

PACT 4  
FAMILIES  
COLLABORATIVE

THE NEXT FULL  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEETING IS:

May 12

Renville Co. Office Bldg in Olivia

11:45 am to 1:45 pm

Cost: \$6.00

RSVP requested:

320-231-7030 ext. 2961 or

Email:

shawna.steffen@

co.kandiyohi.mn.us

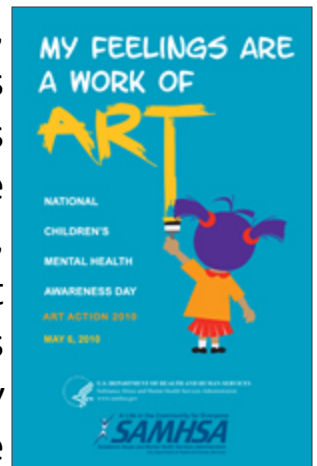
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# PACT 4 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2010

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, with Thursday, May 6 as National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2010. This day is intended for everyone to promote positive development of infants, toddlers, children, and youth. On Awareness Day, "Art Action" will take place in communities across the country. Using the theme "My Feelings Are a Work of Art," teachers, care providers, parents, and others will engage young children in art activities that encourage them to talk about having and expressing feelings. The day serves as a reminder of the importance that mental health plays in each of our lives. Nationally, we continue to see that 5% of kids have mental health issues that significantly affect their lives. This percentage is no less in our four counties. Each of us is directly affected in some way by someone struggling with a mental health issue. The theme for this year is a great reminder that learning how to recognize and express our feelings is a positive aspect of our mental health – whether we are young or old. Take some time in May to really listen to what family and friends are saying to you – be a positive force in promoting good mental health for us all!



Visit [www.arttherapy.org/chmad.asp](http://www.arttherapy.org/chmad.asp) to learn more about and sign up for "My Feelings Are a Work of Art"—the Awareness Day 2010 Art Action!

Rick Loseth, Clinical Supervisor  
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## 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."*

May is the month during the year that we shine a light on Mental Health. It reminds us that we have much work to do to eliminate mental illness and, what seems almost as debilitating, the stigma of mental illness.

Stigma is a very real problem for people who have a mental illness. Based on stereotypes, stigma is a negative judgment based on a personal trait — in this case, having a mental health condition. It was once a common perception that having a mental illness was due to some kind of personal weakness. We now know that mental health disorders have a biological basis and can be treated like any other health condition. Even so, we still have a long way to go to overcome the many misconceptions, fears and biases people have about mental health, and the stigma these attitudes create. <sup>1</sup>

Mental health disorders in children and adolescents are caused both by biology and the environment. Examples of biological causes are genetics, chemical imbalances in the body, or damage to the central nervous system, such as a head injury. Many environmental factors also put young people at risk for developing mental health disorders. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides examples of these causes:

- Exposure to environmental toxins, such as high levels of lead;
- Exposure to violence, such as witnessing or being the victim of physical or sexual abuse, drive-by shootings, muggings, or other disasters;
- Stress related to chronic poverty, discrimination, or other serious hardships; and
- The loss of important people through death, divorce, or broken relationships.

"One in four individuals will suffer a significant mental illness in their lifetime, and one in five families will suffer with a family member who is seriously and persistently ill," reports Robert J. Ronis, M.D., MPH, chairman of Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine's psychiatry department and psychiatrist-in-chief

at University Hospitals Health System. "We are all vulnerable, and we are all part of the solution."<sup>2</sup>

As the community better understands mental health issues, the stigma attached to them lessens, says Ronis. People wouldn't acknowledge a loved one's cancer 20 years ago, but today "we got cancer 'out of the closet,' and we've developed more and more effective treatments," he notes. "The same is beginning to happen with mental illness."<sup>3</sup>

For those of us working to dispel stigma, societal change cannot happen too soon.

<sup>1</sup>Mayo Clinic Staff, . (2010, April 23). Mental health: overcoming the stigma of mental illness. Mayo Clinic.com, Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/mental-health/mh00076>

<sup>2</sup>Light, N. P. (2010, April 23). Forum on mental illness offers hope for families. Cleveland Jewish News, Retrieved from <http://www.clevelandjewishnews.com/articles/2010/04/23/news/local/doc4bd0b7a377bce231345664.txt>

<sup>3</sup>IBID

*Debb Sheehan, Director  
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**Would you like to receive this newsletter in full color via email? Please contact Shawna at (320) 231-7030 ext. 2961 or [shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us](mailto:shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us) to request your PACT 4 newsletter be delivered via email.**

## Renville Co. Chemical Health Coalition

### Safe Spring: Practical Underage Drinking Prevention Strategies

Spring is in the air! Spring break, prom, and graduation soon follow. Daylight is long, and young people are spending more time outdoors, out of school, and away from adult supervision. Parents and other caring adults need to be aware of what youth are doing and be prepared to offer safe alternatives.



In an effort to encourage parents to talk with their teens about underage alcohol use, the RAPAD Coalition held a Town Hall Meeting April 12th at the Renville Community Center. Around 50 people

attended to hear how alcohol impacts communities, especially youth. A meal was served by the Holy Redeemer Youth Group and the session was hosted by TADA (Teens Against Drugs and Alcohol) of RCW. An impacting video “*This Place*” was shown, which depicts the drinking culture to which youth are continually exposed.

Presenters included David Torgelson, Renville County Attorney; and Chris Domeier, Renville Police Department, who discussed laws and penalties for youth or parents concerning underage alcohol use and parents’ responsibilities. Wendell Veurink, Greater Minnesota Family Services, presented on how alcohol impacts the adolescent brain and why it is so dangerous for youth to use alcohol while the brain is virtually under construction.

Inquiring parents and youth had many questions and comments that were discussed by the presenters and other attendees. As one person commented on the meeting evaluation survey, “It truly was an inspiring night.” A resource that parents and families can use is

[www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov](http://www.underagedrinking.samhsa.gov), a guide that provides facts and practical advice on how to talk to children about underage drinking.

- Talk early—learn why it’s never too early to talk to your children about drinking.
- Talk often—get the tools you need to start a real conversation and keep it going.
- Get Others Involved—see how friends, family and communities can be part of the solution.

Talking with your children early and often can make a difference. Get the tools, the facts, and the advice you need from this website.

*Annie Tepfer, RAPAD Coordinator*  
(320) 523-3845; [annie\\_t@co.renville.mn.us](mailto:annie_t@co.renville.mn.us)

## Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Grant

Did you know that more than a quarter of all juvenile delinquents have severe mental illness? In 2006 the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, together with the Council of Juvenile Correction Administrators, conducted a comprehensive survey of justice-involved youth to determine the prevalence of mental health concerns within this population. This “Prevalence Study” found that 70.4% of youth within the criminal justice system met the criteria for at least one mental health disorder. Nearly two-thirds of this population (60.8%) had co-occurring substance use disorders.

The intention of the PACT 4 Juvenile Justice / Mental Health planning grant continues to be to seek out the best ways to identify and assist these youth who reside within our four-county service area. With the exception of a brief hiatus to prepare and submit a request for “Phase 2” (limited continued planning plus program implementation) funding, committees in all four counties have continued to meet on a regular basis. These meetings, together with a meeting with those from each county who were nominated to the Steering Committee, provided invaluable information and ideas upon which the request for Phase 2 funding was based. From this point forward we will work within the goals and objectives identified by the committees with the expectation that continued funding will allow for program implementation. We hope and expect that providing care to this significant population of justice-involved youth will improve not only their lives, but also the lives of their families as well.

*Greta Smolnisky, Coordinator*  
(320) 231-7030 ext. 2969; [greta\\_s@co.kandiyohi.mn.us](mailto:greta_s@co.kandiyohi.mn.us)



## 21st Century Community Learning Center—Canby School

At the Canby School District we are wrapping up a busy year of 21st Century after-school programming. We have had a year filled with busy students and snow days.

Our Canby High School ACE (After Class Experience) program has been especially busy this year working on various units. We began the year with many Design Squad activities, which put the students' imagination and ingenuity to the test. The students' favorite project was the rubber band machines. We also did some research projects on bands and songs; these projects culminated with presentations and papers. Over the late winter months we had Olympic competitions in various academic events in which we presented bronze, silver and gold medals to participants. Below and to the right is our math competition where the first three participants to have their worksheet done and correct were awarded medals.

This spring we have been working on our interviewing skills. We have learned how to phrase questions and how to compile data. We brought in community members to

interview and then shared and compared what types of information we were able to gather. We also spent a few sessions designing and flying kites on our windy days. We have tried to incorporate some movement with our academic component each day. On a recent day of programming we warmed up with one of the topic thumb balls (see photo below on the left).

Our elementary program, Young Explorers, has been active this year in several different areas. We have spent time in math and language arts with both lessons and games. One activity that the students really enjoyed was the money counting lesson. We were blessed to have the Exploradome come visit this year and we used that as the cornerstone of a space exploration unit. We brought in an expert dietitian who talked to us about healthy eating habits and preparation. We spent some time out in the elements this winter working on snow and ice art projects. The game creation project was also reportedly one of the favorites at Young Explorers this year. The students designed a game and made all of the rules. Then they made several revisions until they felt that it could not be improved anymore.

We are excited about the quality after-school experiences that we have been able to provide this year. We concluded our year with a joint event for both our ACE program and our elementary Young Explorers program where all participants went bowling. The high school students helped the elementary students with scoring and strategy.

*David Leppke  
Site Coordinator*



*Funding for the PACT 4 Families Collaborative 21<sup>st</sup> 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.*

## Wraparound—Early Beginnings in Mental Health

**Wraparound is a strength-based, family-driven team process to help families with complex needs meet their goals.**

In recent years, Wraparound has become a valuable process used in a variety of settings. On the national level it is being implemented in various arenas, including children's mental health, child protection, child welfare, and corrections. With this month nationally recognized as "May is Mental Health Month," it seems a good time to point out that Wraparound had its early beginnings in the arena of children's mental health.

Wraparound emerged along with the *Systems of Care* movement in the early 1980's. *Systems of Care* refers to "a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that are organized to meet the challenges of children and youth with serious mental health needs and their families" (<http://systemsofcare.samhsa.gov>). Simply put, the system of care philosophy means that when there are several agencies/entities working with a family, they need to be working together. PACT 4 Families, of course, was born out of this movement. In the past 20 years, the children's mental

health field has seen a rapid growth of a family advocacy movement. "This growth has been fueled by the efforts of advocacy organizations such as the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health and the National Mental Health Association. These organizations have embraced the Wraparound process as a potential means for ensuring the fundamental rights of families with mental health needs...the growth of the family movement in children's mental health has been an important impetus for the ongoing development of Wraparound." (Bruns, Burchard and VanDenBerg, "History of the Wraparound Process," *Focal Point: A National Bulletin on Family Support and Children's Mental Health: Quality and Fidelity in Wraparound*, 17(2), page 4-7).

In the early years, Wraparound was part of a movement to overcome fragmented and overly-professionalized mental health services. "Since then, the use of the term 'Wraparound' has become common shorthand for flexibility and comprehensiveness of service delivery, as well as for approaches that are intended to help keep children and youth in the community" (Bruns, Burchard and VanDenBerg, p. 4).

Today Wraparound teams are comprised of members from a growing number of entities, including (among others) mental health service providers, child protection workers and guardians ad litem, probation officers, family and friends, school staff, employment specialists, and pastors. Effective teams include *both* agency representatives and informal family supports.

This evolution of Wraparound is fascinating to study! From children's mental health teams to teams meeting within prison walls, the process of Wraparound empowers individuals and families and provides both hope and respectful accountability. "Wraparound represents a process that has the potential to be extremely efficient and useful in improving the lives of children, youth and families" (Bruns, Burchard and VanDenBerg, p. 7)

Char Erickson, Coordinator  
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## Evaluation Update

### Did you know –

School enrollments across the state of Minnesota are expected to hit a low point in the 2010-2011 school year and then increase 6.5% by the 2018-19 school year.

Since the PACT 4 Families 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant began in September of 2007, an average of 390 students (49 students per eight participating districts) attended grant-sponsored out-of-school activities provided for children in need of extra help.

For the 2009–2011 LCTS grant cycle, 22 grants were awarded to PACT 4 partners and during the second half of 2009 those grantees served 1,107 at risk youth for an average of 50 youth per site.

The fifteen public school districts that are members of PACT4 had a total enrollment of 16,766 students in the 2008 -2009 school year and that number represents only 2% of the total Minnesota state student enrollment.

During the last three months of 2009, the Guía staff made 381 contacts with 33 program participants for an average of 11.5 contacts per client. The most common reasons for the contacts were related to vocation/education issues (113 contacts) or relationship-building/mentoring (129 contacts).

Seven of the fifteen PACT 4 school districts exceed the state average for the percentage of students identified as needing special education services.

Dr. Ed Downey, Evaluator  
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# AT-RISK YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

## Two Free Workshops

### *“Strategies for Professionals”*

Thursday, May 6, 2010 12:30 ~ 1:30 PM

Box Lunch available for \$6.00—MUST RSVP by MAY 3

Topics Include:

- Information and Trends in the Juvenile Justice System
- Strategies for Working with Youth in Multiple Systems

### *“Advocating for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System”*

Thursday, May 6, 2010 7:00 ~ 8:30 PM

Light Refreshments will be provided

Topics Include:

- Mental Health and Juvenile Delinquency
- Behaviors in School and Referrals to Court
- Navigating the Juvenile Court System

*Presented by: PACER Center*

Lili Garfinkel, Coordinator; Juvenile Justice Project;

Renelle Nelson, Coordinator; Project for Children with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

Both of the following workshops will be held in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building, 2200 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NE, Willmar

\*\*\*\*\*

RSVP: [shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us](mailto:shawna.steffen@co.kandiyohi.mn.us)

or 231-7030 Ext. 2961

Please RSVP by May 3 and indicate if you would like a box lunch for \$6.00

Sponsored by PACT 4 Families Collaborative with the support of a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services



IN HONOR OF “MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH”

## May 6<sup>th</sup> is National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day

This year, Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day focuses for the first time on early childhood. Across the country, communities are getting the word out that children and youth with mental health needs and their families can thrive when provided with effective services and supports to meet their needs. The goal is to raise awareness among everyone connected with nurturing children’s social and emotional well-being from birth. Addressing children’s mental health needs early improves their chances to succeed in school and beyond.

Minnesota’s message is “It’s more than ... heights, weights and growth charts. Children’s mental health matters.” Mental health screening can detect early signs of possible mental health problems in children. It is a short, simple, first step to discovering when a child may need further diagnosis and treatment. Dr. Troy Hanson, a Minnesota family medicine physician, stated, “Early childhood mental health screening is our first and best shot to immunize against social, emotional, and behavioral health problems and boost lifelong mental resilience and adaptive capacity.”

Through PACT 4’s Birth to Five Mental Health grant, we are supporting social-emotional screening for children ages six months to five years. We are working with the Early Childhood Committee by offering training on Minnesota’s preferred screening tool, the Ages & Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE). Over 60 early childhood professionals participated in a three-hour training session led by Maria Balbo, Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative; and Cathy Nelson-Messer, Heartland Community Action-Head Start. In addition, we partnered with Maria and Cathy to bring ASQ-SE training to Affiliated Community Medical Centers pediatricians and family practice physicians to begin the process of incorporating social-emotional screening into well child visits. The outreach to additional medical providers in our four counties is underway.

The screening process also includes follow-up resources for children with elevated scores. Referrals to County Public Health Nurses and Mental Health Professionals such as Lutheran Social Services and Woodland Centers are included within the grant. Children and their families may receive direct services and interventions. The Minnesota Parents Know website ([www.MNParentsKnow.info](http://www.MNParentsKnow.info)) is another option for developmental resources and referral information for parents and providers.

National Mental Health Day is a reminder to parents to play with their children, talk with their doctors, and screen their children for health, physical, and social-emotional concerns. Intervening as early as possible is more effective than waiting.

<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">May</h2>				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
<b>3</b> ■ Juvenile Justice/ Mental Health Planning Mtg; 1:00-2:30; Kandiyohi Co Family Svcs Conf Room ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>4</b> ■ Juvenile Justice/Mental Health Planning Mtg; 10:00-11:30; Master's in Olivia ■ Executive Board Mtg; 11:30-2:00; #2055	<b>5</b> ■ Office Staff Mtg; 1:30-2:30; #2057; OFFICE CLOSED DURING MEETING	<b>6</b> ■ Two free PACER provided trainings: At Risk Youth & The Juvenile Justice System. See page 6 for more information	<b>7</b>
<b>10</b> ■ Parent Advisory Mtg; 5:30-7:30; YMCA	<b>11</b> ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	<b>12</b> ■ PACT 4 Comm. and Full Collaborative meetings-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	<b>13</b> ■ KC Community Circles Steering Comm; 12:00; The Oaks at Eagle Creek; Willmar ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>14</b>
<b>17</b> ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> ■ PACT 4 All Staff Mtg; 8:30-11:30; MPR; OFFICE CLOSED AT THIS TIME ■ KC Comm. Circles Volunteer Mtg; 11:45-1:00; #2057	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	<b>26</b> ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr ■ 21st CCLC Site Coord. Mtg; 9:00-Noon; #2057	<b>27</b> ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>28</b>
<b>31</b>  <b>MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY</b>				

<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">June</h2>				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	<b>1</b> ■ Executive Board Mtg; 11:30-2:00; #2055	<b>2</b> ■ Office Staff Mtg; 1:30-2:30; #2057; OFFICE CLOSED DURING MEETING	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7</b> ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>8</b> ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	<b>9</b> ■ PACT 4 Comm. and Full Collaborative meetings-Litchfield; 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	<b>10</b> ■ KC Community Circles Steering Comm; 12:00; The Oaks at Eagle Creek; Willmar ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>11</b>
<b>14</b> ■ Parent Advisory Mtg; 5:30-7:30; YMCA	<b>15</b> ■ 21st CCLC Advisory Comm; 8:30-10:30; #2045	<b>16</b> ■ KC Comm. Circles Volunteer Mtg; 11:45-1:00; #2057	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> ■ 21st CCLC Trng; 9:00-Noon; MPR
<b>21</b> ■ Willmar RJ Circle #2; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>22</b> ■ New London RJ Circle; 5:30-7:00; Peace Lutheran Church	<b>23</b> ■ Willmar Transition Circle; 5:30-7:30; Lakeland Ctr	<b>24</b> ■ Willmar RJ Circle #3; 5:30-7:00; Lakeland Ctr	<b>25</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

*All Willmar meetings are held at the Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building (KCHHSB) unless otherwise noted.  
(MPR=Multi Purpose Room)*

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.

## 2010 Executive Board

Arliss Stenger, Parent-Meeker Co. (Vice Chair)  
Serves through 2010—3rd Term  
(320) 453-8153 / arliss\_stenger@yahoo.com

Debi Brandt, Heartland Comm. Action Agency  
Serves through 2012—2nd Term  
(320) 235-0850 / debib@heartlandcaa.org

Gerald Brustuen, Renville Co. Human Svcs.  
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Jill Bruns, Renville Co. Public Health  
Serves through 2011—3rd Term  
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Tammy Thompson, Meeker Co. Corrections  
Serves through 2011—1st Term  
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Debb Sheehan, Director (non-voting)  
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Becky Romosz, Parent-Kandiyohi Co.  
Serves through 2012—3rd Term  
(320) 235-2204 / ellen\_romosz@ymail.com

George Dubie, Greater MN Family Svcs. (Chair)  
Serves through 2010—1st Term  
(320) 214-9692 / gdubie@greaterminnesota.org

Greg Schmidt, MACCRAY School Dst.  
Serves through 2011—1st Term  
(320) 847-2154 / schmidt@maccray.k12.mn.us

Loren Hacker, Canby School Dst.  
Serves through 2010—3rd Term  
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Val Mersch, Fiscal Agent (non-voting)  
val\_m@co.renville.mn.us

## Chief Elected Officials

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PACT 4 Families Collaborative  
2200 23rd Ste NE Ste 2030  
Willmar, MN 56201

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED