

**Clark County
STASHA Peer Educators
2009-2010
Summary Report**

STASHA (stay-shuh): Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse
A program of Clark County Dept. of Community Services, Youth House





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



Peer Educators: the basics

Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse (STASHA) is a peer education group composed of youth in middle or high school in Clark County. The group of up to twenty youth members is open to those who have never used drugs or alcohol, those with past experimentation/use, and those who have completed treatment and are now in recovery.

Members of STASHA work on a county and state level to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol by youth. Meetings are held twice a month, with subcommittee meetings taking place throughout the year. The group also completes projects, such as the Ads and Subtract program, which encourages local stores to remove tobacco and alcohol advertisements. In addition, members attend prevention summits across the state.



STASHA is a diverse group that encourages its members to feel welcome and open with each other. We feel this is the best way to accomplish our goals, but still have a fun time doing so. In the past, STASHA members have gone through tremendous growth and developed great leadership skills. This program is also a great opportunity to develop skills for a future job or college experience.

-STASHA Peer Educators

reducing risk and increasing protection

STASHA's 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.

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

- Attitudes, norms or laws favorable to substance use
- Low neighborhood and community attachment
- Friends and/or self engaging in substance use

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.

STASHA continually impresses me with their dedication, compassion, and their willingness to challenge themselves and take on difficult tasks. This group has managed to create a safe space for youth to discuss substance abuse issues. They are highly informed and energized to create change....watch out Clark County!

-Sondra Storm, PREVENT! Coalition Coordinator



Peer Educators: the data

Total members and gender		School Districts Represented	
Total	12	Camas	2
Men	4	Evergreen	2
Women	8	Ridgefield*	1
Grade ranges		Vancouver	5
7-8th	5	Washougal	1
9th-12th	6	Clark College	1
Post-grad	1	*Teen lived in Ridgefield, but attended a private school outside the district	



Volunteer hours increased 168 hours from 902 hours served in 2008-09 to 1070 in 2009-10. STASHA members volunteer between 4-8 hours each month with Clark County by addressing substance abuse issues. Applying the Bureau of Labor Statistics rate for volunteer service, STASHA members donated \$22,309 worth of time during the 2009-2010 program year.

Prevention Partners, 2009-10

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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| -PREVENT! Coalition | -Evergreen Mentoring Initiative | -Columbia River Mental Health, |
| -Clark County Meth Action Team | -Big Brothers, Big Sisters | Options Program |
| -Mt. View High School | -Juvenile Justice/Recovery Court | -Clark County Substance Abuse |
| Prevention Club | -Clark County Public Health | Advisory Board |

"STASHA is the bomb, but not the kind of bomb that explodes and kills people. We are the kind of bomb that jumps up and yells 'HELLO WE'RE AWESOME!', with lots of fireworks. Yeah. STASHA is that kind of bomb. -Katie, STASHA Peer Educator

Peer Educators: Capturing the Spirit



During the State of the County address, held February 4th, 2010, the Board of County Commissioners presented the STASHA Peer Educators with the "Spirit of Clark County" Award.

Selected from a group of nominations, STASHA received the award for their extraordinary volunteer work in County prevention. Four members of the group were present to receive the award. A similar plaque hangs in the corridor leading to the Commissioners' office.

*An excerpt from the award nomination: **Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse (STASHA)***

Youth in grades seven through 12 study substance abuse. They then use their knowledge, and in some cases personal experience, to work with peers and others to prevent substance abuse among youth. They have presented information to legislators in Olympia and worked with retail stores and schools to reduce youth-oriented promotion and increase prevention education.

Peer Educators: the projects



Fall Training, Clark County, WA (October 2009)– To ensure an opportunity to learn accurate, factual information related to substance abuse prevention, new and returning peer educators take part in a two-day training. The teens explore prevention theory, drug facts and trends, and what it means to be a peer educator. Most importantly, members engage in team-building exercises, building trust and rapport. We often invite guest speakers to lead workshops on related prevention topics. Training is a time to plan out the year ahead and to celebrate emerging prevention leaders.

Washington State Prevention Summit, Yakima, WA (October 2009)– Youth prevention teams from across the state converge to receive training and guidance around developing a prevention plan. National and state-level presenters offer innovative ideas as well as training on national prevention models. Youth then take these ideas and information back to their communities. At the 2009 summit, STASHA co-presented a workshop with their local coalition, PREVENT! on the Ads and Subtract project seeking to reduce alcohol and tobacco advertising



Drug Facts Chat Day, Clark County, WA (November 2009)– Hosted by NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse), Drug Facts Chat Day brings together a team of scientists to answer questions submitted electronically by pre-selected teams of youth across the country. STASHA was a selected team. In an effort to increase youth voice, STASHA promoted the chat to local youth-serving agencies and gathered questions to submit on the day of the chat. Questions from youth connected to Juvenile Justice and Columbia River Mental Health were answered by NIDA scientists. For a complete transcript of the chat visit:

<http://www.nida.nih.gov/chat/2009/>

Policy Makers Education Day, Olympia, WA (January 2010)– Held in January, this day of service connects the peer educators with their state legislators. Brief meetings are scheduled between the youth and the law-makers to discuss substance use/abuse related legislation and to talk about youth prevention efforts in Clark County. Of particular interest to the youth was the proposal to legalize marijuana. STASHA prepared marijuana fact sheets for distribution during their meetings and fact sheets about how drugs impact youth. The educators attended a training on educating lawmakers and a rally in the rotunda hosted by Lt. Governor, Brad Owens.



Reach Out Now: Teach In, Vancouver, WA (March 2010)

— Modifying a curriculum provided by SAMHSA, STASHA Peer Educators created a dynamic alcohol prevention workshop tailored specifically for 4th/5th graders and their high school mentor. The workshop emphasizes age appropriate skills that include refusal skills and identifying supportive adults. Bringing the high school mentor into the training creates opportunity for conversations about alcohol risks to continue throughout the year. The high school mentors receive their own training in the fall. This program served 150 individuals among five schools.



Teens Care 2 Youth Summit, Clark County, WA (May 2010)

— Two peer educators, Jaycob and Connor, partnered with members of Mt. View High School's prevention club to host a community conversation on underage drinking at the Teens Care 2 Summit. The youth team led the discussion using the Conversation Café format, a style emphasizing listening and sharing among all participants. Youth participants were joined by adult community members including law enforcement, teachers, and public leaders from across the county. Groups shared perspectives on the cause of underage drinking, the legal drinking age and the impact of substance use on families.

Spring Youth Forum, Grand Mound, WA (May 2010)

— For the second year in a row, STASHA was selected to attend and present at the statewide Spring Youth Forum held at the fabulous Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound, WA. Teams apply for a spot to showcase a project for adjudication. The forum, funded by the WA State Attorney General's Office, brings together some of the strongest and most innovative youth prevention teams across the state. STASHA members presented the Reach Out Now: Teach In project to other prevention groups receiving high praise.



Contact us!

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"It was an honor and a pleasure to prepare and present the Conversation Cafe at the Teens Care 2 Prevention Summit 2010 with STASHA. It was great to see their dedication and commitment to create a quality experience for the attendees. Prevention Club students are still talking about it months later!"

-Carolyn Newman,
Mt. View Prevention Club Advisor