



*A brief history of the formation
of a community coalition to
reduce youth substance use
among students in the Blaine
School District*



2011-2018	Coalition History in Whatcom Co.
2018-2020	Formation of Thrives
2020-2024	Drug Free Communities (DFC) Support Grant: \$125k/yr
2025	Evolution & End of DFC grant
2026-2030	What's Next for Thrives



2011-2018

Coalition History in Whatcom Co.

- **2011** Formation of **Whatcom Prevention Coalition (WPC)**
 - Whatcom Family & Community Network receives first federal 5-year DFC Grant (following merger with STAR Task Force).
- **2015** WPC receives second 5-year DFC grant.
- **2017-18** County receives CPWI funding for Ferndale and Mt. Baker.



2018-2020

Formation of Thrives

- **June 2018** County and Blaine Schools convene Collective Impact Initiative in Blaine to support district students forming extensive networking and strategic planning group. County contracts facilitator for group.
- **2018-2020** Group meets monthly, expands partnerships, & becomes ***Birch Bay-Blaine Thrives***. Thrives is a conduit for multiple program resources and partnerships (CIS, 21st Century Grant).
- **December 2020** **Thrives receives** 5-year DFC grant, BSD fiscal agent.



2020-2024

Drug Free Communities (DFC) Support
Grant: \$125k/yr

- **March 2020** Schools close due to COVID. Kari Holley becomes coordinator.
- **2020-2021** Thrives meets monthly via Zoom. Coordinator supports all students at home through student support programs and initiatives, in-person supports and school-wide initiatives when schools open.
- **2021-23** Coordinator and Thrives expand community and school supports for Blaine district students.



2024-2025

Evolution & End of DFC grant

- 2024 – 2025 Pennie Allsop & Lindsay Dickson hired to expand **Thrives** coalition and initiatives.
- Oct 2025 DFC Grant ends. Pennie Allsop continues as **Thrives** Director with support from Blaine-Birch Bay Park District, WSU Co-op Extension, and County.
- 2026 Reapplying for DFC and multiple other grants. Thrives survives!

DFC Logic Model: Asset based

- Based on local data: *Healthy Youth Survey*
- Root Causes are guided by Prevention Science
- Local conditions are specific, identifiable and actionable
- The logic model stays consistent with community experience and expectations



2024-2025

Funding Volatility

- Coalitions outlive staffing challenges
- Fiscal Agent challenges
- Repeated federal grant pausing
- Re-applying for year six



2024-2025

County Wide Support

All Hands Summit
Trusted Adult Workshops
Strengthening Families Program
Boys & Girls Club
Animals as Natural Therapy
Roots of Empathy
Our three local coalitions

Narcan Demos
Internet Safety: Homeland Security
Hope Science (Chan Hellman)
MAD HOPE Youth Suicide Prevention
Screenagers
SMART Digital Hall Passenger System
School Signage



2024-2025

Events & Volunteering

Safe & Sober Graduates
Back to School Family Resource
Fair
Kindness Month
Overdose Awareness Day
Hadestown
Peace Arch Pallooza (ASB)

Polar Plunge
Pre-dance hangouts
Blaine Borderite Block Party
Blaine Harbor Festival
Community Meetings
CADCA



Whatcom youth spend a Day on Capitol Hill



WA State Youth Coalitions unite and talk prevention with
U.S. Senator, Maria Cantwell



2025

Trusted Adult
Workshops





2026

Systems in Place

- Michelle Flores at Blaine Schools: A grant funded position focusing on substance prevention and intervention
- Substance Club
- Growing Partnerships
- Grants Training



Join us!

Every third Wednesday at 1 p.m. in the Blaine
School District board room