



Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency
Healthy People, Healthy Communities

Press Release

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FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE GANG RESISTANCE CURRICULUM

This school year marks the sixth consecutive year of Gang Resistance is Paramount (GRIP) instruction in elementary schools. GRIP has been taught in the school districts of Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg and Anderson Valley. This year GRIP expands to Covelo and Laytonville.

The objectives of the GRIP curriculum are to educate students about the dangers of gangs, discourage youth from joining gangs, and educate parents about the signs of gang involvement. The 5th grade curriculum consists of 15 lessons that include lecture, student discussion, interactive activities, and video excerpts, using all learning modalities. Students are taught about peer pressure, drugs, alcohol, self-esteem, family, crime, gangs and territory, and gangs and vandalism.

The program is evaluated through annual administration of a pre/post student survey and brief surveys of classroom teachers. Evaluation of the 2008/09 school year demonstrated an impressive increase by 5th graders in their knowledge of gangs and their attitudes about the negative consequences of gang involvement. Teachers were also positive about the impact of GRIP on their students and the campus environment.



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Middle school administrators, as well as the Ukiah Police Department, report that though there is still some fighting on middle school campuses, they have seen a reduction in the large multiple-subject fights that were occurring before GRIP delivery began.

Local police departments, the County Sheriff department, and the County District Attorney's Office provide funding for the GRIP program using asset forfeiture reserves. Mendocino County Community Health Services' Prevention And Planning Unit oversees program coordination and provides organizational support. Local community agencies provide the program delivery. Other program partners include parents, school district administrators and community based organization directors.

According to Sheriff Tom Allman, "The most exciting thing this year is that GRIP has a presence in the Round Valley Unified School District for the first time. Having this program in the Covelo area is a huge asset to the area." Sheriff Allman continued, "Gangs aren't confined to large cities anymore, we have a clear gang presence in Mendocino County. Wherever there is a gang, they are actively recruiting our children. It's important for us to get to our kids first and GRIP has been successful at just that."

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