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**New Effort Emphasizes Character in Sports—
 Announcement to be Made at Family and Youth Summit**

Larimer County, CO—Character in Athletics—Make it a Priority! (CHAMP!) That’s the message sports participants will receive when they show up for practice and games.

CHAMP! is a new effort to ensure playing fields are also character development fields. Its goal is to promote, recognize and reward character excellence among sports participants, teams and organizations that consistently encourage and display sportsmanship, teamwork and community.

CHAMP! has been developed by a task force commissioned by Colorado State University, the City of Fort Collins and Poudre School District after an opinion poll revealed that local parents and coaches think more can be done to ensure sports programs continue to provide positive role models. The Healthier Communities Coalition of Larimer County (HCC) conducted the poll in 2005 with assistance from the Colorado State University Research and Development Center (http://www.healthylarimer.org/Sports_Report-Jan2006.pdf).

“The initial efforts of the CHAMP! Task Force have created a solid foundation for what can become an integral part of the youth sports culture in Northern Colorado,” said Thad Anderson, CHAMP! Task Force chairman and Triple Crown Sports Colorado Baseball director. “CHAMP! is designed to create a greater awareness of the importance of making character development a central theme in youth sports—players and teams might not always get it right, but they should always strive for character excellence. Ultimately, the success of CHAMP! will rely on implementation by youth sports administrators, coaches, parents and players. The Task Force anticipates that CHAMP! will be piloted within PSD boundaries, but a long-term goal is for CHAMP! to become a model for other communities throughout Larimer County and perhaps even the nation.”

Details about CHAMP! will be announced at **3 p.m. this Saturday, April 22**, during **The 2006 Family and Youth Summit**, at the **First National Bank Exhibition Hall—The Ranch/Larimer County Fairgrounds**.

The Summit, a one-day conference from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., is for youth (12-18), parents, educators and youth-service providers. It features keynote presentations and interactive sessions that focus on helping youth and families make healthy lifestyle choices, build character and overcome obstacles to reach their goals. Onsite registration is available between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Prices are \$10 for youth/students, \$25 for adults, and \$40 for a family of three or more; does not include lunch, so **bring a picnic!** For more information, contact HCC at (970) 495-7503 or krs4@pvhs.org.

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The Healthier Communities Coalition of Larimer County is an alliance of nonprofit, education, health, business, government and citizen leaders who collaboratively identify, develop and implement strategies to improve the health and well-being of county residents. Established in 1994 and located in Fort Collins, Colorado, HCC’s special focus since 2002 has been on improving the lives of our youth.

Board Representation

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 of Larimer County*

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