



Division of Community Services

PROJECT: *ADOPT-A-CLASS*

Promoting Good Citizenship through Early Intervention



The Need

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has made significant progress in recent years in reducing juvenile delinquency and recidivism. However, most traditional DJJ programs address the needs of youth who are currently in the juvenile justice system and/or who are at an age where many of their negative behavior patterns are already established. As juvenile justice professionals the challenge we face is finding meaningful ways to intervene in the lives of youth *before* they become involved in delinquent behavior, and in turn involved in the juvenile court system.

We at DJJ believe the most effective prevention programs are those which intervene directly in the lives of at-risk youth in their early years. This is best accomplished in late elementary or early middle school, before they can develop the negative attitudes and behavioral problems that may ultimately lead them into the juvenile justice system. Prevention is especially important in dealing with the crime of disturbing schools, which is consistently the most referred charge for school-age youth. One such early intervention program that DJJ provides to schools is PROJECT: *Adopt-A-Class*.

What is PROJECT: *Adopt-A-Class*?

PROJECT: *Adopt-A Class* is a program where a local DJJ county office “adopts” classes at local elementary and middle schools based on their population of “at-risk” youth. In this forum, DJJ staff and community partners as guest presenters, provide one-hour sessions in the classroom over several months interacting directly with the students. In these sessions the students are encouraged to make good positive decisions that build character, self esteem, good citizenship, and reinforce behaviors that will help them be successful in life. Addressing these issues with students in the classroom is a key strategy of the program and is geared toward building positive relationships in that environment, and teaching them the necessary skills to reduce risky behaviors.

PROJECT: *Adopt-A-Class* Goals

Project: *Adopt-A-Class* goals are to promote positive youth development by teaching students how to avoid risky behaviors and by enhancing positive factors in their lives. Through this direct intervention DJJ hopes to assist youth in preventing problem behaviors at a young age *before* they become a pattern that leads to a referral to the juvenile justice system.

PROJECT: *Adopt-A-Class* Sample Topics:

- Introduction to SCDJJ, Consequences of Delinquent Behavior, and Pre-Test
- Dealing with Disrespect
- Understanding the Causes of Anger
- Drugs, Alcohol and their Affects
- Making Good Decisions and Setting Goals for Life
- Accepting Responsibility and Exercising Rights Appropriately
- Achieving Academic Excellence
- Power of Positive Peer Associations
- Resolving Conflicts Peacefully
- Bullies, Bullying, and Victimization
- Field Trip – SCDJJ Evaluation Center and *The Insiders* Presentation
- Review, Post-Test, and Awards

For more information please contact your local DJJ County Office (full listing on reverse) or:

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Prevention & Intervention State Coordinator
Office of Community Justice
4900 Broad River Rd., PO Box 21069
Columbia, SC 29221-1069
Office (803) 896-4082 ♦ Fax (803) 896-6917
erwill@scdjj.net

For additional DJJ resources please visit our website:
<http://www.state.sc.us/djj/>

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age.
THE FOLLOWING OFFICES HAVE BEEN DESIGNATED TO HANDLE INQUIRIES REGARDING THE NONDISCRIMINATION POLICIES:
Title IX – Inspector General’s Office – 803-896-9595, Title II & 504 – Special Education Office – 803-896-8484

DJJ County Office Directory

Abbeville
864-366-5312

Aiken
803-641-7735

Allendale
803-584-4751

Anderson
864-260-4041

Barnwell
803-259-7114

Bamberg
803-245-5184

Beaufort
843-525-1351

Berkeley
843-761-8194

Charleston
843-740-1649

Cherokee
864-487-2564

Chester
803-377-8104

Chesterfield
843-623-2378

Clarendon
803-435-8587

Colleton
843-549-1509

Darlington
843-393-5641

Dillon
843-774-4147

Dorchester
843-832-4265

Fairfield
803-712-6533

Florence
843-665-3080

Greenville
864-467-5875

Greenwood
864-229-6648

Georgetown
843-546-8723

Hampton
803-943-4296

Horry
843-915-8969

Jasper
843-726-5666

Kershaw
803-432-9171

Lancaster
803-285-9447

Laurens
864-984-2518

Lee
803-484-4550

Lexington
803-359-5526

Marion
843-431-1110

Marlboro
843-479-2961

Newberry
803-276-8243

Oconee
864-638-9537

Orangeburg/Calhoun
803-533-6270

Pickens
864-878-7560

Richland
803-253-4050

Spartanburg
864-562-4200

Sumter
803-778-2368

Union
864-429-1640

Williamsburg
843-355-2772

York
803-909-7500

Tri-Counties
(Edgefield, McCormick, Saluda)
864-445-8138

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) is the state cabinet agency responsible for providing custodial care and rehabilitation for the state's children who are incarcerated, on probation or parole, or in community placement for a criminal or status offense. Our mission is to protect the public and reclaim juveniles through prevention, community services, education, and rehabilitative services in the least restrictive environment.