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with Youth Initiative projects.*



**In 1990-91  
the Safe Streets Youth Initiative  
continues to welcome  
partnership opportunities  
with schools and organizations.  
Our goal is to mobilize  
young people around the issues.**



*For more information  
on how your organization can support,  
and be supported in,  
involving youth as partners  
in the search for solutions,  
please call us at 596-2501 or 857-7228*

**Safe Streets Youth Initiative**  
c/o WASHINGTON LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE  
Tacoma-Pierce County Youth Initiative  
P.O. Box 2402  
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▼  
**THE  
SAFE STREETS  
YOUTH INITIATIVE**

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- A partnership between the Tacoma-Pierce County Youth Initiative, Safe Streets and Pierce County youth.
- A coalition to encourage young people to assess and address those issues such as gangs, violence, drugs and apathy that hold their generation at risk.
- An opportunity for youth to lead projects that renew communities and provide real options to drugs and gangs.

For nearly two years, we have been working to challenge and support youth leadership through community service by:

- providing "real world" education for action and implementing change
- encouraging youth to identify the real issues related to gangs and drugs and to address community needs
- providing support for the development of youth-initiated projects in the forms of:
  - skills training
  - mentors/advocates/partnerships
  - networking/resource development

**With your involvement,  
our young people's search for solutions  
will continue to turn to action. Please read on.**

*The Safe Streets Youth Initiative ...*

*... partners in the search for solutions*

## PROBLEM

*THERE ARE 500 OF THEM  
AND 500,000 OF US ...*

... so why do we feel outnumbered?

Safe Streets recognized long ago that one of the reasons gangs are so powerful is that they are organized. It makes sense then, that one of the major goals of the Safe Streets Campaign is to link the various groups in Pierce County who address the gang and drug issues.

The partnership between Safe Streets and the Tacoma-Pierce County Youth Initiative developed out of an awareness that young people have an important role to play as partners in the search for solutions to the continually escalating drug and gang violence issues facing our country, and more alarmingly, our county

Throughout 1989, a core group of young people and civic mentors met regularly to plan and provide key leadership to a variety of youth-initiated projects. In 1990, the work expanded to include school-based action groups, and the development of a curriculum (successfully piloted with a leadership class at Curtis High School) to move young people towards projects which *proactively* addressed their concerns while educating the broader community.

We are committed to mobilizing resources which support the efforts of youth willing to take action. This year, who knows what outstanding projects their talents and convictions will yield?

*This year, with your involvement,  
the search for solutions can expand.*

## SOLUTION

### *Get Involved*

➔ **Send a student representative** from your school or organization to our monthly meetings. These meetings are a chance to network, share needs and resources, and connect with project opportunities.

➔ **Organize a Safe Streets Action Group** at your school or organization. We can assist with recruiting, training and on-going support.

➔ **Have SSIYI speak to your class or group.** We have members who are recovering addicts and ex-gang members who tell it like it was.

We can provide up-to-date info on the drug and gang situation locally and nationally, address myths and stereotypes, and challenge participants to become involved by taking action.

We can meet with your class or group once to make a presentation, or on a regular basis to provide on-going support. Last year, we worked twice weekly with a class for an entire semester. The sessions in critical thinking, drama, initiative exercises, pluralism, leadership and project development resulted in the majority of the class participating in an educational outreach project to local elementary and junior-high schools.

➔ **Have our positive rap group To The Point, perform at your school** and spread the word:

- Stay in school
- Stay off drugs
- Don't pre-judge others

## RESULTS

*... come from commitment to action*

Since organizing the initiative in March, 1989, young people have developed—and provided key leadership to enable the success of—many projects. Below is a sample of what members have done to pro-actively address the problem of gangs and drugs in their communities.

They have:

- *Led graffiti cover-up teams*
- Organized and promoted Drug Free Week
  - *Developed programs which reach out to students at various grade levels*
- Organized neighborhood clean-ups
  - *Sponsored youth forums*
- Spoken on radio and TV
  - *Developed productive linkages with area high schools*
- Renovated apartments for low-income families
  - *Provided key input to Safe Streets Steering Committee*
- Initiated planning for Hilltop Hangout
  - *Organized RAP EXPLOSION '90*
- Supported Saturday bowling for Hilltop youth
  - *Reviewed films on gangs and drugs*
- Addressed myths about gangs and drugs
  - *Provided alternatives to gang and drug involvement for their peers*
- Developed funding and provides management for 2 D' POINT, a rap group delivering positive messages to young people through concerts and

*What do you want to do?*