

PCOP



YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

HI-SET

ĀISSPOŌMMOŌTSIIYŌ•P

# Parent Community Outreach Program

## HI-SET/ Adult Basic Education/Kinship~

### Hi-SET

With the end of the school year approaching, we are working with our clients to make a plan of study for the summer. One of our clients will test the last week in May. We have two students still on remote learning. We have 1 new student to add to our total of 7.

### Grandparents Raising Grandkids/Kinship (a program within āisspoŏmmoŏtsiiyŏ•p) Kinship Program & Aging Mastery Program-

With the option of having registration online, we are encouraging our PCOP program participants to come into our offices and enroll their students for summer school as well as for the regular school year (2023/2024).

Our relationship and collaboration with CPS are improving and we are almost all working to help eliminate barriers for these students and their caregivers as that transition through life events.

Again, in April we shared that we were witnessing a theme within the Kinship group, specifically our Grand Parents raising Grand kids, and that these kiddos are being removed from their parents' care and "placed" with grandparents by CPS. Mostly due to drug related incidents. This is usually the situation with most of our kinship families and now our McKinney Vento families, but not all. These Grandparents are experiencing many barriers as to financial limitations and gaining access to children's documents. We are trying our best to refer these families to supportive services which can give them further support beyond our program. Many of them just need a helping hand and someone to help assist with connecting to resources.

Heidi Lester’s visit to our community on May 3<sup>rd</sup> was a success. She was able to meet with 5 of our Kinship Caregivers and offer them valuable information and resources. Again, this presentation and informational gathering was primarily for our kinship families (274 Care Givers), including grandparents raising grandkids, aunts, uncles, and siblings. We are inviting Heidi Lester back again in August. With her support, she was able to connect 1 caregiver to a mechanic and also pay for a small part that was needed for the Grandparent to have reliable transportation. Another Grandparent was able to meet with a lawyer and create a living will, which assisted with a “plan” for the children she cares for and eliminated her worries for who would care for them after she passes away.

## āisspoōmmoōtsiiyō•p ~

*McKinney Vento Data update: 218*

### **McKinney Vento Update from Darcy S.-**

Greetings from the Family In Transition/McKinney-Vento Program! Currently, we have 218 students in the district receiving opportunities and supportive services. I have been busy introducing myself, meeting students, guardians, and staff to assess FIT needs request forms, filling them out, and delivering the services. It is a busy job assisting the Parent Community Outreach Program and all the many facets of the internal programs like FIT, YHDP, Hi-Set, and McKinney-Vento. I am enjoying the challenges and learning on the job training daily. Irene is an amazing director and is providing opportunities for our student population that have barriers to success. PCOP is an awesome addition to Browning Public Schools and my hope is it continues its successes for our students! -Darcy S.

A success: We had 13 McKinney Vento Students who graduated from Browning High School!!!!

### **School-based Clothing Closets**

Our BES clothing closet is still seeking donations for sizes 8 youth – 12 youth. If you know of anyone with gently used items, please have them deliver to us here at our offices, (located below BES). Or have them call (406)338-5025 and we can arrange for these items to be picked up. Thank you!

Our High School Clothing Closet is still available and accessible for students in need of many different sizes of clothing.

### **School-based Food Pantry**

(Re-sharing as we are still receiving requests for snack items)

The goal of the school-based food pantries has always been to make food available and easily accessible for students with food insecurities at home. With both the High School and Middle School food pantries, we stock them with foods that students can bring home to prepare meals with during the evenings and/or weekends.

Aside from student who are experiencing food insecurities, many of the staff and students at both BHS and BMS have requested “snack” type foods for when they’re students are hungry during the day.

This brings a few concerns and challenges because our food pantries are provided by grant funds (which the amounts vary year-to-year) and not the Food Service program at BPS. The other concern is that if students are aware of the possible “snacks” available, they may be more likely to eat the Breakfast and/or Lunch options, thus creating issues for the food service program (student count). I am open and willing to accept any suggestions the board may have regarding this request.

The backpack food program for the elementary grades will continue throughout summer school in addition to the Summer food program. We are currently distributing 324 back packs weekly to students in the elementary building every Friday.

### **BPS YHDP**

### ***#17 unaccompanied homeless youth have been provided support this 22/23 SY.***

The YHDP program has been super busy as the school year is winding down, YHDP Supportive Services have been speeding up. Four YHDP clients have successfully Graduated from BHS on 05-21-2023. Making sure those students/clients were at school every day passing their classes and receiving the support they needed to help them succeed was a major priority for me. As well as making sure all clients are checking in with me weekly to let me know how YHDP can support them in their everyday lives. As of the month of May 2023 there are currently 8 students identified as unaccompanied and experiencing homelessness or on the verge of being homeless. YHDP currently has 15 active clients that are receiving YHDP supportive services.

Parent Community Outreach Program and Youth Homeless Demonstration Project are offering Healthy Nutritional Cooking classes for the YHDP Clientele every Wednesday, in the parent community outreach program building. So far, we have completed four weeks of

classes and have two more following weeks left. The clients will receive a certification of completion as well as . This has been a great experience for them and they are utilizing the skills in their everyday lives now.

Some challenges have been not having a transitional living center or home for the unaccompanied youth and not having enough resources in the community to refer them to. Not having an on-site area to put the washers and dryers that YHDP purchased for clients that are in need or utilizing the laundry services that we offer and provide. Not having trainings offered to me by the district to help me improve and challenge myself to prosper as the one and only YHDP case manager. Needing more help and assistance with providing the supportive services we offer and to keep up with the data and all the duties for one person can be a challenge.

YHDP program will be offering fun and educational events scheduled for the month of June for clients, such as hiking and job placement. As well as planning for future tours for Job Corp, Montana youth challenge and College Universities to give the students/clients an opportunity of viewing their options available for stable housing/education.

Thank you.-Monty Lucke

### **Out Reach Event for May:**

May is MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS month! We will be collaborating with the SAMSHA Native Connections: Culture & Hope program to provide mental health including, specifically information related to grief. Our friends at Tamarack Grief Resource Center shared the idea of offering a "Walk with Me Through Grief" opportunity for families and students to receive information in a space which welcomes them to begin or continue their grieving process. We will be collaborating with THIP and Southern Piegan at the Skate Park/Walking Path beginning May 24<sup>th</sup>-June (ending date depending on availability of staff)

Sometimes when our realities are bleak and we find ourselves filled with sadness, anger, or hopelessness it is difficult to find the energy to seek out help. This collaboration with the programs mentioned above will help destigmatize mental health as well as motivate our families to partake in their physical and mental health, in a non-judgmental or threatening space. This is for our entire community and most importantly our students so that they can witness the resources available and become education on how those resources can be accessed while exercising. Our mindsets change with exercising and sometimes that break for just a moment can help us seek hope and the energy to move towards healing.

We are working on the flier and will post it district wide and on social media platforms as soon as it is finished.

### **Cooking Classes:**

Kaitlyn Sharp is teaching cooking classes to the YHDP/Teen Parent's every Wednesday from 11:30-12:40 beginning April 27<sup>th</sup>. At the end of the six weeks, students will be rewarded for their participation in the class with their choice of: cooking utensils, crock pots, griddles, etc. Kaitlyn is doing an amazing job at educating this group of students so that they're able to learn various ways to cook multiple meals in one pot. So far, they've made, goulash, quesadilla's, lasagna, and parfaits.

**Community Awareness:**

This is something that was shared with me (I am still trying to track down the author to give credit) and a realization that as a community and member of this community, we need to remember this statement and utilize it as a movement towards acquiring a growth mindset or even self-actualization:

*“ my tribe don't owe me a house, or a car, it doesn't owe me a piece of land...I don't need to hold \$ in my hand to say I am Shoshone (Blackfeet) or I don't need to be saying...my tribe owes me this or that....what I do know is I owe my tribe my dreams... my hard work to make it a tribe that will find growth to make it in this world. I owe my tribe the preservation of its culture, its land, its water, and most of all...to give my tribal members a better life from the child to the elder. I owe my community my hard work to look good and feel good. This land needs my hard work to show its real beauty the creator intended. I owe that much I know...I was born into debt to my ancestors.....”-unknown*

I also feel it may be something we share with the participants within our programs as sometimes we have caregivers or even parents who enter our doors with an entitlement mentality. It is often difficult to provide them supportive services when they aren't willing to help themselves or complete tasks they are responsible for (i.e. submitting housing applications, making appointments, etc.). This puts us (PCOP Staff/district) in a tough position when we find ourselves continuously offering support numerous times but, not observing the end goal of student success through enrollment or improved attendance.

As always, if you all have any questions or would like to stop by our offices, we are located below the main office at Browning Elementary.

Our phone numbers are:

Irene: (406) 573-1498 cell: (406) 249-7943

Jill: (406) 732-6030

Darcy: (406) 573-1492

Monty: (406) 338-5025

Happy Spring!