

Journey Through The Northwest-www.NCCY.ORG Northwest Community Coalition for Youth Newsletter

“Giving Teens A Voice”

6TH EDITION

MAY 2011

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NEWSLETTER
PROJECT
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SPECIAL POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- **NCCY Awards Banquet**
- **Stopping the violence**
- **Making Peace**
- **Cell phones in school?**
- **The Costs of Bullying**
- **Soul Daddy**

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NCCY Partners With U.S. Attorney’s Office

Youth Make “Reel” Video Documentary About Violence by Joshua Scott

Rodney Jones, a Martin Luther King High School senior, participates in the new USAO (United States Attorney Office) Film Project. The intervention project helps kids who have experienced violence and are coping with emotional trauma. Film making is used as an outlet and NCCY youth acquire skills creating a video documentary about violence.

“The program lasts about 8 weeks.” Rodney continued, “I’ve been involved for about 3 weeks and wanted to make a difference in other kids lives who lost loved ones due to violence”.

Professional film producers help with making the documentary. Rodney explained the producers have been positive role models who have also produced the acclaimed television series, “The Wire”. “The Wire” is about urban life in Baltimore that focuses on gangs, drugs, crime, violence and corruption.

Rodney became involved in the program as a result of losing a loved one to a violent crime. He wanted to help himself and others to deal

with their trauma.

Rodney heard about the program from a school secretary, Ms. Gibbs. He said, “this program is my opportunity to help other youth that need



Picture courtesy of

guidance, because a lot of kids out here don’t have parents or guardians that care.” He continued, “.... Its (documentary) about teens dealing with violence in school. We are interviewing people now, and will start editing soon.” The documentary is called, “Reel Voices of Youth”.

The project has caused Rodney to contemplate profound questions like, “Why is there so much violence?” He feels, “It’s a combination of too

many single parents and young fathers who get scared and leave.”

Rodney continued, “Violence is pointless. Violence can be prevented by not letting little things get to us. Just try your best to leave the situation.” He also believes the environment is a factor.

A focused young man, Rodney plans to attend Temple University, University of the Arts, or a historically black college or university (HBCU) to further study the art of film making because of his experience in this innovative program. We may have another Spike Lee in the making!

Other schools participating in this project are: Imhotep Institute Charter High School, New Media Technology Charter School and Hope Charter School. There are 23 active students divided into two groups. The Well and The Village film companies are involved in this project.

Ms. Michelle Rajsic represents the U.S. Attorney’s Office and collaborates with the NCCY to make this unique program successful.

Peacekeepers Appreciation Day Planned

The 3rd Annual NCCY Peacekeeper Appreciation Day shall be held on Saturday, June 4, 2011. This day is dedicated to the Philadelphia, SEPTA and School District of Philadelphia Police Departments as well as crossing guards and safe corridor volunteers.

Seniors from the Phillip Murray

House will be special guests.

This year’s event will take place at the Morris Estate Recreation Center. Attendees shall be asked to donate \$10. to help raise funds for the “Philadelphia Police Department’s Hero Survivors Fund”. Sponsors are still being sought for this event. Please contact Eric

Hardaway, State Representative Dwight Evans Office at 215-549-0220 or Officer Ron Jackson, Community Affairs Officer, 35th District.

Officer Calvin Johns, 14th District will be the DJ and photographer. Bring your appetites because there will be great food.

Cell Phones In School by Joshua Scott

Students using cell phones in schools have been a concern of administrators and teachers. Many of these multi-purpose devices allow us to stay in contact with loved ones, share information and even gain knowledge.

Today's smart phones are mobile desktops. Checking emails, surfing the Internet and watching television is normal. No wonder many schools throughout the nation ban them. Many administrators feel students don't need cell phones in class because it disrupts the learning process.

However, at what point does banning cell phones become unfair?

A policy should deter a behavior and not keep people from contacting each other during an emergency. It has been reported that some school districts, Montana for example, confiscate cell phones for a week or more if students are caught using them while school is in session.

However, sometimes it's necessary to have cell phones in case of emergencies. It's an easy, direct line of communication between parent and child.

You don't have to wait or depend upon a third party to relay information.

Yet, the advantage of having a cell phone in school could just as easily be a disadvantage because it can lead to behavioral and academic problems when students use their cell phones in class inappropriately for non-emergencies. Students can also become victims of cell phone robberies and thefts which creates other problems.

No doubt, students will continue to carry cell phones. Policies to address this issue must be fair and balanced.



Picture courtesy of msnbc.msn.com

“Those who engage in bullying are more likely to get into trouble with the law as adults.”

STOP THAT BULLYING by Joshua Scott

The epidemic of school violence is nothing new. Yet, in recent years it's become a hot topic. Flash mobs and bullying, which also includes cyber bullying have become serious problems. What are the causes and how can we create solutions to this rising epidemic?

First, we must understand why bullying happens. One researcher cites that incidents of bullying include six factors: cultural, institutional, social, family, personal history, and power.

Culture influences how we interact and treat each other. In a society that promotes competition, kids will compete in school. Competition for attention and material things can promote bullying.

Television and music can be violent and influences behavior. Some videogames also encour-

age youth to commit violence to get higher scores. Its accepted in our society.

Furthermore, institutions or schools with apathetic teachers and administrators generally have more student behavioral problems. Even grownups bully. Reportedly, 57% of people bullied at work, were bullied as children according to one study.

Dr. Dan Olweus, a psychologist, “found that children who were bullied in the 6th and 9th grades were more likely to experience depression and low self-esteem by the time they were 23 years old.”

Also, those who engage in bullying, are more likely to get into trouble with the law as adults. The after-effects of bullying are long lasting according to an article published in Urbandojo.com/blog.

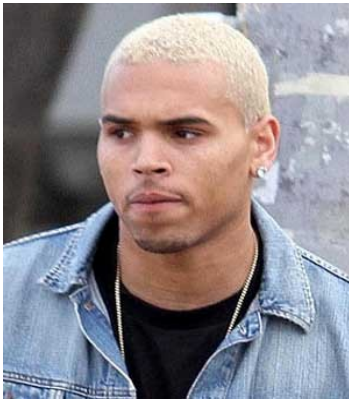
How do we fix the problem of school violence and bullying? The most important and effective approach is building a better alliance between schools and parents. Nearly half of all bully victims never report their incidents to adults. The percentages of bullying are probably higher than statistics indicate according to studies.

There needs to be more dialogue between schools, parents, children, the community and professionals to address this issue.



Courtesy of www.detroitmommies.com

A Falling Star? Hit CDs Won't Make a Difference by Joshua Scott



Picture courtesy of blacknews.com

give him. Everything seemed to be going “peachy” for a while until a recent television interview.

Apparently, according to many sources, a blonde

haired Chris cut the news interview short and stormed off the television set. On the way out, he ejected a chair through a window.

Yes, Mr. Brown was sporting blonde platinum hair; possibly to get more attention from viewers at home. Or perhaps his public relations staff thought a different look would make us forget who he was? We'll never know.

But we know Chris Brown is struggling with the media and more importantly, with himself. After his attempt to reclaim his good image, it is understandable that he's frustrated. Although, breaking windows with chairs is a *little* overboard and does not help.

Chris was once a victim of mental and physical abuse during his childhood. His mother was battered by his father according to some reports. Unfortunately, research shows many victims and witnesses of abuse sometimes become abus-

ers. Despite all the riches and fame Chris was no different.

Chris should continue to seek counseling or anger management. As a society, we need to stop judging and being critical of others. We're all human.

Chris should definitely be held responsible for his actions. You can't commit assault with impunity. That's why he paid his debt to society.

The media drives celebrities crazy with their constant badgering. Yet, you must have control. The media sells bad news and will often take an opportunity to provoke and sensationalize. Chris fell for the trap.

Yet, we all have problems. If you don't, then cast the first stone.

We can only hope Christopher's fall isn't too hard before he turn's his life around.

Chris needs to find peace within himself. That's when his star will stop falling. Hit CDs won't make a difference.

“We all have problems. If you don't, then cast the first stone.”

The record breaking R&B pop star Chris Brown has it all according to the American standard. He has the cars, the fans, the endless bank account, and tons of musical sales.

So why are things going so sour recently for Chris? He was attempting a come back from his troubles from the Rihanna incident.

A couple years ago Chris was charged with assaulting pop-star sensation Rihanna. Some say he was provoked. Others say he was frustrated and lashed out. Still more say its wrong to hit a woman; and they're stone right!

After the incident, many fans were disappointed, and the media portrayed him as a womanizer. Record sales plummeted but rose again once some fans began to for-



Picture courtesy of thecostmag.com

Cutting the Budget for Education and Building More Prisons Is the Key? By David Scott

Education has been one of the most important indicators of success.

If education is so important to so many people, then why is there a trend to cut funding for education? Pennsylvania's governor is not only proposing budget cuts in education, he is also building more prisons!

The governor, and many other politicians, believe we should cut funds for education programs such as preschool, art and music. These programs have been proven to enrich our student's learning experi-

ences, make them better students and decreases drop-out rates.

Studies also indicate that truants, drop-outs and the less educated are more likely to be incarcerated. Research indicates there is a direct correlation between education and incarceration rates. Regretfully, African-Americans and Latinos are disproportionately incarcerated often due to discrimination.

Pennsylvania is also building prisons in rural or suburban areas to help local economies and create prison jobs. Products made by prison-

ers (almost free labor) are also sold to collect the profits.

Furthermore, prisoners are often ineligible to vote. Yet, these suburban counties get more political representation in government because their populations grow as a result of prisoners being counted in their census.

Cutting the budget for education and building more prisons is not the key. Many reports indicate it cost more to incarcerate than educate.

SAFE CORRIDORS: SEEKING VOLUNTEERS



Photograph is courtesy of portalsso.vansd.org

“Approximately 6000 to 8000 jobs allocated for young people this summer are in jeopardy.”

The NCCY “Faith Based Committee” is leading a “Safe Corridors” initiative in collaboration with northwest area churches, mosques and other religious institutions.

The primary objective is to provide some level of protection for students when they are travelling to and from school. Students are often subjected to assaults, robberies and other crimes.

Douglas Evans, TWIS, NCCY Faith Based Committee Co-Team Leader feels obligated to the safety of the students. He recently stated, “these are your children, my children, our children and our future and we are charged to guide, direct and protect them.”

Although other communities throughout the city have implemented “Safe Corridor”

programs, the NCCY is seeking additional adult volunteers to help monitor students.

A critical time when incidents occur is after school dismissals as converging groups of students representing different schools inundate the community about the same time.

Students sometimes assault each other while there have also been reported incidents of gangs randomly attacking individuals.

Disorderly behavior, vandalism of property and even confrontations with homeless or mentally ill adults have also been a problem.

Faith Based congregations can provide responsible and committed adults to assist in monitoring students. However, interested adults are also sought in the community.

Schools that need volunteers immediately include Roxborough High School, John L. Kinsey School, Wagner Middle School, Germantown High School, Imhotep Institute Charter School, Hope Charter School and Martin Luther King High School.

If you want to volunteer for the Safe Corridors program, please contact Douglas Evans at 215-686-1424, Vernon Smith at 215-54-0220 or Co-Chair of the NCCY, Ms. Isabella Fitzgerald at 215-429-8051.

Strategy meetings are held every 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 7174 Ogontz Avenue.

Instead of complaining about the problems, citizens must be responsible and get involved.

FUNDING CUTS FOR PHILADELPHIA YOUTH NETWORK

As a result of a significant reduction in funding proposed by Governor Corbett to programs such as the Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN), approximately 6000-8000 jobs allocated for young people this summer are in jeopardy. PYN has launched a campaign to raise funding for this valuable summer program.

According to PYN’s web site, “The Philadelphia Youth Network’s vision is that all of our city’s young people take their rightful places as full and contributing members of a world-class workforce for the

region. They are pursuing this vision by making connections between individuals, organizations and systems to provide the preparation needed for our city’s youth”

The Job Resource & Development Center (JRDC) is a provider of PYN. JRDC helps recruit students for summer jobs. A number of these job “slots” have been cut.

Last summer, PYN youth participated in the NCCY Community Newsletter Project through Work-

Ready Philadelphia.

This valuable program allows youth to earn income and stay occupied during the summer months. The summer can be volatile in some communities when innovative programs and jobs are not available.

Although the job market is showing signs of improvement, African-American communities still need these programs because they are disproportionately affected by discrimination in employment and education.



Courtesy of <http://okpolicy.org/>

THE POWER OF DANCE: IMHOTEP'S PERFORMING ARTS AND MODERN DANCE CONCERT

Imhotep Institute recently held its 2nd Annual Performing Arts Modern Dance Spring Concert on Friday, April 15, 2011.



The event was well attended and featured the Imhotep Modern Dance Theatre, Imhotep Capoeira Angola Ensemble with special guest appearance by Nia-Next, Apprenticeship Program and Jamey Rislin as the soloist.

Picture courtesy of www.tahoe-culture.com

There was a variety of Afrocentric music, including jazz, complimented with modern dance and traditional African choreography.

The choreographers included Antoinette Coward-Gilmore, Cindy Logan, Kamau Blakney and Bill Thomas.

Sister Antoinette Coward-Gilmore, Imhotep's Modern Dance Director/Founder gave the welcoming address. Throughout the event, she also educated the audi-

ence about the history of Modern Dance by including question and answer sessions.

One performance, "Capoeira Is An Art" highlighted a music medley. Traditional Angolan musical instruments were played with vocals.

The music, costumes and the dance performances by all the participants were remarkable.

Moma Christine Wiggins, Founder/CEO of Imhotep and Co-Chair of NCCY was impressed with all the performances.

The "Power of Dance" brought in the Spring with a "flair".

The "Power of Dance" brought in the Spring with a "flair".

The Future is Now: 3-D in Your Hand Joshua Scott

Don't you hate using those dirty, clunky 3-D glasses when you go to the movies? What if you didn't even need glasses, and could watch a 3-D movie in the palm of your hands?

Nintendo, the same company that released hit game franchises such as Mario, Wii and Gameboy, recently established a new standard in hand

held entertainment. Say "hello" to the Nintendo 3-DS handheld entertainment and gaming device.

Nintendo 3-DS allows users to experience multimedia such as video-games, movies, pictures, and even the internet in stunning high clarity 3-D — without glasses!

Although it has a hefty \$250 price

-tag, you get plenty of "bang for your buck". It even has parental control settings for parents wanting to protect children from harmful content.

After getting my hands on the 3-DS, I'd highly recommend it to anyone interested in an affordable way to experience their favorite multimedia in all that 3-D glory!



Picture courtesy of free-3ds.org

Soul Daddy's the winner of hit NBC's, "Americas Next Great Restaurant"

There are plenty of reality shows on television today, and sitting through them all can seem like torture. However, NBC's show "America's Next Great Restaurant" takes the cake—or the soul.

It's a show about multiple contestants from various backgrounds competing to win their own restaurant franchise!

When it came down to the end of the season, only 3 contestants were left. "Spice-Coast", an east Indian concept, "Saucy Balls", an Italian cuisine, and "Soul Daddy's", an African American restaurant, were all fiercely competitive.

However, there was only room for one winner and "Soul Daddy's" won the hearts of the judges and

audiences. It seems they were won over by the down home cooking and soulful atmosphere.

Jamal owns Soul Daddy's, and now has three locations in New York, Minnesota, and Los Angeles!

This could be the next McDonald's or Subway franchise. The judges apparently think so!



Jamal standing in front of his new franchise, "Soul Daddy's". Picture courtesy of www.uaw-chrysler.com



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JOURNEY THROUGH THE NORTH-WEST started in 2007 so that young people could have a voice in their community and write about their interests as well as local and world events.

We are dedicated to ensuring our young people are safe and feel secure by indentifying and eliminating condition that are harmful to their health and safety.

That is why the NCCY has joined with other community forces to accomplish our vision of identifying and eradicating elements which decrease youth safety and educational growth.

2nd Annual 2011 NCCY Awards Banquet by David Scott

The 2nd Annual 2011 NCCY Awards Banquet to honor students who attend Northwest Community Coalition for Youth (NCCY) schools shall take place on Saturday, June 11, 2011 from 2:00 pm—4:00 pm at Imhotep Institute Charter School. Last year's banquet was a resounding success. More than 350 attendees turned out when 200 were expected.

This year, honorees shall also include students featured on the "I Don't Skip" poster that was developed by the NCCY for the School/Merchants truancy initiative. Dr. Bill Cosby Jr. was featured the first year as the positive role model on the poster. Claudia Averette, Deputy Superintendent, School District of Philadelphia was last year's positive role model. Reverend Dr. Alyn E. Waller, Pastor of Enon Tabernacle Church is this year's positive role model. The poster was widely distrib-

uted in the community and on SEPTA buses and trains.

Students who have perfect or near perfect attendance shall be recognized and honored for making education a priority. Many students often succumb to "peer pressure" and unfortunately start to become truant.

The 2011 "I Don't Skip" poster which is the 3rd to be developed by NCCY, shall be unveiled at the 2nd Annual Banquet. A "positive role model" and/or celebrity shall also be featured on the poster with local youth.

Ms. Terri Stigler of Foundations, Inc./JRDC and Mr. Steve Robertson, Assistant Director for the Philadelphia Center for Arts and Technology have taken the responsibility of participating in the Banquet Food Committee. Ms. Nicole Hines of the Parent Ombudsman at John L. Kinsey School shall be coordinating decora-

tions for this important event.

Recipients shall receive awards in several categories including, I Don't Skip, Student Community Service, Good Neighbor and Crusader for Peace Awards.

Tickets shall be sold for the reasonable price of \$15. Honorees will not have to purchase tickets. However, family members and friends are expected to incur the costs for their tickets.

Volunteers are also needed for various committees. Contact Ms. Fitzgerald at izzyftzz2@verizon.net.

Please come out and bring a friend!

