

The Bi-Monthly Broadcast



Hello and welcome to another edition of the Bi-Monthly Broadcast! It was so great to see you all in March in Helena for our two days together. Spring is here and there are just over three months left to the first year of the grant. I know I'm feeling the clock ticking to get things done and I'm sure you are too. Just remember to take deep breaths and allow yourself time for self care.

In this issue of the newsletter, you'll find information about the upcoming National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, learn about resources from Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!, and hear about the HiSet and GED changes from WORD. There is also information about upcoming trainings and conferences.

As always, thank you for the work that you do every day to support young families in Montana.

~ Kelly Hart, Healthy Montana Teen Parent Coordinator

13th Annual National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is May 7, 2014

Hundreds of thousands of teens nationwide are expected to participate in the thirteenth annual National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy on May 7, 2014. The purpose of the National Day is to focus the attention of teens on the importance of avoiding too-early pregnancy and parenthood through an interactive online quiz and game.

On the National Day and throughout May, teens nationwide can visit <http://www.StayTeen.org> to participate in The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy's National Day Quiz. The National Day Quiz delivers important teen pregnancy prevention messages and challenges teens to think carefully about what they might do "in the moment." The message of the National Day Quiz is straightforward: *Sex has consequences.*

Organized by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, the National Day has widespread support. Nearly 200 national organizations and media outlets serve as official National Day partners by promoting the online quiz.

More than 450,000 teens participated in National Day activities in 2013 and nearly 5.5 million individuals have taken the National Day Quiz since 2001. Among the findings from a group of teens who participated in the 2013 National Day Quiz:

- 88% said the Quiz made them think about what they might do in such situations;
- 69% said they'd talk to their friends and 44% said they'd talk to their parents or other adults about the situations described in the Quiz;
- 67% said the Quiz made them think about things they hadn't thought about before;
- 66% said the Quiz made the risks of sex and teen pregnancy seem more real to them; and
- 60% said they'd learned something new from the Quiz about the consequences of sex.

For more information about the National Day and ideas on how you can help promote the event, please visit <http://TheNationalCampaign.org/event/national-day-2014>.

Montana now uses the HiSET test for the High School Equivalency test instead of the GED test. What does that mean for those who want to get their GED? If someone already started the GED test, do they have to start over? What is the HiSET? This article hopes to answer some of these basic questions.

HiSET is an acronym that stands for High School Equivalency Test and it is accepted as a general education equivalency test by colleges and employers as well as the military. Upon first hearing that things were going to be changing in regards to the High School equivalency test, some of us may have gotten information that it was going to be much more difficult as well as more expensive. Now that the HiSET has officially been implemented we are finding that it isn't as big of a change as some may have been expecting. The HiSET cost is \$50 if it is all paid for at once. This fee would also include two retakes for each of the five portions of the tests. If each section of the HiSET is paid for individually the cost will be \$15 for each. The GED was \$61 and one had to pay for each retest that may have been needed. There will also be a "test-site fee" for each of the five tests given and that fee needs to be paid when a student goes in to take the test. The test-site fee varies but in Missoula it's only \$3 per test, which comes to a total of \$15 for all five

test sections. Another change anticipated was that students who have started the GED but did not yet pass all of the five sections of the test would have to start all over again. As it turns out, during this first year (2014) of the HiSET being implemented students are able to count the sections of the GED test that they have already passed. To pass the GED one would have to have a passing score for each individual section as well as an overall average minimum score. If a student passed each section of the GED test but did not get an overall average score that was high enough to pass, they may need to only retake the lowest scoring section in order to pass the HiSET. The reason being that during this first year the passing score is actually lower than what the GED's was. The HiSET is done on a computer which enables students to see their scores much faster than they were able to when they took the GED in paper form. Students will still have the option to take the test on paper which helps those who may have an aversion or disability in regards to taking tests on a computer.

So what do advocates and case managers need to be aware of? To start, the fee for the HiSET is paid for online and so checks or cash will not be accepted for payment. Agencies or organizations will need to be able to

pay using a credit or debit card. The test-site fee will need to be paid at the time when students take the test otherwise they will be turned away, so this detail needs to be stressed to students. Making an inquiry to your local test site to see if they offer scholarships is always a good idea. There are usually classes offered from the test sites to students free of charge to help prepare for the HiSET test. There are also many resources online. For example, the Missoula Public Library has multiple educational resources, including free online tutoring which is accessible to all Montana residents. You may want to contact your local Library and inquire about any test prep resources or materials they have. It would also be important to let your clients who need their High School equivalency test that this is a great year to get it done because for the next few years it will increase in difficulty until it reaches the new standards set in place at a national level.

In closing, the new High School equivalency test called the HiSET isn't quite as daunting or expensive as some of us may have been expecting. We can easily continue helping the young parents we work with to believe in their worth and ability, identify and overcome any barriers in their way, and attain the educational goals that will create more opportunities and stability for them and their family.



Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!

Recent statistics indicate that as many as 1 in 4 children aged 0-5 are at moderate or high risk for developmental, behavioral, or social delay.^[1] As a result, a number of government organizations^[2] have partnered to launch *Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive!*, a coordinated effort to encourage developmental and behavioral screening and support for children, families, and the providers who care for them.

Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! seeks to:

- **Celebrate milestones.**

Every family looks forward to seeing a child's first smile, first step, and first words. Regular screenings help raise awareness of a child's development, making it easier to expect and celebrate developmental milestones.

- **Promote universal screening.**

Just like hearing and vision screenings assure that children can hear and see clearly, developmental and behavioral screenings track a child's progress in areas such as language, social, or motor development.

- **Identify possible delays and concerns early.**

With regular screenings, families, teachers, and other professionals can assure that young children get the services and supports they need, as early as possible to help them thrive alongside their peers.

- **Enhance developmental supports.**

Combining the love and knowledge families have of their children with tools, guidance, and tips recommended by experts can make the most of the developmental support children receive.

Birth to 5: Watch Me Thrive! resources include:

- A list of research-based developmental screening tools appropriate for use across a wide range of settings;
- Guides on how to use the screeners for a variety of audiences, from early learning teachers to doctors, social workers, and families;
- Toolkits with resources and tip sheets;
- Guidance on finding help at the local level; and
- A screening passport that allows families to track a child's screening history and results.

This unprecedented multi-faceted initiative will assure that the wide range of adults who love, work, and care for young children have an array of resources tailored to fit their needs and those of the families they serve. **Visit www.hhs.gov/WatchMeThrive for a complete set of resources.**

[1] National Survey of Children's Health, 2011-12. With funding and direction from MCHB, these surveys were conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics.

[2] The Administration for Children and Families, Administration for Community Living, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Medicaid and Medicare, Health Resources and Services Administration, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Special Education Programs at the Department of Education.

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

*Have training opportunities to share? Send them to Khart2@mt.gov *

April

Montana DPHHS—Montana Family Planning Training

April 23—24, 2014

Helena, MT

For more information visit: <http://umt.edu/ce/cps/montanafamilyplanningtraining/>

May

TeenWise Minnesota 2014 Annual Conference

May 1—2, 2014

Brooklyn Center, MN

<http://teenwisemn.org/annual-conference/>

ChildWise Institute—The ACE Study Summit

May 29—30, 2014

Billings, MT

For more information visit: www.childwise.org

June

Montana DPHHS—Great Beginnings, Great Families Conference

June 2—4, 2014

Helena, MT

www.mtnreg.com/GBGF

Montana DPHHS—*Helping Children to Eat and Grow Well* (Ellyn Satter Institute)

June 10, 2014

Bozeman, MT

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/cacfp/index.shtml>

Montana Office of Public Instruction—Montana Behavioral Initiative Summer Institute

June 16-20, 2014

Bozeman, MT

More info to come!

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