

Parent-daughter event tackles esteem issues

By **BUFFY POLLOCK**
for the Mail Tribune

Parents and pre-teens can get help on everything from puberty to peer pressure during an event Saturday geared just for them.

The ninth annual Parent and Daughter Faire, hosted by Planned Parenthood, will be from 9 a.m. to noon at the Smullin Center on the Rogue Valley Medical Center campus.

The event gives girls age 9-12 and their parents information ranging from physical changes they can expect to ways they can boost self-esteem. It also serves as an icebreaker for parents needing to talk about such issues, said Planned Parenthood education program coordinator Maggie Sullivan.

"I just know that in order to prevent teen pregnancy, that this age is really key," she said. "I've seen all the research that shows the more a teenager and parent can communicate openly, the less likely that teen will be to become involved sexually too soon, to smoke, to drink ... to engage in all those kinds of risk behavior we parents are so worried about.

"Parent and pre-teen relationships are an important foundation for those teen years when things tend to get really complicated."

The event Saturday will kick off with free breakfast at 8:45 a.m., followed by a welcome from Sullivan at 9 a.m. and a performance by the Planned

Parenthood teen theater troupe — a group known for screaming, squealing and whispering taboo words like "peer pressure" and "periods."

From 9:30 a.m. to noon, parent-pre-teen pairs may choose any three of six mini-sessions, including "Managing the Mirror Fears," "Periods, Pimples and Puberty," "You're Beautiful ... Naturally," "Friendship, Fun and Games" and "Partner Yoga."

This event and another planned Feb. 28 at Southern Oregon University are sponsored by the Reduce Adolescent Pregnancy Project, a coalition of health care providers, educators, law enforcement and religious and community leaders in Jackson County, and by the Medford and Ashland chapters of the American Association of University Women.

Mickey Ketchum, spokesperson for the Medford branch of AAUW, said the event represented everything her group encourages for young girls. "AAUW encourages girls to be all they can be," Ketchum said. "This starts with family support in the early years and the parent-daughter faire opens communication in a non-threatening, interactive and fun way."

For information on either event, contact Sullivan at 770-3331.

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"They took a lot of the tension out of it, like it's all normal, which they should because it is."

Joe Moretti, Gold Hill father who brought his daughters to event

It's not for girls only: Faire hits hard issues

By **BUFFY POLLOCK**
for the Mail Tribune

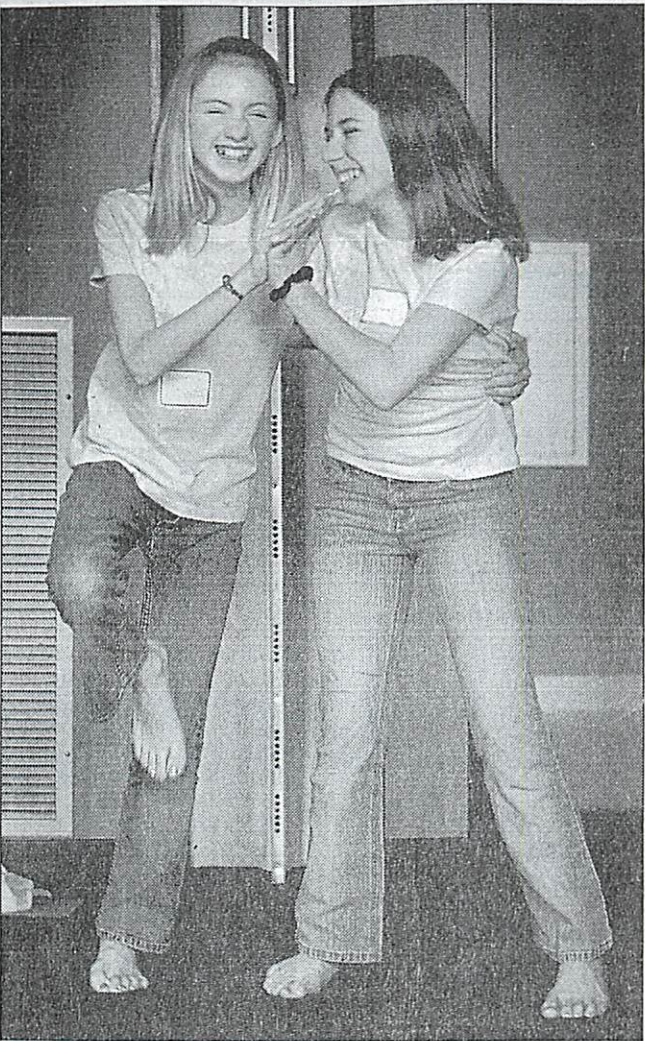
Nearly 200 laughing and sometimes embarrassed adolescent girls and their parents packed the Smullin Center at Rogue Valley Medical Center Saturday for the ninth-annual Parent and Daughter Faire.

Hosted by Planned Parenthood, the fair is geared toward giving pre-teens age 9-12 and a caring adult a chance to communicate on important issues about growing up—even those topics considered taboo.

When the Planned Parenthood teen theater troupe took to the stage squealing and whispering words like "puberty" and "periods," for example, the audience got a serious case of the giggles and oh-my-goshes.

The theater act served as an ice breaker to mini-sessions that included "Managing the Mirror Fears," "Periods, Pimples and Puberty," "You're Beautiful ... Naturally," "Friendship, Fun and Games" and "Partner Yoga."

The theater troupe's fearless leader, Miss No-Making-Fun-Of-Anybody-Else-Girl, appeared in dozens of scenarios in which pre-teens faced emotional and physical changes and had a hard time



Mail Tribune / Jim Craven

Friends Kierstin Michaels, left, and Angelina Basile, both 12 of Medford, giggle as they try to maintain a yoga pose during Saturday's Parent and Daughter Faire in Medford.

Next Faire on Feb. 28

A second Parent and Daughter Faire will be held

couldn't believe it. They took a lot of the tension out of it, like it's all normal, which they should because it is. It was just a great way to bring all those things up without making