



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Working Within Rural Communities: The Unique Benefits and Challenges for Substance Misuse Prevention Professionals

May 16, 2024

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Washington State Rural Network

Objectives

- Understand challenges facing rural prevention providers, and ways to overcome those challenges.
- Gain access to an online Rural Prevention Toolkit, containing 4 categories of tools for success in rural communities.
- Discuss ways to increase connections and networks.

Your Voice Is Essential

- We will be using Mentimeter
- Use the QR code in the corner to take you to the full set of questions for the full webinar

OR

- Use the link in the chat to navigate to the Mentimeter questions
- We will return back to these questions throughout the webinar



The Rural Network: Supporting Prevention in Rural Communities



Washington State Rural Network

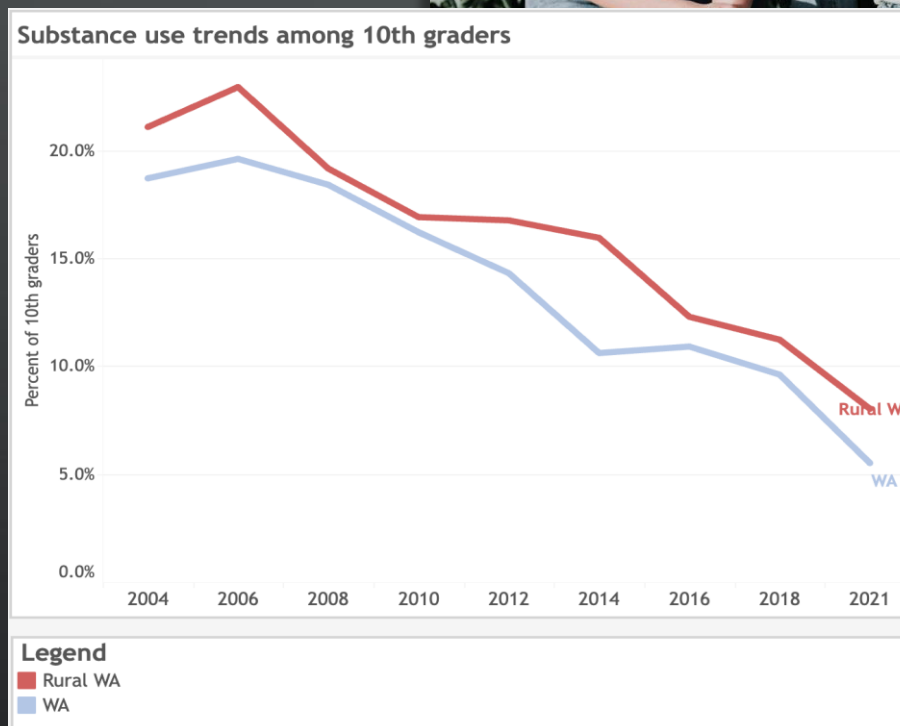
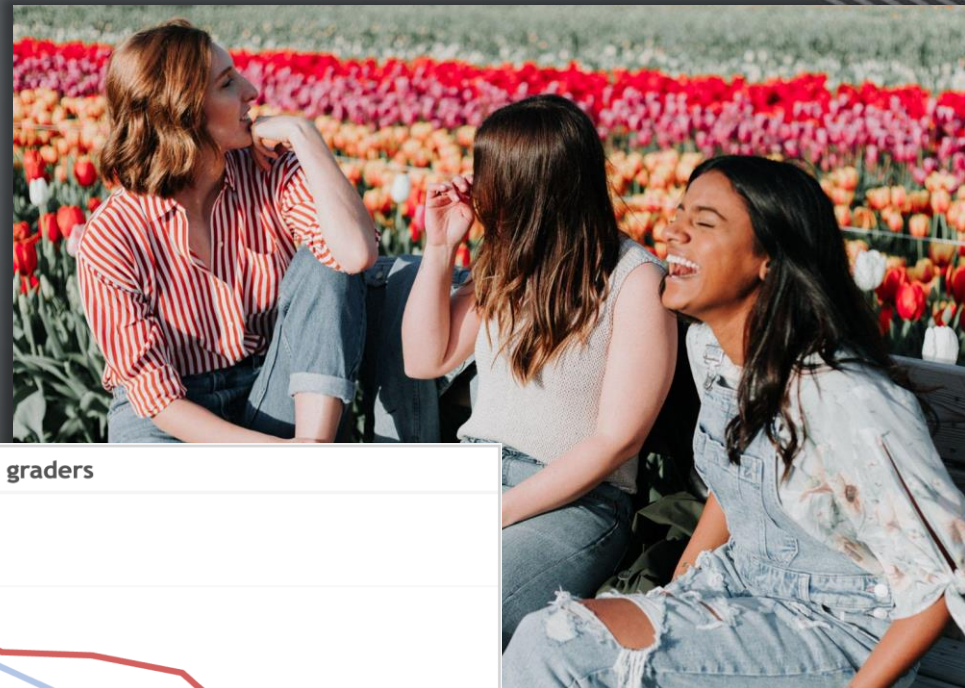


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Define Rural

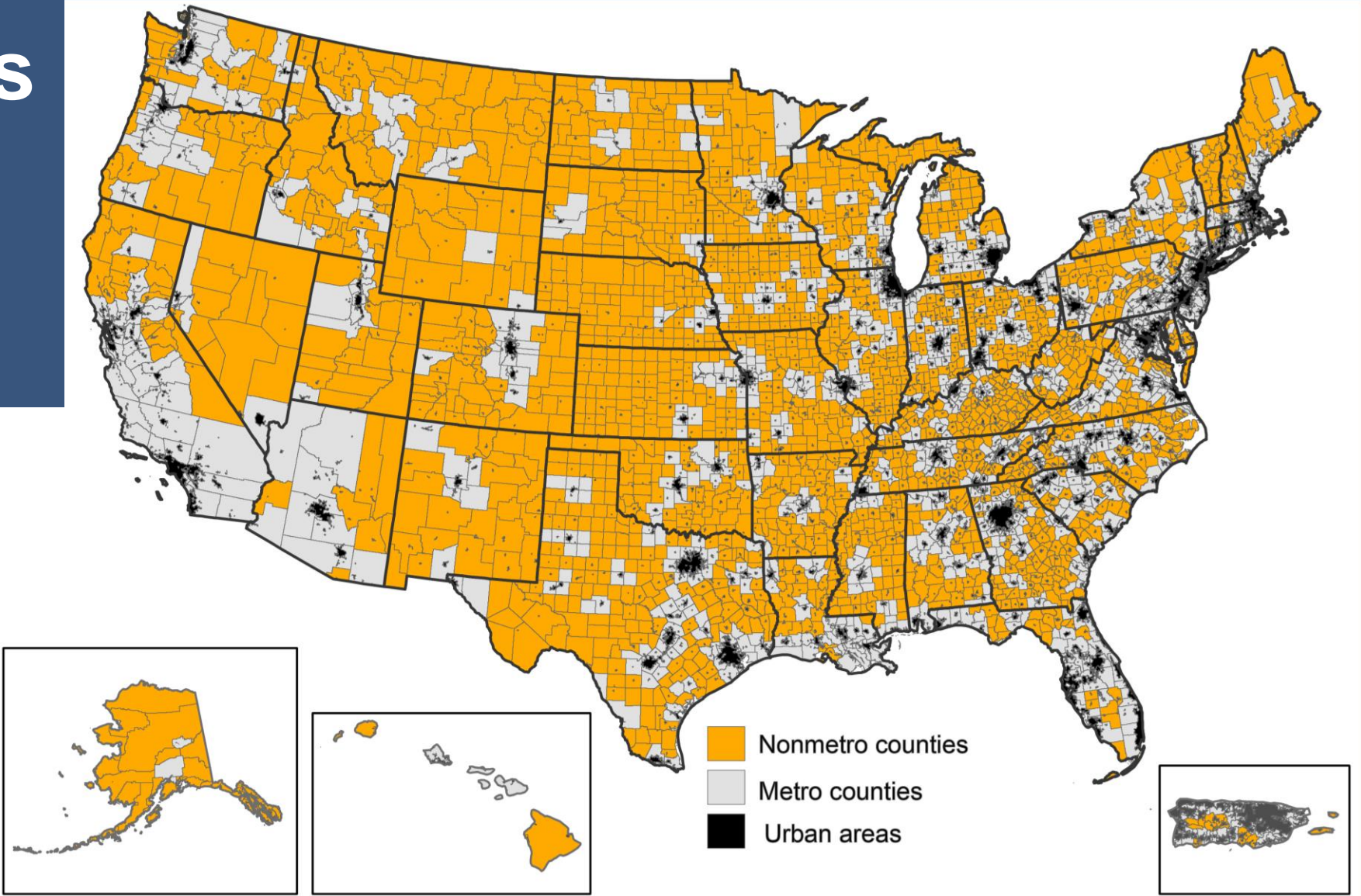
What does it mean?

- Self-identification
- Intersectionality
- Values and beliefs
- Unique data
- Grassroots



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U.S. Counties by Type (2023)



What Does Grant County Look Like?

- Rural Central Washington
- Population: 2,270
 - 83% Hispanic/Latino
 - 17% White
- Culturally rich
- Family centered
- Pride and work

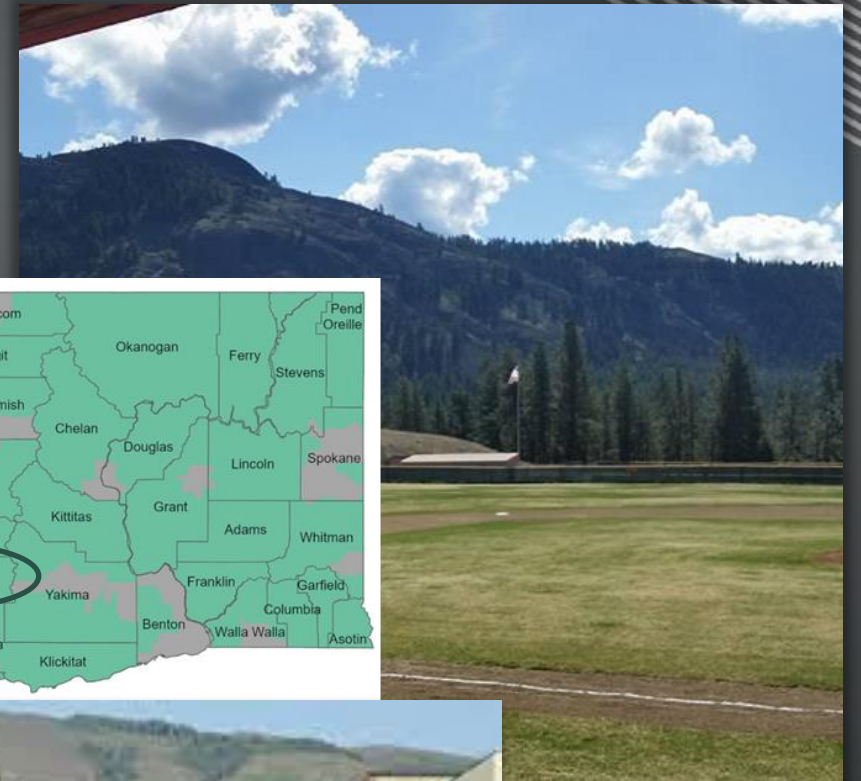


What Does Morton Look Like?

Lewis County

Population: 1,000; 20-40 kids per grade

- Identity crisis
- Defined by industry
- Complex politics
- Youth feel “stuck”

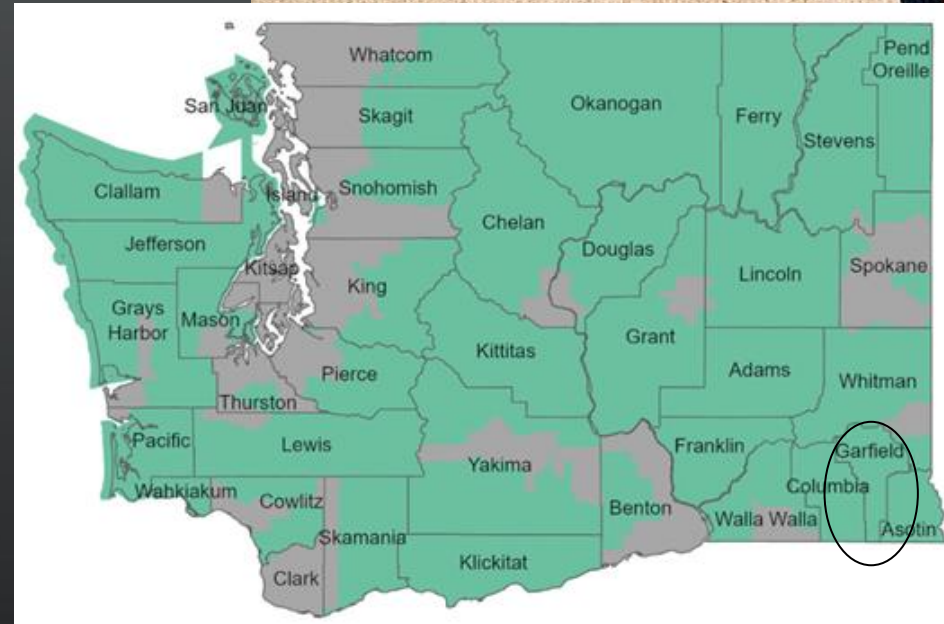


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What Does Pomeroy Look Like?

Garfield County
Population: 2,400

- Only 1 zip code
- Isolated, no services in a 30 mile radius
- Mostly white, lower middle class farming community



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In the Mentimeter or the chat,
tell us something you think is
important to know about your
community.



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The Paradox of Rural



- Poverty and wealth
- Hardship and privilege
- Relying on volunteers



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Rural Challenges

- Distance and technology challenges
- Recruitment of all 12 sectors
- Limited volunteer pool
- Identification and use of local data
- Gatekeepers and power players
 - Formal and informal power holders



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Rural Challenges, cont.

- Fiscal Agencies
 - Business capacity
 - Regional service - not local
 - Culture clash
- Technical Challenges
 - Internet speeds
 - Data gathering and analysis
 - Reporting - low numbers, privacy concerns



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Differences in Rural and Urban Communities

- Slow trust building
- Values
 - Solidarity
 - Interdependence
 - Civic pride
- Integrating rural innovation
- In-person relationships
- Acknowledgement of betrayals:
Economy, access, and culture



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Take the poll in Mentimeter to
tell us how much you
experience some of these
challenges.



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What Can We Do?

- Leverage collaborations and partnerships
- Respect local culture
- Use quality data
- Support collaboration from funders

Take the poll in Mentimeter to tell us what you have done to address these challenges and/or what successes you have had in your prevention work.



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Washington State Rural Network



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Structure

- Network of Prevention Professionals
- Supported by 2 staff
- Drug Free Communities Coalitions
- Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative Coalitions
- WA State Department of Health
- WA State Healthcare Authority
- Collaborate on rural needs
- Unique rural data
- Provide professional development
- Expert presentations



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History of the Rural Network

- 2010 - Funding by Geography
- 2012 - I502 Rec. Cannabis
- 2015 - YMPEP through DOH
- 2016 - Priority Populations
- 2018 - Training and TA contracts
- 2020 - Prevent Coalition: Rural
- 2021 - Full SPF
- Present Day: Rural Prevention Network



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Network Goals

1. Connect rural communities
2. Reduce youth substance misuse in rural areas



A gathering of rural people who support youth on their journey to whole health.



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Rural vs. Non-rural Data Findings

- Higher use of cannabis, vapor, binge drinking
- Native, Hispanic/Latino, LGBTQ+
 - Fact: No difference in number of youth identifying as LGBTQ+
- When discussing disparities, focus on risk/protective factors
- Positive Adult Relationships
- Positive Childhood Experiences

Risk Factors		
Measure	Rural WA	Non-rural WA
Have best friends who use marijuana	32.8%	31.5%
Easy access to marijuana	32.6%	31.5%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from regular marijuana use (once or twice a week)	31.1%	28.2%
Friends perceive youth marijuana use as not wrong	14.3%	12.9%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from regular vaping (almost daily)	16.1%	12.7%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from heavy cigarette use (pack or more a day)	9.0%	7.8%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from regular alcohol use (daily)	22.5%*	15.9%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from binge drinking (five or more alcoholic drinks on one occasion, once or twice a week)	12.5%	10.9%
Perceive no/low risk of harm from misusing prescription drugs	7.8%	6.5%

Protective Factors		
Measure	Rural WA	Non-rural WA
Parents perceive youth marijuana use as very wrong	75.1%	75.7%
Parental discussion about reasons to not use marijuana	58.1%	58.3%



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Collaboration

- 27 Rural Office Hours
- 16 Trainings
- 13 Steering Committee Meetings
- 11 Rural Network
- 4 Media Workgroups
- 2 Toolkit Workgroups

TOTAL = 86 Network Meetings Held



Who Do We Serve?

- Isolated, rural communities
- Those who self-identify as rural
- People who serve rural but may not identify as rural



WA State's First Ever Rural- focused Prevention Conference



Current Priorities



Toolkit

- Stock photos
- Success stories
- Other TBD



Conference

- Training
- Networking
- Skill building



Policy

- Advocacy
- Connect to Legislators
- Public testimony



Data

- Needs assessment
- Healthy Youth Survey

5 Steps to Build Your Own Network

In no particular order:

- Build your coalition
- Turn stories into data
- Find your fiscal allies
- Establish key goals and priorities
- Celebrate every success!

“If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.”



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www.preventcoalition.org/rural



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