

November 2009



Dear Friends:

High rates of alcohol and other drug abuse in both the youth and adult populations of Talbot County continue to impact the health and safety of our community. Our young people still remain at serious risk—due in part to what community leaders have agreed are deeply entrenched social and cultural norms and adult behaviors concerning substance abuse. We are, however, starting to experience successes and need your support to continue this progress.

When high school student Nicki Swann of Cordova joined Talbot Partnership's efforts to reduce substance abuse in Talbot County, our community was facing what seemed like an insurmountable task. Nicki, now out of college, has remained a faithful volunteer with Talbot Partnership, and now works in Talbot County with the youth of our community. Efforts from individuals like Nicki, as well as other community coalition partners have enabled our rates of substance abuse to drop in 14 of the 16 major categories (Alcohol, Binge, Tobacco, and Marijuana) from 1996 to 2007, according to the Maryland Adolescent Survey data.

Our Vision

At Talbot Partnership's annual planning retreat last fall, concerned citizens shared their visions for Talbot County in 2011. As Nicki sat and listened to ideas being presented about making the community's substance abuse problem real, personal, and relevant in order to engage our citizenship, she wrote a poem about her personal vision for 2011. The following is an excerpt from that poem:

*"Feed the fire,
Make it bright,
Fill our mission with tools.
Healthy families along with low abuse rates are the goal
Engaged citizens by the way,
Feed our fire like coal."* —Nicki Swann

Our Programs

Talbot Partnership needs your support as "engaged citizens" to continue providing the valuable resources for families and teens to help support and educate them on issues related to adolescent substance abuse before they become users. These include our Guiding Good Choices parent education program, Safe Homes parent pledge and directory, and the Talbot Youth Coalition.

Your Help

Through your donation, you can help Talbot Partnership continue offering these important resources to our communities, building a positive community culture where youth and adults lead healthy, safe and productive lives.

Please use the enclosed response envelope for your donation or visit us on the web at www.talbotpartnership.org and click on "Donate." Through your support we can work together to continue this important prevention work.

Sincerely,

Gary Pearce
Executive Director
Talbot Partnership

Jim Reed
Board President
Talbot Partnership

