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## youth matters

a newsletter of alternatives for youth

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### spotlight:

**kimberly bryant,  
michelle roberts,  
and lauren ruth**



#### Who:

Kimberly, Michelle and Lauren are the newest members of our staff, coming to AFY to serve as Community Advocates for the St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD) and to work with habitually truant students.

#### Position at AFY:

Begun in January 2009, the Community Advocate program is designed to improve student attendance in the SVVSD and to help parents become more involved in their students attendance. Last school year, three Community Advocates worked at two middle and two high schools. Due to the success of the program in just one semester, the Colorado Department of Education, which funds the program, approved increased funding for three additional community advocates.

This school year, Kimberly is working with students at Silver Creek High School, Michelle with students at Frederick High School and Lauren with students at Longs Peak Middle School. Community Advocates meet with students and parents to find effective ways to engage truant students in school.

#### About:

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### Dear Alexa,

October has brought fall to the greater Longmont area and a time to enjoy the new sights, scents, weather and holidays of autumn. Alternatives for Youth's participants are looking forward to the excitement of Halloween at the end of the month.

October is [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#), a national movement to bring public attention to the problem of violence in the home. Domestic violence touches men and women of all ages. At AFY, we are no stranger to domestic violence as some of the youth we work with live in homes where domestic violence happens. The impact can be devastating. This month, join the movement and consider what you can do to stop domestic violence and its impact. Our No "Kid"ding article below has more information and suggestions.

We hope you are enjoying all the gifts of October!

### fall family fun!

#### Enjoying Fall Together

October is the perfect month for kids and their families to get out together and do positive, family-building activities. Quality family time is an investment in each of your family members, giving families a time to reconnect, to have fun together, and to bond. And the kids build great memories!



While the weather is cooler but still often sunny, you can get out together to enjoy many of the areas fun and free or low-cost seasonal activities:

- **Visit a local farm** and enjoy fall activities such as corn mazes, pumpkin picking, vegetable picking, petting zoo, and hay rides. Check out [Anderson Farms](#), [Cottonwood Farms](#), Miller Farms, [Rock Creek Farm](#), [Rocky Mountain Pumpkin Ranch](#), and [Sunflower Farm](#).
- **Go to a haunted house.** Check out Jesters Dinner Theatre "[Cell Block Terror](#)" and [Scared.com](#), an online guide of Denver metro's haunted houses.
- **Participate in Day of the Dead activities** at the [Longmont Museum](#) through November 15.
- **Go on a ghost tour.** Check out Longmont's [Historical Ghost Tours sponsored by Spooks, Inc](#) (Society for the Prevention of the Ostracization or Obliteration of Kindred Spirits).
- **March in a parade.** Lyons' [Spooktacular Halloween Parade and Downtown Trick-or-Treating](#) is on October 24, and Longmont's [Halloween Parade and Trick or Treat Street](#) is on Saturday, October 31 with line up starting at 9:30.
- **Get dunked!** Longmont's [Pumpkin Dunk](#), a non-scary Halloween themed swim at Centennial Pool for all ages is on Saturday, October 24, 5:00-7:00 p.m.
- **Have a safe Halloween** at Erie's [Trunk or Treat and Spookyfest](#) on Saturday, October 24, Longmont's [Safe Halloween Night](#) on Saturday, October 31, and Niwot's [Great Pumpkin Halloween Party](#) also on October 31.

Get the kids involved! As you plan an activity, remember to ask your family members what they would like to do, and be ready to do something new!

### afy:fyi



#### Program Updates

As the school year moves into its second month, we are so excited about the work that we get to do with St. Vrain Valley School District students. Following are highlights from our four programs:

**Celebrando la Familia** is continuing Homework Clubs at Heritage Middle School and Columbine, Spangler and Rocky Mountain Elementary Schools. Each location is providing bilingual tutoring and assistance with organization after school to a growing number of students.

Latino Parent Involvement in Education meetings, held in collaboration with other area organizations, will hold two meetings in October at Spangler Elementary School. On October 28 meeting topic is "Home Safety: Fire Safety and Home/Care Safety." All meetings are free, open to all interested parents, and include childcare, light dinner and Spanish translation. A complete list of meeting dates and topics are available

Kimberly, a therapist, lives in South Boulder. Outside of her work as a Community Advocate, she works with her partner on [Community Roots](#), an innovative Neighborhood Supported Agriculture model and spends time with her 13-year-old son. Kimberly also loves to snowboard and has been a snowboard instructor. As she gets settled in at Silver Creek, she is excited about "the power of the work" as a Community Advocate.

Michelle is originally from Lincoln, Nebraska and recently returned to the Denver area (where she had lived previously to do downhill mountain bike racing). Michelle is a talented song writer, singer and guitar player and used to play in an all girl band called "Standard Models." With experience in social work, Michelle is excited about "doing good" as a Community Advocate at Frederick High School.

Lauren is a Colorado native, grew up in Gunbarrel, and graduated from Niwot High School. Lauren is happy to return to the Colorado sun after living in Seattle where she attended Seattle University. Lauren enjoys singing, acting and dancing. With an interest in social justice, community advocacy and working with youth, Lauren is excited to be connecting with middle school students at Longs Peak.

We extend a warm welcome to these talented and energetic women!

**benefit concert**  
**Friday, November 13**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Niwot High School**  
**Auditorium, Niwot**  
["Celebration of Latin America,"](#) concert to benefit Alternatives for Youth and Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra

Join us for a celebration of Latin American and Hispanic music and dance featuring"

World premier of an original piece by composer in residence, **Monica Sales**

Classical Mexican-American guitarist, **Javier de los Santos** performing Joaquin Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez"

Music selections from de Falla, Moncayo, Marquez and Chabrier performed

from our [Calendar of Events](#).

Celebrando's Folklorico Dance Group is practicing for two fall performances at the Longmont Museum and Cultural Center's Dia de los Muertos Family Celebration on Saturday, October 31 and with the Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra's "Celebrate Latin America" concert on Friday, November 13.

**NorthStar** classes are continuing at Heritage Middle School with eighth graders and will begin this month at Erie High School with evening classes for boys. The classes for youth follow [The Council for Boys and Men](#) curriculum, a strengths-based group approach to promote boys' and young men's safe, strong and healthy passage through pre-teen and adolescent years. NorthStar evening classes, which focus on anger management, conflict resolution and communication within a family, are offered to all interested families. The series of evening classes are offered monthly and dates can be found on our [NorthStar web page](#).

The **Community Advocate** program, a partnership with the St. Vrain Valley School District, is now in six schools! Community Advocates are working at Heritage and Longs Peak Middle Schools and Frederick, Longmont, Silver Creak and Skyline High Schools. The Community Advocates work varies at the different schools and includes working with younger students to catch them early, working with families and siblings within families, working with students who are excessively tardy and getting them to school on time, and connecting families with other resources in the community.

**Clearview Educational Center**, a program for expelled middle and high school students, provides classes in math and science, English, social studies and electives, P.E. at the YMCA, as well as group and individual counseling for all students. The staff is beginning to incorporate new Smart Boards into the classrooms and will soon incorporate service learning with Open Space in Mountain Parks and art through CU's Arts Bridge program. Students are enjoying their twice weekly P.E. classes at the YMCA with the English teacher, Rhea, and a volunteer, Alex, and the opportunity to exercise and get out of the classroom.

**no "kid"ding ...**

**Did You Know?**

Longmont's Main Street is lined with large white ribbons on the lampposts. These white ribbons are part of Longmont's support of [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#). Domestic violence is devastating to its victims and to a community. Did you know:



- Domestic violence is Longmont's number one public safety issue. More people are injured from domestic violence than any other crime in Longmont.
- Domestic violence is a serious public health issue. Nearly one-third of American women report having been physically or sexually abused by a boyfriend or husband at some point in their lives.
- Many children exposed to domestic violence exhibit behavioral and physical health problems, and what they experience growing up has an enormous impact on their future relationships.
- Between 13-25% of teenage girls have been in a physically or verbally abusive relationship.

- At least one woman is battered every fifteen seconds. Very few will tell anyone.
- Victims of domestic violence come from all walks of life, all cultures, all income groups, all ages, all religions.
- Victims share feelings of helplessness, isolation, guilt, fear and shame.
- Domestic violence includes women abused by their partner, children witnessing the battering of a loved one, a senior victimized by a family member, and teenage girls abused by their boyfriends.
- Domestic violence can look like a partner, husband, or family member who keeps track of all of a loved one's time, who constantly accuses a loved one of being unfaithful, who discourages relationships with other family and friends, who is critical about little things, who angers easily when drinking or taking drugs, who humiliates a loved one in front of others, who destroys personal property, who hits, punches, slaps, kicks or bites, who uses or threatens to use a weapon, and who forces a loved one to have sex against her will.
- Domestic violence does not usually end but escalates in both severity and frequency the longer a victim waits to take action.
- Community members can help (from [Longmont Ending Domestic Violence Initiative's \(LEVI\) website](#)):

- **Educate yourself:** Get the facts, and find out what resources are available in the community.
- **Help a victim:** Let them know you are there for them. Tell them they don't deserve to be abused and that they can live a life free of abuse. Let them know about area services that can help. Services for victims include but are not limited to safe shelter,

by the **Niwot Timberline Symphony Orchestra**  
 Singer **Molly Kittle**  
 Performances by Alternatives for Youth's **Folklorico Dance Group**  
 Limited number of free tickets for youth, \$10 youth, seniors and adults accompanying free ticket holder. \$15 adults. Tickets available at the door and at AFY. Call 303-776-8184 for more information.

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counseling, social services, legal advocacy, legal aid, low-income healthcare and child care, protection (restraining) orders, temporary safe pet housing, sexual assault resources, employment, self-sufficiency assistance and housing. Children who have been exposed to domestic violence can receive counseling, mentoring, supervised visitations and safe exchanges between parents.

- **Talk to an abuser:** Always remember that while an abusive person may be open to talking with you, true change can only occur if that person is willing to be accountable for their actions, and be willing to take the necessary steps to help themselves. Domestic violence certified treatment and counseling is available to abusers.
- **Wear and distribute ribbons:** The purple ribbon helps raise awareness for domestic violence. The white ribbon is a symbol men wear to show they want to end ALL violence against women. Ask others to wear a ribbon. You can pick up ribbons at the Longmont Police Department lobby (ribbons are located in the wall display just to the left of the Records desk), Daily Times-Call, Longmont Public Library, and Longmont United Hospital. Larger quantities of ribbons can be arranged through [LEVI](#).
- **Set a good example:** Other people see your behaviors and actions, especially young people. Treat others with respect, and teach the young people in your life that domestic violence is wrong.
- **Raise awareness in larger groups:** Talk to a church group, during business meetings, or group meetings. Here are a few ideas: Ask your pastor for a couple of minutes to talk about efforts to end domestic violence, or ask to have it included in the bulletin or talked about in a sermon. During a business meeting or other group meeting, take a few minutes to talk about the efforts.
- **Take a stand:** Domestic violence is not a private family matter. It is not an individual issue. It is not just a women's issue. And, the police cannot solve this problem alone. Every single person can and should play a role in resolving domestic violence. Domestic violence is our problem as a community, and we all need to be involved in becoming part of the solution.
- **Support local non-profits whose goal is to stop domestic violence:** You can support LEVI on October 23 at the fundraiser and art exhibit, "[Through the Veil](#)." Opening night and artists reception fundraiser at Old Firehouse Art Center from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the gallery at 667 Fourth Avenue in Longmont. Tickets are \$10. You can [contact LEVI](#) for more information and to purchase tickets. Tickets will be available at the door, if available.

You can find more information about domestic violence and community resources at the following websites:

- [Boulder County Domestic Abuse Prevention Project](#)
- [City of Boulder Domestic Violence Information](#)
- [The Domestic Violence Awareness Project](#)
- [Longmont Ending Domestic Violence Initiative \(LEVI\)](#)
- [Longmont Police Department: Domestic Violence](#)
- [Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence \(SPAN\)](#)
- [Safe Shelter of St. Vrain Valley](#)

*Note: The above is provided as information and does not indicate an endorsement by Alternatives for Youth of the listed websites. You can find past No "Kid"ding . . . Did You Know? articles on our website by [clicking here](#).*

Alternatives for Youth, Inc.'s mission is to promote 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. Since 1978, Alternatives for Youth has been providing services to youth and their families in the Longmont community. Last year, over 1,000 youth and their families received services through Alternatives for Youth, including after-school homework clubs, parenting education, an alternative school for expelled youth, positive recreational activities, youth leadership opportunities, academic enrichment activities, and service learning activities.

**Thank you for your support!**

Alexa Van Dalsem  
 Resource Development Director  
 Alternatives for Youth

**get involved!**

**Yes! I/We want to help young people succeed! I/We wish to support Alternatives for Youth's work in helping youth succeed by:**

Volunteering                       Making a gift donation of: \$

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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