

# TOGETHER!

## Summer 2011

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

TOGETHER!'s mission is to engage and mobilize families, schools and the community to advance the health, safety and success of our youth.


### Let us know what you're thinking!

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Newsletter Editor: Danielle Koenig



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

## Medical Marijuana Debate Affects Youth Use

There is often uncertainty over how medical marijuana is handled in this state, and what has or hasn't passed into law. This has resulted in a confusing and often harmful message being delivered to Washington youth in the following ways.

### A low perception of harm contributes to youth drug use.

Public debate about marijuana policy has increased significantly since 2003. At the same time, among state high school students, the perception of harm from marijuana use declined by 20 percentage points and use increased by 10 percentage points, according to the Healthy Youth Survey. Chemical dependency specialists who work with youth or schools report an increase in the number of those who say marijuana is safe because it's a medicine. Yet marijuana dependence is the primary reason youth enter treatment.

### Increased community access means increased youth access, too.

As happens with alcohol, an increase in outlets selling marijuana increases youth access.

How do we address these problems?

### Put marijuana behind a pharmacy counter.

Pharmacies act as a barrier between youth and access to all other prescription drugs—treat marijuana the same way.

### Clarify medical marijuana laws.

Clean up the current legal jumble caused by numerous bills, partial vetoes and jurisdiction discrepancies.

**Regulate advertising.** To reduce favorable attitudes about youth marijuana use, place restrictions on advertising and dispensaries.

**Designated providers/growers should be 21 and older.** The current law enables people as young as 18 to provide or grow marijuana, yet some 18-year-olds are still in high school.

### Also in the News: No Cigar Bars

A plan that would have permitted up to 100 cigar lounges and 500 retail tobacco shops to allow smoking didn't pass the Legislature.

*From The Olympian*

## Partners with Pride: Keeping the Festival Tobacco-Free

### Ban Benefits Health of LGBT Community



This was the fourth year TOGETHER! has partnered with Capital City Pride to make their yearly festival a smoke- and tobacco-free zone.

The reason? Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people's usage rates of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are higher than the general

population. In fact, LGBT individuals are up to 200% more likely to smoke.

Why the difference?

Educational systems and health and human services have often neglected LGBT communities, but tobacco industries have not. As a result, LGBT individuals and communities often see media messages that promote smoking, but not messages of optimal health. Tobacco companies support

*See Pride, inside*

## More ways to get news

TOGETHER! sends out eShare, a shorter, news-focused 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 "Newsletters."



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.

## Did you know...?

- **There are more than 4,000 chemicals** in a cigarette. At least 60 of those are cancer-causing agents, or carcinogens.
- **The Washington State Patrol's Target Zero DUI Team** arrested 2,614 suspected drunken drivers in Pierce and Thurston counties in 2010.
- **Cigarette filters** are plastic and not biodegradable. The toxic chemicals captured by the filters are particularly dangerous to wildlife. In Washington state, flicking a cigarette butt out the window can result in a fine of up to \$1,025.
- **HealthFinder.gov** hosts weekly chats on prevention and wellness.
- **Illicit drug use** cost the United States more than \$193 billion in 2007, in direct and indirect costs involving crime, health and productivity.
- **Youth alcohol use** in Thurston County has been falling for 7 years.

## A Note from Diane on Our Mission

**"TOGETHER! engages and mobilizes families, schools and the community to advance the health, safety and success of our youth."**



Through a thoughtful process, we at TOGETHER! have made a shift in our mission statement (above is the new one). We do not anticipate that you will notice much of a change in what we do, or how we do it, but we believe the new mission better illustrates our values.

Our programs are based on the premise that children, youth and adults are more motivated by the positive than the negative, and we wanted our mission statement to reflect this. A core of our work is to build collaboration and partnerships in the community. We engage and mobilize so that together we can ensure that all young people in Thurston County communities are supported, healthy, safe and valued.

Sincerely,

Diane Pieroni  
Resource Development Director

## Pride (continued from cover)

LGBT bars, fairs and media. They place ads in national magazines for this audience; put ads with same-sex undertones in mainstream magazines; and sponsor LGBT events and issues. The industry also focuses its ads on themes important to the community, like civil rights, individualism, social success and acceptance.

There are also the extra stresses of an LGBT lifestyle, such as homophobia and ostracism. Gay bars are socially important as community centers and support networks, but are also a main contributor to community norms about the acceptability of heavy drinking, smoking and drug use. Tobacco is often a conversation starter. Teens start smoking because they feel like it will help them fit in—59% of LGBT youth smoke, compared with 35% of non-LGBT teens, a study shows.

There is also often a resistance to quit smoking because of what Gay City Health Project calls "queer fears": quitting may make you lose all your friends, you won't have a way to

meet new people, what if you join a quit-smoking program and the other participants are prejudiced, and more.

Is it possible for LGBT individuals to quit smoking successfully and happily? **Yes.**

TOGETHER! can provide materials that specifically address quitting for this community that can be helpful. We also can provide lists of cessation resources, many of which have been screened to make sure they are LGBT-friendly.

Most importantly, keep trying. It takes some people a dozen attempts to quit before they succeed. Ask your friends for support. Your friendships are based on more than smoking or drinking, even if it may not seem that way sometimes.

*Information from Gay City Health Project; Michele J. Eliason, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Health Education, San Francisco State University; and the American Cancer Society. Contact TOGETHER! for more information.*

# Coalitions Address Health, Safety in South County

TOGETHER! is now supporting the Tenino and Rainier school districts and their communities through two new alliances of local citizens that work to create healthier communities by keeping youth, young adults and others free from substance abuse.

The long-term goal of these coalitions is to reduce violence and substance abuse while improving academic performance.

The members themselves will determine the programming, based on individual community needs and using creative self-designed programs and proven best practices. They'll use the Strategic Prevention Framework (see below) to govern their ideas.

## Join! Plan! Act! Talk!



Contact Coordinator Tim Stampfli at 360-493-2230 x13 or TStampfli@ThurstonTogether.org.

### And we're off!

Last week, both coalitions had their first meetings—Tenino/Bucoda on June 22 and Rainier on June 23. Keep an eye out for further news on where the members decide to take things.

Anyone who wants to help further the coalitions' goal can be a member.

## Community Work Guided by Proven Strategy

TOGETHER! community coalitions all use the Strategic Prevention Framework to accomplish their goals. Groups that use this as a road map are more likely to succeed in reducing substance abuse and related problems.



community's needs, gaps, resources and readiness.

**Step 2:** Develop and increase community awareness of the problems and increase involvement from community members.

**Step 3:** Create a plan for implementing effective programs, policies and practices.

**Step 4:** Put into practice the selected programs, policies and actions.

**Step 5:** Refine the plan as needed.

### What is this framework and how does it work?

**Step 1:** Understand the

Read about TOGETHER!'s coalitions under "What We Do" at [www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org).

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

Give a tax-deductible contribution to TOGETHER!.

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

**Mail:** 418 Carpenter Rd SE, Ste 203

Lacey, WA 98503

Give directly from your cell phone



### Other ways to help

- Give through your workplace
- Designate us in Combined Fund Drive, #0316 202
- Include us in your estate or retirement plan
- Make an honorary or memorial gift
- Volunteer your time

## Voices of Youth



The first Voices of Youth Town Hall took place June 1, thanks to United Way's coordination. Dozens of student leaders discussed health and safety issues important to them and other youth in front of at least 150 audience members. Members of the audience also shared their thoughts.

There will be 2 more Voices of Youth events, in November and next April. Stay tuned for more details.



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Find pictures and biographies at [www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org).



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## Summer 2011 Newsletter

### Inside:

- How the state’s medical marijuana debate is affecting youth
- Tobacco use in the LGBT community
- TOGETHER!’s new mission
- What it takes to build coalitions
- Voices of Youth Town Hall pictures
- More!

## Back-to-School Help

### Stuff the Bus:

Aug. 6, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,  
Tumwater Costco.  
Help “Stuff the Bus” with school supplies, non-perishable food and other supplies for kids in Tumwater.



### Little Red Schoolhouse:

Aug. 18, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.,  
Jefferson Middle School,  
Olympia. This annual event provides children from low-income families with items they 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).



## COUPON

Courtesy of **TOGETHER!**  
[www.ThurstonTogether.org](http://www.ThurstonTogether.org)

The *Wave* carwash  
**\$3.00 OFF**  
**The Tsunami!**

Locations in south Lacey, Hawks Prairie, Tumwater and Centralia. Details at [www.thewavewash.com](http://www.thewavewash.com).

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