

2014 Needs Assessment for Limestone

Judge Jeanne W. Anderson

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Supt. Tom Sisk	Caroline Page	Susan McGrady	
Rep. Dan Williams	Lisa Anderson	Monica Garcia	

Accomplishments

Our Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) again had a very busy year. The CAC was a long time dream of our Children's Policy Council and we celebrate their ongoing success. The CAC currently has a Parenting After Trauma group being offered to caretakers of children who have been victims of violence or serious abuse. The group is open to parents, extended family, friends and foster parents.

The Family Resource Center (FRC) continues to expand services. We are very proud of the Parents as Teachers Baby Boutique. This program provides parents of young children an opportunity to earn "baby bucks" when they make good parenting choices.

Also the Parents as Teachers Program is providing education and support to pregnant mothers to ensure a healthy baby and family environment. All pregnant mothers are eligible.

The Youth Community Service Program is a venture by the FRC and the Juvenile Probation Office that places youth in community service. As part of court sentencing, juveniles ages 12 and up are placed in businesses and community events to volunteer as they are supervised by a liaison from the FRC.

The LAUNCH Program is now housed at the FRC. LAUNCH provides support for out of school youths (ages 16-21) needing assistance in education and life planning.

Several other programs continue to thrive at the FRC despite budget cuts. Career Link provides career consultation in support of employment, resume' creation, and education opportunities. Crisis Services otherwise know as Hope Place provides support for women and men experiencing domestic violence in a relationship. Legal Services comes to the FRC on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month to offer in-person consultation with Legal Services of Alabama. Childcare Management of Alabama has a childcare representative providing support to families with childcare needs.

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Limestone County continue to expand programs in the areas of education, arts, character leadership, sports and fitness, and healthy lifestyles. The Boys and Girls Club Reading Academy is experiencing great success. At the Tanner Club, 12 out of 13 seniors graduated and all 12 are going to college. As part of the Reading Academy, the Club continues to offer guidance to the students on into their college years.

The Limestone County Sheriff's Department hosted regional training for the Alabama Sex Offender Registration & Notification Act. We applaud Sheriff Blakely's continued efforts to protect children in our community.

The Limestone County Department of Mental health continues to offer Summer Day Camp. The camp gives children education opportunities, summer activities and continuation of medication.

The PEACE project and Life Skills classes offered by the Mental Health Center NCA have been very helpful in Limestone County. PEACE stands for Promoting Emotional Adjustments through Core Values and Education. It is an educational program designed to help participants increase problem-solving and assertiveness skills, identify the emotions underlying anger and aggression and how to change them, and gain greater personal power and responsibility. Life Skills empowers families with the basic tools for success.

The Department of Human Resources continues to work hard to serve our children despite loss of personnel and budget cuts. Training for this year include Safety Assessment and Individualized Service Plan training to all staff, Childhood Trauma and the Effects of Social Work on Social Workers, and many other local training to improve the casework and knowledge of our social workers. Supervisors received numerous additional training on permanency, safety, and overall casework in all areas of CPS/Foster care.

Our county school truancy program continues to be strong with the aid of School Resource Officers assisting

with truants when 5 absences are reached. Limestone County now has a full time officer at every county school. All of the Limestone County School Resource Officers attended the TAASRO conference and received specialized training on recent changes in juvenile law and school safety.

The Truancy Intervention and Prevention of Alabama (T.I.P.) program has made huge progress in fighting truancy in Limestone County. This program is a collaboration between Athens State University and the Limestone County Juvenile Court. T.I.P. acts as a liaison between students, parents, teachers, school administrators, truancy officers, court and community agencies. This program works hard to intervene and prevent tardiness, absenteeism and drop-out rates.

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First Priority

Need related to children of this county

Child Health

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Limestone County Department of Human Resources All Kids Full Tummy Project Limestone County Churches Involved Sarrell Dental Center Athens Limestone Family Resource Center Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama Athens Limestone Children's Advocacy Center Athens Limestone Hospital Athens Limestone Health Department Athens Lions Club	Public transportation Additional funding to bridge gaps Additional mental health services for children under 13 years of age

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Continue to support the Family Resource Center (FRC) and these programs being offered to help children be healthy: Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Prenatal Parents as Teachers Program.
2. Raise awareness of the FRC Baby Boutique. This is part of the PAT program and parents are eligible to earn "Baby Bucks" by participating in home visits, group visits, enrolling in WIC, enrolling in All Kids, scheduling and keeping doctor and dentist appointments, and children's immunizations. They are then able to purchase items such as diapers, wipes, formula, clothing, bedding, toys, etc. in the Baby Boutique.
3. Public transportation is a problem in Limestone County. Parents need assistance traveling to participate in programs and in getting children to the appropriate facilities for medical appointments.
4. Continue to utilize the Athens Limestone Mental Health Department summer day camp program for children.
5. Work toward expanding the Full Tummy Project to all schools in Limestone County. This program sends home food for the weekend for children receiving free lunch from their school.

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Second Priority

Need related to children of this county

Child Safety

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Limestone County Department of Human Resources Limestone County Churches Involved Athens Limestone Family Resource Center Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama Athens Limestone Children's Advocacy Center Athens Limestone Hospital Athens Limestone Health Department	Local Shelters Local Long Term Residential Treatment Additional Drug Prevention Programs Public Transportation

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. A large number of dependency cases in Limestone County are filed due to drug issues of the parents. Parents are not able to meet their children's needs because of their addictions. Limestone County needs a local long term residential drug treatment facility.
2. Work to increase number of participants in Drug Court. Limestone County is seeing success in their drug court graduates. Drug free parents are able to work toward stronger families.
3. More foster parents in Limestone County.
4. Work with the District Attorney's office to expedite child abuse cases. If child abuse was committed by a parent or guardian, a delayed court hearing often affects the permanency of the child.

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Third Priority

Need related to children of this county

Truancy

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
Limestone County Board of Education Athens Board of Education Athens State University Truancy and Prevention Program of Alabama School Resource Officers Limestone County Department of Human Resources Limestone County Churches Involved Athens Limestone Family Resource Center Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama Limestone County Juvenile Probation Office Limestone County District Attorney's Office	Full time School Resource Officers in every city school. (Limestone County currently has full time officers at all of their schools.) School Resource Officers in the county schools have been conducting an early warning meeting with parents to warn them of what will happen if their children continue to miss school.

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Continue to utilize the Truancy Intervention and Prevention (T.I.P.) of Alabama program. This program serves as a liaison between students, parents, teachers, school administrators, truancy officers, courts and community agencies. The goal is to prevent absenteeism, tardiness and drop-outs.
2. Expand volunteers/interns for the T.I.P. program at Athens State University.
3. Continue to support the Boys and Girls Club and their Reading Academy. The Reading Academy not only helps students perform at their reading level, it helps encourage graduation and furthering education after high school.
4. Continue to support and find additional funding for the Family Solutions Program offered by the FRC. This program works with families as a "mentor" finding both short and long term solutions for families and children.