

Healthy Communities

May/June 2004

Healthy Adams County Celebrates Families



In this issue....

[HAC Celebrates Families](#)
[Executive Director's Message](#)
[Youth Resource Network](#)
[Families First Task Force](#)
[Ready to Learn](#)

Health and Safety Day for Kids - No one got into the spirit of the 8th annual Health and Safety Day for Kids more than the staff of Healthy Adams County. You probably can identify the "Tooth Fairy" as Jennifer Williams but who could this friendly, purple dental dinosaur be???!!!

Pictured above is the festive display created by the Oral Health Task Force, which was manned by local dentists including Dr. Ed Enriquez, Dr. David Reese, Dr. Lee Flinner and oral surgeon Dr. Gregory Rongione. Other affiliated task forces who represented Healthy Adams County included Families First, Safe Kids Coalition, Tobacco Prevention, Adams Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Collaborating for Youth and Domestic Violence Task Force. All the task forces were creative in developing fun activities for the children while also providing important resource information to parents. The event attracted nearly 1,200 participants who were able to visit 75 exhibitors, enjoy entertainment and collect a ton of free goodies and giveaways. Health and Safety Day for Kids is sponsored by Gettysburg Hospital, 1320 WGET, Gettysburg Times and AllStar Events Complex with the support of Belco Community Credit Union and WPMT Fox43.

Message from the executive director



Hello everyone! As you can see from this month's articles, the theme for this edition of **HEALTHY COMMUNITIES** is **Children!** A review task forces affiliated with Healthy Adams County will show that there are several groups which are obviously devoted to addressing identified issues associated with children and youth. Among them are: [Families First Task Force](#), [Safe Kids Coalition](#), [Youth Resource Network](#), [Collaborating for Youth](#), [Children's Health Task Force](#), [Domestic Violence Task Force](#), [Tobacco Prevention Task Force](#) and [the Adams](#)

[Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.](#)

However, a closer look will reveal that virtually all of our workgroups are focusing on a whole range of community needs, issues, and activities that impact health status and quality of life of our children. When we examine those themes which drive the good works of this **community** health partnership: **access, advocacy, awareness, education, information, affordability, availability, prevention, wellness...**, we are reminded that one of the most critical target groups within the Adams County population is our children.

If you take a moment to visit our website at www.healthyadamscounty.org, you may quickly review the mission, vision, goals, objectives, and action plans of all of these groups to see how each of them are designing ways to keep children in their focus.

For example, the **Tobacco Prevention Task Force** has adopted an objective "to implement the Nine Best Practices established by the CDC" through actions such as the BUSTED! Youth initiative, tobacco sales enforcement, and school tobacco education programs.

The **Safe Kids Coalition** is actively engaged in pursuing their goal of "promoting the prevention of childhood injuries in Adams County through education, collaboration, and advocacy" with programs scheduled virtually every month.

Another example is the **Oral Health Task Force**, which now has two committees: Access and Education. The Education Committee has an ambitious schedule this year targeting children. One such project is highlighted on the front page with their first and very busy exhibit at Health and Safety Day for Kids.

Also, the **Children's Health Task Force** continues its focus on identifying and enrolling eligible children and families in Pennsylvania's medical programs for children, Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

Finally, we would like to bring the community's attention to a county-based program called **Ready to Learn @ United Way of Adams County**. A number of our affiliated members were treated to an informative presentation at our April Membership luncheon by M.J. Duffy, Program Coordinator. M.J. explained this early childcare and education program offered by a key collaborative community partner agency. See the article below for much more information.

Have a very safe summer!
Bill Taft

What's Youth Resource Network all about

The **Youth Resource Network** (YRN) of Adams County, established in September 1998, is a community partnership that works collaboratively on issues and concerns affecting youth in Adams County. The Network has more than thirty-five (35) members, nonprofit, government, education, private and public organizations that provide programs and services for youth in Adams County. Our mission is "to connect youth to community".

The Network serves as a unique support and resource network for youth programs and services. The Network works collaboratively year-round and meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 11:30 a.m.

Twice a year, the Network publishes a brochure with programs and activities for middle and high school students, "What's Up After School?!" and "What's Up This Summer?!" These brochures are widely distributed throughout the county through the school districts

and locations frequented by students.

The Network developed and maintains an e-resource network to identify and share resources in support of organizations providing services to youth throughout Adams County.

The mission of Youth Resource Network is to work collaboratively to enhance the quality of life and opportunities for youth in Adams County through education, advocacy and resource development

The Network has established several goals, which include:

- To serve as an information and support network for individuals and organizations providing programs, activities and services to youth in Adams County.
- To advocate for issues related to the well being of youth in our community.
- To increase the level of awareness of existing youth resources and needs (among youth, families, service providers and schools) in Adams County.
- To increase the level of connection and participation of youth in our community.
- To assess, enhance and develop youth resources through collaboration and resource sharing.
- To serve as an affiliate of Healthy Adams County and Collaborating For Youth, and its initiatives Communities That Care & Family Services System Reform.

For more information on Youth Resource Network, call 717-334-5809.



Working Together for the Health of our Community

Families First Task Force



Task force chairpersons shown above:
Mark Stewart, Family Service Partners, and
Amy Peeples, PEACE.

Number of Task Force Members: 17 members and an advisory board of 24.

Recent Accomplishments: In April, which is designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month, Families First provided a display for the Gettysburg Hospital and the Hospital Auxiliary's Thrift Shop. The t-shirts on display were created by adolescent and teen survivors of sexual abuse. The quilt was also designed and completed by victims of abuse.

Families First also participated in a child abuse proclamation on April 7, 2004 at the Adams County Commissioners office. At the proclamation ceremony, two of the poster contest winners were present to

accept their awards.

The poster contest is open to area children in community programs who have the chance to design a poster based on the theme for Child Abuse Prevention Month. The 2004 theme was "We're not going to stop until every child is safe."

Three savings bonds were donated, two from M&T Bank and one from the board of

directors of Child and Youth. They were awarded for first, second, and third winners in the amounts of \$100, \$75, and \$50.

The task force also placed posters throughout Adams County celebrating the decrease in child abuse rates over the past ten years. However, the message to always bring awareness to the community to continue decreasing number of child abuse cases was strongly recommended.

In April, the task force also participated in a community-wide yard sale to raise money for child abuse prevention activities.

At Health & Safety Day for Kids, held on May 2, Families First created the annual "Candytown" game and provided an opportunity for a survey participation, as well as having resource information on hand.

Upcoming Events & Programs:

Families First will complete it's annual calendar and parent resource guide in June and also participate in the Heritage Festival.

Other Task Forces that You Serve On:

Amy also serves on the Youth Resource Network and Safe Kid's Coalition.

Ready to Learn

Research has proven that extensive cognitive, emotional, and social growth occurs during a child's first five years.

Experiences during these early years influence important aspects of a child's life, including emotional health, educational and employment goals, and interactions with others.

In Pennsylvania, efforts have been underway to develop a system of early care and education that meets families' needs and prepares an educated workforce of the future.

At the local level, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare promotes childcare initiatives through grants to community agencies.

One such initiative is Ready to Learn, a program which partners providers, educators, businesses, and other agencies, in efforts to enhance child care and education.

A grant awarded to the United Way of Adams County helps fund Ready to Learn and is spearheaded by program coordinator, MJ Duffy.

"Improving child care and education for the Adams County area should be a priority for the community," says Duffy.

A local Planning Team comprised of these necessary partners helps to guide the Ready to Learn initiative.

"We work with local child care providers, primary school teachers, training institutions, and various agencies to provide a number of innovative programs, including training opportunities, family and community awareness activities, and involvement of business in the early care of our children," Duffy adds.

For more information on Ready to Learn, please contact the United Way of Adams County by calling 717-334-5809.
