

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention
Promoting healthy lifestyles, families, communities



Photo by Gary Halvorson Oregon State Archives

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Prevention in Wasco County

All across the country, adults are concerned about healthy development of young people. In searching for answers to the behavior problems of alcohol and other drug abuse, delinquency, violence, school drop out, and teen pregnancy, researchers have shown there are number of **risk factors** that increase the chance of adolescents developing health and behavior problems and there are **protective factors** that give youth resilience to problems. Oregon supports county and tribal governments in their strategic plans to prevent alcohol and drug abuse.

Wasco County and YOUTHTHINK are working toward communities free of the effects of substance abuse, where all members, especially young people have equal access to opportunities in order to flourish and live healthy, meaningful lives. In order to achieve this goal we realize that there is not an agency, government or individual who can make this happen alone. Together, if we truly desire to “Be the Change” we can develop a community environment where every person feels safe, loved and celebrated.

YOUTHTHINK is a grassroots organization that is leading the “Be the Change” cause in Wasco County. YOUTHTHINK believes in utilizing the Strategic Prevention Platform. SAMHSA's Prevention Platform is a systemic community-based approach, which aims to ensure that substance abuse prevention programs can and do produce results. This approach to prevention helps our citizens use the powers of prevention to lead healthier, longer lives. The Prevention Platform includes: assessment, capacity, planning, implementation and evaluation. These five steps are conducted in an overlapping environment that includes sustainability and cultural competence.

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YOUTHTHINK and Wasco County are currently implementing the PRIDE survey as one of their many community assessment tools. YOUTHTHINK is utilizing the evidence based programs of Project Alert and Strengthening Families. This year the county will implement The Parents Who Host Lose the Most project in an effort to aggressively take on the issue of underage drinking.