

from the *Heart*



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A parent's worse nightmare is a call that their child has been processed in the juvenile justice system for a criminal offense -- and with the costs of arrest, detention and prosecution at the feet of the taxpayers, it's a community problem, too. In fact, every \$1 spent on prevention translates to an average of \$20 spent on the youthful delinquent. In 1997, 76.4 of every 1,000 youth were in the juvenile justice system. By funding after-school, mentoring and mental health programs, the Children's Services Council of Martin County is helping to reduce these numbers. In 2009, 49.4 of every 1,000 youth were in the system. We are making a difference!

The Need: **Juvenile Justice**



The key to keeping kids out of the juvenile justice system is to get them engaged in enriching activities.

The Response: **Mental Health Care**



Tykes & Teens: **General Mental Health**

Growing up can be a troubling time, and not all children and teens handle it well. With mental health counseling sessions taking place at Tykes & Teens in Palm City as well as 11 school sites throughout the county, therapists offer services ranging from short-term counseling to handle issues stemming from divorcing parents to longer-term treatment for very complex family situations. The Children's Services Council supports this non-profit, which works to identify root causes for a child's behavior -- either before or after entering the juvenile justice system. As a result of mental health counseling, children and teens often show better academic performance, reduced substance abuse and improved family relationships.

The Children's Services Council of Martin County is an independent district, approved by voters by referendum in 1988, to enhance the lives of the children of Martin County and to enable them to attain their full potential by supporting 34 impactful programs for youth in our community. Learn more about your agency at: www.cscmc.org and www.facebook.com/cscmc.

The Response: After-School Care and Mentoring

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF MARTIN COUNTY**

is academics, including a "Power Hour" initiative that encourages all members to spend at least an hour on homework each day. Adult role models support children's interests in everything from cooking to robotics, which results in a very low percentage of members involved in the juvenile justice system. They also offer a popular summer program.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Martin County: High-Yield Learning

Located in four communities -- Hobe Sound, Indiantown, Port Salerno and Palm City -- the Boys & Girls Clubs offer a well-rounded curriculum designed to engage youth in positive out-of-school activities. The focus of this program



Stuart *City of Stuart:* East Stuart Youth Initiative

A model collaboration among the city's Community Resources Department, Boys & Girls Clubs, the City Police Department and Tykes & Teens, the East Stuart Youth Initiative serves the historic East Stuart community with everything from homework help to baseball, swimming lessons, culinary arts, and creative arts. Plus, this program offers a progressive Alternative To Out-of-School Suspension (ALTOSS) Program, where students receive counseling to avoid further disciplinary problems. The First Offender Program here also helps first-time, minor juvenile offenders keep their record clean and reduce further crime. They offer gang awareness and substance abuse resistance classes -- and keep kids off the streets.

Located in the neighborhoods that most need after-school care within walking distance of home, Martin County's programs provide a safe and supervised place for children and teens. At area community centers in Golden Gate, Banner Lake in Hobe Sound, New Monrovia in south Stuart (run in partnership with the New Monrovia Community Development Corp.), Jensen Beach and Indiantown, participants do homework and work off energy through sports and fun trips with adult role models.



Martin County:
**G.A.A.P., B.L.A.S.T.,
J.A.S.E., P.L.A.C.E., R.E.A.C.H.**



YMCA:
Strong Families

At two locations in Stuart, the YMCA's Strong Families program includes a tutoring component and a lot of fun. The Y staff collaborate with the police department to run educational lectures, which take place at a time when studies show juvenile crime triples. By keeping the child in a safe, supervised environment, kids and teens are less likely to be in bad situations and more likely to stay engaged with positive activities such as athletics. The Y also offers popular summer camps.

2 With the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program, 90% of "Littles" reported their mentoring relationship helped them make better choices throughout their childhood. When it comes to avoiding the juvenile justice system, sometimes it's just that easy. The Children's Services Council supports this program, where "Bigs" are matched with "Littles" and participate in a variety of activities that show at-risk kids that someone really cares.

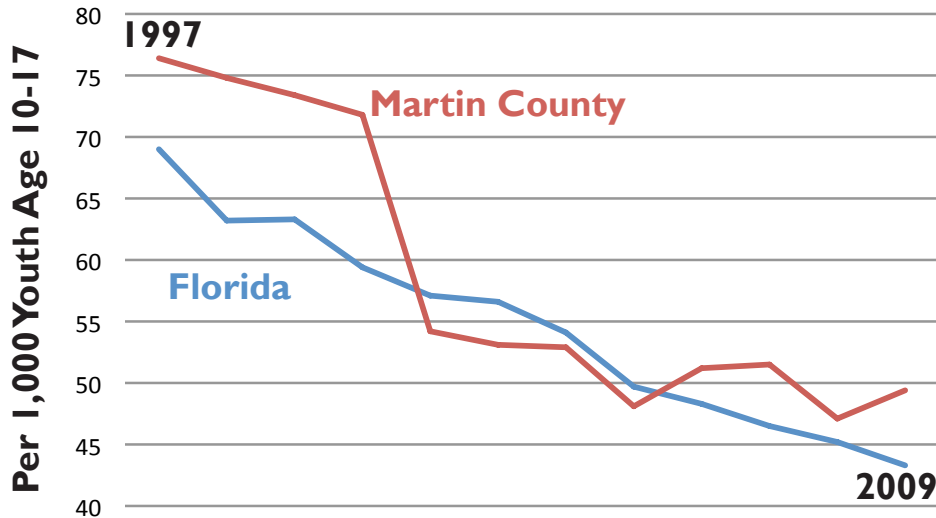


Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, Inc.

Big Brothers Big Sisters.:
Start Something

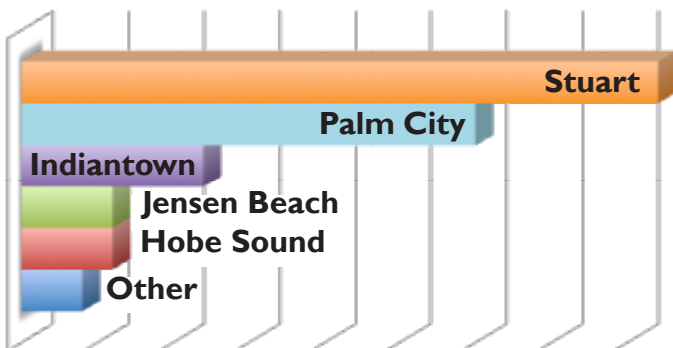
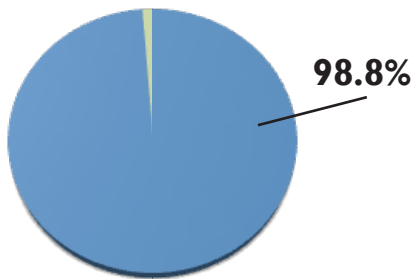
The Impact: Fewer kids in "the system"

A marked decrease in the rate of youth referred for juvenile justice offenses from 1997 to 2009:



2010 Youth of the Year Anthony Smith stays on the positive path, thanks to after-school programs funded by the Children's Services Council of Martin County.

Average percentage of participants in Council-funded after-school programs who have had NO interaction with the juvenile justice system from July 2010 to June 2011:



Cost of Juvenile Detention per child per year:
\$102,200.00

Source: Fla. Sheriff's Association

Cost of East Stuart Youth Initiative's First Offender Program per child in 2010-2011:
\$783.23

Last year, 36 teens & pre-teens completed this program. That's a potential savings of \$3,651,003.80 in 2010-2011 alone! And that's not even counting the costs of arrest, prosecution or treatment!

At left, a quick look at the neighborhoods where the children and teens who participate in Tykes & Teens' General Mental Health program live.

Success: Positive paths

Success story

Editor's note: In sixth grade, 11-year-old Zachary Martin was battling negative peer pressure. Trying to fit in, he bought marijuana at school and was caught. He was immediately suspended, and later expelled and sent to Spectrum. His mother elected to take him to the Alternative To Out Of School Suspension Program at the East Stuart Youth Initiative. At the City of Stuart's recreation center, his mother also learned about the collaborative after-school program with the Boys & Girls Club, City of Stuart, Tykes and Teens and the Stuart Police Department. She signed him up to start community service work. Meanwhile, Zachary was arrested and was sent to a diversionary court, designed to help keep his record clean if he complies with the court orders. Now at the after-school program every day, he cleans up, helps young kids with homework, helps the chef with cooking classes and serves snacks. Zachary is following the rules of the court, helping out and finding that it can be very rewarding to be on the right side of the law. Here's his story in his own words:*

"I had got in trouble for buying Mary J. I came to do community services because I knew it would help with court. It has been hard on me, but after a bad day at school I'll come here to the Stuart Boys & Girls Club. When I walk in, I say in my head 'Woo, let's do this.' When I see the kids, it makes me happy to see them smile, and it takes some stress off (with) every little smile I see and all their faces. It helps me a lot because I don't have to worry or stress out when I worried about court. Boys & Girls Club of Stuart, thank you. You guys are helping me get through all this. The staff, they are helping. When I struggle, they help. Thank you, everyone. You are helping tremendously. At the Boys & Girls Club, I also do activities like assist the staff, do cooking classes and art, and they are all so exciting."

* Name changed to protect privacy

Events & Meetings

Jan. 23: Council Meeting

Feb. 10 - 17: Martin County Fair
-- look for the new Family Fun
Corner!

Date To Be Announced: State of the
Martin County Child Symposium
(stay tuned to learn more!)

Registered to vote?

A great way to ensure the programs and policies you care about remain in Martin County is to register to vote and VOTE! Log on to www.martinvotes.com to register today!

Council News

In December, the staff of the Children's Services Council of Martin County participated in a **food and toy drive**, benefiting House of Hope and Toys for Tots, which is administered by our friends at the United Way of Martin County.

We also worked diligently to update the **grant application** for reapplication by our 19 funded agencies for the 2012-2013 grant cycle. This application is due to be released early this month.

Finally, we will begin ramping up our **community outreach** this month! If you know of a group that may be interested in learning more about the Council, please contact Suzanne Wentley at swentley@cscmc.org!

Contact Us

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