

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

October 2009

# The JAC Perspective



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

## CALENDAR

### Lee County Juvenile Justice Council

October 1  
1:30 p.m.  
Justice Center Annex  
Sixth Floor, Courtroom A  
Fort Myers

### Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board Executive Committee Meeting

October 7  
1:30 p.m.  
Southwest Florida Workforce  
Development Board  
9530 Marketplace Rd., Ste. 104  
Fort Myers

### Prevention Network

October 9  
10:00 a.m.  
Fort Myers Police Training Facility  
1803 Golf View Avenue  
Fort Myers

**Law enforcement  
should call ahead to**

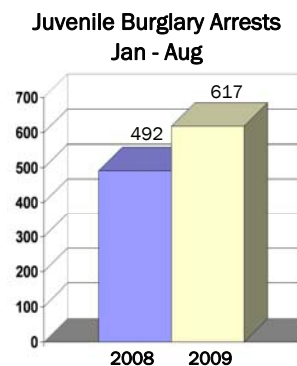
**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

**when bringing an  
arrested youth  
to the JAC.**

## Local Juvenile Burglary Bucks State Trend

During the last weeks of September headlines announced that crime in Florida is down 7.9 percent for the first half of 2009. This figure is part of the 2009 Semi-Annual Uniform Crime Report released by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), which provides a preliminary indication of this year's crime figures. Lee County's figures were even more encouraging, showing an 11.9 percent decline in crime for the first six months of 2009. This overall decline was also mirrored in local juvenile arrests. The JAC saw 10 percent fewer arrested youth during the first half of 2009 than during the same timeframe in 2008. The FDLE reports that burglary was down statewide by 3.9 percent and in Lee County by 1.1 percent. However, the JAC saw 9.7

percent more youth arrested for burglary during the first half of 2009. The figure is even less encouraging when the months of July and August are included. For the first eight months of 2009 the JAC saw 25.4 percent more youth arrested for burglary than for the same timeframe in 2008.



## Middle School Is Prime Time For Parent Talk

Only months ago he was a confident fifth grader. Younger students looked up to him. He was the master of his universe. That was then. Now, that same child who thought he knew it all is the low man on the social totem pole, navigating his way around middle school, facing puberty, and possibly for the first time facing decisions about drugs. The truth is that middle school is a time when youth may be exposed to drugs for the first time. During the 2008-09 school year, the JAC saw more middle school students arrested at school for misdemeanor possession of marijuana (under 20 oz.) than high school students. It is encouraging that in student surveys the



number of Lee County middle school students reporting that they had used marijuana in the past 30 days decreased from 15.9% in 2002 to 7.7% in 2008. Still, in 2008 one in eleven Lee County students ages 10 to 14 reported that they had used marijuana at some time in their lifetimes.\* There is a message in this for parents: Don't wait until kids enter high school to talk to them about drugs. Parents do make a difference. For tips on getting started go to [www.timetotalk.org](http://www.timetotalk.org).

*Kids who learn about the risks of drugs from their parents are up to 50% less likely to use them.*

## What is Juvenile Probation?

About one out of every four youth who enter the juvenile justice system in Lee County, or a little over 700 youth each year, are placed on probation supervision. Probation can be ordered by the court in cases involving a youth who has been found guilty of having committed a delinquent act. Probation is utilized rather than residential placement for youth who pose a lower risk to public safety. When a youth is placed on probation, he or she continues to live at home. The youth may be ordered by the juvenile court judge to complete a number of sanctions and services which are called "conditions of probation." Conditions of probation can include performing community service hours, paying restitution if the victim suffered losses as a result of

the crime, writing an apology letter to the victim, abiding by a curfew, mandatory school attendance, abiding by the school district's student code of conduct, participating in counseling or other community-based programs, and random drug testing. The youth is assigned a Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO) through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. The JPO monitors the youth's compliance with the court ordered sanctions and services. Several local law enforcement agencies have Juvenile Arrest and Monitoring units or "JAM" officers who also assist with monitoring youths' compliance with their court ordered sanctions. If youth do not follow the conditions of their probation, do not complete their probation sanctions, or



obtain additional law violations, a Violation of Probation (VOP) may be filed. This can result in the youth being arrested. If the court finds that a violation of probation did occur, the youth may be given additional sanctions or placed in a Department of Juvenile Justice residential facility. Once the youth has completed all of his or her sanctions and has stayed out of further trouble, then the youth may earn a recommendation for termination from probation supervision. The court approves final termination from supervision.

**Fall 2009  
Juvenile Justice Symposium  
October 13, 2009**

**Session 1**  
**Reframing Zero Tolerance:  
Promising Approaches as  
Alternatives to School Based  
Arrests**  
(8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.)

**Session 2**  
**Best Practices in  
Addressing Truancy**  
(1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)

Joseph P. D'Alessandro Building  
2295 Victoria Avenue  
Room 165 C-D  
Fort Myers

RSVP to [chelton@sheriffleefl.org](mailto:chelton@sheriffleefl.org)

Additional information is at  
[www.swfljac.org/O9symposium.htm](http://www.swfljac.org/O9symposium.htm)

Sponsored by the  
Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board

## JJ Council Meeting Location Change

The meeting location for the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council has changed to the newly opened Justice Center Annex, 6th Floor, Courtroom A. The Justice Center Annex can be entered from 1700 Monroe Street or from either Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. or Main Street just east of the Suntrust Building at 2000 Main Street. The council will meet October 1st at 1:30 p.m. Parking is available off of Liberty Street between Central Avenue and Jackson Street. A free trolley runs between the parking lot and the Justice Center Annex. The Lee County Juvenile Justice Council meetings are open to the public.

*In the first eight months of 2009, 26 percent of all juvenile arrests at the Lee JAC were for Violations of Probation.*



*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.*