

SOUTHWEST
FLORIDA



Separating a troubled past
from a bright future.

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*When does a disruptive child become one who is on the verge
of becoming something worse?*

Can a teen who has been arrested be saved?

When should someone step in and lend a guiding hand in the right direction?

The fact remains there are countless numbers of students who must be removed from public schooling - and over 2 million teens arrested every year. Where do families and communities go to seek help when all else has seemed to fail?

The faculty and staff at AMikids Southwest Florida can help to answer many of these questions.

AMikids Southwest Florida is a non-profit alternative education program for at-risk kids ages 14-18. AMikids Southwest Florida is one of 56 programs in 8 states affiliated with AMikids, headquartered in Tampa, Florida. Our facility's location in Ft. Myers Beach offers a wide range of opportunities for the kids we serve to learn about their relationship with our environment. Our AMikids Personal Growth Model combines education, treatment and behavior modification to provide a holistic, comprehensive approach to the needs of our kids resulting in over 73% of our kids having a successful transition back into the community.

We know there is a future for every kid. In it, we see hope, excitement, discovery, promise and success. But, there is work that needs to be done right now.

Our Goals

- Reduction of Juvenile Crime
- Increase in Academic Gains
- Increase in Employability Skills
- Increase in Community Service



Our Kids

Who are our Kids?

Statistical data from 2005-2006; retrieved from the 2008 AMI Outcomes report compiled by the Justice Research Center, Tallahassee, Florida

Demographics

- Males (75%) and Females (25%)
- 14-18 years old
- Average Age at Enrollment: 15.6 years
- 43% of the student body is minority
 - 25% Black
 - 16% Hispanic
 - 57% White
 - 2% Other
- 43% of the kids were committed for a felony property offense
- 43% of the kids were committed for a misdemeanor offense
- Average Age at First Offense: 14.2 years
- Average # of Prior Arrests: 4.4

Youth Information

Kids attending AMIkids Southwest Florida typically:

- are significantly behind in academic courses and need the opportunity for credit recovery
- need mentoring
- have a history of substance abuse
- have displayed a lack of respect for peers and authority
- are suspected of or have admitted to gang involvement
- are lacking in motivation
- need assistance developing self esteem

AMIkids Services

Academics

During their stay at the program, kids are exposed to a wide range of educational opportunities that will afford them the tools they need to continue their education in the field of their choice and secure quality employment. Youth have the opportunity for credit recovery to earn their way back to the appropriate grade level, vital for those kids returning to local public schools. AMIkids Southwest Florida offers each student with aptitude and perseverance the opportunity to continue their education at vocational/technical centers, community colleges, and universities and the skills to find a productive job.

Experiential Education

Programs include water safety, boating, and other hands-on programs to give each student meaningful and challenging experiences in a variety of ways. Experiential activities teach students when they are most receptive. And, the experience-based education allows our students to get to know teachers on a different level, fostering a more relaxed relationship, influencing them to shift their behavior and to change the way they see the world. For those kids with more serious learning and behavioral issues, there have been startling results.

Behavior Modification

At AMIkids Southwest Florida, discipline is defined as the provision of consequences for behaviors. This means that our students receive recognition for positive behaviors, as well as negative consequences for inappropriate actions. We believe discipline (for both positive and negative behaviors) is only effective if it possesses warmth. Staff members receive a job description that provides them with a list of responsibilities associated with their employment. Likewise, our students receive a "job description" which is called a case treatment plan, providing our youth with a list of responsibilities. The plan differs for each youth, describing student goals in the areas of education, behavior, social relationships, vocation and leadership. Progress on goals is provided by daily point card, program rank board, assessment by the AMIkids Southwest Florida treatment team, the Case Manager, weekly documentation and monthly reports. The process is effective because students understand their job and how well they are doing towards accomplishing that job. Over 73% of the kids that successfully complete the program have no further negative contact with the legal system for the one year period following program completion.