

Juvenile Assessment Center  
of Lee County  
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September 2006

# 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

September 7  
1:30 a.m.  
Old Lee County Courthouse  
East Room

### Juvenile Sanctions Team

September 14  
1:30 p.m.  
Lee JAC

### Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board

September 20  
1:30 p.m.  
Southwest Florida Workforce  
Development Board



*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.*

## The Trauma and Delinquency Connection

Mention "trauma" and chances are that thoughts turn to medical trauma and a "trauma center" at a local hospital. However, "trauma" can also refer to psychological trauma. Psychological trauma can result from experiences of being a victim of physical or sexual abuse, experiencing serious life threats or injuries, witnessing violence or severe injury of others, and severe or repeated loss. Psychological trauma can be the result of either a unique individual experience of an event or it can result from enduring conditions. Severe, chronic trauma in childhood and adolescence can have a variety of emotional, behavioral, cognitive, physical, biochemical, and neurological consequences. All can adversely affect a

youth's development and functioning. Research is clear that there is a high correlation between past traumatic experience and delinquency. Youth in the juvenile justice system are at high risk for development of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Rates for PTSD among youth in juvenile justice settings are up to eight times as high as in community samples of similar age peers. Although trauma effects can manifest in a variety of ways, when combined with other risk factors, trauma can be integral in the development and persistence of antisocial behavior. If untreated, the effects of trauma can account for a youth's lack of empathy, impulsivity, anger, acting out, and resistance to treatment or intervention.

## TRUE Assists Girls With Trauma Issues

The Children's Advocacy Center of Southwest Florida is now accepting referrals for the TRUE Girls Program (Trauma Resolution through Understanding and Education). This is a ten-week therapeutic group with aftercare services to assist girls ages 12 to 17 in managing feelings related to a history of trauma. There is no charge for the services. Call Andrea Bishop at 939-2808 to make a referral or for more information. The TRUE program was made possible through a special legislature appropriation for Lee County during the 2006 state legislative session.



*It is estimated that 60% of girls in the juvenile justice system have a history of being abused, 60% have witnessed domestic violence, and more than 50% have a history of being sexually abused.*

## Southwest Florida Trauma Recovery Network

The field of trauma treatment is a relatively new one. Many treatment professionals have never been trained in trauma specific interventions. Trauma issues have largely gone unrecognized and undiagnosed. Many human service agencies have never considered how to effectively address trauma within their systems of care. Sometimes standard practices within systems of care can trigger maladaptive responses or re-traumatize the very people they were designed to help. The Southwest Florida Trauma Recovery Network (TRN) hopes to change that.

TRN is a collaborative effort between local agencies that provide services to children and adults who have been exposed to a wide variety of traumatic circumstances. The TRN's goal is to promote the delivery of effective, evidence-based trauma treatment and trauma informed services to children and their families throughout Southwest Florida. Next month the TRN will make internet based training on "trauma informed practice" available for local human service agencies and professionals. More information will follow in a future newsletter.



*Laurene Folkins performs a variety of duties at the JAC. She provides data reports and analysis, supervises interns, greets the public, and is often the helpful voice one hears when calling the JAC.*

## Celebrating Community Partnerships

On August 21st, the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council recognized local legislators for their efforts to bring state funding to Southwest Florida for juvenile justice initiatives. Representative Jeff Kottkamp, Senator Dave Aronberg, and Representative Trudi Williams were honored at the event.



Rep. Jeff Kottkamp accepts a "Star Legislator" recognition from the Hon. Sherra Winesett, Circuit Court Judge and immediate past-chair of the Lee County Juvenile Sanctions Team.



Senator Dave Aronberg accepts a "Star Legislator" recognition from Kevin Lewis, Lee County Juvenile Justice Council Chair.



Greg Johnson, Assistant Secretary for Prevention and Victims' Services with the Department of Juvenile Justice, addresses the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council on August 21st.

## Transformations

Susan Flynn, with Lutheran Services Florida, is new to the JAC. Susan provides the Transformations program at the JAC. Transformations offers individual, family, and gender specific group counseling to assist families in preventing youth from engaging in delinquent behavior. There is no cost for the services. For information, call Susan at 344-5109.



*The JAC welcomes Susan Flynn, new counselor for the Transformations program.*