



**ASHLAND YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION INITIATIVE**

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Project Director

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Dear Ashland parent, faculty, and community member,

The Ashland Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition and the Ashland Public Schools are pleased to make available to you the results of the 2008 Metro West Adolescent Health Survey of 1200 Ashland middle and high school students.<sup>1</sup> The MWAHS is sponsored by the Metro West Community Health Care Foundation, which also funded the three-year effort of the Ashland Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Initiative. The Foundation has committed to funding the MWAHS survey every other year over a 10-year period to collect important trend data on key areas affecting the health and safety of our youth. This 2008 survey is the second of the five survey administrations planned. The results are important for a number of reasons:

- They guide schools and communities in best directing community resources to critical areas; including education, law enforcement, and social services.
- They reveal important trends in key areas of public health such as substance abuse, nutrition, dating violence, stress and depression.
- They provide parents, counselors and health care providers with insight into youth decision-making and at-risk behaviors. This helps to guide us in better responding to youth problems and needs as they navigate through their teenage years.

The results are presented in "Executive Summary" format, which includes a summary of key findings, as well as charts indicating how the results compare with the first survey administered in 2006. We have also provided a link to the PowerPoint presentation our Coalition delivered to Ashland parents on 10/29/09.

We hope that this information will be useful to you in many ways. We welcome any questions or comments on these results, and any ideas on how best to respond to the issues illustrated in the survey. You can send them directly to me at [rmoro@ashland.k12.ma.us](mailto:rmoro@ashland.k12.ma.us).

Sincerely,

Robert M. Moro, MA/LCSW  
Project Director-The Ashland Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Initiative

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<sup>1</sup> Ashland's participation is part of a 22-town regional survey of 32,000 middle and high school students in the Metro West region. To see those results in Executive Summary form, go to Mchcf.org, click on Special Initiatives, and then "What's New."