

September, 2014

Dear Parents,

The Youth Action Board (YAB) is a volunteer high school youth group serving the Birmingham Bloomfield Community Coalition in its mission to raise awareness and mobilize the entire community to prevent the abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, with a focus on our youth. We are writing today because we strongly feel, and research shows, parents play the most important role in their children's lives for influencing the prevention of substance abuse.

As YAB members, we represent the public and private high schools of the Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills School Districts and meet on a regular basis to dialogue on substance use and abuse trends, as well as other important issues teens face today. Based on this information, we plan and organize safe, fun, alternative community-based and supported events and leadership opportunities for teens. Over the last couple of years when students from all 11 of the public and private high schools came together for our annual CHOICES, Youth-led Dialogue Day, teens have voiced an increasing need to have parents step up their presence and efforts in preventing substance use and abuse by youth, of all ages, in our community.

Our appeal to you is twofold. First, we really want and need you to be our parents, not our pals, by setting and consistently enforcing guidelines and rules with appropriate consequences, and by spending time hearing what we have to say as well as getting to know our friends and their families. Second, if you are able to, we are asking you to make a donation to the Coalition and its prevention of substance abuse efforts for our youth. We simply cannot do this without the continued support of you.... our Parents.

For our part, throughout the school year, we will be present at school and community events to promote our message and encourage other students to take the pledge *to be substance-free*. In addition, the Coalition will be providing even more information and opportunities geared toward parents, to make sure you have what you need to help your child remain substance-free.

So.... what are the prevention and safety of your teen and their friends' worth to you? Will you take the pledge with us, your teens in your community, and support the Coalition and YAB?

It's easy to donate, simply send a check to the Birmingham Bloomfield Community Coalition, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, organization, or donate on-line via PayPal at [www.bbcoalition.org](http://www.bbcoalition.org).

Sincerely,

*The Students of the YAB*



*Youth in Action!*



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[www.bbcoalition.org](http://www.bbcoalition.org)

#### **Youth Action Board (YAB)**

**A group of volunteer high school students from public and private schools in Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills School Districts including:**

***Academy of the Sacred Heart  
Bloomfield Hills High School***

***Brother Rice  
Cranbrook***

***Detroit Country Day***

***Eton***

***Groves***

***International Academy***

***Lincoln Street Alternative***

***Marian***

***Model***

***Roeper***

***Seaholm***

#### **STAFF**

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***YAB MISSION: To give teens a positive voice and presence in the community and to promote the substance-free choices we live by and believe MOST teens are making today!***

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## HERE'S WHAT TEENS IN OUR COMMUNITY WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT TEEN DRINKING AND DRUG USE:

*Drugs and alcohol use has turned, and is now becoming abuse. Teens, younger and younger are becoming users. Teens are putting themselves, academics, scholarships, athletics and their health in serious danger.*

*Too often I hear people joke about how drunk they were or how high they were at a party. Yet the adults never do anything about it. I hear more and more about what people are getting away with.*

*I am concerned about teen drug and alcohol use in my school/community because it will affect our society in the future. The youth of today are going to be the future leaders of the world.*

Parents need to understand that their children may be participating in drug and alcohol use. Never assume they are perfect. Even the best kids can make mistakes.

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## HERE'S WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO DO ABOUT IT:

**I'd like them to stop ignoring the problem and actually do something about it. Parents should not be telling their kids that it's alright to smoke pot or drink because that's what they did when they were in high school. This problem truly stems from the ideas and misconceptions that kids get from their parents.**

*I'd like them to wise up and become a proper role model for their kids, and their kids' friends. Realize that they set an example for all of us. They smoke or drink in front of their kids without telling them that they shouldn't do it. I'd say half the parents don't even know or care that their kids are doing these things because they think it's ok to do them.*

**I WANT PARENTS TO STOP HOSTING PARTIES AND START TALKING TO THEIR KIDS MORE ABOUT CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATH.**

*Listen and pay attention to your child's activities. Do not freak out when something happens. This creates resentment and makes your child shut down more. Over all, open up the communication lines!*

**I WOULD LIKE THE ADULTS TO TALK TO THEIR KIDS ABOUT DRUGS AND ALCOHOL. PARENTS NEED TO BE MORE AWARE OF THEIR KID'S ACTIONS AND WHO THEY HANG OUT WITH.**

**BE OUR PARENTS NOT OUR PALS.**

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