

Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative

Partners for Healthy Communities

Coalition Mission

The **Mission** of the Panther Country Coalition is to *prevent youth substance use* by promoting health and safety through education, community bonding, and personal empowerment.



Coalition Coordinator

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Pend Oreille County
Counseling Services

Panther Country Coalition



Cusick, WA

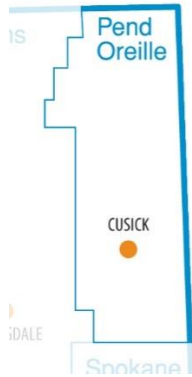
About the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI)

CPWI is a partnership of communities, schools, counties, local prevention coalitions and state agencies. CPWI supports communities in preventing the abuse and negative consequences of alcohol, drugs and other substances. CPWI priorities include reducing underage drinking, marijuana use and opioid misuse/abuse among middle and high school aged youth. We provide evidence-based practices and promote positive changes in communities. Together we can build healthier communities.

About the Coalition: Communities & Schools Working Together

Panther Country Coalition (PCC) is a grassroots volunteer organization formed in August of 2013 to mobilize the Cusick community. Our goal is to prevent and reduce youth substance use. We work in partnership with youth, law enforcement, local government, healthcare, faith-based organizations, volunteer groups, youth organizations, parents, businesses and community members to support our youth living substance free lives. PCC is governed by citizen volunteers and representatives from local agencies. We work in collaboration with the Cusick School District, Northeast Washington Educational Service District, The Kalispel Tribe, The Town of Cusick, Washington State University Extension Office, The Tri-County Health District and Pend Oreille County.

Cusick and Usk, WA have a rich history. The earliest inhabitants were Indian tribes. Archaeological evidence shows Native American presence as early as 11,000 years ago. In 1809 the North West Company explorer David Thompson (1770-1857) made his first trip down the Pend Oreille River. The Indians he found were the Kalispels, which means "camas people," after a root that was their staple food, and the Pend Oreilles. The Kalispels have their reservation near Usk and are still a prominent part of the community. By the 1850's timber was the major extractive industry. Today the main employers are the Kalispel Tribe and the Cusick School District.



Teepee and Canoe - Pend Oreille River, 1860

About Our Community

The Panther Country Coalition serves the communities of the Cusick School District which includes a population of approximately 1,300. The School District serves 285 students in grades K-12 including those from the nearby Kalispel Indian Reservation and Kalispel Salish School. We are in beautiful Pend Oreille County in the northeast corner of Washington State, 50 miles north of Spokane and 20 miles from Newport.

General Statistics

Zoning – Rural

Cusick median household income (2019) = \$44,375

Compared to WA median household income = \$78,687

Student demographics for October 2020 (K-12)

October 2020	Student Count	285
Male		52%
Female		47%
Free or Reduced Meals		62 %

Race/Ethnicity

American Indian/Alaska Native	23%
Asian	0.7%
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	8.4%
White	50%
Two or more races	16%

About Prevention Programs in our Community

Some of our goals and strategies include decreasing favorable attitudes among youth towards drinking and marijuana use and increasing their perception of harm and risks associated with underage alcohol and marijuana use. We are implementing anti-drug messages and programs that bring awareness to our community about underage drinking and youth substance use through media campaigns such as “Start Talking Now” and “You Can”. Another strategy is to increase family management skills and effective communication between parents and youth. We offer a parenting workshops like “Guiding Good Choices” and “Strengthening Families Program” throughout the year. Additional evidenced based programs offered are “Sport Prevention & Wellness” and the culturally centered “Healing of the Canoe” curriculum. Collaborating with our community partners remains a high priority.

Other Contacts

Student Assistance
Program Specialists

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Cusick School District



CPWI is funded by

Washington State
Health Care Authority

For more information
about CPWI visit

www.TheAthenaForum.org