



improving lives, strengthening communities

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Rocky Mountain Development Council Campuses Go Tobacco Free

Housing  
Head Start  
Rocky Mountain Preschool  
Energy Share  
LIEAP  
Weatherization  
Mental Health Crisis Planning  
Kids Management Authority (KMAA)  
Agency on Aging  
Daily Dinner Clubs  
Foster Grandparents  
Meals on Wheels  
Retired & Senior Volunteers  
Senior Citizen Centers  
Senior Companions  
Senior Transportation

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Neighborhood Center and all Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC) buildings and sites become tobacco free. “We join many other organizations taking this final step toward better health for our staff and clients,” said Gene Leuwer, Executive Directive. “We’ve not allowed smoking inside for a long time. But we hadn’t addressed outside areas such as parking lots.”

The decision reflects the agency’s mission, state law, and real inspiration from Head Start. As Head Start families enrolled their children in RMDC’s program, many parents expressed a desire to stop smoking and model a non-smoking life to keep their own children healthier.

That triggered RMDC’s decision to take a final step that would further respect employees’ health and that of the many clients who use RMDC facilities. The policy eliminates client and staff exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke and reduces exposure to third-hand smoke (the residual materials that linger on clothing, body, and hair).

Patty Dahl, RMDC Head Start Director, welcomes this change for Head Start families. “Our families really are working hard to do the right thing for their children. It’s a high priority for Head Start to support families trying to be tobacco free.” Head Start and RMDC will direct those who want to stop using tobacco to a variety of educational opportunities and assistance.

In fact, special programs for Head Start families begin October 5 and run each October Monday evening in the Neighborhood Center dining room. The community is also invited to these 5:30 to 7:00 pm presentations: October 5, “History of Tobacco,” Darby Bramble, Lewis & Clark City-County Health Dept.; October 12, “Sacred Use of Tobacco,” Leo Pocha Clinic, Helena Indian Alliance; October 19, “Tobacco and the Media,” Darby Bramble, Lewis & Clark City-County Health Dept.; October 26, “Health and Tobacco.”

All staff, clients, and visitors are prohibited from using any form of tobacco (cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, or any tobacco products) on RMDC campuses including the Neighborhood Center; the LIEAP office; Weatherization offices and shops; Community Development office on Park

Avenue; the Jan Shaw Home, the Margaret Stuart Home, and “Our Place” campus except for the smoking shelter there.

For further information, please contact Human Resources Officer Gale Anderson, [gale@rmdc.net](mailto:gale@rmdc.net) or 457-7310.

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