April 18, 2017

Dear Western Kansas friends (new and old),

We have seen all the trucks with hay and fence heading west. We don’t have that kind of stuff but we want to help too. With the endorsement of the Governor’s Behavioral Health Services Planning Council, we are traveling to Ashland to host our annual Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day, May 4. We invite you, Ashland and surrounding towns, to our event. We want to learn about your needs and those of your children/who may have experienced the trauma of the March wildfires. And we want to share our expertise and that of our partner organizations around children’s social, emotional health. We invite you to join us in Ashland to attend any or all of the following. We will be in Ashland all day.

10:00—11:15 “Partnering for Help and Hope – Supporting Children’s Mental Health Following a Natural Disaster,” Facilitated by Dr. Steve Woolf, Superintendent, USD 101 with mental health experts. Where: Ashland High School Gym. We invite all junior high and high school students, their teachers, parents of Ashland students and surrounding communities, first responders and community members.

11:30--1:00 “Listening/Responding to Needs of Families,” facilitated by Barbara Huff, Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health, Washington DC. Where: Ashland High School Gym. We invite adults who are caretakers of children/adolescents in Ashland and nearby communities to describe the needs of their families. Kansas experts in education, trauma, mental health and substance use prevention/treatment will respond to group and individual requests for information.

1:00—6:00 Individual and small group discussions, private meetings with therapists. Where: Ashland Community Library. Dr. Jane Adams, Director, Keys for Networking, will facilitate. Kansas experts in education, trauma, mental health and substance use prevention/treatment will respond to group and individual requests for information. We encourage parents and youth to drop in from the track meet when time allows.

6:00—7:30 “Celebration of Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day,” Live via Internet from Washington, D.C. Where: Ashland Community Library. Honorees are Olympic champions Michael Phelps and Allison Schmitt, an eight–time Olympic medalist. Phelps and Schmitt serve as Honorary Chairpersons of SAMHSA’s National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day. Teammates and personal friends, Phelps and Schmitt have spoken candidly about their respective struggles with behavioral health and how they have supported each other through difficult times.

Please plan to spend all or part of this day with us and the amazing team of experts who will be in Ashland to meet with you. Bring your friends. We are excited to meet, share information and learn with you—to raise resilient Kansas children. Our staff are parents whose children have severe emotional, behavioral problems. Keys for Networking, Inc. is a nonprofit, 501©(3) organization, located in Topeka, serving Kansas families statewide.

Our Partners include

Ashland United School District 220

Community Engagement Institute at Wichita State University

Compass Behavioral Health, Garden City and Dodge City

DCCCA, Douglas County

Iroquois Center for Human Development, Greensburg

Governor’s Behavioral Health Services Planning Council with the leadership of the Rural and Frontier Subcommittee

Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)

Keys for Networking Inc., Topeka

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

St. Francis Community Services of Dodge City and Garden City

For additional information on this events, or to let us know you are coming, please contact Keys for Networking at [(785) 233-8732](javascript:void(0)). Keys is a Kansas nonprofit 501©(3) parent information network. Our services to parents are funded via state and federal grants and contracts. Services are offered at no cost to parents. We look forward to meeting you, seeing you in Ashland, May 4.

Respectfully,



Jane Adams, Ph.D.

Executive Director