

# CARING CONNECTIONS

Oklahoma Systems of Care newsletter



## INTRODUCTION

This is the first issue of *Caring Connections*, a newsletter for Oklahoma Systems of Care staff. Our hope is that *Caring Connections* will be a valuable resource for you and the families you work with. The Oklahoma Systems of Care state staff values your input and would like to hear from you regarding this and future issues. Please submit all comments and ideas to Traci Castles, [tcastles@odmhsas.org](mailto:tcastles@odmhsas.org) or (405) 522-8019. Thank you for caring for Oklahoma children, youth and families.

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## BREAKING NEWS

Oklahoma Systems of Care Statewide Initiative (OSOCSI) will take Systems of Care statewide while making significant inroads in decreasing disparity for children. The ultimate vision is that all Oklahoma children and youth with serious mental health and co-occurring needs and their families will have access to Systems of Care in the communities of their choice. The OSOCSI will serve children and youth ages 0-21 with serious emotional disturbance, and their families. Special priority will be given for youth ages 16-21 with co-occurring needs who are involved with the juvenile justice and/or child welfare systems.

OSOCSI will serve a minimum of 200 children, youth, and their families annually by the second year of funding, 700 by Year 4, and 1000 by Year 6. All served will have a diagnosable mental health challenge and be at risk of out-of-home and/or out-of-school placement, requiring multiagency interventions.

## ...AND THAT'S NOT ALL

Go to [www.samsah.gov](http://www.samsah.gov) for information and news about the National Systems of Care initiative. This site always has interesting and innovative news and information on Systems of Care development, partnerships and a community profile. You can also benefit from the [www.tapartnership.org](http://www.tapartnership.org) website. This website may be beneficial when trying to uplift your community, with energizing information about cultural competence, family involvement and youth guided activities. Take a look at what is happening in other funded Systems of Care communities.

For additional information and technical assistance with your Systems of Care community please call ODMHSAS at 405-522-4151.



## CULTURAL CORNER

We work hard to provide all children, youth and families opportunities for a life free of behavioral issues, addiction and the consequences of mental illness. With many of our community-based services and prevention efforts, we often are able to intervene before problems becomes too severe. It is our responsibility to reach out to all Oklahomans regardless of their culture. With this in mind, we must train and educate ourselves to be adaptable to the diverse population we serve.

Is intelligence measured by the correct number of questions we can answer on a test? If so, what if we were given a test written for a culture we were not familiar with? How would we be looked upon by that culture if we were ignorant of their traditions, beliefs, or language? Think about it. How do you judge a person when they do not know what you are talking about? How do you feel when you do not understand what they are talking about?

Take the “Rap” culture quiz. Some of you may have children, siblings or maybe even you are a part of this culture. This quiz is to provide you with some knowledge of the “Rap” culture and see how familiar you are with the terminology. Have fun and continue to expand your cultural knowledge!

**The Reddon-Simons “Rap” Test**—Indicate what you think each of these phrases means.

1. Don't play the dozens
  - A. Don't gamble
  - B. Don't talk about others' family members
  - C. Don't try to stay up 'round the clock
  - D. Don't date too many people at once
2. She's a mary jane girl
  - A. she smokes marijuana
  - B. she's someone's pet project
  - C. she has a pimp
  - D. all of the above
3. I got some new kicks
  - A. I just got some good drugs
  - B. I've just been in a fight
  - C. I've got some good gossip for you
  - D. I've got some new shoes
4. Let me throw down on this plate
  - A. let me check the quality of this marijuana
  - B. let me snort some cocaine
  - C. let me finish eating
  - D. let me steal this car
5. She's buffed
  - A. she's got a cute rear-end
  - B. she's overweight
  - C. she's wearing leather
  - D. she's got polished manners

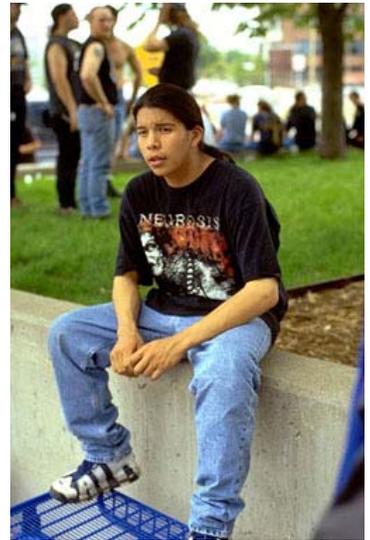


Answers: 1. B 2. D 3. D 4. C 5. B

## YOUTHVILLE, OKLAHOMA

The Youth of Oklahoma face an endless variety of barriers and obstacles in our communities: sky rocketing high school drop out rates, substance abuse, gang violence and a poor economy. To prepare our future community leaders and inspire them will require a community effort. We need to focus on 5 key areas of healthy youth development.

- ◆ **Learning:** provide an opportunity to learn things they like; it inspires youth to achieve and reach for goals
- ◆ **Thriving:** encourage and promote a holistic approach to health
- ◆ **Connecting with the Community:** promote an environment where youth take ownership of their community
- ◆ **Working:** provide opportunities for vocational and practical skill development
- ◆ **Leading:** encourage civic involvement and development, empower youth to hone leadership skills



## EVOLUTION IN LINCOLN COUNTY

With the help of the Lincoln County Community Collation, Sac and Fox Nation, the Turning Point Collation, Lincoln County Systems of Care and OJA, the youth of Lincoln county are planning the first ever Youth Speak Out. The youth have identified Mid-September as their Youth Speak Out date. **So...who's next?**

## FUN IN THE SUMMERTIME

There are a variety of free retreats offered to various couples through the **OK Marriage Initiative**. These retreats are overnight stays offered at no cost to the attendees; children are not permitted to attend these retreats with their parents/caregivers, but there is some money available to help offset the cost of childcare. The upcoming retreats include: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, September 19-20 in Guthrie.

Pre-registration is required for all retreats and space is limited. For more information or to register, please visit the Thriving Marriages website at <http://www.registernow123.com/thriving/info.htm>.

**Oklahoma City Zoo** offers Way Back Wednesdays beginning Wednesday, July 1st. Every Wednesday for the months of July and August, zoo admission is only \$0.75/person and there are also \$0.75 concession specials.

**Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History** in Norman offers free admission to everyone on the 1st Monday of each month.

**Gilcrease Museum** of the Americas in Tulsa offers free admission to everyone on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

**Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art** in Norman offers free admission to everyone every Tuesday.

**Philbrook Museum of Art** in Tulsa offers free admission to everyone the 2nd Saturday of each month.



## CONTACT US

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## FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKSHOPS

### **Parent to Parent Mentorship**

This course teaches parents about effective parent mentorship, communication, conflict resolution and more.  
For more information, (877) 571-5072—Email: [heather-pike@oklahomafamilynetwork.org](mailto:heather-pike@oklahomafamilynetwork.org)

August 27—Sapulpa

### **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Training Series**

Topics include Parents and Teachers as Allies, In Our Own Voice, Family to Family, Family Support Facilitator Training, and Consumer Family Leadership Academy. Contact Kelsey Lunsford or Gail Israel at (405) 230-1900 or 1-800-583-1264 or via email at [klunsford@nami.org](mailto:klunsford@nami.org) or [gisrael@nami.org](mailto:gisrael@nami.org)

August 28-30—Norman

### **Oklahoma Parent Center**

To get more information, call 877-553-4332 or go to <http://www.oklahomaparentscenter.org/index.html>

#### **Parents Rights (Special Education)**

August 18—Moore  
August 25—Bartlesville  
September 22—Tulsa

#### **Communication Workshop**

August 25—Bartlesville

#### **Section 504**

August 20—Okmulgee

#### **Oklahoma Transition Institute**

September 9-10—Oklahoma City

## FAMILY AWARE.ORG

July 2009's *Families Matter!* column features the story of Bill, Nancy, and Ally, a family living with bipolar disorder. Read about Bill and Nancy's struggle to get adequate diagnosis and treatment for their daughter, Ally. Bill and Nancy discuss their challenges, successes, and advice for other families living with depressive disorders. This story is one of a number of "Family Profiles" available on [FamilyAware.org](http://FamilyAware.org), an online resource hosted by Families for Depression Awareness.