

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

September 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

### Prevention Network

September 6  
12:00 p.m.

D'Alessandro Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165  
Fort Myers, FL

### Lee County Juvenile Justice Council "Celebrating Community Partnerships"

September 6  
1:30 p.m.

D'Alessandro Office Complex  
2295 Victoria Ave., Room 165  
Fort Myers, FL

### Juvenile Sanctions Team

September 10  
12:00 p.m.  
Lee JAC

### Circuit 20 Juvenile Justice Board

September 19  
12:00 p.m.

St. Matthew's House  
2001 South Airport Pulling Road  
Naples, FL

**Law enforcement  
should call ahead to**

**344-5161  
or 344-5171**

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

## Drug Test Kits Available at the JAC

A young man recently came to the JAC to request a free drug test kit. He had heard on the news that the JAC has begun to give out free drug test kits to parents of middle school age, non-arrested youth. He said that he was worried that his younger sister is using drugs, but that their mother is denying it. He nodded with recognition as he reviewed information included with the kit on the warning signs of substance abuse. He admitted that he is currently involved in substance abuse treatment for himself. He explained that he hoped he could get his sister help sooner than he had gotten help for his own substance abuse problem. This young man's personal observations confirm what research tells us. On average, it takes parents

*On average, it takes parents two years to recognize that their child has a drug abuse problem.*

two years to recognize that their child has a drug abuse problem. Most youth are first exposed to drugs much earlier than parents are aware. A survey of Lee County youth indicated that 24% of middle school youth have tried an illicit drug. The average age that a Lee County youth first tries marijuana is age 12. According to Bill Naylor, Assessment Center Manager, "We want to get the word out to parents that middle school is a time when many youth are first exposed to drugs. Parents need to pay attention and monitor what their middle school youth are doing." According to Naylor, a drug test kit is one tool that a parent can use to send the message to their kids that drug use is unacceptable and hopefully prevent their kids from using drugs. If a parent *(continued page 2)*

## Celebrating Community Partnerships

On September 6th, the Lee County Juvenile Justice Council will honor Representative Nick Thompson, Senator Dave Aronberg, and Representative Gary Aubuchon for their efforts during the 2007 legislative session on behalf of Southwest Florida youth. Ceremonial checks will be presented for local juvenile justice programs funded this year by the State of Florida. Programs that received funding through Community Budget Is-



sue Requests and with local legislator sponsorship include Associated Marine Institutes for contracted conditional release, the Children's Advocacy Center for trauma counseling with victimized youth, and Abuse Counseling and Treatment for domestic violence diversion. The event will be held September 6th at 1:30 p.m. at the Joseph P. D'Alessandro Building, 2295 Victoria Avenue, Room, 165 in Fort Myers. The public is invited.

## Tune in to Teen Culture

Does “C” describe your awareness of teen culture, as in the acronym KPC? (*Translation: Keeping Parent Clueless*) 95% of parents don’t recognize the lingo that kids use to communicate on the computer. POS (Parent Over Shoulder), for example, is used to warn someone that a parent is watching. The use of LMIRL (Let’s Meet In Real Life) should be a concern when one considers that 89% of sexual solicitations to kids are made in either chat rooms or through Instant Messages. How real is the threat? 20% of children ages 10 to 17 have received unwanted sexual solicitations online. 75% of youth who receive an online sexual solicitation do not tell a parent. It is important to spend time learning about teen culture to be better able to communicate with teens and to better understand the influences in their lives. Here are some places to



start. If you haven’t already, check out popular web sites, such as, MySpace and YouTube. Try a search using words such as “marijuana” to see what information kids can potentially be exposed to. Find definitions to internet lingo at Net-Lingo. Be sure to check out the site’s “Top 20 Acronyms Every Parent Needs to Know.” The Entertainment Software Rating Board provides information at [www.esrb.org/ratings](http://www.esrb.org/ratings)

about the content in computer and video games so consumers, especially parents, can make an informed purchase decision. Find lyrics to music at [music.yahoo.com/lyrics](http://music.yahoo.com/lyrics). After exploring what kids can be exposed to in today’s culture, you may decide that a little more POS is not such a bad thing.

## Drug Test Kits (cont.)

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. In addition to the drug test kit, parents receive information on how to use the kits 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 parents if their child does test positive for an illegal drug. Having a drug test kit in the home can also provide a youth with a believable excuse to say “no” if they are asked

by peers to try drugs. Although the JAC is targeting parents of middle school youth, it does not turn away parents of non-arrested youth under age 18, or even an older sibling worried about a younger brother or sister. The drug test kits can be picked up at the Juvenile Assessment Center at 2117 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd. in Fort Myers, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Parents will need to spend approximately five minutes with assessment center staff to receive instructions on how to use the drug test kits. For more information, call the assessment center at (239) 344-5100.



*The JAC welcomes Sarah Arnold, Juvenile Probation Officer Supervisor with the Department of Juvenile Justice. She will oversee the DJJ screening of all arrested juveniles brought to the JAC.*



*Kaya, a trained drug dog, will go into the schools this year with LCSO Corporal Chris Lusk to do random, open air searches for drugs. Schools can request Kaya’s assistance by calling LCSO Youth Services at 477-1000.*



*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.*