**Agency Name:** Southeast Wyoming Foster Grandparent Program  
**Program:** Foster Grandparent Program Laramie County  
**Reporting Period:** Jan - Dec 2009  
**Contact Person:** Judith Johnston  
**Phone:** 307-634-1265  
**E-mail:** Judith.johnston@peakwellnesscenter.org

**Agency Mission/Vision:** The Foster Grandparent Program has a two-fold mission – it provides volunteer opportunities that allow older adults to remain physically and mentally active while providing one-to-one attention to youth having special needs.

**Community Issue Program Targets:** Helping Youth Succeed

**Program Target Population:**
- Foster Grandparents are low-income adults over the age of 55 who are assigned to a school or agency that serves children at-risk or with special needs
- Youth ages birth-21 who are at risk/special needs are identified by the volunteer agencies as needing one-to-one attention in order to achieve their individual goals
- Assigned children receive a minimum of 15 hours per week working with their Foster Grandparent
- More than 900 youth with identified special needs have been served in the reporting period

**Program Significance to the Community**
- The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) partners with churches, schools, and non-profit organizations in the community to serve at risk/special needs children
- Youth benefit from extended intergenerational relationships with Foster Grandparent Volunteers
- Young people are provided with activities and structure that develop life skills and a positive learning environment
- Young people's skills and interests are encouraged and prepare them for academic and social success
- Youth feel supported and nurtured as they achieve their goals
- Youth experience success and enjoy increased self esteem
- In tight economic times volunteers are called upon more often to help relieve the pressures felt by schools and non-profits organizations in serving their clients. Youth are provided the one-to-one attention that staff are unable to provide due to the increased demands of their agencies.
- Foster Grandparents, not being "staff", often take on a different role with the children that is more of a confidant and special friend. Youth are encouraged to develop a one-to-one relationship with their Foster Grandparent who provides emotional support in the academic or therapeutic environment
- Eighty-six percent (86%) of the youth served by a Foster Grandparent in an academic setting progressed/showed improvement and were promoted to the next grade or level as was appropriate
- The number of served youth who have an incarcerated parent has increased over the last three years
### Program Resources
- **Staffing:** 2 FTE, 1 PTE
- **Office Space:** 3 individual offices, work/storage room, conference/training room
- **Equipment:** 3 computers/printers, 3 telephones, copy machine, FAX machine, laptop computer w/ power point projector, files, digital camera, calculators, TV-VCR
- **Furniture and consumable supplies**
- **Volunteers:** 75 Foster Grandparent Volunteers, 15 member Advisory Council
- **Community Partners:** Peak Wellness Center, volunteer agencies, senior centers, churches

### Program Activities
- Develops Memorandum of Understanding with schools and agencies in the community that serve at risk/special needs youth whom would like to have Foster Grandparent Volunteers
- Recruits, screens, trains, and assigns Foster Grandparents to a volunteer agency
- Agencies assign youth to work with Foster Grandparent one-to-one or in small groups
- Assigned youth have access to their Foster Grandparent a minimum of 15 hours per week
- Youth achieve success in reaching their personal or academic goals

### Program Results
- More than 908 youth received Foster Grandparent service in an academic or therapeutic setting
- Age breakdowns of youth served: 0-5 years 191, 6-12 years 562, 13-19 years 154, 20-21 years 1
- 515 youth aged 10-18 had access to Foster Grandparents at the Boys and Girls Club for homework assistance and socialization
- 759 (86%) youth showed improvement, were promoted to next educational level, or graduated as reported by volunteer agency staff on the VAD’s
- 84 Foster Grandparent volunteers provided approximately 49,000 hours of direct service to the youth served
- Service was provided to 24 schools and human service agencies serving at-risk/special needs youth 21
- The need for Foster Grandparent services is there and is increasing as verified by the number of volunteer agencies who have requested additional Foster Grandparents and the number of new volunteer agencies coming to FGP for service
- Service was provided to 24 schools and human service agencies serving at-risk/special needs youth 21

### Outcome
- **Children develop literacy and numeric skills while expanding their overall knowledgebase**
- **Students experience academic success**
- **Children feel cared for and nurtured while their teen parents pursue their education at Triumph High School**

### Performance Measure
- **# and % of students will show improvement academically on various tests and other indicator measurement devices**
- **# and % of students who will be promoted to Kindergarten**
- **# and % of infants and toddlers who will receive quality child care**

### Method of Measure
- **Staff report progress on Volunteer Assignment Descriptions (VAD’s)**
- **Confirmed by staff on VAD’s**
- **As verified by staff on the VAD**

### Results Analysis and Next Steps
- Other data reported to the Corporation for National and Community service (the federal sponsor of FGP) indicates more profound needs in the children served today. This is evident in the types of special need/disabilities being reported by the volunteer agencies in regards to the children receiving services.
- Special needs that have increased the most – Substance abuse – previous report 1, most current 11
  - Teen pregnancy – previous report 1, most current report 8
  - Abuse and neglect – previous report 2, most current report 9
  - Learning disabilities – previous report 18, most current report 67

  **NOTE:** It can be surmised that substance abuse and teen-pregnancy have increased in our reporting due to the addition of Triumph High School as a volunteer agency but FGP responds to community needs and requests and therefore this reflects directly on community need.
- An 86% improvement rate in children served is considered successful
- In the upcoming year efforts will be made to survey the children served by Foster Grandparent to get their input on the benefits of the multi-generational relationship
- With an increased number of Foster Grandparents being recruited, the program was able to fill vacancies and add additional volunteers as requested in a more timely manner
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Agency Mission/Vision:
The Foster Grandparent Program has a two-fold mission – it provides volunteer opportunities that allow older adults to remain physically and mentally active while providing one-to-one attention to youth having special needs.

Community Issue Program Targets:
Helping Neighbors in Crisis and Strengthening Families

Program Target Population:
- Foster Grandparents are low-income adults over the age of 55 who are assigned to a school or agency that serves children at-risk or with special needs
- Youth ages birth-21 who are at risk/special needs are identified by the volunteer agencies as needing one-to-one attention in order to achieve their individual goals
- Foster Grandparents serve a minimum of 15 hours per week at their volunteer agency working with their assigned children
- More than 908 youth with identified special needs have been served in the reporting period

Program Significance to the Community:
- Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) is the only program in Laramie County that offers volunteer opportunities for low-income older adults to work with at-risk/special needs youth
- FGP provides an economic boost to older adults via the non-taxable federal stipend the volunteers receive
- The stipend provides volunteers approximately $200 - $300 per month that increases the volunteers level of independence
- Older adults attain emotional/psychological satisfaction in being productive and contributing to the community
- Community inclusion increases self esteem and confidence that are directly related to health benefits among the elderly
- Older adults who remain physically and mentally active have an increased potential for self sufficiency and productivity
- Older adults seek out the FGP experience and continue long term because:
  - Supplements their income
  - Provides daily purpose and meaning
  - They help youth succeed
  - Socialization with peers
  - Strong community connection
- Foster Grandparent Volunteers provide a valuable service to the children and youth of Laramie County who are assisted in meeting their academic/therapeutic goals
- Not only are the Foster Grandparents benefited but youth who are successful socially, emotionally, and academically become stronger more productive members of the community.
- Many of these youth in turn will experience more successful family relationships

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<td>• Foster Grandparents receive transportation assistance, nutritious meal each service day, insurance benefits, and an annual physical exam</td>
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<td>• Grandparents Lives Enriched</td>
<td>• # and % of Foster Grandparents who respond the overall quality of their life is “better” or “much better” # and % of grandparents who continue with the program # and % of grandparents who have previously undiagnosed medical problem or condition identified will take corrective action in one month # and % of students will show improvement academically</td>
<td>• Foster Grandparents respond to annual Volunteer Impact Survey • Foster Grandparents respond to annual survey following their annual physical exam • Data is collected from volunteer agencies for children served by Foster Grandparent Volunteers</td>
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<td>• Grandparents Make Timely Health Choices</td>
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<td>• 60 Volunteer Satisfaction Surveys were distributed in October 2009. 49 or 82% of volunteers responded. An increase of 9% over last year.</td>
<td>• The results from this year’s volunteer satisfaction survey were consistent with the previous two years which indicates that the program is accomplishing the goal of improving quality of life</td>
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<td>• To the question “What extent do you credit any change in your quality of life to your participation in this program?” 30 volunteers or 63% indicated “significant change”, 16 or 33% indicated “some change”, and 2 or 4% indicated “no change”. One declined to answer since they had just started the program. When asked overall how satisfied you are with this volunteer experience 48 or 98% indicated they were satisfied-very satisfied. Only one individual indicated they were dissatisfied.</td>
<td>• Volunteer recruitment continues to be a priority. New federal guidelines in October 2009 dropping the age requirement to 55 and increasing the income guideline to 200% of poverty with a 50% allowable medical deduction has dramatically increased the number of qualified applicants to the program. More specific data will be monitored and reported on in 2010</td>
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<td>• Volunteer attrition dropped significantly this year from 28% in 2008 to 16% (or 14 volunteers) in 2009. Of the 84 who were successfully placed and served, 60% or 50 volunteers were active at the beginning of the year and continued in the program. Of the 28 who joined the program 24 or 86% continue to be successfully placed. Reasons for terminations – 2 to care for a relative, 4 for health reasons, 1 retired after 23 years of service, 1 retired after 7 years of service, 1 is taking a leave of absence and plans to return in the fall, 3 for unsatisfactory behavior. Foster Grandparents who responded to the survey related to their annual physical exam indicated the following - 3% indicated they were made aware of a health condition previously unaware of, 26% indicated that they would not have had an annual physical if not required to do so by FGP, 89% indicated that they felt the physical was beneficial, and 20% requested information and referral to other programs i.e., breast cancer support group, dental assistance, prescription drug assistance, and meals on wheels. Progress was tracked for 821 youth in academic settings in 2009. 684 or 83% achieved their goals, were promoted, or showed improvement in test scores. 27 graduated from Triumph High School</td>
<td>• With an increased number of Foster Grandparents being recruited, the program was able to fill vacancies and add additional volunteers as requested in a more timely manner</td>
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<td>• Foster Grandparents received on-going training and community recognition Foster Grandparents receive transportation assistance, nutritious meal each service day, insurance benefits, and an annual physical exam</td>
<td>• The volunteer physical survey continues to be consistent with previous year’s surveys, indicating that the physical is still a valuable volunteer benefit. Foster Grandparents will continue to receive high quality orientation training and monthly in-service training in order to continue to serve at risk/special needs youth</td>
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