



DJJ MISSION

To increase public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention and treatment services that strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youth.

Message from the Chair

The last several weeks have been times of great stress for staff throughout the county. In every system, child welfare, education, juvenile justice and state and county governments people have been wondering and waiting for the news to come – “do I have a job?” or “what job do I have?” As I write this that question is still unanswered for some.

While there may be fewer jobs or people working in the positions they used to have the problems and concerns of youth do not evaporate. As a matter of fact there is a good probability that there will be more problems and an increasing need for services. Preliminary data seems to indicate that more youth are being referred to the department this year than in previous years thereby reversing the trend to reduce the number of youth touching the system.

As the Board Chair I was both chagrined and heartened in the last several weeks. First my chagrin, the Palm Beach Post reported that Palm Beach County did not have a Civil Citation program when in fact we were one of the first counties to establish such a process in 1992. Our civil citation program is our Youth Court and diversion programs, including the Juvenile First Offender programs implemented by local law enforcement, the Palm Beach

County Sheriff’s Office and School Police. These programs divert more than 5000 youth per year from the court system.

Now the heartened part, on May 16th we were privileged to have an all-day visit by the new Department of Juvenile Justice Secretary, Ms. Wansley Walters. The Circuit received accolades for its commitment to serving youth.

The fiscal picture continues to look dim for the immediate future and probably for the next several years. However, we are here to serve the children to the best of our ability. This crisis shall challenge us to re-examine our programs and services and streamline and integrate where possible. The children depend upon us. They are our future and we cannot let them down.

If you are interested in working with the Circuit 15 Juvenile Justice Board please contact me. We are open and willing to accept the support of community volunteers. You can make a difference in the life of a child.

Chair, Barbara Gerlock

Notable Events

- ★ August 19th: Juvenile Justice Overview & Detention Center Tour.....561-355-6586
- ★ August 22nd: 1st day of school.....
- ★ October 15th: AVDA Race For Hope.....561-265-3797 x 118

Local Resources

- ◆ **Juvenile Justice Board Website.....www.c15jjb.com**
- ◆ Florida Community Alliance.....561-904-6514
- ◆ Delinquency Drug Court.....561-355-6586
- ◆ Technical Education Center (Belle Glade)561-993-1126
- ◆ Juvenile Education Clinics..... 561-355-6856
- ◆ Mavericks High.....561-296-5705

Parents....need help?

Since 1986, **Children's Home Society** of Florida (CHS) has operated Safe Harbor, Palm Beach County's only emergency shelter for runaway, homeless, truant and ungovernable youth. Safe Harbor provides short term shelter for male and female youth 10-17 years old that meet the criteria established in F.S. 984 for Children in Need of Services/ Families in Need of Services (CINS/FINS). The ultimate goal is to reunify youth with their families and connect them with referrals to address their specific needs.

CHS also provides non-residential counseling for more than 200 youth and families each year. Counselors provide individual and family counseling to youth in their homes, in school, or at CHS offices in West Palm Beach. The counseling addresses a wide array of behavioral issues including truancy and rebelliousness.

Ms. Julie DeMar, Director of Program Operations for CHS, oversees all residential programs, adoptions and services to homeless, runaway and at-risk youth. Ms. DeMar has a Master's Degree in Social Work, and more than 12 years of experience in social services and child welfare, including more than 6 years of supervisory experience in those areas. She has been with CHS since 2004. Reporting to Ms. Demar are Joan Jordan and John Sherman. Ms. Jordan is the Clinical Supervisor of the CINS/FINS residential and non-residential programs. Ms. Jordan has a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology and is a licensed therapist in the State of Florida. Ms. Jordan has 25 years experience working with youth and homeless populations in both professional and volunteer positions. She has been with CHS since 2008. Mr. Sherman is the Program Manager of Safe Harbor. He is pursuing a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice and has more than 10 years of experience working with delinquent youth and their families in both professional and volunteer positions. Mr. Sherman has been with CHS since 2009.



For more information about CHS, please contact **John Sherman**:
john.sherman@chsfl.org or (561) 307-9033

Community Program Spotlight

ASPIRA Palm Beach, a division of ASPIRA of Florida, Inc., is a community-based youth organization. Operating in Palm Beach County since 1996, ASPIRA’S mission is “to empower the Puerto Rican, Latino and other communities through advocacy and the education and leadership development of its youth.” The basic philosophy of ASPIRA is the belief that school, parents, youth, and community must interact to bring about positive results. ASPIRA’s goals for youth are to develop their leadership potential, to develop their skills to the advancement of the community, to motivate, orient and assist through counseling and educational services, to advocate for greater access to quality education, leadership programs and other opportunities.

The ASPIRA Clubs are educational peer culture models organized and facilitated by Advisors at school sites. The Advisors follow a curriculum that includes educational, leadership, anti-violence and skill development components. ASPIRA utilizes an educational peer culture model known as the ASPIRA Club system. The ASPIRA Clubs meet on a weekly basis, operate under parliamentary procedures, and elect peer representatives as officers of the clubs.

With funding from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, ASPIRA implements a violence prevention and leadership skills building program, (REACH), at Lake Worth Middle School. Targeting 33 low-income, mostly Hispanic middle school youth, who live in high crime neighborhoods, the program utilizes the Teen Outreach curriculum in order to engage youth in community service projects that bond them with their community. Since July 1, 2010, youth in the program have had opportunities to help organize food with Feeding South Florida, clean up Lake Worth beach, to create holiday cards for soldiers and sorting hair for Locks of Love. Also, in November 2010, ASPIRA brought girls from the program to attend the “Girls Going Places” conference at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton where they spent the day learning about entrepreneurship and financial independence.

ASPIRA has been funded by DJJ since 2001 for various youth violence prevention programs, with all achieving very high rates of success. According to DJJ’s data from 2008 – 2010, the ASPIRA REACH Program served 79 youth with only 2 referred to the Juvenile Justice system while in the program and 0 referred within 6 months of release from the program. ASPIRA fully engages youth with interesting, hands-on lessons which teaches them alternatives to using violence and strengthens their leadership skills to prevent negative peer pressure from influencing their decisions.

ASPIRA currently operates other prevention programs within 6 elementary schools and 4 high schools in the Palm Beach County area.



YOUTH VIOLENCE: RESEARCH ON CAUSES & BEST PRACTICES

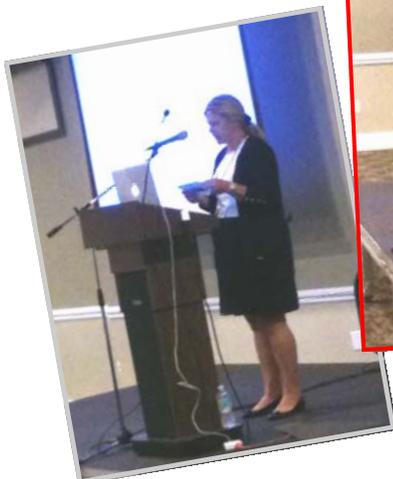
In collaboration with Office of the State Courts Administrator, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit sponsored a free community education session on Tuesday, June 28th. The training shared detailed information on causes and patterns of youth violence and delinquent behavior. Nearly 150 individuals, including Judges, attorneys, law enforcement, counselors and other community professionals throughout south Florida participated in the event. Chief Judge Peter D. Blanc opened the event and Juvenile Judge Kathleen J. Kroll introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. Delbert Elliott. Dr. Elliott is an internationally recognized authority on youth violence and has authored several books on juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, mental health and school dropout. His presentation provided an overview of findings based on many years of research which has led to the development of numerous evidence-based programs. His lecture discussed evidence-based and promising programs, as well as data concluding certain practices and programs were ineffective and harmful. Furthermore, Dr. Elliott provided resources for additional information. The presentation as well as resource information can be found on the Court's website: www.15thcircuit.com. Thank you to all who attended!



Dr. Delbert Elliott



**Chief Judge
Peter D. Blanc**



Judge Kathleen J. Kroll



The last newsletter addressed the civil citation program proposed by the Department for all circuits in the state. Civil Citation is now the law of the state. Currently, 11 circuits have a civil citation, or like program, and in the near future we can expect such a process in every circuit. Palm Beach County's civil citation will be an "other such program" referenced in the legislation. We established the Juvenile First Offender Program/Youth Court almost 20 years ago. The civil citation will place a heavy emphasis on data collection and management. The secretary needs to show that prevention works in reducing the incidence of juvenile crime and can delay or prevent the commission of more serious crime.

Unfortunately as we herald the legislation for civil citation we mourn the decision to close beds at the Detention Center and to cut staff. Hopefully we will be able to reassign staff and use the funds saved by closing and diversion services in the change we can anticipate a efforts are implemented and the youth that have not been services touch the system. Of Detention Center resources reduced capacity. In the first capacity was announced the capacity.



beds to enhance the prevention circuit. As with all systems lag time before the prevention meet the anticipated goal and privileged to receive these concern is the potential that the will be stretched beyond the few weeks since the reduced Detention Center has been over

On June 6th, the Department announced that Florida was chosen as one of four states to participate in a "groundbreaking national initiative to reform its juvenile justice system by translating "what works" into everyday practice and policy under the auspices of Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (JJSIP). This will provide a framework for implementing best practices throughout the entire juvenile justice system. JJSIP will produce an evaluation tool to identify any shortcomings in juvenile programs or services, evaluate how closely those programs or services align with the most prominent research in the field, and help identify concrete recommendations for improvement.



did you know...

**THERE ARE OVER 160 DOCUMENTED GANGS IN
PALM BEACH COUNTY WITH OVER 6,000 MEMBERS**

Detention

Goodwill's Alternative to Secure Detention Program

The *Alternative to Secure Detention Program* in Palm Beach County provides home detention monitoring services to juveniles that scored to enter juvenile detention, but can be supervised in the community. Certain youth already placed in secured juvenile detention may also be eligible for this program. The Alternative to Secure Detention Program is administered by Gulfstream Goodwill Industries and may monitor up to 30 youth at a time. The program not only keeps youthful offenders from committing more crimes, but is also less expensive than incarceration.

The Juvenile Justice Case Worker Component

Each youth in the program is assigned a Juvenile Justice Case Worker (JJCW), who develops an individualized goal plan for each youth to guide them along the course of the program. The JJCW will work with and monitor the juvenile, who would otherwise be in a secured detention facility. Training or referrals for supportive services such as mobility training, emergency transportation, school supplies, food, emergency shelter and bus passes is provided. Referrals may include supportive medical, psychological or housing services.

Participants work with their JJCW on behavioral and personal issues that can act as barriers to success. The JJCW also monitors youth by scheduled face-to-face meetings and indirect contact, such as phone calls, as well as surveillance of juveniles on an impromptu basis such as home visits, school visits, etc. When substance abuse, physical abuse or mental health issues are identified, the JJCW will refer the individual to the appropriate agency for guidance and counseling.

The Mentoring Component

All youth enrolled in the Alternatives to Secure Detention Program have the opportunity to be assigned a mentor from the GoodGuides Mentoring Program. Mentoring has proven to be instrumental in motivating students to stay in school. Mentoring also offers guidance, counseling and modeling of appropriate behaviors as well as assisting youth with critical problem solving. Goodwill's GoodGuides Mentoring Program launched in January 2009.

The Educational Component

Tutoring sessions are offered for all youth and facilitated by a certified teacher. The goal of tutoring in this program is assist enrolled juveniles with learning basic math and reading skills. Testing is utilized for assessing each juvenile's progress in this area. Money Management classes utilizing the "*Money Smart*" curriculum for youth are also offered. This curriculum includes specific education in the areas of budgeting , saving, and checking account skills.

For additional information, contact: Elise Johansen (561) 848-7200 x 2251

Education



The **Parent Project** is an evidence-based parent training model for parents of adolescents who are involved in, or who are at risk of engaging in destructive or illegal behavior that disrupts the educational progress of students. The Parent Project is a nationwide program which was started in California and has been 20 years in development. It has trained 3,000 facilitators in over 30 states across the U.S. Extended Hands Community Outreach, Inc. (EHCO) was the first and only 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Palm Beach County to take the Parent Project facilitator training. It became licensed by the Department of Children and Families (a mandatory requirement to provide prevention programs in Palm Beach County) to provide the program in 2008 and has provided the program for the past three years to parents of high-risk behavior teenagers and adolescents in the county. The School District of Palm Beach County has now partnered with ECHO to offer the Parent Project in our local schools. The Parent Project provides educational workshops which are held once a week in 10 week sessions and include Personal Responsibility and Loving Solutions component which helps teens to learn to cope with challenging issues. The program is designed to reduce risk factors such as dropping out of school, running away, youth violence, drug and alcohol abuse, gang activity and criminal activity.

The listed schools in **Palm Beach County** will be offering the Parent Project. Classes are held once a week in the evening from 5:30-8:30. Dinner is provided at the beginning of each class for the family. The class structure is a classroom style setting with each facilitator presenting in 30 minute increments of unit lessons. Participants complete interacting activities every 15 minutes and have weekly follow up assignments.

- Atlantic Community High School
- Glades Central High School
- Lake Worth Community High School
- Palm Beach Gardens High School
- Palm Beach Lakes High School

For additional information, contact Shandra Stringer (561) 315-5463

C.L. is a “success story” for Unit 106. He was initially placed on probation in 2008 at the age of 14. He was doing well until 2009 when he was caught stealing a cheap pair of shoes to wear to school, a 2nd degree misdemeanor. The Judge continued his probation. His mother had no money to purchase clothes for him. Although living at home, he was on his own. At that point his probation officer, realizing he had no clothes for school, obtained help for him that became the turn around point for him when he realized there were people who both cared for and would help him. His attitude and behavior changed and the stealing stopped. Besides clothes for school, NCC [Choice of Change Program] furnished him a bike so he could ride, rather than walk, to Unit 106 Probation Office for mentoring and to volunteer in the community. Now he is 18, has graduated from high school, completed all of his probation requirements including fully paying restitution and court fees, and is applying for jobs. He volunteers at “We Promise to Care, Inc”, which provides hot meals and social services to transient and pedestrian traffic on Broadway in West Palm Beach. He assists with the 2ND CHANCE Mentoring Program, leading by example and mentors the younger boys. He also helps around the Unit 106 office. Once the termination of his probation is complete, he is looking at the military for his future and plans to apply for the Army.



The first time we met W.H. was at the Juvenile Detention Center. W had already served a week in the Detention Center when we interviewed him for the Alternative to Secure Detention Program (ATSD) at Gulfstream Goodwill Inc. When we first saw W, he came out of a classroom with his head down and would not communicate with us. After ten minutes of trying to talk with him, we were finally able to understand that he wanted to be involved in the ATSD program and wanted to change his life. W was disappointed in his actions and felt like he had let his mother and family down. W was very withdrawn and would not even look at us, when he spoke.

It has been a little over a month since W was accepted in the ATSD program and the changes have been remarkable. W now holds his head up high and smiles when he speaks to us. Goodwill has been able to assist the family with food provisions and has been able to assist W with clothing, new shoes, and bus passes. The principal of the school where he attends reported that he has had a very positive attitude change, especially since he has some new clothes to wear. His grades have been reflecting his change in attitude. W has stated that he would like to either find a job for this summer or attend the Goodwill Summer Program so he will keep busy and avoid getting into trouble.

Community Information

**VISIT A YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT CENTER
NEAR YOU!**

- BELLE GLADE
- BOYNTON BEACH
- LAKE WORTH
- RIVIERA BEACH

Want to learn more about
delinquency records or job etiquette?

Enroll in a **FREE**
Juvenile Education Clinic
Contact (561) 355-6856

NEED COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS??

Check out:

[http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/guest/programs/
JAS/communityprojects](http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/guest/programs/JAS/communityprojects)

got resources?

Check out the on-line DELINQUENCY AND DEPENDENCY RESOURCE GUIDE:

http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/guest/courtprograms/delinquency_dependencyresourceguide

HELP PREVENT JUVENILE CRIME IN YOUR COMMUNITY

BUY THE [INVEST IN CHILDREN](#) LICENSE PLATE

Funds go to Prevention programs in the County where tags are sold



Tag-funded programs include:

- ☞ After-school activities
 - ☞ Mentoring
 - ☞ Tutoring
 - ☞ Job internships
 - ☞ Youth summits
- ☞ Learning to live violence-free
- ☞ Parent-Child relationship building
 - ☞ Summer camp scholarships
- ☞ Recreational programs for girls and boys
 - ☞ Substance abuse intervention