

Monday, January 19th, 2026
Influence the Choice
Youth Advocacy Day



Dear Legislator,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. We are students participating in Youth Advocacy Day with Influence the Choice, a grassroots nonprofit focused on youth substance-use prevention in East King County. We appreciated the opportunity to share our perspectives and experiences with you.

Below is a summary of the topics we discussed and the ideas and suggestions we shared related to youth substance-use prevention.

School-Based Substance Use Prevention Education

Focus: Gaps in prevention education and the need for consistent learning about substance abuse risks throughout middle and high school.

Recommendations:

- Increase consistency in substance use prevention education across grade levels
- Ensure prevention education reflects current substances, trends, and real student experiences
- Youth Prevention Feedback Loop: A simple way for students to anonymously share what prevention messaging feels relevant or unclear, strengthening existing prevention efforts
- Support peer-to-peer prevention programs that empower students to educate and support one another

Impaired Driving & Lowering the BAC Limit to 0.05%

Focus: Preventing impaired driving and lowering the BAC limit to 0.05% for all drivers to keep young people safe on the roads.

Recommendations:

- Lower the BAC limit to 0.05% for all drivers, following successful examples from other states (e.g., Utah) and other countries
- Reduce alcohol-related crashes and injuries by setting clearer, safer standards

Using Substance Tax Revenue for Prevention

Focus: Reducing youth access to alcohol and addressing adult attitudes that normalize underage alcohol use.

Recommendations:

- Increase or maintain taxation on alcohol, cannabis, nicotine, and similar products
- Dedicate a clearer, larger portion of tax revenue specifically to youth prevention efforts, rather than broadly combining prevention, treatment, and recovery funding

Protecting Prevention Funding

Focus: Maintaining funding for youth substance use prevention and school-based supports.

Recommendations:

- Protect prevention funding from budget cuts, especially during economic downturns
- Establish clear, dedicated funding streams for prevention so resources are not diverted away from youth-focused programs
- Recognize prevention as a cost-effective investment that reduces long-term healthcare, justice, and education costs