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PRESS RELEASE

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HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS AIM TO HELP COMMUNITY

WELD COUNTY, CO – Did you know that the Department of Human Services (DHS) has programs designed to keep families out of DHS? “Our primary goal is to work with families and prevent children from going into the system whether that is the juvenile justice system of the child welfare/foster care system,” said Judy Griego, Director of Weld County DHS.

“In fact,” said Griego, “Weld County is the only county in the state with a formal Prevention Unit. This unit is designed specifically to work with families on a volunteer basis to help them conquer challenges before the problem escalates and we have to intervene on a legal basis.”

The Prevention unit is comprised of 13 case managers and family involvement is purely voluntary. “There are times when someone calls us concerned about the welfare of a child and when we investigate we find that while there is no legal course of action to take at the time there may be ways we can step in and provide help to the parents,” said Griego.

For example, someone may call DHS concerned that a particular child continually shows up to school dirty. Case workers will follow up on the information and may discover that the family’s water has been shut off because they can’t afford to pay their water bill. If the family voluntarily works with the Prevention Unit, the case workers can help locate assistance for the family to remedy the problem.

“Families face all types of challenges, but not all them necessarily result in neglect or abuse for the child. If those issues aren’t solved quickly, though, they could lead to bigger issues that may require DHS involvement,” said Commissioner Coordinator Mike Freeman.

In addition to the voluntary Prevention Unit programs, DHS also has other programs to help families including:

MYAT: The Multidisciplinary Youth Assessment Team is a collaborative effort comprised of professionals from a wide variety of Weld County service organizations. The program strives to build on the strengths of youth and their families by increasing protective factors and reducing problematic behaviors. Treatment planning is individualized to the needs of each youth and their family. Treatment plans are staffed by the MYAT team to collaborate services and expertise.

Fatherhood Initiative: The Weld County Department of Human Services is committed to providing support and services that will empower fathers with the tools to be there for their kids. The Weld County Fatherhood Initiative is housed within the Department’s Family Focus Prevention Programs Unit. The Family Focus Prevention Unit works to create partnerships and programs that assist in strengthening families in our communities.

To learn more about services at DHS, please visit <http://www.co.weld.co.us/Departments/HumanServices/>

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