

# HORIZONS

OF HEALTH AND HOPE IN MONTEZUMA AND DOLORES COUNTIES

## CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER

Incredible Years Parenting Class (for parents of 2-10 year olds). Call 565-1195, ext. 21 for information and registration. Dinner and childcare provided.

Guiding Good Choices (for parents of 8 - 14 year olds) Call 564-1195, ext.21 for information or registration. Dinner and childcare provided.

26<sup>th</sup> State Suicide Prevention & Intervention Plan Update, Empire Electric - Calvin Denton Room, 12 - 4 PM, Lunch provided.

### OCTOBER

3<sup>rd</sup> La Plata Community Meth Forum, premiering of "Break The Glass: Life on Meth", Columbine Center - Durango 11:45 AM - 1 PM, 946-8979.

11<sup>th</sup> Character Council Meeting, 12:10 - 1:30 PM, Montezuma County Sheriff's Office.

15<sup>th</sup> Meth Action Committee, 10:30 AM, Chamber Room at Cortez Welcome Center.

15<sup>th</sup> School/Community Youth Coalition, 11:15 AM, Chamber Room at Cortez Welcome Center.

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## Parental guidance supports success as children head back to school

For those of us who have witnessed seemingly countless school starts for ourselves, our children and perhaps grandchildren the ritual is familiar – anticipating the change, concluding vacation activities, buying school supplies and perhaps even choosing some new clothing. However, the back-to-school experience almost always brings some type of stress and worry, especially for those children and parents fresh to the endeavor.

For children there are new teachers and classmates, new-to-be-found classrooms, fresh routines and perhaps a change in schoolwork. This time can be particularly unnerving and overwhelming for children who are facing major transitions such as starting elementary school or entering middle school. And if there are elements of home life that are unsettled, the challenge of school starting can be even greater.

As a parent, grandparent or other caregiver there are proactive steps that can be taken to support children as they head back to school.

- Express interest and enthusiasm about the start of the school year. If you are confident and excited, most likely your child will be also.
- Be sure to say good-bye to your child as they leave to begin their school day. Being both friendly and firm can help with the challenge of separation for younger children. Supportive statements are best if separating is difficult, such as "it's hard to say good-bye" and "I look forward to hearing about your day later."

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## Cortez schools add liaison to connect local families with community resources

The Montezuma-Cortez School District has hired former elementary principal, Rob Lee, to serve as a parent and community liaison for this school year. The position is designed to meet parent and family needs and develop positive supportive relationships with families, the schools, and the community. The responsibilities of the Liaison are as follows:

- Work with the schools to visit and support families where students are having behavior problems, attendance problems, or other concerns. To help with communication and to encourage and support parent involvement through the accountability process or parent-teacher groups.
- Work with parents to insure that the educational needs of their students are being met. Connect parents with supporting agencies and make them aware of both community and school resources. Provide classes and workshops where needed and give positive support to help children succeed in school.

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## Healthy Kids Colorado Survey provides annual update on teenage health behaviors

Are you wondering why a teenager you know is uncharacteristically conversant regarding matters of health-related choices recently? Are you being asked if and when you first used alcohol, or if you took the brunt of bullying behavior? The catalytic event might be the annual query of our state's high school youth through the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey.

The survey, administered annually in October, has proven itself as an important tool in assessing the current health status of Colorado's high school teens, and when matched with previous survey results sheds light on trends in health-related choices made regularly by youth. These important findings inform efforts to provide on-target health education curriculum and campaigns throughout the state.

Rebecca Larson, Regional Prevention Consultant with the Omni Institute, indicates that the Healthy Kids Survey is key to providing accurate and timely results that aid prevention professionals in designing and targeting messages most likely to increase pro-health decision-making by Colorado teens. Larson indicated that, "The data from this school survey has been used to bring hundreds of thousands of dollars into our community for several years to serve our youth and families in need."

A valuable side benefit of the survey is the conversation of health-related issues spawned by the query. The scope and length of the survey provide a thought-provoking review of choices related to the daily lives of high school youth in today's culture. For many teens engaging the survey prompts them to discuss health issues with their peers, teachers, parents and others.

The lengthy (nearly 150 questions) survey covers the range of issues that young people are impelled to make decisions about during this transitional phase of their lives – confidence issues, diet and exercise, substance abuse, school involvement, bullying and violence, sexual activity, community involvement and others. Larson shared, "The schools in Montezuma and Dolores counties have been great over the past many years in administering the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey!"

More information on the survey can be accessed at [www.omni.org](http://www.omni.org).

## CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

9<sup>th</sup> Fund Raising Workshop for Rural Not-for-Profits. Learn techniques and be coached on how to raise funds in rural communities.

Sponsored by School/Community Youth Coalition, Community Radio Project and Summit Advisory Council. To register your organization's fund raising team call Missy Miller at 882-1253 ext. 7#.

13-14<sup>th</sup> Training in Social Norms Marketing and "Science of the Positive" with Dr. Jeff Linkenbach, Farmington NM, Info at 505 566-5871.

## Monetary support offered for meals

Many local public schools offer healthy breakfasts and lunches for children as part of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. Free and reduced meals are available to families who qualify for the program. Eligibility is determined using income and family size criteria as indicated below. There are other criteria that qualify families for free or reduced meals such as food stamp and unemployment program participation. Parents should check with their local school to determine eligibility and to obtain application materials.

### INCOME QUALIFYING CHART

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Yearly</u>
1	\$1,575	\$18,889
2	\$2,111	\$25,327
3	\$2,648	\$31,765
4	\$3,184	\$38,203
5	\$3,721	\$44,641
6	\$4,257	\$51,079

## Learn parenting skills in "Families that Care: Guiding Good Choices"

If you are a parent hoping to improve your parenting skills, the Pinon Project sponsored "Families that Care: Guiding Good Choices" class series may be for you.

The class will address such topics as strengthening family bonds, helping your children to avoid drug use and aiding your family to develop healthy beliefs and clear standards/. The program targets parents of 9-14 year olds and is fostered by a lively and open atmosphere in which one can learn strategies to increase children's involvement in the family.

The class series consists of five Tuesdays with fall start dates of September 11 and October 23. Classes are 5:30 – 8:00 PM and include childcare, dinner and rewards. Class size is limited – call Adrien at 564-1195, ext. 21 for information and registration.

## Liaison position supports families

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- Work with the community to identify resources and help parents and families become aware of the resources and support available for them. Help families with needs access the community resources available to meet those needs.
- Work with the Hispanic community to overcome barriers of language and culture. Make certain that letters home and parent conferences take place in Spanish where necessary and that opportunities to learn English are provided for parents.
- Work with the Native American community. Meet regularly with representatives of both the Ute Mountain and Navajo communities. Make sure parents are aware of available resources and work with parents and staff to resolve differences in cultural perceptions. Help each child to succeed.
- District Homeless Coordinator. Work to make sure that each child has the security of food and shelter and the opportunity to learn.

The goal of the parent liaison is to match needs and resources. If a parent has a concern or a need then the liaison is ready to help. If there are community resources being under utilized then the liaison can help make parents aware of those opportunities. If communication is awkward or difficult the liaison can give support. If there are needs and no available resources then the liaison will work to develop resources to meet that need.

The Montezuma Cortez School District cares about each individual child and the Parent and Community Liaison is responsible to help families develop resources and support so students can succeed.

Rob Lee can be reached by phone at 739-0742.

## Back to school support from parents fosters children's success

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- If you have visited your child's school already, you are one step ahead of the game, and if you have not, it's never too late to do so. Both child and parent gain familiarity with the school from a visit and this familiarity supports interest and conversation about school.
- Take time to listen to your child and discuss aspects of the new school year that he or she has concerns about. Remember to let your child know that it's normal to feel nervous about the start of any new activity, including school.
- Remember that routines are supportive for children, especially during times of change. Involving children in the routine, such as packing lunch and choosing clothes to wear, will add to the likelihood of success.
- Spend time each day talking to your child about their day in school. Give your child positive feedback about his or her new experiences. Encourage them to share their feelings about the rewards and challenges of their school experience. Give airtime to frustrations and concerns.
- Support and encourage your child to become involved with school activities, especially new ones that may lead to new friendships and interests.
- Attend school functions and stay involved in your child's education. Children whose parents are more involved with their education exhibit higher achievement, are better adjusted and are more inclined to stay in school.

## Speak Up!

*Speak Up!* is a chance for you to have a voice in the decisions that affect you, be involved in your community, and make a change! Meetings are run by youth, which means as a member ***you are the decision maker.***

The mission of *SPEAK UP!* is to

- ❖ *Provide positive activities for youth in Montezuma County.*
- ❖ *Ensure that youth are recognized, valued, heard and involved in community life.*

Contact -  
Tracy Farmer, Facilitator  
970-739-9438  
tfarmer@fone.net

### Why should you join?

Speak Up! is an exciting opportunity to develop activities and build networks that benefit youth. Join in on the fun if you want to:

- ❖ Have fun while organizing activities and events. Quit complaining about boredom and do something!
- ❖ Have a voice in the community!
- ❖ Attend fun state and national conferences for youth!
- ❖ Meet unique people who are interested in your perspective!
- ❖ Contribute to your community!

## **HORIZONS now on the air!**

HORIZONS newsletter's radio-based cousin launched via the KSJD airwaves in August. The monthly newsmagazine, also using the HORIZONS moniker, is hosted by Missy Miller, Director of the School/Community Youth Coalition and Amy White, Director of The Nest (formerly known as the Child Advocacy Center). Jen Adams produces the broadcast on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 8:30 AM.

The monthly radio program features items related to building and sustaining healthy communities, especially as related to youth, in Montezuma and Dolores Counties. Horizons aims to connect KSJD listeners with resources in their community that support healthy lives for themselves, their family and the community at large.

Horizons first airing featured an interview with three area superintendents, Michael Canzona (Mancos RE-6), Stacy Houser (Montezuma-Cortez RE-1)) and Mark MacHale (Dolores Re-4A). The superintendents discussed a variety of topics including their professional backgrounds, particular interests in public education and plans to facilitate dialog between schools and their communities. The latest Horizons explores myths surrounding suicide along with suicide prevention, especially as it relates to the Montezuma and Dolores Counties.

KSJD broadcasts on three frequencies: 91.1 FM (Cahone, Dolores, Dove Creek, Pleasant View), 91.5 (Cortez, Towaoc) and 104.1 (Mancos).

## **CHARACTER CHOICES**

**September** Be a person of good character through **DEPENDABILITY** (fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice) and not inconsistency.

**October** Be a person of good character by learning **THOROUGHNESS** (knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words if neglected) and not practicing incompleteness.

Provided by the Character Council

## **HORIZONS**

is published bi-monthly and focuses on issues related to supporting healthy lifestyle choices for the youth of Dolores and Montezuma counties. The newsletter is funded by state Title V funds through Montezuma County Partners. Submissions including calendar items, health news, ideas and corrections can be sent to Newsletter Coordinator, at [preventnews@frontier.net](mailto:preventnews@frontier.net).

**HORIZONS**  
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