

Spring 2025

PREVENTION CONNECTION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Alliance
for Healthy
Communities

A Convener, Collector, Conduit and
Catalyst for Community Change



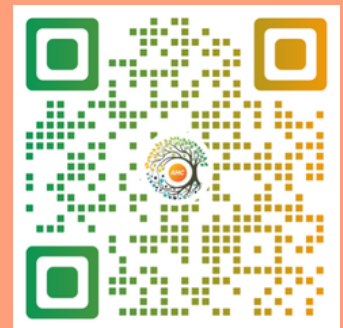
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Located in the
All Ways Center
6020 US Hwy 19
New Port Richey, FL



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Alliance for
Substance
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Prevention Tip of the Quarter

April is a significant month for raising awareness about critical issues that affect our communities, including Alcohol Awareness Month, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and Stress Awareness Month. These campaigns aim to educate the public, promote prevention, and support those affected by these issues. Alcohol Awareness Month focuses on the dangers of alcoholism and encourages reflection on drinking habits, while Sexual Assault Awareness Month emphasizes the importance of creating safe environments and supporting survivors. Stress Awareness Month highlights the need to manage stress for overall health and well-being. By participating in local events, spreading the word, and supporting relevant organizations, we can collectively address these critical issues and foster a hopeful future. Let's make April a month of awareness, prevention, and positive change.

How You Can Get Involved:

- **Participate in Local Events:** Many communities host events, workshops, and campaigns during April to promote awareness and prevention. Check local listings for opportunities to get involved.
- **Spread the Word:** Use social media and other platforms to share information about these awareness months. Raising awareness is a collective effort.
- **Support Organizations:** Consider donating to or volunteering with organizations that work towards preventing alcohol misuse, sexual violence, and managing stress. Your support can make a significant difference.

For more info on how to get involved with ASAP initiatives or a committee, email ASAP Coordinator Missy Coyle:

Missy@empoweredcommunities.org

ASAP Quarter in Review

By Missy Coyle, ASAP Coordinator

This quarter, the ASAP General Coalition resumed in-person monthly meetings, traveling across Pasco County to ensure accessibility for all members. Our presence as vendors at various community events—such as the WGR School Health and Safety Fair, Healthy START Reconnect and Walk Like MADD—allowed us to connect with residents and share vital resources. In total, we attended seven events, furthering our mission to engage with and support the community. Additionally, the ALL Ways Center continues to thrive as a resource hub. We warmly welcome everyone to stop by for resources or a tour to see the impact we're making together.

Committee Corner

This quarter has been a fantastic period of progress and community engagement for ASAP! Our subcommittees have been buzzing with activity, driving impactful initiatives and forging strong partnerships. **Opioid Awareness Committee:** Our groundbreaking project to implement Narcan vending machines in Pasco County is ongoing and we are excited for implementation. Thanks to collaboration with some amazing community partners. This initiative aims to increase accessibility to life-saving medication and tackle the opioid crisis head-on. **Recovery Committee:** Announces, Save the date of 9/20/25 for our Recovery Walk which will be held in down town New Port Richey at SIMS Park. **SEN Committee:** We are still actively seeking sponsors for our Blossom Bag project! This initiative aims to provide essential items for those in need, and we can't wait to see the positive impact it will have on our community. **Alcohol Initiatives Committee:** We are continuing to collaborate with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) West Central Florida to promote Alcohol Awareness. We are working on a poster campaign to bring awareness to alcohol, misuse and promote safety. Together, we're making strides towards a healthier, safer, and more supportive community. Let's keep the momentum going!

STAND ABOVE THE INFLUENCE

Powered by Alliance for Healthy Communities

STAND Coalition Updates

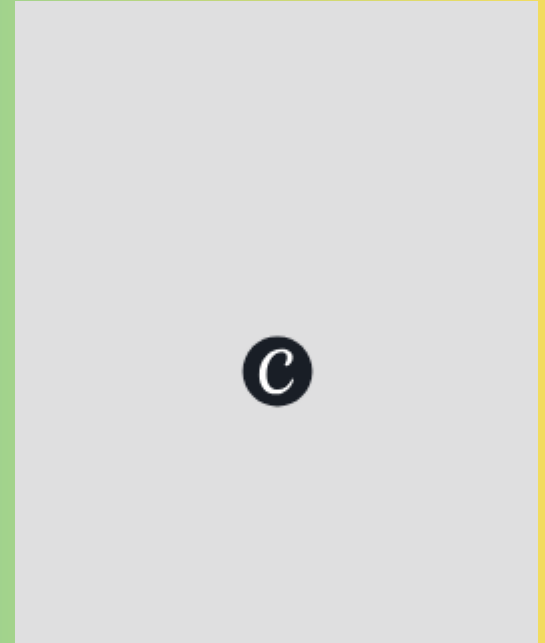
By: Kristina Scherer, STAND Coordinator

STAND Above the Influence Youth Coalition started the New Year by participating in the grand opening celebration of the All Ways Center alongside the community. STAND members took part in the Prevention Advocacy Day T-shirt contest organized by the Community Coalition Alliance, where a STAND Youth Member, Keyara, won second place for her design.

In February, STAND had a presence at the Florida Department of Health in Pasco County event and the Premier Community Health & Fun Fest, where they distributed educational resources for youth and families. Additionally, in February, STAND reached a significant milestone of 502 followers on their social media page and are grateful for the community's support. The previously scheduled Prevention Advocacy Trip was postponed to March due to inclement weather in Tallahassee. In March, STAND was invited to participate in the SADD Health & Safety Fair at Wiregrass Ranch High School, where STAND representatives provided educational materials and STAND swag to the high school youth. Currently, the STAND youth members are busy planning the upcoming STAND Youth Summit, titled "Press Play on Mental Health - Find Your Rhythm So You Can Help Others." For more details, please refer to the accompanying flyer. A group of STAND Youth members and Advisors are also eagerly anticipating the rescheduled Prevention Advocacy Trip. We extend our heartfelt thanks to AHC, Baycare, the Rotary Club of New Port Richey, and United Way of Pasco for sponsoring this trip.

The excitement for the upcoming months continues to build as STAND prepares for a series of engaging activities and community events. The STAND Coordinator and Advisors are incredibly proud of the dedication of the STAND youth members, whose efforts make all these initiatives possible. With each event and milestone, STAND continues to inspire and empower young people to be leaders and advocates for a healthier community. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in STAND's journey.

Change Begins
with **YOUTH!**





Introducing **SAFE**

The SAFE (Suicide Awareness Finds Empowerment) Suicide Prevention Coalition was established in 2021 as a workgroup under the Pasco Acute Care Committee. Since its inception, SAFE has brought together a diverse group of partners committed to raising awareness and preventing suicide in the community. Partner organizations include the Alliance for Healthy Communities, James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital, BayCare, Bobby White Foundation, Pasco Sheriff's Office, Advent Health, Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, NAMI Pasco County Florida, Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Health Pasco County, Pasco County Schools, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, TGH Behavioral Health Hospital, and Central Florida Behavioral Health Network.



Since the fall of 2022, the Alliance for Healthy Communities has supported SAFE by hosting its website and recently integrating the initiative into its regular meetings and communications. SAFE's work goes beyond just meetings, with participation in major community events such as the NOPE Candlelight Vigils, Pedals for Prevention, Opioid Town Halls, Pasco Mental Health Summits, Veterans' Coffee Socials, and the ASAP Conference in 2024.

SAFE meets every fourth Wednesday of the month from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. For more information or to get involved, contact Karen Barfield at kbarfield@cfbhn.org or Chrissie Parris at Christine.Parris@baycare.org.

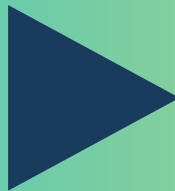
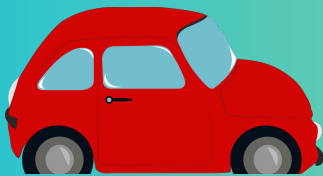
Past initiatives have included surveying providers to assess the effectiveness of current assessment and screening tools. SAFE also collaborated with STAND to host a youth-focused activity during Suicide Awareness Month in September 2023.

Currently, SAFE is expanding its initiatives, including growing the Veterans' Coffee Socials, launching the Gun Shop Project, and focusing on outreach to individuals aged 60+. These ongoing projects aim to further the coalition's mission of empowering individuals and communities with the tools to intervene and support those at risk of suicide.



Trend Alert

Vaping continues to be a growing concern in Pasco County Schools, with new trends making it increasingly difficult for parents and educators to identify these devices. In recent coalition meetings, members highlighted alarming developments, including vapes disguised as everyday items like inhalers or even gaming devices. ASAP is actively collaborating with school leaders to support the development and enforcement of policies aimed at addressing this issue. Particularly troubling is the rise in reports of elementary-aged children found with vapes, often tied to a widespread misconception among parents that these products are harmless. To help raise awareness, images of newer, harder-to-recognize vapes are displayed alongside this message so parents can better identify and prevent use at home.



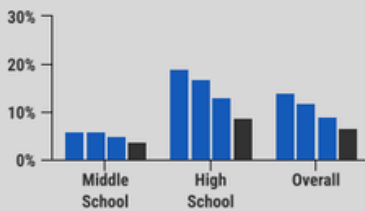
Data That Drives Change

Pasco County | Vaping

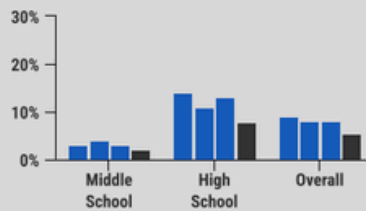
Nicotine Vaping and Marijuana Vaping

Vaping has rapidly emerged, both within Florida and across the nation, as one of the most prevalent forms of adolescent substance use. In 2020, new items that distinguish between nicotine vaping and marijuana vaping were added to the FYSAS questionnaire. The graphs below show the percentage of students reporting one or more occasions of vaping nicotine and vaping marijuana within the past 30 days. For Pasco County, the graphs show the change in vaping prevalence rates between 2020 and 2024. Statewide comparison data for Florida as a whole are shown for 2024.

Past-30-Day Nicotine Vaping



Past-30-Day Marijuana Vaping

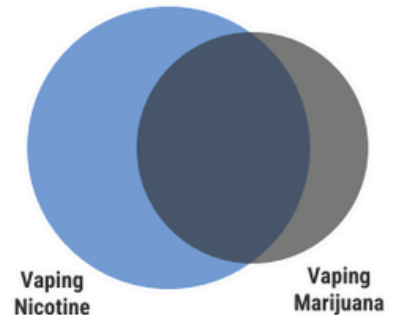


County 2020-2024

Florida Statewide 2024

Vaping Nicotine and Vaping Marijuana

This overlap reveals the role of vaping as a substance delivery system. **62%** of Pasco County students who vape nicotine also vape marijuana, and **68%** of students who vape marijuana also vape nicotine.





**AROUND
TOWN**

Chasco Coronation

Congratulations to AHC's staff and Board of Director's Members who were nominated for King Pithla and Queen Chasco in 2025!



Chasco Coronation Ball
2025 King Pithla Nominee



**Cesar
Rodriguez**

Nominated by
**Rotary Club
of Holiday**



Chasco Coronation Ball
2025 Queen Chasco Nominee



**Kelly
Mothershead**

Nominated by
**Pasco Alliance
for Healthy
Communities
/ASAP**



Chasco Coronation Ball
2025 Queen Chasco Nominee



**Kellie
Rodriguez**

Nominated by
**Rotary Club
of Holiday**

(L-R): AHC Board Member Cesar Rodriguez, AHC Executive Board Member Kelly Mothershead, AHC Executive Director Kellie Rodriguez

Grand Opening!

The All Ways Center had their official Grand Opening and ribbon cutting ceremony in January! The prevention and recovery resource center hosts both Alliance for Healthy Communities and The Hope Shot and is located at 6020 US Hwy 19 in Downtown New Port Richey. Stop in and see us!

