



Club News

Volume 1, Issue 3
Winter 2009

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“Children will not remember you for the material things you provided but for the feeling that you cherished them”

Special points of interest:†
As of January 2010, an estimated 10.5 million children under the age of 18 live in families with an unemployed parent or 1 out of every 7 children.
.....
Children forced into poverty by a recession are three times more likely to be poor as adults than their more affluent peers.
.....
Children who fall into poverty as a result of a recession are less likely to graduate from high school or college.

(First Focus Campaign for Children: Families of the Recession, January 2010)

Demand for Non-profits Services on the Rise - While Giving is Slowing Down

Called the “Great Recession,” the current economic impact has caused many non-profits like the Boys & Girls Clubs to find that their services are wanted even more. Unfortunately, these very “wanted” organizations are being hard hit in the money department due to the same downturn. It seems when needs goes up, giving goes down.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of North Central Florida is no different. Like many Boys & Girls Clubs, revenue is created through grants, fund-raising by the board of directors, and giving by local individuals and business. Some of this giving is generated through the United Way that in turn helps several other non-profits in the area. Currently our larger grants come through both the state and federal government. The state grant is called Project Learn which provides needed revenues for such activities as

after-school tutoring, and homework help. Currently all of our clubs are 21st Century Learning Centers as provided through the Federal 21st Century Learning Grant. The Boys & Girls of North Central Florida units, Veteran’s Park, Jerkins, and Steinhatchee, received the new grant beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. Our Club was one of only 9 Boys & Girls Club in Florida that received the grants. These grants financially cover a host of activities from education and recreation to prevention.

Even with these funds, the clubs are constantly opening their door to more and more children in need of after school

care and support. There is always a need for more sports equipment, paper for copiers, books for the shelves, and pool sticks for the pool tables. The need goes on and just like the support that Boys & Girls Clubs give to their local members. No wonder it is called “The Positive Place for Kids!”



Youth of the Year: Leadership Learned and Earned



The Youth of the Year Program at Boys & Girls Clubs is a nationally recognized program that is sponsored by the Reader’s Digest Foundation. The program is designed to promote and recognize service to club and community, academic performance, contributions to the family, and spiritual life. Each club selects a youth of the year who then competes on the state level. Those who

win on the state level receive a \$1,000 scholarship and go on to compete in a regional competition for a \$10,000 scholarship. These five regional winners then compete in Washington, DC where they vie for an additional \$15,000 scholarship. The national winner will receive their award from the President of the United States and go on to be the teen spokesperson for all members.

Holidays at the Club: What an Adventure!



Youth of the Year 2010: Erica Scott

The 2010 Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year is Erica Scott. Daughter of Eric and Nita Scott, Erica has been a member of the club for 7 years and a junior staff member for the last two years. Erica is preceded by her sister Ashley in working for the club at the Veteran's branch.

Erica is currently a Junior at Taylor County High School who plans to graduate in 2011 and go on to attend college at Florida State University where she wants to major in Sports Medicine and Mathematics.

When asked how she felt once the winner was announced, Erica stated, "I was in disbelief—I didn't know what to say except Wow!"



Chief Professional Officer Lisa English with 2010 Youth of the Year Erica Scott

Substance Abuse and Taylor County

Annually the *Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey* is given to Florida youth. Students in grades 6-12 are surveyed to measure the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and delinquent behavior as well as measure the risk and protective factors related to these behaviors. According to 422 Taylor County students, 53.1 percent had used alcohol over their lifetime

*"Alcohol is the most commonly used drug among Taylor County students."
2008 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey*

with 32.9 percent having used it within 30 days of the survey. Alcohol was the most commonly used drug among these students. After alcohol, 37.3 percent admitted to having used cigarettes in their lifetime and 13.7 percent noted they had used cigarettes within 30 days of the survey. In fact fewer students than in years past perceived daily use of alcohol as being harmful.

Of the students surveyed, 23.2 percent reported that they had been suspended from school during the survey year and 13.2 percent even admitted having attacked someone with intent to harm.

These key findings of drug use and anti-social behavior is only aggravated by high risk factors within the community. Fifty-six percent of Middle school students reported that the perceived availability of drugs was high which indicates it is easier for students to get alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. In essence more availability equals the higher likelihood of use.

Underage Drinking: Its Worse than you Think

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving, or MADD, "Underage alcohol use is more likely to kill young people than all illegal drugs combined." Unfortunately, the beginnings of underage drinking is much earlier than most people think. Almost 20% of 14-year-olds say they've been drunk at least once, according to a U.S. Surgeon General, and one-fourth of 8th graders have reported being drunk, according to the Monitoring the

Future Survey. Another study, by RAND Health, found that three-quarters of 7th graders had used alcohol. Unfortunately, the onset of early drinking is likely to cause severe problems for the future of the children in-



involved from employment problems and drug abuse to criminal problems and violent acts. What should parents do? First, parents must be willing to talk to their kids—don't be afraid to address the issue and learn to give your kids information on how alcohol can affect their bodies and their future. Secondly, be vigilant in monitoring your kids. Know where they are at, who they are with, and what they are doing. Set limits, enforce rules, and most of all—COMMUNICATE!



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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF
NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA**

"The Positive Place for Kids"

Meet the Director of the Jerkins Club: Natisha Basha Miller

Meet NaTisha Miller—Director of the Jerkins Club branch and Area Director of the Boys & Girls Club of North Central Florida . NaTisha has worked for the Club for over 15 years, beginning as a part-time staff where she facilitated a gameroom program that interested both younger members and teens alike.

When asked about her long standing career with the Boys & Girls Club, Natisha simply states in the humble manner that defines her, "If I can make a difference in the life of one child, then the years are more than worth it." It is clear that NaTisha has touched the lives of far more than one child in her tenure at the club, and will continue to do so form many years to come.

