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# King County Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program Strategic Plan, 2018-2023

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## Executive summary

The King County Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program (KC-YMPEP) developed a five-year strategic plan to guide youth marijuana prevention efforts. This work is supported by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) via the Dedicated Marijuana Account and activities are directed by DOH's Regional Implementation Guide. KC-YMPEP is led by the King County Departments of Public Health and Community & Human Services and advised by community partners.

## Youth marijuana use is a problem in King County

Youth in King County live in an environment of retail marijuana and are combatting multiple risk factors and complexities. Although use rates are trending down, fewer students perceive regular marijuana use to be harmful. In addition, there are disparities in rates of use by race, place and sexual orientation.

There is also a lack of clear, consistent and available educational materials. Evidence and research are emerging, but the science is not settled and messages are often conflicting and confusing. KC-YMPEP will continue to collect, analyze and report out findings to continue to increase awareness and motivation to tackle the problem of underage marijuana use in King County.

## KC-YMPEP seeks to reduce 10th grade marijuana use rates by:

- Increasing regional partnership, coordination and capacity;
- Developing an evidence base to inform current and ongoing efforts;
- Providing accessible educational information for youth and adults who influence them;
- Promoting youth leadership, and
- Supporting policies and procedures that keep kids in school and provide them with tools and resources to stay healthy.

**KC-YMPEP applies the guiding principle of targeted universalism** and focuses on the people and places where needs are greatest to ensure that decisions, policies and practices produce gains for all. Based on analysis of the Healthy Youth Survey and qualitative efforts, the communities of greatest need in King County include:

- Youth who identify as LGBTQ,
- Youth of color,
- Youth who reside in Seattle and South Seattle and
- Youth with multiple risk factors indicative of marijuana use; specifically, those who report using other substances, having close friends or household members who use marijuana, are at academic risk, are bullied and / or have easy access to marijuana.

## Community partners provide strategic guidance and participate in activities

A 15-member Regional Network provided input to this plan and will continue to provide guidance for planning and implementation. Regional Network members represent the sectors, regions and priority populations in King County. KC-YMPEP will work with these and other community partners to implement activities.