

Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative

Partners for Healthy Communities

Coalition Mission & Vision

Our coalition leads community efforts to address the conditions that lead to youth substance use and misuse in Centralia, Washington. We believe that all children can succeed, and that relationships with caring adults are key to success.



Coalition Coordinator

Sara Bumgardner
360-520-6879
360 NW North St
Chehalis WA 98532
sara.bumgardner@lewis
countywa.gov

Bio: Sara found her passion in community health and prevention during her time as an AmeriCorps VISTA. Now, working for Lewis County Public Health & Social Services, she uses her past experiences to help organize Centralia partners in building a healthy, thriving community.

Centralia Prevention Coalition

Centralia, WA

About the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI)

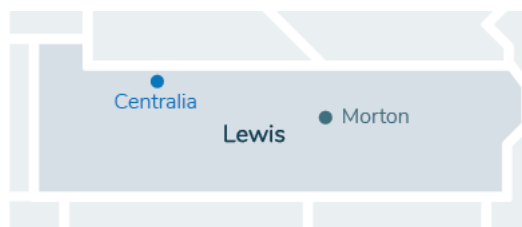
CPWI is a partnership of state agencies, counties, schools and local prevention coalitions supporting communities in preventing alcohol and other drug abuse and its negative consequences. CPWI priorities include reducing underage drinking, marijuana use and opioid misuse/abuse among middle and high school 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 Centralia Prevention Coalition is a passionate group of volunteers working together to improve young lives by preventing youth substance use and misuse. The coalition started working together in 2018 to respond to high rates of teen drug misuse in Centralia. Our coalition members' work together to plan prevention projects that will make a difference.

The experience and passion for service from Educational Service District 113 have been a big part of our early successes. They have prevention strategy knowledge and highly trained staff ready to implement interventions. Our other key partners include Family Educational Support Services, Cascade Community Healthcare, Community Integrated Health Services, and Centralia Middle School. They bring valuable insights into the realities facing Centralia youth and families. The coalition also includes parents, law enforcement, community organizations, and health insurance providers. We hope to expand participation from these sectors in the future.

So far, the biggest challenges we face are community education and organization. Coalition work is relatively new to Centralia, as is prevention science. Simply explaining the process to each new participant can be difficult, and the necessary training is time-consuming. This leads to an organizational structure that is more top-down than collaborative, but that is improving. Thankfully the coalition members are resourceful, thoughtful, and have a passion for service to others, which sustains us.



About Our Community

Centralia, as its name suggests, is in the center of the Pacific Northwest's most populated region, lying exactly halfway between Seattle and Portland, Oregon. These unique characteristics have been an integral part of the city's development. Initially a provider and processor of natural resources and agricultural products, Centralia has been transitioning to light manufacturing, logistics, and service industries over the last several decades.

The greater Lewis County area is home to rivers, lakes, wild spaces, and outdoor adventure opportunities. The area hosts several arts organizations and festivals, including the largest regional fair in Southwest Washington. Centralia College serves as cultural hub for the area, holding Hispanic heritage events and serving as the overnight campsite for the annual Seattle to Portland bicycle ride. Lewis County is a friendly place, with folks more likely to help than not, and an attitude that what is conceivable is achievable.

About Prevention Programs in our Community

The Centralia Prevention Coalition has the goal of reducing Centralia students' marijuana, tobacco, and prescription drug misuse rates by 10% by the 2024 Healthy Youth Survey. The coalition will accomplish this by addressing the local conditions which lead to youth substance use, namely poor connections between students and their community, easy access to drugs, positive attitudes about youth drug use, and few prosocial opportunities for youth.

In the schools, our Student Assistance Professional will implement a communication curriculum called Life Skills with all 7th and 8th grade students and act as an advisor to the Youth Prevention Team. For Centralia families, we offer the parenting classes Guiding Good Choices, which has proven to make a difference. In the community, we are holding educational events focused on prevention and community strength building, as well as participation in national prevention events such as Drug Take Back Day in April and October. We are also preparing for a community-wide campaign to promote positive community norms and correct misperceptions about youth substance use.

Other Contacts



Student Assistance Program
Specialist
ESD 113 Capital Region
Rick Miranda
360-748-2274
rmiranda@esd113.org



County Contact
Lindsey Shankle
Social Services Supervisor
(360) 520-1424
Lindsey.Shankle@lewiscountywa.gov

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For more information
about CPWI visit
www.TheAthenaForum.org