At the Sultan Library, two young people overdosed on the synthetic marijuana known as Spice. It’s a drug that while not illegal, causes seizures, it can cause hallucinations and it can cause vomiting. But the drug problem along Highway 2 goes far beyond Spice. *The Snohomish County Tribune* newspaper recently reported the number of substance abuse calls and thefts in the first six months of this year, was seven to eight times higher than the previous year.

And according to the police, most of the thefts committed to – in-, in the area are committed to fuel a heroin habit. And of all the substance abuse calls related to heroin, high-, high school girls are reportedly using heroin as a weight-loss drug.

Drug related hospital admissions has skyrocketed into-, in the area. Heroin and other illegal drugs are taking a toll on the health and security of all of our communities. There is no Mayberry anymore. The – Opie is probably a user, if not a dealer, these days. And that’s why we are here tonight. So we can understand the extent of the drug problem along Highway 2 and we can share ideas for reducing the toll that drugs are taking.

We’re going to hear some opening remarks from our distinguished ca-, panelists this evening and then I will ask some questions and you are encouraged to ask questions tonight. And if-, if you’re following on Twitter, you’re welcome to answer quest-, uh, ask questions, as well. We will get those questions to the panelists. And when it does come time for the questions, I will ask those of you have questions to raise your hands. We’ll send a microphone to you and we will get that question asked and answered to the best of our ability this evening. And if you would identify yourself, if you would identify any specific organization that you belong to, we would be very happy to have that information, as well.

Tonight, on our panel we have Detective David Chitwood of the Snohomish Regional Drug and Gang Task Force and Bart Wheaton, Chemical Dependency Counselor with Catholic Community Services and the Cocoon House. And I’m going to ask each of them to begin our presentation this evening with a statement. And then we will get to the more important aspect, which I think is your questions and their answers. And I think we will begin with Detective David Chitwood.

Thank you. Thank you guys, for comin’ tonight. Again, I’m Detective Chitwood with the Snohomish Regional Drug and Gang Task Force. I’ve been in law enforcement for about 22 years. My career started in the City of Lake Forest Park. I was there from ’92 to ’99, [clears throat] Excuse me, and then at, uh, came on a Ride-Along with a Deputy in Snohomish County and said: I gotta go work there. So I came here in ’99 and, uh, love it. Been here ever since.
Currently, right now, I – I am Deputy with the Sheriff’s Office and I am assigned to the Drug Task Force. In Snohomish County, the Drug Task Force is a regional, multi-jurisdictional task force. So we serve all of Snohomish County. And it’s kinda like a one-stop shop. We’ve got detectives that do mid-to-upper level cases. We’ve got prosecutor-, criminal prosecutor assigned from the Prosecutor’s Office. We’ve got a Secretary for her. We’ve got Lieutenants. We have the Health Department, we have CPS assigned to our office. So we have lots of options and lots of . . . ability to-, to do our jobs. So it’s actually, it’s kinda crazy to think that we have such a big task force in Snohomish County but it-, it is nice to have all those entities in there.

And if you think about it, with Highway 2, with I-5, with the waterway, with the airway, the railway, we’ve got a lot of different ways that drugs come into our community. So, you know, unfortunately, that’s why we need such a big task force here. So it’s actually, it’s good to have what we have here. So –

Part of what my job is, the Force and obviously is a bunch of undercover detectives doing mid-to-upper level cases. My job is to do street-level drug stuff and to – to work on drug houses. I also work on our website. I work on our Facebook page. And go and talk at community events like this, in schools for education. I talk to parents about: What is drug paraphernalia? People hear about drug paraphernalia, they hear about heroin. I – I show ‘em pictures. I show ‘em what paraphernalia is. What is drug paraphernalia. What goes along with heroin? And what goes along with Crack, and stuff.

So for me, I can get out in public and be seen like this, where the other detectives, obviously their job is to – to blend in and – and be undercover. So – Yeah, I think that’s . . . all I can tell you about me right now.

00:05:30 BART WHEATON

My name’s Bart Wheaton. I’m a Chemical Dependency Counselor for Catholic Community Services. I work out of the Cocoon House. Currently, I’ve been working as a Chemical Dependency Counselor for Catholic Community Services for – this is my fifth year. I have been working Cocoon for the last two years and when working with the Cocoon is, it’s a little, more at-risk youth, more at risk for . . . criminal activity, for at risk for homelessness and just more at-risk youth. When working with the youth, I frequently have to work with agencies, like schools and parents and also work with police and probation departments.

So, a lot of times, I guess, the biggest question I would get from most parents and most people from just the community asking me about my job, and would be the-, I guess the biggest question would be . . . about how to tell if your kids are doing drugs.

And the-, I think the second biggest question is, well one the-, the . . . people don’t understand about addiction is they-, they believe it’s a choice. And they believe that if the youth would just choose not to use drugs, everything would be better. But what I understand about drug addiction and what I’ve learned is – it’s a disease, and it’s a disease of the mind and it’s identified as a disease by the ASAM Criteria, as well as AMA – American Medical Association.

So a lot of times, a lot of the questions I – I will answer about drug addiction will be just simply: Why can’t a person stop? And a lot of times that’s – that’s a tough question to – to ask, especially with the at-risk youth that I – that I do work with. A lot of those kids have . . . addiction affected families that – so at an early age they’re exposed to drug addiction and alcoholism.
And I also . . . the Moderator there, he had said, you know, the heroin and methamphetamines and all those drugs, but since . . . our state has put alcohol into grocery stores, that has – there’s been a big up- spike of alcohol poisoning because the harder alcohol readily available to youth – they steal it out of the grocery stores and so, I mean, that’s another issue that-, that I think a lot of people don’t think about. So – is alcohol poisoning that I know that I talk to people at the hospital and they say that has been on the rise, of a lot of kids comin’ in for alcohol poisoning.

So I’d be more than happy to answer any of those questions, if you’d like. Thanks.

00:08:52 MODERATOR

Thank you. Again, our panelists, Detective David Chitwood of the Snohomish Regional Drug and Gang Task Force, and Bart Wheaton, Chemical Dependency Counselor, Catholic Community Services, the Cocoon House. And if you have some questions, please feel free to ask them. I will exercise the Moderator’s prerogative and ask the first question, and this one for – for Detective Chitwood.

When you started 22 years ago, what – what were the primary crimes of youth that you were dealing with? Was the crime of illegal drug use, alcohol abuse, as high on your list as it is now? 22 years ago when you started?

00:09:40 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

I think it was just starting but I came from the city of Lake Forest Park in King County, if you guys know where that’s at. So it was a different kind of activity there – cocaine, a little bit of heroin, and pills, marijuana – It just wasn’t – it wasn’t as big as it – it is now – here. It did – We didn’t have a high – we don’t have a high school. They had a elementary school in Lake Forest Park. The closest high school, I think, was Bothell and then maybe up by maybe Shoreline High School. So we didn’t have the kids in the community like this, or like in Gold Bar or like in Stanwood, that’s got the high schools and stuff. So it’s a different – That’s a tough question for me because it-, it was different there. So it’s def-, I definitely see a lot more-, a lot more kids using and willing to try stuff than I did in Lake Forest Park 22 years ago.

00:10:36 MODERATOR

And . . . for-, for you, Bart: With the kids that you deal with, well the-, the kids that you talk with and – and deal with, what do they tell you about how they got involved with drugs and when they started?

00:10:53 BART WHEATON

I think the most common reason I hear is peer pressure, friends who have – they’ll have been around somebody else that was using the drug and asked them to use it.

00:11:08 MODERATOR

And – and what-, what is it that – that doesn’t allow them to say: No! ?

00:11:15 BART WHEATON
I – that’s a – I think that’d be better asked a teenage development person that knows teenage development and how kids really wanna fit in. I mean – I don’t know if you guys were teenagers, you were in high school, right? Right? That’s-, that’s a tough gig, I mean, that’s the worse. I would never wanna relive those times in my life [laughs] again. So I mean, really, you know that-, that need to – to wanna connect and to wanna fit in.

00:11:41 MODERATOR
And – and are you seeing an involvement at a younger age? Or is it fairly consistent?

00:11:48 BART WHEATON
It’s – it’s fairly consistent. Usually the age of first use rough- around 8th or 9th grade.

00:11:57 MODERATOR
And then so that would be . . . 12, 13, 14 years old? Something like that?

00:12:00 BART WHEATON
13 to 14, yeah. 12, 13, 14, yeah.

00:12:05 MODERATOR
And it’s generally starts with peers, not in the home?

00:12:06 BART WHEATON
No, that’s not true. Because a lot of kids, especially the kids I work with today out at Cocoon, they do – there is a lot of exposure to drugs and alcohol in the home. But I mean, kids like – I worked out at IOP Group in Marysville, which is – is a, kind of a rural area and those kids certainly would . . . would – the main reason was peer pressure out there.

00:12:34 MODERATOR
And we’re having this forum here and the opportunity for you to ask questions, as well. If anyone has a question for either of our panelists, please raise your hand and let us know that you have that question and we’ll get a microphone over to you and give you the opportunity to get that – that question asked. So please don’t hesitate to raise your hand if you have questions for tonight.

Let me put this question to both of you. We know that there’s a genetic link for alcoholism, and we also know that the single, largest influence on kids is their parents. Is the dynamic going to change? What do you think the impact is going to be now that the recreational use of marijuana in Washington is legal? Do you see it having a significant change in drug usage numbers in the-, in the county as a result of it being made legal? Detective?

00:13:42 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD
I don’t-, I don’t think it’s gonna help. Yeah, I mean – you know, parents now, you talk to your kids about drinkin’ and driving and you talk to your kids about drugs. You talk to your kids
about bowling. We talk to our kids about not lying and usin’ bad language and stuff. Now we have to talk to our kids about when they go to the neighbor’s house, who they’ve been playing with for the last five years, if they pull out a joint or a bong and they start smoking a substance, please come home, and don’t hang out there. It’s another conversation that we have to have with kids.

Some parents are gonna choose to smoke in their house and smoke marijuana and – and that’s fine if that’s what they choose to do, because it’s legal in the state of Washington, and the voters approved it. But as parents that are against that, we have to talk to our kids and let them know: Listen, this is what marijuana looks like. This is part of the paraphernalia that goes along with it. If, for some reason you’re at a friend’s house, or you’re at a gathering and their parents or their brother or sister or whoever, pulls it out and starts smoking this, we want you to come home, or give us a call and we’ll come and get ya. And then that’s a place that I know that my kids will not go back there. So I think it just is more conversation that we have to have with the stuff like drinkin’ and driving when they’re Driver’s Ed and that type of stuff.

00:14:57 BART WHEATON

Yeah. I – I think the kids that are . . . pre-dispositioned to kinda have a problem with drugs or alcohol – I don’t think it’ll affect – I think those kids would have a problem with drugs or alcohol without that legalization. I mean, I – like you said, I don’t think it will help. I think the – I talked to a kid from this community and asked him where he got his marijuana and he told me he got it from . . . a guy that has a medical marijuana card that goes up to a dispensary right down the road here, and buys it for him. So –

00:15:31 MODERATOR

Would the-, the kids that you have that conversation with, your-, your children and you say: If you’re over at a friend’s house and they pull out a bong and they start lighting up . . . Is that a ques-, a conversation that is going to be unique to this drug? You wouldn’t have that conversation if they were over there and they pulled out a beer, to have a beer? Pour themselves a cocktail? Is it – is it a unique conversation?

00:16:02 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

I think so. Second-hand smoke, issues of that. I mean, I – I – I would think that parents would talk to their kids about the same thing: Hey, if you’re over at Jimmy’s house and Jimmy’s parents are drinking and they’re, you know, usin’ bad language, stumbling around, any showing effects like that, bein’ disruptive, I guess you would have that conversation. Did I answer your question, Ryan?

00:16:26 MODERATOR

Yeah, yeah. OK.

00:16:27 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

I’m tryin’ to think if I had that conversation. I’m not really sure but I – I would like to hope that I did.

00:16:36 MODERATOR
And again, if you have questions this afternoon, please. We have a question in the back. Please stand up and identify yourself.

00:16:43 DONNA NOBLE [SP]

Hi. My name is Donna Noble, I live in Marysville and I’m a Student Support Advocate in Granite Falls School District. So this question is directed to Bart. So Bart, with the – kids that you’re seeing, and this is something that I’ve experienced, is the kids are getting clean from the harder drugs – the Meth and the heroin and things like that, but they’re still using marijuana to the point where it would be deemed that they’re dependent, but they’re not looking at a light that it’s that bad because, I mean, that obviously, if they’re addicted and using the heroin and Meth, they’re not doing that anymore, but they’re still smoking, and they don’t look at it like it’s a big deal or it’s disrupting their life and it helps them to focus and stay calm and things like that. Can you address that, as far as . . . in your role and what you know and – how that’s gonna impact them and – the clean and non-clean type thing.

00:17:32 BART WHEATON

Sure. Yeah, that does happen quite a bit. And I think another thing needs to be said about that legalization. Because what that does do, and that’s a part of the conversation, I think Detective Chitwood was talking about is – it normalizes marijuana and it normalizes marijuana use. So a youth might think now: Well, it’s legal. It’s – it’s harmless. So, which, I mean, alcohol’s legal but it still can cause harm, too. So I think it’s – that’s just part of the conversation, like Detective Chitwood said but –

So my experience with youth that are trying to get off heroin and trying to . . . get out methamphetamines and using marijuana, that’s a very common thing that happens actually. What they will do is – it’s stimulates the same parts of the brain – marijuana does – so it’s just a matter of time before they go back to those drugs.

00:18:36 MODERATOR

Any other questions? Yes?

00:18:39 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:

Yeah, I guess I’m –

00:18:39 MODERATOR

Uh, wait. Just wait for the microphone. Please stand up and identify yourself.

00:18:46 MONICA STEADMAN [SP]

My name is Monica Steadman. I’m a social worker. Have worked at Providence for several years and now I’m and Independent Clinical Social Worker. I would beg to differ, I guess, about that kids aren’t using the Methamphetamine, the opiates. I think that what I’m seeing or what I
have seen is, is that they’re just going straight to the heroin. It’s - they don’t have the money to spend –

00:19:11 BART WHEATON

Yeah. That’s my experience, too.

MONICA STEADMAN

- 80 on a pill or you know, and so – And also, the age group. My – I have three boys. My youngest is going into sixth grade.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE

We can’t hear.

00:19:23 MONICA STEADMAN

Sorry. I have three boys. My youngest is going into sixth grade and I asked him, you know, when he’s at the skate park: Have you been approached? And several times he talks about it and – and working within the pediatric unit I, you know, the age group, I’m seeing is lower than – er-yeah, lower than –

00:19:44 BART WHEATON

I’m talkin’ about kids that would have to come in and see me for an assessment. They age group of those kids, not age group of kids that will be approached. I’m sure those kids that see me for assessments, usually right around age 13 or 14 is the initial. I mean, every once in a while I’ll get one as young as 12, but never younger than that.

00:20:05 MONICA STEADMAN

Interesting.

00:20:05 MODERATOR

Thank you, and there was a question in the back?

00:20:13 SHEILA KRAFT

Hi, I’m Sheila Kraft and I’m a member of Nar-Anon of Monroe and I came because of – I was told that there was this meeting, which I think is awesome and addiction, as you guys probably know, especially the-, Wheaton in the Cocoon House, it’s a family disease in that it affects the family. OK? So the addict is affecting himself but it can be devastating to find out you have a child who is addicted, and whether they’re going in and out of jail or whatever it is. In and out of treatment, which can be very expensive - Or a family member or a close friend.

So I wanted to let people know, especially parents, that there is a group for you, a support group. It’s called Nar-Anon and it's similar to Al-Anon for AA. So at Nar-Anon, we’re – we’re
affiliated with Narcotics Anonymous and it’s a place where you can come and talk about your hurt and get support. And also find out things that are helpful and are not helpful to do with an addicted . . . loved one.

So I have materials with me – brochures and also a printout of all the meetings in Western Washington, so if anybody would like those, I’d be happy to connect with you after the meeting.

00:21:42 MODERATOR

And do you have a- is there a website for –

00:21:44 SHEILA KRAFT


00:22:07 MODERATOR

Thank you. Have another question over here.

[pause]

00:22:14 JULIE

I’m Julie and I’m a parent, here in Snohomish and I thank you both for being here. I’m just curious if you could talk a little bit about what’s been done actively in Snohomish to help this issue.

00:22:25 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Sure. Just recent-, well not recently, but for a while, the City of Snohomish has seen retail thefts spike. So for instance, somebody would go into Kohl’s, grab some stuff, take that item, maybe to Fred Meyer’s, return it, get a gift card. Take that stuff, that money or the gift card, either trade it for heroin or take it somewhere that somebody’s given ‘em maybe money for that gift card – like 57 cents on the dollar or 80 cents on the dollar – and they’re getting cash for that. And then they’re taking that in return and . . . buyin’ their drugs. So what’s happened is, unfortunately, Snohomish has gotten that issue and it’s become a big issue, and that’s how the Drug Task Force is starting to get involved.

One thing that you guys need to know is, the City of Snohomish, they are all deputies here. You contract with the Sheriff’s Office and they all do a great job as proactive enforcement. I mean, not only are they responding to all the 911 calls that come in and all the different assists that they do maybe to Sultan or Monroe or Lake Stevens. They’re answering 911 calls and then they’re going out and physically doing enforcement – checking houses, checking drug houses and stuff when they can. So they really do a lot. And it’s, you know, we have to abide by the laws that are set out there. We can’t just – in the state of Washington, if there’s a drug house, I can’t just go sit in front of a drug house and stop the next person that comes out, you know? That’s . . . profiling. That’s a pretext stop. And so we have to do other ways to investigate that.
So we’re here, we’re doing stuff, we’re involved and like I said, your police department here does a great job as being proactive in the community. So, is that kind of answering your question? If you’re asking if we’re going around and talking to the homeless kids and finding out if they have a place to stay or dealing with the mentally ill – you know, there the Compass House in Everett just started a place on Broadway. So instead of dealing with some homeless person that’s maybe got some type of mental issue and is using heroin, we just arrest him for trespassing and book him in a jail. That doesn’t help. ‘Cuz now the jail’s stuck with the cost of treating them for their mental disorder and stuff. So, you know, we can use Compass help there, as well. So I think it’s something that we’re gonna start doing like we’re doing in South County, helping more, trying to help come up with solutions, you know, for facilities that they can help. Catholic Service, you know, Community Services and that type of stuff. But all I can tell you is we’re proactively doing enforcement in the City.

**00:25:03 MODERATOR**

Talk - talk me through the process. If you arrest – if you get a call for a crime – shoplifting – and you-, you arrest the individual, a young person, and it is apparent that he is or she is doing this crime to feed a drug habit – Talk me through the process of what you do with that kid.

**00:25:26 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

So if we get a 911 Call, someone’s stealing and we get to Kohl’s in time, or any other place, and we’re able to stop them and somebody says: Yeah, that person, Security Officer, we arrest ‘em. We find the product on ‘em. It’s – it’s up to the Deputy to decide. When we figure out who they are, we identify ‘em, we figure out how old they are. Is it a felony level case? Is it a gross misdemeanor case? Are we takin’ them to jail, or not? If they’re under the influence, we don’t know what they’re under the influence of. We could ask ‘em. They might tell us: Yeah, I’ve recently used this or that. But we don’t have a process where we offer them a place at the Cocoon House or you know, we could book them into jail. We could take ‘em to Denney Youth Center. They may have a process there that, you know, asks them about their addiction and stuff. But unless they have marijuana-, or heroin on them or something, we really don’t know. And we could release them and take their photograph, take their information, write up a report, send it off to the Prosecutor’s Office or send it off to Denney Youth Center. They could be homeless. Maybe they’re using their parents’ address. So we – part of the investigation is to try to figure out who they are and that type of thing.

If they have heroin on them, then you know, it’s up to the Deputy to, you know, either test it, field test it, see if it tests positive and then book ‘em into jail or release them and then refer the charges. So that’s –

**00:26:50 MODERATOR**

And – and if they’re not homeless and they – they are, they do have an address and you contact their parents, how often are the parents surprised to hear that their child is using heroin?

[pause]

**00:27:07 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

Well, I’m tryin’ to think – when I was back on patrol, how many times – that doesn’t happen very often with younger, juvenile kids bein’ on heroin, stealing – right now. I think right now, if you
were to take an age limit of the kids or the people that are doing this stuff, you’re probably looking at 19 to 25 year-olds . . . that are stealing. So they’re adults. So we don’t have to release them to their parents.

So I think the last juvenile case I did was in Granite Falls at – yeah. And it was somebody extracting THC out of marijuana. I can’t think of the last juvenile offense that I had while working patrol – with heroin or Meth or somethin’ like that.

00:27:48 MODERATOR

Then what most often is it, the juvenile offense, that you come across?

00:27:50 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD


00:27:57 MODERATOR

And Bart, when – when a child, when a kid comes to you, what’s – talk me through the process of – of dealing with – with this child.

00:28:07 BART WHEATON

So I – I wanted to answer- you’re kinda – what we do on – So Cocoon House has what’s called street advocates. And I work with the street advocates. The street advocates that are in your neighborhood, in your high schools – I think there’s two designated for this specific area. And what they will do is they will go out to kids they see at the skate parks or kids they see at the streets. Or, I don’t know if you guys are familiar with the Stoner Trail – they are here in Snohomish – it’s behind 7-Eleven there – So they’ll go out into the Stoner Trail and talk to kids and they will ask kids if they want help, or if they’re-, if there’s some need that they have. And the kids will – if the kids identify that they have a need for drug and alcohol help, then the advocate will contact me. And then I then will meet with the – with the youth and do an assessment and make a recommendation for-, for some treatment.

And / or if it isn’t drug and alcohol help, if it’s mental health help, or housing help or legal help – and a lot of times that is how kids do get in touch with me. They do end up in Denney Youth Center and then eventually get a probation officer, and then the probation officer will recommend, because of the youth has had drug history, to meet with me. And that’s, a lot of times how I will get in contact with the kids through the day. Denney Youth Center actually has quite a few programs to help – help kids that are affected by drug addiction.

00:29:49 MODERATOR

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Is it – is it funded fully enough?

00:29:50 BART WHEATON

Huh?

00:29:52 MODERATOR
Is it funded fully enough? Do you have enough money?

00:29:56 BART WHEATON

I can’t really speak to funding.

[Audience – No – no. No]

00:30:00 BART WHEATON

Probably – oh, yeah, probably not. It’s my experience – Social Services isn’t funded very well. But yeah, probably not.

00:30:07 MODERATOR

Do you have a question?

00:30:06 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

We do. Yeah, I apologize. I got here late so you probably went over this before I got here. But there – Detective, are you-, is it a Snohomish County drug force or a City of Snohomish?

00:30:19 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

It’s the Snohomish Regional so it’s – all of Snohomish County.

00:30:20 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

OK. I’m a mother in Monroe and I’m gonna be out of town next week so that’s why I came here but – I was wondering – kinda in addition to what you said, I’m wondering more about proactive stuff that’s being done. There was a thing put on by the Monroe School District at the beginning of the year and . . . it was great. But I, unfortunately, I didn’t bring my 12-year-old ‘cuz I didn’t realize that, I mean, I thought it was an adult program and it would have been great for him. And I think education, the more information to give kids the better. So we’re not too . . . you know, being proactive rather than, you know, reacting and then needing the treatment and the Cocoon House and being homeless and everything. Is the – the Regional Drug Task Force, do they do anything like that? Put on programs for kids, like not just D.A.R.E. and, you know, I can talk to my kids about it but I’m just mom. You know?

00:31:16 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yeah.

00:31:17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Do they do anything like that?

00:31:19 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD
Yeah. So a couple years ago what we started to do different of the Task Force – we sent out letters to all of the schools in Snohomish County to say: Hey, the Drug Task Force would like to offer this 30-minute drug awareness type thing. So we did a – we did a whole lot that year, and then it’s kind of slowed down. Some of the-, most of the schools will have like in their health class they’ll talk about drugs and alcohol, tobacco and that type of thing. Right now I currently work with just a couple schools at the sixth and seventh grade level. But if anybody were to call and say: Hey, Monroe High School, 9th- graders health class, wanna do something for drug education, awareness, that type of thing – it would get sent back through the Sheriff’s Office or through Monroe and could come to the Drug Task Force.

The City of Monroe, with that being their school up there, they could do that themselves. So I’m not really sure but if they were to call and say: Hey, do you put this on? We would definitely – that’s something that I do.

So like if I were to go to, let’s say a Monroe middle school and talk to somebody there, I have a 45-minute presentation that we show. And, you know, I – I talk to ‘em about, you know, this is what it is. This is what people are doing and this is what’s out there. I’m not showing them how to use it. But I want them to know what it is and what it looks like, so if they’re at a friend’s house and somebody pulls somethin’ out and starts huffing on it and breathing in and says: Hey, this is really good. It makes you feel good. They’ll know that that’s called or ‘huffing’ or inhaling. So we, you know, I teach them on three different drugs – heroin, marijuana and we talk about maybe pills or huffing, depending how much time we have.

So as a Task Force, that’s somethin’ that we do and we offer. Do I go out and solicit it all the time? No. ‘Cuz if I did, I would be so busy doing that and teaching in schools, that I wouldn’t be able to do drug enforcement at the street level and that type of thing. We’re just – we don’t have enough manpower to do that.

But I would never turn something like that down. Post Middle School in Arlington? I’ve been talking there for the past five years and I think all the kids that are now into high school, that have attended that school, have heard my drug presentation there. Stanwood High School, a couple other places, Port Susan Middle School. So I have some certain places that people call me back-Cavelero Mid High was one. But as the teachers change and that type of thing - again, I don’t solicit – we just wait for them to call us.

00:33:30 MODERATOR

And then, Bart? What about . . . Catholic Community Services and Cocoon House?

00:33:44 BART WHEATON

We – yeah. Catholic Community Services actually has a counselor out at Sultan right now. She works with the whole Sultan School District. I’m not – I’m not sure what connection they might have to the Monroe or Snohomish schools. I know that we do work with kids out of the schools and if any of those schools request like – just like Detective Chitwood had said – any of those schools request a presentation or have a – a . . . thing that they’re puttin’ on that they want us to represent, we will definitely go there. And that’s part of my job, too, is outreach.

00:34:22 MODERATOR

Are there other questions in the audience?
UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

While I’m grateful we’ve spoken about the youth and how to prevent this disease and what’s happening, I guess my question may be directed to you, Bart. I don’t know if you can answer it or not. My addict is not a youth and did not -

BART WHEATON

OK.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

- start until later adulthood. And I also live in the City of Snohomish and from what I’ve seen, it has a huge problem in that 19 to 35 years. And those are the kids and the people that the Detective spoke of that are doing the robberies, the home robberies, the –

BART WHEATON

Right.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

- break-ins. As a family, we’ve tried . . . everything we can.

BART WHEATON

Right.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

We are limited legally by what we can do. But as an addict, they’re not in the right mind.

BART WHEATON

Right.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Why can’t we commit them? Why can’t I put her in a psychiatric facility?

BART WHEATON

I-, I think -

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

I’ve tried. Humph She’s been a tough –
I think you have to – you’d have to like prove that they have to be harming themselves some way.

00:35:42 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

If they’re on heroin and she’s using every day?

00:35:43 BART WHEATON

Obviously, yeah.

00:35:44 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

- She’s harming herself.

00:35:44 BART WHEATON

Yeah, obviously, she’s harming herself, probably quite a bit. I – I feel for you because –

00:35:50 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Right. How do we change that law?

00:35:50 BART WHEATON

- because addiction is – is a horrible, horrible disease that is very hard to understand and a lot of people think it is very much like a light switch. You can turn it on and turn it off.

00:36:03 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

I can’t. I -, if I could, I would have turned her switch off.

00:36:05 BART WHEATON

Ha! And so – so until the – the person that’s addicted has a desire to – to try to do something different or starts to value different things, and seek out some help, nothing really can be done. It’s – it’s like –

00:36:23 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Even if they could get that mental help? Mental health help? You don’t think that –

00:36:27 BART WHEATON

And – and I see what you’re saying. That if you could get them just to – to go to the – I guess the best way I could put it is my experience, as if I’d put a puddle of water here, spilled some water and I pushed on it. It would spread out. And that’s kinda what it’s like sometimes when you push on an addict. The –

00:36:47 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE
Yeah.

00:36:47 BART WHEATON

- their brain is the most affected part of their body –

00:36:51 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Right.

00:36:51 BART WHEATON

- and they’re going to protect that drug use. They – that drug use, to them, is survival. It’s – and really base animalistic instinct.

00:37:00 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

It goes over everything. Right. It’s more important than breathing.

00:37:01 BART WHEATON

And – and outweighs all. It’s a-, it’s a very much, it’s like a survival instinct. So a lot of times the best thing to do for an addict is to let ‘em shoot themselves in the foot and let them –

00:37:13 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

And when they don’t? When that’s not enough?

00:37:15 BART WHEATON

It’s – that’s the horrible thing about it. I – and there’s-, there’s no real set way to address addiction. Like in –

00:37:20 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Can we change the law? How do we change that?

00:37:21 MODERATOR

And I think that – I think we’re getting into an area of discussion and it’s a little bit off topic, so we wanna bring it back to the – the question of youth and drug use and that – I think you have some very real, legitimate questions that need to be taken up at a much higher level that what we have here.

Go ahead, yes? Please stand up.

00:37:42 PHILLIP

Hi, my name is Phillip. I live in Snohomish. My question is for the Detective – probably. I’m just curious – you-, you started out talking about the – the two overdoses at the Sultan Library
and I’m just wondering: Is there sort of like a Good Samaritan law where if someone had – their friend has drank too much or taken too many pills that they can’t call 911 . . . without, you know, getting themselves in trouble and if – if that is the case, is the message out there that: Hey, if – if your friend’s overdosing or whatever, you know, get help. Obviously, we wanna keep the drugs out of the community, but if they slip through, you know, is the message out there that, you know, - anyway – that’s my question so –

00:38:33 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Well, that’s a good question. As law enforcement, we’re not gonna hold you liable for their overdose. If you’re supplying to them – you know, providing a building, you went out and purchased it for them – they overdosed and you know, maybe died or something happened, that’s probably a different story. That’s somethin’ that, you know, the Detectives and stuff would investigate and determine what happened. But if it was just – let’s say it’s a normal – somebody took too much – took a pill that they, you know, started to react from – Yeah, calling 911, getting us there, getting the-, the fire department there – I don’t think you’re gonna be held liable for that. I don’t know necessarily about the Good Samaritan part of it. But it’s – it’s not – like I said, most of the time we’re not headed out to these things just to go grab somebody and take ‘em to jail. You know? It’s – it’s about helping people. I mean, the Deputies that work this area and work, and the officers that work this area, you know, show a lot of compassion to a lot of people out there and that’s part of it, you know? Maybe that’s what it takes to get somebody some help, you know? If you end up calling, you know? To get them help. Was that-, did I answer your question?

00:39:46 BART WHEATON

Act-, actually, there is a Good Samaritan law and – and we do go over that with the kids at our treatment center, and we do let them know. When – when the kids are in treatment, we will let them know about that law and let them know that they will not be held accountable if they call 911 if they have a friend that’s overdosing.

00:40:06 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

We have one -

00:40:08 MODERATOR

Question over here?

00:40:08 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

- right back here.

[pause]

00:40:09 RACHEL

Hi. My name is Rachel and my son’s an addict and I feel your pain. I guess my question would be – I read the article in the Tribune a couple weeks ago and I think it was Detective Slack maybe?
00:40:25 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

He’s the Commander – yeah.

00:40:26 RACHEL

Yeah? Yes.

00:40:26 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Commander Slack.

00:40:28 RACHEL

And the part that irritated me the worst is the statement that: Drugs are part of our economy, so we need to educate our kids on the evils of drugs. I get that. Why do we have to accept that they’re part of our economy? Why can’t we stop the heroin? Why do we have to say it’s gonna be here? It doesn’t have to be here.

I have – I printed Snohomish County Jail Registry today. Just on a whim, I printed the Ks, because my son’s best friend, who when they were 16 stole a car, drove it with my son in it. He broke his femur. That’s where it all started. My son is in prison today – Thank, God! It’s the best think that could have happened. But he overdosed in the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot here in town about a year ago. And I was told that I needed to walk away. I needed to leave him alone. I followed the ambulance as far as Bickford and I turned my car around and I went back and begged the police to go to the hospital and arrest him, and take him to jail. They said there was nothing they could do.

He went the next step. Somebody else got hurt, which is – I’m sad. God saved them and they’re gonna be OK. But why do we have to accept that it’s part of our economy? Why do we have to accept that heroin is in Snohomish? These petty thefts, this young man has been in jail 30 times since he was 16. WHY? That’s my question. Why? There’s no consequences and I don’t know if it’s our judicial system – My son went through Drug Court at Denney. Fantastic program! Are they funded well enough? NO. They’re the best thing that happened to him. They probably saved his life. He has overdosed probably four times and been brought back to life. Trip to the hospital in the ambulance. Hit him with the Narcan and he’s good to go. Until they suffer real consequences, some of ‘em will not quit.

00:42:24 MODERATOR

Well, let’s- let’s put that question to the Detective. What would have to happen if the community wanted to say: No More Heroin?

00:42:37 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Well, it’s a – it’s a big thing. I mean, I’m tryin’ to think about what you’re sayin’. If I responded to that call and he was overdosed, I start lookin’ for paraphernalia. I start lookin’ for stuff. If I don’t see anything, and he already used the needle and put it in him . . . maybe I could charge him with drug paraphernalia. But I can’t charge –
00:42:55 *UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE*

But [inaudible]

00:42:57 *DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD*

OK. That’s the difference, see? I mean, that’s how we start investigating it and start figuring it out. When I go up to ja-, or when I go to the – the hospital with him and get it clear to book. And book in the jail for that? Really depends what’s going on at the time, in the county. So I can’t second guess –

00:43:14 *UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE*

Right.

00:43:14 *DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD*

- about that. As far as the community? Yeah, the community needs to get together. They need to take a stand on drug houses, problem houses. Just ‘cuz, you know, I’ve talked to multiple people about houses. Just ‘cuz people go to a flophouse and party and stuff? It’s not against the law. OK? To go to a house and party. So it’s not against the law to be poor; it’s not against the law to be homeless. So . . . the community needs to come together and do their block watch system, through working with the – the local police department or the Sheriff’s Office if they’re an unincorporated. They can go to the Task Force website, report suspicious activity, report people, provide information. Maybe that’s something that’s gonna help us. ‘Cuz if we didn’t know about that specific vehicle at that specific house, that could be the dealer that we’re looking for and the break that we’re looking for. So people talking to each other and getting involved – Yeah, that’s how you take back your community, you know?

00:44:13 *MODERATOR*

We have other questions here this evening.

Questions back here.

00:44:16 *STEVE STRICKLER [SP]*

My name is Steve Strickler. I’m the Director of Juvenile Justice for Youth for Christ in King and Snohomish County, and work specifically with the Denney Juvenile Justice Center and throughout Probations, Drug Courts and actually work for a couple of the Superior Court judges in developing youth partnering and mentoring programs for the Offender Drug Court and ARY Drug Court. And I feel your pain. I know your son! I was there when he graduated. There is no simple answer to this. And saying that why the-, why can’t it just not be here is – is like puttin’ blinders on. I mean, it’s here.

And what I would say, if you have family members that are between the ages of 12 and 19, the – the Offender Drug Court, which is a court that a juvenile will have actually committed a crime and if you get him in that drug court, there are enormous resources available to help those kids.

The – the ARY Drug Court is not an Offender Drug Court, so a kid that just has a - a drug problem, that process can be initiated by a parent or a legal guardian and if the Petition is
approved, then the Judge and the Court becomes the parent or the guardian’s partner in dealing with whatever’s necessary, and then mandatory treatment can be assigned. Whereas – that’s where a lot of the times there-, there’s not money. And we don’t have one – correct if I’m wrong, Bart. I don’t think we have one treatment facility in the county – maybe there’s something in Mount Vernon. But most of the kids that – that we commit to-, to treatment, they have to go to Yakima, they go to Spokane, they go to Vancouver. They go all over the place. But they don’t come here –

00:45:58 BART WHEATON

Yeah. Inpatient.

00:46:00 STEVE STRICKLER

- because of money. We just don’t have the money. And –

00:46:02 BART WHEATON

Yeah, there’s no inpatient facility. There’s detox facilities, and but as far as the inpatient facilities, none in Snohomish County.

00:46:09 STEVE STRICKLER

But if-, if you just go online and you could actually – do the web search for Snohomish County Reclaiming Futures, which is a change initiative in the county. I’m one of the Board Fellows on that council, on that committee. And we work with Superior Court and all the at-risk youth organizations that work with kids throughout the county, and there are a ton of resort-, resources that have become available there. And over the last couple years, hundreds of hours has been spent gathering that information. So you can go to that site and get some questions answered.

00:46:30 MODERATOR

Yeah, we have other questions so –

00:46:40 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Yes!

00:46:40 MODERATOR

- and please be patient as we move through the room and around the room, getting the microphone to you here.

00:46:45 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

Thank you.

00:46:45 MODERATOR

Please -
00:46:47 BART WHEATON

Also, I’d like to say somethin’. Actually, at Catholic Community Services At-Risk Youth Representative is right here in the room. Her name is Becca Reed [SP]. Right there. So if you do have any questions about the At-Risk Youth program, Becca would be happy to answer those.

00:47:01 LINDA

Hi. My name’s Linda and my question is for Detective Chitwood.

00:47:05 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yes?

00:47:06 LINDA

I’ll try not to cry now.

00:47:09 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Be strong.

00:47:10 LINDA

I know. [Emotional] I lost my son last July 6 – to heroin.

00:47:18 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

How old?

00:47:19 LINDA

34 – on our property. He had an apartment and so many times we were – my husband and I were scared to check on him. We were scared he was gonna be dead. And the time he did die, we were shocked that it finally happened because we’ve been scared of it for years. I remember the first time – I know the first time he tried heroin, he came in the house and said: Mom – do you like me? I’m really mellow. I found a new drug I like. And I said: Jake, what is it-, what are you on? And he said: Don’t worry it, Mom. ‘Cuz he’s Bipolar and he’s either up or down. But I told him: No, I don’t like ya high like that. But he . . . he liked it. I don’t know. But anyway, my question to you, Detective, is: How many deaths to heroin in Snohomish were there in 2013? And how many deaths so far in 2014 has there been in Snohomish?

00:48:14 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Unfortunately, I don’t know that. I don’t know the stats on that. I didn’t run that. I know there is – I know the overdoses are up. If they were, I would – I would imagine from last year, at this point. I don’t know exactly but I hear the calls when they come out on the screen that’s somebody’s in the bathroom.

00:48:30 LINDA
Yeah.

00:48:31 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Somebody’s possibly overdosed, somebody’s shooting up. Eight cars are en route, you know, that type of thing. So I would – I would say it’s up. But I just don’t have a number for ya.

00:48:39 LINDA

OK.

00:48:40 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yeah. I’m sorry.

00:48:43 LINDA

OK. I was-, I would –

00:48:45 LINDA

- OK. Yeah, ‘cuz we’ve all told him, my-, it’s been hard on my – my husband, myself, my daughter and my other son and we all told him: This isn’t gonna end good. And he died on a Saturday and he was gonna go into Rehab on Tuesday. And that’s a problem.

00:48:57 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Right.

00:48:58 LINDA

You have to wait a year. You have to wait months!

00:49:01 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Right.

00:49:01 LINDA

So when he was ready to go into Rehab, we couldn’t get him in Rehab.

00:49:05 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Right.
00:49:05  **LINDA**

Then he *dies* and we knew he was probably doin’ his last – Yahoo or whatever before he went *in*.

00:49:11  **DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

Yeah.

00:49:12  **LINDA**

It kills ya.

00:49:13  **DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

Yeah. Probably took way too much or somethin’ or – yeah. That is [inaudible]

00:49:15  **LINDA**

It was black tar and it was pure.

00:49:17  **DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

Yeah.

[next person receiving mic]

00:49:29  **MARY D**

My name is Mary D and I’m a Parish Nurse in one of our congregations here in Snohomish. I have been to the City Council to talk to them about *not* opening a marijuana shop in our city. And by this fall, in September, they will make, be making a decision. Several council members are *for* opening a shop in our community. One of you suggested that it’s seems that when we advocate for this, that it seems like we’re *normalizing* the situation, and that’s the way I see it, as well.

I feel that we are trying to make money on the backs of our children by advocating for something like that *in* our community. Even though it probably will not *stop* drugs, we still do not need to *sell* it in our community. Several areas have decided not to do that, like Monroe, for instance and I believe, Marysville. So I’m hoping that all of you will talk to the City Council and go to the meetings and advocate that we don’t *do* that.

One thing – one problem I see you have as a police person, and working in the-, in what you do, is our *media*. Our media is actually *supporting* marijuana. I – I – when I turn on the television and watch the *news*, I see the program talking about the newest shop that’s opened. We now have a mother and-, mother and son working together, opening a shop on marijuana and they’re almost *affirming* –

00:51:12  **MODERATOR**

Did – Did you have a question?
00:51:14 MARY D

- that these are good.

00:51:14 MODERATOR

Did – and do you have –

00:51:15 MARY D

What I would have a question in is that the next thing I was going to say is that we have several programs that are going to be discussing on how we blend marijuana into our food. And how-, how can we prevent the-, I know they smoke it. I’m a nurse. I know all about what they do with it. But how can-, what can we do about keeping it from candy and cookies and – and then – and that kids wanna sell it on the playground? How can we keep that part of it from happening?

00:51:52 MODERATOR

Thank you. Thank you – it might be above you-, your pay grade but if you’d like to take a shot at answering that question. What can the community do and what role should the community take?

00:52:04 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Well, if the community doesn’t want it in the Snohomish, where do you go? You go to a City Council meeting, right? You burn up the phones, you burn up their emails, you let ‘em know and make it clear that this community doesn’t want it here. OK? How do you do that? That’s totally up to you, OK? And how often you do that? I don’t mean to burn it up tonight and call all your friends to do that. But what I mean is that’s how you – you make a voice for yourself.

As far as stopping it into edible items and that type of thing – The voters in the state of Washington approved it. It’s not gonna stop. OK? You can stop it from your community here but you’re not gonna be able to stop it in all the communities, so it’s gonna be around. As far as an edible shop or a taco, you know, like those little portable places that go around, maybe there’s gonna be somethin’ in the city of Snohomish, you know, stops that from coming in and selling their product in the city. I’m not really sure. That’s, again, over my head.

As far as kids – under the age of 21, it’s illegal. OK? So edible items, if we were to go out to the park, if we were to stop kids – we can confiscate that stuff. If we know what’s in it, obviously, we’ve gotta send it out and get it tested and do all that stuff. But, you know, that – we can still do the enforcement end and take their stuff, OK? And then figure out where they’re getting it and that type of thing. So it – it can be done. But if you don’t want it here, I suggest goin’ to the City Council.

00:53:25 MODERATOR

Let me-, let me bring this back to the focus of the form here and ask both of you: It’s obvious that – that the-, the beginning of the solution of the problem, at any level, is going to be in the home and with the parents being involved and knowing what’s going on. So can you talk a little bit about what some of the signs parents should be looking for – for beginning experimentation with drugs by their kids. What – what should they be looking for?
00:53:53 **BART WHEATON**

I think the first thing to look for is change in friend-, friend group. Change in behavior – of any sort of behavior, sleep – sleep pattern. Change in eating habits. Change in how they talk. Change in their school, their grades. Losing interest in things that they once had interest in. I can tell you that the biggest protective factor for youth in drugs and alcohol is the family and is also outside . . . outside like football or – or church groups or youth groups or . . . just outside activities that they kid can do. That they’re held accountable to – that’s what I do for my-, my children. And so I know those – those work well and they-, they’ve been proven to help in keeping kids away from-, from drugs and alcohol.

00:54:53 **MODERATOR**

Detective?

00:54:55 **_DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

For me the signs are . . . as law enforcement, are you missing stuff in your house? Are things comin’ up missing or – Checks bein’ written, you know, by your juvenile, by your somebody that’s living there? You know, what types of things are missing? What types of things aren’t feeling right? Like he said, the language, the attitude, the comin’ home at-, late, smelling of smoke. Anything like that, that you just know – listen, that’s not right. Somethin’s not right here. If that little hair on the back of your neck sticks up, you need to investigate it. You need to be –

00:55:25 **BART WHEATON**

Yeah.

00:55:25 **_DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

You need to be hardcore. Do you have passwords to their cell phones? Do you have passwords to their Facebook account? You know, do you know what’s going on? Do you know who they’re talking to? Do they have Snapchat? Do they, you know, what – what are they doin’? You know? We’re the parent. We need to be involved. We need to know what they’re doin’ and that’s how you try to police it.

Does it always work? Not always but – you-, it helps you to know what’s going on. If we just turn the other way and not know what they’re doing and allow them to stay out ‘til 10, 11 o’clock at night, or allow them to stay on the computer ‘til 12, 3-, you know, two o’clock in the morning, and we don’t know what’s goin’ on with their passwords and their Facebooks and that type of stuff – that’s how they start, you know, experimenting and taking the next step and going. So –

00:56:10 **MODERATOR**

And – and your response to – to the-, to the child saying: What? Don’t you trust me?

00:56:15 **_DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD**

Yeah. I – I trust you but I wanna know what you’re doing. I wanna make sure. I wanna know who your friends are. I wanna know what your friends are doing. For instance, when I see certain things, of certain kids, commenting a certain way on something, I say something. And not
only do I say somethin’ to – would it have been my kid? I would say somethin’ to them the next time I see ‘em. So but I’m thinking-, and I’m talking from a cop – I’m a cop and so I’m – I wanna get involved and get right in somebody’s face and talk about it and stuff. I don’t wanna – but I think that’s how you stay involved as a parent, to-, to see these signs and start asking questions and knowing what’s going on, and pull back the reins and: Oh, you don’t wanna come home at ten o’clock when I told you to come in at ten o’clock? Then give me your iPhone for the next week.

00:57:02 MODERATOR

Can – can you talk a little bit about as we return to the basics here – a little bit about where the drugs are coming from? Are – are these drugs domestically provided or are they coming up from Los Angeles or in from New York?

00:57:20 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yep, comin’ out of state. Like I said, cartels are bringin’ ‘em in. The Task Forces all around Washington, DEA – Drug Enforcement Administration – everybody’s workin’ hard and bein’ proactive to stop the mid-to-upper level flow of it coming in to the counties and coming in – and they’re, you know, they’re doin’ a good job. I see – I see the stuff that comes out of all the busts that they do and the, you know, the kilos – seven kilos, ten kilos – you know, $500,000 here. You know, they’re workin’ hard and they’re – they’re doing it. And we’re get – but stuff gets through, and we get the collateral damage from it. So –

00:57:58 MODERATOR

We have a – another question?

00:58:01 GARY

My name’s Gary. One of the things that I would like to clarify ‘cuz we’ve covered multiple subjects tonight. That if the crime basically – and that was the purpose of the meeting – is – is being perpetrated from the 19-35 year-olds that are adults that can make their own choices, one of the things that we can do is if you look at it as that person to support their habit is stealing. But the parts that are in our control are all the people that are buying stolen items. Think about it. They’re stealing your lawn mowers. They’re stealing power tools. And if somebody pulls up in a pickup truck and wants to sell you a bunch of stuff for five dollars a piece, it would be better to turn ‘em in. It would be better to control it that way. But stop buying the stolen stuff. I mean, if – if you stop all the – that source of it, they have no place to sell it. They may convert to something else but it’s – it’s very important to know that that is something in our control.

One more thing. I – I have smoked pot since I’m ten years old and I’m 60 years old. I have no desire to quit. I enjoy it. Don’t want to quit. But the point being is that if I had my kids – my 12-year-old kids, which are all grown, came to me and said: Dad, I wanna go drinking tonight, or I wanna go smoke pot, I’ll tell ‘em to go smoke pot all the time, over the effects of alcohol and how extreme it is when people just drink and drink and drink. And then they get behind the wheel. I wouldn’t have any issue with people that smoke pot and drive cars. It’s – it’s a much smaller scale of the chance of that person getting in trouble versus the guy that drank the entire bottle of whiskey. Just – just to let people know that – that smoking pot is – there are millions of people that smoke pot in this world. Accept it! But the things we can control is to stop the crime.
MODERATOR

Well, then let me just –

DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Sure. I gotta – I gotta comment on that.

MODERATOR

Well, let me just put that to the – to the Detective there, Bob.

[laughter, talking]

DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

So – so we don’t – we don’t know this yet, but reference your comment about somebody smoking and driving down the road versus drinking? Yeah – No. That’s –

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

[inaudible] Highway 2, between Monroe and Sultan.

DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yeah, we –

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE

- Right? [inaudible]

DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

I – I’m just sayin’ we’re gonna see in Washington, just like Colorado. Colorado came out with stats from their watching traffic safe-, from their Traffic Safety Commission, about – their crime has gone down since legalizing marijuana. Crime in Colorado has gone down. DUI crashes have gone up. And we don’t know those yet in the state of Washington. But . . . we’re gonna see that probably as soon as Washington gets goin’ here and everybody starts doin’ their thing. We will probably see statistically DUI crashes increase in the state of Washington. So I beg to differ about your opinion on that.

MODERATOR

Thank you. Thank you. Oh, again, going back to the basics here, this – this evening. Can you talk a little bit about pot and spice and ecstasy in terms of their effect on a – a child and the – the responses and identifying those drug uses?

DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD
Well, I’ll tell you what – I’ll tell you what it is and then you – you wanna talk about the effects and what the kids –

01:01:19 BART WHEATON

Yeah.

01:01:20 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

OK. So marijuana is a plant. It’s a seed, so you grow it, right? You put it in soil, heat, room temperature, lights, and you grow it, just like a plant. On the plant grows the buds and on that bud there’s THC – it’s a chemical. OK? A little crystal that grows. When you put it into a pipe, you light a match to it, smoke it like you would a cigarette. That chemical gets into your bloodstream, gets into your brain, releases all the dopamine and different things and gives you the high.

The Spice, all that is, is a synthetic form of marijuana. So what they’ve done is they’ve taken this herb, they’ve sprayed some chemical on it. That’s the synthetic marijuana so it’s a-, or syn-, synthetic THC. They’ve sprayed this chemical on there, so when you smoke that Spice substance, that chemical would get into your body, into your lungs and into your bloodstream, gives you the similar effect as that of marijuana. Does it give you the same effect? I don’t know. Does it make you hallucinate a little bit more? Do some stranger things? Yes, I believe so. But – so does everybody get the difference? So one’s a chemical . . . the other one’s a plant that grows the THC, the crystalline substance that you ingest. Right? OK.

Do you wanna talk about the –

01:02:37 BART WHEATON

So . . . with the Spice you’re – the problem with Spice is, like you said, it’s a chemical. So whoever is making that chemical, the ingredients can be changed and altered. So you’re never gonna get the same chemical con-, you know, type of – of compounds from different types of Spice. They sell all different types of it.

01:03:00 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE (?)

[inaudible] at the smoke shops.

01:03:01 BART WHEATON

At the smoke shops right in town, right. And it’s my experience that no – you know, I haven’t heard of any but I’m sure they’re out there. That the kids that – that use the Spice are usually kids that already have been exposed to marijuana and have smoked marijuana. But I’m sure there’s kids that’ll get the Spice and experiment with that first.

But every time I ask a kid about Spice use they almost inevitably tell me: It sucked. And then I ask ‘em: Why would you keep doing it then? ‘Cuz they always tell me they – they’ve vomited or they’ve gotten really hazy vision and hallucinated and they said they didn’t really care for it [laughs]. And I’ll ask ‘em why did they continue doing it and they-, they’ll say: I don’t know. Ha! It’s easy to get.
01:03:46 MODERATOR

Is it additive?

01:03:47 BART WHEATON

It is very addictive, yeah. Yeah, it stimulates the brain in the same receptor sites as other drugs. It stimulates the brain.

01:03:57 MODERATOR

And then can I just ask in terms of price, is Spice more expensive than marijuana? What kind of a price –

01:04:03 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Cheaper.

01:04:03 BART WHEATON

Cheaper, yeah. Yeah.

01:04:06 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

I’ve never bought it but I – I don’t think it’s very expensive.

01:04:07 BART WHEATON

15-, it’s like $15 and you get like five grams.

01:04:13 MODERATOR

Any other questions? We have another question here.

01:04:15 GINA

Thank you. My name is Gina and I am the mother of an addict, as well. And when we talk about what you should know, I think you should know about our children who are 30 years old and incarcerated. I have many letters here from my son in jail, as we speak.

It seems like we need to begin to have conversations about our country and a different path. We have been . . . we - we failed to look at the bigger picture in many ways, in our country. If you take a look at Europe, they also have a drug problem there. But it’s much less than America. And if you hone in on the Netherlands, they have a drug problem. But again, it’s in the ratio, it’s much, much less than America. And what have they done differently than we do here? And it’s time to have that conversation about changing.

I took some time before I came today, hoping that we could have a conversation about how to change our country and its outlook, and how to decriminalize the addict. And how to criminalize the . . . seller. It’s – what they did in the Netherlands is they reduced the harm. They focused on the harm, and particularly, they reduced the demand of – for the dealer. So you – they
aggressively seek the dealer. They reduced the supply when the dealer doesn’t have a business, of course, and then the authorities focus on the big guys.

The focus is on prevention, healthcare and the user and . . . they have some odd ideas there, that would be so far – it’s such a stretch for us to even think about, but it’s time to think about it. For one thing, they have what’s called a User Room there. It’s odd to us. It’s a room where an addict can go and they are actually monitored and they have clean syringes. They’re treated with Methadone more aggressively there than here. There are needle exchange programs and they vaccinate them against . . . Hep – Hepatitis.

It just seems like we – we keep going down this same path. Drug addiction is on the rise. My son did not go - become a drug addict because of peer pressure. He wanted to feel normal. And this made him feel normal. And it just got deeper and deeper and deeper.

Yes, education is great. We need to educate our children. We need to be in the schools and in the communities – but this mom has lost her child. I am losing mine. I expect a call any day. And I think it’s time we switch the conversation.

01:07:11 MODERATOR

And I think that’s an excellent place to bring this conversation to a close this evening because that’s what we’re starting to do. Starting to have conversations about these issues, conversations about these important topics that affect us and can only be solved by us. We can solve the problem if we have the community will to do it.

So what I’d like to do is just bring our afternoon-, our evening to a conclusion by giving each of the panelists an opportunity for some final thoughts before we bring the program to a close. Detective Chitwood?

01:07:50 DETECTIVE DAVID CHITWOOD

Yeah, I – I’d like to thank you guys for coming out. It’s great. I was – I’m – I’m happy to see that the room is full. I’m happy to see you guys here and concerned and – and want to get involved. At the - before you guys came in, I brought some pamphlets and stuff. I never know what people want so there might be some stuff underneath the table there, that’s not on the table, that I’m gonna put back out for you. My business cards are here. My email address is here. The Task Force is a regional task force. We’re here to work with the community, here to work for you guys and – and help you guys. So my job again, is to help you. So if there’s something you need, please feel free to send me an email. And I’d be more than happy to answer your questions or get something for ya, that you guys need. So, you know, thanks again, so much.

01:08:31 MODERATOR

Mr. Wheaton?

01:08:32 BART WHEATON

Thanks. I – yeah, I’d like to echo that sentiment. ‘Cuz that’s where I think it starts is in the community, too, as well. And they do have harm reduction programs here in Snohomish County. There is a needle exchange program in the City of Everett. And there is - they are fighting for
funding for a more aggressive Methadone program but that’s also been, you know, caught up in the legislature.

01:09:00 **UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE**

Is Methadone [inaudible]?

01:09:02 **BART WHEATON**

Suboxone and – and Methadone.

01:09:03 **UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE**

Well, that’s – Methadone is used to [inaudible] all over the place.

01:09:07 **BART WHEATON**

It absolutely is, it absolutely is. But yeah, we’re-, we’re – We’re workin’ on harm reduction programs, as well. This – this county is, anyways.

01:09:17 **MODERATOR**

Well, I wanna thank you all for coming out tonight and if you know someone who might benefit from a conversation of this type, please let them know that there will be another discussion of this nature of an issue that matters of this topic next Thursday, at the Monroe Library. We’ll be joined again by our panelists here this evening so if you know someone, if you heard something of interest tonight and you think someone else might benefit, tell them about the forum next Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the Monroe Library.

We – we’ve come to the end of our allotted time and so if you have not yet done so, please take a moment to fill out the blue evaluation form. Sno-Isle Libraries would very much like to hear your thoughts and other suggestions as to how to improve these presentations and what other issues that matter should be dealt with in community forums like this.

I wanna thank Detective David Chitwood of the Snohomish Regional Drug and Gang Task Force and Bart Wheaton, Chemical Dependency Counselor, Catholic Community Services and Cocoon House, for being here tonight and – and sharing their expertise. Civil discourse on issues that matter is how we get change happening. And I wanna thank you for sharing your views on the topic of drugs with us tonight and responding and asking your questions, and I wanna thank you for coming out. I wanna thank you for being part of the Issues That Matter, and invite you to join us here at the Monroe Library next Thursday at seven o’clock for the Sno-Isle Library’s – Sno-Isle Library Foundation – Issues That Matter and if tonight’s discussion has made you more curious, take the time to explore . . . in the library, using the resources of your community library and the community library’s websites to find out more. And again, thank you all for coming out tonight.

[01:11:12 – 01:11:20   Applause]

END OF RECORDING [01:11:28]