



MOVING THE WORK FORWARD

Juvenile Justice Newsletter:

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Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to the First Edition of the Juvenile Justice Newsletter! The purpose of this exciting venture is to inform the Lincoln area community, its leaders, and state senators on the ways and means that the local governmental agencies and community organizations are partnering to care for our troubled youth and their families.

As everyone is aware, incarceration and other involvement in the juvenile justice program do not always yield the desired result of moving these youth into productive and thriving lifestyles. Lincoln and Lancaster County's agencies in areas of human services, law enforcement, judicial system, and youth corrections have teamed together, along with many of the community's non-profits, to create new practices, programs, and policies designed to promote positive changes in these youth and their families. You will learn of these new initiatives through this quarterly newsletter.

Taking care of our youth is a responsibility that public, private, and nonprofit agencies/ organizations share. Increasingly, over the years, local government is relying on private and nonprofit organizations to assist in helping our youth because they provide services that the local government simply cannot by itself provide. These organizations have the skill sets and specialized experience that can meet the needs of these juveniles more effectively than government or its agencies can. On the other hand, the local government serves as a facilitating partner in providing support to the private and nonprofit entities.

It is our sincere hope that you find this newsletter enlightening as to what is occurring in our community to help our youth and their families overcome troubling problems. The public, private, and nonprofit agencies have joined themselves in a concerted effort to effect positive and lasting changes in our juvenile justice system.

-Roma Amundson, County Commissioner

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) for Lancaster County – Advocating for the best interests of children and youth in Juvenile Court.

Hundreds of children and youth in Lancaster County are victims of abuse and neglect. Court Appointed Special Advocates or CASA for Lancaster County is local non-profit that recruits, trains, and supports community volunteers who advocate on behalf of abused, neglected, truant or ungovernable children in Juvenile



Court. CASA volunteers get to know the children and all of the circumstances and issues surrounding the family. They gather information and report their findings and recommendations directly to the judge. CASA volunteers provide first-hand, timely information to the judge and advocate for any needed services. CASA volunteer advocates provide a voice for children in court, expedite permanency, share with the judge the needs and wishes of the children and ensure that children have safe permanent homes. For more information about CASA, please see our website www.casa4lanaster.org or call our office 402-474-5161.

-Dawn Rockey, Executive Director



CenterPointe - DBT IOP Program

What started off as a year of opportunity to launch a new program, quickly turned into a year of improvisation. Here at CenterPointe, we started our new Intensive Outpatient (IOP) Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) Program in late February, only to be met with the reality of COVID in March.

DBT focuses on regulating negative emotions, which can lead to problematic behaviors. The main modules of this therapeutic approach are: mindfulness, distress tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness, and emotion regulation. Each teen is expected to attend DBT group therapy three times per week, an individual session once per week, and the caregivers are also expected to attend one night per week, with their teen.

The program has a maximum of 12 participants at one time. Each individual had been struggling with multiple hospitalizations, self-harm behaviors, and/or suicidal ideations. The program seeks to bridge the gap between outpatient therapy and hospitalization. The goal is to educate the individuals about DBT skills, including when and how to use them. By using these skills, hospitalizations are reduced for the teens and their functioning in the community is improved.

What started in person, quickly moved to telehealth. The IOP staff gathered their materials and sought to make lesson plans via phone, email, and many PowerPoint presentations. While there was a learning curve, staff quickly found they were presented with a unique opportunity: a chance to provide strengths-based care to the individuals in need.

When surveyed early on in the pandemic, more than half of the caregivers stated they felt their child was safer at home. To this day, many referral sources ask how they are currently providing services. IOP staff have seen an uptick in participation from the teens. When asked how they felt about Zoom group therapy, many stated they felt more at ease. One individual noted "It's just easier. I don't really have to see everyone else, and I feel less ashamed. It's nice knowing I'm not alone, but not having to sit right next to them."

The DBT IOP program started getting regional attention in June for its successful Zoom services, and recently gained national attention when referrals were searching for Zoom based IOP programs. While the curriculum is ever-changing for the better, the DBT IOP staff work diligently to continue to provide quality services. If you are working with an individual you'd like to refer, please email IOP@centerpointe.org to get in contact with our staff.

-Ryan Carruthers, Director of Clinical Operations



Pictured are CenterPointe staff, Melissa Kumke, LIMHP, LADC and Rachelle Brouillard



Lancaster County Attorney

As Lancaster County Attorney, it is my duty to ensure the enforcement of the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Nebraska, and the laws of the State of Nebraska for the health, safety, security and welfare of our children and families. My office's Juvenile Division, comprised of six full-time attorneys and two support staff, is tasked with accomplishing this mission by reviewing, evaluating, coordinating, diverting, or ultimately filing, when appropriate, cases in the Separate Juvenile Court of Lancaster County.

When asked to author an article highlighting the juvenile justice work in the Lancaster County Attorney's Office, I contemplated on where to begin. In over 32 years of experience as a prosecutor in Nebraska, I have seen firsthand the leaps forward we have made in responding to juveniles who violate the law. I am proud of what we are accomplishing in Lancaster County and I look forward to the future as we continue to implement our nationally recognized juvenile interventions.

One area of particular strength is our juvenile diversion programs. These programs have been developed and expanded to offer our prosecutors the best range of interventions possible to meet the needs of juveniles who have violated the law. While it is my office that has the duty to develop and implement these diversion options for juveniles, we by no means consider these "our" programs. While hundreds of juveniles in our community are being diverted out of the formal juvenile justice system each year as a result of the discretion we utilize, these life changing programs are a direct result of our system and community-based partners. Without this partnership between the Lancaster County Attorney's Office, the Lincoln/Lancaster County Human Services Office, and our community partners we could never have realized the level of success we have experienced over the past few years.

We leverage these partnerships at the earliest possible point of intervention, having dedicated staff with Master level Psychology degrees within the Human Services Office complete a juvenile risk assessment. This assessment is provided to youth who have committed a first-time law violation to determine the need, if any, for a County Attorney led intervention. After prosecutorial review of these assessments and the offense itself, a large percentage of these cases are informally diverted out of the system completely. We have made it a priority to educate our attorneys (and others) on adolescent brain development, trauma and implicit bias. Because of this understating, youth in our jurisdiction have multiple opportunities to participate in a diversion program that can keep them out of the formal juvenile justice system. This begins with a now nationally recognized program (RESTORE) designed in collaboration with Georgetown University to divert offenses committed in our schools.

Our prosecutors continually work in collaboration with Lincoln Public Schools and Lancaster County school principals, administrators, and counselors on issues impacting students' success whether it be due to neglect occurring in the home, a juvenile's uncontrollable behavior, or excessive absenteeism. If there are suspicions of abuse or neglect our prosecutors work to ensure reports are made to law enforcement and/or the Department of Health and Human Services for investigation. If a youth is leaving home without permission, exhibiting behaviors to suggest mental health or behavioral health intervention may be appropriate, our prosecutors work to refer them to appropriate evaluations and services. If a student has on-going excessive absenteeism, our prosecutors work alongside school staff as part of a community-based truancy diversion program. The premise of each of these interventions is to connect our youth with community partners based on the individualized need of the child and their family.

Our work in developing cutting edge responses to meet the needs of juveniles in our community continues to expand. We currently are in the midst of designing a diversion program for youth who have identified behavioral health needs that contributed to their offense. We have also partnered with other local juvenile justice agencies to share data with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in a combined effort to assist us in analyzing outcomes. This collaboration is also taking a serious look at issues of disproportionality that may be present in the system and examining thoroughly the potential causes. To that point, just this year we brought to Nebraska national speaker Adam Foss to educate prosecutors across the state about Racial Justice and its impact within the juvenile justice system.

The attorneys and staff in the Lancaster County Attorney's Office have families and children embedded and invested in the child care, schools, community programs and available services in our community. I believe there is no greater responsibility than to meet the needs of the children and families in Lancaster County. While the programs listed above may be located in our office, they are truly community-based programs. As Lancaster County Attorney I am thankful for these on-going partnerships and I look forward to building new ones in the years to come.

-Pat Condon, Lancaster County Attorney

LSO & Cedars Youth Services - 5-O Fun Club

In mid-2015, the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office began planning a community policing project with CEDARS Youth Services which was initially funded by grants from Lancaster County Human Services and later other sources including public donations. The original aim of the program was to bridge the gap between local law enforcement in our community and youth who were at risk for, or who had committed law violations and were involved in the juvenile justice system at some level. The idea was to bring the two populations together through collaborative efforts of a mix of entertaining ventures, games, and candid discussions as well as rewarding community service projects. Youth would have the opportunity to build positive rapport with the Lancaster County Sheriff's deputies and meet the people behind the badge in a casual setting. In November of 2015, the group began meeting twice monthly for two-hour events in the evening that would include dinner and transportation. During the initial meeting, the group selected the name Five-O Fun Club. Five-O is a slang term for police, and fun was planned into many of projects ahead. The group has met regularly since that time, apart from a hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic, through continued grant funding and tremendous support from program partners and the public.



During the meetings, deputies are dressed in civilian clothing and referred to by only their first name. Youth that are new to the program will many times have no idea that the adult in which they are interacting with is actually a law enforcement officer. By getting to know each other in this friendly manner, guards can be lowered, and a rapport can be

established. Some youth can appear disinterested until they see their peers having fun and interacting. It is amazing how quickly those others become involved.



The youth who are chosen to participate in the program are selected by CEDARS. Many are pre-adjudicated and probation youth who have been referred by their diversion caseworker or probation officers initially through CEDARS Life Skills Reporting Centers. Other youth from the shelter program have also been involved. Youth can, and are encouraged to, attend the group after their discharge from supervision. Deputies who participate in the group are selected from volunteers willing to commit to a longer term. Many of the deputies who continue to serve were part of the originally selected group from

2015. This continuity of youth and deputies has allowed the relationships to be built over many months, leading to stronger bonds of friendship.

Over the years, there have been many rewarding meetings of fun activities. The group has taken part in trips to the Escape Room, Defy Gravity, Laser Tag, Paint Yourself Silly, Corky Canvass, Husker Basketball, concerts at Pinnacle Bank Arena, Lincoln Children's Zoo, Roca Berry Farm, Makit Takit Craft Studio, Foodie Kids Lincoln, John Breslow Ice Hockey Arena, Nebraska Game and Parks Outdoor Education Center, Aikido of Nebraska, Champions Fun Center, Adventure Golf Center, JB Equestrian for horseback riding, fishing with Nebraska Game and Parks at Holmes Lake, football and frisbee at Pioneers Park, holiday lights tour and much more. The fun activities always keep the interest of the youth while simultaneously engaging in memorable conversations and learning experiences with the deputy sheriffs.

In addition to the fun activities, youth are required to participate in community service events. These are hands-on working projects that benefit the community. Youth who have community service commitments to diversion or probation can use the hours towards their completion. Many of these projects have included picking up litter at the Lincoln Children's Zoo, the Helen Boosalis Trail, and Holmes Lake Park. Other projects involved writing holiday cards and delivering plants or flowers to residents of local retirement home communities, pulling weeds at the grounds surrounding the City of Lincoln Parks and Recreation Offices and artfully decorating food containers for Meals on Wheels.



One of the most rewarding community service projects has become an annual event. During the holiday season, the group will go shopping at a local grocery store for food to be purchased and donated to the Food Bank of Lincoln. Deputies and youth are divided up into small groups and given a budget under which to shop. The groups have a limited time to complete their holiday grocery shopping and the group coming closest to their budget, without going over, wins small prizes in the form of gift cards. Activities such as this give the youth the life skills of shopping on a budget, carefully selecting items for needy families and the satisfaction of donating to a worthy local charity.

LSO & Cedars Youth Services - 5-O Fun Club...Continued

Over the years, there have been many youth in the program who complete their commitments and succeed. There have been regrettably a few who are not so successful. But overall, the interaction between the youth and the deputies involved has always been positive and fulfilling. This program has given the children involved an understanding that law enforcement officers are just regular people that have a different kind of job. Beyond that, the deputies participating in the program have a greater consciousness of the fears, thoughts and misunderstandings about law enforcement that the youth bring forward in the question and answer sessions. Factor in the group's socioeconomic, racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and we have created a recipe for even further awareness and understand among all the participants.

In 2020 there was a great deal of media coverage concerning a small amount of vocal public opposition of policing in America. Programs such as the Five-O Fun Club are now more important than ever to bridge the gap between the police and the public which they serve.

- Captain Tommy Trotter, Lancaster County Sheriff's Office

The Salvation Army - Teen Night

During the school year, 6th-12th graders spend their Friday nights at Teen Night hosted by The Salvation Army for a night of fun, socializing and basketball. Most of the kids participate in open gym basketball games, while others hang out in the stands socializing with friends and listening to music. The Salvation Army hosts 28 Teen Nights per calendar year.

Teen Night is supervised by 4-5 staff members from 8:00-10:30pm on Friday nights but typically goes until 11:00pm due to kids wanting to play one last game. The past several years Teen Night has had anywhere from 30-70 kids at each Teen Night. This past year I reached out to Tommy

Johnson, Meechie Johnson and Makaila Murphy to gauge their interest in taking on Teen Night. Tommy Johnson quickly responded with "That sounds like a lot of fun especially since I used to go to Teen Night at The Salvation Army when it first started!".



When I sat down and thought about how I could grow and make a greater impact on the youth at Teen Night I immediately thought of Tommy, Meechie and Makaila. They already do so much for the youth in our community and all the kids look up to them as they are such great role models. Teen Night the past year has grown to averaging over 90 kids per night, including a night that had 126 teens.

"Teen Night is important in our community for the simple fact that it gives kids the opportunity to interact with each other in a positive environment. They can come to Teen Night and feel safe regardless any problems they are having at school, home or with another peer. The Salvation Army is making lifetime memories for these kids."

The main goal of Teen Night is to simply give teens a safe and fun place to spend their Friday nights. In addition, the youth build positive relationships with the staff and some nights get treated to pizza.

-Matthew Drommond, Community Center Director

The Bay

This past year was all about the pivot — asking ourselves, our community, and our partners how we can continue to fulfill our mission in a way that is safe and sustainable. Like many in our state, this led our team towards virtual programming, and the creation of The Bay Online.

The Bay Online is exactly what it sounds like, virtual versions of the things we're experts at: skateboarding, music, digital art, and building relationships with young people in the margins. Since last fall, we've been facilitating multi-directional engagement between our instructors, school facilitators, and students all semester long via the social learning platform, Flipgrid.



The Bay...Continued

Through The Bay Online, we're continuing to provide positive out-of-school time alternatives to high-risk young people and build connections during an incredibly isolating season, all the while helping foster new ideas, passions, and skill sets. Through collaboration with some amazing partners, by the close of this school year we will have provided programming to students from over 20 different Nebraska schools.

Not a chance we could make it happen without the support, expertise, guidance, and big ideas from our partners. To name a few:

- **Lincoln Public Schools and the Independence Academy** — Our space already wouldn't be the same without you in it!
- **Beyond School Bells** — The chance to participate in the ELO Innovation network was rocket fuel to The Bay Online. Thank you for coaching and helping us develop this weird idea!
- **Nebraska Children and Families Foundation** — This is a thank you in advance and a chance to *plant the seed for what I'll get to write about next newsletter.*
- **Lincoln Community Learning Centers** — Thank you for opening doors and building bridges into so many new schools within our community!
- **Civic Nebraska** — Your team is incredible! Thank you for letting us play a role in the PPE distributions. When this is over let's open a drive thru?
- **Community Health Endowment** — For being the cornerstone to The Bay Online this semester.
- **Lincoln Chamber of Commerce** — Being named Small Business of the Year is an honor, and something we don't take lightly. Thank you.
- **Sara, Jenni, Becky and the team** for always helping us stay pointed in the right direction.

- Shayne Pearson, Program Director
shayne@thebay.org

Family Service Lincoln - Behavioral Health Program

Through the support of Juvenile Justice funding, the Family Service Behavioral Health Program is providing behavioral and mental health services in two Lincoln Public High Schools (Southeast and East) and at Raymond Central Public Schools. We are currently providing services to 45 students and their families.

Within our daily work, we utilize evidence-based practices such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, solution-focused brief therapy, and trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy skills to address the needs of youth. By addressing the mental and emotional needs, students can focus more on school and be successful. Through our collaboration with schools, we provide a holistic approach to meet the needs of the families. Therapists engage parents in the therapeutic process through family sessions. We teach parents the skills needed to address their youth's behaviors while strengthening their relationship. We can help youth who may be growing up in an unhealthy environment, the skills to survive and thrive. Our preventative focus allows us to provide services to youth and families before they become involved with the juvenile justice system; thus, saving the family a lot of emotional, mental, and financial hardship.

The Behavioral Health Program at Family Service fills a gap in community services by being located in Lincoln Public Schools and providing services to those families who may not qualify for financial coverage through Medicaid Insurance and/or cannot afford third party insurance.

Our licensed professional staff members meet with youth at their school, which is a natural and familiar environment. We provide a safe, caring, and supportive environment where they can share without being judged. Providing services in the schools reduces stress for parents who would otherwise have to leave their employment to transport their youth to needed mental health appointments. Working within the schools increases consistent student attendance at therapy sessions to address their mental health needs and decreases the rate of "no shows" or "late cancellations."

-Tammy Sassaman, Behavioral Health Program Coordinator

DISTRICT 3J Juvenile Probation:

We continue to work with the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice on improving outcomes for juvenile probation youth. Our priorities include:

- A. Family Engagement
- B. Incorporating the Science of Adolescent Brain Development into practices and protocols,
- C. Trauma screening/referrals for treatment
- D. Probation conditions that target the risks
- E. Detention only for public safety
- F. Positive Youth Development
- G. Opportunities for Early Release if risks are reduced/competencies are built

We have developed an entirely new set of outcome data to assist us in evaluating and enhancing practices. District 3J Probation is looking forward to 2021 and collaborating with a variety of community partners to make a positive impact on probation youth.

-Lori Griggs, Chief Probation Officer



Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln



While coronavirus has impacted everyone, creating unforeseen challenges and adjustments as we adapted to safety guidelines, Big Brothers Big Sisters Lincoln (BBBSL) has been able to remain open to continue serving Lincoln's most vulnerable children and youth facing adversity. For our Littles whose regular day-to-day lives have been drastically disrupted by the pandemic, our efforts to provide them with stability and consistency has been paramount. To meet the needs of our Littles and their families, as well as our mentor Bigs during these uncertain times, here's what we've been up to!

In response to the pandemic, BBBSL staff members have continued to work remotely and actively connect with each of our youth and their families to provide ongoing support and help identify practical needs and resources to increase stability in the home. These families have an established trusting relationship with our staff, and have turned to our agency for help during these unprecedented times. For families who have exhausted community resources and still have unmet needs, we launched our Better Together Relief program last year to provide basic needs items – healthy foods and hygienic items – to BBBSL families in need. We hosted the first round of the relief program in April 2020 to support 10 families, a second round for 13 families in June, and a third round to 10 families in August. We hosted a fourth round in November, providing basic needs items as well as Thanksgiving dinner groceries (including a turkey for each family) for 22 of our families!



-Haley Martinez, Assistant Director of Operations





Lincoln Police Department – Operation Tipping Point

Operation Tipping Point (OTP) has more than 20 community partners, to include direct partnership with 17 Lincoln Public Schools, and justice stakeholders to address the increasing violent crimes associated with gangs in Lincoln, Nebraska through intervention/preventions strategies. A full-time Gang Outreach Specialist serves as a link between primary and secondary prevention/intervention efforts and engagement of community partners. The Gang Outreach Specialist is located within the Lincoln Police Department Gang Unit. The Gang Specialist continues to facilitate Operation Tipping Point meetings, coordination and outreach with Lincoln Public Schools, parents, community partners to reduce gang membership, gang related violence, and increase gang related information sharing.

OTP currently has 81 youth in the program. The youth in OTP goes all the way down to elementary and up to a senior year in High School. Like many other programs, 2020 has been a challenging year and OTP has had to adapt to the ever changing dynamics of COVID. Right now OTP is back to in person contacts but only one on one. We hope to get back to small group activities when the weather gets warmer and we can do outside activities. About 50% of youth in OTP are doing in home zoom school which is a little more than double of the normal average. OTP will meet with youth at school during school hours or at home. During the Pandemic OTP referrals have been down a bit but we still have 81 youth in the program right now. OTP continues to work with Community Partners to provide resources for youth in the program.

OTP is still collaborating with the Malone center for “Take Pause” police engagement activities. With Covid we have had to mix Take Pause with zoom and in person activities depending on the health risk dial. OTP is currently collaborating with Juvenile Probation and other Community Partners to provide mentors for Gang Involved Youth in the Criminal Justice System.

-Matt Baker, Gang Outreach Coordinator

**BADGES FOR BASKETBALL
TOURNAMENT**

FREE 3 ON 3 BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT
FOR SIGN UP CONTACT TOMMY @ 402.817.9899
SIGN UP DEADLINE IS FEB 7TH

THE SALVATION ARMY UNTAPPED POTENTIAL POLICE DEPARTMENT MALONE COG

2 DIVISIONS | 5TH-6TH GRADE | 7TH-8TH GRADE

FEB 18TH @ THE SALVATION ARMY
6:00-9:00PM
FOOD PROVIDED!

Lancaster County Human Services

RESTORE is a collaboration between the Lancaster County Attorney’s Office, Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln Police Department, YWCA, The Mediation Center and Human Services with technical assistance through Georgetown University. RESTORE is a school-based diversion program aimed at diverting the school to prison pipeline through evidence based Restorative Justice Principles. RESTORE seeks to avoid entry into the juvenile justice system by not filing charges, but by holding youth accountable for their behavior through restorative justice practices and encourages behavior change through interventions and referrals to appropriate programs. If the youth successfully completes the program, arrest information in the local law enforcement data base will be cleared, so an arrest will not be part of his/her criminal history.

Lancaster County Juvenile Diversion Program

Lancaster County operates a post arrest, pre-file diversion service. An alternative to traditional justice proceedings for youth ages 11 to 17 who have committed certain types of legal violations. If the Early Assessment Process recommends diversion and the County Attorney agrees then the referral will be sent to be processed in Juvenile Diversion. Diversion collaborates and works with a variety of community agencies to develop the diversion plan. The plan is tailored to the juvenile’s offense, it may include community services, online 3rd millennium classes, pay restitution to victims, engaging in pro-social activities in the community.

-Becky Steiner, Juvenile Justice Coordinator



Lancaster County Youth Services Center

When I accepted my current job as Program Coordinator at YSC, it seemed like the perfect role for me. It would allow me to bring my skills set as a certified special education teacher, administrator and youth advocate to create programming that is holistic in the sense that it meets and supports a youth's physical, emotional, spiritual and social development. I envisioned that our program goals would be accomplished by focusing on a relational approach. Simply put, the bridge built thru cultivating authentic relationship will singularly go a long way toward our stated program goals.

A major responsibility within my role at YSC is to provide evidence-based programming in those life skills areas connected to independent living. In providing instruction to our youth, I may find it helpful to look at individual youth's IEP with the knowledge that some youth may need differentiated instruction in the elements of content, process and product or how the student will learn to do his or her self-regulated learning. In addition, I may collaborate with the youth's "home" school or thru juvenile probation. It is my belief that strong effective leaders assume responsibility to ensure that all stakeholders are working collaboratively toward a common goal. I have carefully woven into our life skills program, topic areas to include: self-advocacy, decision making, strength based interest and career oriented planning; social problem solving and conflict resolution, guided by a restorative practices model - which is built on the premise of repairing and healing relationship.

Life skills classes occur twice weekly for each housing unit along with a board game and art group scheduled at the end of the week. While navigating within our COVID-19 protocol, I make it a point to do life skills with every youth even if means a 1-1 session. Most recently in life skills, all youth were asked to create a vision board. The vision board (a collage of pictures, words, phrases and art) serves as a visual picture that the youth could display in his or her room. The overarching question each youth was given was the following: "What will your future look like?" This question asked youth to consider people and places that would be part of their future. What kind of job or career might the youth be inclined to pursue in the future? Finally, who are some individual role models or heroes that inspire and/or motivate each youth to pursue their future dreams and plans?

Even when a youth is displaying behaviors that could be detrimental to successfully working our behavior management program, the goal is always to provide support by positively engaging the youth which is accomplished thru informal teaching and modeling appropriate behavior. I am involved at a level of helping to create behavioral interventions that utilize a restorative component. I will meet with a youth and ask him or her to think and reflect using a series of questions that will allow for self-reflection and to consider steps needed to "make right" where things went wrong.

The final point I would make regarding programming at YSC speaks to a theme-- that youth will grow in their level of self-awareness and knowledge of the consequential impact of their decisions. This is the reason that staff will often see me whether it is through life skills classes or through working 1-1 with a youth, encouraging youth to learn how to set self-determination goals that directly connect to independent living. And the most exciting thing for me to witness is a youth who feels empowered by the knowledge that he or she can set a series of small goals—whether it is the decision to attend school each day with the goal of getting school credits and finally passing that Geometry class or maybe the specific goal concerns making an apology to a family member that so that the road to forgiveness and healing can then begin to occur. Broken trust can be regained!!

-Chad Chapman, Program Coordinator

Upcoming Meetings

Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities: 2/5 12-1pm

Collaborative: 2/11 9-11am

Community Planning: 2/11 11:15am-12:15pm

Family Engagement: 2/18 11:30am-12:30pm



to our **AMAZING** Community Partners