

2023

**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT  
REPORT**

**YOUTH RISK AND  
PROTECTIVE  
FACTORS**



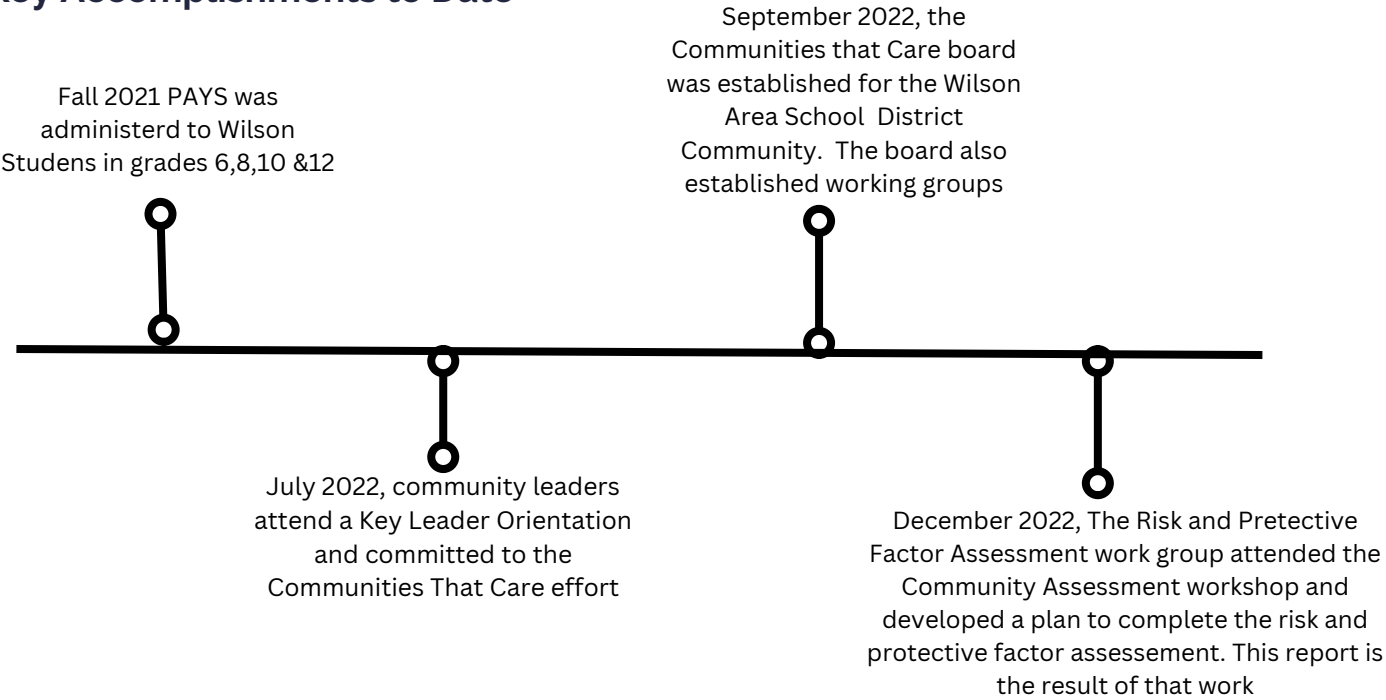
**WILSON AREA**  
COMMUNITIES THAT CARE COALITION

# WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

## What is the Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition?

The Wilson Area Communities that Care (CTC) Coalition is a group of youth, families, community leaders, business members, and residents from Wilson Area School District and surrounding communities. The coalition consists of a key leader board, to provide group guidance and organization; coalition members, to raise community concerns and develop possible solutions; and work groups that put the plan into action. Our members include district parents, residents, local health care experts, law enforcement members, community leaders, and members of non-profit organizations.

## Key Accomplishments to Date



## Our Mission Statement

Wilson Area is an inclusive and nurturing community that provides opportunities for success, purpose and well-being to empower our youth to become respectful, confident and healthy adults, who contribute positively to society.



## WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

### **Introduction to the Community Assessment Report**

This report describes the results of the Risk and Protective Factor Assessment completed as part of the work of the Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition. The Communities That Care system is a way for members of a community to work together to prevent youth problem behaviors, including substance use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop out and violence. The assessment was completed using the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) and publicly available data. The PAYS was administered to students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 in the Wilson Area School District in the Fall of 2021 with a 100% participation rate.



### **The Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS)**

PAYS is a primary tool in Pennsylvania's prevention approach of using data to drive decision-making. By not looking at just the rates of problem behaviors but also at the root causes of those behaviors, PAYS allows schools and communities to address reasons rather than symptoms. This approach has been repeatedly shown in national research studies to be very effective in helping youth develop into healthy and productive members of society.

Questions on the survey covered four domains - community, school, family, and peer/individual. These domains help determine where the strengths of the community are and which can be promoted to assist students. They also help to determine where potential problems exist inside and outside of school that can have an impact on a student's readiness to learn when they arrive at their school each morning.

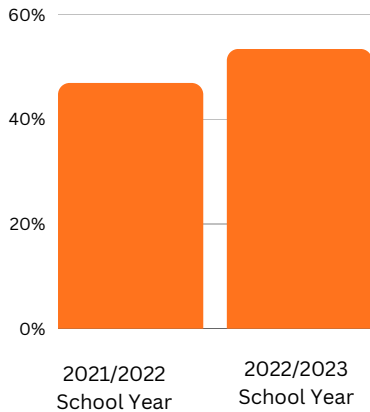


# WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

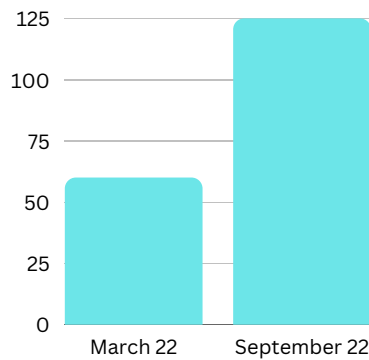
## Public Data Sources

Other data resources utilized to prepare this report include the district poverty rate as determined by the free and reduced lunch program, the district graduation rate, and food insecurity in the district.

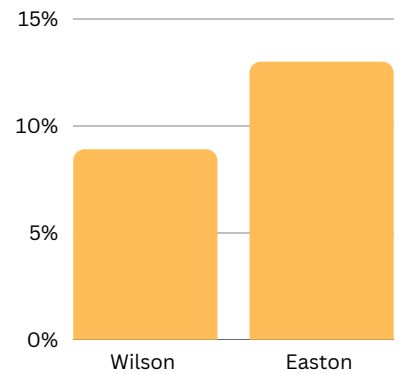
### Students with Free and Reduced Lunch



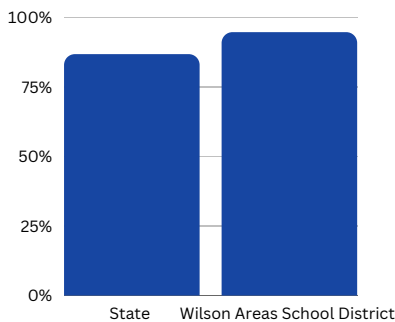
### Weekend Meal Distribution



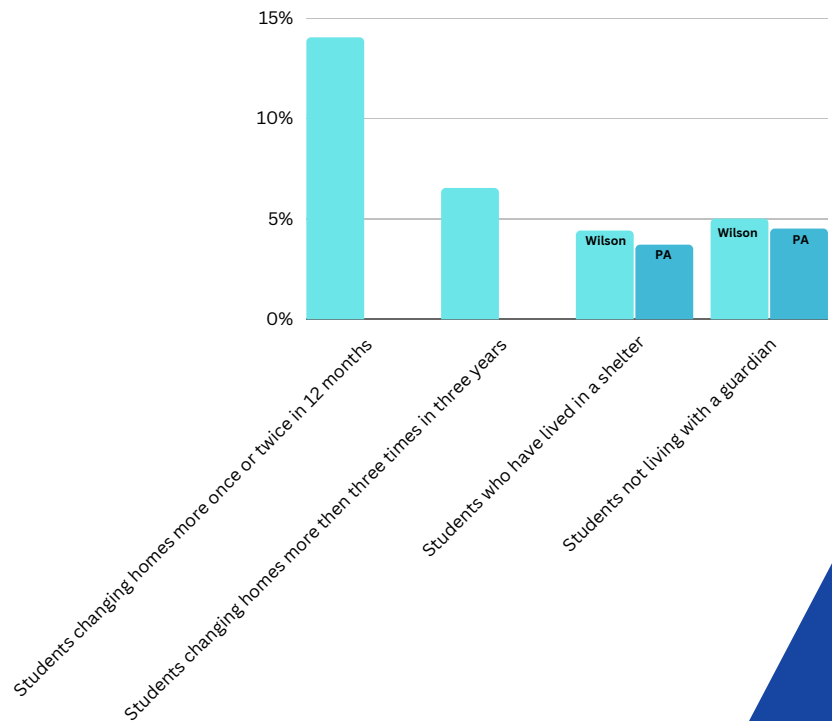
### Percentage of Families with SNAP benefits



### Graduation Rates



### District Homelessness and Transition Data



## WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

### How the Priorities Were Identified

The Risk and Protective Factor Assessment work group analyzed the data to identify which risk factors are most elevated in the Wilson Area Community. This initial list of priorities was presented to the Community Board, which discussed other considerations, such as the community's ability to have an impact on certain risk factors at this time. By consensus, the Community Board then selected the final priorities for prevention action in the Wilson Area Community.

### How is this Data Helpful?

The findings in this report will help to formulate the coalition's priorities so that we can create an empowered community that promotes holistic well-being through accessible resources and opportunities, collective responsibility, and meaningful engagement for all.

### Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition Priority Risk and Protective Factors

Risk Factors	Domain	Monitoring PAYS Over Time			
		County 2021	2017	2019	2021
Low Neighborhood Attachment	Community	48.00%	48.00%	48.00%	51.00%
Perceived Risk of Drug Use	Peer & Individual	55.00%	51.00%	52.00%	56.00%
Depressive Symptoms	Peer & Individual	45.00%	41.00%	37.00%	41.00%
Parental Attitudes Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior	Family	55.00%	40.00%	44.00%	53.00%
Protective Factors	Domain	Monitoring PAYS Over Time			
		County 2021	2017	2019	2021
Rewards for Prosocial Involvement	Community	32.00%	63.00%	53.00%	34.00%

# WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

## Risk Factor: Low Attachment to Community

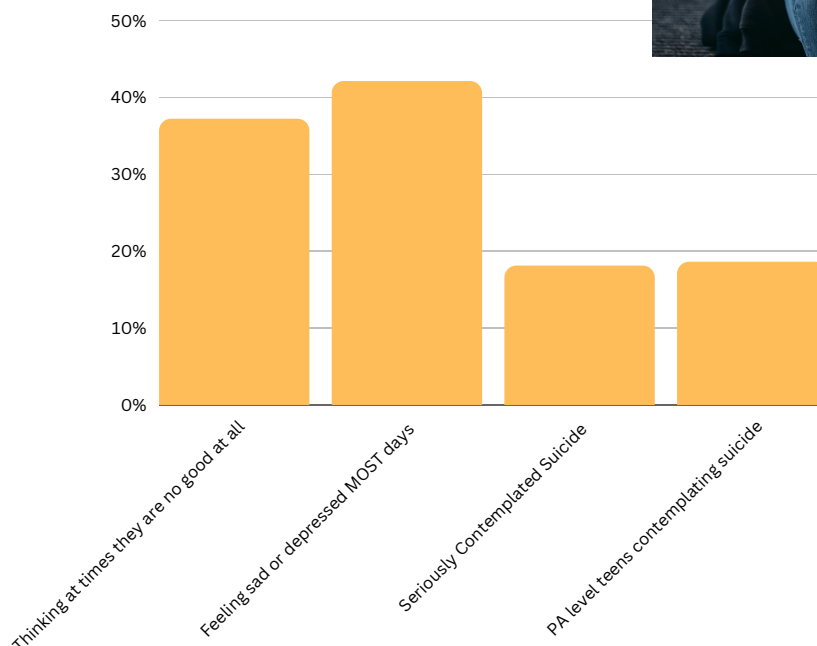
Higher rates of drug problems, delinquency, violence, and drug trafficking occur where people have little attachment to the community. Vandalism rates are high when there is low surveillance of public places. These conditions are not limited to low-income neighborhoods – they can also be found in more affluent neighborhoods. Perhaps the most significant issue affecting community attachment is whether residents feel they can make a difference in their communities. Neighborhood disorganization makes it more difficult for schools, churches, and families to promote positive social values and norms. This risk factor has been identified as a priority for the Wilson Area Community.

## Risk Factor: Depressive Symptoms

Important mental health habits—including coping, resilience, and good judgment—help adolescents to achieve overall wellbeing and set the stage for positive health in adulthood. Depression is the number one risk factor for suicide by teens, a risk amplified in teens self-medicating with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. While suicide is a general public health concern, suicidal thoughts and attempts are even more common among youth.



2021 PAYS Data  
Depressive Symptoms



## WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

### Risk Factor: Perceived Risk of Drug Use

A number of scientific studies have identified a link between mental health problems, such as depression, and the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATODs) during adolescence. Within the district, the percentage of students who reported Moderate Depressive Symptoms was 63.1%. Those with moderate symptoms have increased instances of both the lifetime and 30 day use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana from those who reported No Depressive Symptoms. Although the number of students reporting High Depressive Symptoms is only 6.9% of students, the instances of lifetime and 30 day substance use for students reporting High Depressive Symptoms increased significantly and almost doubled in alcohol and marijuana use.

	No Depressive Symptoms		Moderate Depressive Symptoms		High Depressive Symptoms	
	District 2021	State 2021	District 2021	State 2021	District 2021	State 2021
Depressive symptom alone	30.0	28.4	63.1	63.8	6.9	7.8
Alcohol Lifetime	22.1	19.8	38.8	39.7	60.5	57.3
Alcohol 30-Day	8.0	6.6	13.6	15.0	26.3	25.9
Cigarettes Lifetime	1.8	2.9	9.6	8.5	15.8	23.4
Cigarettes 30-Day	0.6	0.8	2.0	2.2	2.6	7.9
Marijuana Lifetime	4.9	5.4	18.7	14.4	34.2	30.6
Marijuana 30-Day	3.1	2.5	11.7	7.5	23.7	18.8

This trend is not confined to district students, when compared to the non-depressed group, youth in the state of Pennsylvania with high depressive symptoms indicate 30-day alcohol use rates that are four times higher than non-depressed students. Statewide, depressed students indicate use rates that are ten times higher for past-month cigarette use and seven times higher for past month marijuana use in comparison to non-depressed students.



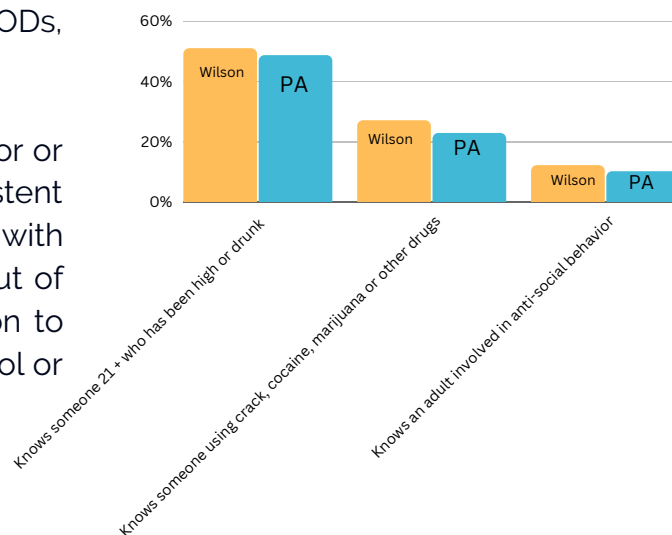
## WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

### Risk Factor: Parental Attitude Favorable Toward Antisocial Behavior

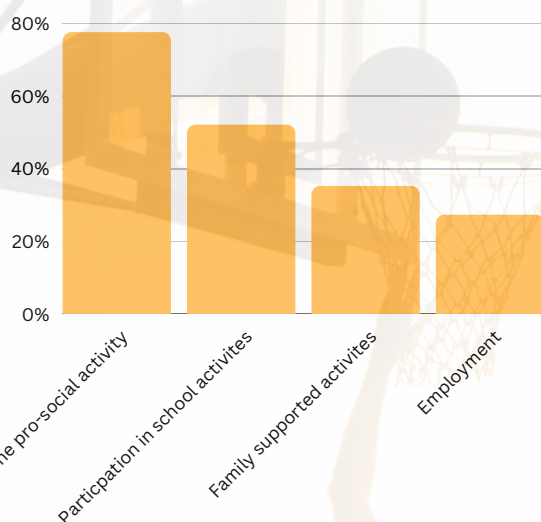
Antisocial behavior may involve outwardly directed aggression (against adults and peers or property), addictive behavior (gambling, dishonest communication, use or selling of ATODs, and suspension from school/arrest).

Children who experience unclear expectations for behavior or are given excessively severe, harsh, or inconsistent punishment are at a higher risk of developing problems with drug use, delinquency, violent behavior, and dropping out of school. Youth raised where there is a history of addiction to alcohol or other drugs are at a higher risk for having alcohol or other drug problems themselves.

Anti-social behavior



Pro-social involvement



### Protective Factor: Pro-Social Involvement

When young people participate in pro-social activities that foster healthy development, they are more likely to develop connections with peers and members of the community who engage in prosocial behaviors. Being engaged in pro-social activities provides opportunities for bonding with adult role models—such as community leaders, neighbors, police, or clergy—who can offer moral guidance and emotional support.



## Conclusion and Recommendations

### The Strengths of the Wilson Area Community

The data revealed that young people in the Wilson Area Community are motivated to follow society's expectations and standards. In particular, young people reported high levels of the protective factor "Belief in Moral Order" and low levels of the risk factor "Rebelliousness." The Wilson Area Community should work to build on this strength while enhancing other protective factors in its prevention efforts.

### Community Priorities

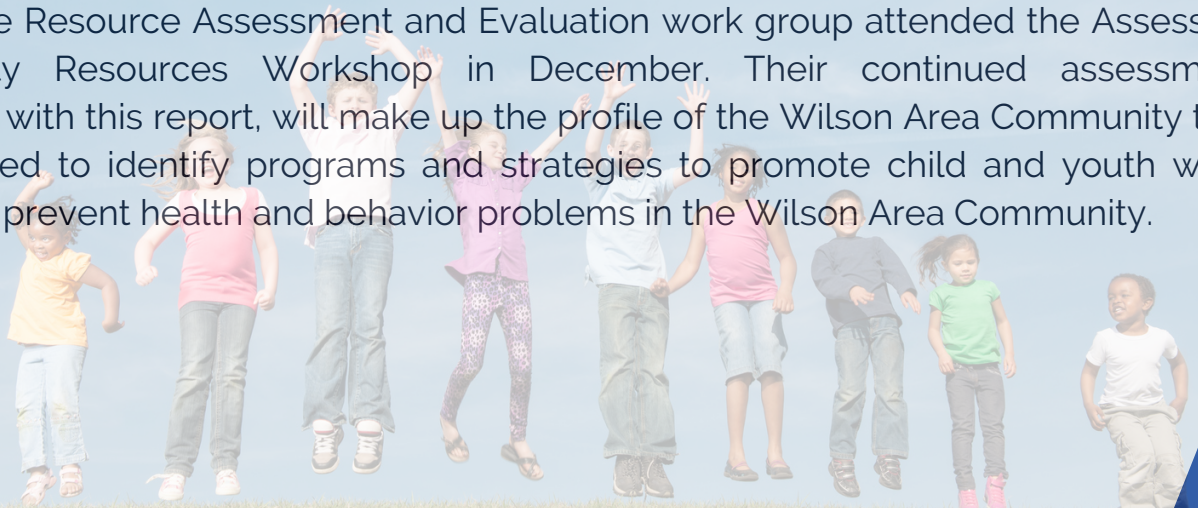
Based on the analysis of the data and input from the community, the following priority risk factors were identified for the community to focus on over the next several years:

- **Low Neighborhood Attachment (Community Domain)**
- **Depressive Symptoms (Peer and Individual Domain)**
- **Perceived Risk of Drug Use (Peer and Individual Domain)**
- **Parental Attitudes Toward Antisocial Behavior (Family)**

These risk factors were selected as priorities because the data indicated that they are among the most elevated throughout the Wilson Area Community. We recommend that the community give particular attention to implementing strategies or programs to address these four risk factors when developing a prevention plan.

### Next Steps

The next step in the Communities That Care process is to find out what resources are already in place in the Wilson Area Community that address the priorities outlined above. The Resource Assessment and Evaluation work group attended the Assessing Community Resources Workshop in December. Their continued assessment combined with this report, will make up the profile of the Wilson Area Community that will be used to identify programs and strategies to promote child and youth well-being and prevent health and behavior problems in the Wilson Area Community.



## WILSON AREA COMMUNITIES THAT CARE

### **A Call for Support**

It is crucial for leaders to support prevention efforts aimed at building protection and allocate additional resources to reduce these risks. There are several compelling reasons for this:

- Ensuring the well-being of young people: As leaders, it is our responsibility to prioritize the well-being and development of the younger generation.
- Investing in the future: Young people represent the future of our community. By addressing the risks they face, we are investing in a stronger and more resilient future.
- Economic benefits: Problem behaviors among young people can have significant economic implications for the community.
- Enhancing community safety: Problem behaviors, such as substance use and violence, not only harm the individuals involved but also pose a threat to community safety.

Ultimately, these efforts will contribute to the overall prosperity and resilience of the community as a whole.



## **Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition**

**This report was a collaborative effort and compiled by our coalition's Community Board members listed below.**

### **Community Board Members**

Sherry Darr	Concern For Kids
Ellen Denizard	Star Community Health
Pamela Drager	Magellan Behavioral Health of PA
Rev. Jamie Edelman	United Fellowship Lutheran Church
Martha Fenningham	Valley Youth House
Tanya Falero	Third Street Alliance for Women and Children
Jaclyn Hudak	St. Luke's Health Network
Traci Knopf	Wilson Area School District
Prem Kumar	Lafayette College
Dr. Alex Mindler	Wilson Area School District
Meghann Moyer	Wilson Area School District
Nella Panella	Community Bike Works
Laura Samson	Wilson Area School District
Joelle Strahler	Community Representative/Wilson Alum
Amber Walsh	Concern Therapist WASD Social Worker
Dr. David Wright	Wilson Area LINCS Family Center
Wendy Wright	The Center for Humanistic Change



## Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition

Our Key Leaders have pledged their support to the coalition and advise us on funding opportunities, and other essential resources.

### Key Leaders

Robyn Barbosa	Northampton County Dept. of Human Services
Donald Barrett	Wilson Borough Mayor
Susan Dalandan	Lehigh Valley Food Policy Council
Iris Delgado	AmeriHealth Caritas
Melissa Flores	Two Rivers Health and Wellness Foundation
Tiffany Grabinski MSN, RN	St. Luke's VNA
Joan Heebner	West Easton Borough
Jaclyn Hudak	St. Luke's University Health Network
Carla Kohler	Lehigh Valley PBS
Lisa Liddington	Lehigh Valley Health Network
Chief Robert Mahady	West Easton Borough
Chief Chris Meehan	Wilson Borough Police Department
Laura Samson	Wilson Area School District
Trooper Ryan Seiple	Pennsylvania State Police
Beth Tomlinson	United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley
George Washburn	Williams Township Board of Supervisors
Justin Woodring	Wilson Borough Council Member
Dr. David Wright	Wilson Area LINCS Family Center

#### Special Thanks To:

U.S. Representative Susan Wild

State Senator Lisa Boscola

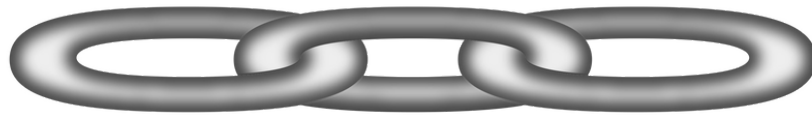
State Representative Robert Freeman

The U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Pennsylvania



**WILSON AREA**  
COMMUNITIES THAT CARE COALITION

**LINCS**



*Linking Family, Community, and School*

**Contact:**

Trina Johnson-Brady

Community Mobilizer

Wilson Area Communities That Care Coalition

Wilson Area LINCS Family Center, Inc.

[tjohnsonbrady@wilsonareasd.org](mailto:tjohnsonbrady@wilsonareasd.org)

[LINCSfamilycenter.org/Coalition](http://LINCSfamilycenter.org/Coalition)