

Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative

Partners for Healthy Communities

Coalition Mission:

The Coalition for Drug-Free Youth educates, inspires and empowers our community to support youth and to create a safe, healthy environment aimed at addressing alcohol, tobacco and other drug problems.

Coalition Coordinator



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Rudy has worked in public and community affairs for more than 40 years. He brings a unique view to prevention with his marketing and public relations background working with multi-ethnic communities in Washington State and California.



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 and Schools Working Together

In 2012, King County Department of Community and Human Services' Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (now renamed to Behavioral Health and Recovery Division) awarded a CPWI grant to Navos Mental Health Solutions to develop a community coalition focused on alcohol and other drug prevention in the White Center/North Highline community.

The Coalition for Drug-Free Youth targets community members, organizations and groups in the White Center/North Highline area as well as staff, students and families in the Highline School District (HSD). Specifically we work with students and staff at Cascade Middle School, New Start High School and Evergreen High School.

Our Coalition enjoys the support and participation of numerous programs and service providers, including the HSD, the business community, faith-based organizations, government and law enforcement, civic and volunteer organizations such as the White Center Kiwanis, health care, media and youth-serving organizations guiding students in implementing positive norms activities on-campus and the nearby community.

Other Contacts



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Department of Community and
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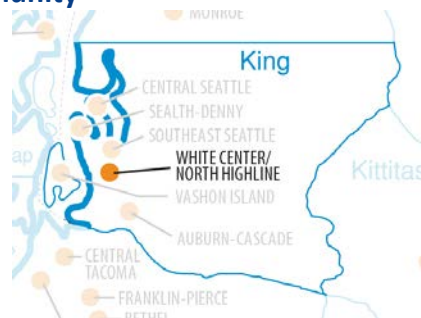


Transforming lives

For more information about CPWI
visit DSHS.wa.gov/CPWI

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About Our Community



Cascade Middle School

Evergreen Campus



The White Center/North Highline community is rich in cultural diversity with a mix of refugees and immigrants, people of color, ethnicity, country of origin and spoken languages. It's a youthful community, with more than 40% of children and teens in King County living in South King County.

This diversity creates the challenge of engaging community members in school and community activities unfamiliar to their cultures. Additionally, the majority of immigrants and refugees speak a language other than English at home: most common being Spanish, Somali, Vietnamese and Khmer/Cambodian. Immigrants from other African and Arabic countries are joining with long-standing Asian, Pacific Islander and African American groups. While this creates challenges for engagement, this also provides opportunities for cross-cultural learning and sharing experiences such as through Multi-cultural Nights at the schools.

The region is characterized by high levels of poverty, limited access to health care and employment opportunities, and cross-cultural differences that contribute to lack of unity in the community. Lack of specifically localized media reflecting the various languages of the community adds to the challenge of engaging these communities in a consistent manner.

As with many communities that have similar demographics, factors beyond economics put students at higher risk of substance use, including low attachment to community and school, lower academic level, and feelings of alienation, particularly among youth.

Adding to these factors are a number of retail/recreational marijuana stores that have been licensed in the area, raising concerns about youth access to marijuana and changing community norms.

Still, the coalition, in partnership with various service providers, have developed close relationships with these disparate communities that have resulted in providing families and youth with healthy and wise alternatives to substance use.

About Prevention Programs in our Community

The Coalition for Drug-Free Youth is one of more than 50 CPWI prevention organizations throughout the state. Our youth development opportunities include Prevention Teams at the schools, LifeSkills training, Project SUCCESS, mentoring, community-building and public awareness activities.