



*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, 21<sup>st</sup> 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