



ADAMHS BOARD

*Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services Board
of Adams, Lawrence, Scioto Counties*

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Ohio Senate Education Committee

Testimony on SB 7

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Executive Director
ADAMHS Board of Adams, Lawrence, and Scioto Co.

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Chairman Brenner, Vice-Chair Blessing, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 7. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the ADAMHS Board of Adams, Lawrence, and Scioto Counties. We are the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Adams, Lawrence and Scioto Counties, and are statutorily empowered to establish, to the extent resources are available, a community support system, which provides prevention, treatment, support and rehabilitation services for our community.

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 7 and the proposed inclusion of language that requires annual instruction in grades K-12 on the harmful effects of short-term or chronic substance use and the harmful effects of and legal restrictions against the use of drugs of abuse, including instruction regarding marijuana.

In our three county areas, according to the OH YES Surveys 2021-2022, we have seen a rise in alcohol, vaping, and marijuana usage in 11-14 year olds. In Adams County, the highest percentage of alcohol use was 11-12 year olds at 26.26%, the highest percentage of marijuana usage was 13-14 year olds at 35.19% and overall usage of vaping was at 35.51%. In Lawrence County, the highest percentage of alcohol use was 13-14 year olds at 11.39%, the highest percentage marijuana usage was 13-14 year olds at 37.06% and overall usage of vaping was at 25.49%. In Scioto County, the highest percentage of alcohol use was 11-12 year olds at 26.38%, the highest percentage marijuana usage was 13-14 year olds at 47.83% and overall usage of vaping was at 23.65%. Prevention funds are one of the smallest pots of funds we receive, however we have contracted with three of our providers to provide prevention education in the schools in all three of our counties. They have been able to implement Vaping programs, Substance Use education, Life Skills and many other programs to educate our youth on the harm of using many of these substances. However, we do not receive enough funds to place these programs in all of our school systems.

"Empowering residents to be mentally and physically healthy and to lead addiction-free lifestyles"

I strongly believe that incorporating the addition of prevention training on all substance use annually in a developmentally appropriate way in their health curriculum in schools would be very beneficial. Unfortunately, we are seeing many younger children experimenting with substances at an earlier age at an alarming rate. We need to target our children at earlier stages in their life to prevent the use of harmful substances, if we wish to stem the tide of our overwhelming drug abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. If you have any questions about any of the information I've shared in this testimony, please contact me via email at sue_shultz@adamhsals.org or via phone at (740) 354-5648.