

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WellSpring Community Network (WCN) serves the small communities of Chinook, Ilwaco, Long Beach, Seaview, Oysterville, and Ocean Park, Washington. The area makes up the 28 mile long 3 mile wide Long Beach Peninsula bordered by the mouth of the Columbia River, the Pacific Ocean, and Willapa Bay. Located an hour and a half from the I-5 corridor; and three and a half hours from Seattle the Long Beach Peninsula is rural and isolated. The area is served by one local middle/high school (Ilwaco Middle High School) and two K-6 elementary schools (Ocean Park and Long Beach).

The coalition was established in 2006 (originally under the name South Pacific County Community Network) through a statewide initiative to support grassroots coalitions and coordinate local efforts to address youth substance use and other community problems. Comprised of adult and youth volunteers, representatives from local schools, businesses, faith communities, local and state government, law enforcement, healthcare professionals, local business, media, and youth serving organizations, coalition membership brings together a broad cross-section of the community.

In 2008, WCN received a Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant and in 2011, was selected as part of cohort one of the Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery (DBHR) Prevention Redesign Initiative (PRI). Additionally, WCN serves as the Community Mobilization Against Substance Abuse (CMASA) policy board and as the south county Family Policy Council (FPC) network. The coordination and leveraging of these funding sources have propelled WellSpring's considerable growth over the past several years and positioned our coalition as the source for community leadership, communication, and coordination of youth substance use prevention programs on the Long Beach Peninsula.

Over the past several years, WCN has refined its focus to prevention of two primary substances of underage use: alcohol and prescription drugs. While our data have improved from 2006, there is still a substantial youth substance use problem in our community. In addition, we have identified several substance use related consequences such as juvenile crime, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and teen depression and suicide, as issues that can be affected by our work. In response to these problems, WCN and our partners support a variety of direct service and environmental strategies designed to reduce youth substance use including: Project Northland, Class Action, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Adventure Day, Girls Circle, Youth Coalition, Teen's Against Tobacco Use (TATU), Youth Action Klub (YAK), "Let's Draw the Line" campaign, Parenting Programs (SFP, MPP), Red Ribbon Week, retailer compliance checks, shoulder tapping, ATOD policy work in the schools and community, social norms campaign, RX Take Backs, and annual town hall events. Members of the coalition are confident that while the direct focus of the strategies will be mostly targeting alcohol and RX use, many of the strategies will apply and have a positive impact on all substances.

Our goals are to continue the downward trend (since 2006) of youth substance use as evidenced by reductions of 30 days use and age of initiation of Alcohol and Prescription Drugs among 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in the Ocean Beach School district. We will achieve this by increasing perception of harm, perception of peer and parental disapproval, and age of onset. We believe that by reducing youth substance use, we will also reduce the substance use related consequences as well. We use the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) to guide our work. **Our mission is:** Through advocacy, awareness and action, we will create a community culture that strengthens families, reduces substance use, and promotes mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness