

Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative

Partners for Healthy Communities

Coalition Mission

Our mission is to promote and support a healthy, safe, and economically viable community, free from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, violence, and related social issues affecting our youth and families.



Coalition Coordinator

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Bio: Laura Tolman has worked for Blue Mountain Counseling in Dayton, Columbia County as the Coalition for Youth & Families Coordinator since September 2012. Laura has a passion for preventing underage substance use. She loves her community and sees great potential in Dayton's youth.

Coalition for Youth & Families

Dayton, WA



About the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI)

CPWI is a partnership of state agencies, counties, schools and local prevention coalitions supporting communities in preventing alcohol and other drug abuse and its negative consequences. CPWI priorities include reducing underage drinking, marijuana use and opioid misuse/abuse among middle and high school aged youth. By providing evidence-based practices and promoting the positive changes in communities, we can build healthier communities.

About the Coalition: Communities & Schools Working Together

The Coalition for Youth and Families began in 2009 and has become an important part of the community. Many of Dayton's key leaders and volunteers have become members. Members and partners include parents, representatives from the Dayton School District, the local news media, the county health department, health care providers, the County Prosecutor, Juvenile Justice staff, the City of Dayton Mayor and the Columbia County Commissioners.

Last year 15 youth attended the Summer Youth Coalition training, and 20 students participated in another leadership retreat planned and facilitated by the Dayton High School Youth Coalition.

Youth participation in community initiatives and their success bringing other young people into the program strengthens the coalition. We hope more parents will also join our coalition in the next year, adding their influence to create the positive changes in attitudes, norms, and behaviors that will prevent and reduce youth substance use.



About Our Community

- Rich in history, this area was explored by Lewis and Clark who camped on the Patit Creek, east of Dayton, in 1806. By 1861 the community had turned to farming wheat and other grain because of the highly fertile soil. By 1872 the town had been platted, named, and the post office established.
- Dayton has a population of 2,526, consisting of an ethnic diversity of; 91.6% White, 1.9% Indian/Alaska Native, .6% Asian, .4% Black, 7.1% Hispanic/Latino and 5.6% Other. Dayton has a median income of \$39,591 and its zoning is rural.
- Challenges the Coalition faces include school policies and laws that are not consistently enforced, a lack of knowledge of the harm caused by underage alcohol use, a low perception of risk and consequences among youth, and a community where many believe underage drinking is a “rite of passage.”

The Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) shows Dayton students have a higher rate of substance use than the state average, and a lower perception of risk. Educating our community and developing common policies between schools, law enforcement and juvenile justice organizations is key to overcoming these challenges. An interagency team will continue to work to implement this strategy. One of the strengths of our community is a growing core of dedicated students working to overcome challenges.

About Prevention Programs in our Community

Coalition goals include educating youth about how they can make healthy choices. We provide the Second Step program to young students and Life Skills training for high school students to help accomplish this goal. We will continue to work with the school district to improve and implement school policy.

The Coalition will be able to track progress through annual community surveys, coalition assessment tools, Second Step and Life Skills pre/post surveys and the HYS.

Other Contacts



Student Assistance
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CPWI is funded by

Washington State
Health Care Authority

For more information
about CPWI visit

www.TheAthenaForum.org