

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

February 2008

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

LBR Workshop

February 6
12:30 p.m.

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

Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Executive Board

February 6
2:00 p.m.

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

Juvenile Sanctions Team

February 7
12:00 p.m.

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

Lee County Juvenile Justice Council

February 7
1:30 p.m.

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

Prevention Network

February 15
10:00 a.m.

Lee County Human Services
2440 Thompson Street

Committee on Youth Gun Violence

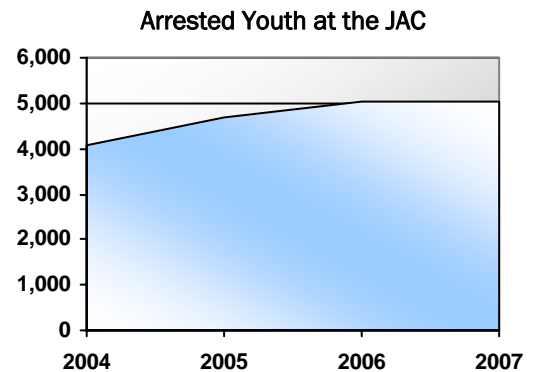
February 29
11:30 a.m.
The Bridge

2128 Cleveland Avenue

(All locations are in Fort Myers)

No Change in Arrest Numbers At JAC for 2007

Between 2006 and 2007, the at-risk youth population (ages 10 to 17) in the JAC's catchment area grew by 5%. The JAC receives almost all youth arrested in Lee County in addition to arrested youth from Charlotte, Glades, and Hendry Counties who score eligible for secure detention. Despite the growth in population, there was little difference in the number of arrested youth brought to the JAC between 2006 and 2007. There were 5,025 youth processed at the JAC in 2007, three youth less than in 2006.



Juvenile Justice Cooperative Education Program Piloted

A Juvenile Justice Cooperative Education Pilot Program began in January with Southwest Florida College and local juvenile justice programs. The program is open to students in the college's Criminal Justice Studies program. Unlike traditional internships in which students work in a single agency, students will observe various facets of the juvenile justice system. They will have the opportunity to observe prevention, booking, screening/assessment, court, diversion, probation, detention, treatment, and commitment programs. The JAC is coordinating the program.



L- R: Charlie Buen and Azer Delva are enrolled in the Juvenile Justice Cooperative Education Pilot Program.

Cooperative Education Program Participating Agencies

Southwest Florida College
Lee County Sheriff's Office
Department of Juvenile Justice
Neighborhood Accountability Boards
Juvenile Arbitration/Teen Court
Southwest Florida Addictions Services
Lutheran Services of Florida
Southwest Florida Marine Institute
SW Florida Regional Detention Center

Law enforcement should
call ahead to

344-5161
or 344-5171

when bringing an
arrested youth
to the JAC.

Group Aims to Reduce Youth Gun Violence

Is gun violence among youth a problem in Lee County? While the incidence of youth gun violence in Lee County is small compared to the total incidence of crime, there are concerning trends. Juvenile arrests for armed robberies in Lee County increased from 32 in 2004 to 60 in 2007, an 87.5% increase. Anecdotally, those working with at-risk youth in Lee County report that there is an increase in youth carrying guns. This perception appears to be supported by the data. In 2004, 20 youth were arrested for carrying a concealed weapon/firearm. In 2007, 45 youth

were arrested for carrying a concealed weapon/firearm, a 125% increase. Youth gun violence is linked to other community risks, which include changing demographics, a decrease in jobs available, an increase in youth who carry guns, an increase in gang activity, an increase in illegal drug sales, family disruption, media violence, and poor parenting skills. All of these risks exist in Lee County. While the incidence of youth gun crimes is low in comparison to overall crime, the Lee County Juvenile Sanctions Team asked, "Is any

level of youth gun violence acceptable?" The Sanctions Team doesn't think it is. It has identified youth gun violence as one of its priority issues for 2008. A subcommittee on Youth Gun Violence will meet the fourth Friday of the month at The Bridge at 11:30 a.m. to develop strategies to reduce youth gun violence in Lee County. For more information or to get involved, contact Jeffrey Shicks at (239) 337-3798.



Delinquency Court Guide

A Family Guide to Delinquency Court is a booklet prepared by the Office of the State Courts Administrator for youth and families. Illustrated by youth and designed with youth in mind, it provides an introduction to the delinquency court process. There is



a place for youth to write down important information, such as,

their next court date and the name of their Juvenile Probation Officer. It includes important reminders, such as, show up to court, wear nice clothes, and show the judge respect. It is available online at www.flcourts.org/gen_public/family/bin/juv_brochure.pdf.

Florida High School - High Tech Promotes Student Success

Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida offers a program for youth with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 22 to promote technology based education and careers. It encourages youth in the program to explore their potential and interests in science, technology,



engineering, and math. The program works to reduce the high school dropout rate of youth with disabilities, increase their enrollment in a post secondary technical school or college, and

improve their participation in employment-related activities. It works primarily as an afterschool program, providing corporate site visits, mentoring, job shadowing, visits to colleges, and assistance with college applications. For more information, contact Tim Goodman, Program Coordinator, at (239) 995-2106, extension 227.

Workshop on Juvenile Justice Legislative Budget Requests

The Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board will hold a workshop for juvenile justice council members on the Legislative Budget Request (LBR) process. The workshop will be on February 6th from 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. at the SW Florida Workforce Development Board at 9530 Marketplace Rd., Suite 104,

Fort Myers. (Please arrive by 12:15 p.m.) Carol Helton, Project Coordinator with the Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County, will facilitate the workshop. A light lunch will be provided. RSVP to Judith.Saint-Sommer@djj.state.fl.us or call (239) 464-6822.



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.