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PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Pinellas County Health Department Receives
Grant to Work with Boys and Young Men**

The Pinellas County Health Department's Violence Prevention Office was recently awarded a three-year, \$260 thousand per year grant from the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB) to work with young boys on violence prevention, sexual responsibility, and substance use prevention.

Boys ages 9-14 in three after-school programs will have an opportunity to participate in focused workshops, games, academic assistance, sports, the arts, and nutrition and fitness classes, all emphasizing belonging to and participating in a healthy community and a healthy life.

A unique aspect of the program will be that the health department will work with Pinellas County's two domestic violence centers, CASA and The Haven, to include respect for girls and women as part of the learning process, with the belief that this will help prevent these boys from engaging in violent behavior in future relationships.

"We always hear about what the victims of domestic violence, especially girls and women, should do about ending the violence done to them, but we often forget about teaching boys and men how to solve problems without violence," said grant coordinator Elihu Brayboy. "This grant gives us a tremendous opportunity to reach out to boys with a message that will remain with them through adulthood."

Further, grant funds will be used to work with local coaches who influence boys in this age group. Coaches and workshop leaders will receive training in all areas covered by the grant before workshops begin, and will continue to receive support from local and national experts in these fields.

The after school sites will be Mt. Zion Human Services in St. Petersburg, the High Point YMCA in Clearwater, and the Palm Harbor YMCA in Palm Harbor, all of whom are currently seeking staff to lead the workshops. For more information, contact Brayboy at 727-824-6962

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