

Alexa Van Dalsem

From: Alexa Van Dalsem [alex@alternativesforyouth.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2009 12:18 PM
To: alexa@alternativesforyouth.org
Subject: News from Alternatives for Youth

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)

You're receiving this email because of your relationship with Alternatives for Youth.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.



youth matters

a newsletter of alternatives for youth

In this Issue

[Spotlight: AFY Staff](#)

[AFY Classes and Meetings](#)

[AFY's New Year's Resolutions](#)

[AFY: FYI](#)

[No "Kid"ding . . .](#)

quick links

[Calendar of Events](#)

[More about AFY](#)

spotlight: afy staff



AFY has a number of new faces this month (some pictured above), so we're spotlighting all of our talented and diverse staff in this

volume 2: issue 1

january 2009

Dear Alexa,

We hope the beginning of 2009 finds you ready to take on all that a new year has to offer. We are excited to be back at full speed with all of our programs and to be serving St. Vrain Valley youth with new and improved services.

Throughout the year, we look forward to sharing our latest news, events and achievements as the year progresses through this newsletter and our website at www.alternativesforyouth.org.

Happy New Year!

afy's new year's resolutions

Plans for the Year Ahead

This month, we completed a large goal for our organization - launching a new Community Advocate program and expanding Clearview Educational Center's hours and services. But our goals don't stop there!



In fall 2008, AFY's Executive Director, Deb Roberts, interviewed key stake holders about what key issues and trends they were seeing among the youth in our community. One or more of the interviewees - Greg Wagner, Chief Probation Officer of Longmont Municipal Probation, Mike Butler, Longmont Chief of Police, KG Campanella-Green, Coordinator Student Assistance Services for St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD), Paul Talafuse, Principal at Coal Ridge Middle School and SVVSD Expulsion Officer, Kari Borski, Principal at Heritage Middle School, Matt Buchler, Principal at Longs Peak Middle School, Mary Vigil, Celebrando la Familia Program Director, and Angel Salathe, Clearview Educational Center, Program

issue. Below are our names and positions.

Administrative

Deborah Roberts,

Executive Director

Marie Terry,

Administrative

Assistant and

Bookkeeper

Alexa Van Dalsem,

Resource Development

Director

Celebrando la Familia

Mary Vigil, *Program*

Director

Josie Vigil, *Program*

Assistant

Andrea Almanza,

Homework Club Tutor

Erika Ibarra,

Homework Club

Assistant

Christina Martinez,

Homework Club Tutor

Bertha Olivares,

Homework Club

Assistant

Clearview

Educational Center

Angel Salathe,

Program Director and

Social Studies Teacher

Padma Adepu, *Math*

and Science Teacher

Ann Arling,

Paraprofessional

DA Erickson,

Counselor

Gretchen Florescue,

Counselor

Yael Glick, *English*

Teacher

Saint Jimenez,

Middle School Teacher

Community

Advocates

Paula Fredman, *at*

Skyline High School

Mary Vigil,

at Heritage and Longs

Peak Middle Schools

Heidi Weekely, *at*

Frederick High School

Director - shared the following:

- Substance abuse was cited as the number one issue by virtually every interviewee, and if not the number one issue, one of the major issues. The rate of substance abuse, especially marijuana and alcohol, is up, and there is a lack of treatment programs for teens, especially for low-income families.
- Teen sexuality was cited as a concern, being more prevalent in middle schools, pregnancy in middle schools and sexual harassment increasing, and there being limited programs for pregnant high school students and none for pregnant middle school students.
- Students who are habitually disruptive in school is increasing. Such students often have behavior issues because they feel "stupid" and use bad behavior to conceal this. As well, habitually disruptive students' parents are often not home due to work and are hard to reach.
- Gang involvement is still an issue with an increase in middle school affiliation noted.
- More youth are living in poverty in the SVVSD, with a possible increase in the feeder system to Longmont High School. Many parents are working more than one job and, thus, spending less time at home.
- The occurrence of truancy was noted as increasing and leading to a number of more problematic concerns, including a disconnect between student and school and expulsion. It was noted that some parents are unfamiliar with importance of attending school, the law governing truancy and penalties if a child is truant.
- Parents want their children to succeed, but they lack the time or information to help their child be successful. It was noted that parents are showing more responsibility and more Spanish speaking parents attend PTO meetings and parent/teacher conferences
- A rise in assault was cited, with a focus on an increase in girls physically fighting, especially in middle school, dating violence and breaking into cars.
- Other concerns included academic success not being as high as desired, poor access to mental health services, a need for an alternative middle school, an increase in youth homelessness, and a need for volunteer mentors and tutors.

AFY's board and staff will meet this month to discuss our future goals around these top issue and problems, continuing our commitment (and on going resolution!) to meeting the needs of the community to help all youth succeed.

afy: fyi



Program Updates

In December 2008, Hispanics in Philanthropy and the Latino Community Foundation awarded us a grant to improve our marketing. Over the next year, we are excited to begin work with a marketing consultant, to update our brochure and to look for improved ways of letting people know our impact on youth in the St. Vrain Valley community. Indeed, with school back

NorthStar
Emanuel Barr,
Program Director

In the next month, we will update our [staff listing](#) on our website where you can read more about all those who make our work possible!

afy classes and meetings with NorthStar and Latino Parent Involvement in Education begin this month!

NorthStar evening classes are held twice a week for three weeks at the AFY building, providing instruction to middle and high school you and their families on conflict resolution, anger management and communication skills. Classes begin January 19.

Free Latino Parent Involvement in Education meetings meet twice a month at Skyline High School on topics relevant to parents with school age children. The first meeting is on January 14.

For more information, a complete list of dates and registration information, [click here](#).

afy board of

in session, all of our programs are up and running! Following are highlights from our four programs:

Celebrando la Familia's Homework Clubs are serving a full load of elementary and middle school students with 30-40 participants at Columbine and Rocky Mountain Elementary and Heritage and Longs Peak Middle Schools. We are excited to be starting a new Homework Club this semester at Spangler Elementary School, bringing our total sites to five! At each site, students receive free, bilingual tutoring, building in organizational and life skills, and positive activities.

Latino Parent Involvement in Education meeting resumed on January 14 at Skyline High School with a presentation by the St. Vrain Valley School District on "How to Help Our Children Pass the CSAP and CELA." The monthly meetings are intended to provide education to parents about how to be better involved in their children's lives and schools. A complete calendar of meetings, held Wednesday evenings, is available on the [Alternatives for Youth](#) website.

Girls Group began at Longs Peak Middle School with 13 girls and at Heritage Middle School with 12 girls. The groups are a supportive and positive peer group that teaches a select group of girls life skills through the [Girls Circle](#) curriculum. Last year's girls learned valuable relationship and communication skills that improved their friendships and success at school.

Our new **Community Advocate** program, a partnership between AFY and the St. Vrain Valley School Districts, began fully staffed this month. Our three community advocates provide services to targeted, truant students, including as needed, doing some detective work to figure out why the student is truant (sometimes related to the student not wanting to participate in gym or being so far behind in class that she has anxiety about going), informing parents about attendance laws and what can happen to students or parents if students under 17 years old don't attend school, supporting parents through court mediation regarding a student's truancy, and providing support to students and parents so students can be successful in school. Mary Vigil will continue to work with students at Heritage and Longs Peak, Heidi Weekley at Frederick High School and Paula Fredman at Skyline High School.

NorthStar's new Program Director, Emanuel Barr, began classes at Heritage Middle School the first week of January, providing students at-risk of suspension or expulsion with in school classes during the school day and classwork on life skills, communication, and anger management. Emanuel will begin holding a series of six-session evening classes for students and their parents on January 19, offering similar teaching to students and their parents. Evening classes are free and open to families who will benefit from the instruction. For a calendar and more information about the evening classes, [click here](#).

Clearview Educational Center staff have been planning for months for the program's expansion, which began in full force on January 5. 14 middle and high school expelled students are now attending the program full time on two floors of our office building; 10 former Clearview students are receiving transition support with their return to school; and all students are receiving individual and group counseling, academic work on PLATO software, and class time in English, math, science and social studies. Throughout the semester, students will also have the opportunity to participate in service learning and equine therapy at

directors

Greg Wagner
Board President
Chief Probation
Officer, Longmont
Municipal Probation

Dr. Jack Hay
Board Treasurer
Retired Assistant
Superintendent, St.
Vrain Valley School
District

Rick Beisel
Board Secretary
Attorney

Bob Arnold
Board Member
Owner, Aspen Laser
and Technologies

Carmen Ramirez
Board Member
Program Coordinator
and Mediator, City of
Longmont Community
Relations Program

Connie Syferd
Board Member
Executive Director,
Learning Services
Center, St. Vrain Valley
School District

Joder Arabian Ranch and experiential education. We are so excited to begin the new year with expanded services to help all of our youth succeed!

no "kid"ding ...



Did You Know?

One topic that we often discuss with our youth is goal setting and goal achievement. As we start the New Year, many of us are setting resolutions for the year and looking for ways to achieve those resolutions in the future. Indeed, the New Year is a great time to think of renewal, to let past mistakes go, and to gear up for a great year! Adults and youth alike can make goals for the year ahead to improve their lives. Try some of the tips below for yourself or with a young person you know. Did you know:

- The top three most popular New Year's resolutions are to maintain healthy weight, get out of debt and to stop smoking ([Associated Content](#)) and other popular resolutions include save money, get a better job, get fit, eat right, get a better education, drink less alcohol, reduce stress overall, reduce stress at work, take a trip and volunteer to help others ([USA.gov](#)).

- Nearly half of all adults in the United States made resolutions this year.

- A key to achieving the smallest to the largest goals is to get started immediately. Don't wait for inspiration; make inspiration by taking action today!

- You CAN do things to make your resolutions more attainable. Set yourself up for success by following some of these tips:

- Set goals that are realistic and meaningful. Make your goals achievable and something you really want . If you don't have strong, internal motivation within yourself, you won't be successful.
- Make your resolutions specific. Instead of "I want to be healthier," opt for "I want to exercise regularly" or "I will cut down on my television watching."
- Create a plan that breaks large goals into smaller ones, and tells you what to do next and all the steps required to complete the goal. What baby steps do you need to take?
- Include in your plan, alternatives to a behavior that you want to change. If you want to quit smoking, but smoking is the only time you have to yourself, what other forms of alone time are available to you?
- Create your plan IMMEDIATELY to harness your New Year motivation.
- Write down your resolutions and plans and share them with someone you trust.
- Think year round, knowing that a hundred tiny steps throughout the year make a resolution happen. Develop a ritual or habit for revisiting your plan perhaps with a friend, relative or mentor.
- Add a spiritual dimension to your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to get fit, you may also resolve to get outdoors more

often instead of going to the gym. Time outside will help you get in balance with nature, and will honor both the physical and spiritual sides of yourself.

- Remain flexible knowing that plans will change and you can change them. If plans change or you don't fully achieve your goals, think in positive terms rather than focusing on how much you fall short of your aspirations.
- View setbacks as lessons for growth. Mistakes can be and usually are opportunities for learning. If you fall short of your goals, ask yourself what kept you from achieving them and then try to make corrections.
- Celebrate small successes

What kind of New Year's resolution have you or will you make for yourself? You can find more information about making and keeping New Year's Resolutions at the following websites:

[How to Make a New Year's Resolution](#)

[How to Make New Year's Resolutions Stick](#): Listen to an interview with clinical psychologist John Norcross about how to increase your odds for success

[Popular New Year's Resolutions](#)

[MyGoals.com](#)

[Where to Begin: Expert Advice on Maintaining Resolutions](#)

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 800 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:

Address:

Phone:

City, State, Zip:

E-mail:

You can make a secure credit card donation to Alternatives for Youth using GivingFirst or Google Checkout at www.alternativesforyouth.org/contribute.html. To make a donation by check or cash or to volunteer please return this form to Alternatives for Youth, 24 Ninth Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501 or call 303.776.8184.

Alternatives for Youth is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Donations to Alternatives for Youth are tax deductible. We do not sell or trade our mailing or e-mailing list to anyone.

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to alexa@alternativesforyouth.org by alexa@alternativesforyouth.org.
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



Alternatives for Youth | 24 Ninth Avenue | Longmont | CO | 80501