

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Philip Morley, County Administrator

FROM: Jean Baldwin, Director

DATE: February 6, 2012

SUBJECT: Agenda Item – Letter to Peninsula Daily News in response to article
“Why Johnny’s a bad kid” published January 10, 2012

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Jefferson County Public Health requests Board approval and signature on response letter to article “Why Johnny’s a bad kid” published in the Peninsula Daily News on January 10, 2012 giving support to the Nurse Family Partnership.

ANALYSIS/STRATEGIC GOALS/PRO’S and CON’S:

On January 10, 2012 the Peninsula Daily News published an article about the effects of toxic stress early in life or even before birth resulting from early childhood exposure to abuse and neglect, substance abuse, poverty and violence. The article gave great credence to the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program, an evidence-based nurse home visiting program. The Board of Health was going to write a letter of support to the PDN regarding the 11 years of NFP in Jefferson County but the recent snow storm will push any response back to late February. JCPH is asking the Board of County Commissioner’s respond to the letter for the JCPH Nurse Family Partnership program by signing this letter.

FISCAL IMPACT/COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:

There is no fiscal impact to the county or this department.

RECOMMENDATION:

JCPH management request approval of the Jefferson County Public Health requests Board approval and signature on response letter to article "Why Johnny's a bad kid" published in the Peninsula Daily News on January 10, 2012 giving support to the Nurse Family Partnership.

REVIEWED BY:


Philip Morley, County Administrator

2/2/12
Date



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Phil Johnson, District 1 David W. Sullivan, District 2 John Austin, District 3

February 6, 2012

John Brower, Publisher
Peninsula Daily News
PO Box 1330
Port Angeles, WA 98362

The Jefferson County Board of Health applauds the Peninsula Daily News for publishing Nicholas Kristoff's op-ed, "Why Johnny's a bad kid" on 1/10/12. A growing body of scientific research supports the finding that the "toxic stress" that results from early childhood exposure to abuse and neglect, substance abuse, poverty, and violence has devastating lifelong ramifications. Kristoff writes about the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) recent report on the lifelong effects of early childhood adversity. The AAP policy report calls for the implementation of science-based strategies to alleviate toxic stress and its negative impact on children's healthy development, learning, behaviors, and future health.

Mr. Kristoff specifically names Nurse-Family Partnership, an evidence-based nurse home visiting program, as a successful early intervention program that supports young mothers and their babies to a healthy start in life by improving prenatal health, school readiness and maternal economic self sufficiency. Jefferson County Public Health has been providing Nurse-Family Partnership services to families in Jefferson County for the past 12 years. This and other family health programs offered through Jefferson County Public Health have contributed to the health of Jefferson County infants as evidenced by our substantially lower rates of infant mortality, low birth weight babies, and premature deliveries as compared to statewide rates.

The Jefferson County Board of Health supports the AAP's call for community involvement to support young children and their families and sustain the important gains we have achieved over the past 12 years.

Sincerely,

John Austin, Chairman