



DJC Newsletter

April 2008

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This issue of the DJC Newsletter focuses on programs and services provided to the youth through DJC during Black History Month activities and throughout the year.

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Model County Programs

DJC will reserve space in each newsletter to highlight county programs that are especially effective in promoting juvenile accountability, competence building and public safety. If you have a contribution for the next newsletter, please forward it to Jocelyn Petersen at jocelyn.petersen@wisconsin.gov. Thank you.

Lincoln Hills School: Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparent Program at Lincoln Hills School has been active for 35 years, touching the lives of hundreds of youth. Foster Grandparents at Lincoln Hills are a dedicated and caring group of mentors who see the potential in all youth and work to help them visualize a positive future. The volunteers teach students to become confident and independent in their learning, even in the face of significant challenges. Through this program youth can experience firsthand the vitality of elders and learn how to interact with them respectfully. Some of the activities include: discussions, reading, helping in the classroom, baking treats to share, planting flowers outside living units, arts and crafts, and participating in Victim Impact Panels. The volunteer program is federally funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Grandparents help students learn vital life skills

Currently 19 seniors from four surrounding communities are actively participating in the program. Foster Grandparents interact with Lincoln Hills' students from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. daily. Using the special skills they have acquired in their own lives, Grandparents are able to motivate the students in unique ways. Through the Title One Reading Program, Grandparents spend one hour per day assisting a student with reading. Students and their Grandparents frequently develop strong bonds and make rapid progress both academically and socially. The Grandparents also enjoy watching the students develop basic skills required to become productive members of the community.

Foster Grandparents are rewarded by knowing that they've made a difference. In 2007 they helped students raise reading comprehension by an average of 1.62 grade levels. Many students graduate from the reading program and go on to earn diplomas and technical college credits.

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Southern Oaks Girls School- Girl Scout Programming

People have questioned the reasons behind the development of a Girl Scout troop at Southern Oaks Girls School. However, upon review of the Girl Scout Law it becomes inherently clear as to the motivation behind the program. The Girl Scout Law focuses on an individual doing their best, being honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what one says and does. In addition, the Law goes on to address the issue of respect for oneself and others, respecting authority, using resources wisely and making the world a better place. These are the same goals and focus Southern Oaks has for all of their youth. The Girl Scout program provides support and reinforcement to all of the treatment and educational programs provided at SOGS.

When youth are committed to Southern Oaks Girls School, they are automatically registered as a member of Girl Scout Troop # 344. The youth begin their involvement with the Girl Scouts during their first week at the institution. The Social Workers at SOGS receive formal training from the Girls Scouts of Racine County, Inc. and are registered as Girl Scout leaders. Bi-monthly themes are established and coordinated by the Social Workers who facilitate a *Cadet and Senior Interest Project* from the badge book. Activities are planned and held on each and every Saturday. These activities are designed to motivate the students and provide them with a variety of learning experiences. Social Workers plan projects and activities as well as coordinate outside speakers pertinent to the theme of the month.

Girl Scout Programming at Southern Oaks is non-traditional programming which provides "hands-on"

experiential learning. Many of the projects provide information and education specific to life skills and social skills. The Girl Scout activities assist the youth in acquiring basic social skills as well as learning information previously not available to them.

Examples of these activities include:

- Education and learning activities regarding healthy lifestyles, nutrition, exercise, and health issues.
- Basic parenting skills.
- Giving back to the community and developing a positive connection to the world at large.
- Identifying hidden talents, interests, and strengths, as well as tapping into their personal creativity.
- Learning how to feel good about oneself through personal and group accomplishments.
- Experiencing positive social activities and healthy outlets.
- Experiencing the value of as well as practicing team-work activities.
- Developing self-confidence and leadership skills which are woven throughout the fabric of all of the activities.
- Assisting in the making of Super Saturday Posters for Union Grove.

Recent activities have included:

- Fitness to Fashion; youth worked at gaining appropriate skills regarding job readiness clothing, basic physical fitness awareness, and appropriate skin care techniques.
- A World of Understanding- provided the youth with an opportunity to learn about the world in which we all live. They were exposed to a variety of cultures, beliefs, and racial differences.
- Artistic Crafts – youth participated in a variety of craft making activities. Youth participated in learning about and the making of Turkish tiles, holiday cards for family members, and pictures to send home for the Holidays. They also participated in the making of individual quilt squares which were then sewn together and donated for a Restorative Justice silent auction fundraiser.
- Paper Works - paper industry in Wisconsin was the topic of learning during this month's activity. Decoupage and hand made wreaths were additional highlights.

Girl Scouting serves as a transitional link for youth returning to the community. In addition to learning many skills necessary to be successful in the community they also may choose to continue their participation in their local community troops upon release.

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SPRITE- Action in 2008

SPRITE is a 24-day intervention that engages juvenile delinquents in life-changing adventure education activities. It is designed for boys ages 13-17 who have law violations that may or may not meet the criteria for placement in a Juvenile Correctional Institution. Courts have a range of dispositional options including "Experiential Education" Ch. 938.34 (7g) Wis. Stats. Having a solid aftercare plan and clear rewards or consequences for youth performance at SPRITE are important motivators and impact the selection of youth for the program, but counties are not required to seek a correctional placement as the consequence for failing to complete the program.

The SPRITE program uses real-life experiences to teach trust, communication, responsible decision making and social skills. It is an excellent resource for counties looking for short-term, yet high-impact programming. Referrals are accepted monthly for up to 12 young men.

SPRITE has an exceptional team made up of new director, Jo Mercurio, two Youth Counselors, six Experiential Recreation Specialists and a Wisconsin DPI certified half-time physical education and health teacher. Staff credentials include college degrees in psychology and recreation leadership, training from world renowned organizations such as Outward Bound and the National Outdoor Leadership School, excellent safety records in rock climbing and Challenge Course facilitation and direct service to both male and female youth in out of home settings.

In 2008, programming will again include canoeing expeditions as well as backpacking as a means of challenging youths' teamwork skills and perseverance. Youth will review or be introduced to several cognitive intervention tools that assist with decision making. An emphasis on re-integration to the community will continue with a focus on connecting to school and employment. In addition to the physical education curriculum for which students will earn 0.25 credits, students are engaged in language arts assignments through essay and journal writing and book reports as well as exploration of social studies and geography topics.

Counties that refer youth to the SPRITE program can expect ongoing status reports throughout the sessions, as well as a final written evaluation of the youth's effort, attitude, ability to adjust to change and stress, interface with peers and authority figures, community performance and social skills and overall summary of program performance/aftercare concerns.

While based at the SPRITE House, 15 miles south of Madison WI, students perform community service throughout the state, for which they earn a letter of reference appropriate for potential employers. Comments from past recipients of SPRITE youths' efforts include:

"SPRITE has been an invaluable partner in our efforts to restore a diverse aquatic plant community in the Upper Yahara River at Cherokee Marsh. The program supervisors in the field do an excellent job of engaging the participants to really understand the importance of the work project in a holistic manner. They [Sprite students] are active participants and have helped us refine some of our restoration techniques. They learn the "hows", but more importantly they also learn the "whys", so they can truly understand how their community service benefits the environment, and the public that visits this special natural area." (Russ Hefty, Conservation Resource Supervisor, City of Madison Parks Department.)

Whether it is rock climbing, urban resource exploration or community service, the SPRITE Program components are based on current research about what works in reducing common risk factors for delinquency and increasing protective factors against it.

Evidence-based practices and/or curriculums

The 26th Wisconsin Family Impact Seminar hosted by the UW Wisconsin-Madison and UW Extension, included a presentation by Dr. Edward Latessa, Division of Criminal Justice, University of Cincinnati, entitled, "What Science Says about Designing Effective Prison Reentry Programs." In it, Dr. Latessa asserts that effective reentry programs must apply four principles and furthermore concluded that when applied together, these factors can have a "substantial effect on [reducing] recidivism."

These principles and SPRITE's implementation are:

Target high risk offenders: SPRITE targets youth who have a long standing pattern of disorderly conduct, truancy, association with gang-involved or other negative peers, and substance abuse. Property crimes, battery and theft are common among adjudicated offenses.

Focus on Crime-Producing Factors: At SPRITE, youth's anti-social attitudes, poor problem solving

and self-control skills and are all addressed through the experiential programming model. Youth are challenged with unique physical activities. Each activity is then debriefed to solicit student insights, and after a period of reflection, students discuss or write about how they can relate the experience to other areas of their lives.

Use a Cognitive-Behavioral Approach: Dr. Latessa suggests that behavioral interventions that are centered on present circumstances and risk factors and are action-oriented rather than talk-oriented are the most effective approaches to targeting offenders' needs. The tenets of the experiential education model, coupled with the juvenile cognitive intervention tools that SPRITE staff teaches, are the basis of the cognitive-behavioral approach at SPRITE.

Lastly, effective programs,

Closely Replicate the Program's Original Design: The SPRITE Program has been an innovative and integral part of the State of Wisconsin's juvenile corrections system since 1978. SPRITE has served over 3,600 Wisconsin youth as a pre-release program for the juvenile institutions and a diversion to out of home placements for county youth. The program consistently uses the Challenge Course low ropes and high ropes elements, rock climbing, wilderness expedition, community service and urban resource exploration to deliver experiential learning to students.

To obtain referral forms or inquire about making referrals, please contact Jo Mercurio, SPRITE Director, at 608.288.3356 or at joann.mercurio@wi.gov or visit <http://www.wi-doc.com/SPRITE2008.htm>.

2008 SPRITE SCHEDULE			
Referral packets due:	MONTH	START DATE	END DATE*
Apr. 23	MAY	7	30
May 21	JUNE	4	27
June 18	JULY	2	25
July 23	AUGUST	6	29
Aug. 20	SEPTEMBER	3	26
Sept. 17	OCTOBER	1	24
Oct. 22	NOVEMBER	3 ^a	26
Nov. 19	DECEMBER	1	23

*End date is graduation date. ^a Nov. and Dec. sessions begin on a Monday to accommodate holidays.

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Foster Grandparent Program at Ethan Allen School

The Foster Grandparent Program is a federally funded volunteer program under the Corporation for National Service, which was implemented here at Ethan Allen School beginning in 1973. Over the past 35 years, Foster Grandparents have touched the lives of literally thousands of youth during their stay at EAS. Seniors recruited from surrounding communities, serve a minimum of 15 hours per week as trustworthy mentors, role models and tutors to EAS youth. Currently, EAS has 10 active Foster Grandparents, 7 Grandmas and 3 Grandpas.

The Foster Grandparents interact with youth in both the school and cottage settings. They provide a positive and stabilizing influence to the youth. The Foster Grandparents play cards and other table

games with youth in cottages, always stressing cooperation, good sportsmanship, social skill development, and positive behaviors. They also routinely eat dinner with the youth in the cottages, providing a role model for appropriate conversation and table manners. Caring Foster Grandparents focus on improving each youth's self-image through encouragement and support. Frequently the youth reciprocate, demonstrating affection and respect for their Foster Grandparents, and expressing concern when grandma is ill or absent.

The Foster Grandparents in cottages also provide one-on-one reading assistance to youth, whose reading levels are below Grade 6. These 1:1 reading sessions have proven to be very influential in improving these youth's reading test scores. The special needs students thrive with the one-on-one attention and tutoring assistance. Strong bonds have developed as a result of the individual time the Foster Grandparents are able to spend with the youth.

In the school classroom setting, Foster Grandparents serve as tutors in providing critically important 1:1 help which has resulted in more youth receiving their HSED diplomas prior to leaving Ethan Allen School. The Grandparents zero in on the immediate academic need areas when preparing youth for HSED testing, refreshing the subject matter with the student immediately prior to the youth testing in a particular subject area. Our teachers consider the Foster Grandparents to be an important part of the youth's learning experience in the classroom.

Our Foster Grandparents are provided a small stipend and mileage assistance for the fine work they perform. Their true reward is knowing that they have made a difference in the life of a young man.

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Basketball Team at EAS wins Conference Championship

The Ethan Allen varsity basketball team had a successful season! After splitting the first eight games of the season, they won twelve in a row to finish with a 16 and 4 record overall, 12 and 2 in the conference, good enough for the conference championship. In the first round of the division 3 WIAA tournament, EAS ran into Milwaukee Northwest, a team that nearly beat Whitefish Bay Dominican in a subsequent game.

Opposing conference coaches voted five Ethan Allen players all conference awards, one first team, one second, and three honorable mentions. At the awards banquet provided by the Lunchbox, the team members received their individual awards, watched a highlight video, and enjoyed a meal prepared by the Lunchbox crew and Mr. Kobbs.

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Ethan Allen School Teachers & Youth Celebrate Black History Month

In recognition of Martin Luther King Jr., Day and Black History Month, Ethan Allen School teachers coordinated youth activities including an essay contest, reading, music appreciation and art to promote learning.

Ethan Allen School Physical Education teacher Mr. Plaszkiewicz held his annual student Sports Essay Contest on Black Athletes. Coach Plaszkiewicz completed a review of the Black Athlete Essay Contest submissions and first and second place winners were selected. First prize was lunch for the

winning youth with the Coach at the Lunchbox, a food service program and class which is offered by the school and managed by teacher Mr. Kobbs.

Teacher Ms. Gernetzke's classes read and discussed an award winning best book about race relations and friendship which was authored by a New York State corrections employee.

On the last day of Black History month, students in Ms. Rinder's computer graphics class viewed a 40 minute video about Rosa Parks. Additionally, the class listened to the music styles in the video as preparation for a large graphic art poster made with teacher Mr. McQuay. The poster will display in subsequent years in the school's display case.

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Southern Oaks Girls School Participates in Art & Poetry Contest

Southern Oaks Girls School students participated in the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families African American History Month Art and Poetry Contest. Creative works focused on the theme, "And Still I Rise..." Select pieces will become part of a traveling art show highlighting the experiences and talents of students within confinement settings.

Social Studies Instructors celebrated the accomplishments of both prominent and lesser-known African Americans. Throughout the month of February, these celebrations took the form of daily classroom readings, video viewing, and classroom discussion of historical and contemporary personalities.

The Southern Oaks Girls School Holiday Committee sponsored an African American History Month Poster Contest. Students employed very creative two and three-dimensional techniques. These beautiful pieces remained on display throughout the month of March 2008.

Southern Oaks Girls School Staff enjoyed a Soul Food Potluck on February 14, 2008. A wide of variety of dishes, both traditional and unique, were enjoyed by all in attendance.

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NWRO Luncheon to Celebrate Black History Month

On February 22nd, the Division of Juvenile Corrections, NWRO celebrated Black History month by sharing a soul food lunch with their youth. NWRO invited presenters to provide an inspirational message to youth about overcoming life's challenges by making the right choices. An ex-offender and a motivational educator shared their life struggles in hopes to touch the lives of the youth that are within the Division of Juvenile Corrections system. Division Administrators and staff showed their support and gratitude to the youth that NWRO serves.

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Lincoln Hills School Celebrates Black History Month

During Black History Month, Lincoln Hills School had several activities planned to help the youth learn about the contributions of Black Americans to our society. Each cottage had a group where we watched a DVD of the Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream" speech, and then had a discussion about King's influence on American society. We had an ethnic meal for lunch on Feb 14th, giving staff and students a chance to experience culturally traditional culinary favorites.

All month long there were movies shown that presented many different aspects of the fight for equality and freedom, including “The Rosa Parks Story”, “Driving Miss Daisy”, “Glory”, and “The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman” to name a few. We also showed movies like “The Tuskegee Airmen”, “Men of Honor” and “Muhammad Ali”, highlighting the accomplishments of Black Americans throughout our history.

Banners honoring Black History Month were hung in the school and the Administration building, there were educational bulletin boards in the school, and the English department sponsored a Poetry contest for all the youth enrolled in English classes. The theme of the contest was “I Am Who I Am”, and in all we had over 72 poems for the judges to read.

We also had a drawing contest honoring Black Americans, with several entries from each of the cottages. The top 3 Poetry winners read their poems out loud over the school PA system, and the top winners of both categories had their entries posted on a bulletin board in the school, and were awarded 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place medals. We ended the month with a day-long Quiz Bowl competition between the cottages, with all the questions relating to Black History. Youth were given pencils and bookmarks with quotes on them from famous Black Americans, and a special display was set up in the school library, with books highlighting the diverse contributions of the famous, and the many more not-so-famous, Black American heroes.

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SERO and The Milwaukee Youth Corrective Sanctions’ (YCSP) Celebration

The Milwaukee Youth Corrective Sanctions, Black History Program in February 2008 was a wonderful celebration of African American History past, present, and future. This year commemorated the 10th year celebration for YCSP. This year’s theme was: ***And Still We Rise***, reflecting the struggles of the youth and families that we serve. This theme was meant to inspire our clients, families, and community guests that in spite of hard times, bad decisions, and even incarcerations, we can all rise above adversities and become productive, successful members in our communities.

This year, the programs were held every Tuesday evening in the month of February. The dates were February 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th. On February 5th and 12th the weather was not favorable, but the presenters and invited guests still attended in high volumes. Each week more guests came out to participate and enjoy the festivities. Weekly attendance was averaged at 70 guests per night, with the last night of attendance exceeding 100 guests.

This year’s celebrations included:

Keynote speakers:

Green Bay Packer’s Player Rob Davis; Dr. Cecil Austin, a long standing educator in the Milwaukee public school district and founder of the African drumming group, Oma Ana; Joshua Parish from the American Heart Association; and Tyrone Dumas, Board Chairman of the *African American World Cultural Center*.

Other activities:

Poetry, singing, dancing, African drumming, a synopsis of the play, “We are the Drum”, libation, full course hot meals, and a feast on the final evening of the program. We were also pleasantly surprised by a visit and words of motivation by State Representative Tamara Grisby. Administrator Charles

Tubbs and Secretary Rick Raemisch. Assistant Administrator Silvia Jackson was also in attendance. As chairperson for this year, Ms. DeSouza was very nervous about what she could indeed accomplish, as she had never been in the position before. With the help of the Black History Committee, the support of the supervisors and her family, as well as the guidance from the Regional Chief, she can truly say that she was very proud of what they accomplished this year. The festivities were full of enthusiasm, information, African cultural heritage, and fun.

The Black History Committee members included Field Supervisor- Jeff Davis; Program Assistant Adv-Jacqueline Garry; Office Operations Association- Rebecca Olotu; Agents- Angela Fields, Janice Patterson, Lori Kunstman, Patricia Wolter, and Melody Wynn; Youth Counselor Advanced- Carlton Flowers and Vince Barnes; and MPS Para-professional- Laura Johnikin. Help was also given by Jolyn Haugen, Corrine Norman, Erwin Butler, Michelle Glover, and Sandra Chapman whom we are very thankful for.

YCSP would like to thank all participants, guests, performers, families, youth, and distinguished guests for making this year's Black History Program a huge success and we hope to see you all in the coming years. We would also like to thank Assistant Administrator Silvia Jackson, Administrator Charles Tubbs, and Secretary Rick Raemisch for attending and for the funding to support the Black History Programs at YCSP in Milwaukee for the past 10 years.

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Appointment of Laura Wood to Program and Planning Analyst

DJC has announced that Laura Wood has been selected to fill a Program and Planning Analyst–Advanced position. Laura completed her undergraduate studies at Concordia University in health care administration and her graduate studies at University of Phoenix with an MBA. She brings a wide range of private and public sector experience, including work as the supervisor of the DAI medical records unit at Dodge, a program director at Waupun, and project management roles at DOC and UW Hospital. Laura will coordinate DJC's business process and data quality improvement efforts. She will analyze and respond to data requests, and represent and coordinate DJC contributions to information technology projects.

Welcome back, Laura!

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Appointment of Michelle Buehl to Juvenile Services Specialist

DJC has appointed Michelle Buehl to fill a Juvenile Services Specialist position. Michelle completed her undergraduate studies at Southern New Hampshire University to attain a Bachelor of Science with a concentration in criminal justice and a graduate degree in Community Mental Health. She brings a range of professional experience, including working as a case manager, unit supervisor, and program director in two alternate care facilities in which DJC, Serenity Group Home and Sojourn House. In her new job, Michelle will provide technical assistance and consultation to county and DJC managers regarding juvenile services. She will coordinate work with the counties on Early Intervention Program and Community Intervention Program funding. She will also represent DJC in the Wisconsin Juvenile Court Intake Association and its training for new juvenile court intake workers.

Welcome, Michelle!

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Appointment of Jocelyn Petersen to Half-Time Juvenile Services Specialist

DJC recently announced that Jocelyn Petersen has been selected to fill a half-time Juvenile Services Specialist position. Jocelyn completed her undergraduate studies in Sociology, Criminal Justice, and Spanish at UW-La Crosse, and her graduate studies in Criminal Justice at Suffolk University in Boston. Jocelyn brings a range of professional experience in the private and public sectors, including work in county human services. In her new job, Jocelyn will provide technical assistance and consultation on the Intensive Supervision Program (ISP) model, and provide training on the Juvenile Classification System, as well as treatment and services for local juvenile justice providers. Additionally, Jocelyn will write and issue DJC's quarterly newsletter for counties and manage DJC content for DOCNet and the Department's Web page.

Welcome, Jocelyn!

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