



Our mission is to empower families raising children with mood, behavioral and emotional disorders, by providing support, training and advocacy skills and collaborating with community partners to improve the system of care for children.



Welcome to our Issue on Juvenile Justice!

Knowledge is power (Sir Francis Bacon, 1597). If we as a community are aware of the obstacles and therefore, potential outcomes of youth afflicted with mood, emotional, and behavioral challenges, we are empowered to act at a level of proactive intervention. Consider this:

- Children with ED have the lowest graduation rates of all children with disabilities nationally
Children with ED are THREE TIMES more likely to be arrested before they're out of school
For children with ED who drop out of school, 73 percent are arrested within 5 years.
Children with ED are twice as likely to live in a correctional facility, halfway house, drug treatment center, or 'on the street' after leaving school, as compared to students with other disabilities.
Children with ED are twice as likely to become teenage mothers as students with other disabilities



[Source: Stopping the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Pipeline retrieved February, 2009 from: http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/jj.index.htm]

Early intervention is the key to long-term delinquency prevention, and this intervention requires early assessment and evaluation. (Continued Pg 5)

ASK Board of Directors

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- Seventy percent of children in the juvenile justice system have educational disabilities - the vast majority have an Emotional Disturbance (ED) and/or Specific Learning Disabilities.
Children with ED fail more courses, earn lower grade point averages, miss more days of school, and are retained more often than other students with disabilities.

My Daughter Punched Me and it Cost Me \$675.00

Kathy Howard, Family Support Partner

Friday, June 2001: It was a very normal day. The family was sitting around the table eating dinner while sharing events from the day. My daughter, Rachel, excused herself and returned with her bags packed explaining that she was going to spend the night at a friend's. When I told her no, she threw a fit. Rachel was screaming, yelling, and demanding that she be able to go. Rachel said that she needed a break, and needed to get away before she exploded on everyone. A little about Rachel, she had been diagnosed with Bipolar disorder and had learned how to use her disorder as an excuse to get what she wanted. I understood that Rachel may have needed a break, so I suggested that I take her to the ARK. Well that was not an acceptable answer for Rachel and

she refused. She continued to demand that I allow her to spend the night at a friend's. I explained that she had two options, either stay home or go to the ARK.

As I began to walk away from Rachel, leaving her with the two options, she punched me three times in the back. Her father heard the commotion and ran to restrain her. Rachel continued to violently kick the walls and the sliding glass door. At this point, she was completely out of control and I was concerned for her safety. I did the only thing I could think of, call the police. When the officer showed up, I explained the events of the night and included her recent diagnosis. He informed Rachel that he would take her to the ARK as suggested by me. Like before, this answer was

In-descriptive words
In-descriptive words
that provide
little justification
for the rush of emotions
occupying my life
occupying my time...
The words
that linger
behind this mask
of conformity
denying myself
so others
do not deny me...
yet frustration
builds within
as the truth within
struggles without...
I lie here
or sit here
furry feet
in mellow motion
audio satiety
because visual expectations
are but a bill away...
So I thank God
it's Friday
and count my blessing
as tension
occupies my neck
because the true beauty
of truth
is but a notion
in my soul
a spectator
in my world
a vision
I will not deny...

Gisela Lawson, Program Manager

ASK Staff

- Dianne Shaffer, Executive Director
Shellie Bosma, Operations Manager
Gisela Lawson, Program Manager
Kate Gross, Administrative Coordinator
Christine Eckrich, Family Support Partner
Kathy Howard, Family Support Partner
Mary Beth Mapes, Family Support Partner
Ginger Skidmore, Family Support Partner
Mackenzie Hunter, Youth Involvement Coordinator

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Dianne Shaffer

At last, Spring is in the air! I know many of you are tired of the cold and gray winter and are looking forward to spring with its new growth of leaves, flowers and grass. At ASK we are growing too!

In January, we welcomed a new Youth Involvement Coordinator, Mackenzie Hunter, to our team. We are very excited to have her. She brings a great deal of creativity and enthusiasm to her job. You can learn more about Mackenzie and her goals for CAY on page 4.

We are also very excited to have expanded our Board of Directors. We have welcomed five new members to our Board. Thank you to: Michael Ankley,

Mary Hoekstra, Thomas King, Laura Mercadal, Jacqueline Mitchell, and Don Roberts for your willingness to volunteer your time, knowledge and expertise to the vision and mission of ASK. We appreciate you.

Another exciting opportunity for ASK staff is that our Program Manager, Gisela Lawson, will be joining a team of people from the state of Michigan to attend a Policy Academy on Family Driven Strategies. A group of more than 10 individuals from various state-level departments, parents, and staff from family organizations such as Association for Children's Mental Health and ASK, will be working together for 3 days to **develop public policies that will fur-**

ther their work to implement consumer and family-driven mental health care services. This is a very exciting collaborative opportunity and we are thrilled to be a partner in this endeavor!

Spring time brings lots of community activity to ASK. We participate in a number of booths and events throughout the spring and summer. Look for us and say hello at events such as the **All Kids Can Recreation Expo on March 7th** at the Girl Scout building or at the **Children's Mental Health Awareness Day carnival on May 7th** at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds. We would love to see you!



THANK YOU

to all who donated to our Annual Snowflake Campaign:

**Amy & Robert Anderson
Richard & Barbara Baker
Ann & Donald Bonevich
Joan Colgren
Cynthia D. Green
Nancy M. Hamilton
Connie & John Houts
Janet & Keith Jones
Donald & Ann Parfet
Foundation
John & Judy Petro
Donna Ring
Greg & Jo Russell
Karen & Rick Schmitt
Shellee Seymour**

These donations are essential to supplementing our operational and program costs. They allow us to continue our parent support groups and educational training, as well as provide childcare during these events.

Your support allows us to continue to provide these valuable services to families



(cont from 'My Daughter' pg 1) not acceptable and she began to verbally assault the officer. By this time, the officer was frustrated and explained to her that she was now going to the juvenile home for her actions

The next week, we appeared in court. When Rachel hit me, it was a domestic assault and the case was out of my hands. It would be up to the court to decide how to address it. Their decision was to charge Rachel fines and court costs, which was a total of \$675.00. Since at that time Rachel was a minor, I "the victim" was responsible for paying the fine. Where is the justice in that? Had I known then what I know now I would have requested that they have Rachel do community service or some alternative to pay her debt, instead of a direct pay liable to me.

Balanced & Restorative Justice....Juvenile Style

Mary Beth Mapes, Family Support Partner

What exactly is balanced and restorative Justice? What does it have to do with the Juvenile Justice system? First of all balanced and restorative justice (BARJ) is a philosophy, not one specific program. Therefore the way it looks may vary from program to program, but the basic underlying principles are the same.

With BARJ, when a crime is committed the offender incurs an obligation to restore the victim (and by extension the community) to the state of well-being that existed before the offense took place. BARJ looks to restore all parties involved including the offender. The more traditional models such as ones in place in the United States focus more on enforcing retribution against the offender than on making right what the offender made wrong.

Balanced and restorative justice (BARJ) it seems, would have a positive impact on the juvenile offenders' transition back into their communities by:

- Providing opportunities for skill building through reparation
- Affording delinquent youth an opportunity to publicly demonstrate that they are capable of competent and productive behavior
- Diverting troubled youth from further penetrating the system by offering an alternative to confinement

BARJ works to bring the community together through its four basic components. First it encourages a mediated **communication** between offender and victim. Then it seeks to make **amends**, repairing the harm done, through apology, changed behavior, resti-

tution, and generosity. Next, **reintegration** for the victim and the offender, since the victim as well as the offender can suffer stigmatization. Finally **inclusion**; all parties (the victim, the offender and the community) are invited to participate in resolving the crime.

<http://humanservices.vermont.gov/boards-committees/cfcpp/meeting-packets/october-2007/meeting-minutes/guidelines-for-building-youth-balanced-and-restorative-justice-programs-in-vermont/view>

Balanced and Restorative Justice: a tool for transition back to the community. Neglected and Delinquent Organization www.neglected-delinquent.org Author, Pablo De la Huerta

Protecting Children Restorative Justice for Youth: American Humane <http://www.americanhumane.org/protecting-children/programs/restorative-justice/>

Implementing the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model. <http://ojdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/implementing/balanced.html>

ASK provides refreshments and **CHILDCARE** during all ASK support groups, doors open at 6:15!

March/April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 ASK Parent Support Group 6:30-7:30pm featuring Rebecca Wilson, Wraparound	PAG/CAY KICK OFF!!! 5:30-7:30pm	4	5	Changing Practices Conference <i>KCMHSAS</i> <i>Systems of Care Event</i> 8:00am-5:00pm	ALL KIDS CAN REC EXPO!!! 10am-2pm
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 St Patrick's Day	18	19 ASK Parent Support Group 6:30-7:30pm Featuring Rebecca Clore, KCMHSAS "CAFAS"	20	21
22	23	24	25 	26	27	28
29	30	31	APRIL 1	2	3	4
5	6 ASK Parent Support Group 6:30-7:30pm	PAG/CAY 5:30-7:30pm "Becoming a voice for YOUR CAUSE"	8	9	10	11
12 Easter	13	14	15	16 ASK Parent Support Group 6:30-7:30pm	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	SEE BACK SIDE for details regarding listed events. Post & Share this Calendar!!!	

ASK Parent Support Group with a general focus is held on the **1st Monday of each Month** at **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church** ~ 1747 W Milham Rd, Portage

Kalamazoo Wraps Parent Advisory Group (**PAG**) & Kalamazoo Wraps Calling All Youth (**CAY**) Meet the **1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month** at **Bronson Gilmore Education Center**, 7 Healthcare Plaza, Kalamazoo

ASK Parent Support Group focused on supporting families receiving Community Mental Health services is held on the **3rd Thursday of each Month** at **First Presbyterian Church** ~ 321 W. South Street, Kalamazoo

Please contact ASK at (269) 343-5896 with questions regarding updates, cancellations, or alterations to this schedule Or visit our website, www.askforkids.org

Are you a parent or caregiver of a child with a mood, emotional, or behavioral challenge?

Are you passionate about improving the system of care for children's mental health?



Consider joining Kalamazoo Wraps Parent Advisory Group!

Learn more about PAG and how to become a member at our Kick off Event, **Tuesday March 3rd!!!**

Childcare and Refreshments are provided

For more information, contact Gisela Lawson at (269) 343-5896

ASK Parent Support Group Thursday, March 19th:
Come hear Rebecca Clore, KCMHSAS, speak about, **CAFAS-Child & Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale**

Changing Practices Conference

Learn how Systems of Care will shape the future of services for KCMHSAS

8:00 am-5:00 pm

Fetzer Center,

Western Michigan University

Lunch will be provided

RSVP by 02/27/09

*Rebecca Clore, Community Trainer
269-553-8110*

Becoming a Voice for Your Cause!!!

Learn how to become an advocate & to talk persuasively & effectively to policy makers

**TUESDAY
APRIL 7TH!**

**For more info contact
Rebecca Clore, KCMHSAS
269-553-8110**



Look for us at the
ALL KIDS CAN!!!! REC EXPO
Saturday, March 7th
Gils Scouts Glowing Ember
601 W. Maple, Kalamazoo Mi

Sponsored by Parent to Parent of SW Michigan, Kalamazoo Wraps, Family Support Advisory Council, Community Advocates & the Arcadia Institute

Spring will bring more than just the melting of the snow this year at ASK!

Mackenzie Hunter, Youth Involvement Coordinator

Greetings new friends! My name is Mackenzie Hunter and I am the new Youth Involvement Coordinator with Advocacy Services for Kids. I am a recent graduate from Alma College and am thrilled for this opportunity to work with and get to know you all! I'm certain that this position will be a perfect fit for me as it integrates not only my educational and occupational objectives, but also my personal interests as well. Over the next few months I hope to strengthen participation and engagement in Kalamazoo WRAPS' *Calling All Youth (CAY)* program by focusing my efforts on three major areas—the recruitment and retention of dedicated youth, the coordination of community-based activities that foster leadership skills,

and the facilitation of group discussions that encourage perspective sharing among group members. I believe that youth empowerment of this nature is essential in ensuring a youth-guided System of Care, and remain confident that upon the completion of these goals Calling All Youth will succeed in its mission to compel youth to speak out about their experiences and re-claim their voice in the System of Care. We will be holding our CAY Kick-off Event on Tuesday, March 3rd, and I would encourage each of you to spread the word to any youth you think may take interest in joining this youth advisory board! Thanks for all of your continued support and I look forward to working with you all!

CALLING ALL YOUTH!

Are you a young person between the ages of 11-17 who feels like life is happening around you? Calling All Youth (CAY) is your chance to speak up and be heard by adults, teachers, government, therapists, counselors, juvenile justice, schools and all of the other authority figures in your life.

IT'S TIME YOU HAD A VOICE!

**For more information contact Mackenzie Hunter
At (269) 343-5896**



Learn All about CAY & how to become a member at our Kickoff Event, Tuesday March 3rd!!!

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH!!!

**In our next issue we'll cover the
Youth Mental Health System and
Mental Health Community Awareness Events!**



(Cont. from pg 1) Very often, young people struggle for years with unidentified learning disabilities or emotional and behavioral disturbances before they ever become qualified for special education or other support services. In many cases, these services only become available *after* youth have been charged with or convicted of criminal behavior. Early assessment and identification of disabilities can go far in preventing this reality. On a school- and community-wide level, certain behavioral interventions may work well to prevent future criminal behavior.

- Evaluating the environment to determine where young people are most likely to experience problems
- Creating collaborative strategies to prevent problems, identified by adults AND youth together
- Viewing inappropriate social behaviors as 'teachable moments' and responding with appropriate correction & teaching RATHER than immediate disciplinary consequences
- Establishing behavior support teams to monitor and assist prevention strategies

For individual youth who do not respond to these large-scale interventions:

Creating wraparound teams to focus support from home, school, and other community contacts on developing intervention plans that encompass the young person's whole life

- Making intervention decisions along a continuum (range), beginning with the least restrictive intervention most likely to result in the young person's success
- Providing regular and honest feedback to the young person about his/her decisions and their consequences

Prevention is not an easy task and requires the full participation and collaboration of schools, families, religious communities, and other community resources and organizations.

[Retrieved and adapted Feb 2009 from: <http://ncset.org/topics/ijjustice/faqs.asp?topic=25> (Adapted from the [National Center on Education, Disability & Juvenile Justice \[EDJJ\]](http://www.nationalcenteroneducation.com) Web site: <http://www.edjj.org/focus/prevention/>.)]

For complete articles and more information on the topic of Juvenile Justice, please visit the websites cited, or call Advocacy Services for Kids with any questions—raising kids can be tough, if you need help, just ASK!

Defenders of Children....a thought to ponder

Christine Eckrich, Family Support Partner

The notion of "juvenile justice" only developed with the concept of a "juvenile" in general. The widely held belief was that children merely segued into adulthood, or worse, weren't children at all. (The nineteenth century is described as the "era of childhood," because increased standards of living enabled parents to love their children as human beings instead of procreating solely to keep the family alive.) Psychologists and sociologists noted the increased luxury and emphasis on independence—and tendency for marrying later—birthed a generation previously unseen, the teenager. Living at home instead of being kicked out to make a living at the age of twelve led to rebellion, disagreements, and general shenanigans. The identity of a "teenager" developed around the turn of the twentieth century, the same time, incidentally, as the first juvenile court. Founded under the doctrine of "parens patriae"—the state as a parent—juvenile courts aimed not to prosecute the offender, but to instead offer rehabilitation.

However, since then, ideas of rehabilitation have changed. Remember, the rehabilitation in those days is vastly different from the humanist school in practice today. The juvenile justice system still has yet to feel resounding echoes of this reform, however. Community initiatives were founded, but persistent crime rates amongst adolescents suggest that perhaps these reforms are not as effective as their creator's desire. While revision may aim to build self-esteem and provide self-actualization, the fact is, for most adolescents, they are simply not enough to rehabilitate their identities. Might many teens act out because the attention they receive for acting outlandishly be the only attention they receive? How can we provide the love and attention all kids—even teenagers—need beyond attention in courts? Kids and teenagers need to be reminded not only that their illegal actions have true consequences (because often when one despairs, being locked up in juvenile hall doesn't mean that much...in fact, it may be the only safe place one knows), but also of the inherent worth of themselves, as well as others. Drugs, assault, gang violence, and larceny; might it be worth taking a chance to step back to the simplicity of our forefathers from the nineteenth century, where family values included hard work ethics, morality, and reinforcement for good behavior as well as recognition of positive traits from parents, siblings, community and school – could some instances of the adolescent crime rate be somewhat diverted?

How Can I use the concept of Restorative Justice in My Home?

By Ginger Skidmore

Answer: Helping children to understand the concept of accountability at home is the first step in using the concept globally. Children watch their parents very carefully and make decisions based on their perception of what they see. As adults we should model respect of others. We should also model accountability by admitting to our mistakes and making the necessary changes in order to not repeat them.

An example of this concept may be to not minimize issues that arise. Showing interest in the issues that are most important to our children, demonstrates a sense of respect for them. Offering alternatives or likely solutions demonstrates our awareness of the importance of the situation. This behavior on our part educates our children on accountability, problem solving and respect.

Another example may be to maintain self control and address our emotions in a way that demonstrates a sense of responsibility. When we say things that are demeaning and hurtful, we are modeling disrespect and instability. When we model accountability, we foster confidence in our children to do the same, "You know Carrie, when you were sassing me in the grocery store I was really embarrassed. When I called you a brat in the store I know I must have embarrassed you too. Can you forgive me for calling you a name?"

Parenting brings out the best and worst in us. Consistent positive interactions with our children, in all situations, will help our children learn to be confident in any situation they may face in their lives.

Funding by Greater Kalamazoo United Way, Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Services, U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and contributions from members and friends.





advocacy services for kids
 414 East Michigan Avenue
 Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

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BECOME AN ASK MEMBER

Please consider becoming a member of Advocacy Services for Kids.

Membership entitles you to voting rights at the annual meeting, and the fellowship of others who advocate for children's mental health.

Membership dues help fund parent support groups, newsletter costs, and one-to-one support for families.

Joining is easy.

- 1) Fill out the form
- 2) Make checks payable to: Advocacy Services for Kids
- 3) Mail to the address shown.

COMING SOON!!! ASK's website will be updated to include an **Opt-In** feature for our electronic mailing list and a **Paypal** feature for Credit Card donations ~ visit www.askforkids.org



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