



ALTERNATIVES FOR YOUTH, INC.
Helping youth succeed for over 25 years.

Alternatives for Youth, Inc. (AFY) promotes academic persistence and success of youth by instilling values that lead to positive choices and positive community impact and by encouraging social, cultural, and self development. During over 25 years of experience, AFY has seen many changes in community need and has responded quickly with programs to address the challenges facing youth of the St. Vrain Valley School District. 2006 was a strong year for Alternatives for Youth. We continue to see growth in our programs and in our collaborations with other groups and agencies serving the youth and families of the St. Vrain Valley. We look forward to seeing even more progress in 2007 as we continue to provide and expand positive alternatives to the youth of our community.

Celebrando la Familia (Celebrate the Family) utilizes education and positive engagement to help youth avoid drugs and stay in school. Youth and their parents participate in a variety of recreational, educational and cultural activities (Girls Group, Boys Group, Summer Program, Folklorico Dance Group, Homework Club, and various community celebrations) that encourage youth to build their leadership skills and take pride in their heritage. In the 2006-2007 school year, Celebrando la Familia expanded one of its elementary homework clubs, bringing our after school student total to more than 90 regularly attending youth. Of the youth served, 93% improved or maintained their academic performance and/or school attendance; and 10% fewer youth reported non-use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in the last thirty days. Over 80 youth participated in our 2006 Summer Program, improving their academic skills and participating in positive extracurricular activities. Ten youth interns assisted in the success of the Summer Program and gained job preparation experience and leadership training. One of the youth interns wrote about her experience, "Being a teen assistant this summer has helped me become a better person, socially and personally. I met new friends and learned how to get along with people I don't know very well. Taking care of the students here helped me take care of my three younger siblings."

With the increase in gang activity in Longmont, Celebrando la Familia's program director is emphasizing gang education and awareness for youth and parents and positive activities and peer groups for youth, especially elementary school youth. AFY will continue to partner with the St. Vrain Valley Gang Task Force, Longmont's Youth Center and Longmont's Gang Response and Intervention Program (G.R.I.P.) to prevent and intervene in the city's gang activity.

Parents continue to attend the monthly Parents' Night Out meetings, having grown our meetings from two to over twenty parents regularly attending. Parents express their appreciation for a venue to share concerns regarding their children and to develop better communication with their children. Overall, the programs of Celebrando la Familia directly served over 300 youth and families last year.

Homework Heroes provides students at Heritage Middle School with after-school academic assistance as well as alcohol, tobacco, and drug resistance training, conflict management curriculum, presentations from community leaders, and extra curricular activities that connect youth with the community. Homework Heroes served approximately 200 youth, their parents and teachers in 2006, with over 90% improving or keeping good grades and/or improving or maintaining their school attendance. Parents of Homework Heroes participants continued to attend the monthly Parents' Night Out Meetings. At the end of 2006, Homework Heroes' name was changed to Homework Club, and the program was added under Celebrando la Familia, providing better oversight and continuity of our after-school programs. Further, communication with Heritage Middle School and the teachers was greatly improved in the hiring of one of Heritage's teachers to oversee the club.

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Clearview Educational Center (CEC) is an academic and life skills program for expelled middle and high school students of the St. Vrain Valley School District. The program, noted by Tony Grampasas Youth Services as a Best Practice Model, provides academic instruction through computer software and tutoring and group counseling that focuses on building life skills. State certified teachers oversee the program, master's level counselors provide group counseling and a special education paraprofessional provides additional assistance for students with learning and behavioral difficulties. In 2006, Clearview Educational Center served 62 middle and high school youth with all of the students improving one grade level in math, language arts and reading and 85% of participants graduating from or continuing in the program.

Conflict Resolution and Anger Management (CRAM), a partnership between Alternatives for Youth and the St. Vrain Valley School District, provides classes for students at risk of being suspended or expelled at Heritage and Longs Peak Middle Schools with the goal of keeping students in school. The program provides a day curriculum to students that includes units on effective groups, anger management, communication skills, assertiveness training, problem solving and conflict resolution through group activities, guest speakers and autobiographies. Parents of some students attend night classes and receive support through follow up phone calls. CRAM served 75 students and 33 parents in the 2005-2006 school year with 87% of students completing the program, reducing at least one failing grade and improving school attendance. CRAM is the only program in the area offering conflict resolution and anger management classes to offending students and their parents, providing an intervention before students with behavior problems are suspended or expelled.

Alternatives for Youth employs highly qualified staff to include three program directors, ten program staff members and three administrative staff members, most of whom work part-time. As much as possible, we engage volunteers and youth workers to assist with our after school and summer programs and activities, thus mentoring their leadership capabilities. In 2006, Alternatives for Youth welcomed a new Executive Director, Deborah Roberts. Deb brings over 29 years of experience in the non-profit management arena to Alternatives for Youth, having served as the Executive Director of numerous human service agencies and worked with the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta for over twelve years. Gina Quintana joined the staff as the program director of CRAM. For the past eight years, Gina has taught in a wide variety of settings, including at a school for adjudicated, expelled and suspended youth and with gifted and talented and low/moderate needs students.

Support for our programs is generously provided by Boulder County, City of Longmont, St. Vrain Valley School District, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, Department of Criminal Justice, Colorado Department of Education, Foothills United Way, A. Lewis Foundation, Amgen Foundation, Anschutz Family Foundation, Boulder County Drop-in-the Bucket, Centennial Bank of the West, Community Foundation Serving Boulder County, Community Shares of Colorado, Daniels Fund, Denver Foundation, Education Foundation of the St. Vrain Valley, Eberspacher Family Foundation, IBM Employee Contribution Campaign, John C. Duncan Charitable Trust, Longmont Community Foundation, Lynn & Helen Clark Fund, Wal-mart Foundation, and proceeds from special events and individual donations. Thank you to all who partner with us to provide meaningful opportunities for youth to succeed!