

LOS ANGELES

Community Wellness Partnership (CWP)

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Bernardo Rosa, CWP Director

“The young people began this organization to develop a community strategy, to begin to change policies and especially to reduce violence against youth. Our first step was to build bridges between people. It began with conflict mediation at the schools, and from there it extended to organizing door-to-door.”

– Bernardo Rosa, Director

Mission: By educating youth about issues relevant to their life experiences and making them aware of available resources, CWP empowers young people to facilitate change in their communities. CWP seeks to build healthy communities through youth leadership development programs and to change public health policies with youth-led prevention advocacy efforts in Pomona, California.

Overview: CWP uses a “bottom up,” grassroots approach to youth leadership by cultivating future community activists. CWP brings together a diverse group of youth, community residents, collaborative members, and opinion and policy leaders to work on youth violence prevention initiatives at the local, county and state level. Programs include:

- Resources for Youth – a technology-oriented campaign to increase communication and connect youth and their families with vital resources to build critical skills for self-determination
- California Alcohol Policy Reform Initiative (CAPRI) – a statewide effort to reduce alcohol consumption and alcohol-related problems among youth by seeking legislation to impose a fee on the alcohol industry that would fund treatment
- Pomona Youth Commission – a collaboration with the City of Pomona to develop a citywide Youth Master Plan based on the Hawkins-Catalano: Building Healthy Communities model
- Cinco de Mayo Con Orgullo (With Pride) Campaign – a collaboration with California Latinos and Latinas for Health Justice to stop alcohol sponsorship and marketing of this holiday, using an approach based on cultural evidence

Results:

- Trained 580 youth organizers in KIP Youth Leadership Program
- Trained 450 youth in conflict mediation at three high schools and five middle schools
- Trained 175 residents and youth in four Neighborhood College Forums
- Produced quarterly youth publication, "The Unheard Voices," hand-delivered to more than 1,800 households in high-risk neighborhoods since 1995
- Trained 1,875 young men in “Spirit of Manhood” rites-of-passage program

- Trained 76 young women in Mariposa Educational and Career Track
- Trained 33 youth in Youth Social Entrepreneur Program
- Organized 35 youth to conduct community mapping for presentations to local officials on investing in resources for youth, and developed a training video, "Putting Yourself on the Map"
- Successfully passed seven laws at the local, county and state levels to reduce gun violence and violence associated with alcohol industry targeting of youth

Key Elements of Success:

- Long-term commitment to community
- Collaborations with other community groups, elected officials, agencies and funders
- Emphasis on training youth leaders
- Unique approach based on cultural evidence

Target Population: Young people between the ages of 13 and 19.

Evaluations:

- Stanford Center for Research and Disease Prevention, 1996-1999
- Rand Corporation statistical analysis, 1996-1999
- Fern Tiger, 2001
- Larry Wallack, University of Portland, Oregon, policy brief covering gun shows, 2001
- Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, evaluation division, 2003