



The NCCD Center for Girls and Young Women is guided by the courageous life experiences of girls and young women in the juvenile and child welfare systems. The Center is the passionate voice for activism to ensure equitable, humane, and gender-appropriate responses to improve outcomes for girls and young women.

*NCCD Center for
Girls and Young Women*

Dear Friends,

The holiday season is a time of reflection, celebration and gratitude. As 2009 comes to a close, there are constant reminders of the challenging times we face as a nation. Yet, as I personally reflect on the past year and we celebrate the one-year anniversary of the NCCD Center for Girls and Young Women, I am inspired, full of hope and profoundly grateful.

One of my favorite quotes is from Meister Eckhart who says that if the only prayer you said in your whole life was thank you, that would suffice. Since I am at a loss for words to express my gratitude for the support of all of those who have helped to make the dream of opening The Center a reality, I will trust that the words “thank you” will suffice.

First, I would like to thank the Jessie Ball duPont Fund Board of Trustees for their generous financial support without which The Center would not exist. To Dr. Sherry Magill, President of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, thank you for setting high standards and always believing that we could make a difference.

To Dr. Barry Krisberg who served as the President and CEO of NCCD for 26 years, I am profoundly grateful for your vision, your passion and your tireless efforts to ensure that girls are at the forefront of the national agenda. Thank you for sharing in this dream and for challenging me to think big!

I would like to say thank you to those individuals who have quietly, yet profoundly, made a difference this past year.

Vanessa Patino, our Senior Research Associate has brought wisdom, compassion and excellence to every aspect of the Center’s initiatives. Beth Daniel, our Office Manager has worked tirelessly to create an environment that is efficient, creative and honoring to the girls and young women we are privileged to serve. Threasa Miller, our JAGS Director, thank you for embracing the challenge of opening our first direct services project inside the detention facility in Fort Myers.

To the girls and young women whose courage, strength and hope remind us of the true meaning of this holiday season ... thank you.

I wish there was space to acknowledge each of our supporters by name. Please know that you are appreciated. We are proud of our accomplishments and are committed to moving forward. We invite you to read about the numerous initiatives that we have developed and implemented during our first year of operation and welcome your feedback.

Respectfully,

Dr. Lawanda Ravoira
Director



Susan B. Anthony, Vanessa Patino, Lawanda Ravoira, & Beth Daniel

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Setting the National Agenda - The Center Participates in the First Congressional Hearing on Girls



Dr. Lawanda Ravoira and several other advocates and experts gave testimony before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security on October 20, 2009. Chaired by the Honorable Bobby Scott, the first congressional



hearing “Girls in the Juvenile Justice System: Strategies to Help Girls Achieve Their Full Potential” was held to address the issues around the alarming trends of girls’ increasing representation in the system.

Florida Leads the Way

In partnership with Children’s Campaign, Inc., the release of the Justice for Girls: Blueprint for Action 2009 charts a fiscally responsible and service effective direction for addressing the escalating number of girls referred to the Florida juvenile justice system. Senator Stephen Wise (R) has championed the need for reform and is introducing legislation to codify the recommendations set forth in the Blueprint. For information: www.iamforkids.org/promise/promise5/jj-for-girls_Blueprint0109.pdf



Community Briefing held on Commercial Sex Trafficking of Girls

The Center, in conjunction with the Northeast Florida Human Trafficking Task Force, held a community briefing in Jacksonville on August 31st. Renowned expert, Dr. Laura Lederer, FBI and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office representatives presented compelling information about this growing issue. Florida ranks third in the country for this horrific activity.

Justice for Girls: Duval County Initiative

Funded by the Women’s Giving Alliance and the Jessie Ball duPont Fund, Children’s Campaign, Inc. convened the Duval County Initiative Leadership Council to spearhead systemic reform in the care and treatment of girls in Duval County. The membership is comprised of citizen leaders representing business, philanthropy, higher education, research, law enforcement and community service. In partnership with The Center, the Council has researched, developed and adopted a strategic plan that charts the direction for systemic change for girls in Duval County who are in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. For information www.justiceforallgirls.org/advocacy/FJJAArticle.pdf

A Call for Gender Equity for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

Through the release of “A Call for Gender Equity for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System,” The Center has called for an overhaul of current legislation, policies and practices to reshape how the nation is treating and responding to the escalating rates of arrest and incarceration of girls. This and other publications have brought national attention to the work of The Center at various national meetings including, the White House Conference: Gang Violence Prevention and Crime Control; Office of Justice Stakeholder meetings and the National Criminal Justice Commission Act meetings.

Girl Matters® Becomes Model for Gender-Responsive Programming

Girl Matters®, is a 5 day training of trainers curriculum providing a step-by-step guide to creating effective gender-responsive services to improve outcomes for girls and young women in the juvenile justice system. The comprehensive curriculum teaches the core concepts, theories, and practical interventions that are essential to programming and services. It is designed to build staff understanding about why gender matters, the importance of creating a gender-

responsive culture aligned with theory and research, and strategies for addressing girls' challenging behaviors. In our first year, we developed and provided training for Florida DJJ residential programs, the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, North American Family Institute programs, and the staff of the Young Women's Academy and Youth Crisis Center. In early November, we hosted a national training held in Jacksonville with 26 participants representing various agencies.



Soon to Be Released

Girl Matters® Right Moves

This curriculum is aligned with Girl Matters® building blocks and designed to help participants develop skills to facilitate group sessions for girls in juvenile justice programs.

Girl Matters® Smart Choices

Smart Choices will also be aligned with Girl Matters® and will focus on alternatives to the use of physical restraints and seclusion.



“Information from this training will help me renew awareness of the needs of our girls.”

“I will use this information to become a better listener, better communicator, to be more in tune to what’s going on with my kids, and to build strength in kids.”

“I will continue to advocate for my clients, speak my concerns to the agency and will learn to focus less on behaviors and help clients explore their trauma.”

In its first year The Center has:

- developed and published a gender responsive curriculum
- presented at 9 state and national conferences
- conducted 5 Training of Trainers series workshops
- awarded over 100 staff certificates of completion as trainers
- provided training to 14 agencies and 29 residential programs representing FL, TX, LA, PA, & IL

“Maria’s” Story

Maria is the 15 year-old daughter of a migrant family. Her only charge is an arrest for giving a false name to police in Collier County, FL (a misdemeanor). The family didn’t understand the court system and when they moved to the next town for work, they left without realizing Maria still needed to have a disposition hearing. Failing to appear in court, a pick up order was issued and Maria was later brought to detention after returning from working in the fields in the mid-west. With constant relocations, school was not easy for her. At 15 and in the 7th grade, Maria says, “I should have been in special classes but I wasn’t in one school long enough for anyone to notice.”

In detention, she was unable to contact her mother who was on the move again. JAGS Program Director, Threasa Miller, was contacted by DJJ for help in getting family information from Maria who refused to talk to anyone. After spending time with Maria, a call to a sister in out-of-state secured the mother’s contact info and a court date was set. Maria was confused and uncooperative at court and the Judge ordered she be held for a commitment staffing. *This 15 year-old girl was going to be committed to a residential program on a first time misdemeanor charge!*

JAGS continues to work with Maria and her mother. They have agreed to enter into family counseling with a Spanish-speaking counselor. Ms. Miller is recommending alternatives to incarceration for Maria. The DJJ committee has agreed to reconsider commitment if Maria can “make it work” while she is on probation awaiting placement. Maria was released to her mother and, with the help of Ms. Miller, is enrolled in school. There is great hope that Maria will be successful on probation and the commitment will be withdrawn. JAGS will continue to monitor Maria and her utilization of resources in the community.

Justice for All Girls: Alternative Services Program for Girls Launched in SW Florida

Funded by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, JAGS (Justice for All Girls Services) was developed and is currently being implemented by The Center for girls detained at the Southwest Florida (Fort Myers) Regional Juvenile Detention Center. Under



the leadership of Threasa Miller, JAGS is providing alternative services for girls who are awaiting judicial disposition and/or commitment placement. Research-based gender-responsive and trauma-informed practices are the core of our program.

The JAGS program offers individual services to all girls (assessment, referrals, one/one skills training, and group

skills training). Additionally, services to girls and their families (help navigating the system, information about available community programs, recommendations to DJJ and judges regarding appropriate

placements, collaboration with girls’ probation officers where appropriate) are also part of the model to affect systemic change. We will place a special emphasis on training detention center staff in the critical issues that impact the safety and well-being of girls and that lead to improved outcomes for girls.

I also like it ‘cause I have someone to sit down and hear me for once in my life and listen to me.

NCCD Gender Specific JAIS™ Assessment

The Center is proud to have JAIS™ (Juvenile Assessment Intervention System) as an important tool to assess the risk and needs of girls in the juvenile justice system and develop individualized care plans and address the motivations driving girls’ behaviors through practical supervision strategies. Through NCCD, The Center provides web-based access and individual contracts based on jurisdiction size and technical assistance needs. Assessment services can be tailored to meet the reporting requirements of agencies and individual programs along the entire juvenile justice continuum.

Understanding the life experiences of girls and young women involved in the juvenile justice system and translating that information into effective interventions is our expertise. Research is the foundation to our specialized curriculums, training and technical assistance, direct service programs, and advocacy on behalf of girls issues.

Documenting the PACE Model

PACE Center for Girls, Inc. provides a gender-responsive school-based program which been recognized as a promising national model. The PACE “setting” is deliberate in creating a culture which allows girls to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors. PACE has served 21,000 at-risk girls since 1985 with considerable success though there has been no evaluation to ascertain the key elements associated with this success. Under a congressional directive, The Center is assisting PACE to fill this research gap.

The Center is currently documenting the model, including the theoretical and empirical basis for the program model, the core program components, targeted risk and protective factors, desired outcomes, and assessment of data collection measures to prepare them for an outcome evaluation. At every stage,

Crying is not going to get me home. The outside tears are nothing but water. I’m crying on the inside where no one can see it.

careful attention has been paid to ensure that each of the goals and objectives of the assessment lead to products and deliverables that accurately represent PACE and are useful and beneficial to its programming. This collaborative has been a reflective practice and The Center looks forward to continuing this work and presenting the final theoretical model and recommendations for evaluation readiness to PACE in 2010. PACE leadership will be able to utilize the findings to enhance PACE’s organizational capacity and their ability to replicate the model. PACE has selected The Center to serve as the external evaluator. We are committed to an evaluation approach that is gender-responsive and produces valuable findings which will have important implications for prevention and intervention programming for girls.

I prayed really hard and was hoping we would not be in trouble and they would not take us from our grandmother. The police came to my grandmother’s house and took us away. I was only 10 years old.



Research Publications

Getting the Facts Straight About Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

Translating Research Findings into Effective Gender Responsive Services and Interventions for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System, IMPACT Journal

A Rallying Cry for Change: Charting a New Direction in the State of Florida’s Response to Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

Other relevant publications can be found at:
www.justiceforallgirls.org/pubs.html

Florida DJJ Cites Girls Matters® as the Cornerstone Statewide Gender-Responsive Initiative

“We will work together in making Florida a leader in providing effective gender-responsive services. Our girls deserve nothing less.” - Secretary Darryl Olsen

In partnership with The Center, DJJ launched the Statewide Gender-Responsive Initiative with The Center’s Girl Matters® Training of Trainers Program facilitated in Jacksonville, Florida. Following the training, agencies were provided a gender-responsive assessment tool for developing the program implementation and sustainability plan. DJJ will continue to work very closely with The Center who will provide ongoing technical assistance and support.

State of Illinois Embraces Girl Matters® and JAIS™

NCCD is working with a team of state and national youth advocates, researchers and consultants to implement a comprehensive master plan that will restructure the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. Illinois is moving away from an adult correction model toward an evidenced-based assessment and intervention model. The Center has provided the Girl Matters® and JAIS™ Training of Trainers programming and is providing ongoing technical assistance for establishing a continuum of gender-responsive services for the State of Illinois.

Gender-Responsive Assessment Protocol

The Center is developing a gender-responsive assessment protocol grounded in best practices for agencies delivering services to girls. The protocol operationalizes theory at many levels including system, program components, and day-to-day interactions. We are field testing the protocol and will make it available to programs as part of our technical assistance efforts in the coming year. As a result of utilizing the protocol, we envision that agencies will improve policies and practices that negatively impact girls, improve organizational culture, better meet the training needs of staff, and improve outcomes for girls.

Desoto Takes Action

Following a Girl Matters® training in February, and with ongoing consultation from The Center, the staff at Desoto Dual Diagnosed Correctional Facility went to work creating a gender-responsive environment for their girls. Following is part of a report submitted to the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice from the Desoto program.

In June, to ensure fidelity and continued Girls Matters® culture building/programming we implemented staff training on Girls Matters®. We have had staff training on Girl Matters® and trauma training monthly. We are continuing this staff training for the year. We feel staff training is essential in being informed about working with our female population.

In July, we formed a Girl Matters® Assessment Team including youth, administration, QA, psychology, nursing, medical, psychiatrist, unit supervisors, education, and nutrition. We have been participating in completing the implementation plan.

Also please find pictures of our improvements in our visitation room, driveway entrance, and posters on the mods.



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1022 Park Street, Suite 207 • Jacksonville, FL 32204
904.598.0901 fax 598.0902
www.justiceforallgirls.org