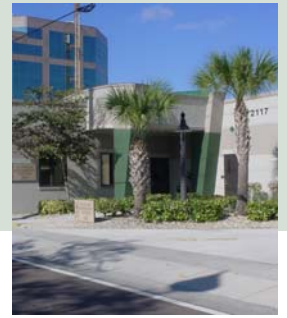


**Juvenile Assessment Center  
of Lee County**  
2117 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
(239) 344-5100  
www.swfjac.org

December 2008

# The JAC Perspective

*Happy Holidays from the JAC Staff*



*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

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

December 3  
1:30 p.m.

Southwest Florida Workforce  
Development Board  
9530 Marketplace Rd., Ste. 104

### **Lee Juvenile Justice Council Planning Retreat**

December 10  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Lee County Human Services  
2440 Thompson Street

### **Juvenile Sanctions Team**

January 8  
12:00 p.m.

Joseph P. D'Alessandro  
Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165C

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

January 8  
1:30 p.m.

Joseph P. D'Alessandro  
Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165C

**Law enforcement  
should call ahead to**

**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

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

## Gangs R Us?

It is not all that unusual for new parents to dress up their infants in cute little outfits. You may have seen baby-sized sports uniforms, dinosaur onesies, or elf pajamas. Here's a new one... baby gang attire. One of the JAC's community partners recently reported working with a parent whose infant was dressed in gang clothing, including appropriately colored bandana, sports jersey, sneakers... right down to a miniature sized gold necklace with the gang's symbol. The Florida Attorney General's office reports that there are more than 50 named gangs in Southwest Florida with over 2,000 identified members operating within the region. No doubt, the infant observed dressed in gang attire was not counted among the identified local gang members...at least not yet. The question is, what are we doing as a community to insure that she never does become a gang member? Attorney General Bill McCollum was in Southwest Florida on November 14<sup>th</sup> to join forces with the local community to



address the growing gang problem in Florida. A statewide strategy is being implemented using regional task forces focused on stopping the growth of gangs in Florida, reducing the number of gangs and gang members, and rendering the remaining gangs ineffectual. The organizing session in November for this region's task force focused on developing cooperative and collaborative strategies for prevention/intervention, law enforcement, rehabilitation, and reentry. Participants included representatives of law enforcement, juvenile justice, corrections, faith-based organizations, youth serving organizations, education, and other community groups committed to providing youth with safe and productive alternatives to gangs. More information about Florida's statewide gang reduction strategy is available online at [www.safeflorida.net/safestreets](http://www.safeflorida.net/safestreets).

## Parents' Guide to Gangs

"Parents' Guide to Gangs" is available from the National Youth Gang Center to help parents recognize and prevent gang involvement. Available in both English and Spanish, the brochure provides parents with information on behaviors associated with joining a gang, common gang identifiers, and what parents can do to keep youth out of gangs. The brochures can be downloaded or ordered online at no charge from [www.iir.com/nygc](http://www.iir.com/nygc).

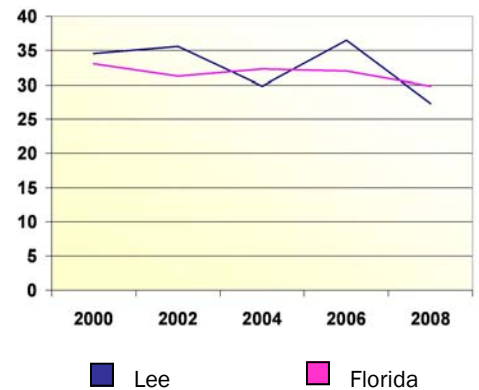


## Lee Makes Progress in Teen Alcohol Use - Risks Remain

The 2008 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey (FYSAS) county-level tables were published online in November. While alcohol is still the drug of choice for Lee County youth, the percentage of youth reporting use of alcohol in the past 30 days was 27.3% in 2008, the lowest it has been since the biannual survey was initiated in 2000. The survey also measures prevalence of risk factors which place youth at greater risk for engaging in problem behaviors. According to the survey, transitions

and mobility continues to be Lee County's predominant risk factor. High scores on this scale indicate that students are frequently changing where they live and where they go to school. When youth frequently change homes and schools, it is harder for them to form healthy bonds with socially appropriate individuals and organizations. The 2008 FYSAS is available at [www.dcf.state.fl.us/mentalhealth/publications/fysas/](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/mentalhealth/publications/fysas/).

Percent of Youth Using Alcohol - Past 30 Days



## Changes Announced in Assessments at the JAC

Southwest Florida Addiction Services (SWFAS) has announced that there will be a \$40 fee for assessments at the JAC beginning in January 2009. A sliding fee scale will be utilized with proof of income. However, SWFAS has indicated that no one will be turned down for services. SWFAS provides walk-in assessments, which includes a drug screening, at the JAC on Tuesdays and Thursdays

starting at 9:00 a.m. No appointment is required. Assessments are provided on a first come first served basis. Assessments are available at the SWFAS office in Cape Coral on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Call the SWFAS office at 772-1211 for questions or to check on the wait times.

## Articles Now Indexed

For anyone who has tried to track down an article from one of *The JAC Perspective's* past editions, the hunt may have gotten a little easier. Many of *The JAC Perspective's* past articles are now indexed by subject area. The subject index is available on the JAC's website from the "Newsletter Archive" page at [www.swfljac.org/archive.htm](http://www.swfljac.org/archive.htm).

## Pre-Screen Zip Code Report Now Available

The Department of Juvenile Justice uses the PACT screening tool to pre-screen all arrested youth. A report of this data is now available for the highest referral zip codes in each county. The data suggests that youth from different areas of the county may have very different levels of risks. The report is available at [www.djj.state.fl.us/Probation/pact.html#PACT](http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Probation/pact.html#PACT). The table below shows two categories of risk screened by the PACT.

Zip Code	Area	Uses Drugs	Not Enrolled in School
33909	Cape Coral	52%	19%
33914	Cape Coral	63%	14%
33990	Cape Coral	62%	16%
33901	Fort Myers	47%	24%
33905	Fort Myers	58%	24%
33916	Fort Myers	50%	17%
33936	Lehigh Acres	53%	18%
33971	Lehigh Acres	46%	20%
33917	N. Ft. Myers	70%	44%

## FAQ: Juvenile Records

The JAC has added Frequently Asked Questions about juvenile criminal records and the sealing and expunging of juvenile criminal records to its website. It is available at [www.swfljac.org/records.htm](http://www.swfljac.org/records.htm).



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.