



YOUTHFORCHRIST

of *Northern Ohio*

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April 2011

In Over Our Heads: Putting a Face on Teen Statistics

We hear the statistics all the time on the news and in the paper about teenagers and their problems. They are just another in a long list as the news reporter shuffles from page to page. We probably don't even listen anymore to the details as we are programmed to move on to the next story.

Every day, Youth for Christ adult leaders are sitting face to face with these young people and finding out their stories, their hurts, and their pains, putting a face to the statistic, and then sharing the story of Christ's love and forgiveness.

- The most recent Ohio vital statistics survey showed that for girls between ages 10-19 there were 26,554 teen pregnancies in 2008. That number adds up to 34.6 out of every 1,000 girls age 10-19 in Ohio were pregnant in 2008. (Ohio Department of Health)
- In Ohio it was estimated, on a survey-weighted hierarchical Bayes estimation approach, that the total number of individuals with an illicit drug addiction or drug abuse problem over a one-year period was 276,000. For this estimation, illicit drugs include marijuana/hashish, cocaine (including crack), heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any prescription-type psychotherapeutic used non-medically. An estimated 55,000 of the individuals with an illicit drug addiction or drug abuse problem in Ohio over a one-year period were between the ages of 12-17. These figures are according to website Usenodrugs.com

Alcohol Consumption by Youth in Ohio

- Underage drinking is widespread in Ohio. Approximately 554,000 underage youth in Ohio drink each year. In 2007, according to self-reports by Ohio students in grades 9-12
- 76% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during their life.
- 20% had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13.
- 46% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasion in the past 30 days.
- 29% had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (i.e. binge drinking) in the past 30 days.
- 3% had at least one drink of alcohol on school property on one or more of the past 30 days.
- In 2007, underage drinkers consumed 22.6% of all alcohol sold in Ohio, totaling \$1.1 billion in sales. These sales provided profits of \$545 million to the alcohol industry.

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How are we helping? YFC has a Teen Moms program in the Wadsworth area that meets weekly with teenage mothers to discuss the struggles of motherhood. We help with baby clothes and supplies, and also teach the importance of God's design for family and the proper skills for being in a relationship. YFC also teaches God's plan of abstinence to young

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inmates in the Sandusky County Juvenile detention center on a weekly basis.

All of our Youth For Christ high school ministry clubs talk about drinking and its effects several times every year. Each week we are sitting and talking with individual young people about alcohol and its impact on our lives. The type of young person typically at one of our ministry meetings is inundated with alcohol in their family, with their friends, and by the various media avenues. Please pray for our staff as we try to help young people make the right choices about alcohol. As you read this, one of our staff may be sitting down with a young person right now and wading through the devastation alcohol has caused in their family.

Most importantly, we at Youth for Christ are taking these issues personally. To talk about drinking, and pre-marital sex, or cutting, or drug abuse in a large meeting format is not enough. We realize that kids can just nod their heads and look like they are listening. We are going **face To face** with kids during dinner appointments and talking about the business of living life. We are committed to sitting down with young people and talking through these issues and not just letting the easy answers be enough.

Being open and direct with young people often gets us in over our heads. We are finding out some of what is really going on in the lives of teens and having to deal with it. The reporter on the evening news never knows the people behind the story. The newspaper reporter just shares what they know. Our staff are uncovering the ugly truth of teen life in meetings with kids every day. We are surprised at how resilient and strong they actually are to overcome some of the obstacles and choices put before them. Please pray for us as we sit down with more students and dig deeper into who they are and help them discover who God wants them to be. We know we cannot do this without God's help and we are encouraged to know that your support keeps us in the lives of young people.

2 Corinthians 1:8.9: "For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself...But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead."

YFCNO Strategic Plan Goal Number Two

The second goal of the Strategic Plan approved by the Youth For Christ of Northern Ohio Board of Directors in January is: To cultivate and establish the Executive Director as the face of YFCNO in all seven counties as a respected man of God who is also known at all levels of YFC USA and throughout other youth ministries for ministry excellence and effectiveness for God. Please pray for Steve and the Board as the work on this goal.

2011 Ohio YFC Board Summit

YFCNO Board members John Heese, Eric Pfeiffer, Bobby Puls, John Roush, and Walt Lamson accompanied Executive Director Steve Pausch to the 2011 Ohio YFC Board Summit at the Bluffton YFC chapter on March 12. They heard YFC USA CEO Dan Wolgemuth kick off the discussion of why and how the YFC chapter board is a "Missional Community." Steve and John Roush told the group the practical ways our board has been creating a missional community. Participants left with seeking YFC Chapter Boards whose members were in love with Jesus Christ, loved each other in Him, and were devoted to telling teens about Him.

John G. Roush, Board Chair

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Pictured left to right John Roush, Bobby Puls, Dan Wolgemuth, John Heese, Eric Pfeiffer, Walt Lamson and Steve Pausch