



Horizons

Winter 2009 - Working with Arizona's rural communities

www.azyp.org

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITIES, DEVELOP RESOURCES TO PROMOTE THE POSITIVE GROWTH OF THEIR CHILDREN



Arizona Teen Statistics

Teen Pregnancy

- Arizona has the 5th highest teen pregnancy rate in the country.¹
- The pregnancy rate for Arizona teenagers 15-19 years old in 2006 was 68.7 pregnancies per 1,000 females.¹
- In 2006, AHCCCS paid for 79.9% of all deliveries to mothers 19 and younger.¹
- Teen pregnancy cost Arizona \$252 million in 2006.²

Alcohol and Drug Use

- 23.2% of Arizona 8th graders, 37.7% of 10th graders, and 46.8% of 12th graders have used alcohol in the past 30 days.³
- Average age of first time use of alcohol 12.93 years of age.³
- Average age of first time use of cigarettes is 12.74 years of age.³
- Average age of first time use of marijuana is 13.47 years of age.³

Source: ¹Arizona Department of Health Services, Teenage Pregnancy Report 1996-2006

²Public Costs of Teen Childbearing in Arizona, Nov. 2006, National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

³ 2008 Arizona Youth Survey Report

4th Annual Taste of Arizona

Arizona Youth Partnership (AZYP) is hosting its 4th Annual "A Taste of Arizona" fundraiser to benefit Arizona's youth in rural communities. The event will be held March 25, 2009 at Stillwell House and Garden, 134 S. 5th Avenue, from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Admission is \$50 per person. There will be a live and silent auction which includes items such as art and jewelry, and live entertainment. Wine and beer tastings and appetizers will be served from great local Tucson restaurants such as El Charro, Metropolitan Grill, Zona 78; Thunder Canyon Brewery will provide hand-crafted beers. Sponsors include Community Partnership of Southern Arizona, Oro Valley Optimist, Pima Prevention Partnership, and Amistades, Inc. All proceeds benefit Arizona Youth Partnership's youth programs.

The foundation of Arizona Youth Partnership is based on this premise and grounded in its mission "in partnership with communities, develop resources to promote the positive growth of their children." Arizona Youth Partnership is a statewide prevention agency that aims to reduce high risk behaviors such as substance abuse and sexual activity of youth by working with school age youth and their families living in 29 rural communities in Arizona. These funds raised will expand and enhance youth and family programming statewide.

In a state where Arizona is ranked 5th highest in the nation for the teen birth rate and youth begin drinking at age 12, it is important that youth have the resources to develop into healthy individuals by making positive lifestyle

choices. Arizona Youth Partnership's programming increases resiliency and protective factors, cultivates youth leaders, mobilizes resources, builds networks, and promotes positive roles for youth. In 2007-2008, our efforts have helped Arizona Youth Partnership reach over 28,000 children, youth, and adults across the state of Arizona.

"We have been so successful in bringing community vision to life locally that other communities statewide are asking us to bring our programs, services, and activities to their youth and families; I hope we can meet the demand." said Executive Director Luan Wagner, Ph.D.

So please join us for a spectacular evening with silent auction, delectable wine tasting, and appetizers. Invite your friends and family to support Arizona Youth Partnership and its life-enriching programs for children, youth, and families. Mark your calendar now for Wednesday, March 25th, 2009 and be a part of this very special evening. For more information please call Joseph at (520) 744-9595.



FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HOPE AND CHANGE. Over the last year, we have heard these two words frequently on television, in the newspapers, on websites, and bumper stickers. As most of us, I have had much opportunity to think about what these two words mean and how relevant they are to me on a daily basis. Then I started thinking about what these words might mean to kids. How do kids become hopeful? How do kids learn to deal with and master change?

At Arizona Youth Partnership we like to hear from the communities where we do our work to find community members are thinking. Annually, we ask adults and youth to complete two surveys that we have developed: *What Youth Need to Succeed In Life* and the *Top 3 Problems Youth Face*. For the first time ever, this Fall, as one of their top 3 answers, youth respondents said they need “hope” to succeed in life. This brief survey asks respondents to check off or list what youth need using one word answers. This makes it difficult to know what they mean or why they are responding so.

As I thought about this finding, I was reminded of the Dixie Chick song, *“I Hope,”* and listened to it. Regardless of one’s political views, this is an amazing song. In the song, the Dixie Chicks sing about how we are the role models for our trusting children. As the child development research shows, children do what we do rather than what we say. Our actions are powerful cues to children about how to view the world, interact with others, deal with unexpected and planned life events, form opinions, and chart a life. Of course, each child is born with a unique temperament and an innate resiliency that influences his/her reactions to people and events, but, as adults we have a powerful opportunity to show youth how to succeed as well as face change plus nurturing and enhancing hope. Now is the perfect and right time to show our children that they can trust us. I hope.

On another but related note, Arizona Youth Partnership has implemented a new initiative to work with high school youth plus 18 to 30 year olds who have graduated from local high schools and develop a program that will prepare youth for success after high school. The pilot phase of the project will involve conducting focus groups in key areas including Ajo, Globe/Miami, Kingman, and Springerville/Eagar. We are seeking the 18 to 30 years olds that still live in their home community and those that have moved away. We want to know if they feel like they have succeeded and, if so, what they got from family, school, or community to support their success. Alternatively, we want to know what they did not get that would have made success more possible. If you are 18 to 30, let us know if you have anything you want to let us know about what helped you succeed by going to our website www.azyp.org and contacting us.



Luan Wagner Burn, Ph.D.
Executive Director

What Policy Makers say about Healthy Marriages

Many policymakers and government officials are interested in increasing and sustaining healthy marriages in the U.S. as a strategy to promote social well-being.

In an address made in 2002, President George Bush made this statement: “To encourage marriage and promote the well-being of children, I have proposed a healthy marriage initiative to help couples develop the skills and knowledge to form and sustain healthy marriages. Research has shown that, on average, children raised in households headed by married parents fare better than children who grow up in other family structures. Through education and counseling programs, faith-based, community, and government organizations promote healthy marriages and a better quality of life for children.”

Compared to unmarried people, research shows that, on average, married men and women live longer, have better mental and physical health, report being happier, have higher incomes and build more wealth. Even in marriages that couples say are only “good-enough”, the adults and their children do better than others that live without the benefits of marriage. Building a healthy marriage takes work but the benefits indicate that it is worth the effort

provided that the relationship is free from violence or any other negative influences.

Marriage is associated with an amazing list of benefits for children. In fact, researchers say that children raised by their own married parents do better, on average, than children that aren’t, across all notable measures.

Researchers have found the following benefits for youth who are raised by parents in healthy marriages, compared to unhealthy marriages:

- More likely to attend college
- More likely to succeed academically
- Physically and emotionally healthier
- Demonstrate less behavioral problems in school
- Less likely to be a victim of physical or sexual abuse
- Less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol
- Have a better relationship with their mothers and fathers
- Less likely to be sexually active as teenager

Source: “What Policymakers Say About Healthy Marriage.” <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/policymakers/whattheysay.cfm> (17 Mar. 2008), Administration for Children & Families, 2008

SONORAN DESERT REGION

Welcome to the Sonoran Desert Region! When the agency began in 1990, this region originally served the rural Pima County communities of Ajo, Marana and Sahuarita. Today, 19 direct service staff work in over 16,639 miles of Cochise, Pima and Santa Cruz counties in nine (9) communities and the Tohono O’odham Nation

The Sonoran Desert Region communities have three substance abuse coalitions and Youth and Family Resource coalitions in Ajo, Catalina and Marana. These adult and youth coalitions are charged with decreasing favorable attitudes toward substance abuse and increasing community cohesion where they live. The youth of these communities also serve on Youth Justice Boards.

During the 2008-09 school year, staff teach relationship skills and STD prevention and implement the Ambassador Program which trains youth in public speaking and leadership skills to create a climate in their community that supports prevention.

Project TEAM creates opportunities for eighth grade youth to be trained in mentoring skills that they will use to mentor fifth grade youth in Ajo, Catalina and Marana. High school youth in Ajo and at

Baboquivari and Tohono O’odham High School on the Tohono O’odham Nation participate in the Youth Empowered for Success (Y.E.S.) program, which is designed to empower youth leaders to create “conditions for success” within their schools. Y.E.S. is based on youth-adult partnerships to create cultural change for a caring campus at partner schools.

This past July, 11 youth and three (3) adults from Ajo, Baboquivari and Tohono O’odham High Schools attended the 5th Annual Teen Institute at the University of Arizona that was sponsored by the Community Partnership of Southern Arizona. These school teams (and their AzYP Coaches) spent one week engaged in team building exercises, action planning training, and school team coordination. These youth and their adult School Champions joined teams from 20 other high schools in Southeast Arizona to gain skills they will take back to their school to formulate action plans and create community change on their campus. Last year these teams addressed the issues of school spirit, lack of

community participation at the campus and youth’s lack of knowledge of the Native culture.

As the school year gets underway, these teams will invite their peers and members of the school staff to give their input during and action planning workshop. From this workshop will come an assessment of the current conditions at their school and give the Y.E.S. Team a focus for their action plan, based on what their



Tohono O’odham YES Team

community has said it needs. At all three (3) schools these teams are seen by the administration as a resource for effecting positive change. Community Development at its finest! Once their plan is formulated they will use their action plan to apply for a mini-grant of up to \$750.00 which they can use to fund their change effort!

For more information on the Sonoran Desert Region and its programs, please contact Mary Anne Fout, Sonoran Desert Regional Director, at (520) 744-9595 or maryanne@azyp.org.



Ajo YES Team



Baboquivari YES Team

HOW YOU CAN HELP

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE in the programming AzYP provides to its communities. **HOW?** By contributing to AzYP through the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit. Your donation will help sustain and enhance programming that keep our children healthy, hopeful, and drug-free. **It is easy;** just send the attached envelope with your donation.

How Does the Arizona Charitable Tax Credit Work?

Contributions to Qualified Charitable Organizations, like Arizona Youth Partnership, may earn a dollar-for-dollar tax credit (up to \$200) on your Arizona income tax.

“Tax credit” means that the amount you owe in taxes is reduced by the amount of your credit. If you have already paid more than you owe, you’ll receive a tax refund from the Arizona Department of Revenue.

How Do I Qualify for the Charitable Tax Credit?

You will receive a tax credit (up to \$200) and your total state taxes will be reduced by that amount if:

- You give to one or more qualified agencies, such as Arizona Youth Partnership.
- You have itemized charitable contributions on your Arizona income tax return at least once since 1996.
- You itemize your 2009 Arizona return.

What about Private and Public School Tax Credit Programs?

It is important to know that the Charitable Tax Credit program encourages gifts to charitable organizations that assist the working poor. It is **completely separate** from the Private School Tuition Credit and the Public School Activity Credit. Qualifying taxpayers may participate in **any or all** of these programs for additional tax credits.

All donations must be received by December 31, 2009 to be eligible for the 2009 tax year. All donations received after that date will be processed for the 2009 tax year. If you have questions on tax credits, please call Arizona Department of Revenue: 1-800-352-4090 (in Phoenix call 602-255-3381), access the website at www.revenue.state.az.us, or contact your tax advisor.

How Do I Donate?

Just send back the attached envelope with the amount you want to donate and your check or credit card number. We’ll do the rest!

For more information about contributing to Arizona Youth Partnership, please contact Joseph at (520) 744-9595 or joseph@azyp.org.

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