

Y - CAP Matter Chatter

"Because All Youth Matter"

Redirecting Youth Behavior by Teaching Values and Rebuilding Families

A quarterly publication of the Memphis & the Mid-South YMCA Community Action Programs



Spring 2010 Issue

WHY PROGRAMS SUCH AS Y-CAP ARE NEEDED

By: Chester Beasley

Recently I had the sad experience of seeing a program similar to Y-CAP close its doors to the community because of the lack of cooperation from those who had both the power and wherewithal to make it successful.

I have learned in my years of work with programs in the field of helping at-risk youth that there are no monetary riches to be gained. The riches come from knowing that you have played the most significant role possible in a young person's life by bringing love, hope and support to those who desperately need it. When I look at how many families have been affected in such a positive way over the years, I grieve when I see a program similar to Y-CAP come to an end.

Y-CAP helps youth in their search for a right direction in life. It is a stabilizing factor that often gives youth the time they need to realize there are positive alternatives to the negative choices they are making which keep them involved in the court system. Y-CAP gives hope to parents who have exhausted their options for help. Suggestions are given to parents to help them locate other services for their child when needed. Support is provided when families are involved in court proceedings, helping them to understand what is happening and giving them encouragement when needed. Y-CAP provides a sounding board for youth and parents when no one else

will listen. Praise is provided for youth who are improving their attitudes and making better choices in their everyday life.

I could go on and on with the many benefits of programs such as Y-CAP. Please pray for Y-CAP as it continues to serve youth and for other communities, counties and municipalities when they have the opportunity to provide something positive for youth at-risk. We should never let selfish ideas and motives dictate our service to others in need.



Laderious and his family were honored guests at the 2010 YMCA Annual Dinner. They are wearing YMCA promotional headbands that say "We're more than a gym." Laderious and Y-CAP were featured in the YMCA's 2010 "We Build People" Campaign brochure.

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- Pray for youth and families
- Become a Board Member
- Tell your friends about Y-CAP
- Provide financial support by becoming a donor
- Invite us to your business, church or civic club to share the word about Y-CAP

Request to receive "Matter Chatter" newsletter.

Call (901) 458-9622

Make a donation to Y-CAP. Your generous gift will help turn young lives around!

**VISIT Y-CAP ON THE WEB
www.ymcamemphis.org**

STAFF CHATTER

By: Renita Boclair

I am Renita Boclair, an intern from the Department of Social Work at the University of Memphis. I have been working with Y-CAP since January. My area of interest is in children and I thought it was a great idea to work with this program. On the first day, I was nervous because I didn't know what to expect. I was more of a spectator and noticed the schedule and how activities flowed from one to the next. I observed the participants and noticed that all the youth had something special about them. I really enjoy being at Y-CAP. The staff is always welcoming and available whenever I need advice on a particular situation. Y-CAP is a learning environment because I am approached with challenges that I have not experienced. I enjoy having an impact on the youths' behavior. During a recent monthly family night event, a youth stated to me that he was ready to graduate. I told him that if he made better choices concerning his behavior and academics, then he will be able to graduate. He looked at me and said "From now on, Ms. Renita, I will try to do the right thing." From that night forward, his behavior improved. It made me feel great knowing that I was a part of his progression. I also like the concept of Y-CAP, which is instilling values to help the youth become responsible, respectful, and honest citizens in their communities. So far, I enjoy tutoring the youth. It is the little things that make the difference with them. For the duration of my time here, my hopes are to continue making that difference.



YMCA HAS NEW PRESENCE ON THE WEB: FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND A NEW WEBSITE.

Article by: Shauna Bateman

Are you a "fan" of the YMCA and Y-CAP? If you don't know, a "fan" is someone who supports your cause through the social media site Facebook. Over 650 members, staff and supporters are currently fans of the YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South.

This year the YMCA of Memphis & the Mid-South initiated a new and expanded web presence including a YMCA fan page on Facebook, a Twitter feed and campaign videos that can be seen through YouTube. The YMCA is now part of the growing global trend among nonprofits and businesses to be more engaged with members and clients through social media. The goal of social media is to connect with people and inspire them to support the YMCA, eventually turning "friends" and "fans" into supporters, donors, and volunteers. Specifically, the YMCA Facebook page features opportunities to get involved with YMCA events and new programs.

Announcements about YMCA events and branch happenings, such as the recent Y-CAP Rummage Sale, are frequently announced via Facebook and Twitter pages.

Also launched this year is a new and updated webpage currently featuring a prominent picture of a real Y-CAP youth and Y-CAP's story. Y-CAP has an updated presence on this site under "YMCA Program Centers." You can even donate directly to Y-CAP through the new Y-CAP page.

Visit the YMCA and Y-CAP and see what is new on the web scene by going to www.ymcamemphis.org



formity. This is largely due to peer pressure, which is most influential during early adolescence (ages 12 -17) when one tends to select role models based on popularity. These role models may come from desired peer groups and from celebrities. Unfortunately, the role models that many teens choose to emulate are selected based on superficial considerations that lack the substance that parents, guardians and youth development leaders are promoting.

How does one compete with that which is glamorous and easily consumed? It is my understanding, based on experience and the research of others, that one must establish a foundation of trust and mutual respect, which is built upon sincere individualized interactions in which there is an active dialogue exchange. Too often I see adults talk at the youths they desire to reach instead of talk with them. While they may yield what seems to be success because the child becomes compliant, the long term results are far too often failures.

Competing with a child's impulsive desire to do and wear what his friends and celebrity role models put forth as best is not easy. Indeed, the task is daunting given how easily they are influenced by images of "Pretty People" engaged in "Kool" activities such as drinking while wearing attractive clothing. Because of their developing sense of self, young people often imagine themselves as being transformed to the stature of such celebrity images and popular peers if they do and wear what is done and worn by those role models. Many kids will go so far as refer to clothing by its brand as opposed to identify them merely as a pair of pants, a pair of shoes or a shirt. This is an example of how associating ones' self with brand identity supersedes their desire and understanding of what it truly means to be an individual. Such influence is much easier when a child does not have a strong relationship with parents or guardians. Nevertheless, in that situation or where a child is closely bonded with an appropriate adult, success is more than an illusion.

While a child will most likely succumb, at least in part, to the desire to be just like everyone else without questioning whether doing so is best, it is not impossible to instill in a child a strong sense of self and to establish comfort with being an individual. To achieve this goal, an adult must foster self esteem. My approach includes, in part, consistently promoting a sense of pride and competence, teaching a child how and why s/he is unique and giving genuine, descriptive praise for behaviors and expressions of character that are representative of strong core values.

ADOLESCENTS ARE EASILY INFLUENCED BY WHAT AND WHO IS POPULAR

Article by: Dennis Head

It is well established that the younger the age of an individual, the more likely it is s/he will yield to crowd con-

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Y **YMCA MISSION:** To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.
Please consider making a donation to Y-CAP. Your generous gift will turn young lives around!



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VISIT Y-CAP ON THE WEB AT www.ymcamemphis.org

WHAT IS Y-CAP?

Y-CAP is a faith-based program that redirects youth behavior by teaching values and rebuilding families.

Y-CAP:

- Targets youth 10-15 years old
- Allows youth to remain in their own home
- Includes the entire family
- Teaches specific values including caring, honesty, respect and responsibility

The primary goal of Y-CAP is to help youth become productive members of society.

Y-CAP wishes to thank
all volunteers from
the communities that
we serve.

If you would like to help
redirect a young life,
call your local Y-CAP office.