

White River School District Project Alert Program
Student Leadership Team teaches Refusal Skills to Glacier Middle School students



Most people begin smoking when they are teenagers or young adults. The 2012 Healthy Youth Survey reports 17% of 12th grade students use candy flavored tobacco products, 16% smoke cigarettes and 15% use hookah. Nationally, the use of E-Cigarettes and other flavored tobacco products has doubled among middle and high school students from 3.3% in 2011 to 6.8% in 2012 (MMWR 9/2013). These products are heavily marketed to teens through television ads, media, malls and the internet. Most of these products come in bright colors, candy-like and fruits flavors that make them appear safe and natural. These products promote smoking experimentation and initiation.

The White Rivers School District (WRSD) is receiving funding from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's (Health Department) Healthy Schools Grant Program to implement Great Body Shop and Project Alert tobacco prevention curriculum. The curriculum instills knowledge and decision making skills in students at an early age. "The White River School District Healthy Youth Survey results have shown fewer students reported smoking cigarettes and more students received information about the dangerous consequences of using alcohol or other drugs. WRSD is making every effort to continue to these programs", said Mike Jacobsen, Curriculum and Assessment Director, White River School District.

Glacier Middle School (GMS) completed the first semester of Project Alert instruction. The class ended by having some of the White River High School Prevention Team members teaches the younger students refusal skills. "The younger kids love it when the high school students visit and they listened well," said Herb Entz, the Prevention Coordinator for the WRSD. Each Team member took about six middle school students and gave them various scenarios to act out. After practicing in a small group, the students then presented their work to approximately 75 classmates.

To learn more about White River School District's Substance Abuse and Tobacco Prevention Program contact Herb Entz at hentz@whiteriver.edu.net or Samantha Yeun at syeun@tpchd.org