



Family Resource Centers

A Program of WORD-Women's Opportunity and Resource Development

Newsletter

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 8

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- WORD promotes and supports parent/family involvement in the schools
- WORD looks to increase literacy by sponsoring and coordinating the Western Montana Literacy Support Corps

Locations of Family Resource Centers

Missoula Area:
 Bonner
 Franklin
 Hawthorne
 Lewis and Clark
 Lowell
 Rattlesnake
 Russell
 Teen Family Resource Center

Bitterroot Area:
 Daly/Grantsdale
 Darby
 Florence
 Hamilton
 Kids First
 Lone Rock
 Ravalli Head Start
 Stevensville
 Washington

Flathead Area:
 Cherry Valley
 Ronan

For more information go to:
www.wordinc.org/frc

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“It Takes A Village...”

“...to raise a child.” A century ago, it was common for a community to come together to raise a barn. Now, school and community partnerships help raise children toward excellence, forging successful and resilient citizens. The Russell Family Resource Center



Craft Club feels that “our school provides a caring and encouraging environment.” Community partnerships flourish in the Missoula, Bitterroot, and Flathead Area schools and with their commitment to children, the landscape of education is changing. Partnerships build on classroom experience and provide a learning component that increases learning beyond the walls. Western Montana is rich with businesses and organizations who are dedicated to children. At the Lewis and Clark Family Resource Center, the students believe “we feel loved and supported by our families and community.”

The generosity of Albertsons, Meadow Gold Dairy, the Missoula Food Bank, and the Salvation Army is appreciated by all area schools. Each stands ever ready to donate milk, muffins, bread, cake, and ice cream for a

Family Fun Night or coats for children in the winter. Yet each school community is unique, and the resulting partnerships often reflect that distinction.

Franklin Elementary School enjoys a bank partnership with Mountain West Bank in the “Save for America” Program. Twice a month during lunch, Franklin students are able to make deposits to their personal savings accounts. Amounts range from \$.37 to \$10. Vickie Rectenwald,

Family Resource Center Coordinator, appreciates that children are learning about saving money and feels that “the bank is helping children learn the power of good financial planning.”

Foster Grandparents tutor students in the Homework Club at Russell Elementary School. The Missoula Aging Services provides one-on-one academic

assistance work in a multi-generational partnership that benefits both youth and the elderly.



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Family Resource Centers, a program of WORD, are a collaborative program between WORD and school districts and are funded by:

- Montana Office of Community Service
- The Engelhard Foundation
- Title I
- Early Learning Opportunities

Meet Your Family Resource Center Family

(Part eight in a nine-part series on Family Resource Center staff)



To watch Vickie prepare for Kindergarten Roundup at Franklin Elementary, one would never guess that she used to work in construction. In fact, that's what brought her to Missoula from her large family near Camas Prairie, ID. Vickie recalls, "I was a laborer for a general contractor, but my favorite

projects were in historical preservation." Missoula's heritage is important, and Vickie realizes the intricacies of building perpetuation and replication of the structural elements. She remembers "working on the Lenox Building, chipping old plaster to expose the bricks that were manufactured right here in Missoula so many years ago."

The Franklin Family Resource Center is the longest running one in Missoula and has retained its history with the original woodwork and slate blackboards. In addition, Vickie has created a welcoming retreat for parents and students. She reflects on the parents who visit the Family Resource Center, "In here, we take time to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere and casual conversations." Vickie feels her main goal is to assist, support, and motivate families toward increased participation in their child's education. She knows that once awareness is established, greater involvement spreads to

other areas of parenting. "We want to show families how much their help is wanted."

Vickie lives and works in the Franklin neighborhood with her three children. As she began to volunteer at the school, it seemed a natural step to join Americorps as the Family Resource Center Coordinator. She appreciates the program's collaboration toward the well-being of children and families. In a reflective moment, Vickie says, "Because I have learned so much about how children relate to each other, it has made me a better parent. The programs we have are excellent resources. I wish I had them when my children were little."

Owning a business as a commercial photographer is Vickie's dream. She looks forward to finishing her education at the UM College of Technology in Business Management. "I'm only one semester away!" One of the valuable assets Vickie has learned about the business community is the importance of involvement. As a future small business owner in Montana, she knows the value of supporting school activities, and understanding that parents need to be parents. "I want to be the kind of employer who understands that parents need to go to a Literacy Lunch or a Family Fun Night with their child. It's important!"

A Note from the Director

You can feel it in the air - change. It's in school hallways, meeting rooms, casual conversation, e-mails, on the phone - everywhere. As we approach the end of the school year, anticipation, excitement and anxieties are blooming. Who will make the grade? Who will not? Who will stay? Who will go? This occurs each year, as predictably as the new growth of spring. I find it very interesting to observe the ways folks deal with this inevitable process of change. Some have a fear of change, become rigid, overreact, blame, or become suspicious. Others recognize it for what it is, a part of life. They accept the challenge, meet it, learn and grow from it. So much depends on attitude, and how we *choose* to respond.

One of my favorite scenes in a show about Robin Hood was when Friar Tuck and the band of merry men were traveling through Sherwood Forest and were suddenly surrounded by the King's men. Friar Tuck looked skyward and through clenched teeth with a woeful facial expression said, "For what we are about to receive, may we be truly grateful". While I laughed at the movie script, I found a useful life navigation tool.

Change is stressful. Adapting to it requires hard work, and only in hindsight can we evaluate it. If there's one thing I've learned along the way, acceptance, looking for the opportunities and appreciating the learning opportunities that lie within change, make for a better ride. As the door to this school year closes, let's open the next one with a sense of adventure and a commitment to learning our lessons well.

-Jeanne Moon
Program Director

Behind the Scenes

As the school year heads toward completion, everyone working with and in schools is wrapping up and starting up all at once. Here at WORD's Family Resource Center program, we're gearing up for a busy summer. Between host site applications and member applications for next year, our hands, desks, "to-do" lists, and calendars are full. We are fielding calls from across the nation. An amazing number of people are interested in joining the Literacy Support Corps and national service in western Montana schools. A number of new schools have expressed interest in developing their community and parent connections through Family Resource Centers. We are excited about our developing partnerships with the Flathead Reservation and Lake County Coalition for Kids, Inc. in Polson. We are looking forward to expanding our work in the Mission Valley and Polson areas.

We are heading toward our new program year with a seasoned and able staff. Educational backgrounds in communication, social work, early childhood, business, teaching, and health, fuel program development that fits the unique strengths and needs of each Family Resource Center site. Our program staff taking us into 2005-2006 include...

Program Director – Jeanne Moon
Jeanne has been working with WORD developing Family Resource Centers for the last seven years. She brings experience working with youth and families, community assessment, research, adult education, management and schools to her enthusiasm for and leadership of this program. Her life experience growing up one of ten children and as an adult traveling, volunteering, parenting and living for over twenty years in a small rural Montana town contributes to her perspectives on how to build supportive communities learning together.



Program Trainer/Technical Assistant
– Laura Pickett

Laura has been working with WORD developing Family Resource Centers for the last nine years. She developed one of Missoula's early Family Resource Centers at Lowell Elementary School and has mentored many more along the way. Laura's expertise in parent involvement strategies, early childhood, literacy and parenting have enriched centers across Montana. She brings unique and rich life experience as a parent of five teenagers, including a set of quadruplets. We all follow Laura's lead in how to be "flexible" and ready for



anything!

Program Coordinator – Brook Clark
Brook is headed toward her third year with WORD and her first year on staff. She spent two years serving with the Literacy Support Corps, her first year coordinating a Family Resource Center and her second year coordinating the Missoula team of AmeriCorps members. Her life experience living in blended families, parenting and her strong draw to the health field serve programs well as we consider the foundation health lays in learning.



Program Coordinator (Bitterroot) – Allison Kinney
Allison has spent the last three years working with Family Resource Centers in the Bitterroot Valley. Her first two years were with the Literacy Support Corps, developing the first Family Resource Center in Florence and leading the Bitterroot team of AmeriCorps members. She continued in national service as an AmeriCorps VISTA this past year serving with Kids First of Hamilton to develop coalition efforts for children throughout the Bitterroot valley. Allison joins our staff this year in a shared position working for Kids First and WORD to further development of Bitterroot Valley Family Resource Centers. Allison's rural family life, parenting (raising children and livestock!), leading youth groups, advocating for those with disabilities, and community building give her a broad perspective and sense of humor that meets folks where they are so they can go from there!



AmeriCorps VISTA – Lindsey Rehder
Lindsey began national service with WORD Family Resource Centers program last summer and has made the commitment to serve another year helping us develop capacity and sustainability. Her Minnesota home of origin has roots in Montana. Lindsey's excellent educational background in Management and Communications, her drive and her desire to make a difference have fueled our program this year, developed public relations and strengthened community connections. With this year's experience deepening her understanding of Family Resource Centers vision she will continue to facilitate long term community driven programs.



...Partnerships Continued

Foster Grandparents are exclusively trained to work with students forming a symbiotic and valuable bond between young and old.

If students are “caught being good” at Lowell Elementary, they earn “Star Bucks” and are able to buy supplies at the school store. The seed money for that store is provided by the Missoula Chess Club. In addition, the Chess Club teaches students how to play chess during lunch every Friday and holds a tournament once a year. Lowell also appreciates the Kiwanis Club’s BUG Program. When a student demonstrates improvement in grades, homework completion, or behavior they are rewarded with a special lunch and a gift certificate for books from Fact or Fiction in Missoula. In addition, the Kiwanis Club generously supports and supplements field trips and supplies at Lowell.

Lewis and Clark Elementary students are able to

work in an outdoor classroom through the “Outdoor Discovery Core.” The native plants and grasses are maintained with tools provided by the Missoula Urban Demonstration Project (MUD) Tool Library. When shopping at the Missoula Good Food Store, 3% of the sales go to the school when a “Scrip” card is used.



Students in Western Montana are the beneficiaries of a community who cares about them and the future. With school and community partnerships, students receive positive messages that they

matter and are valued. As first grade students from Rattlesnake Elementary observe, “we feel we have some influence over things that happen in our lives.”

Locations of the Family Resource Centers:

Missoula Area:

Bonner School
PO Box 1004
Bonner, MT 59823
Sara Boyett
406-258-6151
family@bonner.k12.mt.us

Franklin Elementary
1901 S. 10th West
Missoula, MT 59802
Vickie Rectenwald
406-327-0483

Hawthorne Elementary
2835 S. 3rd West
Missoula, MT 59804
Mandy Hansen
406-327-6945

Lewis and Clark Elementary
2901 Park St.
Missoula, MT 59801
Karin Schalm
406-327-6946
frclewis@mcps.k12.mt.us

Lowell Elementary
1200 Sherwood
Missoula, MT 59802
Kasey Savage
406-327-0390
lowellfrc@mcps.k12.mt.us

Rattlesnake Elementary
1220 Pineview
Missoula, MT
Jane Olson
406-542-4914
resfrc@mcps.k12.mt.us

Russell Elementary
3216 Russell St.
Missoula, MT 59801
Melissa Parrott
406-728-2400 ext 4846
frcrussell@mcps.k12.mt.us

Teen Family Resource Center
1861 S. 12th St
Missoula, MT 59802
Essie Etchingham
406-542-4900

Bitterroot Area:

Daly/Grantsdale Elementary
778 Grantsdale St.
Hamilton, MT 59840
Rachel Martin
406-363-2122 ext 202
martinr@hsd3.org

Darby Elementary
209 School Drive
Darby, MT 59829
Kelly Morris
406-821-3643
kmorris@darby.k12.mt.us

Florence Elementary
5602 Old Hwy 93
Florence, MT 59833
Elaine Copeland
406-273-6747 ext 117
copelande@florence.k12.mt.us

Florence Middle School
5602 Old Hwy 93
Florence, MT 59833
Christa Burns
406-273-0587
burnsc@florence.k12.mt.us

Hamilton High School
327 Fairgrounds Rd
Hamilton, MT 59840
Heidi Tosini
406-375-6060 ext 6222
tosinih@hsd3.org

Hamilton Middle School
209 S. 5th St
Hamilton, MT 59840
Victoria Williams
406-363-2121
williamsv@hsd3.org

Lone Rock Elementary
1112 Three Mile Creek Rd
Stevensville, MT 59870
Nancy Preston
406-777-3314 ext 218
npreston@lonerockschool.edu

Ravalli Head Start
81 Kurtz Lane
Hamilton, MT 59840
Paula Wood
406-363-1217 ext 20

Kids First
Westview Center
103 S. 9th St. #105
Hamilton, MT 59840
Vicki Rivera
406-375-9588
vrivera@bitterrootkids.org

Stevensville Elementary
300 Park Ave
Stevensville, MT 59870
Wanda Stordahl
406-777-5613 ext 351
stordahlw@stevensville.k12.mt.us

Washington Elementary
225 N. 5th St.
Hamilton, MT 59840
Tara Gallagher
406-363-2144
gallagher@hsd3.org

Flathead Area:

Cherry Valley Elementary
111 4th Ave
Polson, MT 59860
Stephanie Noyes
snoyes@polson.k12.mt.us
Edna Lemm
406-883-6333

Ronan Middle School
421 Andrews NW
Drawer R
Ronan, MT 59864
Kathy Benedetti
406-676-3390
kathy.benedetti@ronank12.edu