



Cannabis Use and Vaping among Island County Youth

Michala Milewski, Prevention Specialist

April 2023



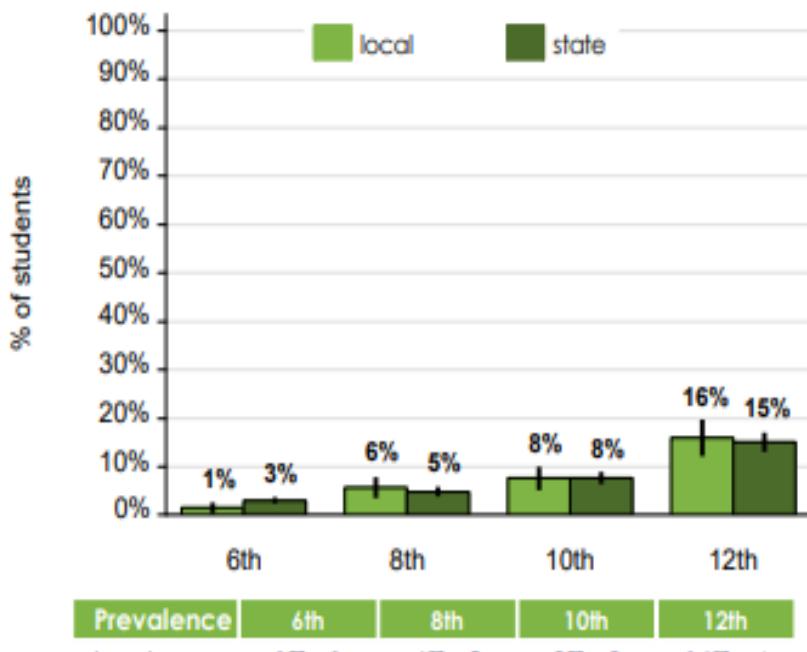
Topics

- Island County Healthy Youth Survey 2021: Findings and Implications
- Island County Priorities from the HYS 2021
- Vaping: Devices and Process after Inhalation
- Adverse Health Effects: Nicotine Vaping
- Cannabis Myths and Facts
- What is High Potency Cannabis?
- Adverse Health Effects: High Potency Cannabis
- Youth Vaping Prevention: Positive Community Norms and Education from Trusted Adults
- Resources
- Get Involved in Your Community

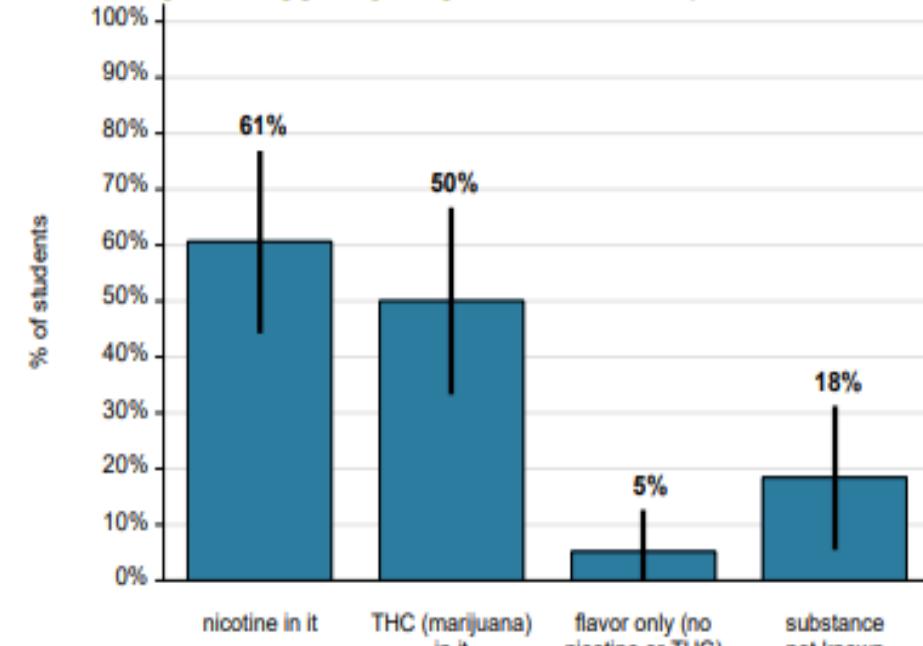
Island County Healthy Youth Survey 2021

Findings

Current (past 30-day) vapor product use compared to the state, all grades



Reported substance "vaped" among current (30-day) vapor product users, Grade 10

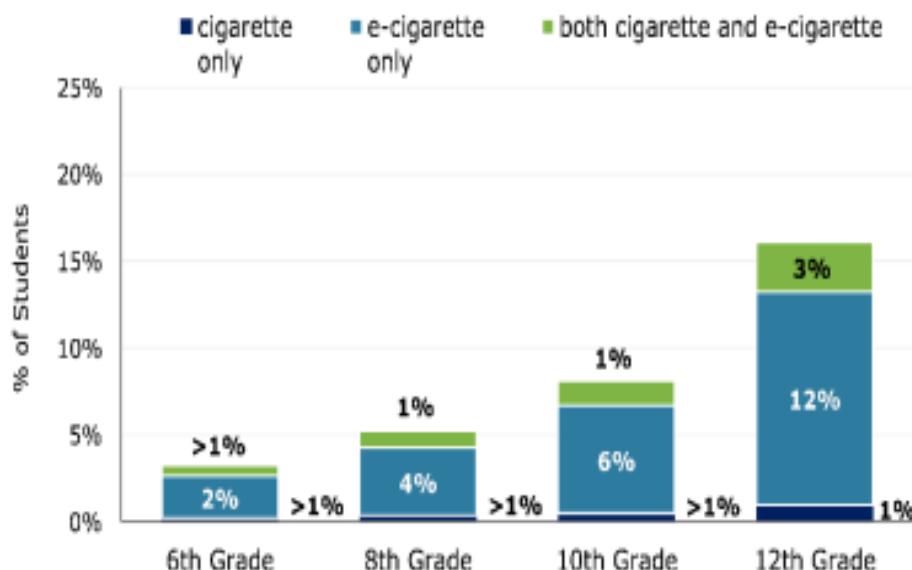


*Students can select more than one type of substance

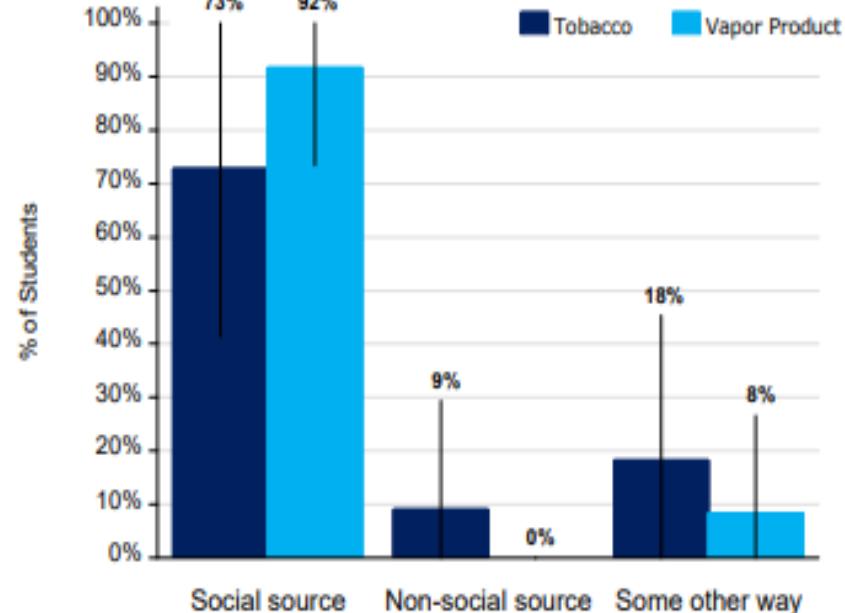
Island County Healthy Youth Survey 2021

Findings

Statewide prevalence of past 30 day e-cigarette, cigarette, and use of both among youth by grade



Source of tobacco and vapor products among those who use them, Grade 10



**Social sources include: giving money to someone, "bumming", from a person 18 or older, and taking from a store or family. Non-social sources include buying from a store, the internet, or a vending machine.

Island County Healthy Youth Survey

2021

Implications

- Local-level vapor product use is **very similar** to state-level vapor product use among all grade levels.
- Among vapor product users, **61%** of grade 10 students “vaped” **nicotine** and **50%** of grade 10 students “vaped” **THC**.
- Among all grade levels, most students that smoked used **e-cigarettes only**.
- Students that use tobacco and vapor products obtain them primarily from **social sources**.

Island County Priorities from the HYS 2021

1

Address Vapor Product usage among Adolescents

2

Address the Vaping of both Nicotine and Cannabis (THC)

3

Address the Social Sources of Tobacco and Vapor Products

Vapor Product Usage.



Vaping

Device Variations

Battery-operated device that heats a liquid usually containing nicotine or THC (cannabis), flavoring, and other chemicals to create an **aerosol** that users inhale

Tabletop Vapes



Dry Flower Vapes



Disposable “E-Joints”



Vaping

Device Variations

Battery-operated device that heats a liquid usually containing nicotine or THC (cannabis), flavoring, and other chemicals to create an **aerosol** that users inhale

Solid Concentrate Vapes



Oil Vapes (Disposable and Refillable)



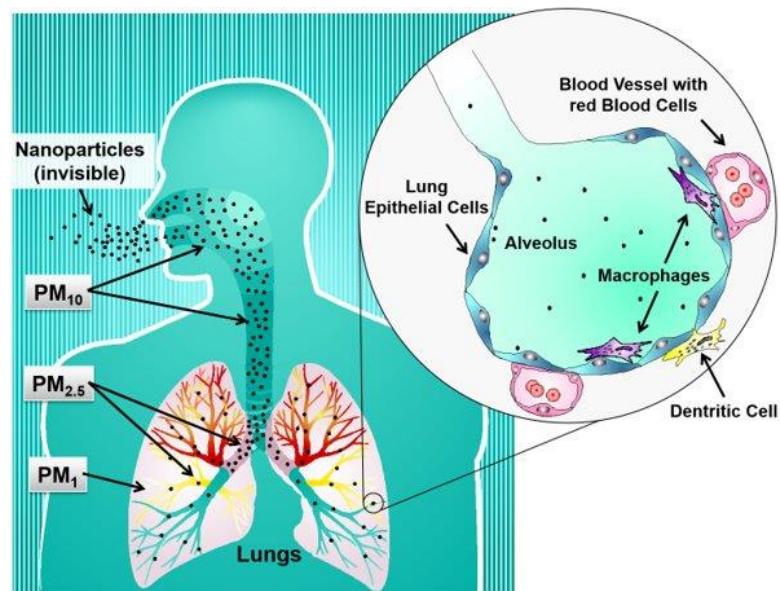
Multi-Product Vapes



Vaping

Process after Inhalation

- **Ultra-Fine Particles (UFP)** travel deep into the lungs and blood stream.
- Attached chemicals lead to **greater adverse health effects** than particles in tobacco smoke.
- Currently, most research focuses on **nicotine vaping** and has yet to explore cannabis vaping.

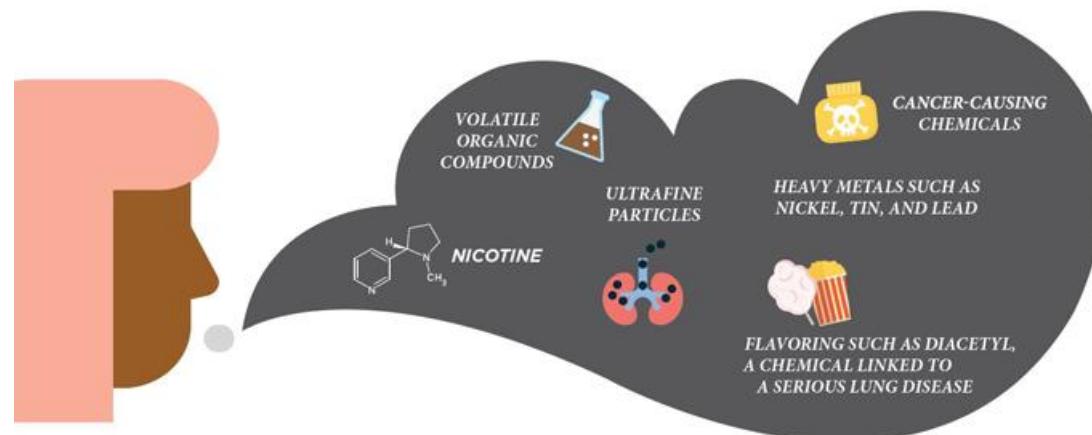


Nicotine and Cannabis Vaping.

Adverse Health Effects

Nicotine Vapes

- Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control **attention, learning, mood and impulse control**.
- Using nicotine in adolescence may also increase risk for **future addiction** to other drugs
- Nicotine **withdrawal symptoms** include irritability, restlessness, feeling anxious or depressed, trouble sleeping, problems concentrating, and craving nicotine.
- Youth e-cigarette and cigarette use have been associated with **mental health symptoms** such as depression.



Cannabis Myths and Facts

- **Myth:** *It's okay for people to smoke every day because people used to do it all the time and turned out fine. It's natural so it's fine!*
- **Fact:** High potency cannabis dominates the marketplace nowadays. It has been genetically engineered to contain high THC levels. Specific adverse health effects are associated with high potency cannabis.

What is High Potency Cannabis?

"High Potency Cannabis" refers to all types of cannabis products that contain over 10% THC.

High potency cannabis now dominates the newly legal marketplace.

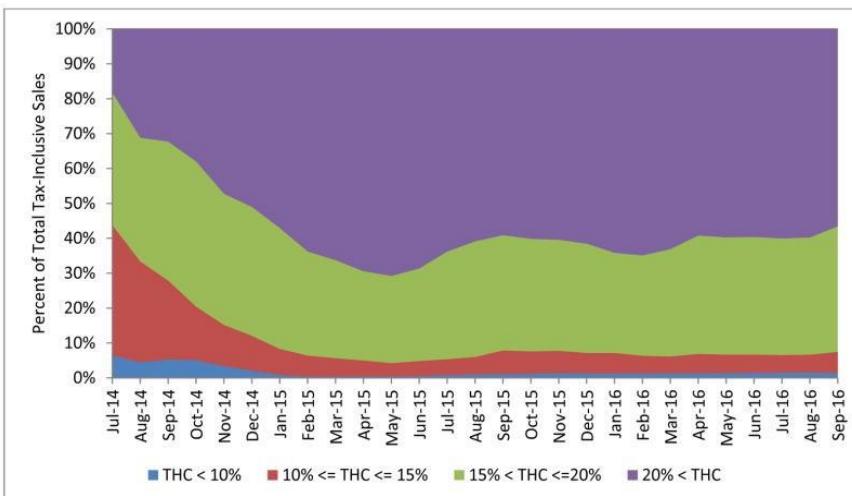


Figure 1 Market shares for cannabis flower products sold, by THC % category. Market share is calculated as a percent of total cannabis flower expenditures (Smart, Caulkins, Kilmer, Davenport & Midgette, 2017)

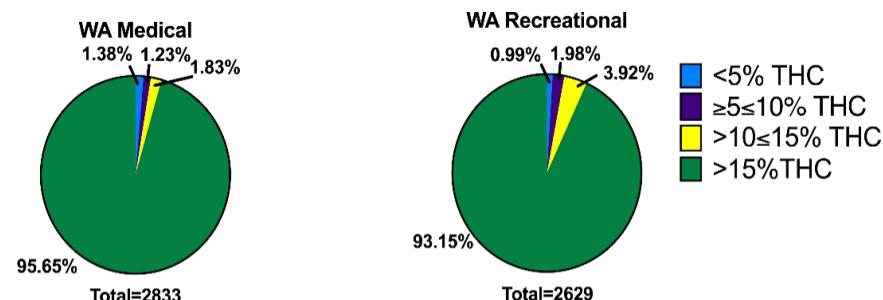


Figure 2 Proportion of products with different levels of THC in WA medicinal and recreational programs (Cash, Cunnane, Fan & Romero-Sandoval, 2020)

Adverse Health Effects

High Potency Cannabis

- Increased risk of **psychosis** (DiForti, Quattrone, Freeman, Tripoli, et al., 2019)
- Increased risk of **addiction** and **generalized anxiety disorder** (Hines, Freeman, Gage, Zammit, Hickman, Cannon, Munafò, MacLeod & Heron, 2020).

What is a Psychotic Episode?

A period of psychosis is when an individual loses touch with reality, seeing and hearing things that are not there and being unable to distinguish reality.

Symptoms of psychosis often include:



Hallucinations



Loss of Motivation



Confusion

Adverse Health Effects

High Potency Cannabis

- More association with "**problematic cannabis use, cannabis use disorder, and mental health disorders**" for concentrates and extracts (Gabrys, 2020).
- "The risk of developing **cannabis use disorder or addiction**, particularly among adolescents, is higher with use of high potency cannabis products"(University of Washington Addictions, Drug & Alcohol Institute, 2020).
- "**Young people are particularly vulnerable**. There is strong evidence of the detrimental impact of THC use during adolescence, and negative impacts may be exacerbated for those who use high potency cannabis or use more frequently"(University of Washington Addictions, Drug & Alcohol Institute, 2020).

Cannabis Myths and Facts

- **Myth: *I sleep better when I smoke!***
- **Fact:** Using cannabis products before sleep leads to an extension of Stage 4 or "deep" sleep and **REM deprivation**. When you wake up, you are more prone to **daytime sleepiness, anxiety, irritability, and jumpiness** (Angarita, et al., 2016).
- **Myth: *Cannabis is a treatment for anxiety!***
- **Fact:** Most individuals' motivation for cannabis use is **not anxiety management** (Lee, Neighbors & Woods, 2007). A common side effect of cannabis withdrawal is **anxiety** (DSM-5). Medical cannabinoid prescriptions are **only recommended** when other traditional therapies and treatments have been tried first (Allan, et al., 2018).

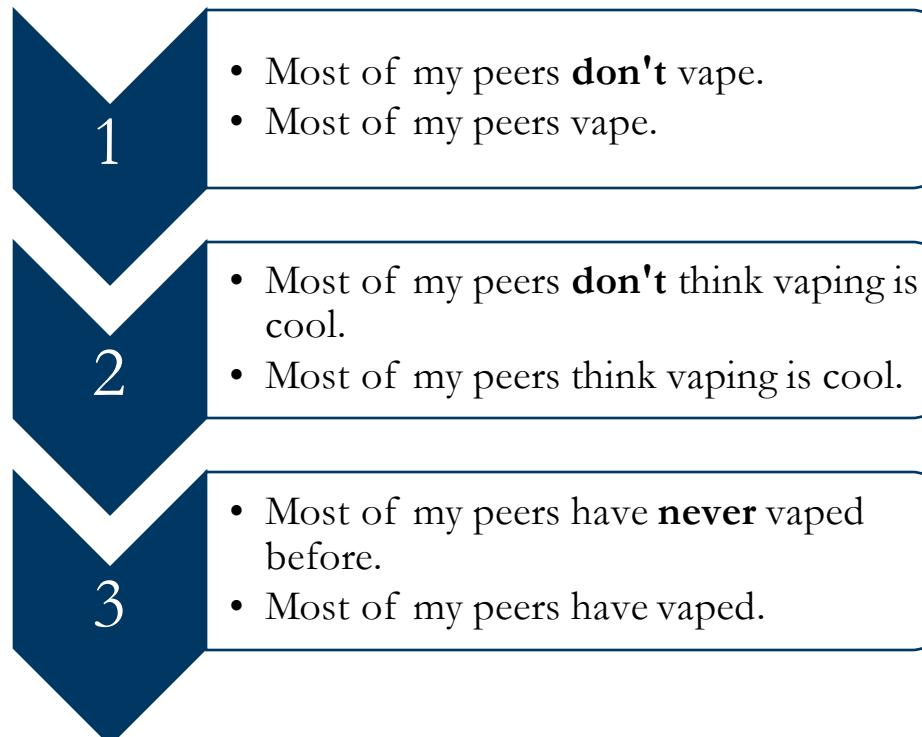
A group of diverse people are sitting in a circle on a wooden floor, holding hands. They are wearing various casual clothing like jeans, t-shirts, and a blazer. The scene suggests a community gathering or support group.

The key to
addressing
social sources
is to address
community education.

Youth Vaping Prevention

Positive Community Norms

Beliefs about what is socially acceptable directly impacts usage rates. Student perceptions of vaping matter.

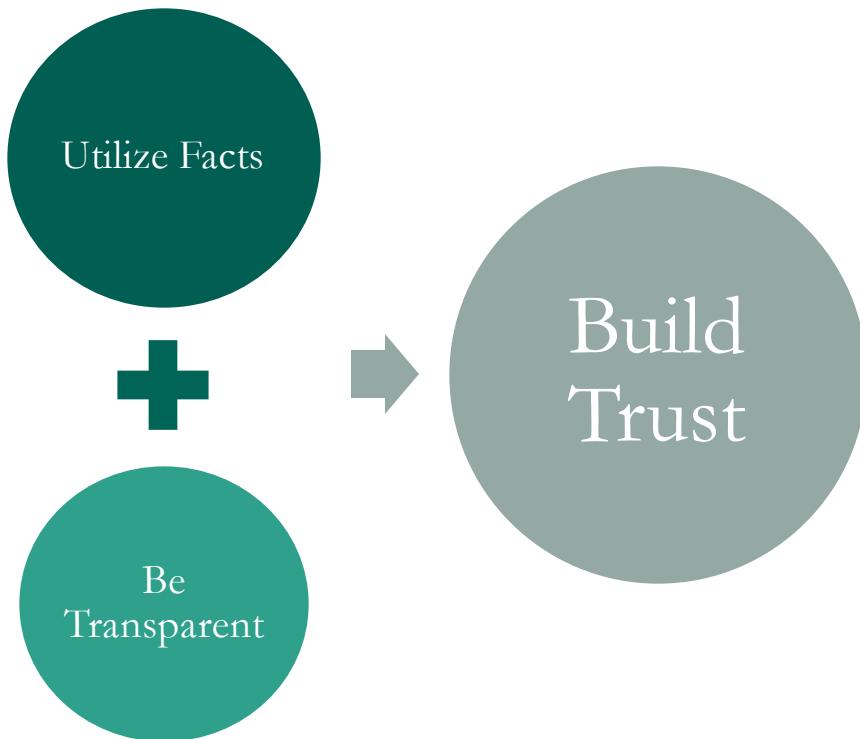


- 1
 - Most of my peers **don't** vape.
 - Most of my peers vape.
- 2
 - Most of my peers **don't** think vaping is cool.
 - Most of my peers think vaping is cool.
- 3
 - Most of my peers have **never** vaped before.
 - Most of my peers have vaped.

Youth Vaping Prevention

Education from Trusted Adults

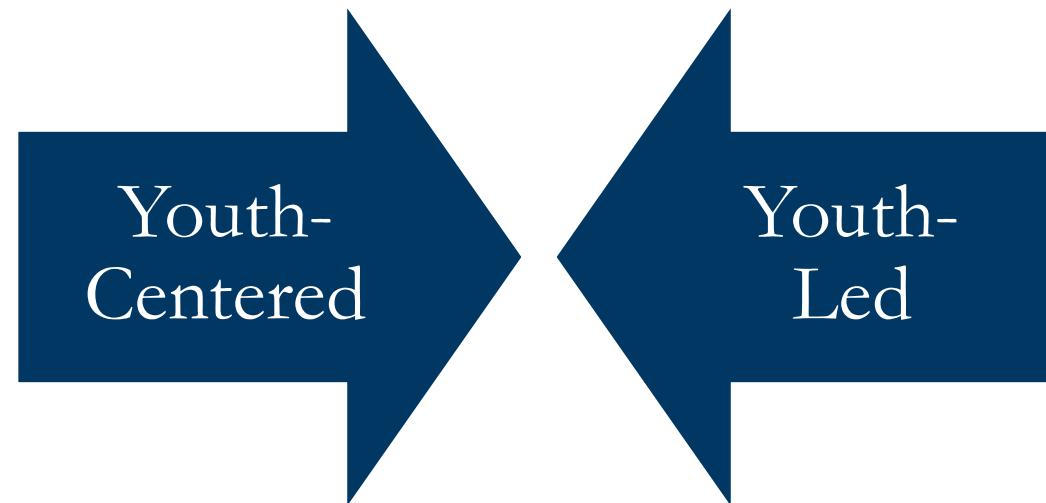
Start the Conversation!



Youth Vaping Prevention

Education from Trusted Adults

Educational format should be a convergence of...



Resources

<https://starttalkingnow.org/>

<https://www.learnaboutcannabiswa.org/>

<https://www.collegeparentsmatter.org/>

<https://www.youthnow.me/parents/cannabis-conve>

<https://www.youcanwa.org/>

<https://www.knowthisaboutcannabis.org/>

<https://www.naturalhigh.org/>

Get Involved in Your Community

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Island County
 - <https://bbbsislandcounty.org/home>
- South Whidbey Cares Youth Coalition
 - <https://southwhidbeycommunitycenter.org/community-wellness-coalition/>
- Oak Harbor Youth Coalition
 - <https://www.oakharboryouth.org/>

