

PACT 4 NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2010

PACT 4 FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE

THE NEXT FULL
COLLABORATIVE
MEETING IS:

Wednesday, February 10
Renville Co. Ofc. Bldg. in
Olivia

11:45 am to 1:45 pm

Cost: \$6.00

RSVP requested:

320-231-7030 or

Email:

shawna.steffen@
co.kandiyohi.mn.us

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CHANGE OF MARCH FULL COLLABORATIVE MEETING DATE TO: March 3, 2010

ReadNex is Coming to PACT 4 for our March Full Collaborative Meeting



This amazing group is on a national tour and crossing Western Minnesota on March 3rd. With the funding from 21st Century we are bringing ReadNex to several schools and to our PACT 4 meeting. If you can come to see them it will definitely be worth your time!

According to Debefore Records, “Embracing the eternal tradition of conveying knowledge orally, audiences nationally and around the globe have been captivated and moved by the anti-apathetic stance of the group comprised of four spoken word poets/emcees and one D.J. Through the art of writing and the power of music, esteemed lyrical scholars Decora, FreeFlowin, Jarabe Del Sol, Latin Translator and DJ H20 continue to uplift urban communities with their universal message and sound influenced by Hip-Hop, Soul, Latin and Caribbean music. As artists, educators and activists, they seek to alleviate ignorance by tackling various issues including but certainly not limited to: race, gender, politics, history, social injustice, gentrification, poverty and segregation. Their evolution into which they are today has been fueled by their experiences as their enlightening and empowering commentary is framed by politics, history and current events.”

Director's Corner

"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."

Being Purposeful

This is one of seven core principles outlined by The Positive Community Norms (PCN) Model that is the guiding philosophy behind our two chemical health prevention grants in Renville and Yellow Medicine Counties.

During a training day for PACT 4 staff last week, Ann Orren reviewed the core principle of Being Purposeful. According to this principle, "We co-create purpose in our lives by aligning our intentions with positive transformation—in ourselves and in our communities. Being purposeful is important because it is how we bring positive results into our own lives and hope into the lives of others. To be purposeful is to be pulled by the future—not pushed, or driven, by the past."

Being purpose-driven is difficult at times when financial resources are inadequate and implementing reforms seems impossible. But time and again, I am impressed with what groups are able to do with limited money and focused approaches. When people and organizations are full of determination, they can make amazing differences in their communities. Recently I have seen purposeful activities in a number of partner initiatives, including the following:

- Planning groups in each of our four counties coming together to honestly take stock of services and gaps in their communities and discuss how they can plan services for youth who have mental health needs and have committed a crime.
- ACGC Schools committing its Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday to train teachers on the effects of poverty on the students and families they work with.
- Early childhood professionals continuing to work on creative intervention approaches for the very young who are exhibiting signs of mental health concerns.

- Parents consistently working to find funding to provide training opportunities for non-professionals about mental health and intervention strategies.

Being purposeful recognizes that one's mission is important, should not be compromised, and leads to determined action. As individuals we find purposeful activity in our personal lives and in joining together in our work. I think PACT 4 is the embodiment of purposeful action in our communities. We can see our purpose pulling us into the future, aligning our work with that of our member organizations, and providing a structure to our time and energy resulting in meaningful outcomes. As a collaborative of focused organizations, we see tangible results of how working together can achieve important change on behalf of children and families.

*Debb Sheehan, Director
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Would you like to receive this newsletter in full color via email? Please contact Shawna at (320) 235-8938 or shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us to request your PACT 4 newsletter be delivered via email.

Resolutions for the Minnesota Legislature

As part of our more comprehensive legislative agenda at PACT 4, we have developed a Legislative Position Statement to present to state legislators in support of Collaboratives generally and PACT 4 specifically. Meeker County Commissioner and CEO member, Amy Wilde, rewrote the statement into resolutions that could be considered by our four counties. Bob Fox, Renville County Commissioner and CEO member recommended that school districts also support PACT 4 by passing a similar resolution. We would like to thank the following Counties and School Districts that approved resolutions to support PACT 4.



- Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners
- Meeker County Board of Commissioners
- Renville County Board of Commissioners
- Yellow Medicine County Board of Commissioners
- BOLD Public Schools
- Canby Public Schools
- Cedar Mountain Public Schools
- ECHO Charter School
- EVW Public Schools
- Litchfield Public Schools
- NLS Public Schools
- RCW Public Schools
- MACCRAY Public Schools
- YME Public Schools
- Central MN Christian School (Prinsburg)
- Community Christian School (Willmar)

By passing these resolutions the school districts and counties have shown once again their tangible support for the work we are doing in partnership with them and the many other partners of PACT 4.

Guía

The Guía Program is excited to announce that in addition to serving high-risk Hispanic/Latino youth who are using alcohol or other drugs, we expanded services July 1, 2009, to at-risk Hispanic/Latino youth. At-Risk youth are those who are suspected of using alcohol or other drugs, or have a family member or friend who are using. Since July, the program has served 28 high-risk youth, 5 at-risk youth, and 25 adult family members of the youth.

Accomplishments of the Guía program in the last quarter (October – December, 2009) include:

- 31 youth were served by Guía.
- 490 contacts were made with Guía youth and family members, totaling 260 hours of contact. The majority of contact fell within the scope of educational/vocational contacts, relationship-building, and planning and goal-setting.
- The program's first graduation occurred in December, 2009. The youth is excited and on the road to a life free of drugs and alcohol.
- 15 youth began the Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) curriculum, a parent/youth curriculum developed by the Council on Prevention and Education: Substances, Inc.
- 16 youth reached their case plan goals. The most common goal categories completed included school completion (some obtained credits and others graduated), pursuing future work interest or employment, and positive community living.
- One youth obtained a substance abuse assessment in order to get into a treatment program.
- One youth was a participant in the Talking Circle Process; the Circle worked with the youth who was transitioning home from a detention center and had substance-use issues.

use and expanding services to those young people who are at-risk of using drugs and alcohol.

Gwenn Garcia, Coordinator
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At a youth gathering in December, Guía staff met with several program participants to find out how they thought the program was going, what they wanted to see more of, and what they would change. The majority of the youth said that they liked the program and felt that it was helping them. They said that they would like to do more outings and activities because it kept them from using drugs and alcohol. We are energized to keep the program moving forward by continuing work with youth who are trying to discontinue their substance



21st Century Community Learning Center

ECHO Charter School

Twenty-Seven middle and high school students from the ECHO Charter School 21st Century After-School Program recently experienced a day of culture. As the culmination of studies about Charles Dickens, Asian Art and proper etiquette, they had the opportunity to go to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and attend the Guthrie production of *A Christmas Carol*. Students prepared for the trip by creating their own works of art based on pieces they would experience at the museum, exploring cultures through media and food, and reading Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

While at the museum, students explored various art movements, world religions, and cultures. Highlights of the tour included comparing Chinese and Japanese architecture, and exposure to "pop" art and minimalism. After their time at the museum, students enjoyed dinner at The Old Spaghetti Factory, where they practiced proper restaurant etiquette.

Following the meal, students had the chance to explore the Guthrie Theater. The students were impressed by the architecture and beautiful views of the Twin Cities. They were thrilled with the presentation of the play. Following the show, comments such as "My face hurts from smiling so much," and "When can we come again?" were heard. The teachers who attended enjoyed watching the students, who were literally on the edges of their seats during the production. One teacher commented that "It was so gratifying to see the world of classic literature and theater opened to students who are not usually given these opportunities."

Pat Jacobsen,

ECHO Charter School 21st CCLC Site Coordinator

Funding for the PACT 4 Families Collaborative 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program is provided by the federal government through the No Child Left Behind Act and is administered by the Minnesota Department of Education.



What is Wraparound?

We will have a Wraparound Orientation in March. If you have not attended a Wraparound training, we encourage you to join us!

WRAPAROUND ORIENTATION

How does the process work? What makes an effective team?
How is Wraparound used in the PACT 4 community?

Friday, March 12, 2010

9:00 – Noon

Room 2035; Health and Human Services Building

To register, call Shawna at 235-8938

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Certificates of Attendance available

Birth to 5 Mental Health Grant

“When should I refer?”

“When should I refer?” is a common question surrounding PACT 4’s Birth to 5 Mental Health grant. There are five factors that are common patterns in a young child’s life:

●Eating ●Sleeping ●Interacting ●Happiness ●Distress

These same factors are also clues into a child’s social-emotional wellness. By looking at the frequency, intensity, and duration of issues surrounding each factor, we can better understand whether or not a child is struggling and may need additional support and intervention.

If child is considered to need follow-up, there are now early childhood professionals in each of our four counties to work with referrals. If the young child needs mental health intervention, Lutheran Social Services and Woodland Centers are designated to see these children and their parents.

Our next step with this grant is getting to the business of building a birth to 5 mental-health infrastructure.

By meeting with childcare providers, early childhood staff, public health nurses and the medical community, we are now at the point of offering various trainings to support what they do best

while building a common language among all.

For childcare providers, we are partnering with Ridgewater College. A pilot training about Social-Emotional Development in the Young Child will be held in February. This training addresses questions raised at focus groups within the four counties. Topics include: social-emotional factors, temperaments, early warning signs, and working with parents to seek community resources.

For early childhood staff, public health nurses and the medical community, the grant specifically identifies the Ages & Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) as the screening tool. This is a parent-report instrument that reliably screens infants and young children for social-emotional delays during the crucial first five years of life. ASQ-SE training sessions will be offered this spring through the Early Childhood Committee and other local partners.

Linda Mathiasen, Coordinator
(320) 231-7030; linda.mathiasen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

Yellow Medicine Co. Chemical Health Coalition

As many of you know, kids are a large part of the activities of the Chemical Health Coalition of Yellow Medicine County. This month I would like to highlight one of the youth groups in Yellow Medicine County. The YAMS (Youth Against Misusing Substances) is a group of 9th—12th graders in Canby. The YAMS mission is to promote healthy and substance-free youth by offering alternatives and education to our peers and being contributing members of our community, at the same time changing our communities’ perception of youth.

According to local statistics, the majority of students in Canby are making healthy choices and DON’T drink alcohol or do drugs. YAMS would like to help spread the word to their peers, younger students, and the community. To do this, they have created t-shirts, radio ads, and posters that use positive messages. They have made presentations to younger students about the importance of not using alcohol and drugs and have spoken to the Yellow Medicine County Board and local civic groups about the importance of this issue.

One of the biggest yearly events that the YAMS co-sponsors is Kidz Nite Out. Kidz Nite Out is offered to all 4-6th grade students in Canby. Last year’s theme was “A Night at the Circus”. High school students provide a night of healthy activities for younger students while incorporating positive prevention messages. The night is a great opportunity for high school students to role model health activities while having fun. The event has been

extremely popular among students in the elementary grades.

Some of the other activities that YAMS have coordinated include: Bean Bag Tournaments, YAM Jam, Party in the Backyard, a Dunk Tank at Hat Day, and Adopt a Highway ditch clean-up.

The YAMS have done a great job planning impressive activities in the community and are well known in the area. These students have made it their mission to make a positive change in their school and in their community. They are role models for younger students, their peers and the rest of the community.

Ann Orren, Coordinator
(320) 669-1460; annorren@frontiernet.net



Kandiyohi County Community Circles



The Circle process can make a world of difference in the lives of youth. The process helps restore youth rather than punish, as often happens in the traditional court system. The Circle process can be utilized for problem-solving, healing, goal-setting, sentencing and/or support. Circle allows juvenile offenders to be surrounded by caring volunteers, who have a genuine concern for the well-being of youth in the community. Circles are about rebuilding a sense of shared responsibility of citizenship while focusing on long-term behavioral changes of the youth involved. Circle is individualized for each youth and addresses issues the youth may have with home, family, or school, and how to navigate life's hurdles.

The following is an example of a recent referral to the Circle process and how Circle made the difference in this youth's life when he needed it most.

"Tyler" (not his real name), was charged with felony-level possession of a controlled substance and delinquency-level possession of drug paraphernalia. Tyler easily fit into the preconceived image of a rough-looking drug dealer upon first coming to Circle. He was a high school dropout, unemployed, and wore his hair long with lip rings. Yet when one takes the time to listen to Tyler's story, you realize the circumstances that brought this youth to being in possession of a controlled substance were not because he wanted a quick high, or was selling or buying to make money. Furthermore, you realize that Tyler is a kid with a great sense of family, caring and doing what is right but became a victim of his circumstances.

At age 16, Tyler made the choice to leave his mother's home to live with his father. His mother was and still is an active user of methamphetamines. Tyler could not condone this and wanted out, but never did he imagine how moving in with his father would affect every aspect of his life. His father was diagnosed with cancer shortly after Tyler moved in. The cancer had

taken hold of his entire body and Tyler became the full-time care provider for his father. Tyler started to miss more and more school in order to care for his dad, until one day he quit because he was so far behind. Gaining employment was impossible. One would wonder why a child would have to take on this responsibility with services that would be available to his father. Two reasons: Tyler experienced a sense of panic whenever he left his father's side. He felt guilty because his father continuously told Tyler that he wanted to spend every last minute possible with his son, whom he trusted and felt comfortable with in providing his care. With no education and no job, Tyler had no income or insurance. Both he and his father were living off of his father's social security disability. One day Tyler experienced tooth pain that had become so severe he asked a friend if he knew of someone who could get him pain medication until he could afford to see a dentist. It was because of this that Tyler was found to be guilty of felony-level possession of a controlled substance and that he became involved in Circle.

Since entering Circle five months ago, Tyler has made many personal strides in his life. With the support of Circle he has obtained his driver's permit, enrolled in the GED program and started the testing process to obtain his GED. He has started to apply for jobs and housing assistance so that he will have a place to live when his father passes away. Further, Tyler has obtained medical assistance and is seeing a therapist to work on his anxiety. Tyler has even gotten his hair cut and started to dress with pride at the suggestion of one Circle member. It is doubtful that Tyler would have made such quick progress and clear positive changes in his life had he not been referred to Circle. Tyler credits Circle for the wonderful support and ideas that have helped him gain the self-esteem and courage to take control of his life.

*Tricia Buggs; Coordinator
(320) 231-7030; tricia_b@co.kandiyohi.mn.us*

January Full Collaborative Highlights

2010 Budget Review — Debb Sheehan reviewed the budget for this year and distributed an itemized financial plan for the upcoming year.

MACCRAY 4-Day School Week—Greg Schmidt, superintendent, presented about their district moving to a four-day schedule and what they've learned a year later. Greg has spoken all across the State about this. He and school board member Debi Brandt are presenting this week at the MN School Board Association. The change has had many benefits and few detriments. In cost savings, they expected to save \$95,203; actual savings were \$181,159.

Committee Reports:

Executive Board – discussed committee and collaborative participation and future legislative visits; elected chair/co-chair: George Dubie and Greg Schmidt, respectively.

Adolescent Services – continued to research available youth activities.

Early Childhood – elected new chair: Cathy Nelson-Messer; spent majority of time discussing the ASQ-SE.

Elementary/Middle School-Age – discussed 6-month follow up of school connectedness conference and future focus of committee.

Wraparound – set goals for 2010.

Parent Advisory – set goals for 2010; a representative from Heartland came to talk about how to write and advocate with area legislators.

Grant Report:

Birth to 5 Mental Health—see page 5 of this newsletter for a summary of this grant presentation.

Kandiyohi County Community Circles—Tricia Buggs, coordinator, has been here for almost two years, and she covered an example of a Circle opening, to help volunteers transition from their daily life to the commonality of the Circle; and a sample of a closing poem that may be read at the conclusion of a Circle.

<h2>February</h2>				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1 ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	2 ■ Executive Board; 11:30-2:00; #2055	3 ■ Office Staff Mtg; 9:30-10:30; #2057; OFFICE CLOSED DURING MEETING ■ RC Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Planning Mtg; 10:00-11:30; RC Govt Ctr #116 ■ KC Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Planning Mtg; 2:00-3:00; #2057	4	5
8 ■ Parent Advisory Mtg; 5:30-7:30; YMCA	9 ■ 21st CCLC Advisory Comm; 8:30-11:00; #2045 ■ Restorative Justice Mtg; 1:30-3:00; #2055 ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	10 ■ PACT 4 Comm. and Full Collaborative meetings-RCOB in Olivia; Early Childhood meets at 10:00 and all others at 10:30; check website for details on committee times (RSVP) ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr	11 ■ Restorative Justice Steering Comm; 12:00; The Oaks at Eagle Creek; Willmar ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	12
15 President's Day—office closed	16	17 ■ RJ Volunteer Mtg; 11:45-1:00; #2057	18 ■ Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Planning Mtg; 1:30-3:00; Family Svcs Conf. Rm; Granite Falls	19
22	23 ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	24 ■ PACT 4 Coordinators Mtg; 10:00-12:00; #2045 ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr	25 ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	26

<h2>March</h2>				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1 ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	2 ■ Executive Board; 11:30-2:00; #2055	3 ■ PACT 4 Comm. and Full Collaborative meetings-Willmar; Early Childhood meets at 10:00 and all others at 10:30; check website for details on committee times (RSVP)	4	5
8 ■ Parent Advisory Mtg; 5:30-7:30; YMCA	9 ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	10 ■ 21st CCLC Site Coord. Mtg; 9:00-12:00; #2055 ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr	11 ■ Restorative Justice Steering Comm; 12:00; The Oaks at Eagle Creek; Willmar ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	12 ■ Wraparound Orientation Trng; 9:00-12:00; #2035 (RSVP)
15 ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	16	17 ■ PACT 4 All Staff Mtg; 8:30-11:30; MPR; OFFICE CLOSED AT THIS TIME ■ RJ Volunteer Mtg; 11:45-1:00; #2057 ■ Boundaries Trng; 1:00-4:00; MPR (RSVP)	18	19
22	23 ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	24 ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr	25 ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	26
29	30	31	1	2

If you have any questions regarding the content of this newsletter or would like to be included on the mailing list, please call (320) 231-7030.

It is the policy of PACT 4 Families to provide equal employment opportunity for all, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

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2010 Executive Board

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(320) 453-8153 / arliss_stenger@yahoo.com

Debi Brandt, Heartland Comm. Action Agency
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Serves through 2012—3rd Term
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George Dubie, Greater MN Family Svcs. (Chair)
Serves through 2010—1st Term
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Greg Schmidt, MACCRAY School Dst.
Serves through 2011—1st Term
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Chief Elected Officials

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED