

Harford Youth Tobacco Use Down

The recent Department of Health and Mental Hygiene survey polled 82,500 students in Maryland on areas related to cigarette smoking, secondhand smoke, and related topics. The survey is done every two years and data can be compared to results from previous surveys. In Harford, all middle and high schools (with the exception of the Alternative Education Center) were sampled.

Results were very encouraging for Harford County's progress in decreasing the number of young people involved with tobacco use compared to the survey two years earlier. Harford County was one of two counties which saw a reduction in the initiation of tobacco use by under-age youth. The 32 percent reduction was the highest in the state. Harford County was third in the state for significant declines in tobacco use among under-age youth with a 38 percent reduction. The county also showed significant declines in the percentage of under-age youth who smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days (-48 percent). Out of 40 categories surveyed, Harford County showed decreased rates greater than the state rate in 34 of those categories. Harford students surveyed reflected significant declines in 22 of those categories.