

# CLARK COUNTY

## STASHA Peer Education



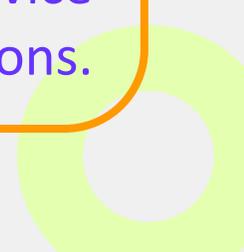
2008-2009  
Summary Report





**STASHA (stā-shuh): Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse**

**Our Mission** is to help prevent substance use and encourage Clark County minors to make healthy decisions through non-judgmental youth-to-youth advice and/or suggestions.



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**G**reetings! I am proud to introduce the most recent addition to Youth Programs at the Clark County Department of Community Services. STASHA, which stands for Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse, is a substance abuse prevention team housed at the Clark County Youth House.

We have been incredibly active this first year; due in large part to our partnerships with local prevention organizations on existing prevention projects. You can read about these efforts in the *highlights* section. The STASHA Peer Educators are gearing up for their fall recruitment and training. I look forward to welcoming even more new youth voices to the table.

The peer educators learn prevention theory and they use this foundation to

construct projects and opportunities for young people to talk about substance abuse prevention in their own words and in their own way.

I hope you are as amazed as I by the energy and dedication these young people bring to the development of a strong and diverse peer education program.

Please join me in congratulating and welcoming this fantastic group of young people to our community!

Angela McKinney  
Prevention Specialist  
STASHA Peer Education Program Coordinator

## PREVENTION WORK IN CLARK COUNTY IS THEORY DRIVEN

Our work is rooted in the risk factors and protective factors theory developed by Hawkins and Catalano (1992). According to this theory, an initial step is to identify the factors that increase the risk for a given problem while simultaneously noting the

factors that buffer (protect) individuals from the risk factors.

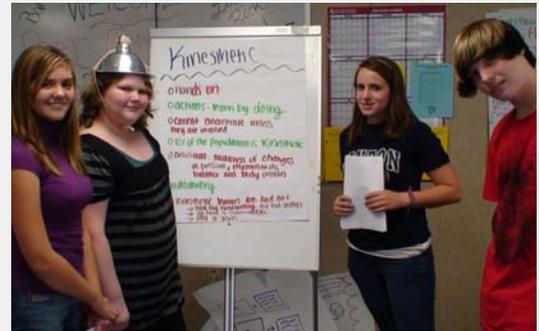
Risk and protective factors are divided into four domains: community, family, school and individual/peer.

Communities can assess the presence of risk factors in each domain and then support interventions that protect against those risks.

It is important to note that the presence of a protective factor does not cancel out a risk factor. Rather, it may reduce the negative impact a risk factor poses on the individual or it changes the way a person responds to the risk.

*“Being a part of STASHA made me realize how much more of the world I want to change and it led me to brainstorm ways that I can make a difference whether it be big or small.*

-STASHA Peer Educator



### The STASHA Peer Education Program seeks to impact these risk factors:

- Attitudes, norms or laws favorable to substance use (community, family, peers)
- Low neighborhood and community attachment (community, individual)
- Friends and/or self engaging in substance use (peer/individual)

### STASHA’s efforts address these risk factors with the following protective factors:

- **Healthy beliefs and standards:** Develop and support clear standards about substance abuse.
- **Bonding:** Increase opportunities for bonding among peers, adults and the community.
- **Create healthy communities:** Promote activities for citizens to engage in a healthy community.



*“I am extremely proud of STASHA for taking their passion to the streets in the Ads and Subtract campaign. Their efforts raised community awareness of how children and youth can be affected by advertising.”*

-Medical professional and prevention partner

## STRENGTHENING YOUTH VOICE

STASHA Peer Educators are Clark County youth in grades 7-12. They represent youth who have always been substance free, youth with past experimentation/use and youth in recovery. Peer Educators serve a one-year

term and can continue to serve through their senior year.

The group receives eighteen hours of training in the fall with additional training provided during monthly meetings. Training covers current drug and alcohol trends/data, prevention theory,

facilitation skills and team building activities.

Encouraging youth voice and leadership skills, members lead the decision making process in all areas of the program from the recruitment process to project selection and completion.

## STASHA PEER EDUCATORS ARE CHARGED TO:

- **Promote** awareness through outreach and educational programs, while serving as a resource for his/her peers at school and/or one-on-one.
- **Advise** various county groups on how to best address substance abuse at a community level.
- **Support** programs and policies that minimize the abuse of alcohol and other drugs and that encourage youth to pursue positive behavior changes and participate in a healthier Clark County.



*"I was very impressed with the amount of energy and passion this group of youth put forth to create positive messages for keeping youth healthy, wrapped up in a big dose of fun. STASHA is fantastic!"*

*-SpringFest Coordinator*

*"Every task STASHA Peer Educators took on surpassed all expectations! They impressed me with their creativity, organization and professionalism."*

*-PREVENT! Coordinator*

## BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION

In March 2008, a core team was recruited to help with the development of the STASHA program. Three amazing youth met regularly in the spring to write a mission statement, craft a youth-centered recruitment plan and establish group expectations and

accountability measures.

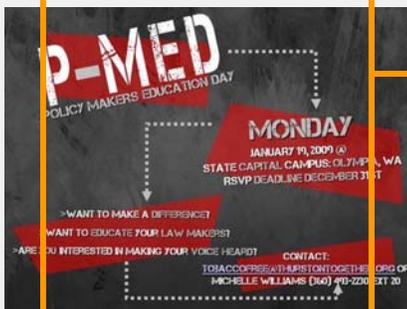
While much of their time together was dedicated to group development, they took time out to host a fishing booth at the 2008 Clark County SpringFest giving away prevention related prizes to some of Clark County's youngest citizens.

## INSPIRATION ABOUNDS AT WASHINGTON STATE PREVENTION SUMMIT

Just two weeks after fall training, seven peer educators travelled to Yakima, WA for the WA State Prevention Summit. This two-day summit brought together youth and adults to learn about innovative prevention initiatives and to honor youth and adult prevention leaders.

New to the summit was

the inclusion of a service learning project. STASHA joined two other youth groups at an elementary school site situated between two rival gangs and a target of gang graffiti. STASHA Peer Educators worked on a mural project where all students put their handprint on the exterior school walls as a way to deter tagging and to claim their school as a positive space.



## POLICY MAKERS EDUCATION DAY DRAWS PASSIONATE YOUTH TO STATE CAPITOL

A youth member of the Thurston County prevention coalition, TOGETHER!, was disturbed at seeing adults in her county smoke in their vehicles with young passengers present. She sought the help of her coalition to organize an action day (Policy Makers Education Day) where young people from across the state came together in Olympia to educate their local legislators about the

harms of second-hand smoke in vehicles.

Nine STASHA Peer Educators met with five of their county legislators to inform them about a House Bill addressing this issue and to introduce STASHA.

In pairs, STASHA members took turns leading the meetings with the legislators, fielding tough questions and sharing their opinions about the bill.

*“PMED day was pretty cool and educational. I never knew how to advocate about a bill before. I had fun talking to the senators.”*

-STASHA Peer Educator

*“I didn't really know what to expect with this group. I soon realized that we were a power force group who could make an impact on substance abuse.”*

-STASHA Peer Educator



## ALCOHOL EDUCATION WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM A FRIEND

STASHA was pleased to partner with the Evergreen Mentoring Initiative and Big Brothers/Big Sisters to teach alcohol awareness workshops to 4th and 5th graders and their high school mentors.

They modified an existing SAMHSA lesson plan created specifically for their national Reach Out, Teach-In campaign.

Participants at five school sites gathered to learn about refusal skills, the impact of alcohol on the brain and ways to talk to trusted adults about concerns. Each youth participant received a certificate and each mentor pair got a bracelet designed by STASHA stating, “Think. Don't drink.”

## RETAILER EDUCATION SUPPORTS POSITIVE TOBACCO COMPLIANCE CHECKS

STASHA, in partnership with Clark County Public Health, visited select stores in Clark County with reminders about responsible tobacco sales. The youth shared with the store owner personal



reasons why selling tobacco to minors has lasting negative impacts on their community.

Counties must maintain an 80% or higher compliance rate in order to sustain some federal prevention dollars. This year Clark County scored 90%.



## YOUTH LEAD COMMUNITY TO POSITIVE CHANGE

When the PREVENT! Coalition received a RUaD grant to reduce alcohol advertising in Clark County, they asked STASHA to help out. Together, the groups hosted a project titled “ADS and Subtract”. The project sought to both survey convenience stores for the presence of alcohol ads and to work with store owners to consider removing signage at their establishment.

STASHA Peer Educators designed and facilitated a training educating youth and adult participants on alcohol advertising, how to use the survey tool and how to explain the project to store owners.

A few of the STASHA Peer Educators continued working with PREVENT! as they engaged youth and adult community members in developing an action plan to encourage stores to remove ads.

# VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS

## VOLUNTEERS MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Literally. STASHA wouldn't exist without the young people who invested hundreds of hours to prevention. Their service hours are valued at almost \$20,000.



Over the next few years, we expect our volunteer hours and membership numbers to grow as more young people, from all areas of Clark County, join our efforts.



### CORE TEAM March 2008-July 2008 School District Representation (Middle School, High School)

Evergreen School District (1 HS)

Vancouver School District (1 MS, 1 HS)

Total Core Team Hours  
Volunteered:  
**121.5**

Value of Hours  
(\$19.53, Bureau of Labor Statistics):  
**\$2,372**

Total October 2008-  
July 2009 Hours  
Volunteered:  
**902**

Value of Hours (\$19.53,  
Bureau of Labor Statistics):  
**\$17,616**

### PEER EDUCATION TEAM October 2008-July 2009 School District Representation (Middle School, High School)

Vancouver School District (6 MS, 3 HS)

Camas School District (1 HS)

Washougal School District (1 MS)

Ridgefield School District (1 HS)

## BRAND NEW HEIGHTS

The success of our first year as a peer education group is attributed to the generous support of our thriving prevention community in Clark County. Our partnership with PREVENT! generated over \$7,000 in new prevention money, with STASHA playing a prominent role in

carrying out the action plan attached to these funds.

We provided updates to groups such as the Clark County Meth Action Team, the Clark County Mentoring Roundtable and the Substance Abuse Advisory Board. These groups both promoted and participated in many of STASHA's activities and events.



The STASHA Peer Education program receives financial support from the Clark County Department of Community Services and the Washington State Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA)