

## **ABSTRACT**

Substance Free Youth (SFY) is a coalition of concerned citizens, organizations, and agencies working to prevent substance abuse among youth in West Vancouver, Washington, by fostering awareness and education, and encouraging participation by individuals, families, and the community. Using the Strategic Prevention Framework of repeated assessments, planning, implementation, and evaluation, SFY will partner with a variety of community organizations and agencies to increase public awareness, enhance school based prevention and intervention services, implement environmental strategies and provide direct services designed to aid in substance abuse prevention.

Healthy Youth Survey data from 2012 indicate that many youth in West Vancouver report that alcohol and marijuana are easy to get, that their friends drink alcohol and use marijuana, and that youth don't think drinking or marijuana use is wrong or risky. Many West Vancouver youth feel that parents' attitudes towards drug use are favorable and have a perception that police do not enforce underage substance use laws. These attitudes and beliefs contribute to underage drinking and marijuana use, which also may contribute to the use of other drugs. Use of drugs and alcohol results in poor school performance, delinquency, and mental health issues detrimental to both the individuals and the community.

To combat these attitudes and beliefs, SFY will recruit membership from diverse sectors of the community to support and participate in projects and programs that increase awareness that most youth do not drink or use marijuana, that alcohol and marijuana is damaging both immediately and long term, and that parents are the predominant influence on youth decisions.

The 2013-14 projects and programs will fall into the following categories: Public Awareness, Environmental Strategies, School-based Prevention/Intervention Services and Direct Services. Details of the strategies included in these categories are described in this strategic plan document.

SFY has had success in creating awareness of the coalition through social media, events, and the community survey; implementing evidenced based Alcohol True Stories Program and Media Ready program; completing an Environmental Strategies training and Research Workgroup; providing a prevention program at Discovery Middle School's 5<sup>th</sup> grade parent orientation night; providing a Cultural Competency training for the community; and including an effective and highly attended prevention and intervention program at the middle school of focus.

In addition to projects and programs, coalition efforts are directed toward the creation and maintenance of relationships with potential partners, recruitment, and continuous evolution of coalition structure and methods. From these, we expect a significant decrease in youth alcohol and marijuana use in West Vancouver as measured by the Healthy Youth Survey.

## MISSION & PURPOSE

Substance Free Youth (SFY) is a coalition comprised of concerned citizens, organizations and agencies in the pursuit of a community which provides its youth an environment that is free of substance abuse. Its mission is to reduce substance abuse among youth by fostering awareness and education, and encouraging participation by individuals, families, and the community. The current focus of the coalition is to reduce alcohol and marijuana use among youth in West Vancouver, Washington. The Strategic Prevention Framework will be used to develop the infrastructure needed to effectively and sustainably lead to reductions in alcohol use and abuse. The Strategic Prevention Framework includes the following components: assessment, capacity, planning, implementation, evaluation, sustainability and cultural competence (CADCA, 2010). As the coalition evolves with new members, new strategies, new community leaders, and changing local conditions, the Strategic Prevention Framework will be repeatedly applied on an ongoing basis.



SFY will partner with various community organizations and agencies to provide public awareness, environmental strategies, school-based prevention/intervention services and direct services. The programs and strategies selected will be evaluated for their effectiveness to reduce underage drinking and marijuana use in West Vancouver.