



## Montebello Unified School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant Initiative

Take a Second, Make a Difference

### Upcoming Activities

October 4	Core Management Team Meeting
October 6	School Site Coordinator Meeting
October 8	Emergency Response Training
October 20	ATOD ES Meeting
October 21	ATOD MS Meeting
October 26	Emergency Database Training
October 28, November 1-3	Emergency Drill #2
November 3	School Site Coordinator Meeting
November 29	Element Working Group Meeting

### October 2010 Newsletter

### A Healing Event

On September 7, at Eastmont Intermediate, a somewhat unlikely group of people stood in front of an unlikely audience to talk about an equally unlikely subject.

The Event - an assembly to speak openly about mental health problems in young people and the Presenters - a 6' 7" NBA Champion, a Congresswoman, a college student, and a high school senior; each one coming from a troubled childhood and each one passionate about seeking counseling not just for themselves, but for the hundreds of students who daily carry debilitating emotional burdens. Quite a thrill for the Eastmont students to see a giant of a man, L.A. Lakers forward Ron Artest, stand before them and tell his story of emotional pain and its subsequent consequences. Ron shared that it wasn't until he reached adulthood that he sought professional counseling to deal with anger and inappropriate behavior.

Artest agreed to become a spokesman for the Mental Health in Schools Act now before the U.S. House of Representatives, because mental health issues face everyone at some point in their life and being able to talk with a trusted "professional communicator" made a huge difference in how he now deals with personal problems. He assured his young audience that because you seek help "doesn't mean you're crazy." Young teens have trouble handling tough situations and behavior, often not of their own making, and he believes kids should have access to the help he got, without the cost, right in their own schools.

Appearing with Artest was Rep. Grace Napolitano, D-Santa Fe Springs, who is pushing the bill through Congress. Napolitano made mental health issues a priority nine years ago after learning that 1 in 3 latinas consider suicide. And she revealed that she was molested as a child and had many problems that kind of trauma creates in a young life. The Latina Youth Program through Pacific Clinics has expanded to 11 schools. If approved, the mental health act would make it possible for young people nationwide to have on-going services.

An upbeat Kristina Segura-Baird spoke from personal experience, telling the attentive audience that she initially was against talking to a stranger about feelings and emotions that threatened to consume her, but that counseling gave her perspective and she soon discovered that there were a lot of positives going on in her life. Angelica Porcayo found herself being

sexually pressured and retaliated against by a boyfriend when she was only a 6th grader. She told of being "written off" by a teacher who stated that her "dumbness wouldn't get her anywhere." Both girls went through counseling at Pacific Clinics under the program Napolitano started.

Each of the very different people standing before that assembly of young people shared a difficult life story, but the theme was common: children deserve help when they are most vulnerable, children deserve to be happy, healthy, and safe so they can reach their highest potential.

MUSD is proud that it is aggressively seeking to provide a safe, compassionate, and healing environment for its students through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant initiative now in place at all its district schools.

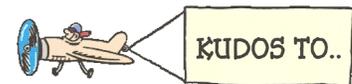
### We Did It!!

You Did It! This year saw MUSD make great progress in the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) participation rate. Two years ago the District saw a somewhat dismal 57% rate and now we're climbing up the charts with 74% participation! That's terrific!

- *What is CHKS?*  
It's the most comprehensive survey in the nation that measures resiliency, protective factors and risk behaviors. The California model gives a very clear understanding of the relationship between students' health behaviors and academic performance.
- *What does it do?*  
It allows school districts to monitor whether they're providing developmental supports and opportunities that promote healthy growth and learning. It assesses health risks, particularly those relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use; school violence; physical health, and school climate among others.
- *Why is a high participation rate important?*  
Low participation rates (meaning not enough kids take part in the survey) mean the survey results are not a reliable source of information; it prevents districts to fully track progress in the areas of student risk factors and identify the needs of youth, thus hindering efforts to meet those needs.
- *When does the survey take place?*  
Each Spring, the survey is administered to student in grades 5, 7, 9, and 11. Our goal for the 2010-11 school year is an 80% participation rate.

#### For additional information

Contact Michael Cobarrubias, Grant Director  
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**Ana Banuelos (Suva Elementary), Roseann Casalichio (Montebello High School), Michelle Duenas (Macy Intermediate), Elizabeth Gonzales (La Merced Intermediate), and Ruth Munguia (Rosewood Park School).**

These five highly motivated educators recently became Certified Trainers in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Motivated because they see that not only in this school district, but also in schools around the nation, bullying has become increasingly rampant, often triggering violent aggression against vulnerable children. This anti-social behavior feeds on humiliation and intimidation and MUSD, under the leadership of Michael Cobarrubias, is taking giant steps to curb and counteract a frightening pattern of abuse among school children. The newly certified employees will be training the gamut of school personnel from counselors to custodians on how to incorporate a nurturing environment of harmony, well-being, and safety into their schools and beyond. One of the new trainers feels the year round program is making "the kids more aware of what bullying really is", and another spoke about students "comfort levels being higher when the issue is out in the open and are more likely to report a bullying incident."

Congratulations to all of you dedicated trainers for taking on this prevalent and unfortunate facet of school life; students must feel safe and free of anxiety in order to grow into their fullest potential. The Olweus program not only teaches prevention of widespread forms of bullying, including acts through the Internet, but about peaceful resolutions to conflict. It's about respect.



Roseann (Montebello High School), Liz (La Merced Intermediate), Ana (Suva Elementary), Ruth (Rosewood Park Elementary)

### Montebello Five

1. Asset #3-Other adult relationships
2. Asset #5-Caring school climate
3. Asset #10-School Safety
4. Asset #22-School Engagement & Participation
5. Asset #24-Bonding to School