

# Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs: Successful Strategies for Prevention and Intervention

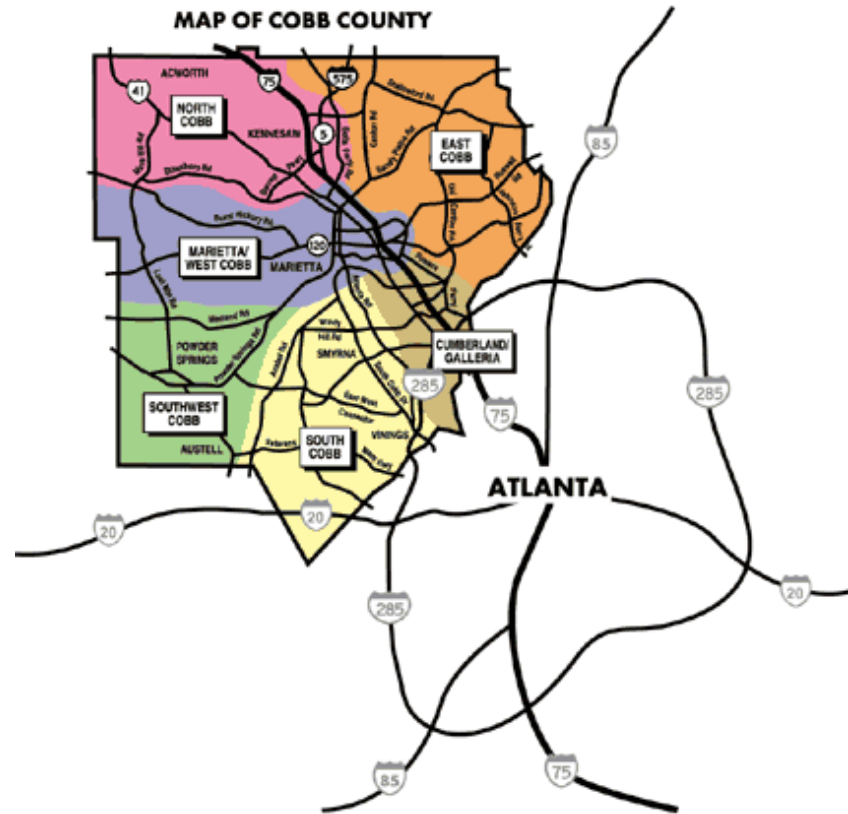
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[CobbSuccessForAll.com](http://CobbSuccessForAll.com)



## Our Service Area

- 26<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the nation
- Over 106,000 students in a diverse, constantly changing suburban environment
- SFAS targeted area: 38,000 students/35 schools (6 high schools, 8 middle schools and 21 elementary schools)
- 56 % Caucasian, 27% African-American, 9% Latino and 8% other
- 26% economically disadvantaged/participate in free and reduced lunch program





## Our Data

- Age of onset: alcohol 13.1, marijuana 13.9, cocaine 13.6, inhalants 11.6, ecstasy, 14.3 and prescription Drugs 12.9
- 10.9% marijuana use in the past 30 days.
- 20.8% alcohol use in the past 30 days
- 68% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders = “getting alcohol is easy”
- Peer disapproval for alcohol use decreases 30% between 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades
- Peer disapproval for marijuana use decreases 90% between 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades
- Unfortunately, as the use and availability increase between 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, preventive measures decrease by 25%
- Cobb County students reportedly binge drink on the weekends more than any other county in the state
- **“Weekend Warriors”**





## What Now?



- Community assessment
- Principals/administrators
- Elected officials
- Law enforcement
- Faith-based organizations
- Current organizations
- Homeowner associations
- Parents and students





## Common Themes within Community



- Drinking is a “rite of passage” into adulthood
- Students are going to drink and experiment with drugs, and there is nothing we can do
- The primary source of alcohol for students is in their own home or the home of friends (“cool parents”)
- Parents host “underage drinking parties”
- It’s a problem we don’t want to acknowledge
- Not enough time during the academic day
- Parents are the missing link
- Law enforcement just doesn’t have the resources





# Planned Prevention and Intervention Programs

- Learning Support Resource Teams
- “Too Good for Drugs”
- School-Based Mental Health Clinicians/Multidimensional Family Therapy
- Certified Addiction Counselor
- J.A.S.A.E. “Juvenile Automated Substance Abuse Evaluation”
- “Guiding Good Choices”





# Challenges

## **Certified Addiction Counselor**

- Standards of practice within schools
- Parents suspicious of school-based services
- Students not easily identifiable

## **Evidenced-Based Programming and Implementation**

- Where to fit in during the academic day
- How to get parents to attend trainings?

## **Community, School System and Individuals “Point of View”**

- Rite of passage
- If we embrace these programs, it’s admitting we have an issue
- Students not motivated to change, apathetic, behavior is normalized
- Not a priority within law enforcement
- Georgia law (similar in Virginia, Minnesota, and New Mexico)





# Overcoming Challenges

## **Certified Addiction Counselor**

- After hours
- Word of mouth
- Referrals from outside sources

## **Evidenced-based Programming and Implementation**

- After-school programming
- ISS groups
- Faith-based organizations (childcare and food)
- “Donuts and Dope”
- Utilizing existing audiences
- Impacting and changing school board policy/ “GRIP” program
- Training community members

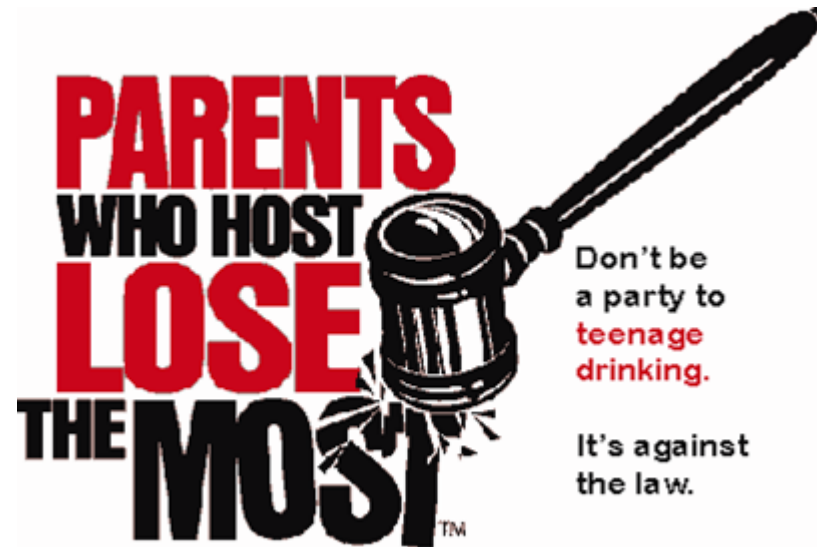
## **Community, School System and Individuals “Point of View”**

- Data
- Scope of impact
- Safe Neighborhoods/Safe Homes (HOAs)
- Recent events



## Recent Events

- January 2009 – High school student killed in drinking-related accident. Adult provided rum to student.  
<http://www.ajc.com/news/cobb/powder-springs-mom-gets-108832.html>
- December 2009 – Ten high school students cited for underage drinking at Christmas Party. Party was thrown at the home of local municipal court judge.  
<http://www.ajc.com/news/cobb/judge-facing-21-misdemeanor-350910.html>





# Moving Forward



- Training additional community members in evidence-based interventions
- Continuing to educate educators on indentifying and how to most appropriately respond
- Social norming campaigns
- Hiring a Deputy Sheriff/Outreach Officer
- Limiting alcohol availability/coordinate compliance checks
- Enforcing county ordinance regarding “social hosting” no longer a civil issue
- Increase youth leadership and advocacy/SFAS Steering Committee

