

Abstract

The mission of the Washougal Community Coalition is ***Building a community that is connected and involved, empowered by healthy choices and strong family units.*** This coalition includes community members, school representatives, youth, parents, local government, treatment, business, law enforcement, partnering prevention coalitions, and youth serving organizations, service clubs, and other involvement community service agencies. This is a true grass roots coalition built by motivated and enthusiastic community members who care passionately about the health and wellness of their fellow community members.

By addressing risk factors associated with poor school performance and youth delinquency, the Washougal Community Coalition plans to reduce underage drinking, youth marijuana use, and youth prescription drug abuse.

Washougal is a small community, and community members are keenly aware of changes that have slowly taken place in the community over the last ten years. Compared to the state, Washougal data is not extremely alarming; however, community members are alarmed at the changes they are seeing on a day-to-day basis within the community. Youth are appearing hopeless, and sometimes reckless, and often are leaving the community as soon as they are able. Community members are ready to learn more about why this is happening in the community and implement strategies to address these changes with their youth. Washougal is a community full of members who are loyal, but cautious about expressing their community loyalty. They want to be proud of where they come from, but are tired of the countywide attitudes of negativity toward the community. Washougal is a community of readiness, readiness to address real issues in the fabric of the community. Washougal Community Coalition Members are motivated and dedicated to addressing the issues in a strategic and effective way.

The Washougal Community Coalition has reviewed their local data, and shared their personal perspectives and experiences in order to prioritize efforts in the community. They have chosen to address lack of community pride, lack of coordination of community services, to better understand and address youth access to substances, correct exaggerated perceptions of youth substance abuse by both youth and adults in the community, increase youth perception of harm, and increase family management skills.

The coalition will serve the entire Washougal community, reaching parents and students in the Washougal School District. The efforts of the coalition will result in an increase in community pride and collaboration and a reduction of underage drinking, youth marijuana use, and youth prescription drug abuse.