

# Community Prevention & 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



### Rudy Garza

Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD)

800 Oakesdale Ave SW  
Renton, WA 98057-5221

(425) 917-7763  
Rudy.garza@psed.org

Bio: 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.

## Coalition for Drug-Free Youth White Center/North Highline



## 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.

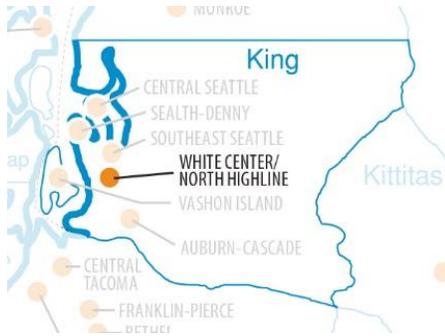
## About the Coalition: Communities & Schools Working Together

In 2012, King County Behavioral Health and Recovery Division awarded a CPWI grant to Navos Mental Health Solutions to develop a community coalition (Coalition for Drug-Free Youth - CDFY) focused on alcohol and other drug prevention in the White Center/North Highline community. Navos served as the Coalition's Fiscal Agent through July, 2018.

In August, 2018, CDFY member Puget Sound Educational Services District (PSESD) assumed Fiscal Agent responsibilities, ensuring the continuation of the Coalition's prevention efforts.

The CDFY teams with community members and organizations in the White Center/North Highline area as well as staff, students and families in the Highline School District (HSD), primarily Cascade Middle School, Evergreen High School and New Start High School in its prevention efforts. HSD also provides funding support for the Student Assistance Professional at Cascade Middle 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.



## About Our Community

Cascade Middle School    Evergreen Campus    New Start High School



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 often unfamiliar to their cultures. The majority of immigrants and refugees speak a language other than English at home: most common being Spanish, Somali, Vietnamese and Khmer/Cambodian. Combining with immigrants from other African and Arabic countries, and together with long-standing Asian, Pacific Islander and African American groups this creates challenges for engagement, but 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 several licensed recreational marijuana stores in the area, the rise in accessibility and popularity of e-cigarettes, specifically vaping, raising concerns about youth access to marijuana and synthetic drugs and changing community norms.

## 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.

**Taylor Freyberg**

Student Assistance  
Program Specialist  
Prevention/Intervention  
PSESD

(253) 797-7451

[tfreyberg@psesd.org](mailto:tfreyberg@psesd.org)



**County Contact:**

Jackie Berganio  
Community Coordinator  
(206) 263-8931

[jackie.berganio@kingcounty.gov](mailto:jackie.berganio@kingcounty.gov)



Department of Community and  
Human Services

**CPWI is funded by**



For more information  
about CPWI visit

[www.TheAthenaForum.org](http://www.TheAthenaForum.org)