

ALLIANCE
YOUTH LET'S GET
LOUD!



ST. JOSEPH YOUTH ALLIANCE
2012 ANNUAL REPORT

Engaging community partners to improve
the lives of children and families



St. Joseph, MO

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From the Executive Director Robin Hammond

Another year has come and gone and the St. Joseph Youth Alliance is once again celebrating success in keeping our youth drug free, providing mentoring, relationships, enforcing age limits in alcohol acquisition, working to reduce child abuse and neglect, and offering guidance to those talented individuals within our community who care for young kids.

In March, we celebrated our one year anniversary at our "new" facility on Mitchell Road with an official Ribbon Cutting ceremony. In April, we hosted our first Trivia Night, raising funds for our programs and awareness for our organization, and the Youth Action Coalition planted a demonstration rain garden for the community.

In May, the Eastside Rotary Club blessed us with the installation of new playground equipment for our kids, just on the heels of our spring prescription drug take-back and Safe Prom initiatives. The YAC! Attack was back this summer, providing service opportunities to connect area youth with community projects, while Trips for Kids offered bikes and instructional riding for young ones interested in taking in the two-wheeled experience.

These programs and more make up the foundation of our work, allowing the Youth Alliance team to make a measurable impact on Northwest Missouri. If you see a red ribbon, view a billboard about suicide prevention, hear a radio spot about safe medication disposal or notice a youth making a difference in the community, you get a glimpse of our programs at work. Behind the scenes, we are bringing willing participants to the table to discuss the challenges that plague our community and develop solutions that work.

I am especially excited about our new initiative, BC Rocks (Buchanan County: Rallying Our Community to keep Kids Safe). Parents of Buchanan County youth pledge to keep alcohol, drugs and tobacco away from kids, monitor activities when gatherings take place in their homes and keep track of social engagements. This safe homes directory will be available through a portal on our new website.

We have a number of exciting initiatives in place and as always, we keep our sights set on the development, education and health of our youth and families. A HUGE shout-out to each and every individual and organization who took the time this past year to foster our cause. Our mission of improving the lives of children and their families could not be reached without your support. Thank you for all your time and efforts.

LET'S GET LOUD!

SUPERSTARS FOR KIDS AWARD **Joe Houts**



When it comes to making life better for young people, Joe Houts is always there to share his talents and lend a helping hand. Joe has been a huge advocate of the Youth Alliance for many years. Through countless hours of service, he puts kids, families, and community first. The energy that Joe brings to the table spills over to many other organizations. All around our community you can see the footprints of his work. Whether it is observed at the Youth Alliance, Remington

Nature Center, Salvation Army, or Heartland Foundation emPowerU, he helps young people explore and grow. Thank you, Joe, for all you do for the Youth Alliance and for always putting the needs of our community at the top of your priority list!

The partners and members of Youth Alliance focus on five key areas – crisis prevention, early childhood education, substance abuse prevention, youth asset development, and youth mentoring.

Crisis Prevention

By delivering integrated support and social services to families, Youth Alliance is helping prevent child abuse and neglect. Through their **Strengthening Families Initiative** they have implemented 5 main goals to offer the following: 1. Parent Resilience, 2. An Array of Social Connections, 3. Adequate Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development, 4. Concrete Support in Time of Need, Including Access to Necessary Services and 5. Healthy Social and Emotional Development.

The goals help parents develop parenting skills and find support from organizations and peer groups. They help families become stronger, offer support in times of crisis, and help children develop socially and emotionally at age-appropriate levels. In the past year, thirty family participants attended Crisis Prevention education classes, 42 attended training, and 45 were involved in networking opportunities. Twenty-one trainings assisted local families.

Child Abuse Prevention Coalition

The St. Joseph Community Coalition for Child Abuse Prevention finds community-based solutions to fill service gaps, promotes projects to prevent abuse and neglect, and drives child abuse prevention, sponsoring Child Abuse Prevention Month each April. The Coalition grew out of the Northwest Missouri Respite Care Task Force, which initiated the crisis nursery in St. Joseph.

Breaking the Silence

Breaking the Silence– Suicide Prevention Coalition challenges the current social trends that are leading to increased rates of suicide among children and teens. By Breaking the Silence and talking about this once-taboo subject, at-risk individuals can get the help they need. This year three members of this coalition, Ashley Howery, Michelle Reents, and James Reents, were honored for their efforts in suicide prevention awareness at the “Show Me You Care About Suicide Prevention Conference” in Jefferson City.



SHOUT-OUT to The Journey Church!

These Guardian Angels shower Family Connections with unexpected gifts of kindness and generosity. From baby strollers, to infant and toddler clothes, to diapers, canned food, and children’s book drives, we can depend on their help. Our children love receiving books that are so important for literacy and are perfect to share for quality family time. One young church member donated his toddler bed to a three-year-old who was moving into a house after being homeless for over a year.

Circle of Parents

Circle of Parents is a parent-led support group that complements the Family Connections program. Circle of Parents offers an understanding environment where parents can share the joys and challenges of parenthood. Structured children’s programs are provided while their parents attend the bi-monthly meetings.

Circle of Parents Shout-outs!

- Support group participants..... **115**
- Support group meetings **27**
- Families served **27**



Family Connections

Family Connections provides families with resources to reduce stress and increase positive family interactions. Through the Family Connections program, parents connect with other parents as they identify their parenting strengths, participate in social activities and engage in parenting education. Home visits, for families with a stay-at-home parent and at least one child under the age of 3, build parenting skills and help parents set and achieve family goals. Newsletters provide parenting tips, advertise support group meetings, and suggest family-friendly activities.

Family Connections Shout-outs!

- Children served..... **43**
- Families served **28**
- Home visits **199**
- Children assessed **15**
- Families in literacy program..... **28**
- Referrals for parents **8**



Early Childhood

The most critical foundation for children's educational success occurs before they start school. The goal is to help childcare providers in 11 counties provide a dynamic and highly successful environment for children to learn. Youth Alliance offers childcare providers customized, professional training, technical assistance, and grants/equipment to offer the best education and care possible for our little future graduates.

Educare

Educare works to support, educate and provide resources to improve the quality of child care programs serving children receiving child care assistance. Monthly visits to child-care providers centers ensure that quality care is being provided and offer opportunities to make suggestions toward improvement. Educare provides continuous opportunities for education and professional development through newsletters and trainings, including Home Childcare Provider support groups.

Educare Shout-outs!

• Children reached	868
• On-site visits	593
• DSS subsidized children served	274
• Childcare programs served	87
• Teachers assisted	61

SHOUT-OUTS

to Neva Carrel and Irene Walker!

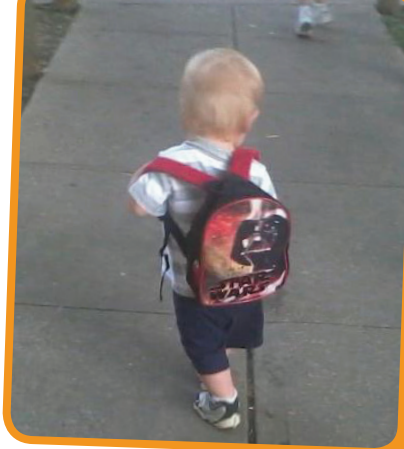


Neva Carrel



Irene Walker

Neva Carrel has impacted quality care for children through the licensing side of the childcare business. Neva is passionate about children being in quality environments and has provided support and assistance to ensure this is possible. Irene Walker has worked directly with teachers and children to mentor and model best practices for early childhood. She knows the importance of the early years and the difference a trained teacher can make. Both of these women are shining stars and have touched the lives of many. Their dedication, caring hearts, and desire to make a difference truly impacts early childhood.



Good parenting skills equals a great first day of school!

Children's Fair

The Children's Fair offers children ages 0-6 early learning experiences about their community through engaging activities. The fair also offers parents inspiration and modeling on activities to share together. It encourages reading as a building block for educational success that becomes a family ritual that strengthens bonds between parent and child. 1,900 people, including 1,103 children, attended this year's Leap into Spring.

Childcare Accreditation

Childcare Accreditation provides funding to childcare providers who are striving to improve their teaching skills and ability to care for young children with a nurturing hand and professional skill. With support, the goal is that childcare facilities reach the high quality standards required for accreditation.

Childcare Start-up & Expansion

Start-up & Expansion funding is meant to assist/support childcare programs/individuals whose intent is to become a licensed program, or to increase their capacity and enhance the quality of care provided.

Childcare Shout-outs!

• Teachers that attended trainings (some duplicate)	410
• Licensed childcare providers working toward accreditation.....	6
• Facilities funded.....	6
• Funded facilities becoming licensed	2
• Increased licensed capacity in funded facilities	59

Substance Abuse Prevention

The Substance Abuse Prevention initiative empowers teens to live a life free of drug and alcohol abuse. It helps parents with tough conversations and works with law enforcement partners to complete compliance checks. Youth Alliance also coordinates Red Ribbon Week, designed to reach thousands of teens with the message that being drug free can open every door to their future.

The Drug Free Community Coalition

The Drug Free Community Coalition is a group of citizens dedicated in developing an environment that encourages youth to live lives free of substance abuse. Any concerned community member is encouraged to join its monthly meetings.



SHOUT-OUT to Stephen Holdenried!

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead must have written this about this year’s Drug Free Community Coalition Star, Stephen Holdenried. Steve serves as chair of the DFC Coalition, is a YA Board member, and serves on the Resource Development Committee. Steve also volunteers countless hours promoting the Workforce Investment Board, Red Ribbon week, Prescription Take Back, and Trivia Night, always with a smile and a “can do attitude”. Let’s give a shout out to Steve for all his hard work!

Youth Mentoring

By linking area businesses with teens for mentoring experiences, Youth Alliance helps teens develop stronger career, academic, and leadership skills. This past year, the program soared as record numbers of participants continued and completed their education and were placed in mentored employment.

Youth Mentoring Shout-Outs!

- Total participants **165**
- Referrals..... **156**
- Job readiness classes completed **98**
- Youth placed in mentored employment..... **51**
- Youth who completed GED or HS **18**

Journey to Unite Mentors and Parents (JUMP)

Journey to Unite Mentors and Parents connects pregnant and parenting teens with trained mentors who assist with parenting skills, academics, and long-term goal setting. Participants have increased from last year by over 20 percent. This year saw the highest number ever of fathers involved in the program. JUMP is a partnership program with Heartland Health and the YWCA.

Substance Abuse Prevention Shout-outs!

- Alcohol compliance inspections **223**
- Businesses passing alcohol compliance..... **89%**
- Responsible Beverage Server Training classes..... **49**
- Individuals receiving RBST **1,313**
- Businesses passing baseline tobacco compliance .. **64%**
- Pounds of medications collected through Prescription Take Back **329**

JUMP Shout-Outs!

- Youth matched with mentors **43%**
- Children of enrolled mothers with current immunizations..... **99%**
- Mothers continuing their education..... **54%**
- Mothers showing improved life skills **100%**
- Fathers participating in program **40%**
- Parents in program who read to their child under age 3 **100%**

Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership (MMP)

Northwest Missouri Mentoring Partnership develops employment skills in teens ages 14-23. Participants receive job preparatory classes including job search, creating a resume and cover letter, applying, interviewing, and job retention. The program also offers on-the-job mentoring relationships to build lifelong work habits. This program is a partnership between NW Missouri Mentoring and Workforce Investment Act Youth Employment Program.



SHOUT-OUT to Tonya Heick

Tonya is a single mother of three who initially enrolled in the Youth Program as a high school drop-out and later joined the Youth Employment Program. In February 2012, she completed her GED and began a paid internship at Gene Field Apartments. She currently works there in a permanent Leasing Agent position while she also works full-time on a management degree at Missouri Western State University. These dreams do not happen overnight which Tonya can attest to, but her determination is why she deserves a shout-out from the Youth Alliance!

Key Youth Asset Development

In conjunction with substance use prevention efforts, Youth Alliance helps provide opportunities for teens to build positive values and serve their community. This powerful initiative creates future leaders and lowers teen risks for substance use. In 2012, over 100 youth in the community joined together to complete nearly 2,000 hours of volunteer service through the Youth Action Coalition.

YAC Attack!

YAC Attack! provides eight week-long service opportunities for youth ages 11-18 through the summer. The projects are complimented by leadership and enrichment activities led by Youth Alliance and the St. Joseph School District Staff. YAC Attack! joined with the City of St. Joseph and American Water to improve water quality. Teens and families volunteered their time and effort in building community rain gardens and rain barrels, as well as cleaning up local streams. The projects inspired pride within the youth involved as they gained an understanding of what they could accomplish for themselves and for others. This past year 13 YAC volunteers earned the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for their outstanding service!

Trips for Kids

Trips for Kids (TFK) teaches youth about mountain biking and the benefits this activity provides for health and wellness. In the past year, 29 bikes have been made available to the Youth Alliance for kids to use as needed. In 2012, seven rides with 14 participants were offered, focusing on health, nutrition, and reducing the carbon footprint. While the bikes serve as an outlet for those youth without access to a bike, the program is open to all children ages 8-13 interested in learning the benefits of mountain biking.



Youth Action Coalition Shout-outs!

- Volunteer hours **2,248**
- Youth volunteer hours **1,974**
- Adult volunteer hours..... **274**
- Youth volunteers..... **102**
- Youth volunteers serving 50 hours or more .. **15**
- Agencies served by youth volunteers **20**
- Service projects completed **55**

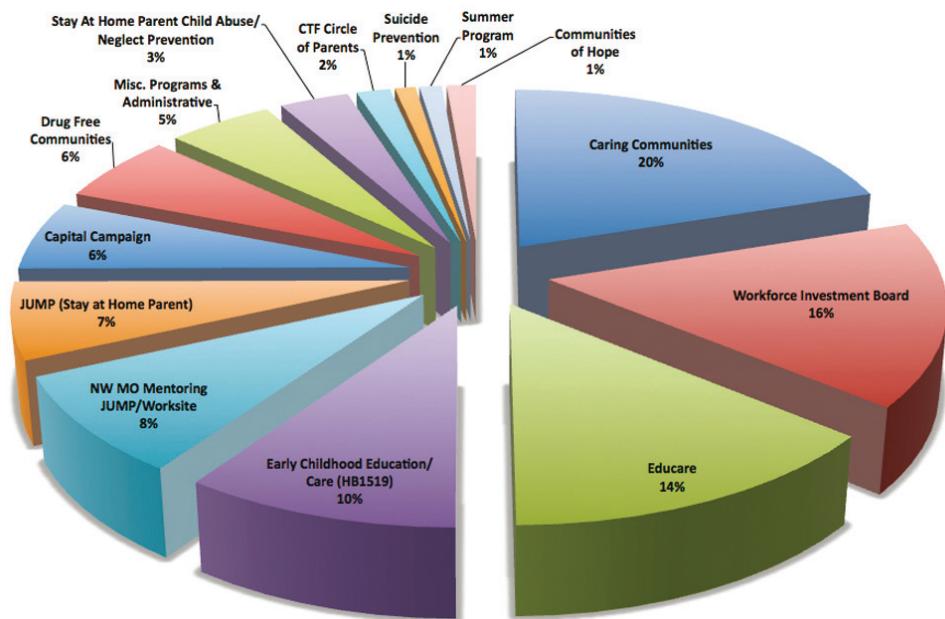
SHOUT-OUT to Haley Hart-Carson!



Haley Hart-Carson

Haley served as a tremendous asset to the Youth Action Coalition (YAC) during this past year. She volunteered every Thursday afternoon to help YAC members plan, schedule, and implement community service activities. Haley is committed to helping young people grow their assets through service to others. She is personally invested in helping each and every YAC member reach their fullest potential. Let's give a big shout out to Haley Hart-Carson for her commitment to the Youth Alliance's YAC program!

Fiscal Year 2012 Revenues



**"Hey, look!
I can read!"**



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Getting loud about a bright future for our youth!

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Pinnacle Properties-Gene Field Apartments
Rolling Hills Library

Sack-N-Save Grocery Store
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232-RENT
Taco Bell
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Buchanan County Juvenile Office
Buchanan County Prosecuting Attorney
Buchanan County Sheriff's Dept.
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Circle of Hope
Dept. of Social Services Children's Division

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First Trust of Mid-America
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Heartland Health System
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Workforce Investment Board
YMCA
YWCA



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Back Row (left to right): Leslie Stone, Anita Jolly, Kelly Tudor, David Rich,
Linda Midyett, Julie Wiedmer, Rhonda Ewing

Middle Row (left to right): Robin Hammond, Nikki Elliott, Fran Brothers, Gayle Babcock

Front Row (left to right): Janice Trapani, Judy Jacobs

Not pictured: Susie Cook, Mayme Abbott, Diane Guthery, Michelle Reents

