

# TOGETHER!

Preventing Youth Violence, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use

June 2010

TOGETHER!'s vision is that all young people in Thurston County communities are supported, healthy, safe and valued.

TOGETHER!'s mission is to prevent youth violence and substance abuse through awareness, advocacy and action to support youth and families.

For more information about TOGETHER! or its programs, contact us at:

Address:  
418 Carpenter Rd SE Ste 203  
Lacey, WA 98503-7905

Phone: 360-493-2230

Fax: 360-413-0231

Online:  
[www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org)  
[info@ThurstonTogether.org](mailto:info@ThurstonTogether.org)

 [www.Facebook.com/ThurstonTogether](http://www.Facebook.com/ThurstonTogether)



TOGETHER!  
is a 501(c)(3)  
non-profit organization.  
All donations are tax  
deductible to the extent  
allowed by law.

## Marching in Procession Is Fishy Business

The children and youth that attend TOGETHER!'s Evergreen Villages Neighborhood Center, along with the center's staff, created costumes for and marched in this year's Procession of the Species!

The Procession is a popular annual event in Olympia that celebrates the natural world, with themes of the elements. The Neighborhood Center group focused on water, making fish and water-animal hats, blue ponchos and brightly painted drums made from water jugs. They also blew bubbles as they marched, and danced to the marchers playing band instruments.



The Neighborhood Center serves the families of Evergreen Villages, a HUD-supported apartment complex in Olympia. The children and youth that attend the center find mentoring, homework help, social and emotional support, and other benefits. Creating the themed costumes together and



See more Procession of the Species pictures at [www.facebook.com/thurstontogether](http://www.facebook.com/thurstontogether).

marching as a group helps them work on creativity, team-building and following directions, as well as allows them to feel like they are a special part of something ... which they are!

You can see pictures of the Procession of the Species 2010 participants, as well as other pictures from the Neighborhood Center, in our Evergreen Villages album on Facebook.



## Join Us in Making a Difference in Our Community!

Give a tax-deductible contribution to TOGETHER!.

**Mail to:**

418 Carpenter Rd SE, Ste 203  
Lacey, WA 98503

**Donate Online:**

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



Other ways to help

- Give through your workplace
- Give through your estate or retirement plan
- Make an honorary or memorial gift
- Donate an item or your time

Contact TOGETHER! for more details on these options.

## Email and printed newsletter options

TOGETHER! sends out eShare, our shorter email newsletter, once a month. If you wish to join that mailing list, go to [www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org) and click on "Newsletter Archive," then enter your email address.

This printed newsletter is produced twice yearly, for summer and winter. If you no longer wish to receive it, send an email to [dkoenig@ThurstonTogether.org](mailto:dkoenig@ThurstonTogether.org) or call 360-493-2230, ext. 20.

## Champions for Kids

TOGETHER! celebrated the ninth annual Champions for Kids event this year, recognizing 25 people from the community who go above and beyond to help children and youth.

If you wish to see who has been a Champion in the past or view pictures of the 2010 event, go to our website, [www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org), and click on "Events."

### Save the Date: Tenth Anniversary in 2011

The next Champions for Kids will be March 7, 2011. It will be an expanded evening, with increased community participation, to celebrate ten years of Champions!

Anyone from the community may be a sponsor and name a Champion. We are accepting sponsors for the 2011 event now.

And it's never too early to think about future Champions, so if you know of anyone you would like to nominate, keep an eye out for our press releases and nomination forms this fall.

## A Note From the Director

Dear Friends,

We hope our summer newsletter finds you in good health and happiness. Things are quite busy these days at TOGETHER!. I hope this news helps you keep tabs on our work toward our vision in which ALL young people in Thurston County are supported, healthy, safe and valued.

Accomplishing this vision will take help from all sectors of the community, including parents, law enforcement, schools, business and of course youth! We are continuing to bring people together, as we have for over 20 years, so that children and youth may have the tools necessary to succeed in life. These tools include knowledge and skills to make healthy and safe decisions to avoid substance abuse and violence.

We are grateful for the amazing network of support for children and youth in Thurston County and look forward to continuing that work with you. Please read the rest of the news that we have to share. Also, if you have a moment, check out our website and become our fan on Facebook, where we post organization news, events and pictures, as well as relevant prevention links. On our website, you can also sign up for the eShare version of our newsletter. Thanks for listening!



Sincerely,



Jim Cooper  
TOGETHER! Executive Director

## Focus on Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention

TOGETHER! offers community training, safe disposal bins

**Drop boxes:** Thurston County officials and TOGETHER!, collaborating through the Prescription Drug Task Force, have opened three drop boxes for the safe and convenient disposal of old medications. They are at the Sheriff's Office, Tumwater City Hall and the Lacey Police Department. These are the only places in the county where narcotics can legally be disposed of.

The Sheriff's Office bin has been open since January and has collected more than 405 pounds of prescription drugs as of May 31. The Tumwater bin opened in March, and it's collected 127 pounds. The Lacey box was installed in mid-June, so no collection numbers are available yet for that

location.

**Rx360:** TOGETHER!, along with The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, has launched an education program called Rx360.

Rx360 challenges concerned citizens to take action to stop the spread of prescription drug abuse in our community. Presenters are taught to give training sessions in their own communities. TOGETHER!'s goal is for 1500 or more people in Washington to see the presentation. Fifty presenters have so far been trained. To schedule a presentation, call Diane at 360-493-2230, ext. 15.

Rx360 provides facts and personal stories and teaches "secure, monitor and dispose," giving participants a way to help keep our children and youth from abusing medications.

## “Erase It”: A New Program of TOGETHER!

This spring, TOGETHER! hired a temporary gang prevention coordinator, Brittany Sill, to work on gang prevention and graffiti cleanup. The program is called “Erase It: Record - Report - Remove.” It started off with a Spring Clean-Up event in March and continued with several graffiti removal days.



If your homeowners association

or citizen group would like to clean up graffiti, contact TOGETHER! for a free cleanup kit. Supplies are limited. Also, iPhone users: Stay tuned for a new app soon that will let you report graffiti directly to law enforcement.

Graffiti can hurt your neighborhood by decreasing home values and inviting more serious crime. But by removing graffiti promptly and reporting it to law enforcement, you prevent your neighborhood or park from becoming a place for crime or gangs.

## Youth Project Investigates Local Alcohol, Tobacco Ads

Research shows a direct relationship between exposure to alcohol and tobacco ads and youth use of these products. So TOGETHER!’s youth-driven Community Assessment Project (CAP) studied alcohol and tobacco advertising in Thurston County convenience stores. Our youth staff and volunteers surveyed 69 stores.

During the project, retailers were informed about the project and the effects of advertising on youth. They were given signs for their store,

posters showing how to properly check ID and survey results.

Of the surveyed stores, 69% were reported as having at least some alcohol advertisements that appeal to youth and 38% of stores had youth-appealing tobacco advertisements. Also, many alcohol and tobacco products were placed near youth-friendly items, such as pop and candy.

The full results of the study are available at [www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org). For more information on CAP, call 360-493-2230, ext. 11.

## Governor Declares “Tobacco-free Teens” Week in September



On April 20, Gov. Chris Gregoire signed a proclamation declaring Sept. 12-18, 2010, as Tobacco-free Teens Back to School Week.

The proclamation was issued because of the statistics on tobacco use among minors. More than 45 kids under 18 in Washington start smoking every day, and more than 14% of Washington high-schoolers smoke.

A copy of the proclamation can be found on TOGETHER!’s website.

If you are a teen or have a teen who’d like to head back to school tobacco-free this year, call us at 360-493-2230, ext. 17, or email [info@thurstontogogether.org](mailto:info@thurstontogogether.org). We can provide quitting information and assistance.

## Gift cards wanted

TOGETHER!’s Evergreen Villages Neighborhood Center serves dozens of children and youth daily, and needs a variety of items.

If you are able to donate a gift card\* to Target, Fred Meyer, Office Depot, Costco or Best Buy, you will be helping to keep these kids supported, healthy, safe and valued, and we appreciate it!

\*The value of any card donated is tax deductible.



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## Upcoming Events

### **Be Well Washington:**

**Aug. 2-7, various locations.**

TOGETHER! will be giving Rx360 presentations throughout the weeklong fair, which culminates in a big event Saturday at Qwest Field. More details are at [www.bewellwashington.net](http://www.bewellwashington.net).

### **Little Red Schoolhouse:**

**Aug. 19, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Jefferson Middle School, Olympia.** This annual event provides children from low-income families with items they will need for the upcoming school year, including clothes, backpacks and school supplies. For more information, call 360-438-1100 x 143 or go to [www.redschool.org](http://www.redschool.org). Little Red Schoolhouse is sponsored by TOGETHER!.



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