Creating Sanctuary
In the Columbia Gorge
• North Wasco County School District in The Dalles, OR received a federal Safe Schools Healthy Students grant to address poor social outcomes among youth ages 0-18 and their families.
• By 2010, 2 years into the grant. Our data was going in the wrong direction. We knew we needed to do something drastically different.
• We began to ask “WHAT IS WRONG” and that question soon changed to understanding “WHAT HAS HAPPENED”
Data: 2010

- 27% of middle school students reported being in a fight on school property
- 26% of middle school students and 34% of high school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during the previous 30 days.
- 10% of middle school students and 24% of high school students reported using marijuana one or more times during the previous 30 days.

Data: 2013

- 14% of middle school students reported being in a fight on school property
- 14% of middle school students and 22% of high school students reported having at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during the previous 30 days.
- 8% of middle school students and 14% of high school students reported using marijuana one or more times during the previous 30 days.
- ZERO Juvenile Arrests during Spring Break 2013.
- Total number of office discipline referrals reached its lowest point in 4 years. Dramatic drop of over 700 referrals.
2010 REFLECTIONS:

• Culture of mistrust among community partners
• Multiple 911 calls from MS/HS every week (day)
• “The Dirty”—lack of community identity
• Public Unrest

Current REALITIES:

• Trained over 20% of the population in Trauma Theory
• Widespread cross sector adoption of Trauma Informed Care and Trauma Responsive Programming
• 2016 awardee of the RWJF Culture of Prize for Collective Impact and ability to build collaborative partnerships to enhance community health.
• Consortium for Trauma Informed Care (MARC Awardee)
HOW DOES ANY OF THIS RELATE TO CLIMATE CHANGE??

• Salmon populations in Columbia River system are down more than 90%
• Agricultural region with over 1.7 million acres dependent on irrigation
• Community response to wildfire
• Transportation related ecological disasters
• Threat of earthquakes or eruptions
What Steps Did We Take

1. Recognize the Problem
2. Develop a Common Goal
3. Engage Stakeholders
4. Adopt a Common Model
5. Implement the Model
6. Evaluate & Reassess
7. Expand Efforts

1. Continued Poor Outcomes for Kids & Families
2. “Rescript the Future in our Community”
3. Community Partner Organizations
4. Sanctuary Model
5. Mental Health Prevention & Promotion & MARC Grants
What is Sanctuary
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TRAUMA?

“Traumatization occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to cope with the external threat.”

Van der Kolk
State of high alert
Inability to think clearly
Extreme thoughts
Attention to threat
Intense and prolonged anxiety
Drive to take action
State of high alert
Inability to think clearly
Extreme thoughts
Attention to threat
Intense and prolonged anxiety
Drive to take action
Lack of basic safety/trust

Loss of emotional management

Problems with cognition

Communication problems

Problems with authority

Confused sense of justice

Inability to grieve and anticipate future

TRAUMA-ORGANIZED SYSTEM
Families, Organizations, Communities

- Cognitive Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Emotional Management Skills
- Judgment Skills
- Safety Skills
- Grieving and Imagination

TRAUMA-INFORMED RESPONSES
Implementing Sanctuary Changes Thinking

Changing Thinking Changes Behavior

Changing Behavior: Changes Organization

Changing Organization Changes Client Outcomes

Adopting a trauma sensitive organizational paradigm changes the way we THINK

The SELF framework changes how we use LANGUAGE

The Seven Commitments delineate how we sustain RELATIONSHIPS

The Sanctuary Toolkit improves the way we PRACTICE

Reduced Turnover

Improved Morale

Better Communication

Decreased Incidents of Violence

Fewer trauma symptoms

Better social skills

Improved relationships

Improved outcomes

Improved safety skills

Improved judgment