

Castle Rock CARE Coalition Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an effort to create a healthier community, key leaders of Castle Rock came together in 2003 because they were concerned about the local substance abuse problems among the youth population. Partnerships were formed between schools, the business community, public health, social services, local law enforcement, parents, youth, senior citizens, the faith-based community and local government. The committee, looking specifically at youth substance use issues, was ground breaking. This committee asked citizens to take the lead in developing a coalition bringing community groups and agencies together to assist in modifying the norms and traditions favorable to alcohol and drug use. Specifically, they asked for community involvement to improve the local situation for youth in Castle Rock. The CARE Coalition was formed and has a nine-year history of collaboration among the community with strong representation from its leaders and citizens, and has learned over time that collectively more can be done for the community.

Area to Be Served:

The city of Castle Rock is just off Interstate 5, roughly one third of the way from Portland, Oregon to Seattle, Washington. Castle Rock rests at the foot of Mt. St. Helens (western access point) and at the northern end of Cowlitz County. Castle Rock serves the areas west and east of Interstate 5 and along State Highway 504, which runs between Castle Rock and the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. The population of Castle Rock is 2,150, with about 8,000 additional residents living in the surrounding area. The community has little ethnic or racial diversity (93% Caucasian/Non Hispanic). Two-thirds of the households are single parent families. Like most rural communities, the schools are the hub of activity. Student athletic and artistic performances are sources of pride and entertainment for the community at large. The Castle Rock CARE Coalition serves the community of Castle Rock, using the school district boundaries to define the area that includes Castle Rock, Vader, and Ryderwood, Washington.

Mission:

The Castle Rock CARE Coalition is dedicated to mobilizing the community and the community's human resources in fostering positive values and healthy lifestyles in order to influence and empower our youth and adults to live drug free, make responsible choices, and to become productive citizens.

Need:

Despite best efforts of local prevention initiatives, underage drinking continues to pose a serious threat to young people in the Castle Rock community, as evidenced by local data (Healthy Youth Survey, 2010). Utilizing the Prevention Redesign Initiative (PRI) and the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) model's needs assessment steps; the CARE Coalition reviewed the nature and extent of youth substance use, using data sources listed in the Assessment section of this report.

Priorities Identified:

The planning committee conducted a thorough assessment of local data to determine the extent of the substance abuse problem. Castle Rock looked specifically at local data, and where it was not available, county data was used. Patterns and consequences of underage drinking were analyzed, as well as environmental factors (alcohol availability, community norms), risk factors, and protective factors relative to underage drinking, risky behaviors, and pro-social skills.