

Juvenile Assessment Center  
of Lee County  
2117 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 344-5100  
www.swfjac.org

October 2007

# The JAC Perspective



*The Juvenile Assessment  
Center of Lee County ...  
assisting youth and their  
families to seek the treat-  
ment and programs they  
need to lead productive,  
crime free lives.*

## CALENDAR

### **Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Executive Board**

October 3  
12:00 p.m.  
Southwest Florida Workforce Board

### **Juvenile Sanctions Team**

October 4  
12:00 p.m.  
D'Alessandro Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165  
Fort Myers, FL

### **Lee County Juvenile Justice Council**

October 4  
1:30 p.m.  
D'Alessandro Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165  
Fort Myers, FL

### **Blueprint Commission**

October 17 & 18  
Hyatt Regency Coconut Point  
5001 Coconut Road  
Bonita Springs, FL  
*time to be announced*

**Law enforcement  
should call ahead to**

**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

**when bringing an ar-  
rested youth  
to the JAC.**

## Trick for Treating Teens

Fall is often a special time of year for parents and children as they make plans for Halloween costumes, pick out pumpkins, decide what treats they would like to give out, and plan what parties or events they will attend. It can be a special time of year when parents enjoy healthy communication and activities with their children. What happens to parent-child communication as children become teens? As children become adolescents, they begin to replace talking to parents about their concerns to talking to peers about many of their concerns. They often



begin to exclude parents in discussing their plans and activities. While this is developmentally appropriate as teens begin taking steps toward independence, parents should not confuse these

changes as a sign that their teen no longer needs parental guidance, monitoring, and supervision. Teens may be ready to have input on what rules are needed and may be

given some leeway in negotiating about the consequences for breaking them, but they continue to need parenting and supervision. They still need parents to hold them accountable to the rules and to fol-  
*(Continued page 2)*

## Blueprint Commission Hearing in Lee County

The Blueprint Commission on Juvenile Justice will conduct a public hearing on October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa in Bonita Springs. The commission has been conducting meetings throughout the state to develop a plan that will reform Florida's juvenile justice system. Although the

agenda for the local hearing had not been released at the time of this report, the meetings held so far have featured state and national experts on juvenile justice trends and best practices and

presentations from local community leaders, groups, and other stakeholders. A portion of the meetings have included a town hall meeting format where citi-

zens can also provide comment. The 25-member Commission is comprised of community leaders throughout the state and is chaired by Florida Atlantic University President and former Lieutenant Governor Frank Brogan. The Hyatt Regency Coconut Point is located at

5001 Coconut Road in Bonita Springs. Information on the Blueprint Commission is available online at [www.djj.state.fl.us/blueprint/index.html](http://www.djj.state.fl.us/blueprint/index.html).



## Trick for Treating Teens (cont.)

low through consistently with consequences for breaking them. Teens may complain that their parents are “old fashioned” (also developmentally appropriate), but consistent discipline provides a sense of stability in their lives and also helps teens to feel loved and cared for. Parental monitoring of teen behavior inhibits not only the opportunity for delinquent activity, but negative peer pressure to be involved in such activity as well. Acting without thinking, or poor impulse control, is also develop-

mentally appropriate for teens. Halloween pranks gone awry, transportation mix ups, trying alcohol or

*Screenings of 13 year old arrested males in Lee County showed that 73% had inadequate parental supervision (compared to 48% for 13 year old arrested males statewide).\**

drugs, and trying risky behaviors are likely to be the main safety concerns about teens during the Halloween season. Just as parents planned ahead when their child was younger,

parents should plan ahead with their teen and clearly communicate with them what the plan is for Halloween events. Get the specifics about any parties or events that a teen plans to attend. Who will be there? Who will chaperone? Make sure that drugs and alcohol are not allowed. Make sure that there is a plan for transportation. Make sure that there is an agreed upon time to be home. The trick to treating teens is for parents to stay involved, even as teens become more independent.



Left to right: Luke Kosar, Legislative Aide for Sen. Dave Aronberg, Rep. Gary Aubuchon, and Rep. Nick Thompson are shown presenting a ceremonial check for one of the juvenile justice programs they assisted the community in obtaining during the 2007 Legislative Session at the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council’s September meeting. The legislators were presented “2007 Star Legislator” awards by the council.

*The JAC staff sadly says ‘goodbye’ this month to Catherine Morency, who has worked for Southwest Florida Addictions Services at the JAC for the past four years. We wish Catherine “good luck” in her new venture.*

## Drug Test Kits Available

Free drug test kits are available at the JAC to parents of non-arrested youth. The kits include information for parents on how to use the test kit as a drug prevention strategy with their child. The kits can be picked up at the JAC during regular business hours.

## Parent Pickup Rerouted at JAC

The JAC’s entrance for parent pickup of arrested youth has been changed to the door facing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Recent renovations at the JAC have resulted in a larger lobby for parent pickup. Department of Juvenile Justice Staff have relocated to offices next to the new lobby. The entrance for prevention services will remain the same. Community partners that attend meetings at the JAC may continue to use the old entrance.



*The JAC of Lee County is operated by the Lee County Sheriff’s Office in partnership with the Lee County Board of County Commissioners and the Department of Juvenile Justice.*

\*From Department of Juvenile Justice PACT screening of arrested juveniles as of Sept. 2007.