

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

July 2007

# 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

July 5  
1:30 p.m.  
D'Alessandro Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165

### Prevention Network

July 10  
11:00 a.m.  
Lee JAC

### Juvenile Sanctions Team

July 12  
1:30 p.m.  
Lee JAC

### Circuit 20 Referral Reduction Committee

July 18  
11:30 a.m.  
Southwest Florida Workforce Board

### Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board

July 18  
1:30 p.m.  
Southwest Florida Workforce Board

### Case Processing Workgroup Diversion Subcommittee

July 25  
12:00 p.m.  
Lee JAC

**Law enforcement  
should call ahead to**

**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

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

## Detention Alternative Saves County

Secure detention is utilized by the juvenile justice system to detain arrested youth, who may be a risk to the community or who are a flight risk, until their case goes to court for a disposition hearing. In Florida, a youth cannot be held in secure detention more than 21 days (*in most instances*). The state began charging counties in 2005 for youth that stay in secure detention prior to their disposition hearing. The state estimates Lee County's detention bill will be \$3,471,178 for the next year based on past utilization. However, Lee County has had the opportunity since March to participate in a Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) detention alter-



native pilot program. Youth who are eligible for secure detention are screened to determine whether they can safely be detained in an alternative detention program. If approved by the court, the youth may remain at home under intensive supervision by DJJ. 97% of the youth have remained crime free while in the program. The program has saved 437 detention days\* at an approximate savings to the county of \$77,220. According to Harry Smith, state coordinator of the program, Lee County was chosen as one of three counties in the state to pilot the program based on its history of collaboration among its juvenile justice partners. Smith recently advised the community that DJJ plans to continue the pilot program for the next year.

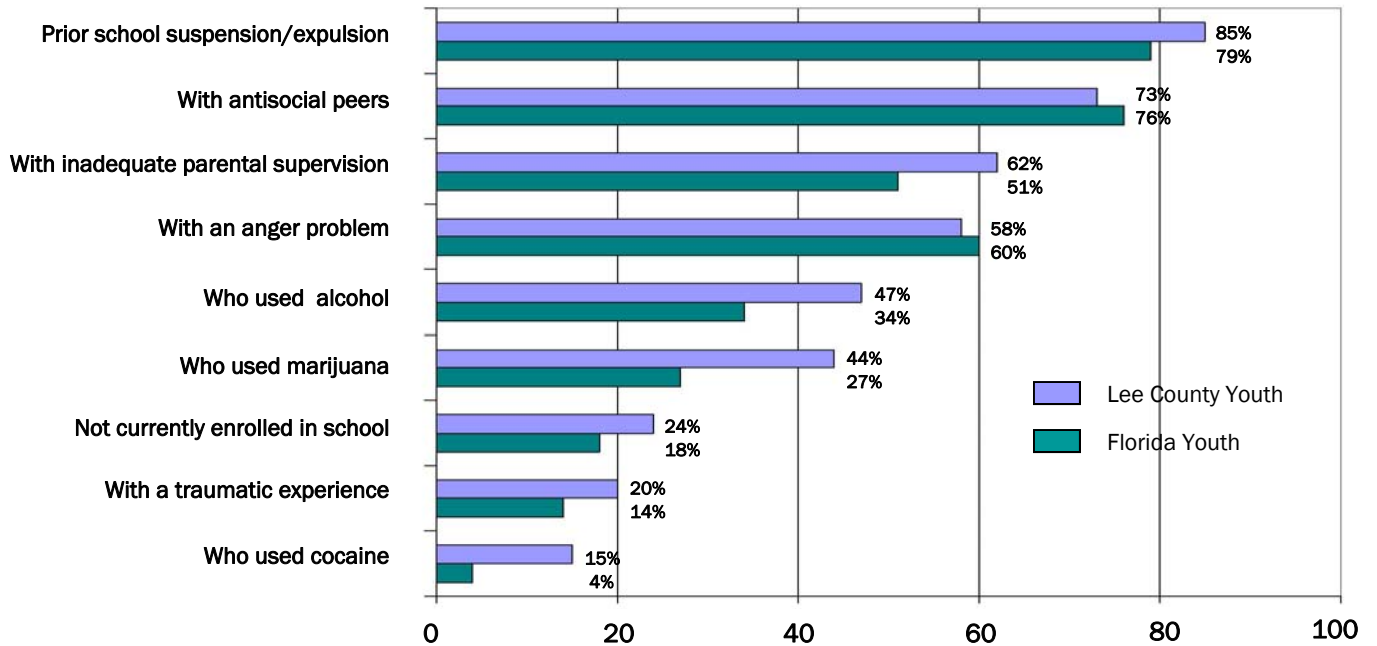
## In Search of "Pump Handles"

In the 1850's, London was overwhelmed by an outbreak of cholera. Hundreds of people were dieing. Hospitals were overflowing. At the time, not much was known about the causes of cholera. John Snow, a London physician, took an approach to solving the problem that was considered novel in the 1850's. He began tracking information about the people who were infected with cholera. He identified that most of the people getting sick lived in one specific area of London. He learned that people who lived in the targeted area got their water primarily from the Broad Street pump. Although he could not explain the specific cause, he be-



lieved that drinking the water from the Broad Street pump put people at risk for contracting cholera. He convinced the city, as an experiment, to remove the pump handle from the Broad Street pump. The cholera epidemic quickly subsided. This was the beginning of the public health model which identifies risk factors related to diseases. A more recent example of the public health model is that research has identified that behaviors such as smoking, poor diet, and lack of exercise are risk factors for developing cardiovascular diseases. The criminal justice field began incorporating a public health model in the last two decades. Since that time science has (*continued page 2*)

**Percent of Arrested Youth With Specific Risks to Re-Offend**



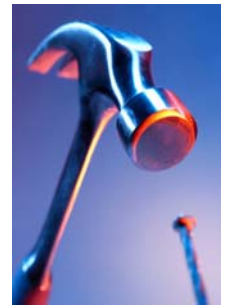
From Department of Juvenile Justice PACT screening of arrested youth, as of June 2007

**“Pump Handles” (cont.)**

made great strides in identifying individual and community risk factors that can predict the likelihood of criminal behavior and the odds that an individual will re-offend. Research tells us that key predictors of youth re-offending include antisocial values, antisocial peers, poor self control and problem solving skills, family dysfunction, low levels of academic and vocational skills, and substance abuse. Community risk factors include a high rate of school dropouts or a high level of substance abuse in the community, for example. The Juvenile Assessment Center of Lee County screens and assesses for risks at both the individual and community level. The JAC also promotes the development of strategies to reduce the risks at both the individual and community level. The story of John Snow reminds us that solving the problem of crime may not be an exact science yet, but progress is possible if we identify the risks and implement strategies to reduce the risks.

**Pardon Our Dust**

The JAC is undergoing renovations to create more efficient utilization of its current space. It has not been unusual for the existing lobby to accommodate a standing room only crowd on the JAC’s busiest days. The renovation will result in a new entrance for parent pick-up and a larger waiting area.



**Probation Officer Honored**



Zaida Maldonado, Juvenile Probation Officer with the Department of Juvenile Justice in Lee County, was named Employee of the Year for Circuit 20 and for DJJ’s South Region. Pictured at the award presentation, L to R: Perry Anderson, DJJ Regional Director; Zaida Maldonado; Al Campbell, Asst. DJJ Regional Director; Frank Busbee, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer; and Hon. James Seals, Circuit Court Judge.



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.