

# Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative

## *Partners for Healthy Communities*

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### 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.*

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### Coalition Coordinator



#### **Rudy Garza**

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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.

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### 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. Our highest priority is to reduce underage drinking among 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students by promoting positive changes in communities.

### About the Coalition: Communities and Schools Working Together

In 2012, King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services (MHCADSD), Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Program 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 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 at Cascade Middle School and its adjacent Evergreen Campus, home to three small high schools: Arts & Academics Academy, Health Sciences & Human Services High School, and Technology-Engineering-Communications (TEC) 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, health care, media and such youth-serving organizations as Community Schools Collaboration and the King County Library System.

In collaboration with Puget Sound Educational Services District and Community Schools Collaboration we have created an active Prevention Team at Cascade Middle School, guiding students in implementing positive norms activities on-campus and the nearby community.

## Other Contacts

### **Karen Sissom: Student Assistance Program Specialist**

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### **County Contact: Jackie Berganio**

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**King County**

Department of Community and Human Services  
Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Program



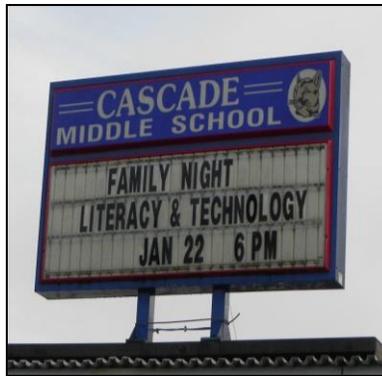
### **CPWI is funded by:**



Washington State  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

*Transforming lives*

For more information about CPWI visit  
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dbhr/dapr/eventionservices.shtml>



## About Our Community

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 outside of their respective ethnic enclaves. The majority of immigrants and refugees speak a language other than English at home: most common being Spanish, Somali, Vietnamese and Khmer/ Cambodian. Long-standing Pacific Islander and African American groups are being joined by immigrants from other African and Arabic countries.

High levels of poverty, limited access to health care and employment opportunities, lack of community unity and cross-cultural differences characterize the region. There is also a lack of specifically localized media reflecting the various languages of the community.

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

Adding to these factors are a number of medical marijuana dispensaries that have settled in the area, raising concerns about youth access to marijuana and changing community norms.

Still, the community benefits from various programs and services, both in the community and through the Highline School District, aimed at 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, including three other coalitions in King County, i.e., the Central Seattle Drug Free Communities Coalition, the SE Seattle P.E.A.C.E. Coalition, and the Vashon Alliance to Reduce Substance Abuse (VARSA). We provide youth development opportunities, tools to help parents raise drug-free youth, and community-building and public awareness activities.