

Tribe sharing grant for new sex education program

By Meredith Lawrence

The Sheridan Sun

A survey of Willamina High School students revealed that one-third of 15 to 17 year olds and half of the 18 year olds have had sex within the past year.

Only one-third of those who reported having had sex said they used a condom.

This information was presented to the Willamina School Board in early October in an overview for a proposed new middle school sexual education program that aims to fully educate youth and help them make safe and responsible decisions.

Amber Mercier, a representative of the Grand Ronde Tribe's Youth Prevention Program, gave the presentation to board members about the federal Tribal Personal Responsibility Education Program grant that the Tribe recently received from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The grant is designed to help the Tribe implement a more comprehensive sexual education program, which the Youth Prevention Program is offering to share with Willamina Middle School at no cost

to the district.

It is important to the Tribe to share the program with the school district because so many Tribal children attend Willamina schools. Youth Prevention also wanted all middle school youth to experience this sexual health curriculum opportunity and it is a positive collaboration with the school.

The four-year grant incorporates one year for study and to design the curriculum and covers three years of the program in action.

So far, the Tribe has received \$263,698 for the first year, which includes help researching and setting up a program, and \$144,954 for the first year of implementation.

The program is called "It's Your Game" and aims to teach students about making healthy choices, avoiding peer pressure and making and keeping personal boundaries and sexual ground rules.

To prepare for implementation of the right sexual education program, members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's Youth Prevention Program polled students in Willamina and Yamhill counties.

Of 117 high school students sur-

veyed, one-fifth reported having more than three sexual partners. State data indicates that the number of Chlamydia infections in females ages 15 to 19 in Polk and Yamhill counties was three times higher than the state average.

An Oregon Healthy Teen Survey also found that Native American eighth- and 11th graders reported a higher incidence of having sexual intercourse than non-Native students between 2006 and 2009.

Additionally, the Youth Prevention Program discovered that Willamina students were not sure they could say no to sex or to sex without a condom, and that many students used drugs and alcohol before sex.

These responses and numbers make it apparent that it was important to move up sexual education to the middle school level, Mercier told board members.

In particular, the current middle school curriculum, which is called Proud Choices, does not have a parent-involvement component. But, according to the Youth Prevention Program survey, 63 percent of Willamina Middle School students who responded said that their parents

were a good source to learn about sexuality and pregnancy.

The "It's Your Game" curriculum has three components: a classroom-based portion, a computer-based portion and a parent-child portion. The program has been shown to increase the age of onset of sexual activity, Mercier said.

The program will take place in 12 50-minute sessions for seventh- and eighth-graders and aims to improve student knowledge, behavior beliefs, attitudes, perceptions of risks and understanding of the facts surrounding the male and female reproductive systems and sexually transmitted diseases.

Students will be taught about the effects of risky behaviors, how to respect themselves, how to engage in healthy relationships, condom usage, risks and ways to avoid pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and about reasons not to have sex.

The program also includes education about the benefits of abstinence.

The Willamina School Board will vote on adoption of the program at its November meeting. ■

Kaleigha Simi

Little Miss Grand Ronde

Hello, my name is Kaleigha Simi. I am 6 years old and I am a first-grader at Willamina Elementary School. My parents are Shannon Simi and Josh Baker; my grandparents are Janet Titus and Virginia and Lonnie Roof; my great-grandparents are Annabelle Poole and Marvin and Eleanor Kimsey.

I am honored to be this year's Little Miss Grand Ronde and I look forward to representing my Tribe.

I would like to thank my grandma Virginia for having my regalia made, Dara Dickenson for making my regalia, and Kimberly Contreras, Pam McDaniel and Halona Butler for all of my bead work.

I would also like to give a special thanks to Halona Butler for all of her hard work that she has put into Royalty and for teaching me how to dance. I would like to say thank you to all of the Royalty girls for their encouragement and for being such great role models. I want to thank my mom for all of her hard work, for supporting me and for believing in me. Also, thank you to all of my friends and family for your support and encouragement.

Hayu masi,

Kaleigha Simi



Kaleigha Simi

Iyana Holmes

Junior Veterans Queen

Hello, my name is Iyana Holmes. I am 10 years old and in the fifth grade at Willamina Elementary. I am the daughter of Brianna Leno and Joshua Holmes.

I am very honored to be this year's Junior Veterans Queen. I look forward to representing all veterans and the Grand Ronde Tribe at many events this year. I hope to learn a lot of new things, meet new people and travel to new or even old places. I would like to be a good, positive role model for all youth and help them learn about their culture.

I would like to thank Halona Butler for getting me involved in dancing and Royalty. My mom and grandmother Leno for all the regalia that you made and for having me to all events on time and ready to go. My grandfather Leno, Kevin Ruggles and my brother Isaiah for all your support along the way. Susie and Glenda for always being there for me, and all the Royalty girls for making this year fun and very memorable.

Iyana Holmes



Iyana Holmes

Help needed identifying veteran's plots in cemetery

The Facilities Department is asking for your help identifying veteran's plots.

If your family member's or friend's plot is a veteran and we do not have a veterans flag present on holidays, please inform us.

We will do our best to mark all plots of veterans.

Contact Adam Leno at 503-879-5525 or adam.leno@grandronde.org. ■

Royalty Christmas Raffle

Prizes: Pendleton Items, Jewelry items, Christmas Baskets and much more!

1 for \$1.00
Or
6 for \$5.00

The Grand Ronde Royalty Girls will be selling Raffle tickets for the whole Month of November. Winners will be announced on December 2nd at the Tribal Christmas party. You do not have to be present to win!

The girls are raising money to attend a pow wow in Washington next summer.

Royalty Queens and Princesses selling tickets

Kiana Leno, Kailiyah Krehbiel, Kaleigha Simi, Iyana Holmes, Elizabeth Watson-Croy, Makenzie Aaron, Madison Ross, Amelia Mooney, Amaryssa Mooney

If you would like to get a hold of one of the girls please contact Halona Butler @ (503)580-9865.