



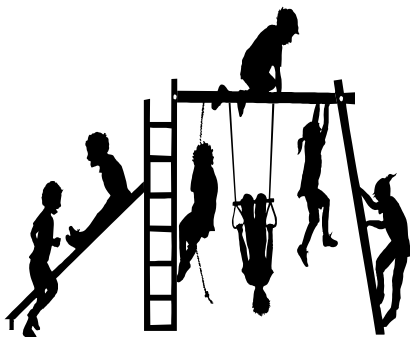
*Putting All Communities
Together in Kandiyohi,
Meeker, Renville & Yellow
Medicine Counties*

PACT 4 Bulletin

July 2004

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Parents Are

ENCOURAGED & EMPOWERED

**We are living art,
created to hang on, stand up,
forbear, continue,
and encourage others.**

— *Maya Angelou*

FULL COLLABORATIVE MEETING NOTICE

The next Full Collaborative Meeting is:

Wednesday, July 14th, 2004

12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

**Kandiyohi County Health & Human Services Building
Willmar, MN**

Committees will be meeting prior to the Full Collaborative meeting. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Shawna by calling (320) 235-8938 or e-mail at shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

(see page 11 or the Calendar of Events on pages 9 & 10 for committee dates and announcements)

2004 Executive Board

Loren Hacker, Canby School District
Serves through 04—1st Term
(507) 223-7226 / lhacker@canby.mntm.org

Mary Potter, YMC Family Services
Serves through 05—3rd term
(320) 564-2211 / maryp@co.yellow-medicine.mn.us

Carmen Clementson, KC Family Services
Serves through 05—1st term
(320) 231-6232 / carmen_s@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

Jill Bruns, RC Public Health
Serves through 05—1st term
(320) 523-2570 / jill_b@co.renville.mn.us

Tammy Thompson, MC Probation (Vice-Chair)
Serves through 05—1st term
(320) 693-5260 / tammy.thompson@co.meekeer.mn.us

Gerald Brustuen, Renville County Human Services
Serves through 06— 2nd term
(320) 523-2202 / jerry_b@co.renville.mn.us

Arliss Stenger, Parent (MC Resident),
Serves through 04—1st term
(320) 453-8153 / astenger@meltel.net

Eugene Bonyng, Woodland Centers
Serves through 04—1st term
(320) 235-4613 / wcenters@tds.net

Becky Romosz, Parent (KC Resident), (Chair)
Serves through 06—2nd term
(320) 235-2204 / becro-mosz@yahoo.com

Sheila Ellingboe, Fiscal Agent (non-voting)
(320) 231-6232 / sheila_e@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

Toni Braness, Collaborative Director (non-voting)

PACT 4 Families Mission

“As a collaborative we will work together to reduce duplication and provide a family driven continuum of quality, innovative, and cost effective services for children and their families. These services will be culturally sensitive and strength based.”

Director’s Corner

by Toni Braness, PACT 4 Director

I am yielding my space this month to reprint an article regarding the Mental Health System from a consumer’s perspective.

Please take the time to read this very timely and informative letter. Special thanks to Kris for allowing us to use this.

Kris Flaten, Chair of the Governor’s State Advisory Council on Mental Health, shared her perspective on problems in the mental health system at a 2/12/04 Press Conference introducing the work of the Minnesota Mental Health Action Group to the public.

I thought about calling in sick this morning. I don’t like to admit that my health is fragile; that I’m vulnerable to the effects of this illness. I abhor the idea of embarrassing myself or losing my "cool" in public. But, I decided to come and be who I am, where I am, how I am. If I start to cry, I start to cry—I can talk through tears and still make sense. Enough of you know me and respect me—you may even forget that I’m always dealing with this long term illness in varying intensities. Right now just happens to be pretty intense.

I’ve been struggling against the symptoms of my mental illness over the past few weeks; yesterday I started into free fall. I don’t know yet if it’ll be a short fall or a long one. I do know that I’m scared. I don’t want to lose everything, I don’t want to have to start up all over again.

I have invested heavily in preventing crises, extended periods of depression. I’ve managed—thanks to phenomenal professional treatment, good friends, family, animals, and a lot of hard work, to avoid hospitalization for 9 years. (There was a period when I was being hospitalized every couple of months. We couldn’t find medications or other treatments that worked—at least not for very long). One of the reasons I’ve worked so hard to prevent recurrences of illness is that I noticed that when I plummeted, I fell deeper and it took me longer to come back. I also noticed—or thought I noticed—that I didn’t come back as completely. I was losing more of me with each episode.

The other reason I’ve worked so hard at preventing recurrences is that the life threatening aspects of this illness have become more and more serious. I know that mental illnesses can be terminal; 9 of my friends and acquaintances who have had mental illnesses have died as a result of their illnesses. (I’m not using the word suicide on purpose because suicide is so often considered a choice and I want to emphasize that when people die as a result of their mental illness, it’s because their illness was terminal, not because they chose to die).

At any rate, I’ve hoped to beat the odds. More than that, I’ve focused on reclaiming my life, taking a day at a time, keeping things in perspective, but never quite being able to forget that if I’m not careful, this illness may become worse or terminal for me as it did for my friends.

This is the truth. These illnesses are real and they are very hard to live with. Their repetitive and unpredictable nature, affects all aspects of one’s life—including making plans, reciprocating in relationships. Dealing with illness is exhausting, demanding, challenging, and sometimes very disheartening. Nevertheless, it doesn’t work to sit back and wait for a "magic" pill or treatment program to fix us or make it all better.



Director’s Corner/

Continued on page 4



The Talking Piece Reflections of Restorative Justice

By Sharon Hendrichs Restorative Justice Coordinator

After giving much thought on specific examples of how circles have empowered and encouraged parents, I'm drawn back to the basic philosophy of circle and how encouragement and empowerment is something inherent in the process. While the circle encourages and empowers the parent, the same is true of the offender, the victim and the community who work together as a whole and who are offered equal opportunity and have equal capacity. We've had to learn in the past few years to **trust the process** because it invites a different approach. Much of the bottom line for the process to work is to feel safe – that who we are will not be dismissed, dishonored, or attacked – not only physically but also emotionally. We each need to feel that we will be valued and that our words, thoughts, feelings, etc. will be respected.

I'm going to borrow from the teachings of Judge Barry Stuart, Mark Wedge and Kay Pranis in their book "Peacemaking Circles: From Crime to Community" to explain the inner framework of a circle and how it is built to encourage and empower all participants:

"Circles, both their traditional, indigenous practices and their current adaptations to dealing with crime, build on an underlying worldview – one that sees the universe as characterized by wholeness, unity, and connectedness. The values and principles we've explored offer different ways of expressing this view of the cosmos, bringing the philosophy down to informing how we view ourselves and interact with others. We treat each other in respectful and ultimately sacred ways, because we see each person as part of the whole and indispensable to it. We also see ourselves as connected to all other beings, and so what happens to them affects us too. Our connectedness gives us the responsibility to care for each other and to help mend the webs that hold us. The circle shape itself is a universal metaphor for this worldview. If we ponder the circle image, various features besides wholeness, connectedness, and unity come to mind. For example, all parts of the circle are equal, since every point on the circle is in exactly the same relation to the center. As a metaphor, a circle does not suggest hierarchy – it has no top or bottom. Also, each aspect is connected with and hence inseparable from every other. No part can be cut out and thrown away without violating the quality of the circle as a whole. A circle also conveys balance – that each aspect is held in a balanced relationship with the whole. Set in motion, a circle symbolizes cycles – patterns of moving forth from and then returning to the origin. In a practical way, a circle metaphor assures us that things will come around again; we'll always have another chance to correct mistakes and to do things better, as long as we're open to learning and trying again."

Chris' *By Chris Oldakowski Schmid, Sustainability Supervisor*

July 9th is the deadline for the Safe Schools Healthy Students (SS/HS) grant application. "The PACT 4 SS/HS Initiative" is being prepared by a team of people at the PACT 4 office under the guidance and direction of you, our partners. This grant proposal is designed to empower parents and involve communities and agencies with School Systems to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses safety, alcohol/drugs and violence prevention and Early Intervention programs, Mental Health and preventive and treatment center services, early childhood psychosocial and emotional development programs, supporting and connecting schools and communities and safe school policies.

Mandatory partners include Schools, Law Enforcement, Juvenile Justice and the local Mental Health Authorities, as the funding sources come from the US Departments of Education, Juvenile Justice and the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

If you would like more information please contact us at PACT 4 Families 320-231-7030.

From The Juvenile Justice Advisory Commit- tee

Congratulations to Judge Smith of the 8th Judicial District!

Governor Tim Pawlenty today announced the appointment of Gail Chang Bohr, Chalip Chacon-Bonilla, Brenda Pautsch, and **Judge Kathryn N. Smith** and the reappointment of Sarah Dixon and Kari Schuch to Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC).

Smith, of Willmar, is a district court judge in the Eighth Judicial District in Kandiyohi County and chairs the Minnesota Supreme Court's Juvenile Delinquency Rules Committee. Smith replaces Jaime Reyes for a four-year term that expires on January 7, 2008.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee awards grants and carries out the state plan of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. The committee consists of 18 members appointed by the Governor.

Now Available On-Line!

All forms / applications are now available on our PACT 4 web site (*Flex, Discretionary, and Wrap-around*).

www.pact4.org

Director's Corner /

Continued from page 2

A critical paradigm shift occurs when we realize that we have long term illnesses and stop waiting for that "magic" pill or treatment that will make us all better. The life we have is the life we have—whether we like it or not and it's up to us to have the best life we can—even if we continue to deal with symptoms—sometimes more intensely than others. That's not a concept that's easy to help other people grasp. We've had trouble articulating this concept throughout the process of the Mental Health Action Group.

Sometimes this is referred to as patient/client/consumer "buy-in." What are the key elements to a "buy-in?" I'll list 5:

- Information—about the illness and its effects
- Choice—treatment options are explained, with pros and cons of each
- Trust—developed between professional and patient/client/consumer
- Respect—the person's perspective and history is valued, their preferences, values, and beliefs are taken into account in deciding on a course of treatment
- Dignity—the person is treated as a person, unique with their own likes and dislikes

When a system is able to convey these 5 points, people are much more likely to develop motivation and actively participate in their health care treatment—and in their lives.

We don't have that kind of system. The system or systems we have frustrate people, inhibit or prevent wellness, reward irresponsibility, encourage persons to be passive, non-participatory, victims. I'll give you an example (and there are many others that could be used).

The combination of treatments and coping strategies that we've come up with to help me deal with the effects of this illness, has been working pretty well. It's taken nearly 20 years to develop; over the past 23 years I've tried at least 30 different medications. Some worked a little, some worked for a while. None of them helped enough that I really thought I was getting my life back. I subsisted.

As an example, I've been taking two medications for 2-3 years now. These medications have been working; not perfectly; I'm still working on improvements. But they've been working. I've been working.

Now, suddenly I need prior authorizations (PAs) for these medications. That's not so hard. Except the PAs have been turned down. Two different health programs are involved. One refuses one; the other denies the other. I'm embroiled in red tape; I've spent 10-12 hours trying to get both of these problems worked out, with multiple calls to my doctor's office, customer service, the pharmacy. I don't have any sense that the people on the other end of the line understand my medical fragility; I don't have the sense that they are mental health professionals. I'm angry. I can be really clear about that: I'm angry that my health status—that I've fought so hard to achieve—can be disrupted by a non-medical professional button pusher. Yes, I'm appealing but they have 30 days to decide the appeal and no provisions for coverage during the appeal process. That means I may well run out of the medications that have helped me stabilize and continue on with my life.

I don't expect to stay on the same medications forever. But they've been working and these changes are being made without my doctor's consent or my consent. The added, unexpected stress is very hard on me. And the potential cost (not just in dollars) of not continuing on these medications is astronomically high.

The health programs involved have broken trust with me, they've treated me with disrespect and indignity. They're leaving me with few choices; forcing me to become an inactive participant in my treatment. This system was not designed to treat me with care and concern.

Here's how it could be done in a way that would preserve the 5 key elements just mentioned:

- Identify possible over expenses
- Query the provider about the rationale for their choice of prescription/course of treatment
- Suggest possible alternatives
- Allow for lead time for both doctor and patient to discuss various options
- Notify in advance that a PA would be required (so it can be started when the current prescription is full) and what

criteria are being used

- Use the patient's history in making decisions

That's how a system that really has my best interests and my health in mind would work.

I really don't like to fight. I want the effects of this illness to have as little effect on my life as possible. All I want is my life, to feel well, to think clearly, to have energy and enthusiasm. I'm willing to work hard; I like working hard. I want the health care system to support my efforts—not thwart them, not put me at risk.

In order to succeed in transforming the mental health system(s), the Mental Health Action Group needs to be grounded in and working from the experiences of the persons and their families who are using mental health services. If we're really going to transform the system, each of the perspectives—including that of patients/clients/consumers—needs to be represented. I know things—from my vantage point that policy makers, attorneys, CEOs, don't know. And they know things and are operating under different pressures, than I am.

Every facet is essential to a diamond; every perspective is essential if we're serious about transforming the system so that it's efficient, effective and supports people in fully living our lives, working, participating in and contributing to society. I hope that the Minnesota Mental Health Action Group will succeed because all perspectives are included and valued. Hopefully, we can transform the system so that others won't have these kinds of experiences I've had and won't experience 15-20 years of not being able to function. I believe we can do better, and that's what we are setting out to do.

**Laugh
and the
World Laughs
with You**

-Family Circle-

WHAT'S GOING ON...

What's Going On... is a column in the PACT 4 Bulletin to keep everyone up-to-date on what's going on in each county.

Meeker County

Parenting is the toughest job there is...and also the most rewarding. As a parent of a three-year-old boy, I cannot express the amount of love, joy, and meaning he has brought to my life. But with this comes great responsibility (and relief) in knowing that there is a little person whose needs come before my own. My faith and family are my empowerment. Everything else is just details.

Amy Haugen
PRIDE-4 Transition Coordinator

Kandiyohi County

Greetings from Kennedy Elementary School. This will be my first summer as a school-based social worker. I am often asked what I will be doing over the summer months. I would like to share my excitement about the activities that I have an opportunity to participate in throughout the summer. I will be assisting with summer school and Early Risers camp which are four-weeks in length. I will also be helping with a two-week Busy Bee camp. I am currently in the process of putting together ideas for a Kinder-camp for children who will be entering kindergarten at Kennedy in the fall. These camps provide fun and structured activities for youth in our community.

Also, there are still openings for the Kinder Plus program. This program provides an alternative to traditional day care. Kindergarteners will spend the first half of the day with their kindergarten teacher and will then spend the afternoon in a school-based program that has been developed to enrich and compliment the kindergarten program. Call Willmar Community Education for more information, 231-8490.

Corinne Dahl
School-Based Social Worker

Greetings to all! I hope this newsletter finds you well and in good spirits. I can't get enough of this month's theme: "Parents Are Encouraged and Empowered." This theme is very crucial, especially for PACT 4 Families because it is one of our ongoing goals. My role in the schools is to empower and encourage parents and all the people that touch the lives of their children.

At the beginning of the school year I encouraged families to get to know their children's teachers and to start to build a positive relationship with each other. By building that connection between parents and teachers children also begin to build a mutually respectful relationship with their teachers. This is incredibly helpful when there are concerns or questions in school. We know that these concerns will be dealt with and resolved open mindedly by both sides.

Truancy and late comers are very important as well. I encourage parents to call if their children are sick or for any reason will be late, be it missing the bus, over sleeping, appointments, etc. I ask parents to call the schools to see how we can help them in having their child come to school on time. I believe that by calling the

"Flatter me, and I may not believe you. Criticize me, and I may not like you. Ignore me, and I may not forgive you. Encourage me — and I may not forget you"

William Arthur Ward -

school ahead of time it shows your children that it is important to attend school on time and to also call ahead of time if for any reason there is an emergency. An example of courtesy for others is during conference time. There have been many instances when parents have set up a time and never showed up. I encourage parents to call their child's teacher to cancel and work out another date and time for their conference. I also let them know that if for some reason they need transportation to call the school so that we can help them get to their appointment on time. I am always there to lend support for the families and would be more than willing to be there for them during their scheduled conference time.

What better way to get involved in what your child is doing than to volunteer at school to be a chaperone or just attend school events? These are great ways to see how your children and their friends socialize and to also get to know what

things interest your children. I encourage parents to nurture their child's interests in new endeavors. Extracurricular sports, after school clubs, and enriching programs are a good place for children to make new friends with similar interests. It also means that they are being supervised and kept busy with meaningful activities when you are unable to watch them or be with them.

Another way that parents are encouraged is to share their culture with their children's teacher, so that way teachers better understand some of the things that the parents and children do. Communication is a crucial part of any relationship and very important between a teacher and a parent.

Rosa Eddy
Early Risers Family Liaison

Our theme this month is, "Parent's Are Encouraged and Empowered." Knowledge is power. For parents, or any individual for that matter, feeling confident in what you know or are able to do is crucial. In any position (and parenting is a lifelong position) asking questions, gaining information, applying knowledge, accepting failure and success are essential building blocks to being empowered. Feeling free or supported to do all this is important. Wraparound teams ideally possess a climate where all team members feel at ease to pose questions and share ideas. A professor of mine once stated, "The only dumb question is the one that is not asked." I agree with this and yet understand why sometimes they go unasked. Parents and team members need to encourage each other and create that climate. When you are okay with yourself and free to express your ideas, you are an empowered person. So, empower yourself, encourage others, and if you aren't asking, take a deep breath and ask the "question."

Diane Helgeson
Renville and Kandiyohi Case Manager

Renville County

Greetings from Buffalo Lake-Hector Early Risers camp! We have successfully completed

What's Going On.../

Continued on page 6



Don Peterson-Burr
Meeker County Case Manager



Hello! My name is Don Burr, LSW (*Licensed Social Worker*) and I am a new Children's Mental Health Case Manager for PACT 4. I will be serving the Meeker County area and have been enjoying getting to know children and families there. I received my Bachelor of Science in Social Work from St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, MN. I have past experience in Mental Health for children and adults as well as working in long term - acute care, and early childhood (Head Start). I reside in St. Cloud where I volunteer for the Hospice in our community and as a Befreinder in our church congregation. I have experience in assisting parents to be empowered to make positive changes by way of a men's single-parent support group that I facilitate. I hope that I can assist parents, families, community partners and staff in learning more about culture and diversity in our communities.

What's Going On/

Continued from page 5

Renville County

our first of four weeks of camp. We are thankful for our strong partnership with our campers' parents. With their assistance we've been able to allow all kids participation in summer activities along with Early Risers.

Our schedule for camp has been fun yet flexible to allow for the weather conditions. Some of the things we've done include: picnicing, making smores, arts and crafts projects, fishing, hiking, exploring, reading, math and science projects. The children are looking forward to going to the Twins game this next week. Have a great summer!

Lori Jensen Hagert
Social Worker

When thinking about this month's focus of encouraging and empowering parents, one thing that came to me was to make sure that, as a caregiver, you take care of yourself. Of course I am not suggesting that a person should do this at the expense of your child, but it is important that you are healthy. It is difficult to care for others when you are not feeling well emotionally and/or physically.

There are a lot of different ways to care for yourself. A few that I came up with were exercising, eating well, and receiving plenty of rest. That is easier said than done with the schedules that a parent has with working, transporting a child to an activity, making supper and on and on. A couple of suggestions that I have is to plan time for you. That could be for a few minutes, hours, or a weekend, whatever can be arranged. For some people, renting a movie to watch as a family is a great opportunity to unwind from the stresses of the day. For others, getting a baby sitter and going out for the evening may be in order.

There are support systems out there. Whether it be a family member, friend, community group, or service provider, please utilize your support system. If you do not know of any local support groups, contact PACT 4 Families Collaborative, Families Matter...Just Imagine and/or a local social service office and ask for contact information.

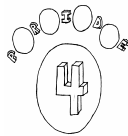
Andre Wohnoutka
Case Manager



PRIDE-4 Project

(*Persons Realizing Independence and Developing Empowerment*)

by Mary Ryan,
PRIDE-4 Coordinator



This month's theme is *Parent's are Encouraged and Empowered*. One of the ways that the PRIDE-4 Project has tried to encourage and empower parents of transitioning young adults is through parent support groups facilitated by Families Matter...Just Imagine.

In a 2002 article from Page Wise, Inc., Marilyn Atherley writes "Human beings are by nature gregarious. We were never meant to be isolated from each other. In most societies people have developed habits of being alone because that seemed like the easiest way to cope with the hurt and distress around them. But the truth is that we all need some others. And it is in these others that we find the courage and strength to deal with the pressures of our daily lives. None of us, on our own, have all the necessary strength. Parents, above everyone else, need the encouragement and support of

more than a few others."

Ms. Atherley then goes on to outline some of the things a parent support group should provide to its members. One is a comfortable space for all to celebrate parenthood. She notes that there is little opportunity for many busy parents to notice the many, sometimes small, joys of being a parent. These joys may have been obscured by the pressures of daily life with a transitioning youth.

A support group should also be a place to be listened to in a non-judgmental, non-critical way - a place where parents can openly talk about the struggles of being a parent and be able to let go of some of the frustration, irritation, and even despair that is common when handling the challenges of parenting a teenager with mental health concerns. It is an opportunity to share experiences, thoughts, opinions, and ideas about what each has learned in the process of parenting.

Courage and strength are encouraged by allowing each parent to take the time to assess the mental and emotional blocks that may interfere with parenting. Society often tries to put the finger of blame on parents and this can result in hopelessness and helplessness. A support group can be instrumental in allowing parents to see their true par-

enting role as one of support and encouragement, not blame. These groups can also be a chance to relax, take care of oneself and have fun.

The parent support groups facilitated by Star Bradburn, Family Liaison for PRIDE-4, are held in places such as coffee houses that allow for relaxation, conversation, privacy, and a feeling of equality for all involved. Parents have reported that they feel a sense of community and understanding in the groups along with the ability to laugh about the same things, talk about problems, and help each other. Being able to talk openly with others in the same situation can help a parent brainstorm for realistic, practical solutions and is often exactly the support and encouragement that is needed.

Whether or not your son/daughter is in the PRIDE 4 Project, I invite all parents of transition age youth to consider involvement in the parent support groups. For information about the groups, meeting times, and locations you can contact Star Bradburn at Families Matter...Just Imagine, 320-222-2454, starb@en-tel.net.

For more information about PRIDE 4, contact Mary Ryan, 320-231-7034, mary_r@co.kandiyohi.mn.us.



EVALUATION REPORT

By Jen Hovland., Evaluation Specialist

The intent of the Early Risers program is to employ strategies with early elementary students in the hopes of preventing substance use and abuse and other inappropriate behaviors as the children get older. The strategies involved include check and connect time between school-based staff and youth, classroom education aimed at reducing risk factors for substance use, student group activities to strengthen social and friendship skills, and family nights which provide parents with opportunities to connect with other parents, learn about services available in the community, and talk about a variety of parenting issues.

One of the most important elements of all the Early Risers strategies is the amount of time that the Social Workers/Counselors and Family Liaisons spend with the children and families involved in the program. To date, 57 children are enrolled in Early Risers across three school districts and four buildings: Buffalo Lake-Hector Elementary School, Bert Raney Elementary School in Granite Falls, and Jefferson and Kennedy Elementary Schools in Willmar. Between January 1, 2004 and June 3, 2004 the Early

Risers school-based Social Workers and Family Liaison recorded 2,725 hours of contact with the children and families enrolled in the program. This averages out to 47.8 hours per child and family during this five month period.

Monthly PEAK (Parents Excited About Kids) nights play a large part in offering families opportunities to network with one another and participate in discussions related to parenting. There were 29 PEAK nights held during the 2003-2004 school year, with 322 people participating in at least one of those events.

Of course we have no way of knowing the full impact that this concentrated Early Risers time will have on the children's behavior five years down the road. We do know from other studies and programs that numerous benefits result from increased awareness of issues and when children and families have increased contact and relationships with caring, supportive adults.



Social Marketing & Training Report

By Danette Hendrickson, Social Marketing and Training Coordinator

Through marketing we do many things to encourage and empower parents. A current newspaper ad that runs in the newspaper has the the following content:

"Talking to your Children about Current Events." Why should I talk about war, terrorism and current events with my children? With increasing news about war and threats of terrorism, children and caregivers may feel a loss of a basic sense of safety and security. We all share concerns about the dangers of terrorism. As adults, it is our job to help our children and each other cope as best we can with concerns that will confront us as individuals, families, communities and as a nation.

Your calm ability to listen to your children's concerns is one of the most powerful ways of helping them to learn, understand and feel safe and secure in the most important part of their world—their families.

What if I have more questions? Where can I turn for answers? If you are concerned about your children, please contact a trusted professional in your community. If you would like further information, you may also contact the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence through www.nccev.org, or www.pact4.org"

There are many more organizations that share information about specific concerns of parenting on the internet. PACT 4 will be providing this information to school district staff development directors in the next month and I encourage you to seek out the information. If you would like a copy of "A Teacher's Guide to Children's Mental Health" or "A Guide to Children's Mental Health for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers." Please contact me directly and I will send you a copy. This guide includes fact sheets on mental health concerns and lists resources. The guide is meant to heighten your interest in children's mental health and help you to get information.

Upcoming Training Opportunity: Dr. Tim Tinius, Neuropsychologist from Sauk Rapids, will be training on **"Hidden Disabilities and How they Affect Children -- Strategies to Help Children Become Successful"** on July 14 at the Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building. There are two trainings: 1. Clinical Focused at 2:30 PM; and 2. Family Focused at 6 PM. Call the PACT 4 office 231-7030 or Families Matter...Just Imagine office at 222-2454 if you need registration information. This training is available for only \$15. There will be certificates of attendance at the end of each session. Parents may attend either session free. Don't miss this opportunity to learn.

It's How We See OURSELVES

By James Clayton Justice

To be ourselves is to be set
free
To come out of our shells is to
be seen
To speak for ourselves is to be
heard
To love oneself is the greatest
Gift we can give ourselves

Oh to be free,
Oh to be seen
Oh to be heard,
Oh to be loved,

It takes courage to find all
these things
Inside ourselves, for when we
do, we begin
to see power within and most
importantly we can find the
strength
to believe in ourselves.

So be free,
Be seen,
Be heard,

And find the love inside that
makes
You the special person you truly
are.

Because in the end,
It's how we see OURSELVES
that matters most of all and
makes us who we are.

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FAMILY FORUM

by Patty Butler, Executive Director - Families Matter...Just Imagine

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED AND EMPOWERED:

Initially, this is what I truly believed and supported, but with age comes differing beliefs and I guess you would say wisdom. I no longer say "Parents should be encouraged and empowered", rather I believe parents should be encouraged to find the power they already have within themselves. A wise woman who has become my mentor shared that thought with me several years ago and it just made sense. After all who am I to think I can empower someone? I do not have that power. What I do have is the belief that we all have inner power, but often times it is buried under self-doubt, shame, lack of knowledge, or a host of other things. So with that belief, I believe all we can do is share what knowledge we have, give our support, help erase the shame, and parents will naturally find their inner power. There is nothing more exciting than rejoicing with someone who has found the power they have within them and the belief that they have the strength to face whatever challenges lay ahead. Parents or for that matter anyone who has found their inner power, are able to look at the world in a more objective and holistic manner, so therefore how can we not encourage everyone around us to find the power we were all born with, but lost as we journeyed along life's obstacles. So I end this month's ramblings with a poem: "It's How We See OURSELVES", by James Clayton Justice.

FAMILY LIAISON FEATURE

By Star Bradburn PRIDE-4 Family Liaison

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED & EMPOWERED

Wow, what a phrase! There are many frustrations that are part of being a parent these days. Parents of kids who are in the 'transition' age group have a set of unique frustrations, especially when the youth is 18. A parent suddenly doesn't have the same rights as before. They want so much to be there for their youth, but society tells them that they don't have those rights anymore. So what can a parent do? Teaching their youth to learn how to advocate for themselves is probably the best gift parents could give their youth! But the only way a parent can do that is if they have learned to advocate for themselves as well as for their youth. Often times, just having a liaison there to support a parent can give them the added confidence they need.

Most of us have heard the saying, "Knowledge is Power". For parents who have a youth with mental health disabilities, this saying holds true.

As a Liaison, I feel that one of the most important things I can do is encourage parents to be as knowledgeable as possible. I try to provide parents with resources and ways to access information. Looking up web sites related to or child's mental health issues is a great way to educate yourself and be knowledgeable. Researching medications and new medications that are available to treat your youth's particular mental illness and keeping up with new studies and techniques are a good ways to stay informed. Keeping yourself updated and informed will give you added confidence when you are dealing with healthcare professionals that are involved in your youth's mental and physical health care.


There are also seminars and workshops that are offered to parents. As a Liaison I feel it is important to keep families up to date on seminars and workshops that are offered throughout the year. Going to an IEP (*Individual Education Plan*) meeting for your youth can be an intimidating experience. Attending workshops to learn as much as you can about the laws regarding IEP's can make a difference.

All of the things I have mentioned above will help a parent be more confident in advocating for their youth, and in teaching their youth to advocate for themselves.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 2004



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4  Independence Day	5 July 4th Holiday Observed PACT 4 Office Closed	6 Executive Board: 11:30-2:00; Room 2055 KCHHSB	7	8	9 Safe Schools Healthy Students Grant Due!	10
11	12	13	14 Full Collaborative Meeting <i>(see below for details)</i> Dr. Tim Tinius: Hidden Disabilities; Training for Professionals : 2:30-4:30; Multi Purpose Room KCHHSB Dr. Tim Tinius: Hidden Disabilities; Training for Parents: 6:00-8:00; MPR KCHHSB	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 Evaluation Committee 10:00-1:00; Room 2057 KCHHSB	27 CaMaFLuS 1:00-3:00; Multi Purpose Room KCHHSB	28	29	30	31



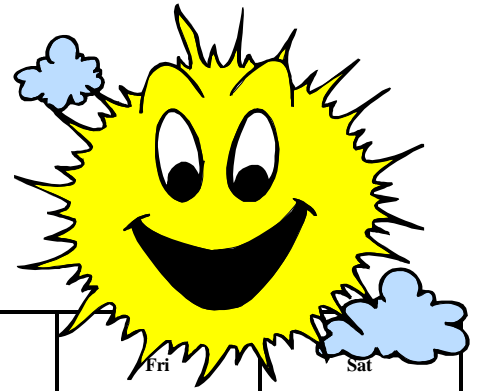
** The Full Collaborative meeting will be on Wednesday, July 14th, from 12:00 noon to 2:00, in Willmar. The Mentor's Committee will meet from 10:30 to 12:00, room 1010, and the Early Childhood Committee will meet from 10:30 to 12:00, room 2057. All are prior to the Full Collaborative meeting. Call Shawna to RSVP.

*KCHHSB = The Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building is located just North of Willmar on Hwy's 71 & 23 next to the Willmar Regional Treatment Center.

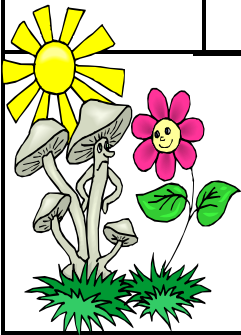
*RCOB = Renville County Office Building. The RCOB is located off Hwy 212 on DePue Ave in Olivia,

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 2004



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Executive Board; 11:30 - 2:00; Room 2055	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 PECFAS Training; 8:00 - 4:30; Multi Purpose Room KCHHSB	27 PECFAS Training; 8:00 - 4:30; Multi Purpose Room KCHHSB	28
29	30	31 SUCCEED/ Public Health Director's Meeting; 12:00 - 2:00; Blue Heron, Willmar				



There will not be a Full Collaborative Meeting in August.

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The June Full Collaborative Meeting in Granite Falls had 62 in attendance.

The next Full Collaborative Meeting is scheduled for...

Wednesday, July 14th, 2004
12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
KCHHSB
Willmar, MN

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Shawna by calling (320) 235-8938 or e-mail at shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

Woyute Cekiya – Upper Sioux

Therese Peterson spoke about the Upper Sioux Community, their various programs and plans for the future. Various staff introduced themselves and described their job responsibilities. Also, the State ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Association) Conference is being held at this facility in August.

Grant Update

Had a PRIDE-4 Site Visit last week, which included youth, parents, and professionals. At the Exit Interview, the Site Visitors stated that they were impressed with the services in place and urged us to sustain, but were aware of the current State economics. Also mentioned favorably were the relationships between the youth/parent and the Coaches & Family Liaison. The visitors spoke to the youth without any coaches present, and heard nothing but good comments.

Our partner school district administrators met and decided to submit one joint Safe Schools/Health Students grant application. This would be for \$1,000,000 per year for 3 years, if funded. Because each school district going in on the grant will need a separate objective and strategies, Chris Schmid is collecting background information. This grant was released within the last 2 weeks and is due July 9th—a very short turn around time.

LCTS Update

Most of the contracts have been sent out, and a good majority have been returned. Almost complete. Every county will have left-over/carryover dollars. Some of this is money budgeted but not spent in 2002/04, and some carryover from the current grant cycle. The approximate carryover amounts are as follows:

Kandiyohi County:	\$81,203.08
Meeker County:	\$48,395.55
Renville County:	\$10,398.42
Yellow Medicine County:	\$35,450.89
4 County:	\$35,292.19

Once final, these figures will go back to county groups to decide if they will award any more grants for 2004/05, or hold these dollars until the next cycle.

After School Grants Update

\$400,000 over 2 years has been set aside for these grants-will run from 1/1/05 to 12/31/06. Executive Board met and set priorities. RFP's will go out in the next month. Grant applications are due September 30th, 2004. If an agency runs these types of programs, after school dollars will need to be applied for before an LCTS grant, as there are no guarantees that county LCTS groups will fund after school programs. This is before school, after school, and summer programs, with priorities being 5th through 8th grades. Some other requirements are:

- ◆ Provide structured activities
- ◆ Involve youth & parents in planning & evaluation
- ◆ No fees to be charged
- ◆ Grant application cannot exceed \$20,000 per year
- ◆ Use best practices

A review committee will be here in the local office. Decisions made in October, with approvals by a special Executive Board meeting also in October. All partner agencies are eligible to apply, not just school districts.

Mentor Program Grant

Lori Clasmann spoke about a Federal grant available for mentoring programs, with a school-based component. Lori and Janet Liebl will be contacting school districts for letters of support. Janet has experience writing federal grants. This grant would be for \$100,000-\$200,000 per year for 3 years.

Pioneer Public TV

Arlene Markell spoke on the Ready to Learn program that helps kids learn to read. This is made possible by a grant from the Public Broadcast System and the U.S. Department of Education.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Board - Discussed After School grants starting Jan. 1 2005 and set priorities; social workers working in the schools; and the school districts who don't currently but are interested in having one. Approved private or charter schools that are PACT 4 members to apply for a social worker too, but at a 50%/50% split, rather than 20%/80%.

Early Childhood Committee - Discussed systems issues regarding the PECFAS screener and implementation in the 4-county area; survey data from Project SUCCEED; and

committee re-structure.

Mentor Committee - Grant discussed, along with the Youth Work Matters workshops, the State Mentor Conference in September, and committee re-structure. Will be working on Needs Assessment next month, and will be electing 2 co-chairs.

School Supplies Committees - Each county is continuing to meet.

Community Evaluation Team - Reviewed the tools for PRIDE-4, how to diversify the membership of the committee (with the goal being 50% parents), a celebration event for families who have completed the 36-month outcome study, and the formation of a subcommittee: Data Dissemination – which would work on taking the data gathered and how and what to bring to the public. Looking for members for this sub-committee.

Training and Technical Assistance Committee - Discussed July's training; the pilot program beginning in Canby to go to teacher in-services and speak on mental health resources in appropriate county. Committee also putting together a resource guide for teachers, and discussed committee re-structure.

Families Matter...Just Imagine - Recent activities included: Family Fun Night at the YMCA; parent retreat; support groups; a grant sent in to the Otto-Bremer Foundation. Working on: camping trip with Greater MN Family Services to Pilgram Point in Alexandria; utilizing Experience Works, a group for non-profits that will hire senior citizens to come in and work for them; in the process of sending in a youth grant; a trip to Valleyfair for the youth involved in groups.

Make Note

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

We're on the Web!
www.pact4.org

If you have any questions regarding the content of this newsletter or would like to be included on the mailing list, please contact Claudia at (320) 231-7030 or e-mail to claudia_t@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

little shadows

*I saw a young mother
With eyes full of laughter
And two little shadows
Came following after.*

*Wherever she moved
They were always right there
Holding onto her skirts,
Hanging onto her chair.
Before her, behind her-
An adhesive pair.*

*Don't you ever get weary
As, day after day,
Your two little tagalongs
Get in your way?*

*She smiles as she shook
Her pretty young head,
And I'll always remember
The words that she said:*

*"It's good to have shadows
That run when you're happy
And hum when you hum-
For you only have shadows
When your life's filled with sun."*

-Author Unknown-

