Community of Focus: White River

Communities of Focus is Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department’s effort to improve health in areas with some of the poorest health outcomes in the county. White River is 1 of 6 Communities of Focus.

Help share White River’s story.
You are the experts on your community. What matters to you may make a difference in your community’s health.

First people
The White River Valley is the ancestral homeland of the Skekomish (Stakamish) people.

Who lives here?
White River includes Buckley, Wilkeson, South Prairie, Carbonado and parts of Prairie Ridge and Bonney Lake. About 20,000 people live here. The community is proud of its history of logging, mining and farming.

Local leaders
Many work together to strengthen White River. One example is White River Families First Coalition, a partnership of more than 50 community organizations.
Another example is White River Partnership. The Partnership meets the first Monday of each month at 10:30 a.m. at Wickersham. All are welcome to join and help plan community improvements.

Strengths and assets
The White River community values traditions, community events, good schools, neighbors looking out for each other and a small town, friendly feel.

The area is home to museums, businesses, schools, churches, civic groups and Rainier State School for people living with disabilities.

What do the data say?
While many people have great quality of life, not everyone has the same opportunities to be healthy. Community residents and partners identified these priorities:
• Access to resources (health, counseling, basic needs).
• Transit options.
• Access to food and a full-service grocery store.
• Opportunities for social connections.
• Addressing mental health.
• Youth-focused opportunities.

The Buckley area has a lower life expectancy than Pierce County. Some White River communities have higher rates of cardiovascular disease, poverty, opioid deaths and disability than Pierce County.

Health starts where we live, learn, work, play and pray.
• What makes White River a good place to live?
• What would make White River a better place to live?
Together we can make White River the best place to live!

Learn more at tpchd.org/whiteriver. Email us at healthequity@tpchd.org.