

frontier area report

the newsletter of the FRONTIER EDUCATION CENTER

The National Clearinghouse For Frontier Communities

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New Report

Addressing the Nursing Shortage: Impacts and Innovations in Frontier America

The national nursing shortage is well known. Less understood are the special needs of rural and frontier areas – from the wide scope of care that any one nurse may have to provide to the obstacles presented by community isolation and fewer economic resources for competitive salaries, modern technology and facilities.

"Frontier and rural communities are more likely to suffer...because (1) frontier and rural communities typically lack the economic resources to compete with urban-based employers, (2) nurses are often not prepared for practice in non-urban settings, and (3) frontier and rural communities depend on non-hospital care settings to a greater extent than their urban counterparts."

Some rural areas have developed strategies to increase the supply of rural health care professionals. These vary from "grow your own" initiatives to improving working conditions.

The report appears on the Frontier website at:
<http://www.frontierus.org/nursing.htm>

Issue Brief

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Caring for Children in the Frontier

"Grandparents are increasingly becoming responsible for their children's children." This Issue Brief charts the growth of this phenomenon and describes the many issues facing both the caregivers and the children that are cared for in various kinship settings. It highlights currently available research and suggests that "more research is needed to find effective information channels to reach rural and frontier grandparents...and to design services that are accessible and acceptable."

The paper includes information from a 2003 article by the US Census Bureau on this issue as well as maps showing the scope of the problem nationally and in frontier counties. Read this December 2004 Brief on the Frontier Education Center website at <http://www.frontierus.org/Grandparents.htm>

New Program

The SPOT for Community Wellness Opens in Peñasco, New Mexico

In May 2005 the Frontier Education Center Local Projects Division was awarded a Rural Health Outreach Grant by the Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS. The grant is for a three-year project to deliver direct mental health, substance abuse, and outreach services in a remote underserved area of northern New Mexico. In the fall of 2004, The SPOT opened its doors at the former post office facility of the village of Peñasco. SPOT stands for "Strengthening, Pride, Optimism, and Trust".

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The SPOT –

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The program is offering a variety of services that were previously available at long travel distances or not available at all. The area experiences high rates of unemployment, underemployment and poverty which lead to high rates of substance abuse and undiagnosed and/or untreated mental health problems.

Direct services from licensed mental health professionals now are available for both individuals and groups. A peer-run substance abuse recovery support group has been organized as well as a Moms Group to help young mothers reduce stress and connect with other people who can relate to the daily struggles and rewards most parents face.

The SPOT is attracting support from other groups and is implementing programs sponsored by other agencies. The SPOT recently received a mini-grant from the New Mexico Public Health Association for parenting classes for parents at the local Headstart.

The SPOT provides referrals and intake for area youth to participate in experiential therapy such as ropes courses and other physical activities. These programs engage youth in need of positive relationships with their peers and with adults in role model positions. In this effort The SPOT is working with the NM Department of Children, Youth and Families and the Mountain Center in Santa Fe.

The SPOT is a result of six years of work by the Picuris-Peñasco Community Coalition, a group of agencies and residents from the Picuris Pueblo and fourteen area villages who have organized to address critical health and other needs of the community.

RURAL POET HONORED

Congratulations to Nebraskan Ted Kooser, who was chosen Poet Laureate of the United States in October. He is the first poet from the Great Plains to be named Poet Laureate. Read about Kooser and his official duties on the Frontier website:

<http://www.frontierus.org/nebraska.htm>

Annual Report Available Online

The 2003-2004 Frontier Education Center Annual Report is available on the Frontier website at <http://www.frontierus.org/documents/2003-4annualreportfinal.pdf>. Executive Director Carol Miller reflects on seven years of organizational growth and progress.

About The Frontier Education Center / National Clearinghouse For Frontier Communities

The Frontier Education Center, the ONLY national organization dedicated to frontier communities, was founded in 1997 after decades of activism on behalf of the enduring American frontier. The founders and Board of Directors believe that a **focus on frontier** is necessary because the smallest and most isolated communities face extreme hardships and in many cases lack even the most basic infrastructure.

Mission: To be the national clearinghouse, conduct research, provide education, and support policy development on issues important to frontier communities.

The National Clearinghouse is contacted on a daily basis by frontier residents, students and researchers, and other regional and national organizations. We share information, provide technical assistance when we can, and refer to other contacts, agencies, and organizations.

To learn more about the Frontier Education Center, visit us on the web: www.frontierus.org
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We are going (almost) paperless...

As much as possible we will use our website to distribute Frontier Education Center materials. If you need a paper copy, please contact our office in any of the ways listed above. Thanks!