

From: Missoula Forum for Children and Youth
To: [Antila, Mackenzie](#)
Subject: Your weekly newsletter is here!
Date: Friday, March 10, 2017 5:26:18 PM

Read our new mobile friendly newsletter on your phone!



Our mission is to lead collaborative, proactive community efforts to prevent underage substance use and to foster the development of healthy and resilient children and youth.

Partner Spotlight

Open Aid Alliance

I sat down with Stephanie Cole, Director of Programs at Open Aid Alliance, last week to hear about what their organization is currently up to and what bills in the Montana legislature they might want the Missoula community to look out for. If you haven't heard of Open Aid Alliance, they are a non-profit organization in Missoula that is dedicated to engaging and empowering hard to reach, underserved individuals by promoting harm reduction and working to prevent HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections through testing, education and outreach in western Montana. Their testing services include free HIV and hepatitis C testing and low-cost Chlamydia and Gonorrhea testing. They also offer free counseling services, case management, and housing assistance services (to people living with HIV and to those who income qualify).

Open Aid Alliance does quite a bit of outreach and education in the Missoula community. Representatives from Open Aid Alliance present to high schoolers, college students, and organizations about the basics of HIV (HIV 101) and they often include a HIV+ Speaker's Bureau. When talking with young people, they talk about risky behaviors related to HIV (and other STIs). They also work to help reduce the stigma for people living with HIV (and other STIs) and substance use disorders in order to reduce harm and empower individuals to get the help they



The staff at Open Aid Alliance.

need. With this harm reduction model in mind, they do a syringe exchange program and also provide condoms and personal lubricant at their office. Because having access to clean syringes for people who inject drugs has been shown to [reduce cases of HIV](#), this syringe exchange program is vitally important to their work.

Open Aid Alliance is currently actively involved in advocating for legislation that will help prevent HIV and other STIs and will help those with substance use disorders have access to clean syringes and life saving opioid antagonists (like Narcan/Naloxone). There is a bill in the Montana Legislature, SB 228 "Exempting needle and syringe exchange providers from drug paraphernalia laws" that Open Aid Alliance is supporting. This bill would protect outreach workers and health departments, who give out clean needles and syringes from legal consequences for having drug paraphernalia. This will allow employees at Open Aid Alliance who do not have to worry about being arrested for doing their syringe exchange program.

In addition, Open Aid Alliance is also supporting HB 333 "Help Save Lives from Overdose Act." HB 333 would allow for the prescription of opioid antagonists (such as Narcan/Naloxone) to individuals who may be at risk for an overdosing with heroin or opioids. This bill would also allow for lay people, such as the family and friends of those individuals at risk, and law enforcement to have access to these opioid antagonists so that they can help when needed. The use of these medications carry a low risk while providing a high benefit and can result in fewer calls for service for emergency responders.

To learn more about this amazing organization, go to openaidalliance.org. They offer their testing and syringe exchange services at their office Monday through Thursday 9am-4:30pm and Friday until 2:30pm (closed noon-1pm). For their counseling services, they ask that you call 406.543.4770 for an appointment.

What's Happening at the Forum

Register for this Event!
State of the Young Child 2017
Tuesday, April 25th
Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula

Caring for Children

Our Best Investment



State of the Young Child 2017



Training - \$10 **8:00am - 11:00am**

Sexual Behaviors in Young Children: Recognizing Concerning vs. Healthy Sexual Behavior
Trainer: MC Jenni, MSW, Care Coordinator at First Step Resource Center, Providence St. Patrick Hospital

and

Introduction to the Community Resiliency Model (CRM)
Trainer: Dana Eisenberg, LCSW

Luncheon - \$20 **11:30am - 1:00pm**

Keynote Speaker: Mike Halligan, Executive Director, Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation

Leaders in health, business, and early childhood are invited to participate in this event highlighting issues that impact young children and families in Missoula. In order for a child to grow up to become a healthy and productive adult, they need to have quality early childcare, education, and healthcare. At this luncheon we will be discussing:

- why investing in early childhood is so important;
- creative solutions to address childcare scarcity; and
- how the medical community and childcare/service providers can better connect to support families.

To learn more about the the event or how to register, go to Healthy Start Missoula's website: healthystartmissoula.org.

Local News

Adverse Childhood Experiences

"Montana Ranked as 4th Worst State for Toxic Childhoods"

Bozeman - A recent study revealed that Montana is one of the worst states for toxic childhoods.



According to the study, Montana ranked 4th overall for kids with two or more adverse childhood experiences.

Adverse childhood experiences are defined as exposure to emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, and household dysfunction during childhood.

Brie Oliver of Lewis and Clark Public Health said that unfortunately she is not surprised by the findings.

"If you need to go to a counselor or get medical care, that is being strong and that is a sign of resiliency," said Oliver.

"And so it's just a culture shift that we need to work on in Montana," she said.

"When we do let people know that they're only going to be supported by taking care of themselves and their families, then maybe we'll see less adverse childhood experiences," Oliver said.

Oliver said that Montana is a state with limited resources and a poor population in rural areas where substance abuse is a big problem.

Even though there are resources available they often go unused because Montanans tend to think they shouldn't ask for help or can deal with the problem on their own.

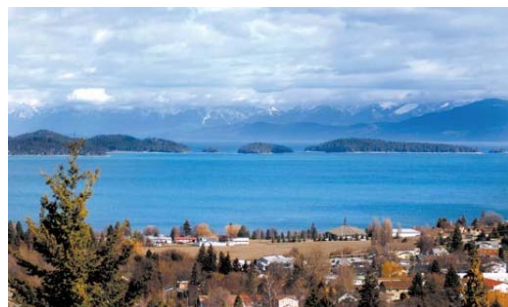
Oliver said once a family takes part in helpful programs the health, happiness and longevity of the family greatly increases.

[Link to Article](#)

Heroin and Opioid Use

"Heroin Use on the Rise locally, Officials Advise Caution about its Deadliness"

Polson - The use of black tar heroin is on the rise in Lake County, local officials say.



Lake County Undersheriff Ben Woods says heroin is slowly replacing heavy-duty prescription narcotics that used to be easier to obtain.

Some of these opiate-based prescription painkillers, such as Oxycontin, Lortab, Oxycodone or Fentanyl, have been restructured so it's not as easy to get high off them, Woods said.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office found 12 grams of heroin in a bust last month. That followed nine arrests for heroin possession and seven arrests for distribution or intent to sell the narcotic in 2016.

Woods said the number of heroin-related arrests for previous years is not available, but deputy county attorney James Lapotka said the county is "seeing more and more of it."

"Last year I got one (case) per month," he said. "Before that I got one or two per year." Heroin used to come from Asia, but now it's coming from Mexico, he said, noting that it is trafficked up the West Coast and then through Pasco, Spokane and Coeur d'Alene.

Tribal gangs in Washington have loose affiliations with Mexican gangs, Lapotka said. "It's much less organized" when it comes through the tribes, he said.

Users can smoke or inject heroin, which comes from the poppy plant. When a poppy plant stalk is cut, the sap oozes out and dries into a black tar product, he said.

One can use chemical processes to refine it, but that involves a laboratory and adds to the cost. This product, which is more common on the East Coast, is known as "china white," Lapotka said.

A small piece of black tar heroin can be broken off, heated in a spoon and inhaled or mixed with water, filtered with a Q-tip and injected into veins, he said.

Heroin has an effect on the body very similar to opiate-based prescription painkillers, Sheriff Don Bell said.

[Link to Article](#)

In Other News

Preventing Teen Marijuana Use

"Pediatrics Group Issues New Guidelines for Talking to Teens About Marijuana"

The American Academy of Pediatrics has [issued new guidelines](#) for doctors and parents to talk to teens about the risks of using marijuana, [CNN](#) reports.



The organization said changes in the legal status of marijuana may lower teens' perceptions of the risk, and may lead to more teens trying the drug. A [recent survey](#) found there is a decrease in the percentage of teens who say they believe there is a great risk in smoking marijuana once a month or once or twice a week.

Doctors should screen preteens and teens for marijuana use, the group said. If they find a teen is using marijuana regularly or heavily, they can then decide if the teen would benefit from treatment, including counseling and medication.

Parents should tell teens marijuana can cause abnormal brain development and impact memory, concentration and executive functioning skills, the group said. They also noted, "If you use marijuana in front of your teens, they are more likely to use it themselves, regardless of whether you tell them not to."

[Link to Article](#)

School Readiness

"Kindergarten Readiness: The 10 Traits Successful Kids Have In Common, From A Kindergarten Teacher"

Beginning kindergarten is a huge rite of passage that looms large for most children and their parents. Children are excited to join the world of older students who attend elementary school. Parents are often

understandably emotional about their child's transition to formal schooling, and perhaps a bit nervous about their child's readiness for what will be required of them in the classroom. With kindergarten registration season approaching, parents may wonder how to best prepare their young children for entering kindergarten in a few months' time.



As a kindergarten teacher, I'd like to share a few observations of children who successfully transition to school. Certain skills and dispositions make for a smooth transition and a successful kindergarten year for many children.

Children who do well in kindergarten are ones who can:

1. Make choices. Children will be given many opportunities in school to make choices. They will choose what to play on the playground. They will choose activities and books in the classroom. Children who have been given autonomy at home in developing preferences and making meaningful choices from limited options are able to transfer this skill to the school setting, thereby exerting confidence in making wise choices within the classroom setting.

2. Make connections. Classroom discussions and individual learning are enhanced by students who have the ability to relate events, topics and experiences that they have had outside the classroom to what they are learning about in school. Parents can support the development of making meaningful connections by participating in responsive conversations with their children about what they are doing, experiencing and reading. Parents may point out links, commonalities and contrasts in every day interactions and ask questions that solicit thinking that compares and contrasts information.

3. Self advocate. Children who are able to state their wants and needs in a clear and polite manner tend to transition more easily to school. Parents do their children a favor in the long term when they consistently model and expect good manners within the family and discourage whining and tantrums. "Yes please" and "No thank you" are phrases that serve children well as their worlds expand.

[Link to Article](#)

Upcoming Events & Announcements

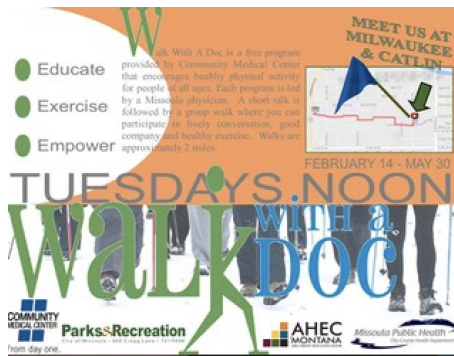
Every Tuesday through May

"Walk With A Doc"

Tuesdays at Noon

Meet north of Third Street, at the Milwaukee Trail, on
Catlin

Community members are invited to trek a 2-mile
expanse of the Milwaukee Trail, as part of Community
Cancer Care and Prevention Center's Missoula Walk



with a Doc program. The program launches at noon Tuesday, Feb. 14, and will continue every Tuesday through May.

[Learn More](#)



Job Opening

Mountain Home Montana

Resident Care Coordinator (RCC)

Current Openings:

Night Shift RCC: Friday, Saturday & Sunday 8:00pm-8:30am

Relief RCC: Cover available shifts that work with your schedule!

[Learn More](#)



Saturday, March 11th

Missoula Kids Fair

Southgate Mall

10:00am - 5:00pm

Kids Fair has interactive, educational and informative for the whole family. FREE crafts, demonstrations, games, prizes, exhibits and more.

[Learn More](#)



Saturday, March 11th

Lids for Kids Helmet Giveaway

Karl Tyler Chevrolet & Cadillac

10:00am - 2:00pm

Pick up a FREE HELMET (while supplies last) for your child and prevent brain injury! Already have a helmet? The Brain Injury Alliance will even measure your child to make sure their current helmet fits right.

[Learn More](#)



Tuesday, March 14th

Parent Education Workshop

Western Montana Addiction Services

6:00pm - 8:00pm

Free workshop for parents of youth who are using or are suspected of using alcohol and/or drugs.

[Learn More](#)



Friday, March 31st

Child Abuse Prevention Month Kickoff Event

Missoula County Courthouse Lawn

12:00pm - 2:00pm

April 1st marks the start of Child Abuse Prevention Month. Please join us at the Missoula County Courthouse for our annual kickoff event. There will be professional and parent speakers as well as giveaways for kids and families, a Pop up Playground, parenting resources.

[Learn More](#)



Saturday, April 8th

Spring Wellness Fair

Payne Family Native American Center

10:00am - 2:00pm

FREE for Missoula's American Indian/Alaska Native Community. Education, Resources, Screenings, Vaccines, and more. Raffle baskets, prizes, and gifts!

[Learn More](#)



Friday, May 12th

Childwise Institute Spring Conference:

"The Trauma Informed School"

Holiday Inn, Great Falls

8:30am - 4:00pm

Jim Sporleder will present his new Administrative Guide "The Trauma-Informed School" A step-by-step implementation guide for Administrators and School Personnel.

\$200 Registration Fee

[Learn More](#)

Attend a Coalition Meeting!

Healthy Start

Thursday, March 16th, 2017

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Location: YMCA Missoula

3000 S. Russell St., Missoula, MT 59801

Coordinator Anna Semple

anna@missoulaforum.org

MUSAP

Wednesday, April 5th, 2017

General meeting: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

MAC meeting: 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Location: Salvation Army Community Center

355 S. Russell St., Missoula, MT 59801

Coordinator Brandee Tyree
brandee@missoulaforum.org

Rx Task Force

TBA

Coordinator Brandee Tyree
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The findings and conclusions in these newsletter materials are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of The Missoula Forum for Children & Youth.

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