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New Report Documents the State of Children and Youth in Larimer County

Larimer County, CO—Kids in Larimer County are doing pretty well in most areas of life, but there are some who are not receiving the support they need to move into adulthood as successfully as possible.

A new report by the Healthier Communities Coalition of Larimer County, *The State of Children and Youth in Larimer County - 2009*, contains data and statistics in a variety of categories about the health and well being of Larimer County's residents, birth to 18 years of age.

The report, called “a monumental undertaking” by Averil Strand, community health services director, Larimer County Department of Health and Environment and contributor to the report, compiles information from 29 sources, like the U.S. Census Bureau, Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. “We’ve tried to remain as objective as possible while gathering information from as many large bodies of research as possible and are leaving interpretation of the data to consumers.”

“That said, however, it’s hard to look at the data and not notice the growing gap in how Caucasian children and youth are doing compared to their Hispanic/Latino peers and the rapidly increasing number of children and youth living in poverty,” Strand said.

While the report also attempts to draw out positive data about kids—such as how much time they spend volunteering/serving their community and how they acquire/use marketable skills—it does not exist, especially at the local level.

HCC began working on this project 18 months ago. “We heard from many community constituents that it would be very useful to have a one-stop shop for comprehensive statistics related to the well being of kids – for information on assets and identification of gaps where services could be provided,” said Lise Youngblade, department head, Colorado State University Department of Human Development and Family Studies, and one of HCC’s Council members who contributed to the report. “I believe this ‘Snapshot’ will be a very helpful tool for agencies and programs that support children and youth, as well as policymakers who make decisions that affect their lives.”

Recognizing data constantly changes, “we intend to make this project as dynamic as possible by regularly updating an online version of the information, and reporting new data and resources as we learn about them,” said Kim Sharpe, HCC coordinator.

The report can be downloaded from HCC’s website at www.healthylarimer.org. A searchable, online version of the information is due by the end of the year.

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The Healthier Communities Coalition of Larimer County (HCC) is a coalition of nonprofit, government, business and citizen leaders focused on improving the health and well-being of our children and youth. HCC does this by serving as a relationship broker, networker, communicator, convener, facilitator, researcher and capacity builder for the family and youth service providers throughout Larimer County. HCC was established in 1994 and is located in Fort Collins, Colorado. The Poudre Valley Health System Foundation serves as HCC’s fiscal agent.

POUDRE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM FOUNDATION

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