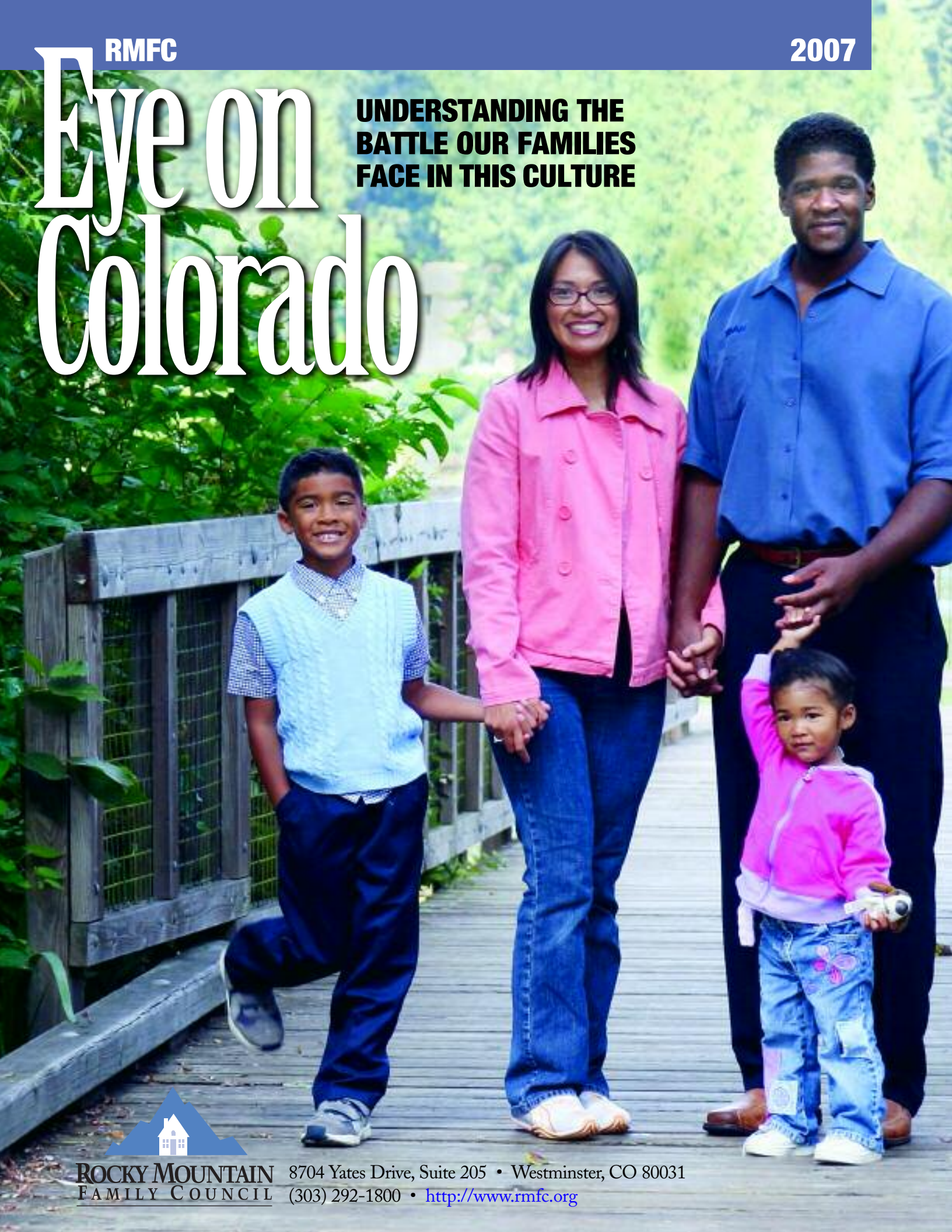


Eye on Colorado


**UNDERSTANDING THE
BATTLE OUR FAMILIES
FACE IN THIS CULTURE**



2007

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Eye On Colorado

A photograph of a family of four standing outdoors in front of a house. The father is on the left, wearing a blue short-sleeved shirt and jeans, with his hands on the shoulders of a young boy. The mother is in the center, wearing a dark blue top and jeans, with her arms crossed. The young boy is on the left, wearing a blue and white plaid shirt and dark shorts. The young girl is on the right, wearing a light purple dress. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

Nothing is more vital to the strength and well-being of the state of Colorado than the maintenance and preservation of the family. Healthy families and strong morals lead to safer and more successful communities.

Unfortunately, we live in a world where the family is no longer seen as the key building block of society — a world where married parents are fast becoming the exception, rather than the rule; where sex outside of marriage, sexually transmitted diseases and abortion are rampant among young adults and teens; and where lawmakers too often look for ways to ease the consequences of irresponsible and dangerous behaviors, instead of looking for ways to help change these behaviors.

Rocky Mountain Family Council has compiled the most recent statistics regarding our culture to help Coloradans better understand the times in which we live and to help make a difference.

ALCOHOL

- A recent *Youth Risk Behavior Survey* found that 47.4 percent of Colorado students (12 to 17 year-olds) currently use alcohol (≥1 drink in the 30 days preceding the survey); and 30.6 percent of students report binge drinking (5 or more alcoholic drinks on one or more occasions during one or more days during the 30 days preceding the survey).¹

ABORTIONS

- There were 9,852 reported abortions in Colorado in 2003. Over one-third of Colorado's abortions were obtained by women age 20-24 (3,287). The next highest age group included women age 25-29 (2,084); followed by women age 15-19 (1,692); women age 30-34 (1,399); women age 35-39 (886); women age ≥40 (414); and women age <15 (52).²

- For nearly one-quarter of the women who had abortions in 2003, this was their second abortion (2,454) in their lifetime. Women obtaining their third abortion numbered 698 and women having their fourth (or additional) abortion numbered 259.³

- While unmarried women comprised the largest number those obtaining abortions in Colorado (7,593), the number of married women was significant (1,822).⁴

BIRTHS

- The number of births in Colorado rose slightly from 68,475 in 2004 to 68,922 in 2005. Since 1995 (54,310 births) there has been a 21.2 percent increase in the number of births in Colorado.⁵

- Over one-quarter (26.6 percent) of all 2005 births in Colorado were to unwed mothers. For comparison, the figure for unwed mothers giving

birth in Colorado in 1940 was 2 percent; in 1950 — 3 percent; in 1960 — 4.2 percent; in 1970 — 9.6 percent; in 1980 — 13 percent; and in 1990 — 21.2 percent.⁶

- The percentage of unwed births in Colorado for white women in 2005 was 18.3 percent; for Hispanic women — 41 percent; for black women — 52.8 percent; for Asian women — 14.6 percent; and for American Indian women — 51.5 percent.⁷

CRIME

- According to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, the number of homicides in Colorado declined 14.6 percent from 2004 (199) to 2005 (170).⁸

- All other major criminal offenses, however, increased from 2004 to 2005 in Colorado including assault (11.5 percent), auto theft (10.2 percent), burglary (6.5 percent), robbery (6.4 percent), forcible rape (5.4 percent), and larceny (5.4 percent).⁹

- In 2005, there were 922 Colorado law enforcement officers assaulted in the line of duty. This is an increase from the number assaulted in 2004 (834). In addition, one officer was killed in the line of duty in 2005.¹⁰

- According to the Colorado Department of Corrections, as of September 30, 2006, there was a total adult inmate population of 22,203. Nearly ninety percent of inmates in Colorado prisons are male (89.8 percent — male, 10.2 percent — female).¹¹ The Colorado adult inmate population has increased 443 percent since 1985.¹²

DRUGS

- A 2005 survey found that 42.4 percent of Colorado students (12 to

17 year-olds) have tried marijuana; 22.7 percent were currently using marijuana (≥ 1 time in 30 days preceding the survey); and 8.1 percent ever used cocaine.¹³

- In 2003, 3,581 juvenile drug violations arrests were made compared with 1,690 a decade earlier.¹⁴

EDUCATION

- The most recent report from the Colorado Department of Education (2004) shows Colorado's high school graduation rate at 82.3 percent. Asian students (86.9 percent) in Colorado had the highest graduation rate in 2004; 86.4 percent of White students, 76.2 percent of Black students, 68.7 percent of Hispanic students, and 66.6 percent of American Indian students graduated.¹⁵

- There were a total of 11,503 students who dropped out of Colorado schools in the 2003-2004 school year, which was an increase (9,068 dropouts) from the 2002-2003 school year. Male students accounted for 6,569 of those who dropped out in 2004 while female student dropouts totaled 4,935.¹⁶

- A total of 72,655 students were suspended and 2,548 students were expelled in Colorado during the 2005-2006 school year. Nearly 14 percent of the total suspensions (9,848) were incidents reported to law enforcement.¹⁷

(CSAP-Reading)

- Results of the 2006 Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) reveal an increase in the percentage of students in the Proficient and Advanced categories in Reading from 2005 to 2006 in grades four, five, six, eight, nine and ten. There was a slight decrease in

grade three and results for grade seven were unchanged. Over the past ten years (1997-2006), the percentage of fourth-grade students has improved 13 percentage points in the Proficient and Advanced categories in Reading.¹⁸

(CSAP-Writing)

- Only Colorado fifth graders showed any positive change in the percentage of students in the Proficient and Advanced categories from 2005 to 2006. Scores in third and fourth grades declined and there were no changes in grades six through ten. Over the past ten years (1997-2006), the percentage of fourth-grade students in the Proficient and Advanced categories has improved twelve percentage points from 38 percent in 1997 to 50 percent in 2006.¹⁹

(CSAP-Mathematics)

- There was an improvement in Math test scores from 2005 to 2006 in grades three, four, five, six, eight, nine and ten. The results reveal a slight decline in seventh grade. There has been a six percentage point increase in the number of eighth grade students in the Proficient and Advanced categories during the past six years in Math.²⁰

(CSAP-Science)

- Grades five and ten were assessed for the first time in 2006 with regard to Science performance. Eighth grade is the only other grade tested in Science and results show no change in performance from 2005 to 2006. Over the past six years there has been a one percentage point increase for eighth graders in the Proficient and Advanced categories.²¹

- Colorado students performed better than the national average on the 2006 Scholastic Assessment

Test (SAT). The average total score for Colorado students was 558 (503 national) on the critical reading (previous known as “verbal”) section and 564 (518 national) on the math section. Starting in March 2005, SAT included a writing section. The Colorado state average writing score for 2006 was 548, which is higher than the national average score of 497.²²

- The Colorado ACT College and Placement Exam is administered to all eleventh grade students. The average overall 2006 composite score (19.0) remained the same as the score for 2005.²³

GAMBLING

- Colorado ticket sales for Powerball (\$96.5 million), Lotto (\$39.6 million), Cash 5 (\$15.7 million) and Scratch game (\$290.7 million) reached all-time highs in 2005 and totaled more than \$442 million. Ticket sales increased over \$34 million from 2004 to 2005.²⁴

- Revenue generated by Colorado’s 46 casinos from gambling alone totaled over \$759 million in 2005.²⁵

- A study of the two Indian Tribal casinos in southwest Colorado found negative social impacts in the areas of arrest incidences, substance abuse, traffic counts and motor vehicle accident responses. The casinos on reservation land are not subject to taxation and are not required to report their revenues to the State.²⁶

MARRIAGE/ DIVORCE

- Colorado’s marriage rate of 7.4 per 1,000 population in 2005 (35,173 marriages) was a slight increase from the 2004 marriage rate of 7.3, but well below the 2000 (8.3) and 2001 (8.5) rates.²⁷

AN AVERAGE DAY IN COLORADO

- 81 Deaths
- 189 Births
- 51 Births to Unwed Mothers
- 27 Abortions
- 31 School Dropouts
- 96 Marriages
- 56 Divorces
- 7 Students Expelled
- 11 Robberies
- 70 Stolen Vehicles
- 92 Burglaries
- \$3.3 Million Spent Gambling

Sources: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Bureau of Investigation, Colorado Department of Revenue

- Colorado’s divorce rate of 4.3 per 1,000 population in 2005 (20,504 divorces) was a slight decrease from the 2004 divorce rate of 4.4. Colorado’s divorce rate reached a 34-year low in 2003 with 4.2 per 1,000.²⁸

- Since 1950, there have been over 1.5 million marriages in Colorado and over 773,000 divorces.²⁹

- Of the 35,173 total marriages in 2005, 22,394 were first marriages for women and 22,809 were first marriages for men.³⁰

STDs/AIDS

- Chlamydia is the most prevalent bacterial sexually transmitted disease (STD) reported in Colorado. There were 12,900 cases of chlamydial infection reported in 2003. From 1996 through 2003, the reported rates of chlamydial infections increased from 196.7 cases per

100,000 persons to 281.3 cases. Women accounted for most (9,746, 75.6 percent) of the reported cases. Among men and women, the 20-24 year age group comprised the largest proportion of infections (4,998, 39.2 percent), followed by the 15-19 year age group (3,941, 30.9 percent) and the 25-34 year age group (2,902, 22.7 percent.) **NOTE:** Pelvic inflammatory disease, which can be caused by Chlamydia, is the leading cause of infertility.³¹

- In 2003, 2,820 cases of gonorrhea were reported in Colorado. Between 1997 and 2003, gonorrhea rates fluctuated but overall were seen to

increase with 61.5 cases per 100,000 population reported in 2003.³² According to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, there have been 8,631 Coloradans who have been diagnosed with AIDS from 1982 to September 30, 2006 and 4,580 have died of AIDS. Of the total AIDS cases, most (5,738, 68.2 percent) were exposed through homosexual contact, 801 (9.3 percent) were exposed through injecting drug use, 934 (10.8 percent) were exposed through homosexual contact and injecting drug use and only 587 (6.8 percent) were exposed through heterosexual contact.³³

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Eye on Colorado can be used:

- when writing a letter to the editor.
- when writing a letter to a government official.
- in a pastor's sermon or a civic speech.
- to share in a small group, Bible study, youth group or Sunday school class.
- to share with a friend or a neighbor.
- for a school assignment.
- as a prayer reminder.

NOTES:

¹ *Health-Related Behaviors of Colorado Adolescents: Results from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2005*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section, July 2006, p. 4.

² Abortion Surveillance—United States, 2006. Table 4. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Vol. 55, No. SS-11. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, November, 24, 2006. **NOTE:** Underreporting and lack of reporting by abortion providers is common. Also, sum does not add to total due to cases with age not known.

³ *Ibid.*, Table 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Table 11. Note: Sum does not add to total due to cases with marital status not known.

⁵ *Summary of Vital Statistics for 2005*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section, 2006, p. 6.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁸ *Crime in Colorado: 2005 Annual Report*, Colorado Bureau of Investigation, 2006.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Supplemental Report-2005 Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2006.

¹¹ *General Statistics 2006*, Colorado Department of Corrections, Sept. 30, 2006.

¹² *Statistical Report Fiscal Year 2004*, Colorado Department of Corrections, p. 4.

¹³ *Health-Related Behaviors of Colorado Adolescents: Results from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2005*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section, July 2006, p. 4.

¹⁴ *Coming of Age in Colorado: The Challenges Facing Our Youth*, Colorado Children's Campaign, November 2005, p. 7.

¹⁵ *2004 Colorado Education Facts*, Colorado Department of Education, January 2005, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *2005-2006 Safety and Discipline Indicators: Number of Suspensions and Expulsions Reported for All Students*, Colorado Department of Education, 2006, p. 15.

¹⁸ *News Release: 2006 CSAP and Colorado ACT Summary and Results*, Colorado Department of Education, August 1, 2006, p. 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *News Release: Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Examination Results*, Colorado Department of Education, August 29, 2006, p. 1.

²³ *News Release: 2006 CSAP and Colorado ACT Summary and Results*, Colorado Department of Education, August 1, 2006, p. 6.

²⁴ *2005 Annual Review: Colorado Lottery*, Colorado Department of Revenue, 2006, pp. 21-23.

²⁵ *Gaming in Colorado: Fact Book and 2005 Abstract*, Colorado Department of Revenue, p. 21.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁷ *Colorado Vital Statistics 2005*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Health Statistics Section, 2006, Table M1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Table M2.

³¹ *Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Colorado: Surveillance Report 2003*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, June 2005, pp. 7, 10.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³³ *HIV and AIDS in Colorado: Monitoring the Epidemic*, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 2006, p. 1.



About Rocky Mountain Family Council

We are a “Voice for the Family — Advocating Timeless Truths.” We communicate the truths of the Judeo-Christian tradition in a way that positively impacts families, communities, and culture.

Founded in 1991, RMFC works with families, churches, community organizations and government leaders to strengthen marriages and families in Colorado.

As a nonpartisan, nonprofit education organization, RMFC represents the traditional family at the state legislature and we publish a weekly Legislative E-update during the legislative session. We serve as a bridge to connect churches, organizations and individuals involved in pro-family efforts. RMFC also sponsors workshops, seminars, and family events for churches and families statewide.



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