



The Girls' Advocate

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Prevention Works

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For more information about *The Girls' Advocate* or to become a member of the Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls, contact Pam Patton at 503.233.4356
Help us be a voice for girls and girls' needs in Oregon!

Check out our new website!

www.equalaccessforgirls.org

Editing, design and layout by:
Laura Eccles

We know that if you can reach girls early in the cycle of risky behaviors and environments, that programs can make a long lasting impact on girls lives. There are **prevention programs** in the Portland metro area that reach girls and young women at a time in their lives in which they often need them the most. While many primary prevention programs seek to prevent problems before they ever begin, the prevention programs we will discuss in this issue are serving girls that may already be engaging in high risk behaviors, have experienced abuse or trauma in the past or have situational factors in their lives which contribute to their behaviors. At the Coalition's monthly meeting in April, members had the opportunity to hear from **four programs that we are highlighting in this issue** that seek to **prevent** girls and young women from going deeper into problem behaviors or situations by offering them a safe, supportive all-girls environment to learn new skills/competencies based on healthy relationships and their strengths.

Chrysalis- Trillium Family Services

Chrysalis was established in 1989 by a group of female private practitioners serving women who had experienced abuse. They received a federal grant to implement the program which is now deemed a "promising program." Although the federal dollars were spent by 1999, Trillium now fundraises privately to maintain Chrysalis. At the program's peak there were 19 participating schools, but are currently down to two. To date, over 1,000 girls have been served.

The program occurs in the high school where a therapist from Trillium goes to a participating school and works collaboratively with a school counselor. Girls are invited to participate voluntarily in the program; groups meet weekly and they also provide psychotherapeutic services to the girls. The girls have access to the counselor and therapist during the school day and are offered incentives, both of which increase participation and attendance. In addition to the psycho-educational group they participate in activities such as a ropes course, take a self-defense class, learn yoga, and participate in an HIV-AIDS prevention seminar. They all celebrate their accomplishments at the end of the year. Chrysalis is an effective prevention program because a fundamental part of the program has always been relationship-based, offering girls time for a trusting relationship to develop. A large part of Chrysalis' success is a result of the year long curriculum. This continuity encourages the girls and reinforces the gains they have made. Girls also learn positive coping skills, have

improved school attendance, grades and demonstrate increased self-esteem. As it's name states, girls emerge from the cocoon of the program to be stronger, more beautiful people. The data shows that in so many cases, they have "learned to fly."

For more information, please contact:
Jamie Lemmon at Trillium 503.234.7532

Go Onward- Girls Inc. of NW Oregon

The GO Onward program serves girls and young women 8-21 who are in, or transitioning from, out-of-home care, including residential programs and foster care. Girls whose personal lives have been impacted by substance abuse, physical or sexual abuse often complete their stay in residential or foster care with little support, guidance and direction. The GO Onward model is designed to provide a supportive peer environment facilitated by licensed practitioners, experienced in best practices for working with girls. The gender-specific adult and peer support seeks to increase aftercare success rates for these vulnerable girls and young women. The program helps to increase social competencies and problem solving skills, nourishes their spirit and self-esteem, and provides educational and career development opportunities.

GO Onward works in conjunction with other programs to ensure that treatment plans are coordinated and integrated. Girls maintain treatment goals while furthering social, emotional, and physical health. Group participation can range from 6-12 months.

For more information, please contact:
Carol Roberts at Girls Inc. 503.230.0054

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Girls Leadership and Development: Supporting Girls To Become The Women They Want To Be

By Sara Carmona of GLAD-Boys and Girls Aid Society

Girls Leadership and Development (GLAD), is a strengths-based prevention program for girls ages 11 – 14. Originally developed as a pregnancy prevention program, GLAD addresses issues of importance to girls and supports them to make positive life choices. GLAD believes young women will make healthy choices when given comprehensive information and opportunities for success.

Each week, GLAD girls attend an educational group where they participate in a fun, active and engaging curriculum intended to build their knowledge around gender-specific topics. Juana says, *“GLAD has taught me how to protect myself, be safe, and to do what is right for me and not to change for anyone.”*

GLAD Youth Advocates are stationed at middle school sites in some of the highest risk neighborhoods in Portland. Their offices, painted in bright colors and decorated with female positive messaging and posters, serve as a sanctuary for many girls experiencing the tumult of adolescence. Amy agrees, *“There’s no drama here. You can say how you feel and not be criticized for how you think. It’s a place where it’s okay to make mistakes.”*

Advocates work closely with school staff to identify youth who will benefit from program services. Although some youth are referred to the program by teachers, counselors and community partners for being high risk for school failure, early pregnancy, or gang involvement, many girls seek out GLAD services on their own. The program’s reputation for making a positive and long lasting difference in girls’ lives helps GLAD maintain both a full client load and a long waiting list each year. *“I am so thankful for this program,” says Mimi. “I know I would be lost with out it. GLAD reassured me that no matter what anybody says, I’m positive that I will make it in my life.”*

Each month, GLAD girls participate in community service projects. Girls have volunteered time with groups such as The Humane Society, Friends of Trees, The Oregon Food Bank, and Race for the Roses, a half-marathon to benefit local non-profit organizations. During the summer, youth plan and execute a 7-week service learning project. GLAD has been serving girls in Portland for over ten years. In that time, the program has maintained a pregnancy rate close to 0% and no youth have dropped out of school while participating in GLAD. Youth in GLAD have demonstrated a dramatic improvement in academic success and a significant decrease in the number of suspensions or other serious school disciplinary actions. Ultimately, GLAD’s program services and activities are part of a larger goal to help girls develop a sense of self-confidence, become positive leaders, and inspire them to believe they can achieve their goals.

For more information, please contact:

Sara Carmona at BGAS 503.222.9661

Excerpts reprinted with permission from Sara Carmona, BGAS

Girl Scouts Beyond Bars

Girl Scouts Beyond Bars (GSBB): The Circle is Round is a program for girls whose mothers reside at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville. They meet twice a month with their mothers at Coffee Creek, re-establishing relationships and participating in activities in a safe, supportive environment. On other weekends, the girls participate in other Girl Scout activities in the community. Since its inception in 1997, the program has grown to include over 50 girls and their mothers.

The primary goal of the program is to decrease the negative impact on parental separation, however the program also enhances and at times serves to re-establish damaged relationships between girls and their mothers. By working on their relationships and to develop their strengths, the program encourages them to make positive decisions in the future.

Children who have suffered the trauma of being separated from their parent by incarceration can suffer from depression, aggression, poor academic performance and truancy. Children with incarcerated parents are also more likely to end up in prison than children whose parents are not incarcerated. GSBB seeks to break this intergenerational cycle of incarceration by focusing on the ever-important mother-daughter relationship to enhance connection and decrease recidivism.

For more information contact:

Anita Noble at Girl Scouts-CRC 503 977.6805

President's Notes

Pam Patton
President of the
Coalition of Advocates
for Equal Access for



In January when the 74th Legislative Session started I said it had been many sessions since the Coalition's legislative advocacy priorities were actually included in the Governor's Budget. But even with that, the cuts that had occurred over the past three biennia still meant that girls and young women services have a long way to go to even regain what we had. Well **the 2007 Session has a few more weeks left before it is expected to adjourn the end of June**, committees closed May 31st and all that is left is revenue and budget. **I am happy to report that to this point (and it's not over until the Legislature passes the budget and the Governor signs it) funding for our four priority areas are either in the budget or looking hopeful.** During the session the Co-Chairs of Ways and Means create their own budget, the one that goes to the Governor for signing, initially it excluded funding for homeless and runaway youth and youth substance abuse prevention.

Here is a run down on the status of our four priorities so far:

Oregon Youth Authority Budget

The Governor's and the Co-Chair's Budgets do include, with the addition of 145 close custody beds, **the re-opening of the Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility in Albany as a single-sex facility for young women with a gender-specific environment and gender-responsive programming.**

The Governor's fully funded and the Co-Chair's Budget phases in the addition of 73 community placement beds, included in that is the enhancement of the continuum of services for adjudicated young women in the community **by adding a 15 bed young women's "90-Day Secure Mental Health and Addiction Stabilization and Treatment Readiness Program".**

Department of Human Services Budget (DHS)/ School Based Health Clinics (SBHC)

The Governor's Budget for the Healthy Kids Plan included the addition of 13 more School Based Health Clinics (SBHC) funded with an increase in tobacco taxes. The Co-Chair's Budget did not fund the Plan with a tobacco tax and at this time there are discussions in the Legislature of referring a Healthy Kids Constitutional amendment to the fall ballot. **However, the Co-Chairs Budget does include \$2M in General Funds for the addition of 13 more School Based Health Clinics separate from the Plan.**

EAG's Four 2007 Legislative Priorities:

1. OYA's enhancement of facility and community services for young women
 2. DHS's expansion of School Based Health Clinics
 3. DHS's youth substance abuse prevention
 4. OCCF dedicated funds for homeless and runaway youth and Juvenile Crime Prevention.
- Plus Continued monitoring of the four Department's implementation of the Equal Access Law.

DHS /Substance Abuse Prevention Programs

The Governor's Budget utilized 2% of the OLCC tax to fund substance abuse prevention and treatment services including proven youth substance abuse prevention programs, such as programs that prevent underage drinking. Unfortunately the Co-Chair's Budget did not, so, this funding is still up in the air. The Legislature is at this moment in discussion about funding for these services, it could be through **SB 184, a bill that enumerates the distribution of OLCC taxes for substance abuse prevention and treatment services, or other funding sources. Hopefully the Legislature will fund substance abuse prevention and in that funding support there being \$250K dedicated to proven gender-specific substance abuse prevention programs for girls.**

Oregon Commission of Children and Families Budget

The Governor's Budget for the (OCCF) included \$1M funding for Homeless and Runaway Youth, but the Co-Chairs Budget does not. Advocates for homeless and runaway youth supported \$4.6 million. **The good news is the Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee allocated \$1 million in the budget for the Oregon Commission on Children and Families, the first direct appropriation from the state for this population.** Not the \$4.6 million of dedicated funding needed for the new initiative that we all advocated for, but it's a start. OCCF will develop the process for distributing these funds.

The Governor's and Co-Chair's Budgets include an additional **\$2M to counties to implement juvenile crime prevention plans.**

As far as our monitoring the four Department's implementation of the **Equal Access Law**, we worked with Senator Kate Brown this session on how to move the Departments to a higher level approach in their Equal Access Reports. We discussed Departments reporting both quantitative and qualitative data, asking that an analysis be done by performance measures in the budget to determine if the information tells us that they have made progress in implementing the law or if there may be another way that would have more impact. We decided this probably would have to happen in the interim and not as part of this session's Reports.

So now you have it. When the 2007 Session ends and the Governor signs the Budget, I will send out an email to all members letting you know the final results. **You should know that your advocacy made a difference this Session. Your voices and girl's voices were heard, together we continue to make a better Oregon for Girls!**

Calendar of Events

Coalition Meetings for 2007

(Meetings take place on the fourth Wednesday of the month)

12:00 pm- 2:00 pm

June 27th: Presentation

July 25th: Discussion

August: No Meeting

September 26th: Presentation

October 24th: Regional Meeting- Central Coast

November 28th: Presentation

December: No Meeting

We want to help **spread the word** about other
Girls' Programs on our website:

www.equalaccessforgirls.org

Contact Laura Eccles (below) if you would like to include a link
to your program on our website.

Contact Laura at the Coalition

for more information on any of these calendar items.

Phone: 503.258.4302, Email: laura.eccles@morrisonkids.org

Spread the Word!

You can also spread the word about your program
by submitting an article on your prevention or inter-
vention program that is working to address the unique
needs of girls and young women for our newsletter or
offering to present at our monthly meetings, contact us!

We would also be very excited to hear from girls
or young women who have been impacted by the good
work you are doing.

If you know of a girl or young woman who would
like to share some of her experiences and thoughts
about your program, contact us!

To submit an article for upcoming issues or present at
a meeting, please contact Laura Eccles
at the Coalition.

503.258.4302 or laura.eccles@morrisonkids.org



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