

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

February 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

### Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Executive Board

February 4  
1:30 p.m.

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

### Juvenile Sanctions Team

February 5  
12:00 p.m.

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

### Lee County Juvenile Justice Council

February 5  
1:30 p.m.

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

### Prevention Network

February 13  
10:00 a.m.

Lee County Human Services  
2440 Thompson Street

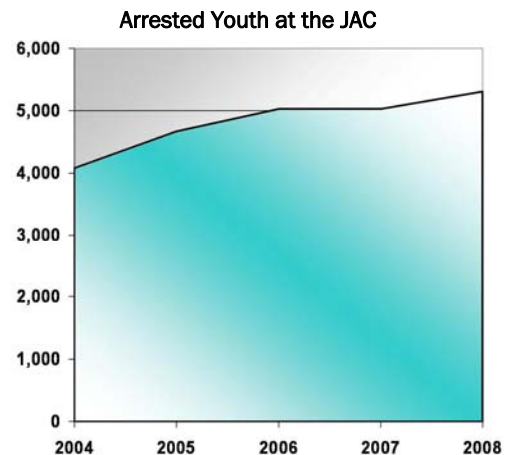
**Law enforcement should call ahead to**

**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

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

## JAC Arrest Numbers Up Slightly in 2008

There were 5,310 arrested youth booked at the JAC during 2008. This is 285 more youth than were processed at the JAC in 2007, a 6% increase. This number represents arrested youth from Lee County plus youth who were screened as eligible for secure detention from Charlotte, Glades, and Hendry Counties. It should be noted that the youth population ages 10-17 in the JAC's catchment area also increased by 5% from 2007 to 2008. See page 2 for a breakdown of the top charges for arrested youth the JAC.



## Medical Clearance Required at the JAC

When a law enforcement officer brings an arrested youth to the JAC, the officer can usually get back on the road within a few minutes. One of the exceptions can be when a youth does not receive a medical, mental health, or substance use clearance. The JAC receives frequent questions about the medical clearance process, so here is an explanation of how it works. Florida statute 985.115(2)(c) outlines how a child taken into custody should be released or delivered from custody under various conditions. Statutes require that if a youth has a serious medical condition, a mental illness, or is incapacitated by substance use that the youth should be delivered by a law enforcement officer to other treatment facilities instead of to a JAC. Therefore, every arrested youth brought to the JAC goes through a screening process before he can be accepted into the JAC. When an arrested youth arrives at the JAC, a Department of Juvenile Justice screener inquires whether the presenting law

enforcement officer has observed specific physical symptoms and/or behaviors in the youth. The screener also asks the youth a series of questions to determine whether he has any injuries, medical problems,



health symptoms, is taking drugs or medications, or has any suicidal ideation. The screener also answers a series of questions on the screening form from his own observations of the youth. If there are no specified medical or behavioral symptoms identified, then the youth is accepted into the JAC. If the youth reports or demonstrates specific health, medical, and/or behavioral symptoms, then medical clearance is required by a qualified health care professional. At that time a nurse from the jail and the booking sergeant are called in to review the  
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**Total Arrests and Top Charges at the JAC**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	%
Total Arrests	4,072	4,672	5,028	5,025	5,310	+6%
Larceny Petit Theft	383	629	527	719	687	-4%
Burglary	574	550	847	633	661	+4%
Larceny	412	403	376	284	506	+78%
Assault/Battery	323	336	334	321	356	+11%
Misdemeanor Marijuana	234	258	318	306	335	+9%
Vandalism/Criminal Mischief	106	153	217	255	167	-34%
Non Marijuana Felony Drug	158	169	164	151	120	-21%
Auto Theft	147	151	212	107	74	-31%
Aggravated Assault/Battery	68	86	137	93	74	-20%

\*Percent change from 2007 to 2008.

**Medical Clearance Required at the JAC (cont.)**

case. If the youth is medically cleared by the nurse, he can then be admitted into the JAC. However, if it is determined that the youth is suffering from a physical condition and is in need of a prompt diagnosis or medical treatment, then a law enforcement officer is required by statute to deliver the youth to a hospital for evaluation and treatment. If it is determined that the youth is mentally ill or has recently threatened, attempted, or inflicted physical harm on himself or others (or will do so in the near future) due to a mental illness,

then a law enforcement officer is required to deliver the youth to a designated public receiving facility. If it is determined that the youth is incapacitated by substance use, then a law enforcement officer is required to deliver the youth to a hospital, addictions receiving facility, or treatment resource center. In Lee County the designated public receiving facility is Lee Mental Health Center’s Child/Adolescent Crisis Stabilization Unit/Addiction Receiving Facility at the VISTA campus.

**Drug Kit Program Ended**

The JAC has discontinued giving out free drug test kits to parents of non-arrested youth. The drug test kit program has been well received by parents who have received instructions along with the kits for how to use them as a drug prevention tool. Over 600 drug test kits have been given out since the program began in August 2007. The JAC has ended the program in an effort to do some “belt tightening” due to the present economic conditions. Parents are

reminded that drug test kits are available for purchase at many local drug stores.

The JAC welcomes Carolina Ferrer from Lutheran Services of Florida. She will be providing counseling at the JAC to non-arrested youth and their families.

**Price to Close**

Price Halfway House, a state run residential program for delinquent boys in Fort Myers, will close March 1. Efforts are underway to transfer the youth in the program to other facilities throughout the state. According to the Department of Juvenile Justice, the closure of Price is the result of the budget reductions taken during the recent 2009 Legislative Special Session “A”. Price is the only residential juvenile justice program in Lee County.

**Nebraska Guests**

JAC staff recently met with the Honorable Christopher Rodgers, County Commissioner and Kim Culp, JAC Director from Douglas County, Nebraska. They toured the Lee JAC and compared notes about how their county’s assessment center operates in Omaha.



Kim Culp (L) and Hon. Chris Rodgers (R)



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.