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MEDIA CONTACT: Laura Oxley, ADHS Public Information: (602) 542-1094
Janey Pearl, ADHS Public Information: (602) 364-1201

Grant Application Could Extend Abstinence Education Program

Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) this month applied for \$1,034,776 to keep the Abstinence Education Program up and running. Current funding for the program which provides information for children across the state is set to run out of money in June.

"We cannot let these programs go away. Teen pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases are urgent public health issues in Arizona and across the country- so it's critical that we use every resource and strategy we can to try to make some progress in these areas," said Interim Director Will Humble. "Fortunately, we have great partners in the state who found the matching dollars to make this application before the deadline."

Several contractors across the state are providing \$776,082 in matching funds for the abstinence grant. If approved, the new funding will work with 12-18 year olds, parents, and educational programs to emphasize abstinence, empower youth to pursue self-sufficiency, learn and retain leadership skills, and increase communication skills between children and their parents.

The state will learn next month whether the grant is approved. If it is, the funding will go to continue Arizona's educational efforts beginning July 1, 2009, if Congress reauthorizes the program.

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