



Linn County NEWS



Contact: Alex Paul, Linn County Communications Officer, 541-967-3825 or email: apaul@co.linn.or.us

Linn Together receives \$625,000 grant

ALBANY — Linn Together has received a five-year \$625,000 Drug Free Communities Grant — \$125,000 per year — according to Linn County Health Services.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy's DFC Support Program funds community-based coalitions that engage multiple sectors of the community to prevent youth substance use.

Linn Together will use the funding to focus on reducing youth use of alcohol, marijuana, and e-cigarettes. In Linn County, 26% of 11th grade students say they have used alcohol, 23% marijuana and 37% e-cigarettes in the past 30 days according to a 2019 Oregon Healthy Teen Survey.

Also, three out of five Linn County 11th graders say that it is easy to get alcohol (62%), marijuana (62%) and e-cigarettes (60%) according to a 2018 Oregon Student Wellness Survey.

“I have been a member of Linn Together for about 20 years and I have seen many different trends in youth utilization of

harmful substances such as tobacco, alcohol and marijuana,” Dar Merrill said. “This grant will allow us to focus on these current issues and, hopefully, counter some of negative health and social effects by educating the community and providing as many tools as possible for parents, youth and the agencies that serve them.”

Linn Together collaborates with community partners to reduce youth substance use by providing information and training to parents, educators, youth, and youth-serving adults; enhancing positive decision-making skills among youth; providing support of healthy alternative activities; increasing collaboration among systems and services that help prevent youth substance use; and enhancing community protection to reduce the risk for youth substance use.

Linn Together was initially formed as “Albany Together” in 1991 and is now a countywide coalition serving Albany and six rural Linn County communities. The Linn Together mission is, “To pro-

vide substance use education, resources, and support to the community that promote the physical and emotional well-being of youth and their families.”

Linn Together includes a youth coalition, Linn County STAND (Students Taking Action Not Drinking) that is comprised of high school students throughout Linn County.

DFC Coalitions consist of community leaders representing 12 sectors that organize to meet the local prevention needs of the youth and families in their communities. The sectors are youth, parents, businesses, media, school, youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, religious/fraternal organizations, civic and volunteer organizations, healthcare professional, and state, local and tribal governments, and other organizations involved in reducing illicit substance use.

To learn more about Linn Together or Linn County STAND, visit linntogether.org or e-mail info@linntogether.org.

October 1, 2021