



Ensuring Youth Stay Drug and Alcohol Free

Based in Columbus, Ohio, Youth to Youth (Y2Y) International aims to eliminate the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) by teens. Through their community-based, youth-led drug prevention strategy, Y2Y aims to “harness the powerful influence of peer pressure – making it a positive force that encourages young people to live free of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.” Y2Y holds the belief that youth are valuable and powerful resources in their own development and should be integrally involved in both program planning, as well as in the implementation of programs and services.

With the overall focus on reducing ATOD among teens, Y2Y facilitates weekly Youth Advisory Board (YAB) meetings and a collaborative summer conference. The YAB meetings focus on providing youth with leadership opportunities in relation to reducing alcohol and drug abuse and misuse. The meetings are open to all high school aged youth and serve as the “core” year-round programming for Y2Y. Additionally, Y2Y annually holds a 4-day summer conference in three locations across the nation. Through the process of working toward a common goal of promoting drug-free choices, the conferences are aimed at teaching youth the skills necessary to become peer mentors, role models, and community leaders against ATOD use in their communities. In 2013, Y2Y served 1,205 middle and high school youth across the U.S. and internationally through their cutting edge youth empowerment conferences and YAB.

In partnership with The Community and Youth Collaborative (CAYCI) at The Ohio State University (OSU) a recent evaluation of the YAB and Y2Y Summer Conferences illustrates the impact of Y2Y on the youth it serves. Overall, youth participating in Y2Y conferences significantly improved their knowledge, skills, and future intentions on eight key Y2Y outcomes (see Table 1). Additionally, nearly all of the youth reported that they were satisfied with the conferences, indicating that they really enjoyed the conference and increased their knowledge about ATOD as a result of their participation (see Table 2).



“I feel accepted and comfortable that we are all one against ATOD.”
—YAB Member

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Scores on Pre- and Post-Conference, and Six Month Follow-Up Surveys

Survey Construct	Pre	Post	Follow-Up
Knowledge About ATOD	4.66(.38) ^{ab}	4.87(.26) ^a	4.78(.48) ^b
Attitudes Towards ATOD Use	4.72 (.44)	4.69 (.57)	4.71 (.44)
Self-Efficacy	4.50(.43) ^{cd}	4.64(.57) ^c	4.68(.42) ^d
Personal Leadership	4.51(.40) ^{ef}	4.64(.43) ^e	4.67(.38) ^f
Leadership with Others	4.12(.84) ^g	4.27 (.85)	4.43(.72) ^g
Future Orientations / Involvement	4.64(.67) ^h	4.69 (.71)	4.81(.37) ^h

Note: Letters indicated statistically significant differences.

Table 2. Post-Conference Satisfaction

Survey Item	% Agree or Strongly Agree
My adult staff family group leader led this group well.	98%
My youth staff family group leader led this group well.	86%
I enjoyed the conference.	98%
I would tell a friend to attend the Y2Y conference.	97%
As a result of the conference, I increased my knowledge about ATOD risks & consequences.	97%
I would like to attend the Y2Y Summer Conference again.	96%
I would like to serve as a youth staff at the Y2Y Summer Conference.	79%

Even 6 months later, youth still had increased levels of knowledge, skills, and future intentions!

Evaluation data also suggest long-term successes associated with Y2Y, as youth continued to report increased knowledge, skills, and values even at 6-month post-conference participation. (See Figure 1). These findings illustrate the conferences' long-term impact on youth.

Findings also support the role of the YAB in further reinforcing values and norms for usage among youth involved in the program. Specifically continued growth occurred for YAB members in relationship to self-efficacy, leadership in group work and personal leadership, and leadership with others. Together, these findings suggest that Y2Y is contributing to the reduction of ATOD use among teens participating in their prevention programs.

In the end, by utilizing key prevention principles such as having youth-led programs, providing opportunities for youth to interact with other pro-social youth, and insisting upon a "no use" message, Y2Y is contributing in meaningful ways to preventing substance use and abuse among teens. For more information on these findings, please read the entire report available at: cayci.osu.edu.



Figure 1. Change in Leadership with Others

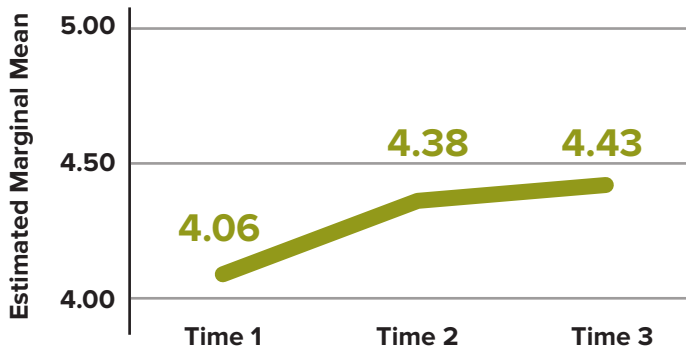


Figure 2. Change in Self-Efficacy

