



**St. Joseph Youth Alliance**

**2009 Annual Report**

## **Mission:**

Engaging community partners to improve the lives of children and families.

## **St. Joseph Youth Alliance**

3308 South Leonard Road

St. Joseph, MO 64503

Phone: 816-232-0050

Fax: 816-390-8536

[www.youth-alliance.org](http://www.youth-alliance.org)

## **Our Values:**

Advocacy

Collaboration

Commitment to Making a Difference

Fiscal Responsibility

Identifying Community Needs

Quality Outcomes

Resource Identification and Development



**PowerUp**

# St. Joseph Youth Alliance Board

Dan Brachman, President .....Retired  
Jason Callaway ..... Central High School  
Colin Cline, Vice President .....Retired  
Chris Connally .....St Joseph Police Department  
Peter Gregory .....Student  
Sandy Hamlin ..... Retired Educator  
Gary Hillebrand, Past President ..... Preferred Family Health Care  
Jerry Lau..... First Trust of Mid America  
Roger Lenander..... First Lutheran Church  
Gary Miller .....MO-Kan Regional Council  
Sharon Ritchey, Secretary.... City of St. Joseph Parks & Recreation Department  
Carla Sage.....Heartland Hospital Trauma Services  
Brian Shindorf.....Assistant Director of Elementary Education  
Jack Teegarden, Treasurer .....Retired  
Joey Thompson .....Children's Division



## from the Executive Director

Robin Hammond

October 2009



After long and thoughtful consideration, I am energized by the theme for this year's annual report. When I think of "power", I think of a continuous system of outputs that protect against short-circuits. In a nutshell, this is what the St. Joseph Youth Alliance is all about. Our five keys of prevention are the components of a multi-pronged approach that provides solutions to everyday community problems, intervening early to prevent short-circuits in the systems within which we operate (e.g., family, school, health care, workforce, social service). As with any powered intelligence system, our system is continuously monitored, providing feedback indicators to help diagnose problems if, when, or before they happen. Just as power systems require a supply of energy (solar, electric, steam, battery, etc.), our power is generated from a mobilized community, engaged youth and families, volunteers and business partners. Thank you for the energy surge in 2009 that has allowed us to "Power Up" to achieve the results illustrated in this report!

  
Robin Hammond



# Introduction

**T**he St. Joseph Youth Alliance strives to positively impact issues relating to children and youth. Since 1991, five key elements have been identified as key drivers for the organization, unlocking the potential of youth in our community. These five key elements are what we now refer to as the Five Keys for Kids.

## Crisis Prevention

Family Connections works to establish an integrated system for delivering health, family support, and social services to children and families in order to improve outcomes, reduce costs, and ultimately reduce the risks of child abuse and neglect. Family Connections also offers educational and social activities for parents and opportunities for families to connect with other families, forming support groups and friendships.

## Early Childhood

The Youth Alliance, through its programs, works with childcare providers to promote the growth and quality of early childhood care and school readiness for children. Services are provided in an 11-county area and include child care provider training, technical assistance, scholarships, and aid to child care facilities interested in meeting early accreditation requirements.



# Unlocking Potential

Five Keys for Kids

## Substance Abuse Prevention

The Youth Alliance is working to positively change community attitudes surrounding drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, encouraging youth to choose substance free lives. Through education and awareness, and the partnership with the Drug Free Community Coalition, youth are educated on the dangers of substance abuse. The Youth Alliance partners with many agencies and organizations in the surrounding area to teach adults how to model prevention.

## Youth Asset Development

Core elements of youth asset development are to instill positive values and a commitment to learning through carefully planned and integrated service opportunities. This process is built on a solid foundation of substance abuse prevention education, leadership and team work development, and opportunities to serve. There are several programs supported through the youth asset development efforts of the St. Joseph Youth Alliance.

## Youth Mentoring

Youth mentoring provides young people with positive adult role models in the community and in the workplace. Our programs have core elements that provide young people with the sense of belonging and help them build a strong foundation for future social success. Key objectives are for youth to achieve academic success and have positive, long-term employment experiences, setting a strong foundation for future social success.

# Thank you

It is with sincere and great appreciation that we present this report to the community. The work and investments that the St. Joseph Youth Alliance makes in this community could not be done without the many individuals and partners who contribute time, energy, and resources to ensure that our youth have the opportunities to unlock their true potential.

The world we live in today is very different from the one many of us grew up in. The advances that have been made in just the last 30 years – new technologies, high speed real-time communication, cultural shifts, education and employment expectations – create opportunities like never before. On the flip side, these same advances are presenting significant challenges for our youngest generation, leaving many behind. This newest generation is faced with soaring costs, incredible national - and oftentimes - personal debt, and an inability to access the skills and services they need to be successful.

With your support and involvement, the St. Joseph Youth Alliance and agencies like ours, make a difference. The power and energy behind our programs and services helps youth build the skills that are needed to survive in this new environment. These skills are essential to prepare them to handle not only the challenges, but to capitalize on the opportunities with which they are presented as well. **Thank you for being the spark that energizes our community!**

## MegaWatt Community Energizer Steve Holdenreid

*Steve Holdenreid is a caring community advocate who truly demonstrates what collaboration is all about. Steve is serving his second term as a half-time AmeriCorps Member with the Youth Alliance, to which he dedicates about 25 hours per week, but, for those of you that know Steve, he doesn't stop there. Steve serves on a whole host of boards and committees that is too extensive to list in its entirety, but includes several city boards and committees, Bartlett Center, St. Joe Serve, Martin Luther King Jr. planning committee, Mitchell Park Neighborhood Watch, Community Housing Ministry, No Child Left Behind, Drug Free Community Coalition, and many more. Steve is a 2008 graduate of the Community Action Partnership Leadership Training and a 2009 graduate of Civic Engagement Training from the University of Missouri Extension. Steve is a retired UPS driver, who doesn't understand the meaning of retirement. He strives to keep himself informed, educated, and involved, all in an effort to improve the lives of children and families. For all his hard work and dedication to the Youth Alliance and the community as a whole, we say "thank you".*

*Thank you Steve, for being the catalyst in so many ways, and thank you for powering us up!*



## A Teen Party You'll Never Forget.

Stop Underage Drinking [www.youth-alliance.org](http://www.youth-alliance.org)



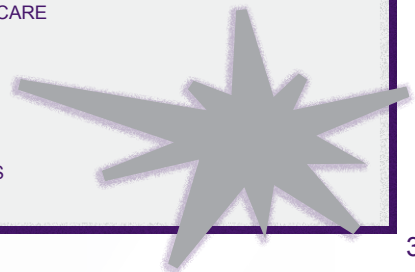
## MMP Business Partners

APPLE MARKET  
CAR CITY CHRYSLER  
CHEDDAR'S  
COUNTRY SQUIRE

FAZOLI'S  
GRAND SLAM ICE CREAM  
HEARTLAND HEALTH SYSTEMS (DIETARY)  
HOLLYWOOD 10  
HYVEE

KOHL'S DEPARTMENT STORE  
KOVAC'S GROCERY STORE  
MEADOWVIEW RESIDENTIAL CARE  
MR. GOODCENTS  
PAPA MURPHY'S PIZZA  
PIZZA SHOPPE  
ROGER'S GREEN HILLS  
ROLLING HILLS CONSOLIDATED LIBRARY  
SACK N SAVE GROCERY STORE

SAINT JOSEPH PARKS & RECREATION AND CIVIC FACILITIES  
SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHILDCARE  
SAN JOSE STEAK HOUSE  
SEAR'S PORTRAIT STUDIO  
SHOE CARNIVAL  
SIMPLE SIMON'S  
ST. JOE HARLEY DAVIDSON  
ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC LIBRARIES  
WENDY'S





# Crisis Prevention

## Family Connections

Family Connections is a home visitation program funded by a Stay at Home Parent Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention grant. Families from Andrew, Buchanan and DeKalb counties who meet income guidelines and have at least one child under age 3 in the home are eligible to enroll. Criterion for participation varies, but families must have a household income below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines.

The primary population receiving services under this program is children under age three. Home visits are conducted to monitor physical and social-emotional progress, and to conduct assessments with parents for purposes of early intervention. Family Connections works closely with the St. Joseph School District Parents As Teachers program and Early Head Start to avoid duplication of services. In 2009, 27 children received assessments.

## Curriculum

Recognizing that parents are a child's first teachers, Family Connections uses the Parents As Teachers *Born to Learn Prenatal to Three* curriculum. Parents learn about milestones in their children's development and age-appropriate behavior through home visits and other activities. Early interventions and realistic expectations are both important strategies in reducing the risk of abuse and neglect.

## Safety and Well-being

The health and well-being of parents is a priority for Family Connections. The home visitor conducts an annual home safety risk assessment in addition to a parental stress index assessment, when needed, and makes referrals as appropriate.



## Additional Services

Family Connections promotes literacy, reduces isolation and identifies community resources. The home visitor distributes literacy materials on a monthly basis – more than 200 children's books in 2008-2009. Families receive a monthly newsletter, also named *Family Connections*, containing parenting tips, community news, calendar of low-and no-cost family activities, budget recipes, product safety recalls, and timely articles about everyday living. Family Connections distributed 450 newsletters each month to enrolled families, YWCA's Mom's Time, child care providers, Pleasant Heights Apartment Complex, and Missouri Children's Division. A lending library of parenting materials was also initiated in 2008-2009 and is housed at the St. Joseph Youth Alliance.



Family Connections Service Volumes	2009
Total number of families served (41 parents/caregivers)	32
Total number of children under age 3 served	44
Other children in enrolled families	28
Number of home visits	199
Number of families participating in Parents as Teachers activities	32
Number of families participating in literacy activities	32

## Highlights

- ✦ In FY 2009, 158 individuals were impacted by Family Connections.
- ✦ Three joint sessions were held with the other Stay At Home program, JUMP:
  - ✦ Piggy Banks and Pumpkins (about managing finances)
  - ✦ How to Read to Your Child at the St. Joseph Public Library
  - ✦ Car Seat Installation Training
- ✦ Getting' Your Golf On (miniature/garden golf);
- ✦ Keep Your Bobber Up: How to Discover Your Positive Energy, by Michelle Moe, funded by the Children's Trust Fund;
- ✦ Three "Talk-About" events:
  - ✦ What's Your Parenting Style?
  - ✦ A Field Trip to the YWCA
  - ✦ Discovering Her True Colors™ Is the Key

## Provider Network

The Provider Network of community service providers met seven times during fiscal year 2009, hosted by Family Connections. Presentations were conducted by Pregnancy Resource Clinic, Community Action Partnership, Circle of HOPE, Faith in Action, Consumer Credit Counseling Services, Air National Guard Family Readiness Group and St. Joseph Housing Authority.

## Northwest Missouri Respite Care Task Force

Family Connections hosted monthly meetings of the Northwest Missouri Respite Care Task Force, attended by representatives of 18 agencies, organizations, individuals, and other entities. The first goal of the task force was to establish a crisis nursery. Family Connections staff participated in writing a successful application for a \$5,000 crisis nursery grant for a six-month pilot at Noyes Home for Children. The project gathered momentum during FY 2009 with support from the Noyes Home board (Ladies Union Benevolent Association) and the St. Joseph Junior League. Implementation is slated for September 2009.

### Community Energizer Rev. Connie Monroe



**Grace:** *The exercise of love, kindness, mercy, favor; disposition to benefit or serve another; favor bestowed or privilege conferred.*

*Connie Monroe is grace under fire: a force to be reckoned with, especially when it comes to children and families. As a pastor, with her husband, the Rev. Louis Monroe of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, she works tirelessly to help families meet crises head-on, while mentoring those same families for an enriched life. The Monroes' Church members welcome and embrace those needing help, becoming the extended family that some don't have, that some have never had, and that some didn't even know they needed. Connie and her Church help feed the spiritual needs of families, as well as providing acceptance, comfort and hope, all with lots of love!*

*Connie is also a parent educator with the St. Joseph School District's Parents As Teachers program, helping parents enhance their skills and monitor their children's physical and social-emotional health and well being. Her services come from the heart, demonstrating grace in action.*

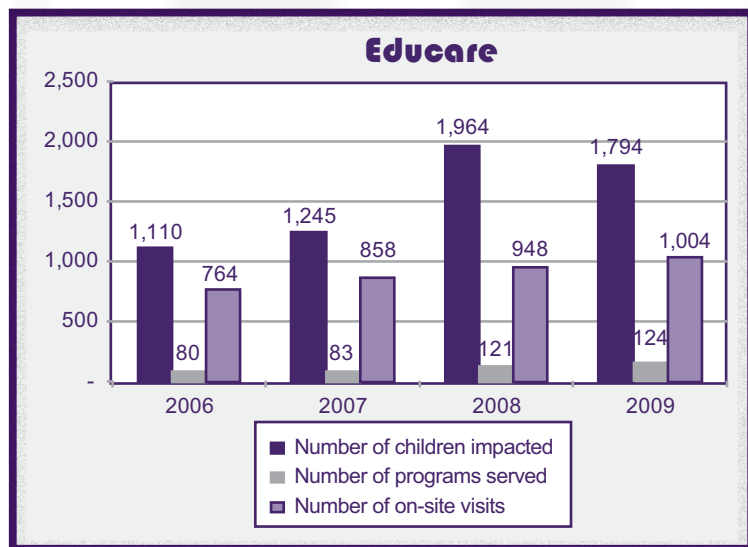
*A community activist, Connie promotes understanding and equality as a voice for those whose own is not always heard. She also partners with other entities for the betterment of the community as a whole. It is a "favor bestowed" and a "privilege conferred" that Connie consented to being the "energizer" for Family Connections and crisis prevention.*



# Early Childhood

## Educare

Educare's primary purpose is to increase the quality of child care and improve school readiness of children. Educare impacted 1,794 children in fiscal year 2009. Of these children, 25% received subsidized assistance through Department of Social Services. Educare served 124 programs and 351 teachers through 1,004 on-site visits. Throughout the year, 720 teachers attended educational training based on the Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals.



## Children's Fair

The 2009 Children's Fair theme was based on the popular children's author, Eric Carle. This year there were 1,383 children participating in fun and interactive learning experiences at the 30 activity areas offered. The Missouri Lions Club also provided free hearing and eye screenings. The fair was a huge success due to the participating organizations and community support. There were approximately 200 volunteers, including 54 youth dedicating their time and energy to make this a special event.

## Child Care Accreditation

Child Care Accreditation provides funding through HB 1519 to child care programs that are committed to reaching beyond the minimum requirements defined by licensing and achieving recognized standards of excellence. The goal is for child care homes and centers to work to achieve and maintain the high quality standards that are so important to the early education of our children.

For fiscal year 2009, five students enrolled in CDA classes and one student enrolled in AA classes. Three individuals attained their Child Development Associate and three students completed coursework and have submitted their application for their CDA credential. Technical

assistance, incentives, and/or equipment were provided to 24 sites working to achieve or maintain accreditation.

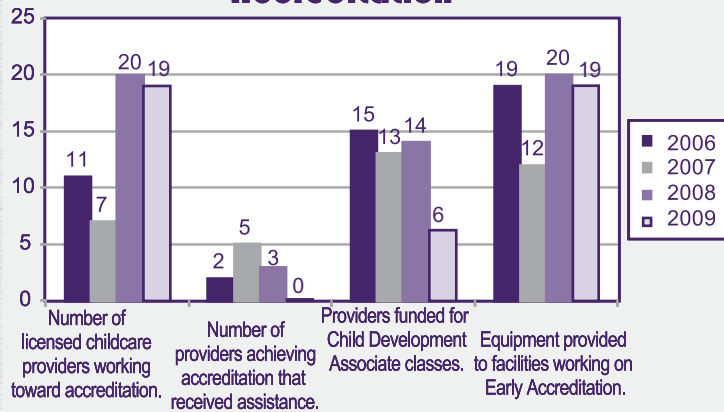
In May 2009, 65 early childhood teachers attended Conscious Discipline®. This one day training focused on comprehensive classroom management and a social-emotional curriculum. Conscious Discipline® is designed to make changes in the lives of adults and, in turn, change the lives of children.

In February 2009, 13 early childhood teachers enrolled in the *Emotional Beginnings* curriculum training. *Emotional Beginnings* is a curriculum and on-site training process used by childcare professionals to increase the emotional availability and relationship building skills of infant and toddler caregivers. The training will be held once per month for 10 months.

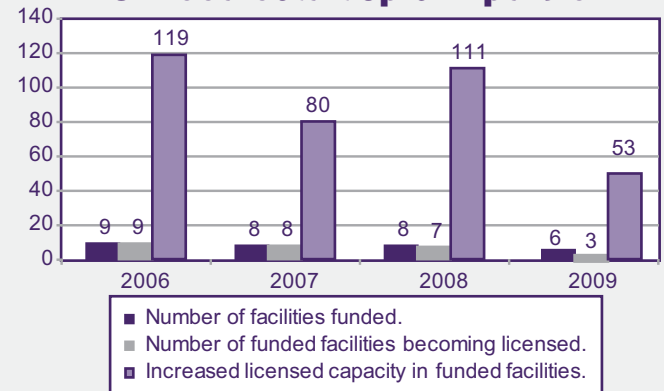




## Accreditation



## Childcare Start-Up & Expansion



## Child Care Start-Up and Expansion

The goal of Child Care Start-Up and Expansion is to increase the capacity of quality child care programs that offer care for infants and toddlers of low-income working families. In fiscal year 2009, six facilities were funded in Atchison, Buchanan, Clinton and Gentry Counties. Five facilities received start-up funding, and one facility received expansion funding. One center, one group home and one family home were licensed. A family home completed expansion, and is licensed for the increased capacity. The other group home and family home had final licensing visits scheduled before the end of August.

- ✦ A center and a group home in Gentry County were licensed. Their total capacity was 55 children.
- ✦ A family child care home in Clinton County was licensed for 10 children.
- ✦ The proposed capacity of the group home funded in Clinton County is another 20 children.
- ✦ The family child care home funded for expansion in Buchanan County increased its capacity by four children.
- ✦ The family child care home in Atchison County will be licensed for 10 children.
- ✦ One family home funded last fiscal year was also licensed this year with a capacity of 10 children.
- ✦ The total number of children who may be cared for in these facilities is 109 children.

## Community Energizer

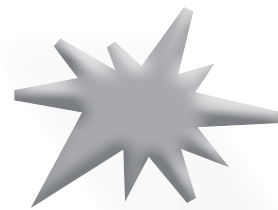
*Hello! My name is Jennifer Jaques and I am a proud Bearcat graduate and foster/adoptive mother of two*



*special needs children. My love for children grew from my childhood and has blossomed into my passion as an adult. In September 2007, I started Enchanted Learning Childcare with the ambition to support the families of St. Joseph and especially the downtown community and families needing extended care.*

*The Enchanted Learning Childcare Family is grateful to the St. Joseph Youth Alliance and especially the Educare Program for their financial support and the caring words of encouragement from Julie. Their financial help has allowed Enchanted Learning Childcare to grow and mature into a superb Early Childcare Center with adequate and more childcare friendly shelving, diverse toys and equipment, a revamped playground, and items needed to pursue accreditation. The transformation from those first few months to today is amazing; our program has grown and is still growing today and working towards a strong future in this community.*

# Substance Abuse Prevention



## Drug Free Communities

The St. Joseph Drug Free Community Coalition is a volunteer group of concerned citizens, parents, students, educators, business leaders and other community stakeholders who meet and work together to develop and promote anti-substance use initiatives and policies to make the community a healthier and safer place to work and live. This year, the Coalition completed its third year of federal Drug Free Communities funding. Its mission is to “work together to positively change community attitudes and behaviors surrounding drug, alcohol, and tobacco, ultimately encouraging youth to choose substance-free lives.”

The Coalition is currently working hard to make it difficult for young people to obtain alcohol and other drugs. Research has consistently shown that in communities where alcohol is readily available, rates of drinking by young people are higher. Through a partnership with the St Joseph Police Department, the Coalition has been able to significantly reduce the number of alcohol outlets that sell to minors. Compliance rates (the percentage of outlets that correctly refused to sell to a minor) have increased from 59% in calendar year 2008 to 78% in the first six months of 2009.



## The Coalition works to:

- ✦ Establish and strengthen collaboration throughout the greater St. Joseph community to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth;
- ✦ Increase citizen participation and greater collaboration among all sectors of the community;
- ✦ Enhance community efforts to promote and deliver effective substance abuse prevention strategies; and
- ✦ Assess the effectiveness of our substance abuse prevention initiatives.

## Average Age of First Use

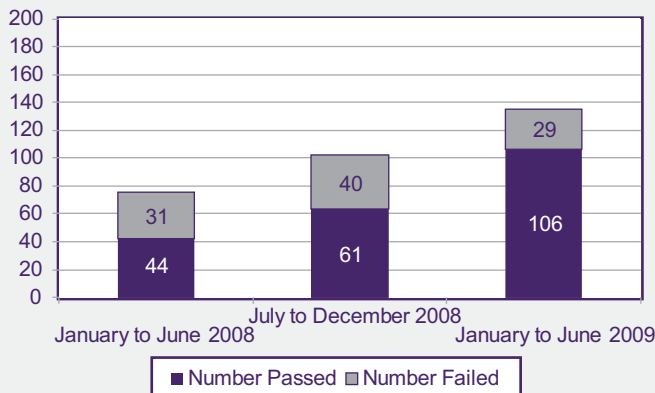
Buchanan County	2006	2008	% Change
Alcohol	11.8	11.9	0.8%
Tobacco	11.2	11.3	0.9%
Marijuana	12.6	12.6	0



**Pick Some Up For A Teen Today !  
Get Busted Tomorrow !**

**YOUTH ALLIANCE** [www.youth-alliance.org](http://www.youth-alliance.org)

## Compliance Checks in Buchanan County January 2008 to June 2009



## Community Energizer Alan VanZandt

Alan VanZandt and the Belt Bowl are great community partners. When the Drug Free Community Coalition brainstormed the idea of after prom parties for our area students, both Alan and the Belt Bowl stepped up to help us make this idea a reality. Now, two years in, the Belt Bowl continues to be a great space for students to have a fun time with all night bowling, games, and food. The Belt Bowl also continues to sponsor other safe and drug free bowling events for students as a reward for making the right choice to be alcohol and drug free. We want to say, “thank you”, to Alan and the Belt Bowl for continuing to energize us as we work together to reduce substance abuse among our youth!





## Frequency of Use in Past 30 Days

	% Reporting Use Ever		%	% Reporting 30 Day Use		%
Buchanan County	2006	2008	Change	2006	2008	Change
Alcohol	54.1%	52.2%	3.5% ▼	21.3%	22.7%	6.6%
Tobacco	31.7%	29.5%	6.6% ▼	15.2%	14.8%	2.6% ▼
Marijuana	15.4%	15.6%	1.3%	8.0%	7.9%	1.2% ▼

The following activities and strategic interventions were implemented this year to help the Coalition make progress toward these objectives.

**Red Ribbon Week** – Red Ribbon Week is a nationally recognized event that engages both youth and adults in efforts to promote a substance free lifestyle through education, awareness activities and events. The Youth Alliance commemorated Red Ribbon Week by decorating area businesses, city buildings, city vehicles and libraries with red ribbons. More than 25 local businesses, libraries and pharmacies displayed posters, decorated with over 300 ribbons and banners, and distributed 5,000 bookmarks and lapel pins. Area Sonic restaurants used 5,000 Red Ribbon stickers, placing a sticker on each order. Banners were displayed at busy St. Joseph intersections, area businesses and the Youth Alliance office and our media partners helped us provide over 150 radio commercials and 600 television commercials. Cable Vision designed and ran the television commercial as a donation.

**Rock & Bowl** – An annual safe prom event, this initiative involves local businesses throughout the community displaying prevention messages on their marquee signs during prom season. In 2009, 59 business participated in the effort supporting our community’s desire to encourage youth to choose substance-free lives. Over 150 youth participated in a number of engaging activities that lasted until 5 a.m. The students were treated to pizza, wings, all night bowling, airbrush tattoos, pool, video games, and a magician and hypnotist. Prevention messages were shared with all participating youth.

**Take A Stand Against Impaired Driving** – As part of the Take A Stand effort, the Ryan Utesch Story was shared throughout the community. Ryan Utesch was a 21 year old from Story County, Iowa whose life was tragically



ended in a preventable crash. Three factors played a part in causing this tragic event: excessive speed, drunk driving and no seatbelt. The wrecked Corvette, a reminder of this tragedy, was displayed at the Belt & Frederick Intersection to illustrate the consequences of poor life choices.

**Prevention Conference** – The theme for 2009 was Prevention: The Earliest Intervention. The all day event was hosted by the Coalition at Missouri Western State University (MWSU) and involved many partners, including Preferred Family Healthcare, MWSU Safety Patrol, and Partners in Prevention. More than 130 people participated, with presentations on topics that included Coalition evaluation, drug trends, suicide prevention, and media literacy in prevention. A first time track just for youth was also offered. Jim Lysaght and TSgt Jason Heneke provided an eye-opening message to youth on the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

**Teach-Ins** – Teach-Ins are an opportunity to teach 5th & 6th grade elementary students, parents, teachers, and the community about the dangers of underage alcohol use. Teach-Ins are instructed by “local celebrities” who educate youth about alcohol use and the effects on the body. This research-based curriculum and other helpful materials are provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In 2009, 14 teach-ins were conducted at 11 different schools in the St. Joseph area with over 1,108 students participating.

## Perception of Risk or Harm - 2008

	No Risk	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	Great Risk
Drinking Daily	11.3%	20.4%	27.1%	41.3%
Smoking Pack of Cigarettes Daily	5.8%	8.9%	21.7%	63.7%
Smoking Marijuana Regularly	8.7%	7.0%	12.5%	71.9%



# Youth Mentoring

## Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership

### Goal:

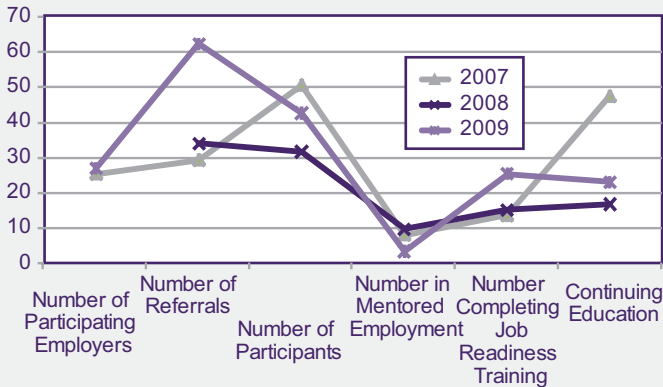
*To help youth ages 16-21 gain employment skills and knowledge that can assist them in long-term employment as well as prepare them for future employment opportunities.*



The essence of the Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is believing in our youth. We need to believe in them before asking that they believe in themselves. Through MMP we can assist our youth in locating personal motivators to move them forward. We set positive examples of commitment, discipline, consistency and truth. Through our business partners we offer opportunities for success, self confidence, hope and motivation.

Specifically, MMP helps youth age 16 to 21 with job readiness by offering skill building workshops and training in job search, completing employment applications, writing resumes, and interviewing. The result is personal success in employment and self-sufficiency.

### Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership Fiscal Year 2007-2009



### Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership Fiscal Year 2009 Employment Success



## Community Energizer

### Deanna Paolino

*Deanna is no stranger to difficult life challenges. She relocated to the St. Joseph area several years ago from New York State. Deanna is unique in that she's a "go getter" and does not allow lack of resources to present obstacles to achieving her goals.*

*Deanna was a self referral to the MMP program in October 2008. Although she was occupied with a hectic school schedule at Missouri Western University, Deanna engaged in the program with energy and vigor that has continued throughout her employment endeavor. Her commitment level at work is evidenced through comments of her employer and co-workers at the Pizza Shoppe:*

*"We are happy working with her; she's doing a great job!"*

*"I'm impressed with her reliability; when I can't count on others, I can count on Deanna".*

*"I love her, she is the best".*

*Most importantly, we as MMP Coordinators, are impressed with her commitment and perseverance to being the MMP participant who has been employed the longest this year. She is a true energizer!*

