



Active Balanced Community Quarterly Report July 2009

III. Program Development: Enhance the services available to youth involved in the juvenile justice system, victims, those with substance abuse issues, and the general community.

Mediation services continue through Michigan Dispute Resolution Services (MDRS). In 2008, 24 mediations were held, including guardianships, PPO, local ordinance issues, employment, landlord tenant and school issues. Through June 2009, 14 mediations have been held involving 67 individuals. Five agreements and 2 partial agreements resulted.

Monroe County Mentors is operating through Big Brothers Big Sisters. In June 2009, a grant was submitted to OJJDP for a mentoring grant. The proposal was designed to develop capacity and to implement a mentoring program in Monroe County that serves every youth who enters the Monroe County Youth Center. The Active Balanced Community Steering Committee will serve as the oversight body. This specialized mentoring program, **Supporting Youth in Navigating Challenges** (SYNC), will provide a variety of mentoring strategies to ensure that every youth has the opportunity to establish a structured and trusting relationship with a caring adult, ultimately supporting them with successful community reintegration, to be evidenced by the following outcomes:

- Reduction in Recidivism (from baseline of 72% return rate)
- Improved Academic Performance
- Reduced Substance Abuse
- Reduced Law Enforcement Contacts
- Improved Family Re-integration

Program Objectives include:

- Develop and implement a thorough volunteer recruitment and screening process.
- Provide comprehensive mentor training and ongoing supervision and support.
- Establish match procedures that are based upon the needs and interests of the youth, not on the adult mentor volunteers.
- Mentors will engage in youth and family re-entry planning.
- Youth will be trained in the philosophy of Balanced and Restorative Justice BARJ.

Substance Abuse Coalition. Funding to support the Coalition through 2008 was received through the Prosecutor's Office from the Drug Forfeiture Funds (\$10,000) and from OMNI (\$12,000). The work plan is monitored by the Coalition, and the United Way of Monroe County serves as the fiduciary agency. The Federal Drug Free Communities' grant application for \$125,000 was awarded, which began October 1, 2008. The grant is for five years – \$625,000. The Substance Abuse Coalition continues to meet on the first Friday of each month at 8:30 a.m. April Corie and Robert Kasprzak serve as the Co-Chairs. Some of the accomplishments include:

- The Dundee Youth Service Organization was formed in December 2008 that will serve as a model for other communities in Monroe County to create both an avenue for input and programs that enhance the protective factors.
- On October 7, 2008, a Town Hall meeting was held at the River Raisin Centre for the Arts. The topic was Prescription Drug and Over the Counter Drug Abuse. The meeting was combined with a concert by country singer Jeff Tuttle. Sponsorships were obtained by

Reckitt Benckiser for the food and payment of the speaker and Mr. Tuttle's travel cost. Mr. Tuttle provided his time / band through an in-kind donation.

- In October 2008, the MONROE EVENING NEWS published a Guest Editorial by April Corie regarding the consequences of legalization of medical marijuana. Following the passage of the proposal, training was provided to the Coalition and Law Enforcement by Ken Stecker.
- On March 5, 2009, the Coalition will sponsor the annual county-wide in-service for human service professionals. The topic of the presentation is underage drinking, including the consequences of providing alcohol to minors.
- In the Spring 2009, all area high schools participated in sending a letter to the parents of all graduating seniors encouraging them to host alcohol-free graduation parties.
- On May 30, 2009, a Medication Drop Off was held at the Monroe County Health Department. 2,874 controlled pills and over 66,000 of non-controlled and other the counter medications. The next Drop Off Day is planned for October 10, 2009 at the Women's Health Fair at Mt. Carmel Church in Temperance.
- A Law Enforcement Sub-Committee was created to ensure that efforts are linked between the Coalition and Law Enforcement. Trooper Bret Smith Chairs the Sub-Committee.
- A Medical Sub-Committee was created to open lines of communication with the medical community regarding prescription drugs.

On August 21, 2009, the Coalition is sponsoring a training with Anneshia Freeman, Program Director of The Lies That Bind. The topic will be "What's Really Going on?" and will cover an overview of how the unconscious self-concept is formed, how to identify how the decision-making process of a person with a negative self-concept operates, and how to identify strategies for assisting individuals in changing negative thought patterns.