

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Human Services Agency
Departmental Correspondence

Date: June 12, 2001
Hearing Date: June 19, 2001

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
Maureen D. Borland
From: Maureen D. Borland, Director, Human Services Agency
Stuart Oppenheim, Northern Regional Director
Subject: Acceptance of the Fourth Annual Report of the Redwood City Healthy Start Network (September, 1999 – August 2000)

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Fourth Annual Report of the Redwood City Healthy Start Network (September, 1999 – August 2000)

BACKGROUND

In 1991, the Redwood City Elementary School District (RCESD) began providing the Family Focus for School Success (FFSS) program to students in grades K-3 and their families. The Services were funded through a five-year grant from the Cowell Foundation. For each year of the program, County staff provided school-based mental health services to the FFSS program. In 1995-96, at the request of RCESD, the Human Services Agency (HSA) also began providing, school-based mental health services to the Taft Healthy Start project, a new school-based collaborative in Redwood City.

Under the leadership of Redwood City 2000, now Redwood City 2020, the Redwood City School District, the City of Redwood City and HSA staff representing the County, worked collaboratively to restructure services for FY1997-98. The outcome of this restructuring is RCESD's Healthy Start Network.

On January 19, 1999, the Board signed an agreement with RCESD through which HSA provides school-based mental health services and consultation to the RCESD's Healthy Start Network through FY1998-99. That agreement funded HSA mental health staff to work at each of three assigned school sites: Fair Oaks; Hoover; and the Taft Healthy Start Family Centers. The Board renewed this agreement on July 11, 2000. In this collaborative effort the County, the Redwood City Elementary School District and the City of Redwood City each contribute significant funding, which provides sustainability for the Healthy Start Network. In addition several community-based agencies, including the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center and the Child Abuse Prevention Center contribute staff to the Healthy Start Network. Pre-to-Three, a program of the Health Agency and Family Service Agency contributed to the growing collaborative as part of the Answers Benefiting Children grant. Several foundations including the Peninsula Community Foundation have contributed funding to the Healthy Start Network.

DISCUSSION

The vision of the Redwood City Healthy Start Network is a neighborhood of healthy children, healthy families, and healthy neighborhoods that make it possible for children and youth, to develop a positive vision of the future, and to acquire the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to become successful, contributing, participants in a rapidly changing world.

Besides the three sites referenced above, Network services will be offered at Kennedy Middle School and the Redwood City School District Child Development Centers (preschools) in the Fall 2001. The Network is also beginning the planning process to expand services to Gill, Hawes and Roosevelt Schools in the Fall of 2002.

Programs and services have been developed to support children, their families and the community in improving student academic success, social functioning, health and well-being, and increasing community involvement in the lives of young people. The Network has participated in a rigorous evaluation of its efforts, each of the past four years. The results of the evaluation have indicated statistically significant improvement in student academic success, improved family well-being and an increase in community building activities in neighborhoods.

Karen Kelly-Torregroza, Director of the Healthy Start Network in Redwood City, as representative of all the collaborative partners, is pleased to present to the Board the 1999-2000 Evaluation Report. This report reflects the improvement made by the children who received services and also discusses the gains made by the schools, pointing to the Healthy Start Network services as one of the contributing factors.

FISCAL IMPACT

The acceptance of this report has no fiscal impact.

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