, child abuse and neglect, health professionals, and cancer, among other areas

Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey (NRPFSS)-A survey of youth in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 on risk factors such alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, and bullying. The survey was conducted most recently in 2012 and 2014.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)-The YRBS is used to monitor health behaviors that contribute to leading causes of death, disability and social problems among youth in the United States. The YRBS includes national, state, and local school-based surveys of representative samples of 9th through 12th grade students.

Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS)-The YTS is a statewide school-based survey that provides information on Nebraska youth behaviors and attitudes towards tobacco. The survey is part of the CDC's national youth tobacco surveillance system to help states improve the capacity to design, implement and evaluate their own tobacco prevention and control programs. The survey gathers tobacco-related information not captured through the YRBS.