Adolescent Female Advocacy Network

Spring 2008

AFAN

State of Utah
Juvenile Justice Services
120 N 200 W
Salt Lake City, UT 84103
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What's New

Members of the statewide task force for the Adolescent Female Advocacy Network have been keeping busy. We are excited to announce our first annual AFAN conference for JJS/ AFAN task force members. The conference will be held on June 3rd at the Training Center in Salt Lake. At that time awards will be given to a task force member and a facility that has demonstrated ongoing commitment to AFAN. At the conference, we will hear from Lisa-Michelle Church and Dan Maldonado as well as other professionals who work with adolescent females. Individual invitations will be sent to each task force member. We are looking forward to this even and appreciate all the help from various task force members to make it a great experience.

Nanon Talley

Director's Message

The Department of Human Services High Level Staffing Committee is comprised of the directors of the divisions within Human Services and is managed out of the Executive Director's office. The purpose of this committee is to manage youth whose needs cross division lines. Recently, the committee has been presented with difficult cases of adolescent girls who have multiple needs. In the past, cases like these were prone to be given to us, Juvenile Justice Services, to manage and we would be in a position to provide services to a youth who did not belong in our system. I have asked Nanon Talley, Program Manager, to assist on cases that involve girls. She has worked with other divisions within our department to find appropriate placements that will meet the needs of the girls and keep them under the custody of the appropriate division. This then allows our resources, financial and manpower, to be spent on the youth who are appropriately placed in JJS custody.

Dan Maldonado

Adolescent Female Advocacy Network

"VOICES" IN THE CANYON

Youth Services in Moab opened its doors to the community in January of this year. One of our goals has been realized in the area of gender specific issues unique to adolescent young women fourteen to seventeen years old. Due to the high numbers of young women who are at risk in our community, this was a high priority in our list of things to do. We were looking for a program that didn't just scratch the surface in educating young women looking for the answer to who they are. We wanted a program that would challenge their beliefs about the world around them their unique space in that world.

Voices, is a program of self discovery and empowerment developed and distributed by Dr. Stephanie Covington, a world renown pioneer who works in healing and survival of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The program is a comprehensive work that concentrates on 4 modules of education that include self-discovery, relationships and communication with others, health issues, and goals and the journey forward. The program has a wide variety of suggestions and materials with a timeline of 18, 1 ½ hour sessions. Sessions are closed, meaning that the same group completes that began. Due to the need to develop group trust and honesty, we do not introduce new girls into the group after the second meeting, and it is recommended that female staff lead the groups without interruption for the entire program.

While Voices was developed for use with incarcerated adolescent females, it is very adaptive and useful in other settings as well. It can be taken into schools, outreach programs, community centers and more. Wherever there are young women looking for help in discovering who they are, there is room for Voices.

Our first group of 10 girls began in October and will complete in February. While the length of the program was a concern at the onset of the classes, the only question we hear now is, "can we meet twice a week?". Due to the time constraints, that is not possible for us here, but it is definitely possible in larger units where there is more staff who can participate. The girls find comfort, acceptance and bonding that is often not a part of their daily lives. The group is so successful that by November, we had a list of another 10 girls, and are working to develop a second group to run concurrent with the first.

The self-trust and empowerment that Voices develops in the girls also allows Youth Services to build trust with the girls and their families that opens the communication for resources and assistance to them outside of the group.

Needless to say, we have found Voices to be a value added tool in our work to strengthen and develop adolescent girls into strong, self-directed young adult women.

Robynn Parker

Adolescent Female Advocacy Network

OUTSTADING EMPLOYEE

Ryan Smith has been with the female unit at Genesis Youth Center since September 27, 2005. He is an exceptional employee, maintaining a professional work performance and a fantastic male role model to our girls. Ryan Graduated from Utah State University in May 2005, Magna cum Laude. Yes, this means Ryan is a very intelligent man and a great asset in his work performance but that is not what is most appealing as a Juvenile Justice Employee. The remarkable thing about Ryan is his ability to connect with the girls and maintain a rapport and relationship at the same time maintaining a solid boundary and professional demeanor with the girls at all times. The girl's love when Ryan comes to work and the interactions between them is truly a training tool for male workers. He has a natural ability to use his skills and personality, which creates a solid male role model for these young girls to look at and use as someone to depend on and trust. As we know, many of the girls that come into our system and facilities having some trauma and negative experiences with males, which put an even greater amount of pressure on men that work and interact daily with our girls. Ryan is one of these unique men that display a positive, kind and consistent strong male role model to the girls that they badly need and we seek as a Division employee.

Please don't use this article as a recruiting tool for Ryan, as of now he really enjoys working at Genesis (at least that what he tells me) and hopefully will not leave us anytime soon, however, he will be a great asset to any facility or region as he moves along in his career. Ryan Smith is a valuable employee to our Division and a great guy to have working with our girls.

What about something negative?
He is an avid BYU fan!!!

Ed Conley, Genesis Supervisor

Who am I?

At the Dixie Area Detention Center we have a on going team building activity that consistently happens twice a month in addition to our other small activities that happen in our team meetings. Everyone on staff fills out a questionnaire with several different revealing questions on it like: What was your most embarrassing moment, what would you do if you had a million dollars, what is your dream vacation/ car, what is your favorite restaurant/ food/ least favorite food and what do you do in your spare time/ days off. A funny story is then written and everyone must guess who that person is. The first one to guess correctly is the winner and then the answer is posted on our bulletin board. It is extremely interesting to see what unique experiences each one of us has had throughout our lives. By sharing those experiences you create deeper, more meaningful relationships with people and therefore are more understanding when things may or may not go as planned in the daily running of a facility.

Sterling Cabana

Adolescent Female Advocacy Network

Youth and Family Resource Services

Forest Ridge Youth Services

The program spotlight for the Spring Newsletter is Youth and Family Resource Services dba Forest Ridge Youth Services ocated in Estherville, Iowa. This Cognitive-Behavioral program is contracted to serve DJJS females with Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse treatment issues and has a contract to provide services for intensive substance abuse treatment, psychiatric evaluations, psychological evaluations and medication management. Located in rural NW Iowa, Forest Ridge has two campuses for a total of five (5) units to accommodate the 106 females. The young women attend Forest Ridge School located between the two residential campuses. This former public school facility was purchased by Forest Ridge and although operated by Forest Ridge, is accredited by the Estherville Lincoln Central School District. The females attend school during the day, participate in individual and group activities, which include substance abuse treatment, Psycho-social Rehabilitation Services (PRS) as well as extracurricular activities including intramural sports, choir, art, drama and speech. Community service and restitution opportunities include

weekly activities in nursing homes, community after school children's programs as well as paid on-campus World of Work employment. Forest Ridge School offers the opportunity to participate in competitive sports including basketball, track and volleyball competing with local school districts. The average length of stay is 6-12 months in this Gender Responsive Program.

Rachel Edwards

“The staff here really care.”

“I like it, they don't try to change who I am.”

“I've learned how my actions have affected people.”

“I think all the girls should come to this program.”

“I never understood what it really meant to take accountability before.”

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Utah County Youth Services

Vantage Point's primary goal is to empower youth to make positive choices in their lives. The girls who come to Vantage Point are encouraged to set goals for their future and make plans on how to achieve these goals. Many of the girls have gone through challenging trials such as abuse, foster care, and family problems. At Vantage Point, we attempt to teach these girls that even though they have had hard pasts, which they cannot change, they still have much control over their futures. Some of the issues we tend to see with the girls are: cutting, eating disorders, thinking errors, victimization, domestic violence, sexual activity and sexual diseases, drug abuse, suicidal ideation, depression, school problems, relationship problems and self esteem issues. We work on these and any other issues while the girls are actually staying at Vantage Point, which can be a 72 hour crisis residential shelter, and in outpatient counseling. Vantage Point provides individual, family and group counseling for 60 days. We have groups for Anger Management, Substance Abuse, Family Relations, and Self-Esteem.The Self-Esteem group is especially for girls age 12 through 17 years and their mothers. This group encourages girls to take control of their lives versus allowing others or circumstances to be in charge. The group uses cognitive therapy techniques along with experiential activities and art therapy. Everything is done to help each girl recognize that she is unique and wonderful. By having the mothers come, it is hoped that they too can develop more positive thoughts about themselves and also share a positive experience with their daughters. Vantage Point does not charge families for any of their services. About two-thirds of the funding for Vantage Point comes from the Juvenile Justice System. Wasatch Mental Health funds part of the remaining necessary funds as does a small contract with DCFS.

State Task Force Contacts

By Area

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If you wish to submit anything for the next newsletter, please send it to Nanon Talley through email by July 1st. This is a great place to recognize the efforts that are being made around the state and to learn of each other's successes!