

Peers Practicing Prevention

A project of the Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program, Healthy Communities, and the Division of Health Promotion

Background:

- Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) is the regional lead, serving Spokane, Adams, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Ferry Counties for the Washington State Department of Health's Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program; funded by tax revenue from marijuana sales in accordance with Initiative 502. Our funded work in the program started in April 2015.
- Youth marijuana prevention in a state where marijuana use is legal for those 21 and older is new. Current evidence-based and promising practices have not been tested in this legal landscape. Developing youth as leaders is a best practice in other substance use prevention efforts, like tobacco and alcohol.
- As part of its overall strategy to decrease youth marijuana use, SRHD developed a grant called Peers Practicing Prevention (PPP) and awarded two groups of youth funds to work on a project related to youth marijuana prevention. Upon completion of the project, the youth are required to present their projects to key leaders in Spokane. The SRHD Board of Health was chosen for its cross-jurisdiction representation.

WSU Spokane 4-H, Teens as Teachers

Teens as Teachers engages 4-H teens in health-related learning, with the goal of supporting youth to lead health-related change in their communities.

4-H teens completed a series of neighborhood assessments using the M-VAPE instrument, an observation tool designed to assess marijuana and vape advertisements in predetermined locations. The team received training on how to use the tool by the SRHD staff. The 4-H teens and staff conducted a team practice in the Sprague/Havana area (near the fairgrounds), after which the teens chose the locations for additional M-VAPE observations. They committed to keep an open mind about what they might discover in their observations. The facts and impressions that resulted from data gathering were a bit "shocking" according to one of the teens. They discovered that the prevalence of marijuana and vaping businesses in the areas where youth hang out, buy things, and gather is much higher than expected. Some of the teens were struck by the prevalence of vaping around areas where youth gather or are playing.

YouthBuild Spokane

For unemployed, out of school young people, Youthbuild is an opportunity for them to reclaim their education, gain the skills they need for employment, and become leaders in their community.

Potentially among the youth most impacted by marijuana, this group of young adults wanted to tell their stories with a goal of prevention and reduction of marijuana use in youth under the legal age of 21. After attending training, and conducting research to learn more about the effects and harms of marijuana on youth, they created a video that highlights their experiences with marijuana and prevention. The video was part of a presentation this team shared with youth and teens at North East Youth Center and East Central Community Center. Their presentation also included an interactive session with participants educating them about the health risks and long term impacts of marijuana. During their project, this team recognized a difference in how marijuana is advertised in specific communities in Spokane.