

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

August 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

Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Executive Board

August 6
1:30 p.m.

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

Juvenile Sanctions Team

August 7
12:00 p.m.

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

Lee County Juvenile Justice Council

August 7
1:30 p.m.

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

Prevention Network

August 8
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.**

3:00 p.m. - Do You Know Where Your Child Is?

School clothes. Check. School supplies. Check. A 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. plan. *What is this?* During this time of year the community and many families are making plans for the start of the school year. It is also time to consider what youth will be doing in the hours after school is dismissed for the day. The prime time for youth crime (and other risky youth behaviors) is between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. on school days.

National figures show that juvenile crime peaks on school days at 3:00 p.m.* While it may be obvious that elementary school aged children need



supervision after school, older youth and even teens also need something to do with their time after school.

Teens that are supervised or involved in structured activities during after school hours are less likely to engage in risky behaviors than those youth who are unsupervised.

Communities can help reduce youth problem behaviors by supporting access for all youth to attend after school programs, supervised extra-curricular activities, and other
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Just Ask!

You won't see it on a billboard or on the side of a bus, at least not yet. But, you may begin to see **Just Ask!** fliers and posters in the community starting in August. The **Just Ask!** campaign is an initiative of the Prevention Network of Lee County, a committee of the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council. The initiative is intended to remind and educate parents to stay engaged in the lives of their youth. Despite all of the competing influences in youths' lives, parents are still youths' most important influence. Lack of parent engagement puts kids at risk for all kinds of risky behavior including delinquency, school drop out, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and violence. There is no funding for the initiative so it will be up to each participating service provider, agency, organization, or individual who



wishes to participate to print, post, and distribute the messages and materials. It is hoped that, if parents see and hear the same message multiple times in different locations, they may put the ideas into practice. Every couple of months there will be a new theme. Some themes will remind parents that it is important to continue to monitor
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* "Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report"

3:00 p.m. - Do You Know Where Your Child Is? (cont.)

structured activities after school lets out. Parents can help reduce youth problem behaviors by encouraging youth to take part in supervised activities available to them after school. If a youth is unable or unwilling to take part in structured, supervised after school activities, it is important for parents to plan other strategies to monitor their youth's behavior. Parents should be clear with their youth on the rules about where the youth is allowed to be and who he/she is allowed to be with during unsupervised after school hours. If working parents are able, they should consider occasional

unannounced visits home during after school hours or otherwise check that their youth is where he said he was going to be. If this is not possible, parents may want to enlist help from other family members, friends, or neighbors to occasionally check up on unsupervised youth. For more information on monitoring and raising healthy teens, access "Navigating the Teen Years: A Parent's Handbook for Raising Healthy Teens" at www.theantidrug.com/pdfs/resources/general/nav_the_teen_years.pdf.

Assessments of Lee County youth offenders indicated that 51% had poor parent supervision. (From Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, youth assessed from July 2006 through December 2007).

Just Ask! (cont.)

their youth's behavior, even through middle school and high school. For example, parents will be reminded to **Just Ask!** their youth "Where are you going, what will you be doing, who will you be with, and when will you be home?" Other themes will provide suggestions for teaching what is right and wrong, communicating with youth, and identifying warning signs that indicate a youth may be having problems. For each theme there will be information on where parents can get more information or

how to get help in the community. Participants are asked to place posters or fliers in offices, on bulletin boards, or other public places. Postcards can be printed to leave in waiting areas or to pass out to parents, clients, or employees. Call the JAC at 344-5100 to receive email notices on the **Just Ask!** campaign. Materials for the **Just Ask!** campaign will be available soon at www.swfljac.org/justask.htm.



The JAC welcomes Jacqueline Seaton. Jacqueline will provide counseling at the JAC for non-arrested youth and their families through a Lee County grant to Lutheran Services of Florida.

Youth Services Gaps Surveys

The Lee County Juvenile Justice Council and the Fort Myers Youth Services Coalition are conducting a youth services gaps survey. The survey is open to anyone who has knowledge of youth services in Lee County. A separate survey is available for youth to provide input. The surveys will be used to help plan and prioritize youth services in Lee County. To access the surveys go to www.swfljac.org/survey.htm. It is requested that the surveys be returned no later than August 15th



by fax to 344-5151, by email to chelton@sheriffleefl.org or by mail to the JAC at 2117 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33901.



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.