

# HORIZONS

OF HEALTH AND HOPE IN MONTEZUMA AND DOLORES COUNTIES

## CALENDAR

### MAY

Fatherhood Classes – Every Wednesday, 6 – 8:00 PM, Dinner and childcare provided. 564-1195 ext.21

2 – 30 Guiding Good Choices (for parents of 8 –14 year olds) Adrien at 564-1195 ext.21 to register, Dinner and childcare provided.

8<sup>th</sup> Second Hand Smoke Training–Trinity Lutheran Church, Cortez 6:00–7:30 PM, Adrien at 564-1195 ext.21 to register, Dinner provided.

9<sup>th</sup> Meth–B–Gone Support & Prayer Group – 6:30 PM Methodist Church, 515 N. Park, Cortez

11<sup>th</sup> THE NEST (formerly the Four Corners Child Advocacy Center) Open House & Logo Unveiling – 3:00 to 6:00 PM, 140 N. Linden, Cortez

12<sup>th</sup> “12 HOURS OF MESA VERDE” – Montezuma County Partners Mountain Bike Race Fundraiser – For info [www.partnersofmontezuma.org](http://www.partnersofmontezuma.org).

15<sup>th</sup> Mancos Meth Action Committee – Mancos High School – 6:30 to 8 PM

(Continued on next page)

## Funds for early prevention programs prove to be wise social investments

by Virginia Howey, Director of The Piñon Project

As our community gathers momentum in its work to prevent and reduce violence and substance abuse, it is important to understand the role early prevention can play. It seems obvious that we would look at effective programs for older children and youth who may be starting to engage in risky behavior. But who would think of programs for children as young as 5, maybe even 3? Yet, there is strong evidence that this may, indeed, be where we begin our efforts. Here are some interesting facts to consider:

James Heckman, a Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences from the University of Chicago, has made dramatic claims about the impact of early care and education because of the social skills that children learn in the early years which set a pattern for acquiring positive life skills later in life. He says the return on investment from early childhood development is extraordinary, resulting in better working public schools, more educated workers and less crime<sup>1</sup>. He writes:

*With money tight in cities and with budgets shrinking every year, each dollar invested needs to have a significant impact. The research is clearly showing that investing in quality early care programs is the absolute best way to use funds. The benefit is seen both immediately and in the long-term, and the pay-off is seen by everyone. Crime rates are lowered, graduation rates are raised, businesses benefit from educated and committed workers, and the city sees a huge return in tax revenue from the increase in the workforce. The phrase, “invest in kids” is thrown around a lot, but when taken literally, it can be the smartest investment a city has ever made<sup>2</sup>*

(continued on page 2)

## Survey provides results to assist in underage drinking education program

Results from the Community Readiness Model survey undertaken in Montezuma County this past winter indicates that “most feel underage drinking by youth in 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade (10-13 years old) is a local concern, but there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it.” The study designed by the Tri-Ethnic Center in Fort Collins was scored in association with Fort Lewis College and is part of the Regional Substance Abuse Prevention Program’s efforts to determine strategies to address substance abuse issues locally.

The survey indicates a range of dimensions related to community awareness of the issue of underage drinking by youth in the County. Survey results indicate that although “some community members have met and begun a discussion of developing community efforts” there are “few members of the community who have heard about these efforts” and “the extent of their knowledge is limited.” It is noted that while community “leaders recognize the need to do something about the issue” the community climate has a different outlook. The prevailing attitude is “there’s nothing we can do”, “only ‘those’ people do

(continued on page 3)

## CALENDAR

### MAY

15<sup>th</sup> - July Incredible Years

Parent Program (for parents of 2-10 year olds) - 5 - 7:30 PM, Towaoc. Dinner and childcare provided.

16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> HUD Grant Writing

Training - FLC in Durango 303 672-5202 for info and registration.

20<sup>th</sup> School Community Youth

Coalition (11:15 AM) and Meth Action Committee (10:30 AM) Cortez Chamber

23 Meth-B-Gone Support &

Prayer Group - 6:30 PM Methodist Church, 515 N. Park, Cortez

31 - June 28 Guiding Good

Choices (for parents of 8 -14 year olds) Adrien at 564-1195 ext.21 register, Dinner and childcare provided.

## CHARACTER CHOICES

May - Be a person of good character by showing **BOLDNESS** (confidence that what I have to say or do is true, right and just) and not be fearful.

June - Be a person of good character by seeking **SECURITY** (structuring my life around that which cannot be destroyed or taken away) and not being full of anxiety.

Provided by the Character Council

## Childhood program successes evident

(Continued from page 1)

Several other studies confirm that quality early childhood programs can result in significant savings to society. Long-term studies have shown that \$7 to \$10 were returned for every \$1 invested in high-quality preschool programs. For instance, follow-up studies with participants in the Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project for first-time mothers in 1972 showed that there were reduced crime rates, welfare payments and emergency room expenses and increased net earnings and tax revenues that resulted in nearly \$7 return on each \$1 spent on this program. Three other long-term studies of high-quality early childhood programs have shown similar, or greater, returns. All four studies agree that crime and remedial education rates were lower and net earnings were higher for participating children and their families<sup>3</sup>

Research also shows that physically aggressive behavior in children as young as 3 has repeatedly been found to predict the development of violent juvenile delinquency and drug abuse in adolescence<sup>4</sup> as well as depression and school drop-out. There is even some suggestion that in the absence of intervention, aggressive tendencies in children may crystallize around age 8 and at this point in life, learning and behavioral problems may become less amenable to intervention<sup>5</sup>

What does this mean for children, youth and families in Montezuma and Dolores Counties? Can we provide programs for young children that stem the tide of increasing substance abuse and other risky behaviors in our own community? We actually happen to have several very effective programs that are targeting very young children in place in our community already. The Montezuma County Health Department and DARE to be You are providing several extremely effective programs that serve prenatal moms and families with young children. In addition, The Pinon Project Family Resource Center has helped implement several effective programs in multiple early childhood settings throughout the County. The largest of these, the Incredible Years Program, is currently serving over 300 children aged 3-6 in eight childcare centers in Cortez, Mancos, Dolores and Towaoc. This proven program increases pro-social skills in children aged 3-6 using a developmentally appropriate curriculum that includes puppets. Annual evaluation of this program for the past five years has shown that we are achieving statistically significant positive outcomes with participating children.

A second program that The Pinon Project has begun to implement this past year is Life Skills Training for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students attending Manauh and Mesa Elementary Schools in Cortez. We will also implement this curriculum with school-age children during summer enrichment programs at the Tree House Early Learning Center and Trinity Lutheran Preschool. In total, we will serve about 150 children aged 5-10 this year through this program. Life Skills Training is one of the most effective programs for preventing tobacco and substance use, violence and school dropout.

While there are many great programs in our community, there are still many gaps and many young children who are not benefiting from early prevention programs that can increase their likelihood of success in school and in making choices that have profound impact on their futures—and our communities' future. I hope you will seriously consider making a meaningful investment in our young children. For more information about programs and services at The Pinon Project please call 564-1195 or email [pinon@frontier.net](mailto:pinon@frontier.net).

<sup>1</sup> Heckman, James and Masterov, Dimitriy. *The Productivity Argument for Investing In Young Children*. October 2004. University of Chicago.

<http://jenni.uchicago.edu/Invest/>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Bruner, Charles, *Many Happy Returns: Three Economic Models that make the case for school readiness*. December, 2004. Resource Brief, Early Childhood Policy Technical Assistance Network.

<sup>4</sup> White, Moffit, Earls, Robins and Silva. How early can we tell? Predictors of childhood conduct disorder and juvenile delinquency. *Criminology* 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Eron, LD. Understanding aggression. *Bulletin of the International Society for Research on Aggression*. 1990.

# Colorado tobacco survey highlights use disparities

by Julia Hesse, Tobacco Education & Prevention Pgm. Coord.

Members of the Target Tobacco Coalition recently attended part one of a two part Cultural Competency training in Durango in order to gain a broader understanding of our communities and explore ways to improve our relationships to them. Cultural Competency can be defined as the genuine sensitivity and respect given to people regardless of their ethnicity, language, gender, economic status, religion, or other apparent “difference” from our self. This training was sponsored by the State Tobacco Education and Prevention Partnership (STEPP) in an effort to become more effective in their mission of reducing the health and economic costs to all Coloradoans due to tobacco use and reducing the disparities in the populations most affected.

The impact of tobacco on health tends to be greater for certain high-risk populations than for the population as a whole. In other words, tobacco use rates tend to be higher for these groups than the national average, leading to increased tobacco-related rates of disease, disability, and death. These populations, referred to as priority populations, include: Latinos/Latinas, Native Americans; people in treatment for substance abuse; people in treatment for mental illness; people with disabilities; spit tobacco users; the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community; and persons with low socioeconomic status.

The Cultural Competency training was timely, as the recently released Colorado 2005 Tobacco Attitudes and Behaviors Survey (TABS), confirmed that the priority populations do show a significantly higher rate of tobacco use. And while smoking rates among all adults have decreased from 19.7% in 2001 to 17.2% in 2005, some priority populations hardly decreased at all or in some cases actually increased. The graphs show us that whites (non-Hispanic) have the lowest smoking rates at 15.9% of the population, while Native Americans have the highest at 35.9% of all Native Americans who smoke. A similar disparity is shown in the second graph as the income lowers; the percentage of tobacco users rises.

## Underage drinking inquiry

(continued from page 1)

that,” or “We don’t think it should change.”

The survey was also undertaken in Dolores County where the results as defined by the Tri-Ethnic Center place the community in a stage of denial or resistance as “at least some community members recognize that it is a concern, but there is little recognition that it might be occurring locally.”

Both Montezuma and Dolores Counties will be hiring program coordinators soon to address the issue of underage drinking. The coordinators initial goal will be raising the awareness that the community can do something to address the issue. The campaign will include information dissemination, youth activities, community collaboration and other efforts.

DISPARITIES IN SMOKING RATES	
% that smoked in 2005	
<b>GENDER</b>	
Female	15.3
<b>Male</b>	<b>19.6</b>
<b>AGE GROUP</b>	
<b>18-24</b>	<b>25.0</b>
25-64	17.7
65+	8.0
<b>ETHNICITY</b>	
White(non-Hispanic)	15.9
<b>Hispanic or Latino (all)</b>	<b>22.7</b>
Black or African American	18.5
<b>American Indian</b>	<b>35.9</b>
Asian American	16.1
<b>All other</b>	<b>38.2</b>
<b>RURAL</b>	
Nonrural counties	17.1
Rural counties	18.6
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	
200% or more of poverty	15.9
<b>100% to 199% of poverty</b>	<b>24.5</b>
<b>Below poverty level</b>	<b>36.8</b>
<b>COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL</b>	
Yes	16.4
<b>No</b>	<b>43.7</b>
<b>HAS HEALTH INSURANCE</b>	
Yes	14.8
<b>No</b>	<b>30.8</b>
<b>DISABLED/UNABLE TO WORK</b>	
No	16.9
<b>Yes</b>	<b>42.7</b>

Estimates based on 2001 proportions of gender, age and ethnicity.  
Groups in bold are significantly worse off.

IMPROVEMENT IN SMOKING RATES		
	% that smoked	
	2001	2005
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>		
200% or more of poverty	17.0	15.9
<b>100% to 199% of poverty</b>	30.5	<b>24.5</b>
Below poverty level	31.5	36.8
<b>COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	18.5	<b>16.4</b>
No	46.7	43.7
<b>HAS HEALTH INSURANCE</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	16.8	<b>14.8</b>
<b>No</b>	38.1	<b>30.8</b>
<b>DISABLED/UNABLE TO WORK</b>		
<b>No</b>	19.2	<b>16.9</b>
Yes	50.2	42.7

Estimates for 2005 are matched to 2001 on sex, age and ethnicity.  
Groups in bold improved significantly.

## Riders fundraise for Partners

Big event mountain bike racing has come to Montezuma County with the advent of the "12 Hours of Mesa Verde" on Saturday, May 12. The race is the annual fundraiser for Montezuma County Partners and represents a significant upgrade thanks to the help of the Kokopelli Bike Club.

The 12-hour mountain bike team relay race will feature the jumps, bumps and humps of Phil's World biking area, just east of Cortez and adjacent to the fairgrounds. Running from 7 AM to 7 PM the race features a 15.5 mile single-track lap length through the juniper treed area that also includes some rocky sections.

Team race classes include solo (that's a one person team!), duo and 4-person. As it's Mother's Day weekend a special 4-Moms team category has been created as well. Teams are expected from the Four Corners states and beyond and with lap times of 1:15 to 2:00 hours riders will circuit the course as many as 10 times. For registration and further information about the 2007 "12 Hours of Mesa Verde" visit the Partners website at [www.partnersofmontezuma.org](http://www.partnersofmontezuma.org) or phone 970 565-4926.

All proceeds from the race are benefiting Montezuma County Partners in its work with area youth. Partners is best known for it's year long, one-to-one mentoring partnerships between area adults and youth, however, their other programs reach out to support local children and teens as well.

## ! YOUTH WANTED !

Need Something To Do For The Summer?  
Peace Jam Art Project  
Get Involved, Have Fun, Have a Voice !!

Who Knows, You Decide  
It's Free!! It's Fun!!  
And You Get To Be A Part Of Something  
Amazing!!

Call now for details, no one over the age of 18 allowed, must be at least 11 to participate. Crescent Rossiter at 565-4926 x 13

Montezuma County Partners, the Character Council and Youth4Change are excited to announce summer program activities for youth that include character education and service learning. Community youth are invited to collaborate and create a youth driven service project that represents youth interpretation and engagement in peace, character and community. By participating in weekly activities and events, youth gain community and leadership skills to initiate a community project that represents their commitment and dedication to the summer program. Activities could include trips to Mesa Verde, Durango art galleries, activities based in Cortez, hiking trips and overnight camping trips. Project outcomes could include a mural, music festival, art walk or a theater production. All community youth are invited to participate in activities on Tuesday and Friday mornings starting May 29, 2007 at Montezuma County Partners on Main Street in Cortez. There are summer stipends for selected youth.

**HORIZONS**  
Montezuma County Partners  
1104 East Main Street  
Cortez, CO 81321

NONPROFIT ORG.

US POSTAGE PAID

CORTEZ, CO

PERMIT #68

## 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 Jimbo Buickerood, Newsletter Coordinator, at [preventnews@frontier.net](mailto:preventnews@frontier.net).