

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

March 2008

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

Juvenile Sanctions Team

March 6
12:00 p.m.
D'Alessandro Office Complex
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165

Lee County Juvenile Justice Council

March 6
1:30 p.m.
D'Alessandro Office Complex
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165

Prevention Network

March 13
10:00 a.m.
Lee County Human Services
2440 Thompson Street

Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board

March 19
1:30 p.m.
Southwest Florida Workforce
Development Board
9530 Marketplace Rd., Ste. 104

Committee on Youth Gun Violence

March 28
11:30 a.m.
The Bridge
2128 Cleveland Avenue

*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.*

Risky Behaviors Pose Long Term Health Risks

Risky behaviors cluster together for teens. If a teen smokes, uses drugs or alcohol, skips school, is behind in school, or engages in illegal behavior, he or she is more likely to also engage in risky sexual behaviors. This can include early first intercourse, unprotected sex, or sex with multiple partners. These behaviors put adolescents at greater risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease (STD). There are around 25 different STD's. Many can occur without symptoms and can go undetected for years. Contracting an STD can have serious negative long term health consequences for teens including



sterility or incurable STD's, such as, genital herpes and HIV. While some youth programs specifically focus on adolescent reproductive health, most positive youth development programs are also helping youth avoid risky sexual behavior just by forming positive, caring relationships with youth, helping them to succeed in school, and providing opportunities that support youth in developing positive goals for the future.

Additional strategies that those working with at-risk youth can utilize to help improve adolescent reproductive health include the following.

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JAC to Distribute Drug Test Kits at Drug House Odyssey

If you have been meaning to pick up a free drug test kit from the JAC and just haven't managed to stop by, here is another option. JAC staff will be available to distribute drug test kits to parents at this year's Drug House Odyssey, April 1 - 3, from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m., at Cape Christian Fellowship, 2110 Chiquita Blvd. South in Cape Coral. A drug test kit is one tool that parents can use to reinforce the message to their youth that drug use is unacceptable. If a parent suspects that their child has been using drugs, a drug test kit is a way to verify drug use. If a youth tests positive, a family can begin to access services in the community to help their



youth before he or she develops a serious substance abuse problem or ends up getting arrested. Having a drug test kit at home can also provide a youth with a believable excuse to say "no" if they are asked by peers to try drugs. In addition to the drug test kit, parents will receive information on how to use the kit as a drug prevention tool, ideas for talking to youth about drug use, warning signs of substance abuse, and information on resources in the community to assist them if their child does test positive for an illegal drug. Parents will need to spend approximately five minutes with JAC staff to receive instructions on how to use kits. *(read more on Drug House Odyssey 2008 on page 2)*

(cont.) Risky Behaviors

- Be aware of risk factors associated with teen risks for STD’s. This includes teens who engage in other risky behaviors, teens with much older dating partners, especially girls with much older male partners, and teens whose parents do not closely monitor their behavior.
- Use role playing to teach youth how to resist when they receive pressure from others to engage in risky behaviors.
- Educate parents on parenting skills which encourage positive

In 2005, 46.8% of high school aged youth reported that they have had sex, and 14.3% of students reported having had sex with four or more partners.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

parent/child communication, help parents to become connected with their children, and provide monitoring of youth’s behavior.

- Provide adolescents and their parents with information about available resources and local services.

What is available in Lee County to address STD’s in adolescents?

The Lee County Health Department recently began offering voluntary STD testing for girls at the Southwest Florida Regional Detention Center. STD testing and counseling is also available at the Lee County Health Department (3920 Michigan Ave., Fort Myers, phone 332-9610). The results are confidential and cannot be shared with the youth’s parents. Health Department staff are also available to come to youth programs to do presentations. Call 332-9557 or 332-9566 for more information.

Drug House Odyssey 2008

Drug House Odyssey includes a series of dramatizations showing youth making good and bad choices about the use of illicit substances. Participants are guided from scene to scene as the consequences of the teens’ choices unfold. The event is free and open to the public on April 1-3 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Cape Christian Fellowship,

2110 Chiquita Blvd. S. in Cape Coral. Tours start every ten minutes and last about an hour. Drug House Odyssey is coordinated by the Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida in partnership with more than a dozen other agencies. For more information contact the Coalition at (239) 573-8747.



Scene from Drug House Odyssey 2007



The JAC welcomes Reina Lombardi with Lutheran Services of Florida. Reina provides counseling to non-arrested youth and their families at the JAC through a Partnering for Results grant from Lee County.

Parent Information/ Support Groups

Presented by Southwest Florida Addictions Services (SWFAS)

at the
Juvenile Assessment Center
2117 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
Fort Myers
Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Choice Theory Parenting Skills
March 6

Teens and Substance Abuse
March 13

Assessments and Court System
March 20

Coping Skills and Safety Plans
March 27

Call 772-1211 for information

Gang Prevention Offered

The Bridge will begin offering The Phoenix Curriculum weekly on Thursdays at 5:00 p.m. starting April 3rd. The Phoenix Curriculum addresses key risk factors for gang involvement, aggression, bullying, substance abuse, violence, and other crimes. The program will be available for middle and high school students. For more information contact Jeffrey Shicks at (239) 337-3798 or jshicks@fccfm.org. The Bridge is an afterschool program located at 2128 Cleveland Avenue in Fort Myers.