

2009

McKean County Communities That Care
Risk and Resource Assessment Results

Compiled by the McKean County Family Centers

2009 McKean County Communities That Care
Risk and Protective Factor Assessment Results
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Background

Communities That Care Risk and Protective Factor Assessment McKean County, Pennsylvania

What is Communities That Care?

Communities That Care (CTC) is a planning process that provides structure for communities as they make informed decisions about what youth prevention strategies to put into place.

To prevent problem behaviors in youth, communities need to identify factors that increase the risk of that problem ever developing. Once these risks are identified, communities can then plan for ways to reduce the risks.

Just as medical researchers have found risk factors for heart attacks such as diets high in fats, lack of exercise, and smoking, research has also defined a set of risk factors for youth drug abuse.

Some children exposed to multiple risk factors manage to avoid behavior problems later. Based on this research, protective factors have been identified that work together to buffer children from the effects of high-risk exposure and lead to the development of healthy behaviors.

Community	Adolescent Problem Behaviors				
	Substance Abuse	Delinquency	Teen Pregnancy	School Drop-Out	Violence
Risk Factors					
Availability of drugs	•				•
Availability of firearms			•		•
Community laws and norms favorable toward drug use, firearms and crime	•	•			•
Media portrayals of violence					•
Transitions and mobility	•	•		•	
Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization	•	•			•
Extreme economic deprivation	•	•	•	•	•
Family					
Family history of the problem behavior	•	•	•	•	•
Family management problems	•	•	•	•	•
Family conflict	•	•	•	•	•
Favorable parental attitudes and involvement in the problem behavior	•	•			•
School					
Academic failure beginning in late elementary school	•	•	•	•	•
Lack of commitment to school	•	•	•	•	•
Peer and Individual					
Early and persistent antisocial behavior	•	•	•	•	•
Rebelliousness	•	•		•	
Friends who engage in the problem behavior	•	•	•	•	•
Gang involvement	•	•			•
Favorable attitudes toward the problem behavior	•	•	•	•	
Early initiation of the problem behavior	•	•	•	•	•
Constitutional factors	•	•			•

How were the Communities That Care Risk and Protective Factor Assessments conducted in McKean County?

A risk assessment consisting of a review of survey, focus group, key informant interviews, and archival data was conducted in the winter of 2009 in McKean County utilizing the Communities That Care Risk and Resource Assessment process. This assessment

analyzed four categories of risk—community, family, school and individual/peer—to determine what risks have the most negative impact on McKean County students.

In total, 19 CTC risk factors were assessed as possible indicators leading to problem behaviors such as teen pregnancy, delinquency, school dropout, substance abuse and violence. One of the primary sources of information utilized for the risk assessment was the McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey administered in 2007 to 1,739 students in grades 6 through 12. The results of 6 youth substance use focus groups held in January 2009, and a variety of McKean County and Pennsylvania statistics were also utilized.

The following sections summarize the results of this assessment. Each risk factor is summarized separately and starts with a description of the risk that is taken from CTC literature.

What Risk Factors and Problem Behaviors were prioritized in McKean County?

After completing the assessment phase, 22 community representatives gathered on February 4, 2009 to further analyze, discuss and prioritize what places youth in McKean County most at risk. The group also determined that of the five problem behaviors, **Youth Substance Abuse** was most problematic.

After much discussion about whether or not *Extreme Economic Deprivation* should be prioritized, the group decided that it should not. Because poverty is difficult to impact with youth focused programs and environmental strategies, it was not prioritized. The following are the prioritized risks and will be incorporated into future community plans developed to help impact youth substance use.

- ***Community Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use***
- ***Family Management Problems***
- ***Family Conflict***

What drugs and environmental strategies were prioritized in McKean County's prevention plan to help combat youth substance abuse and youth risk factors?

On March 4, 2009 twenty-five (25) McKean County Collaborative Board members met to select two substances and first year environmental strategies to impact. A Pennsylvania CTC Technical Assistant facilitated the interactive meeting. After much discussion about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalant and prescription drug abuse, the group prioritized alcohol and prescription drug abuse. After discussing and completing an environmental strategies survey, the group decided to tackle these strategies in the coming year.

- Series of parent-focused community trainings on drug awareness, dangers and prevention tips.
- Create a Youth Council in at least one school district to help promote anti-drug campaigns and other self-chosen and designed activities.
- Host roundtable discussions or town hall meetings to discuss drug abuse.
- Student trainings on the dangers of medication abuse.
- A "Those Who Host Lose the Most" media campaign to communicate to parents the importance of keeping teens away from alcohol and other drugs.
- Prescription abuse awareness activities with adults (parents and grandparents) so they can spread the word.

Community Overview

McKean County is located in the Allegheny Mountains of Northwestern Pennsylvania, at the northernmost tip of the Appalachian Region in the Eastern United States. According to the US Census, its population of 43,633 people encompasses 982 square miles with a density of 47 persons per square mile.

McKean County residents are sparsely scattered across three small municipalities and two larger population centers. The largest population center being Bradford, classified as a City, and the second largest being Kane, which is classified as Borough. Bradford and Kane house nearly two-thirds of the county's inhabitants. Smaller municipalities include the Boroughs of Port Allegany and Smethport, and the Townships of Otto and Eldred (distinct townships merged into one school district called Otto-Eldred).

There are five school districts in McKean County—Bradford, Kane, Otto-Eldred, Port Allegany and Smethport. The school districts are quite geographically and socially isolated from one another, each having its own press or media channels, as well as separate entertainment and worship sites. Not only are residents isolated from each other, but also they feel far removed from larger metropolitan areas. The closest major cities of Erie, Pennsylvania and Buffalo, New York are 150 miles away.

In addition to the five public school districts, there is also a Roman Catholic parochial system, a private elementary school and several private Christian schools that serve a relatively homogeneous resident population. Racial groups other than whites make up only 4.5% of the population. The median age is 38.7 years. Half the residents are male and half are female (50.1% and 49.9% respectively). The ethnicity is 96% white. Most live in family households (67.1%) with an average household size of 2.93.

Despite the presence of a branch campus of the University of Pittsburgh located in the City of Bradford, the educational level of residents remains lower than the state rate. Only 14% of McKean County residents have Bachelor degree or higher (PA 22.4%) and 82.2% are high school graduates or higher.

Poverty is a major barrier for residents of the region. According to the 2007 U.S. Census estimates 13.7% of McKean residents (PA 11.6%) and 19.9% of children (PA 16.6) are living in poverty. Poverty among families with children was 16.9% (12.1% PA). Families with young children under age five are falling even further behind, with a poverty rate of 22.5% versus 15.3% in PA. In the City of Bradford, where many of the county's problems originate and spread, 20.7% of the residents are below the poverty level.

Cattaraugus County of New York State and Cameron, Elk, Potter and Warren Counties of Pennsylvania border McKean County. Because roughly one-third of its land area is in the Allegheny National Forest, hunting and other outdoor recreational activities are the cultural focus, and the main tourist attraction to the county. The geographic setting of McKean County is rural and characterized as economically underdeveloped.

Communities That Care Risk Assessment

Community Risks

Perceived Availability of Drugs

The more available drugs are in a community the higher the risk that drug abuse will happen in that community. Perceived availability of drugs is also associated with risk. For example, in schools where children just think that drugs are more available, a higher rate of drug use occurs. Elevation of this risk factor may indicate the need to make alcohol, tobacco and other drugs more difficult for students to acquire. Minimum-age requirements, taxation and responsible beverage service have all been shown to affect the perception of availability of alcohol.

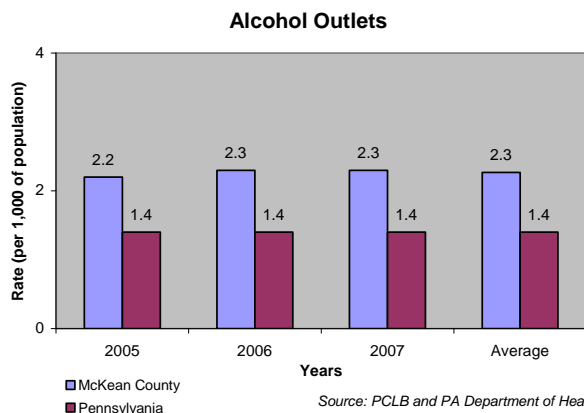
Indicators: Perceived Availability of Drugs Scale, Youth Survey
 Number of Liquor Sales Outlets
 Per Capita Sales of Alcoholic Beverages

According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, many McKean County students perceive that alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are readily available to them. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 44 on the perceived availability of alcohol scale, six points lower than the normative score of 50 and two points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 42. For the analysis of this scale students responded to these questions:

Perceived Availability of Drugs Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	48%	44%
Pennsylvania	-	45%	42%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

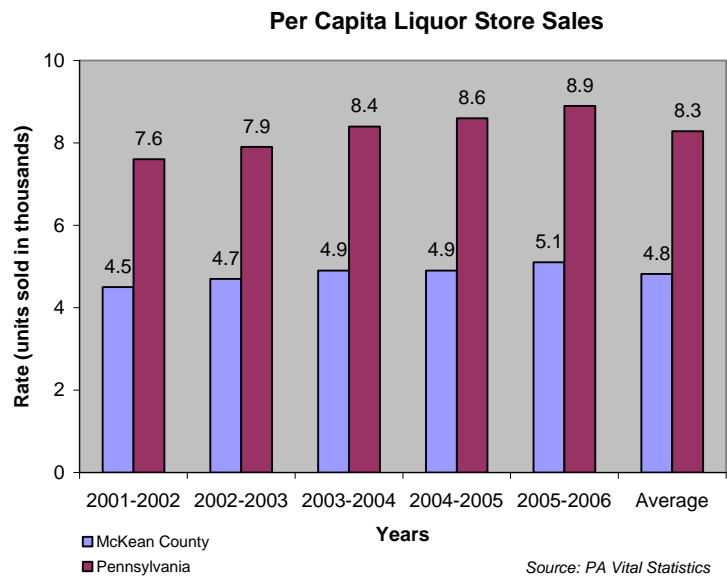
- If you wanted to get some beer, wine or hard liquor, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get some cigarettes, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get some marijuana, how easy would it be for you to get some?
- If you wanted to get a drug like cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines, how easy would it be for you to get some?



Per capita, there are twice as many alcohol vendors in McKean County than the Pennsylvania average. In 2007 McKean County's rate was 2.3 compared to the Pennsylvania average of 1.4.

Liquor Store Sales only include sales at state controlled liquor stores. This statistic does not include any beer sales.

2005-06 liquor sales in McKean County are lower than state averages (5.1 compared to a state average of 8.9.)



Perceived Availability of Firearms

Firearm availability and firearm homicide have increased since the late 1950's. If a gun is present in the home, it is much more likely to be used against a relative or friend than an intruder or stranger. And when a firearm is used in a crime or assault instead of another weapon or no weapon, the outcome is more likely to be fatal. If a student believes that it would be difficult to get a handgun, they are less likely to become involved with the unauthorized and unsupervised use of firearms.

*Indicators: Perceived Availability of Handguns Scale—Youth Survey
Firearm Sales*

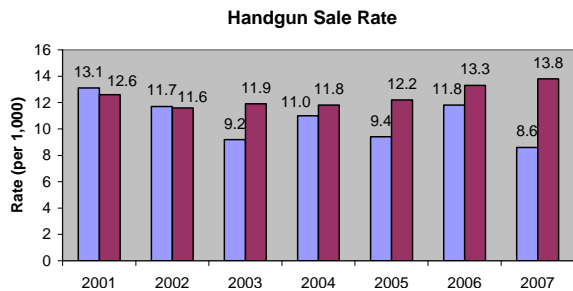
Overall, McKean County students scored a percentile score of 57 on the *Perceived Availability of Handguns* scale, seven point higher than the normative average of 50 and nine points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 48. For the analysis of this scale students responded to this question:

Perceived Availability of Handguns Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	56%	57%
Pennsylvania	-	48%	48%

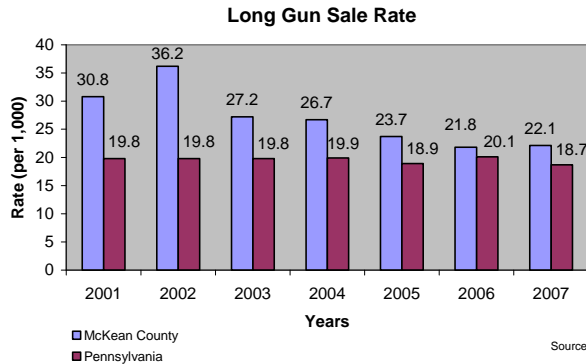
Source: *Pennsylvania Youth Surveys*

- If you wanted to get a handgun, how easy would it be for you to get one?

According to figures for 2001 through 2007, the amount of firearm sales in McKean County



has been on the decline. Data for long gun sales may be linked to fewer residents hunting than in previous years.



Hunting remains a popular sport in McKean County, and many homes contain a long gun firearm. School districts have vacation days built into their school calendar for buck and doe seasons in order to avoid large student absenteeism. Community safety is emphasized through hunter safety courses offered by the Pennsylvania State Game Commission or sportsman's groups. These courses are offered during school hours in most school districts in the county.

Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use and Handguns

Community norms—the attitudes and policies a community hold about drug use, violence and crime—are communicated through laws and written policies, through informal social practices, and through the expectations parents and other members of the community have of young people. As with drug use, students' perceptions of the rules and regulations associated with the ownership and use of firearms have an impact on behavior. That is, when students perceive laws to be strict and consistently enforced, they may be less likely to carry guns and to engage in gun violence.

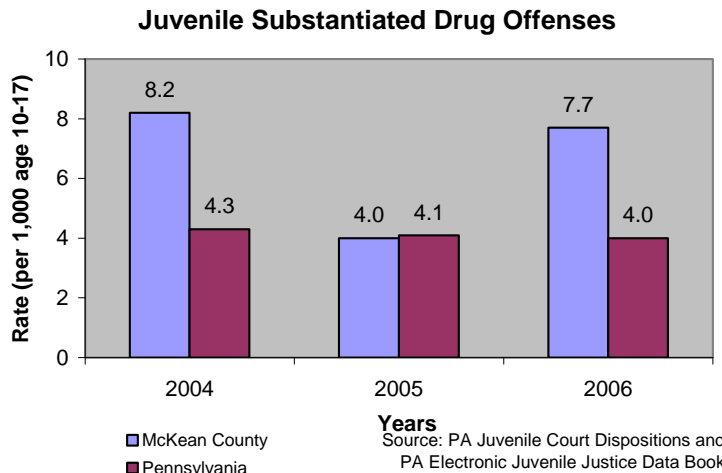
*Indicators: Community Laws and Norms Scale, Youth Survey
Juvenile Substantiated Drug Offenses
Driving Under the Influence Arrests
Laws and Norms Favorable to Handguns Scale, Youth Survey*

According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, it appears that McKean County students feel their community has laws and norms that condone alcohol and drug use. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 51 on the *laws and norms favorable to drug use* scale, one point higher than the normative average of 50 and four points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 47. For the analysis of this scale students responded to these questions.

Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use Scale Students grade 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	48%	51%
Pennsylvania	-	49%	47%

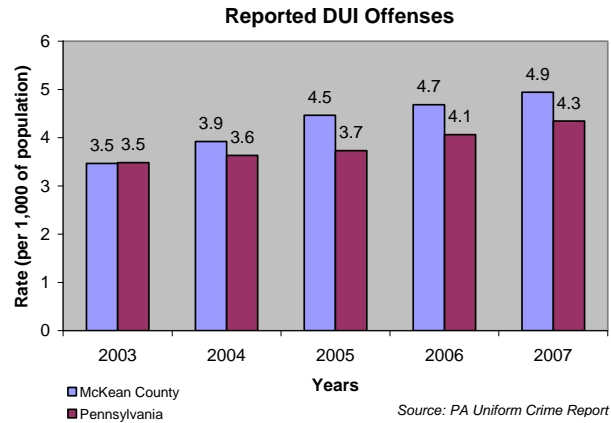
Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

- How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age to use marijuana?
- How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age to drink alcohol.
- How wrong would most adults (over 21) in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age to smoke cigarettes.
- If a kid drank some beer, wine or hard liquor in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?
- If a kid smoked marijuana in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?



Juvenile Crime for 10-17 year old drug offenses is a concern, with 2004 and 2006 rates twice as high as statewide averages.

Adults often model bad behaviors to youth. Driving under the influence is one of the more shameful adult examples. The DUI rate in McKean County has been higher than the state average since 2004 and is still climbing. In 2007 McKean County's rate was 5.2 compared to the state rate of 4.2.



Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 47 on the *Laws and Norms Favorable to Handguns* scale; three points lower than the normative average of 50 and two point higher than the Pennsylvania average of 45. This scale is measure by the question:

- If a kid carried a handgun in your neighborhood, would he or she be caught by the police?

Laws and Norms Favorable to Handguns Scale Students grade 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	49%	47%
Pennsylvania	-	--	45%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Transitions and Mobility

Stability and predictability are important anchors for children, particularly in today's fast-paced world. Even normal school transitions, such as the move from elementary to middle school, or from middle school to high school, are times of stress for young people. During these transition times, significant increases in problem behaviors can occur. This is one of the reasons why the middle years are such a high-risk time for young people. In communities where families move in and out often, or even from place to place within the community, there are higher rates of crime, drug use, and school dropout.

Indicators: *Transitions and Mobility Scale, Youth Survey*
New Home Construction

According to the Youth Survey, McKean County youth are at higher risk for transitions and mobility. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 55 on the *Transitions and Mobility* scale, five points higher than the normative average of 50 and four points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 51. For this scale, the youth survey analyzed student response to these questions:

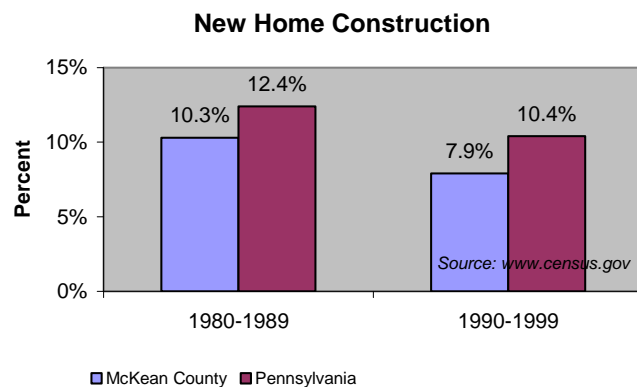
Transitions and Mobility Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	52%	55%
Pennsylvania	-	52%	51%

Source: *Pennsylvania Youth Surveys*

- How many times have you changed homes in the past year?
- How many times have you changed homes since kindergarten?
- Have you changed schools (including changing from elementary to middle and middle to high school) in the past year?
- How many times have you changed schools since kindergarten?

Focus group participants pointed out that the normal school transition from elementary to high school is a stressful time for youth. Incoming 7th graders at the High School level are experiencing adjustment difficulties—coupled with the developmental changes of puberty—this is often more change than they can assimilate. Focus group participants also noted that with the economic downturn more families are doubling up, moving often, and in crowded living conditions. This economic trend also causes stress in families that must transition to new school districts or neighborhoods.

As another negative economic indicator that contributes risk, fewer homes are being constructed in McKean County. Between 1990 and 1999, 7.9% of all residences in McKean County were new homes, compared to 10.4% in Pennsylvania.



Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization

In neighborhoods where people don't feel attached to the community or to each other, children are at higher risk. These conditions can be found in all types of neighborhoods including wealthier neighborhoods, where people are transferred into the area for a few years and have little commitment to becoming involved in or getting to know their community. Community Disorganization pertains to students' feelings and perceptions regarding their communities and other external attributes.

*Indicators: Low Neighborhood Attachment Scale, Youth Survey
Voter Registration
Community Disorganization Scale—Youth Survey
Vacant Housing*

According to the Youth Survey, McKean County students are somewhat exposed to the *low neighborhood attachment* risk. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 49 on the *low neighborhood attachment* scale, one point lower than the normative average of 50 and five points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 44. The youth survey uses three questions to measure the level of attachment that students feel to their neighborhoods—responses to the true/false questions:

- If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood I now live in.
- I'd like to get out of my neighborhood.
- I like my neighborhood.

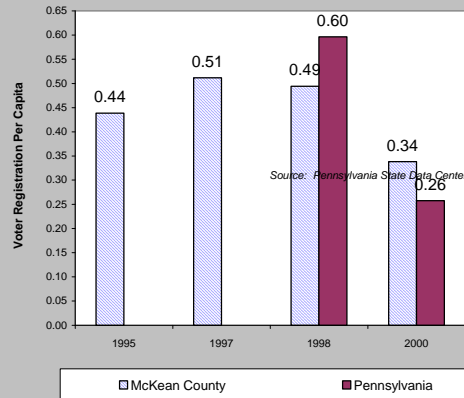
This low sense of commitment may also be reflected in a decline over the last 50 years in community caring and connectedness—less people volunteering, attending church, joining service clubs, or voting. Archival data seems to support this, with voter registration that has declined significantly in McKean County between 1998 and 2000.

Low Neighborhood Attachment Scale Students grades 6-12

	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	53%	48%	49%
Pennsylvania	49%	49%	44%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Voter Registration

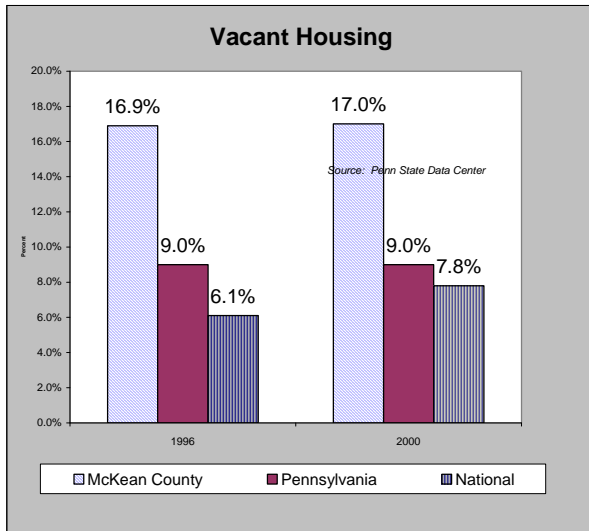


Overall, McKean county students received a percentile score of 54 on the *Community Disorganization* scale, four points higher than the normative average of 50 and four points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 50. This scale is based on students' responses to these items:

- How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: crime and/or drug selling.
- How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: fights.
- How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: lots of empty or abandoned buildings.
- How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood: lots of graffiti.
- I feel safe in my neighborhood.

Community Disorganization Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	58%	55%	50%
Pennsylvania	54%	55%	50%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys



Housing vacancy rates are high in McKean County, indicating that many homes are in ill repair, abandoned and condemned. In 2000, 17% of McKean County homes were vacant versus 9% statewide. Residents often voice how discouraging it is when a vacant home is left to decay and contribute to neighborhood blight.

Extreme Economic Deprivation

Children who live in deteriorating neighborhoods characterized by extreme poverty, poor living conditions, and high unemployment are also more likely to develop problems during adolescence.

Indicators: Children Living in Poverty
Median Family Income
Population Eligible for Food Stamps
Poor and Near Poor Persons
Unemployment figures

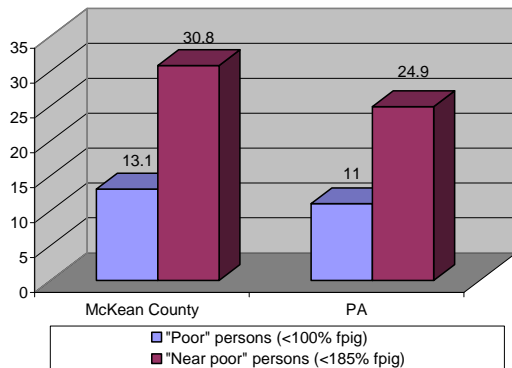
Children Living in Poverty (Under 200% Poverty Level)			
	McKean County Number	McKean County Percent	PA Percent
Under age 6	1,436	49.9%	37%
Under age 18	4,571	43.2%	34.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

McKean County has a significantly larger low-income student population than other Pennsylvania counties. According to the 2000 census, 43.2% of children under age 18 were living in poverty versus 34.4% in Pennsylvania.

According to the 2000 census, the county's median family income for families with their own children was \$39,502 compared to \$49,798 statewide. Thirty percent of all persons in McKean County are under the 185% poverty levels. Currently, nearly 13% are eligible for food stamps where the eligibility cutoff is 130% of the federal poverty income guidelines.

"Poor" and "Near Poor" Persons in 2000
in percentage



Median Family Income For Families with own children	
McKean County	Pennsylvania
\$39,502	\$49,798

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Population Eligible for Food Stamps December 2008	
McKean County	Pennsylvania
12.8%	10.3%

Source: McKean County Assistance Office

Like elsewhere around the country, the local unemployment rate is climbing. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in December 2008 the unemployment rate was 8.4% (7.1% US, 6.7% PA). Twelve months ago it was 4.8%. According to the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, there were 1,900 McKean County residents unemployed as of December 2008 compared to 1,000 in December 2007.

Unemployment Rate December 2008		
McKean County	Pennsylvania	US
8.4%	6.7%	7.1

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Family Risks

Family History of Antisocial Behavior

Children who are raised in a family with a history of addiction to alcohol or other drugs are at increased risk of having alcohol or other drug problems, and children born or raised in a family with a history of criminal activity are at increased risk of delinquency. Similarly, children born to a teenage mother are more likely to become teenage parents, and children of dropouts are more likely to drop out of school themselves.

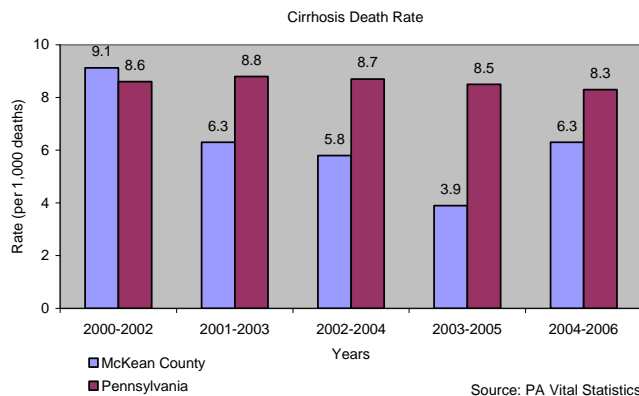
Indicators: Family History of Antisocial Behavior Scale, Youth Survey
 Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis
 Alcohol Related Motor Vehicle Fatalities
 Adults Committed to Alcohol or other Drug Treatment Programs
 Driving Under the Influence Rates
 Blood Alcohol Content Rates

According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, families in McKean County are at slightly higher risk than Pennsylvania families for having a history of anti-social behavior. Overall, in 2007 McKean County students received a percentile score of 45 on the *family history of antisocial behavior* scale, five points lower than the normative average of 50 and three points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 42. For the analysis of this scale students responded to the questions:

- Has anyone in your family ever had a severe alcohol or drug problem?
- Have any of your brothers or sisters ever drunk beer, wine or had liquor? Smoked marijuana? Cigarettes? Taken a handgun to school? Been suspended or expelled from school?
- About how many adults over age 21 have you know personally who in the past year have used marijuana, crack, cocaine, or other drugs? Sold or dealt drugs? Done other things that could get them in trouble with the police, like staling, selling stolen goods, mugging or assaulting others? Gotten drunk or high?

Family History of Antisocial Behavior Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	46%	48%	45%
Pennsylvania	43%	42%	42%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

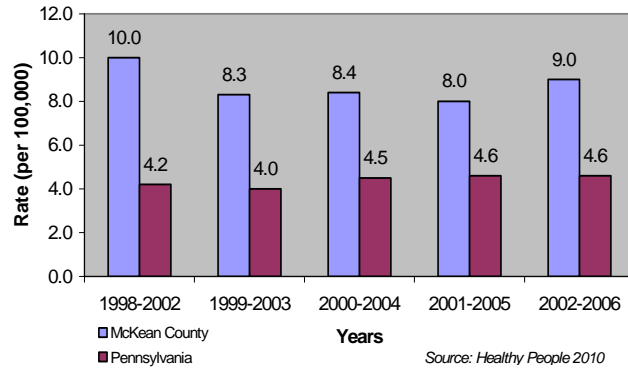


Chronic Liver Disease or Cirrhosis deaths can often be an indicator of alcohol abuse. In comparison to statewide averages, McKean County has fewer cases of liver disease than the statewide norm.

While Cirrhosis deaths are not largely prevalent in McKean County, alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths are. Death rates are twice as high as state averages.

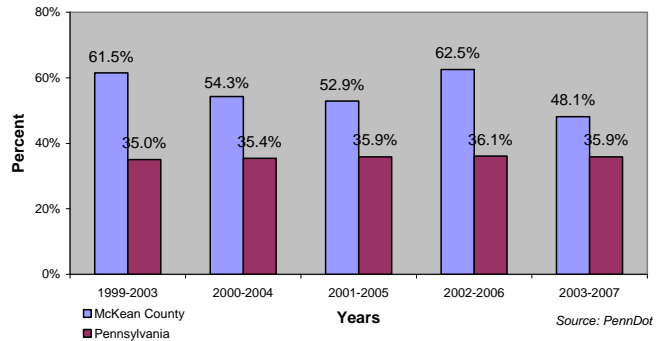
According to the Department of Health, between 2002 and 2006 the death rate for alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes McKean County was 9 compared to 4.6 in Pennsylvania. In a similar PennDot statistic for the same years, 62.5% of all motor vehicle fatalities in McKean County were alcohol related versus 36.1% in Pennsylvania.

Alcohol-Related Motor Vehicle Deaths



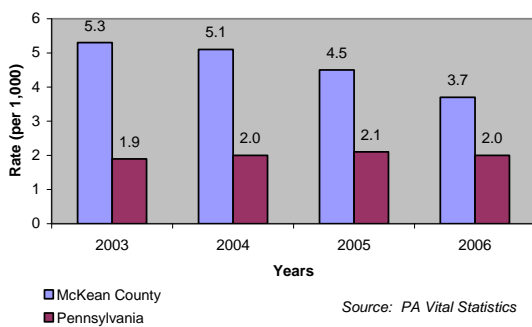
The rate of adults admitted to alcohol treatment programs is higher than state averages. In 2006, the McKean County admission rate to alcohol treatment was 3.7 compared to a Pennsylvania rate of 2.0.

Alcohol Related Crash Fatalities

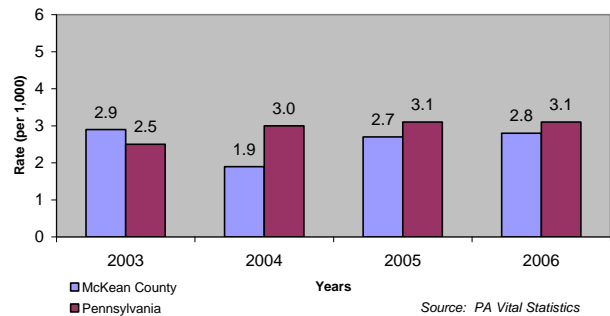


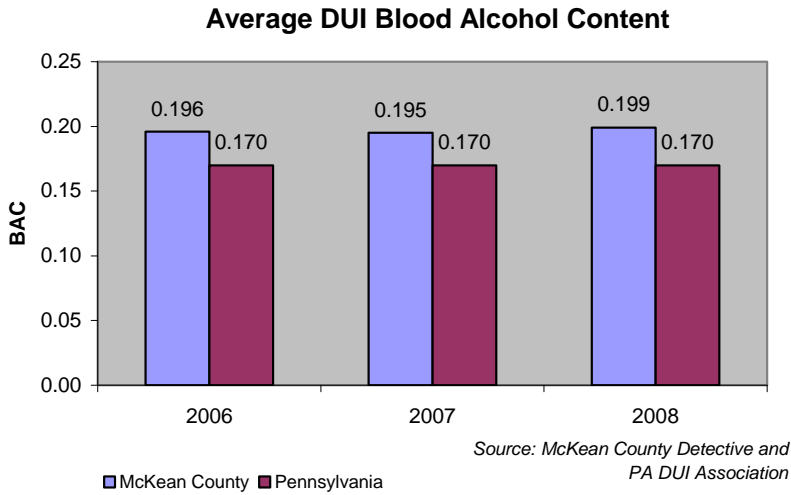
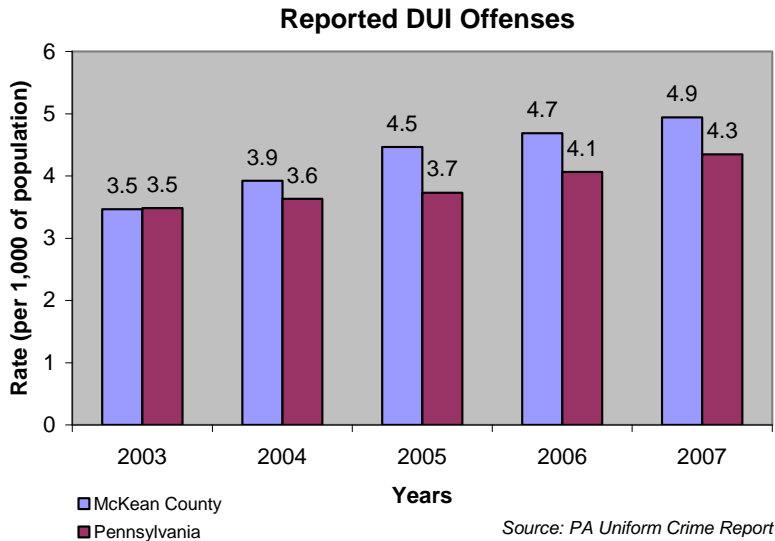
Rates of admission to drug treatment in McKean County are lower than state averages. However, they are climbing and have doubled in the last few years from a rate of 1.9 in 2004 to a rate of 2.8 in 2006

Admission to Alcohol Treatment



Admission to Drug Treatment





Law enforcement representatives participating in focus groups highlighted the facts that not only are McKean County's DUI rates high, but so is the Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of the offenders. Law enforcement has been shocked when some offenders pulled off the road have had a Blood Alcohol Content level of .35—three times higher than the legal limit of .08% for Driving Under the Influence (DUI). Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) averages in McKean County have exceeded state averages for the past three years. This data seems to indicate, and is verified by focus group participants, that some alcoholics are not able to control their drinking and driving behaviors despite serious criminal sentencing awaiting them.

Poor Family Management

Family management problems include lack of clear expectations for behavior, failure of parents to monitor their children (checking to see if expectations are being followed), and inappropriate consequences for following or not following expectations, like excessively severe or inconsistent punishment or lack of consistent reinforcement for following expectations.

Indicators: Poor Family Supervision Scale, Youth Survey
Substantiated Child Abuse Reports
Child Welfare Placements
Safe and Stable Families Outcome Indicator—ICSP 2009-10

In 2007, McKean County students scored slightly worse than other Pennsylvania counties on the *poor family management* scale with a score of 45 compared to 43 in Pennsylvania. McKean County's score is five points lower than the normative average of 50. For this scale the youth survey analyzed student response to several questions—

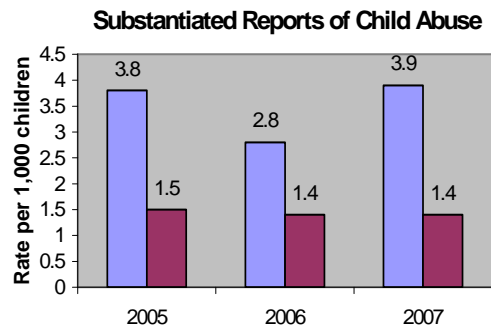
- My parents ask if I've gotten my homework done.
- Would your parents know if you did not come home
- on time?
- When I am not at home, one of my parents knows where I am and whom I am with.
- The rules in my family are clear.
- My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.
- If you drank some beer or wine or liquor without your parents' permission, would you be caught by your parents?
- If you skipped school, would you be caught by your parents?
- If you carried a handgun without your parents' permission, would you be caught by your parents?

Poor Family Management Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	48%	44%	45%
Pennsylvania	46%	43%	43%

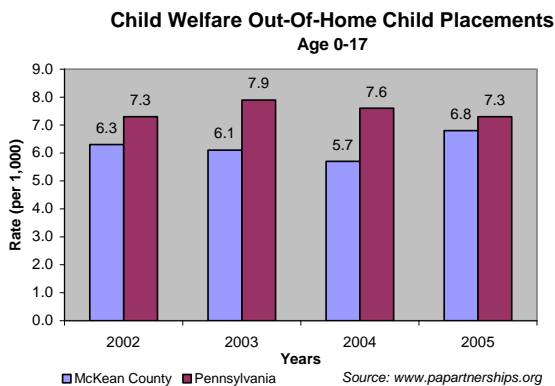
Source: Pennsylvania Youth Survey Reports

*The 2003 percentage represents "Poor Family Supervision"

Always of concern in McKean County is the high prevalence of child abuse. McKean County's rate of 3.9 in 2007 was three times higher than the state average of 1.4 victims per 1,000 children, and was the third highest rate in the state.



Source: PA Department of Public Welfare



Source: www.papartnerships.org

Child welfare placements in McKean County are below state averages. In 2005 McKean County's rate was 6.8 and lower than 7.3 statewide.

More recent data published by the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare in their Integrated Children's Services Plan Community Level Outcome Indicators (ICSP 2009-10) report, identifies McKean County as a high risk county in the *Safe and Stable Families and Communities* indicator area. This outcome indicator area assessed McKean County's levels of food stamp edibility, substantiated abuse, adolescent deaths, timely child welfare placement reunifications, placement recidivism, and residential treatment facility use.

The most troubling McKean County statistics in this report were related to child abuse, child welfare reunification recidivism, and RTF use. It should be noted, however, that the study looked at a relatively short time frame in evaluating placement recidivism and RTF use. A longer duration would more accurately assess trends in these areas.

Safe and Stable Families and Communities Outcome Indicator		
	McKean County	PA
Food Stamp Eligibility: Percent of Population Eligible for Food Stamps, March 2008	12.2%	9.5%
Child Abuse: 2007 Substantiated Child Abuse per 1,000 Children	3.9	1.4
Child Death Rate: 2005 Child and Adolescent Death Rate per 1,000, ages 0-19	.54	.62
Reunification: Children Entering Care 4/1/06 to 9/30/06, Percent Reunified within 12 months	66.7%	52.3%
Placement recidivism: Children reunified with parents or primary caregivers between 4/1 and 9/30/06, who returned to care within 1 year	47.27%	21.60%
RTF Use: 2006 Residential Treatment Facility users per 1,000 persons under 21 years	6.56	2.05

Source: *Pennsylvania Integrated Children's Services Plan Community Level Outcome Indicators Report (ICSP 2009-10)*

Family Conflict

Children who are raised in families where there is persistent, serious conflict between parents or between parents and children are at increased risk. Regardless of whether the family is headed by two parents, a single parent, or some other primary caregiver, children raised in families high in conflict appear to be at risk for all types of problem behaviors.

Indicators: Family Conflict Scale—Youth Survey
 Divorce Rates
 Domestic Violence Caseload
 Protection from Abuse Orders
 Female-headed Households
 Domestic Violence Rates

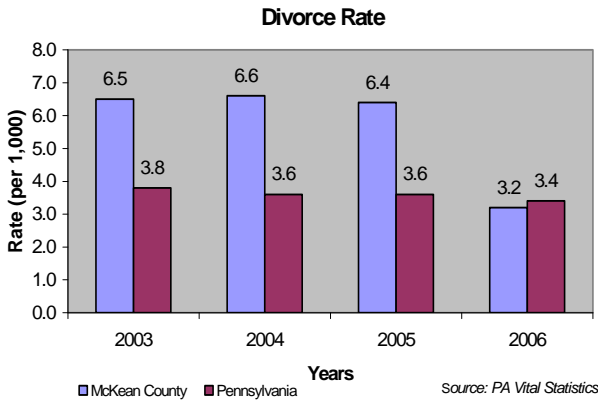
In 2007 McKean County students scored slightly worse than other Pennsylvania counties on the *family conflict scale* with a score of 50 compared to 49 in Pennsylvania. For this scale the youth survey analyzed student response to several questions—

- People in my family often insult or yell at each other.
- People in my family have serious arguments.
- We argue about the same things in my family over and over.

Family Conflict Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	52%	50%
Pennsylvania	-	50%	49%

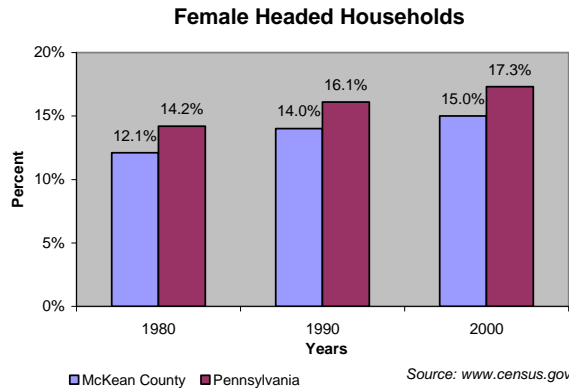
Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

McKean County divorce rates since 2003 have been high—three times higher than state rates. However, in 2006, McKean County's divorce rate fell below the state rate (3.2 in McKean County compared to 3.4 in Pennsylvania).



Nationwide, the number of domestic violence cases and severity of problems have been on the rise. In 2007-08, the YMCA Victims' Resource Center served 264 program participants.

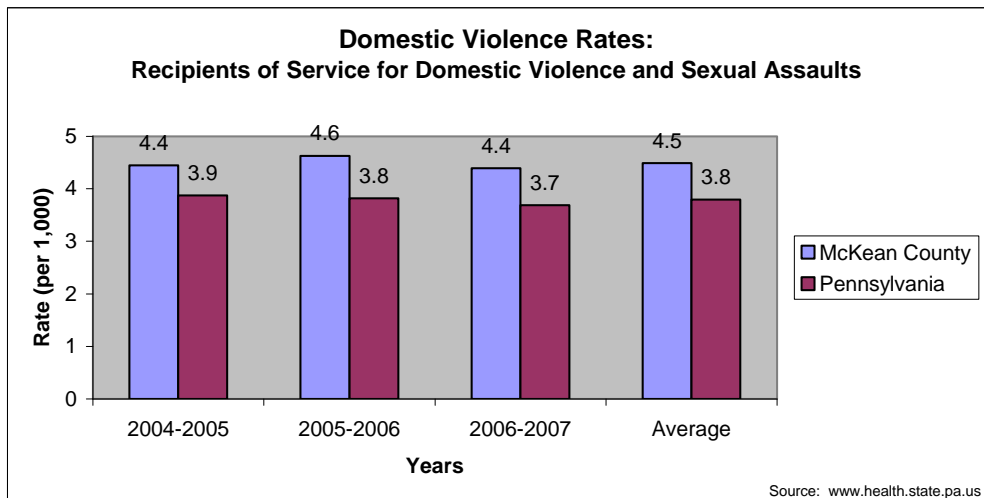
According to the US Census Bureau, the percent of female-headed households in McKean County is also on the rise, however, percentages are consistently below state averages. In 2000, 15% of all households in McKean County were female headed compared to the state average of 17.3%.



Protection From Abuse Orders filed McKean County over the last three years has declined. In 2006, 83 PFA's were filed. In 2008, this number decreased to 59. This is due to changes in court policy more than changes in domestic violence trends. As the chart below indicates, McKean County's domestic violence rates remain steady and each year are consistently higher than state averages.

Protection From Abuse Orders Filed In McKean County	
2006	83
2007	73
2008	59

Source: McKean County Prothonatary Office



in

Parental Attitudes Favorable toward the Problem Behavior

Parental attitudes and behaviors influence the attitudes and behavior of their children. Research shows that parental approval of young people’s moderate drinking, even under parental supervision, increases the risk of children’s marijuana use. When parents involve children in their own drug-using behavior—such as asking the child to get the parent a beer from the refrigerator—there is an increased risk of the child abusing drugs later in life. In families where parents use illegal drugs, are heavy users of alcohol or are tolerant of use by their children, children are more likely to become drug users in adolescence. In families where parents display violent behavior toward those either inside or outside the family, there is an increased risk that a child will engage in violence. Students’ perceptions of their parents’ opinions about antisocial behavior are also an important risk factor. Parental attitudes and behavior regarding crime and violence influence the attitudes and behavior of children. If parents approve of or excuse their children for breaking the law, then the children are more likely to develop problems with juvenile delinquency.

*Indicators: Parental Attitudes Favorable to ATOD Use Scale, Youth Survey
 Adult Behavioral Risks—2003 McKean County BRFSS
 Parental Attitudes Favorable to Antisocial Behavior Scale, Youth Survey
 Adult Violent Crime
 Adult Property Crime
 Total Adult Crime Index*

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey suggests that some McKean County parents are indifferent to their children drinking alcohol. McKean County students scored worse than the matched comparison group on the *parental attitudes favorable to ATOD use scale* with a score of 49% compared to 46% in Pennsylvania. For this scale the youth survey analyzed student response to the questions:

- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to drink beer, wine or hard liquor?
- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to smoke cigarettes?
- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to smoke marijuana?

Parents Attitudes Favorable Toward ATOD Use Students Grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	50%	52%	49%
Pennsylvania	47%	47%	46%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

It is interesting to note that 21% of the McKean County students in 2007 indicated that adults in their lives would not disapprove of student alcohol use.

McKean County youth who indicated “other adults” disapprove of drug use Student grades 6-12	
Drinking alcohol	78.7%
Smoking cigarettes	79.5%
Smoking marijuana	91%

Source: 2007 McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Parental approval of youth behavior can often be modeled in through the parents' own actions. According to a 2003 McKean County Behavioral Health Risk Factor Surveillance System Over-Sampling report, more adults in McKean County participated in binge drinking, smoking cigarettes and using smokeless tobacco than their counterparts in Pennsylvania.

Adult Behavioral Risks 2003		
	McKean County	PA
Binge Drinking	21%	18%
Smoke Cigarettes	29%	26%
Smokeless (spit) tobacco	8%	3%

Source: McKean County Behavioral Health Risk Factor Surveillance System Over sampling Report, 2003

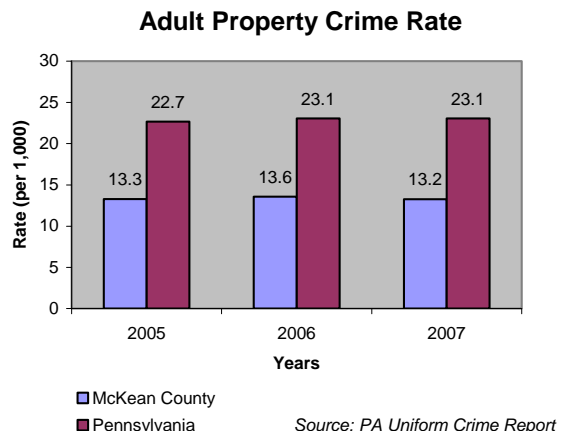
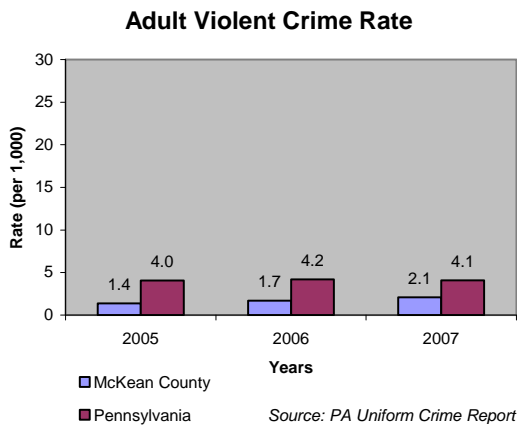
The Pennsylvania Youth Survey suggests that some McKean County parents condone antisocial behavior in their own children. McKean County students scored worse than the Pennsylvania average on the *parental attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior scale* with a score of 48% compared to 46% in Pennsylvania. For this scale the youth survey analyzed student response to the questions:

- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to steal anything worth more than \$5?
- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to draw graffiti, write things or draw pictures on buildings or other property without the owner's permission?
- How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to pick a fight with someone?

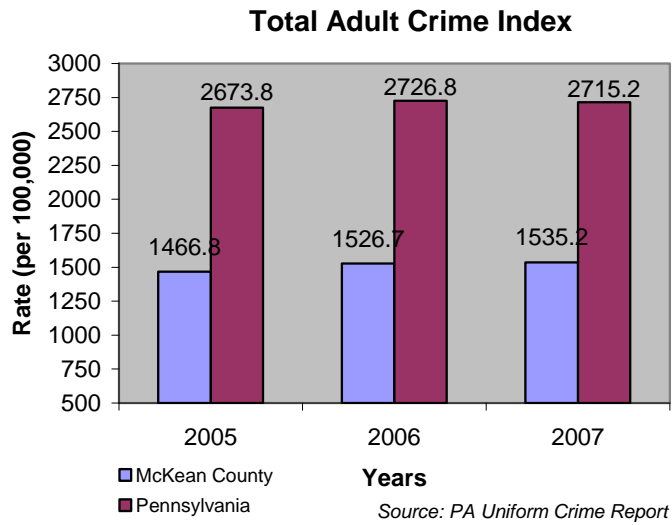
Parents Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior Scale Students Grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	50%	48%	48%
Pennsylvania	52%	49%	46%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

There is less adult crime in McKean County in comparison to Pennsylvania averages. This is true for both violent and property crime. It is of great benefit to youth that they live in an area where crime is half of what it is in other areas of Pennsylvania.



Overall, adult crime is slowly increasing. According to the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime reports, the crime rate for adults in McKean County, and Pennsylvania, has increased by almost 100 points in the past three years—2005 through 2007.



School Risks

Poor Academic Performance

Children who fail academically from grade four on are at greater risk. Children fail for many reasons—learning disabilities, ineffective teaching strategies, racial or sex discrimination, emotional problems, and stressful family situations. However, it appears, that regardless of the cause of the failure, it is the experience of school failure itself that increases the risk of problem behaviors.

Indicators: Poor Academic Performance Scale, Youth Survey
3rd Grade Below Basic PSSA Math and Reading Scores

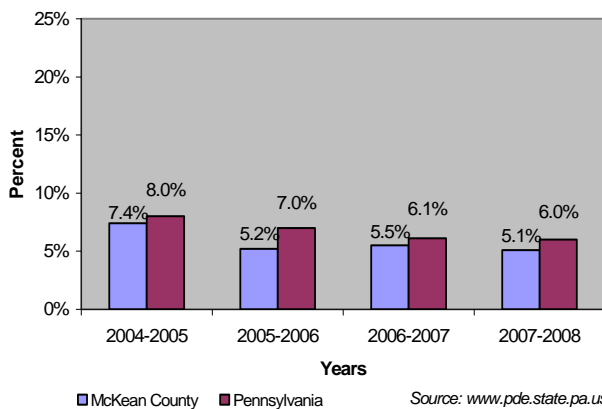
According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, McKean County students are only slightly at risk for academic failure. Overall, McKean county students received a percentile score of 45 on the *poor academic performance* scale, five points lower than the normative average of 50 and one point higher than the Pennsylvania average of 44. The survey evaluated student response to the questions:

- Putting them all together, what were your grades like last year?
- Are your school grades better than the grades of most students in your class?

Poor Academic Performance Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	53%	49%	45%
Pennsylvania	49%	48%	44%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

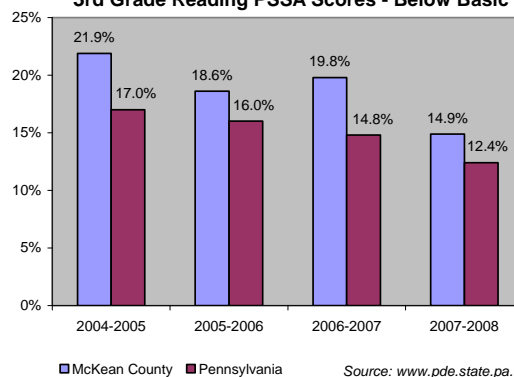
3rd Grade Math PSSA Scores - Below Basic



Fewer students in McKean County are below the basic level in 3rd grade math when compared with other students in Pennsylvania. Below basic Math scores in 3rd grade on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment have been below the state average for the past four years. In 2007-08 only 5.1% of McKean County students were below basic in 3rd grade math, while 6% were in Pennsylvania. However, more students in McKean County

are performing below the basic level in 3rd grade reading when compared with other students in Pennsylvania. While reading scores are getting better, they are still higher (or worse than) than state averages in 2007-08 (14.9% compared to 12.4% in PA).

3rd Grade Reading PSSA Scores - Below Basic



Lack of Commitment to School

Low commitment to school means that the young person does not see education as being useful anymore.

*Indicators: Lack of Commitment to School Scale, Youth Survey
High School Dropouts*

According to the Youth Survey, McKean County students are slightly less committed to school than other Pennsylvania students. On the *lack of commitment to school scale* McKean County scored 47% compared to 43% statewide. McKean County's score is three points lower than the normative average of 50. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to the questions:

- How often do you feel that the schoolwork you are assigned is meaningful and important?
How interesting are most of your courses to you?
- How important do you think the things you are learning in school are going to be for your later life?
- Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you enjoy being in school?
- Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you hate being in school?
- Now, thinking back over the past year in school, how often did you try to do your best work in school?
- During the last four weeks, how many whole days have you missed because you skipped or "cut"?

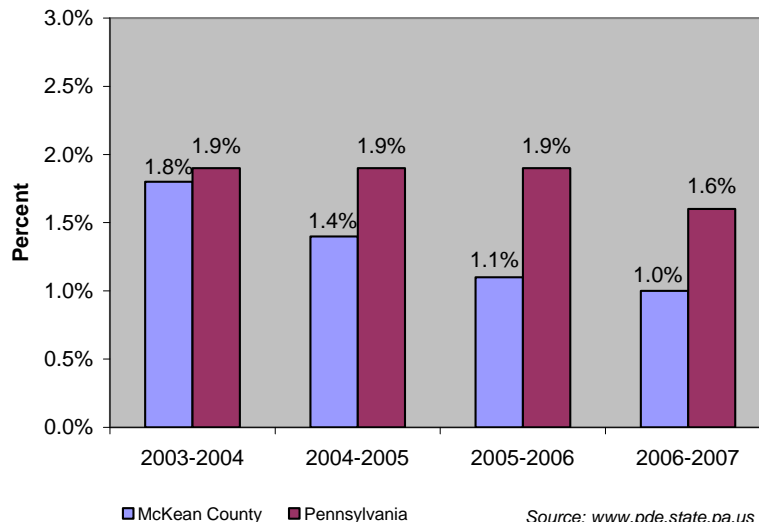
**Lack of Commitment to School Scale
Students grades 6-12**

	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	50%	48%	47%
Pennsylvania	47%	47%	43%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Dropout rates in McKean County are better than state averages. In 2006-07, only 1% of the 7-12th grade student population dropped out compared to 1.6% in Pennsylvania.

Dropout Rate (7th-12th Grade)



Rebelliousness

Although it is normal for adolescents to feel left out or defiant at times, young people who feel they are not part of society or do not have to follow society's rules are at higher risk of drug abuse, delinquency, violence and school dropout.

*Indicators: Rebelliousness Scale, Youth Survey
 Prevalence of Antisocial Behaviors—Youth Survey*

According to the Youth Survey, McKean County students are slightly more rebellious than other Pennsylvania students. On the *rebelliousness scale* McKean County students scored at 47% compared to 44% for the Pennsylvania average. McKean County's score is three points lower than the normative average of 50. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these true/false questions:

- I do the opposite of what people tell me, just to get them mad.
- I ignore rules that get in my way.
- I like to see how much I can get away with.

Rebelliousness Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	45%	47%	47%
Pennsylvania	44%	46%	44%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Antisocial behavior prevalence rates for the combined 2007 sample of 6th through 12th graders are presented in the graph below. Across all grades, 12.9% of the students reported *attacking someone with the intent to harm* in the past year, making it the most prevalent of the seven behaviors in McKean County.

McKean County Prevalence of Antisocial Behaviors 2007						
Attacked Someone with Intent to Harm	Attempt to Steal a Motor Vehicle	Being Arrested	Drunk or High at School	Suspended	Sold Drugs	Bringing a Weapon to School
12.9%	1.8%	4.9%	8.1%	5.9%	3.4%	2.6%

Source: McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey 2007

		Attacked Someone with Intent to Harm	Been Arrested	Carried a Handgun	Carried a knife	Drunk or High at School	Sold Drugs	Stole a Motor Vehicle	Suspended	Taken a Gun to School
Otto-Eldred 6th Grades		3.8	0.0	11.3	15.1	3.8	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0
Otto-Eldred 11th Grades		10.9	0.0	9.1	29.1	1.8	1.8	0.0	1.8	0.0

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Survey 2000

Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior

Young people who associate with peers who engage in delinquent behavior are much more likely to engage in delinquent behavior themselves. This is one of the most consistent predictors identified by research. Even when young people come from well-managed families and do not experience other risk factors, spending time with peers who engage in delinquent behavior greatly increases the risk of their becoming involved in delinquent behavior. Young people who associate with friends who engage in problem behaviors are much more likely to become involved in the problem behaviors themselves. Students' perceptions of their peer groups' social norms are also an important predictor of involvement in problem behavior. Any indication that students feel that they get positive feedback from their peers if they use alcohol, tobacco or other drugs, or if they get involved in delinquent behaviors, is important to note and understand. When young people believe that their peer groups are involved in antisocial behaviors, they are more likely to become involved in antisocial behaviors themselves.

*Indicators: Friend's Delinquent Behavior Scale—Youth Survey
Friends' Use of Drugs Scale, Youth Survey
Peer Reward for Antisocial Behavior Scale—Youth Survey*

According to the Youth Survey, when compared to other Pennsylvania students, McKean County students have fewer friends with delinquent behavior. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 42 on the *friends' delinquent behavior* scale, eight points lower than the normative average of 50 and two points lower than the Pennsylvania average of 44. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have been suspended from school?
- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have carried a handgun?
- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a care or motorcycle?
- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have been arrested?
- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have dropped out of school?

**Friends' Delinquent Behavior Scale
Students grades 6-12**

	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	47%	45%	42%
Pennsylvania	47%	47%	44%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

According to the 2007 Youth Survey, when compared to other Pennsylvania students, McKean County students are slightly more exposed to friends that use drugs. Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 45 on the *friends' use of drugs* scale; five points lower than the normative average of 50 and four points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 41. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have smoked cigarettes?
- Think of your four best friends. In the past year, how many of your best friends have tried beer, wine or hard liquor when their parents didn't know about it?
- Have used marijuana?
- Have used LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, or other illegal drugs?

Friends Use of Drugs Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	49%	49%	45%
Pennsylvania	45%	44%	41%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 47 on the *peer rewards for antisocial behavior* scale, three points lower than the normative average of 50 and two points lower than the Pennsylvania average of 49. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you smoked cigarettes?
- What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you began drinking alcoholic beverages regularly, that is, at least once or twice a month?
- What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you smoked marijuana?
- What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you carried a handgun?

Peer Reward for Antisocial Behavior Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	48%	48%	47%
Pennsylvania	48%	47%	49%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior

During the elementary school years, children usually express anti-crime and pro-social attitudes and have difficulty imagining why people commit crimes or drop out of school. However, in middle school, as others they know participate in such activities, their attitudes often shift toward greater acceptance of these behaviors. This acceptance places them at higher risk for these antisocial behaviors. The perception of harm from drug use is related to both experimentation and regular use. The less harm that an adolescent perceives as the result of drug use, the more likely it is that he or she will use drugs.

*Indicators: Favorable Attitude to Antisocial Behavior Scale, Youth Survey
Favorable Attitudes towards ATOD Use Scale—Youth Surveys
Low Perceived Risks of Drug Use Scale—Youth Surveys
Percentage of McKean County Youth Who Reported Perception of
“Great Risk” of Harm*

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 39 on the *favorable attitudes toward antisocial behavior* scale, 11 points lower than the normative average of 50 and one point higher than the Pennsylvania average of 38. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to take a handgun to school?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to steal anything worth more than \$5?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to pick a fight with someone?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to attack someone with the idea of seriously hurting him or her?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to stay away from school all day when their parents think they are at school?

Favorable Attitudes Towards Antisocial Behavior Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	45%	38%	39%
Pennsylvania	47%	44%	38%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 41 on the *favorable attitudes toward ATOD use* scale, nine points lower than the normative average of 50 and three points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 37. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to drink beer, wine or hard liquor regularly?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke cigarettes?
- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to smoke marijuana?

- How wrong do you think it is for someone your age to use LSD, cocaine, amphetamines or another illegal drug?

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 48 on the *low perceived risks of drug use* scale, two points lower than the normative average of 50 and 5 points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 43. For

Favorable Attitudes Towards ATOD Use Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	44%	44%	39%
Pennsylvania	42%	41%	37%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Surveys

For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- How much do you think people risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they smoke one or more packs of cigarettes per day?
- How much do you think people risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they try marijuana once or twice?
- How much do you think people risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they smoke marijuana regularly?
- How much do you think people risk harming themselves, physically or in other ways, if they take one or two drinks of an alcoholic beverage nearly every day?

Low Perceived Risks of Drug Use Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	38%	51%	48%
Pennsylvania	35%	35%	43%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Overall, McKean County students perceived that smoking cigarettes regularly and smoking marijuana regularly were harmful. However, the students did not feel that drinking alcohol regularly and trying marijuana once or twice was very harmful.

Percentage of McKean County Youth Who Reported Perception of "Great Risk" of Harm 2007	
Drinking alcohol regularly	41%
Smoking cigarettes regularly	67.5%
Trying marijuana once or twice	39.2%
Smoking marijuana regularly	70.4%

Source: 2007 McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior

The earlier young people begin using alcohol or other drugs, skipping school, committing crimes, engaging in violent acts, and becoming sexually active, the greater the likelihood that they will have problems with these behaviors later on. Certain factors that may have a biological or physiological basis are risk factors for substance abuse, delinquency, and violence. These factors show themselves in young people as sensation-seeking or thrill-seeking behaviors, excessive risk-taking and poor control of impulses. Although these behaviors are somewhat characteristic of all teens, the young person who has shown these behaviors throughout his development is at increased risk in adolescence.

*Indicators: Early Initiation Scale, Youth Survey
Early Use of Drugs and Alcohol in a Lifetime, Youth Survey
Sensation Seeking Scale, Youth Survey*

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 46 on the *early initiation of drug use* scale, four points lower than the normative average of 50 and eight points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 38. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- How old were you when you first smoke marijuana?
- How old were you when you first smoke a cigarette, even just a puff?
- How old were you when you first had more than a sip or two of beer, wine or hard liquor?
- How old were you when you first began drinking alcoholic beverages regularly, that is, at least once or twice a month?

Early Initiation of Drug Use Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	-	51%	46%
Pennsylvania	-	43%	38%

Source: Pennsylvania Youth surveys

The average age students in McKean County try alcohol is 12.2 years of age. The average age students regularly use alcohol is 13.5 years of age; smoke cigarettes is 11.9 years old; and smoke marijuana is 13.4 years old. This data is important in determining when prevention should begin. It is evident that prevention should begin prior to the age of initiation—in the 5th and 6th grades.

McKean County Age of Initiation			
Tried alcohol	Regularly use alcohol	Smoke cigarettes	Smoke marijuana
14.1 years old	15 years old	13 years old	14.4 years old

Source: 2007 McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey

Overall, McKean County students received a percentile score of 45 on the *sensation seeking* scale; five points lower than the normative average of 50 and five points higher than the Pennsylvania average of 40. For this scale the survey analyzed student response to these questions:

- How many times have you done the following things? Done what feels good no matter what.
- How many times have you done the following things? Done something dangerous because someone dared you to do it.
- How many times have you done the following things? Done crazy things even if they are a little dangerous.

Sensation Seeking Scale Students grades 6-12			
	2003	2005	2007
McKean County	47	46%	45%
Pennsylvania	46	45%	40%

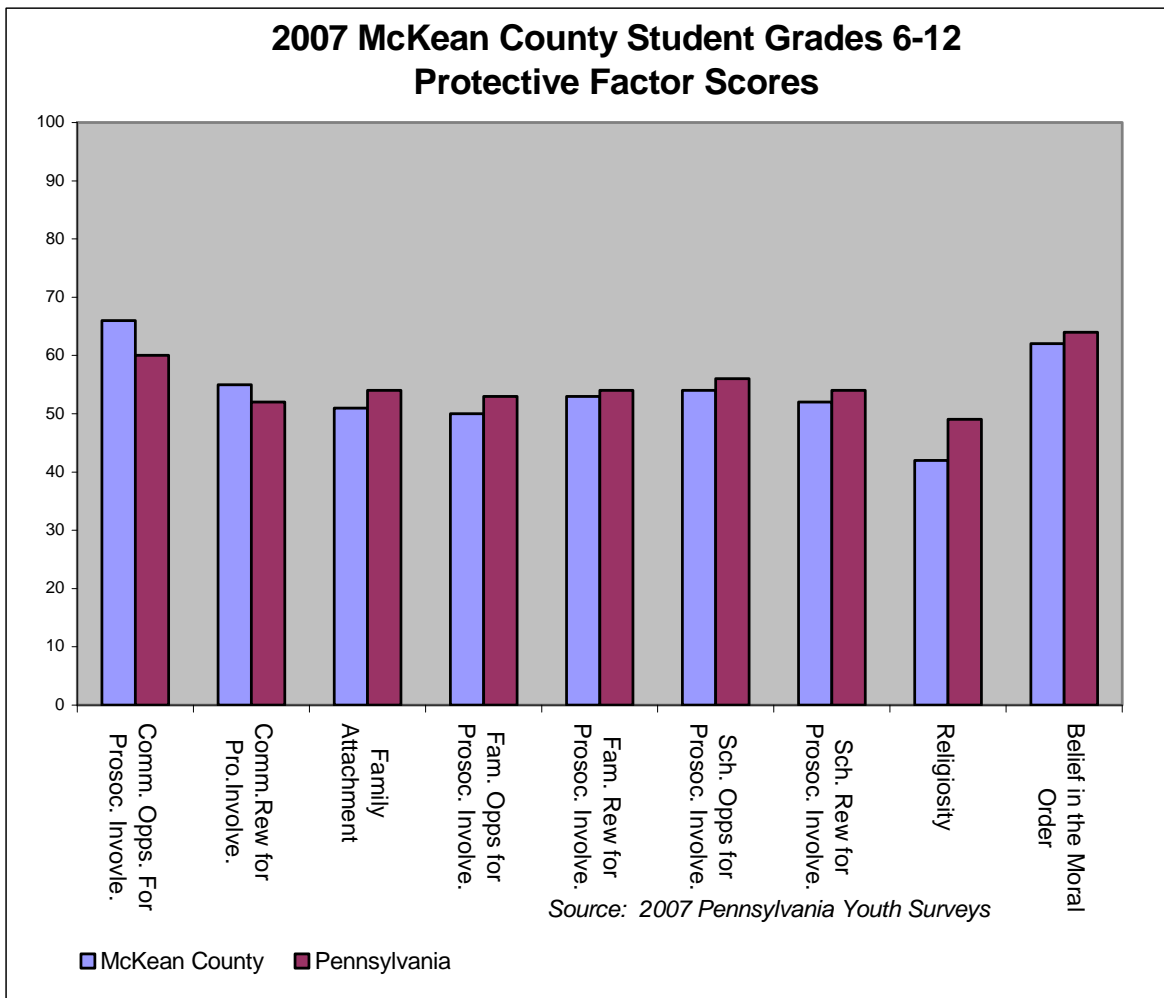
Source: Pennsylvania Youth surveys

Protective Factor Assessment

As illustrated in the graph below, McKean County students scored better than the Pennsylvania averages in several areas of protection. The highest protection was in *Community Opportunities for Pro-social Involvement, Community Rewards for Pro-social Involvement* and *Belief in the Moral Order*.

As a quick reference, protective factors above 50% are providing good protection to youth. Any protective factors scoring below 50% are providing less protection.

The survey results show that *community opportunities for pro-social involvement, community reward for pro-social involvement, and belief in the moral order* provide McKean County students the most protection. *Religiosity and family opportunities for pro-social involvement* provide the least amount of protection.



Problem Behavior Assessment

Substance Abuse

2007 McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Assessment results Lifetime Use Rates

Table 3. Lifetime Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

	McKean County								Monitoring the Future ¹		
	6 th %	7 th %	8 th %	9 th %	10 th %	11 th %	12 th %	Overall %	8 th %	10 th %	12 th %
Alcohol	23.2	45.9	53.4	68.3	71.8	81.7	76.3	54.9	38.9	61.7	72.2
Cigarettes	6.4	22.7	29.6	38.0	39.2	61.5	44.7	30.6	22.1	34.6	46.2
Smokeless Tobacco	4.7	9.7	19.2	29.3	22.5	40.0	22.9	19.0	9.1	15.1	15.1
Marijuana	0.7	2.2	7.6	17.6	19.1	45.1	26.8	14.2	14.2	31.0	41.8
Inhalants	6.9	9.2	14.6	13.8	15.8	12.7	9.9	11.6	15.6	13.6	10.5
Cocaine	0.5	0.0	1.4	2.4	1.4	7.4	3.3	2.0	3.1	5.3	7.8
Crack Cocaine	0.5	1.1	0.5	1.5	0.9	2.3	3.3	1.2	2.1	2.3	3.2
Heroin	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.0	1.9	2.9	2.7	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.5
Hallucinogens	0.5	0.0	1.6	2.4	5.1	8.6	7.3	3.0	3.1	6.4	8.4
Methamphetamine	0.2	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.9	0.6	2.6	0.9	1.8	2.8	3.0
Ecstasy	0.2	0.0	1.6	0.0	3.3	1.7	4.6	1.4	2.3	5.2	6.5
Steroids	0.7	0.0	1.4	1.5	1.4	0.6	2.0	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.2
Any Illicit Drug (Other than Marijuana)	7.8	9.7	16.8	17.1	19.0	22.9	13.7	14.7	--	--	--

Past 30-Day Use Rates

Table 4. Past-30-Day Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs

	McKean County								Monitoring the Future ¹		
	6 th %	7 th %	8 th %	9 th %	10 th %	11 th %	12 th %	Overall %	8 th %	10 th %	12 th %
Alcohol	3.2	11.9	17.3	23.4	28.8	53.7	32.2	21.0	15.9	33.4	44.4
Binge Drinking	2.5	5.9	11.3	12.3	15.8	28.7	19.5	12.1	10.3	21.9	25.9
Cigarettes	2.5	7.6	15.2	13.7	16.7	33.1	12.4	13.4	7.1	14.0	21.6
Smokeless Tobacco	1.5	5.9	10.3	13.7	10.6	17.7	10.5	9.2	3.2	6.1	6.6
Marijuana	0.2	1.1	3.5	5.9	8.4	21.7	9.9	6.1	5.7	14.2	18.8
Inhalants	2.7	5.4	6.2	4.9	4.7	4.6	2.6	4.6	3.9	2.5	1.2
Cocaine	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	2.9	2.0	0.5	0.9	1.3	2.0
Crack Cocaine	0.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	1.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.9
Heroin	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Hallucinogens	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.5	1.4	4.0	2.6	1.0	1.0	1.7	1.7
Methamphetamine	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.7	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6
Ecstasy	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.2	0.6	1.2	1.6
Steroids	0.7	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	1.0
Any Illicit Drug (Other than Marijuana)	3.7	5.4	7.9	5.9	6.0	10.3	4.6	6.2	--	--	--

Table 5. Lifetime Nonmedical Prescription Drug Use

	McKean County								Monitoring the Future ¹		
	6 th %	7 th %	8 th %	9 th %	10 th %	11 th %	12 th %	Overall %	8 th %	10 th %	12 th %
Amphetamines	1.2	2.2	5.2	6.3	10.2	12.0	8.7	5.9	6.5	11.1	11.4
Sedatives	2.0	3.8	4.9	6.3	7.9	9.2	6.7	5.3	--	--	9.3
Tranquilizers	1.2	0.5	2.2	2.0	3.7	6.9	7.4	3.0	3.9	7.4	9.5
Other Narcotics	0.5	1.1	2.7	6.8	8.4	20.0	6.0	5.4	--	--	13.1

Note: The symbol "--" indicates that data are not available because students were not surveyed, the drug was not included in the survey, or a comparable aggregate calculation was not available. *Monitoring the Future* data is only available for 8th, 10th and 12th graders.

¹ Johnston et al., (2007).

Table 6. Past-12-Month Nonmedical Prescription Drug Use

	McKean County								Monitoring the Future ¹		
	6 th %	7 th %	8 th %	9 th %	10 th %	11 th %	12 th %	Overall %	8 th %	10 th %	12 th %
Amphetamines	0.7	0.5	1.6	3.4	7.6	11.4	6.0	3.8	4.2	8.0	7.5
Sedatives	0.5	1.6	1.9	4.9	5.3	5.2	6.1	3.0	--	--	6.2
Tranquilizers	0.8	0.0	1.1	0.5	2.4	6.3	4.8	1.9	2.4	5.3	6.2
Other Narcotics	0.5	1.1	2.5	4.9	6.7	17.7	4.0	4.5	--	--	9.2

Note: The symbol "--" indicates that data are not available because students were not surveyed, the drug was not included in the survey, or a comparable aggregate calculation was not available. *Monitoring the Future* data are only available for 8th, 10th and 12th graders.

¹ Johnston et al., (2007).

Table 7. Past-30-Day Nonmedical Prescription Drug Use

	McKean County								Monitoring the Future ¹		
	6 th %	7 th %	8 th %	9 th %	10 th %	11 th %	12 th %	Overall %	8 th %	10 th %	12 th %
Amphetamines	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.5	3.8	8.6	5.4	2.4	2.0	4.0	3.7
Sedatives	0.5	1.1	1.7	2.0	1.9	2.3	3.4	1.6	--	--	2.7
Tranquilizers	0.3	0.0	0.6	0.5	1.9	3.4	3.4	1.1	1.1	2.6	2.6
Other Narcotics	0.5	0.5	1.4	1.5	3.3	10.3	4.0	2.6	--	--	3.8

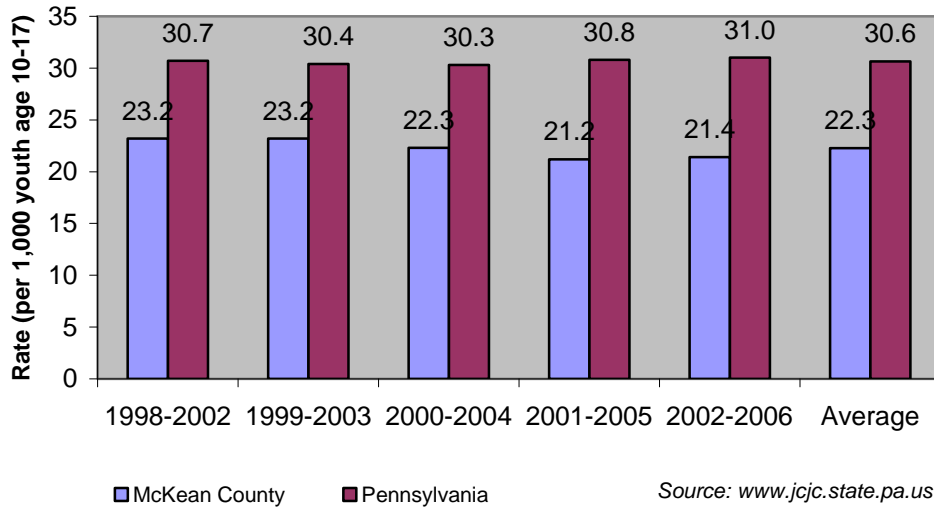
Note: The symbol "--" indicates that data are not available because students were not surveyed, the drug was not included in the survey, or a comparable aggregate calculation was not available. *Monitoring the Future* data are only available for 8th, 10th and 12th graders.

¹ Johnston et al., (2007).

“In recent years the nonmedical use of prescription drugs has emerged as a major public health issue. Both the *National Survey on Drug Use and Health* (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2003) and the *Monitoring the Future* study (Johnston et al., 2007), two major sources of youth drug abuse prevalence data, have reported increases in the unauthorized use of prescription drugs. This trend is particularly troubling given the adverse health consequences related to prescription drug abuse, which include addiction, physical dependence and the possibility of overdose. Despite these concerns, the research community is still in the early stages of developing survey methods that can accurately measure the prevalence of prescription drug abuse. If anonymity is ensured, most students will honestly and accurately report their use of alcohol; tobacco, marijuana and other easily recognized categories of illicit drugs. The measurement of prescription drug use, however, is more complex. There are many prescription medicines that are subject to abuse, making it impossible to present an exhaustive list. Also, respondents may have difficulty identifying the names of prescription drugs they have used, and they may have difficulty distinguishing between prescription and over-the-counter medications. With these challenges in mind, the *PAYS* includes 12 questions designed to measure prevalence-of-use rates across four prescription drug categories: amphetamines, sedatives, tranquilizers, and narcotics other than heroin. Results for McKean County are presented in Tables 5, 6 and 7.” Source: McKean County Report, Pennsylvania Youth Survey 2007

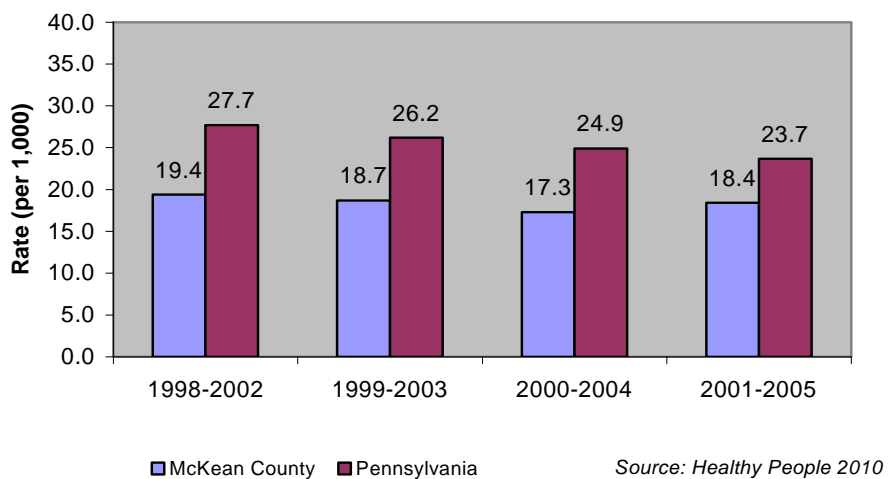
Delinquency

Juvenile Probation Caseload



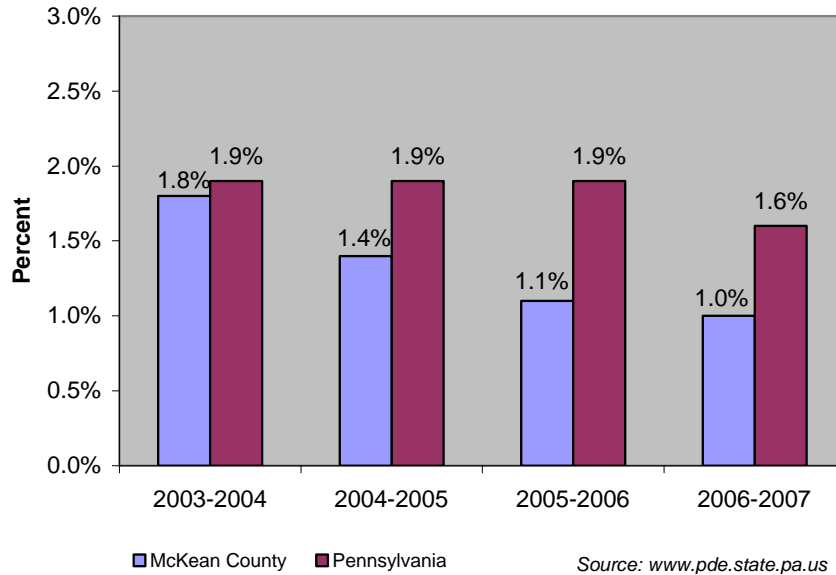
Teen Pregnancy

Pregnancy Rate (age 15-17)



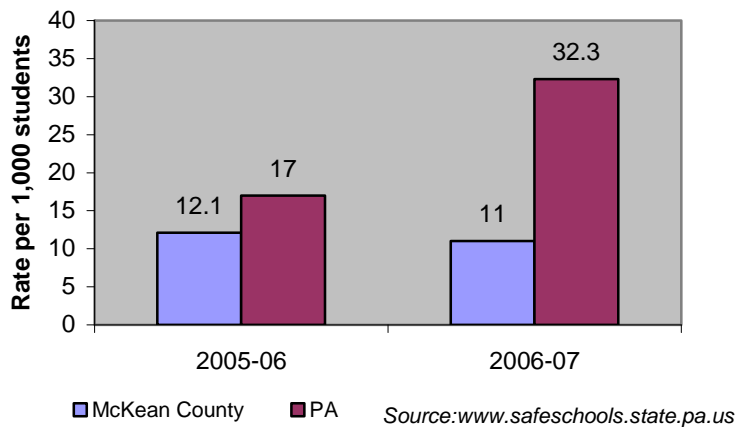
School Dropout

Dropout Rate (7th-12th Grade)



Violence

School Violence Out of School Suspension Rates for Violence



McKean County Resource Assessment

Resources

County Government:

McKean County has a strong single county management system under the umbrella of the Department of Human Services. Child welfare, mental health and mental retardation programs are in one county department, and coordinate much of the county's case planning. Other county departments include Juvenile Probation, Adult Probation, McKean County Prison, and the District Attorney's Office that are coordinated by a team of three County Commissioners, and collaborated through the McKean County Criminal Justice Advisory Board.

Human Services:

Services for young children include Head Start, Early Intervention, Child Care Information Services, and a closely networked system of private child care and disability service providers. Behavioral health services through The Guidance Center and Beacon Light Behavioral Health Systems offer home based and outpatient support for families such as Wrap Around, Family-Based Mental Health Services, and Outpatient Therapy. Residential treatment programs are available for adolescents and adults with mental health and developmental disabilities.

Child welfare focused programs include foster care, treatment foster care programs, and an independent living program for youth in transition. Mental health and mental retardation case management, mental health crisis response, homeless assistance programs, alternative education programs, domestic violence and sexual assault programs, victim witness services, legal aid, family planning and women's health services, public health services through the Pennsylvania Department of Health and a variety of medical home care providers also provide care to residents. Juvenile justice programs include intensive probation services, school based probation, adult probation, and the Boondocks Program—an environmental-based community service program.

Basic Needs:

Employment training programs include those networked through PA CareerLink, the New Choices/New Options Program, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the County Assistance Office. Financial, food and medical assistance is provided by the County Assistance Office, Social Security Office, Northern Tier Community Action Corporation, Highmark CHIP and adultBasic programs, Angel Food Ministries, local food pantries, and the WIC program. Safety net programs to help residents through crisis are provided by the Red Cross, Salvation Army, YWCA and area churches.

Addictions:

Addictions treatment is available at Bradford Regional Medical Center and through the Single County Authority, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services. Both organizations provide a variety of inpatient and outpatient options for residents. Psychiatric care is handled by a group of dedicated doctors who treat patients through all agencies and at the local hospital. Area churches host recovery support systems such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

Family Support:

In 1996 family support systems called Family Centers were developed as a freestanding community center in each of the school district catchment areas. The Family Centers are sponsored by the McKean County Commissioners and operated by The Guidance Center. They have helped the county change its point of reference to a more comprehensive designed service for the whole family unit, and have involved parents in program planning. A variety of parent supports such as home visits, workshops, classes, support groups, family events, and after school activities are offered out of the Family Centers using evidence-based programs and strategies.

The four Family Centers that exist in the county allow resources and supports to be accessible at community levels. Partners on the Collaborative Board contribute to youth evidence-based programs operated out of the Family Centers and area schools. The Strengthening Families Program, a family workshop for middle school youth and parents, is the largest collaborative project of this kind. The workshops are an evidence-based program offered twice yearly in each middle school and are facilitated by trained juvenile probation officers, child welfare workers, drug and alcohol specialists, ministers, teachers and parents who are workshop alumni.

Youth Development:

A limited number of activities for positive alternatives for youth are offered through the Family Centers, schools, Bradford Family YMCA, Penn State Cooperative Extension 4-H, churches, and the Kane Community Center. There is a SADD club in the Port Allegany and Kane Area School Districts and a SALSA (Students Advocating Life without Substance Abuse) club in the Bradford Area School District.

Strengths

- There is a high level of cooperation between schools, community agencies and law enforcement that will also benefit future community efforts.
- A very open policy exists in schools allowing facility use and integrated care for school based police officers, probation officers, Student Assistant Program personnel, behavioral health treatment, and parenting and youth programs.
- Cooperation also exists among human service and prevention providers.
- Collaboration currently is established around events such as Alcohol Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness Month, Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month.
- Through the McKean County Drug Task Force, collaboration between the District Attorney's Office and area police forces, there is also a coordinated arm of drug enforcement in the county. A full time County Detective oversees coordination across jurisdictions.
- The McKean County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB), a relatively new board, has encouraged collaboration across criminal justice partners. The CJAB has explored an intermediary punishment program and networked technology.
- McKean County has developed a strong focus on prevention as a solution to the problems it faces.

Gaps

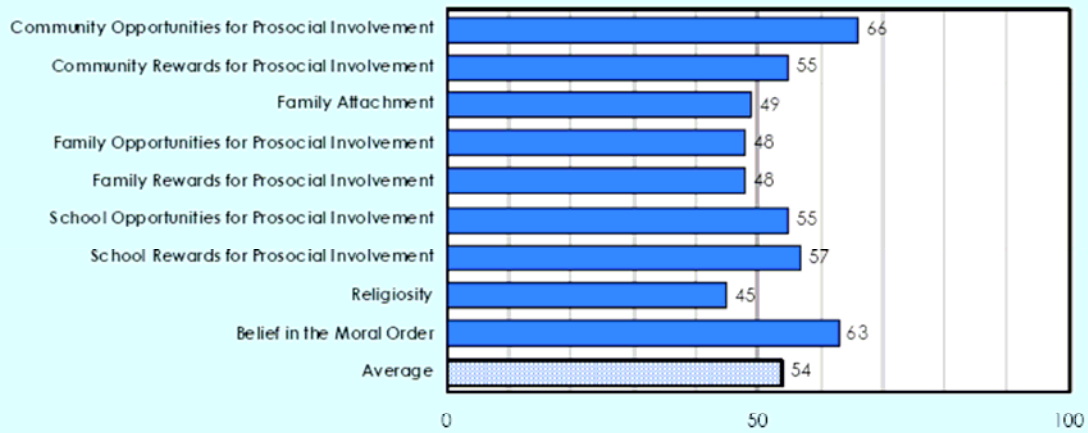
- Statewide partners such as the Ad Council, State Police, Liquor Control Board, Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office and Pennsylvania National Guard are available for drug prevention efforts but are untapped resources that could further efforts.
- Others that could be mobilized for prevention work include schools, law enforcement, churches, parents and youth.
- Families must be utilized for environmental change. Family related problems were an identified risk and a weak protective factor. For this reason, more parent-to-parent and parent-to-youth communication strategies need to be explored.
- The number of positive alternatives for youth is declining, as are the opportunities for families to spend quality time in activities together. Drug free activities such as sporting leagues and community dances occur in communities and schools; however, in general, after school youth development is an area that is losing ground due to funding shortages. To complicate matters, some recreational facilities have closed because of crumbling infrastructure—Otto-Eldred pool and Bradford Roller Skating Rink.
- Only a limited number of youth leadership opportunities are available. SADD Clubs do not exist in every district and many are struggling. The Smethport PROSPER Club is inactive. On a positive note, the Bradford SALSA Club is growing and wanting to expand to other districts.
- Outside of the Tobacco Coalition and the McKean County Drug Taskforce, community groups have not traditionally tackled environmental change. And neither has worked collectively in mobilizing citizens or youth. This is clearly a need.
- There is also room to increase capacity within the McKean County Collaborative Board through active parent, business and youth participation—weaknesses identified on a recent Collaborative Board Assessment. A necessary step is to expand membership, and increase capacity through board training.

No groups within the county are working on marketing campaigns, counter-advertising and campaigns to change social norms. Start Talking Before the Start Drinking, Those Who Host Lose the Most and Drugs Kill Dreams are possible campaigns.

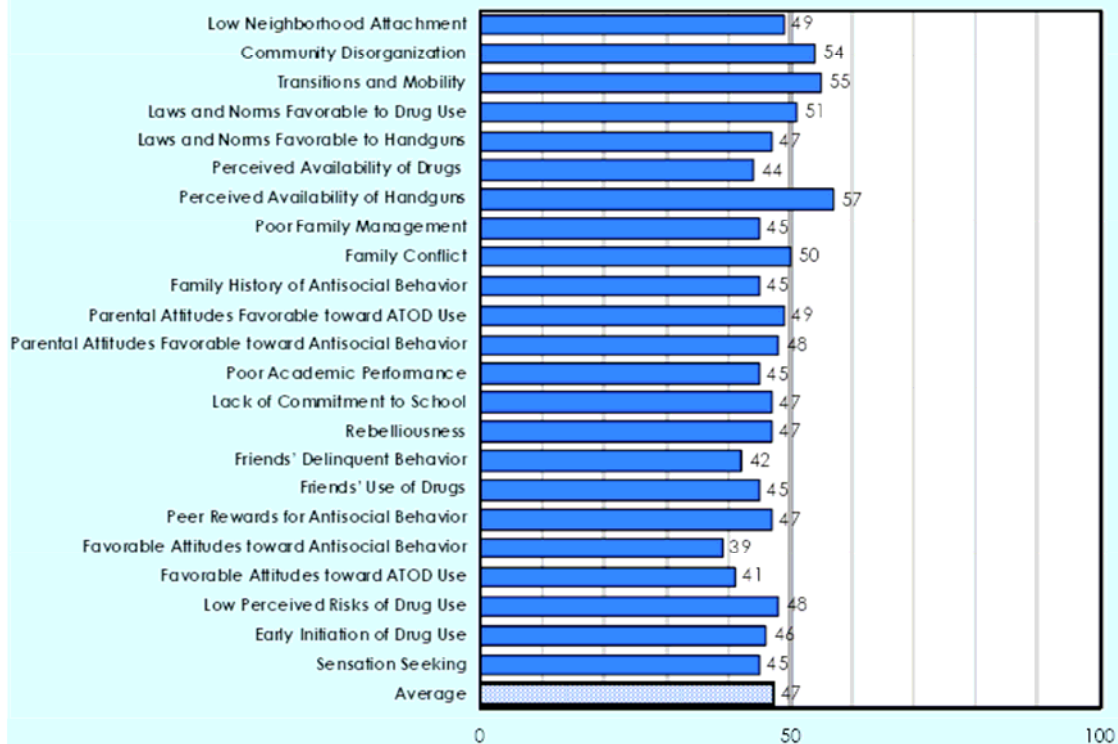
REFERENCE MATERIALS

McKean County 2007 PAYS: Overall Results

Graph 5. Overall Protective Factor Scale Scores



Graph 6. Overall Risk Factor Scale Scores



McKean County Drug and Alcohol Use and Abuse Focus Group Results

Background

In December 2008 and January 2009, focus groups and key informant interviews were conducted to discover more about alcohol and drug use/abuse in McKean County. The information was gathered to help write a Drug Free Communities Grant with the goal of addressing alcohol and drug abuse through environmental strategies and community collaboration.

Thank you to all the participants who provided the invaluable information summarized below.

Bradford Focus Group Results

(11:00-1:00 on December 09, 2008 and 9:00-11:00 on December 16, 2008)

Alcohol Use/Abuse

Participants said youth get alcohol numerous ways, including:

- Someone of legal age.
- Their parents unmonitored liquor cabinet.
- Their parents, who think it will be a “controlled environment”.
- Local bars.

Youth in the area have many places to go to drink including their houses, at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, or outside of Bradford on lease roads, old buildings or in open fields.

In the spring surrounding prom and graduation are common times of year when organized drinking occurs among youth. While this is true, kids who want to drink or have a drinking problem will find alcohol and places to drink year round.

Participants gave several reasons why people in McKean County drink. One theme that came out surrounded the family. In a large percentage of households, adults consume alcohol in the home, at bars and during other social situations (i.e., Italian Fest, the Legion, the Bowling Alley). The kids see this and learn that it is normal to drink frequently. They also talked about situations where parents have advised their kids who play sports to lie to school officials about drinking to avoid consequences. While the school has athletes sign a document explaining the schools expulsion/suspension policy and a Drug and Alcohol referral if caught drinking, they need to be either caught during a school activity or admit to it. Respondents also said the geography affected drinking. Bradford is a rural area with limited activities so people drink alcohol to fill time.

A third reason was that it is socially acceptable to drink. One example given pointed toward the bars being “drinking” bars where people go to drink (as opposed to dance, eat...). Alcohol is also served at community events like local festivals, weddings, and during holiday parties. They also mentioned that in the past, shot glasses/beer mugs were handed out at prom and the senior class has had alcohol symbols on their class t-shirts. Bars also factor into making drinking socially acceptable by offering drink specials and participating in the UPB “graduation” walk. Alcohol is also used as incentives for fundraising. The panel also questioned the law that allows an 18 year old to serve alcohol

in a bar or sell it at a store. It was also noted that DUI repeat offences were rising and some of the Blood Alcohol content on these DUI's was very high (.35). Rural road conditions contribute to alcohol related crashes.

Respondents felt the laws about drinking were known in the community. They felt that the judges are too lenient on the supplier of alcohol to underage drinkers when more than one youth were involved (up to \$1,000 per youth they supplied to).

The Liquor Control Board does compliance checks on local retailers. All the bars in the area have been cited for serving alcohol to minors at least once. Most bars will continue to do this because they make more money off of serving minors than it costs to pay the fine.

The panel felt that advertising does not cause youth to start drinking. It has more to do with getting minors to drink one particular beer as opposed to other brands.

Drug Abuse

Respondents indicated that a commonly used drug by youth in the area is prescriptions (they estimated that 10-15% of kids use). These are easily acquired. The panel felt that doctors were over prescribing medications and a lot of "Dr Shopping" is taking place. The area has no pharmacy databases due to the high cost of this technology that tracks prescription drug use by purchaser across participating pharmacies. They can also easily get it from their medicine cabinet. Another source is from their friends. When this transaction is made, they do not feel as though they are dealing drugs because it is prescribed to them, therefore they own them so they can give them out just like any other object they own. In the past, it was easy to distinguish the people to get drugs from in school, but now there is no "drug dealer(s)" because the sharing of prescription drugs is so prevalent and the youths don't necessarily view this kind of sharing as wrong. Common prescription drugs named by participants were Aderal, Vicoden and Oxycodine.

Marijuana is also prevalent. Like prescriptions, most kids could name where to get it.

The panel did not feel that there are a lot of hard-core drug users in the area. Other drugs discussed were:

- **Inhalants** – Huffing is becoming more prevalent. A common source was computer cleaners
- **Cocaine and Heroin** – Not common in the juvenile population, more of the hard-core users.
- **Hallucinogens** – Not seen much.
- **Meth** – While our community is a place where Meth could thrive (due to the rural location), there luckily hasn't been much use yet. The panel felt that people are scared of the effect at this point. While it is not used, an increase in the production of Meth has been occurring. The community has always been a few years behind and when it does hit, the participants indicated the results would have a devastating effect on the community.
- **Ecstasy** – Not seem much.
- **Steroids** – Not widely used, however there is a small community of users; probably among athletes.

Experimentation is one of the main reasons youth do drugs. Youth also think they are invincible. The panel also discussed how parents condone the problem when schools may tell parents that their kids have a substance abuse problem and the parents choose not to take action to help the youth because they are afraid their children will be exposed if they get treatment. Some parents want to deal with it on their own because they are wary of the system.

Respondents described different demographic, economic and moral trends affecting drug and alcohol use.

- One is poverty. Participants indicated that low-income families move into the area because they hear about the availability of human services.
- More minority African American men come to the area from Buffalo (mainly), Pittsburgh and Jamestown. They form a relationship with a female from the area, who likes the attention and then deal out of the homes' of these females in the winter and on the streets when it is warmer.
- Technology has made drug communication more accessible. Participants talked about how prescription drugs can be bought over the Internet, and drug trafficking is aided by cell phone and email usage.
- Another recent trend noted was the acceptance of younger females dating older males. These relationships feed alcohol and drugs to the younger partner and friends.
- More domestic violence victims are using harder drugs than ever before.
- Participants spoke about the general moral and ethical decline in some youth which has caused people to be bolder than in the past.

Bradford Focus Group Participants

Mikele Bay (Children and Youth Services), Nancy Chestnut (YWCA), Steve Green (Bradford Police Department), David Ray (High School Vice Principal), Greta Billings (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services), Dominic Circone (District Justice)

Bradford High School Student Focus Group Results

(2:50-3:15 on January 29, 2009)

Alcohol Abuse

The group explained that students are provided alcohol from older (over 21) people they know; friends, siblings, parents, other family member. They also can find it around the house.

To drink they might go to a friend's house or the woods. Some of the known places include "the bush" and "the flats" (on the hill off of Jackson Ave. before the stop sign at Kendall Ave.)

Students drink because they are stressed, to have fun, because of peer pressure, because they have nothing else to do and they are curious.

The panel was mixed about the affect of alcohol advertising on youth. Some felt that there aren't many ads around and the ads that are in the area did not impact them because there is not much to do in the area so students drink. Some felt that it does because when you

see the ads, it makes you think about it. One student described an experience with a billboard and how looking at it made them want to try it because it was colorful, flashy and looked refreshing.

Drug Abuse

The students explained that they can get prescription drugs from many sources such as from home, friends, grandparents, drug dealers and parents. They also said that there was some use of steroids in the school for the purpose of weightlifting and sports.

Bradford High School Student Focus Group Participants

Laurell Coldren, Kelly Woods, Kayla Palmer, Shaina Carnahan, Jordan Webster, Amber Hallock, Missy Johnson, Jeremy Wedge, Katelyn McCormick, Tony DiStrola, Dani Tolin, Allison Sampson, Ashley Sampson, Dan Yeager, Mark Thompson, Jack Caul, Sam Mellon, Sara Peterson, Lorrinda Hurd, Reaha Gleason.

Kane Focus Group Results

(11:00-1:00 on January 13, 2009)

Alcohol Use/Abuse

Participants stated teens get their alcohol from their parents or a friend that is over 21. While an underage drinker occasionally will get served at a local bar, there are no “problem bars” per se.

There are several times of the year where kids are/have the opportunity to drink. The evenings of prom and graduation are the quietest times of the year for the police department because kids go to one place to party and stay there. Kane also has several events with alcohol served though none currently seem to be a problem for underage drinking; Swedish Festival, Alumni Weekend, and the Fireman’s BBQ.

The panel feels that drinking is a subculture in Kane. Alcohol is readily available and is used for recreational purposes. Kids learn to drink from their parents who are using it as a way to deal with stress. Some parents also let their kids drink/have parties in the house because they think that it is safer than letting their kids will drink somewhere else. The local winery uses minors to bottle their wine. Kids do not see a lot of good examples of how to drink responsibly.

The school administration and the police work well together when a student is found to have alcohol.

Drug Abuse

Participants stated that there has been a growing trend among youth using prescription drugs. This is partly due to how available it is. Kids can go to a medicine cabinet, take a few, and no one will ever know. Marijuana is also a heavily used drug among youth. Kids in some families have seen their parents grow it, roll it and smoke it for many decades.

Teens do not seem to be users of harder drugs. Most are in their 20’s or older. Other drugs discussed were:

- **Inhalants** – Not widely used.
- **Methadone** – There are some users in the area.

- **Cocaine/Crack Cocaine** – There are some users.
- **Hallucinogens** – There hasn't been much use, but seems to be easily purchased.
- **Meth** – All around the area, but it has missed Kane so far.
- **Ecstasy** – No know users.
- **Steroids** – Small population in the community are users.

The panel recognized a few trends that influence alcohol and drug abuse.

- There always seems to be trouble families moving back and forth between Bradford and Kane, and sometime Warren.
- They also explained that the economy is going to affect alcohol and drug abuse.
- The ease of contact through cell phones has also helped to allow people to get drugs and alcohol easier.

Kane Focus Group Participants

Brian Hillard (Chief of Police), Wayne Cooley (Police Officer), Amy Mickle (Middle School Guidance Counselor), Father Phil.(St. Callistus Priest) and Becky Harvey (Kane Family Center Staff).

Otto-Eldred Focus Group Results

(11:00-1:00 on January 9, 2009)

Alcohol Use/Abuse

Minors are getting alcohol from friends or siblings who are barely old enough to drink. Some parents provide it to their children. There have also been incidences where students will go to Bradford for parties. The bars do not seem to be a source for kids to get alcohol. During the warmer months kids go to drink on the more secluded roads (Barden Brook, Kansas Branch and North Branch). Underage drinking becomes more common after Easter because it is getting warmer and graduations are getting closer. During the colder months, a lot of drinking is done in basements. Old Home Days is also a problem. Even if minors don't get alcohol, they can see those who are drinking and learn the negative behaviors associated with alcohol.

The participants felt that people drink alcohol because it is the drug of acceptance. Parents think alcohol is okay compared to other drugs. They also pointed to 20 years ago when the NY drinking age was 18 and being so close, kids would go there to drink. Those people are now parents of 17-18 year olds and they think it is okay to drink at that age because they did. At times, parents will stick up for their kids if they are on a sports team and were caught abusing substances. By parents doing this, they are teaching their kids that it is okay to lie to get ahead.

One difficulty seen in the Otto-Eldred area and in the school district is the lack of a consistent police force. Their current police force is only part time. By the time the police can come to investigate an incident, it may be three days later and the evidence is gone and the stories will be changed. This makes it difficult to hold people responsible.

Drug Abuse

Prescription Drugs are the most commonly used drugs by teens in the O-E area. A large percentage of kids are walking around with pills in their pockets. They share them with others or they can get them from their parents' medicine cabinets. Many youth are on

antidepressant medication, so it makes getting drugs easy. The panel estimates between 5-10% of kids use prescriptions regularly. Kids think that taking pills are cool. Another used drug is inhalants. There have recently been a few incidences of duster being used.

Other drugs discussed were:

- **Marijuana** – Kids don't seem to be talking a lot about it.
- **Cocaine** – None known of.
- **Heroin** – Not used among the youth but by the out of school population.
- **Hallucinogens** – None known of.
- **Meth** – None yet.
- **Ecstasy** – Costs more money so it isn't accessible.
- **Steroids** – Probably is used, but haven't heard much about it.

The panel gave a few reasons as to why youth do drugs. One was that there is no sense of community. There are three separate communities in the area that make up the school district. They also discussed the idea that people see substance abuse among youth as "just something that teenagers do."

The panel felt that the closing of Ethan Allen was going to have a big impact on alcohol use. Without work and not much else to do, people are going to go to the bars to drink. It is also going to contribute to the poverty in the area. Other trends affecting drug and alcohol abuse include the lack of things for kids to do. The pool is shut down, there is no ski club and there aren't groups for older kids at the Family Center any more.

Otto-Eldred Focus Group Participants

Terry Stanly (Otto-Eldred Elementary Principal), Martha Wolfe (Otto-Eldred High Guidance Counselor), Jannine Tyler (Behavioral Health Supervisor) and Kelly Zetwick (Family Developmental Specialist)

Port Allegany Focus Group Results

(11:00-1:00 on January 14, 2009)

Alcohol Use/Abuse

The panel said youth get their alcohol from older friends, their parents, and sometimes through theft. They drink in their bedrooms, in the woods, in their basements (while parents are home) and on Rt. 155 in an old gravel pit. Football season, prom, graduation and homecoming are all common times of the year for kids to drink.

They felt that people drink alcohol because it is socially acceptable. Minors see their parents drinking at parties, during holidays and at family events and think that alcohol is needed to have a good time. Another way it has become acceptable is when students wear shirts with beer logos. The High school also gives out beer mugs or Champaign glasses for prom gifts. Also, the school has seen a trend of parents defending the innocence of their kids if they were accused or caught using a substance. Without direct proof or student admission, accused student often deny and get away with drinking or drug taking.

Drug Abuse

Panelists said that prescription drugs were commonly used by youth. They can easily get them by taking from parents, a friend's medicine cabinet, or friends. Marijuana is also prevalent.

Other drugs mentioned were:

- **Cold Medicine** – Kids are drinking to get euphoria.
- **Inhalants** – Kids are using it but not noticed as much.
- **Hallucinogens** – Not much any more.
- **Heroin** – Haven't seen lately in Port Allegany.
- **Meth** – It isn't there yet, but this is a good area for it because it is rural. There is a lot of potential for it.
- **Steroids** – None know now, but has been more common in the past.

Roulette was mentioned as an area where kids go to do drugs. There are a couple of older friends of students who live there.

The panel thought the students do not perceive drugs as harmful and that this has contributed to an increase in drug use. They also mentioned the Internet as an information source (i.e, students could go on the Internet and read about how to make Meth).

The declining economy and its adverse affects on substance abuse were also discussed. The panel felt that they haven't seen an increase in drug and alcohol abuse yet, but they were expecting it anytime. Kids are stressed out about their parents losing jobs. Some kids have seen their parents make money off of selling drugs and may want to help out during tough economic times so they start to sell.

The panel also noted the changing demographics as impacting drug use. African American men are moving into the areas such as Bradford and Elk County from Pittsburgh and Buffalo, getting in a relationship with a young woman whose parents are poor, and then having them go out to sell drugs. The parents are okay with it because the male is helping to make money.

Port Allegany Focus Group Participants

Heidi Aikens (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services), David Shaffer (Inpatient Therapist at Maple Manor) and Dan Eskesen (High School Guidance Counselor)

Countywide Focus Group Summary

(11:00-1:00 on January 26, 2009)

Alcohol Use/Abuse

Respondents stated that minors drink in the woods during the summer. It is often very difficult to find out where they got the alcohol though.

The panel provided several reasons as to why youth in McKean County drink alcohol.

- The declining economy has made it a cheaper and more prevalent drug of choice.

- Places where youth used to go to spend time are closing (i.e., pools) so youth drink for something to do.
- Parents perpetuate the problem by talking about drinking when they were in their late teens and portraying it as a good experience. Their children hear this and learn the behavior.

The panel shared a few trends dealing with alcohol abuse.

- They said that the average blood alcohol content of DUI's in McKean County is higher than the state average and at the top or close to the top of all counties in PA.
- They also explained that 70-80 percent of all cases that go through the court system are associated with alcohol (1/3 of cases are DUI's; 80-90 percent of domestic dispute cases are alcohol related). This is causing overpopulation at the jails.

Drug Abuse

Marijuana is a drug very commonly used among youth. It is inexpensive and readily available (sometimes easier to get than alcohol). One reason the panel felt it is popular is because there isn't enough education about how it is a gateway drug leading to harder drug use. They also felt that people now don't think of marijuana as a drug. The amount of use is a problem because after they use for a period of time and it does not give them the high any more, they will move on to another harder drug that will affect them.

Prescription Drugs are also common. People "doctor shop" and then resell the drugs. Prescription drugs may be stolen and resold to support their drug habits.

Other drugs mentioned include:

- **Crack-Cocaine** – a lot of kids are starting to use. It is coming out of Buffalo and available mostly in Bradford, so many users from the county travel there to get it, though it can also be purchased in other areas in the county.
- **Fentanyl and Morphine patches** – There are people using (some cases of people chewing on Fentanyl patches to get the high).
- **Cold Medicines** – Haven't heard much about them in the adult population.
- **Heroin** – This seems to be coming back in popularity because of the availability. 10 little Ziploc baggies can be purchased in Buffalo for \$100 and sold for \$40 a bag around McKean County. There have been several overdoses lately.
- **Inhalants** – If someone is using, it is tough to discover because the items used are not illegal to possess. Also, parents are not aware of the potential problems around certain items (i.e., if a child has a few cans of Duster in their room, they may not think to look into it further).
- **Meth** – The Drug Task Force hasn't been able to buy any, though it is a group drug. Usually a group of people will make it with the intent of using it themselves, not to sell.

The panel provided several reasons why people use drugs in the county.

- Availability of drugs was one reason given. If one person is arrested for dealing, this does not usually stop it on the street level because there are always more drug dealers to take their place.

- Another focused around the family. They explained that the biggest indicator of a child's drug use was if the parent used. The children see parents using and learn that it is normal.
- Also, because the parents are using, they oftentimes do not parent their children properly. These kids then look for a place to belong and that usually comes from peers who are using.
- Limited police department coverage does contribute to the overall problem. Many departments in the area have only part time coverage of. People know when officers are off duty. Because of the budget crunch, this problem will likely get worse.
- The police can be fairly certain that someone is using or dealing, but they need probable cause to charge a crime. To get this, they oftentimes have to do surveillance, which takes time and costs a lot of money. It is important to ensure the case is sound because if it is thrown out, other users will figure out what went wrong and try to copy that.

A drug trend mentioned involved African American males coming into the area from Buffalo. They move into a house with a woman who is addicted to drugs. They then have the women sell so if caught, they will not be charged because they are not selling. Another trend focused around young parents (17-18) becoming users, who may be partnered with older users.

Countywide Focus Group Panel

John Pavlock (McKean County District Attorney), Jerry Okerlund (McKean County Detective), Duane Wolfe (McKean County Department of Human Services Director), Teresa Wilcox (McKean County Juvenile Probation Director).

Community Alcohol Personality Survey Results (CAP)

In January and February of 2009, focus group participants also completed a survey to help the community establish the shape of the underage drinking problem and identify and prioritize specific contributing factors to the problem. This survey was completed by 23 participants and is helpful as an additional source of information regarding the perceptions of the youth, law enforcement, schools and others.

Identifying the problem:

The top three problems that are seen with in the McKean County community related to underage drinking

- Teen drinking parties
- Underage access and drinking
- Family Problems (divorce, fights, etc.)

Identifying Contributing Factors

The most identified contributing factors that lead to underage drinking in McKean County.

- Parent/adult indifference/tolerance of underage drinking
- Peer pressure to drink
- “Kids will be kids” attitude by adults
- Poor role modeling by adults
- Greater acceptance of alcohol use than other drugs

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Era photo by Fran De Lancey

From left, Michele Kern, regional consultant for the Communities That Care Initiative, Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University, who conducted the meeting Wednesday; Lenore Wyant, program director for Communities That Care, Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University; and Lee Sizemore, prevention program director for The Guidance Center, who coordinated meeting arrangements, look over some documents during a meeting at the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine in Smethport.

At meeting Wednesday, officials discuss top factors placing McKean County youth at risk

By **FRAN De LANCEY**
Era Correspondent
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SMETHPORT — Family management, family conflict and community laws/norms related to drug use were prioritized Wednesday as the top factors that place McKean County youth at risk, according to the consensus reached by the representatives of various agencies who attended the meeting of "Communities That Care," which was held at the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit Nine in Smethport.

"Family management" describes how a family functions and considers such topics as supervision and discipline. "Family conflict" includes cases of violence.

Sponsored by the McKean County Collaborative Board, the meeting drew personnel from the McKean County Children and Youth Services, schools, drug and alcohol services, social services, McKean County Probation Office, Department of Health and the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford. Also attending was Lenore Wyant, program director for Communities That Care for the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University.

"Implementing 'Communities That Care' is a system, not a one-step and done program," said Michele Kern,

regional strategic consultant for the Communities That Care Initiative, Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research.

"Its goal is to raise good citizens in healthy behaviors by identifying early risk factors and also those factors that exist in communities that protect youth from problem behavior. It is community-focused, driven by data, focused on outcomes and uses tested effective strategies. Pennsylvania adopted CTC after it proved to be very successful in Washington state."

Communities That Care data from the state from 2005-08 show a reduction of youth violence.

The protective factors include intelligence, bonding, pro-social opportunities and health beliefs.

Communities That Care is proactive, according to Kern.

"For example, while alcohol prevention can be expensive, it is less costly than preventative measures. We won't eliminate the problem behaviors, but we can reduce the number of youths involved in them."

According to Kern, "risk factors" are those influences that will increase the likelihood that youths will experience one or more problem behaviors.

In McKean County, 23 risk factors were identified as possible indicators that could result in problem behaviors such as teen pregnancy, delinquency, school dropout, substance abuse and violence.

Economic deprivation was recognized as a risk factor that influences most of the other risk factors.

Lee Sizemore, prevention program director for The Guidance Center, said one of the main sources of data used in the risk assessment process was the McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey, which was administered to students in grades six through 12 in 2007. Also used were the results of six youth substance use focus groups that were at various locations in the county last month and various county and state statistics.

At Wednesday's meeting, the participants met in small groups to prioritize risk factors in the categories of family, community school, peer and individual and problem behaviors. Members in each group identified two risk factors as well as strengths.

Among the strengths mentioned were a decrease in antisocial attitudes and school dropout rates, and improved math scores on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, which are above state average. Meanwhile, the reading scores on the PSSA are getting better, but not above the state average.

Following some discussions, the participants reached a consensus on the final list.

The data from the various surveys, meetings and focus groups will be used to develop a Communities That Care action plan.

Thank you to the following volunteers who participated in this assessment and planning project:

Teresa Wilcox	Director of McKean County Juvenile Probation
Lori Peace	Caseworker, McKean County Department of Human Services
Julie Speaker	Bradford Elementary School Guidance Counselor
Beth Scanlon	Port Allegany Elementary School Guidance Counselor
Casey Schillinger	Strengthening Families Program Coordinator
Nancy Chestnut	Director, YWCA Victims Resource Center
Vicky Skvarka	Nurse Supervisor, PA Department of Health McKean County
Debra Olson	Nurse, PA Department of Health McKean County
Tara Erway	Director of McKean County Children and Youth Services—DOH
Duane Wolfe	Director of McKean County Department of Human Services
Greta Billings	Drug and Alcohol Specialist, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
Karen Bird	Drug and Alcohol Specialist, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
Heidi Aikens	Drug and Alcohol Specialist, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
Sarah Campbell	Northern Tier Community Action Corporation
Betty Jo Wilcox	Strengthening Families Coordinator
Amy Mikle	Kane Middle School Guidance Counselor
Kelly Valdez	Life and Independence for Today, Inc.
Fran Delancey	Correspondent, The Bradford Era
Stephanie Eckstrom	Pitt School of Social Work/Kane Area School District Board
Lenore Wyant	Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research
Lee Sizemore	McKean County Family Centers
Steve Greene	Bradford City Police
David Ray	Bradford High School Principal
Dominic Circone	Bradford District Justice
20 Bradford youth	Bradford SALSA Club
Brian Hillard	Kane Chief of Police
Wayne Cooley	Kane Police Officer
Father Phil Pinczewski	Pastor of St. Callistus
Becky Harvey	Family Development Specialist, Kane
Terry Stanley	Otto-Eldred Elementary Principal
Martha Wolfe	Otto-Eldred High School Guidance Counselor
Jannine Tyler	Behavioral health Supervisor, The Guidance Center
Kelly Zetwick	Family Development Specialist, Kane
David Shaffer	Alcohol and Drug Abuse Inpatient Therapist, Maple Manner
Dan Eskesen	Port Allegany High School Guidance Counselor
John Pavlock	McKean County District Attorney
Jerry Okerlund	McKean County Detective
Michele Kern	Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research Center
Mikele Bay	Caseworker, Children and Youth Services
Tina Martin	CARE for Children Executive Director
Joe DeMott	McKean County Commissioner
Lynne Grim	Child Care Information Services
Mimi Smith	Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Darlene Nortum	Life and Independence for Today
Larry Donahue	Bradford Ministerium
Randall Durante	Kane Branch Manager, Northwest Savings Bank
Kelly Okerlund	Intermediate Unit 9 Family Literacy Program
Darlene Nortum	Life and Independence for Today
Marg Kroh	Director, Adagio Health
Larry Donahue	Bradford Ministerium
3 Smethport youth	Past PROSPER Club participants
Jodie Holmberg	Smethport Parent
Jodie Groshek	Smethport Parent