

# Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative

Partners for Healthy Communities

## Coalition Mission

With a belief that all children can succeed, we lead efforts to improve young lives by emphasizing our strengths and creating safety and stability for families.

## Coalition Coordinator

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Bio: A former home builder turned science teacher, Isaac found student support by accident and decided to make it his life's work. Now, working for Lewis County Public Health & Social Services, he uses his past experiences to help organize Centralia partners in building a healthy, thriving community.

“We’re all pulling, now let’s pull together!”

## 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.

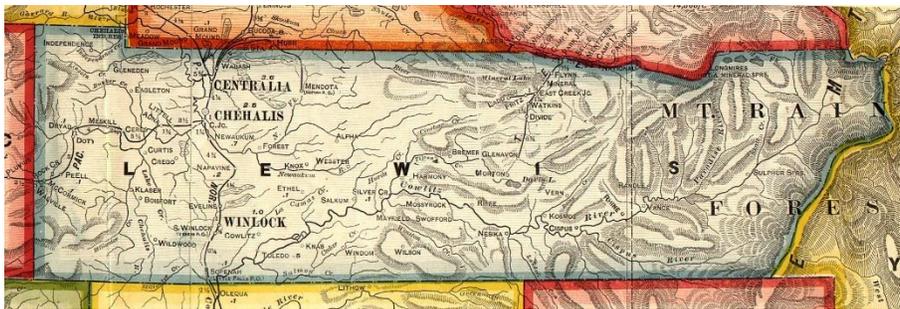
### About the Coalition: Communities & Schools Working Together

The Centralia Prevention Coalition first met in December of 2018 and has been moving at a fast pace ever since. With our first sponsored public event and a round of parenting classes in May of 2019, we created a full strategic plan in half the time it typically takes new coalitions, and are now fully engaged in implementation. This is entirely due to the strong partners in the community and the unity of purpose on the coalition.

The experience and passion for service from Educational Service District 113 and Centralia College are a big part of our early successes. They both have prevention strategy knowledge and highly trained staff ready to implement interventions. Our other key partners are the Centralia School District, whose efforts to become more trauma informed preceded this coalition and have dovetailed with our own theories of change, as well as the Youth Advocacy Center and Lewis County Juvenile Probation staff,

both of whom bring valuable insights into the realities facing Centralia youth and families. We also cooperate with area churches, law enforcement, mental healthcare providers, and civic groups, and 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 which 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 is sustaining us through this early time of transition.



## About Our Community

Centralia, as its name suggests, is in the center of the Pacific Northwest's most populous region, lying exactly halfway between Seattle and Portland, Oregon. This gives it some unique characteristics which 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 plays host to several arts organizations and festivals, as well as the largest regional fair in Southwest Washington. Centralia College serves as cultural hub for the area, holding Hispanic heritage events twice a year and serves as the overnight campsite for the annual Seattle to Portland bicycle ride. Lewis County as a whole 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 marijuana, tobacco, and prescription drug misuse rates among Centralia students 10% by the 2022 Healthy Youth Survey. This reduction will be accomplished by addressing the local conditions which lead to youth substance use, namely low school and community bonding, a high degree of social access to drugs, favorable attitudes to drug use in families and

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For more information  
about CPWI visit

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

the community, and too few opportunities for youth to be involved in prosocial activities.

In the schools, our Student Assistance Professional will be implementing a communication curriculum called Life Skills to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, as well as act as advisor to the Youth Prevention Team. For Centralia families we are offering the parenting classes Guiding Good Choices and Strengthening Families, both of which have been proven to make a difference. In the community, we are holding public forums and 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.

Our primary means of assessing success is the Healthy Youth Survey, delivered on even numbered years to nearly all Washington students. To supplement this data, we look at statistics from the local hospitals, law enforcement agencies, the Washington Poison Center, and other agencies who track data associated with underage substance abuse. When we have outcomes from the work we do as a coalition, we will bring that to the community's attention through partnerships with media outlets, public events and forums, and in official coalition communications online and in social media.