



Positive Press

The Official Newsletter of the Southern Colorado Health Network

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DEADLINE TO RETURN SCHN KID'S HOLIDAY GIFT PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM IS NOV. 5TH



Clients who are eligible for the 2021 SCHN children's holiday gift program should have received the program registration form in the mail recently. Please fill out the form and send it back in the enclosed envelope addressed to SCHN. The deadline for returning the form is Nov. 5.

Eligible clients are those with children 14-years old and younger who are in the client's physical custody at least 50 per cent of the time. If you are reading this article and eligible for the program and have not received the program registration form in the mail, call your case manager.

Included on the children's holiday gift program registration form is a box to check if you also wish to sign up for a holiday food basket. **Holiday food baskets will be available to all Colorado Springs area SCHN clients and holiday gift cards will be given to SCHN clients in the other SCHN service area counties, so call your case manager if you are interested in receiving one.**

The pick-up dates for the children's gifts, food baskets and the mailing or distribution of holiday gift cards will be in December and exact dates will be reported in the December Positive Press newsletter.

Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) Begins Again on November 1

The Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) will start up again on November 1. LEAP is designed to help eligible low-income households with winter home heating costs and is available to all individuals meeting certain financial guidelines.

If you applied last year, you should have received the 2021-22 application in the mail. If you did not apply last year and would like to apply this year, your SCHN case manager can mail you an application or you can call 1-866-432-8435 to receive an application.

LEAP does not pay the entire cost of home heating. If qualified, you will receive a one-time payment sometime between November 1, 2021, and April 30, 2022. For additional information, call the toll-free LEAP line listed above in paragraph two.



LEAP

HEALTH ACCESS/INSURANCE UPDATE

Please watch your mail and email for notices from Medicaid/ Health First Colorado. They will be notifying people of the need to recertify by a stated deadline. If you don't recertify in time, the benefits will end and you might have a lapse in medical coverage. It's important that you recertify with Medicaid even if you know you are above the income limit. If you let your Medicaid lapse and don't try to recertify, you might not be eligible for other insurance. Please speak with your case manager or health access coordinator if you have any questions.

- People with plans through Connect for Health have been receiving rebate checks from their insurance carrier. These checks need to be signed back over to the program and will be sent back to ADAP. To sign a check over, you would write 'Payable to CHN' on the back of the check and then sign your name below. Please let your insurance coordinator know as soon as you receive a check back from your insurance company and we'll help assist you with this process.

- Open enrollment for Connect for Health for 2022 plans will start on November 1st and run through January 15, 2022. Your Health Access Program coordinator will be contacting you to set up an appointment for re-enrollment. If your employer is offering a medical plan, please get the benefits informational packet and speak with your coordinator before you accept or decline any of the options.

ACCESS POINT PUEBLO (APP) UPDATE

By Sarah Money, Syringe Access Program Manager

The staff is always busy at Access Point Pueblo! In the past month, APP staffers have had a lot of interest from people in the community who want to learn about syringe access. The APP program continues to work with CSU-Pueblo nursing students, who will be spending the semester working on provider outreach to combat stigma and increase cultural competency.

The APP program is also continuing to work with different agencies to expand access to Narcan across the city. The APP needs assessment work results in outlying counties have shown so far significant need for harm reduction services in the small, rural communities.



In September, the APP staff has felt so much gratitude from the people we serve. Opioid overdoses are on the rise. There have been more overdose reversals than days this year. It is truly an honor to hold space for people as they navigate this ongoing crisis."

SCHN ONCE AGAIN PART OF THE INDY GIVE! CAMPAIGN



The Southern Colorado Health Network (SCHN) is pleased to once again be included in the Indy Give! Campaign. Indy Give! Is a year-end (November-December giving period) philanthropic initiative created to encourage everyone in the Pikes Peak region to give back and get involved with local nonprofits.

The Indy Give! Campaign enables SCHN to highlight its mission of meeting the evolving needs of people affected by HIV and other health conditions throughout southern Colorado and also provides SCHN with the opportunity to raise funds in order to support all SCHN programs and services.

Information on how to support SCHN can be found at www.indygive.com.

THE CHN RED BALL IS LIVE IN 2021 ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

The 13th annual Red Ball fashion benefit is slated to be an in-person event on Sunday, Nov.21, at Reelworks (formerly known as the EXDO Event Center). The 2021 theme will be a celebration of individuality and fashion and will incorporate video, dance, pop up entertainment and much more!

The Red Ball is a signature fundraising event for CHN and is intended to showcase the creativity of Denver's vibrant fashion scene as well as to raise funds to impact the lives of people in Colorado living with HIV and to ignite awareness for World AIDS Day (Dec. 1).

Money raised by the Red Ball augments funding for the critical programs and services CHN provides to Coloradans living with HIV and other health conditions. More than 5,000 individuals across the state depend on these programs and services for medical and dental care, housing and nutrition assistance, emergency financial grants, and more. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the need for these support services has increased dramatically. Because of this increased need for support, the funds raised from the Red Ball will be even more critical than before.

World AIDS Day is observed each year on Dec. 1 and is a day set aside to recognize the impact that HIV and AIDS have had on communities around the world. The Red Ball grew out of an idea to produce an event that would draw awareness to World AIDS Day. The event was created as a means of drawing a different and diverse crowd to an event that would both mark the day of observance in a larger way while allowing for messages of prevention and support for those affected to be delivered to a larger audience while raising funds to support people living with HIV or at high risk.

Additional information available at www.coloradohealthnetwork.org/events/red-ball

Women's Retreat Wrap Up

We have wrapped up our fifth annual Women's Retreat! The retreat virtually hosted participants, including female and non-binary participants, from Sept. 30th to Oct. 2nd. An incredible thank you to all the staff that participated in creating a warm, calming environment, and a huge thank you to the clients that participated and were flexible and vulnerable over the course of the retreat.

The past few years have been trying, so the retreat's focus was on creating a space for reconnection and relaxation. Through the virtual format, participants were able to connect with each other from across Colorado, sharing resources and experiences. The workshops we hosted this year included, Glitter Bottle Creation for Stress Reduction, Affirmation Canvas Painting, Art Journaling, and multiple yoga sessions as well as many social hours for participants to simply connect through conversation. We enjoyed our entire three days, and we hope to see more participants next year!





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NATIONAL LATINX AIDS AWARENESS DAY IS OCTOBER 15

National Latinx Aids Awareness Day (NLAAD) is observed each year on Oct. 15 and was first created by the Latino Commission on AIDS and the Hispanic Federation in 2003. The main purpose of this day is to raise public awareness of the HIV epidemic in the Hispanic/Latinx communities in the USA.

According to National Institutes of Health (NIH), HIV remains a serious threat to the health of Hispanic/Latinx communities. Being the fastest growing minority group, as the population grows, the total number of HIV/AIDS cases is likely to also rise significantly.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and NIH note that despite the high cases of HIV, and the recommendation that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care, many Hispanic/Latinx individuals remain untested. The CDC estimates that 1 in 6 Hispanics/Latinos with HIV are unaware they have the virus. Obviously, people who do not know they have HIV cannot take advantage of HIV care and treatment and may unknowingly pass HIV to others.

The CDC notes that other issues may put some Hispanics/Latinos at higher risk for HIV infection:

- Having higher rates of some sexually transmitted infections than other races/ethnicities.
- Poverty, migration patterns, lower educational level, and language barriers may make it harder to get HIV testing and care.
- Not using HIV prevention services, not getting and HIV test, or not getting treatment if they have HIV due to fear of disclosing immigration status.
- Experiencing higher levels of mistrust of the health care system.
- Stigma, fear, discrimination, and homophobia may have impact for some.

Last year's theme for NLAAD was "Living with HIV or not...we're in this together" still stands in 2021. The focus is on the tools available to address HIV and the purging of HIV-related stigma. However, reducing stigma begins with you, so get educated and get tested!

NEW PREVENTION PROGRAM AT SCHN: Love Alive

Last year in El Paso County alone, there were 186 fatal overdoses. While this is the second highest overdose rate in the entire state, Narcan, the overdose reversal drug, is still extremely difficult to locate and obtain. That's why we are proud to introduce the newest prevention program at Southern Colorado Health Network: Love Alive!

Love Alive is the newest and most accessible Narcan distribution program in Colorado Springs. The program is rooted in community support, harm reduction, and the belief that all people deserve to live happy, healthy, and autonomous lives.



Love Alive has the following goals:

1. Provide free and accessible Narcan and fentanyl test strips
2. Educate the local community on harm reduction, Narcan administration, and how to keep the community safe
3. Reduce stigma regarding people who use drugs and teach people how they can become allies to people who use drugs

If you'd like to be involved, you can follow our Instagram at [lovealive.cos](#), or call us at 719-578-9092 to learn how to administer Narcan, and get your free kit.

Access Point Pueblo

Free, sterile supplies available for those who need them. **Tuesday & Thursday**
10am-12:00pm & 1:30pm-4:00pm
Southern Colorado Health Network
807 N. Greenwood St., Ste 200
Pueblo, CO 81003



719-621-1105

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