

**San Mateo County Probation Department
Margaret J. Kemp Camp**

JOURNEYS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Journeys is a structured and gender-responsive program for girls at the Margaret J. Kemp Camp in San Mateo, California. The program is designed around best practices in working with women and girls in the justice system; it is intended to be:

- Strengths-based
- Goal-oriented
- Process-oriented
- Nonlinear
- Without strict deadlines
- Achievement-oriented
- Involving continuous reinforcement
- Promoting girls' ownership of their program and progress
- Relational

Research shows that women and girls are motivated by strong connections with others. They develop a sense of self and self-worth through connections. Evidence-based programs for women and girls take into account the need for structure, problem-solving through process, and competition for recognition and attention.

The Journeys program was born from the idea that a girl's experience in the Camp Kemp program should be structured; a girl should be able to mark her progress and see how she has changed over time. The program was piloted for six weeks in April and May of 2008. Feedback from girls involved in the pilot stage was important in making adjustments to the structure and content of the program.

The heart of the Journeys program is the Passport. These multi-colored workbooks contain exercises to structure girls' time at Camp, help them track their progress, and serve as a personal record of their achievements. The Passport is designed to organize girls' experience through goal-setting and to allow staff to give tangible reinforcement of positive and pro-social behavior.

The Passport contains the following sections:

- Welcome: These pages provide an orientation to the rules and workings of Camp.
- My First Reflection: These pages contain exercises that help staff get to know a girl when she arrives at Camp.
- My Journey: These pages are the heart of day-to-day operations at the Camp. At the beginning of the week, girls set one goal. Throughout the week, girls record their activities in a weekly calendar and rate their mood in the morning and the evening. The last part of this section asks girls to evaluate how well they did with the goal they set for the week. Staff work with girls in goal-setting, and review their progress during the week. Girls get a new set of pages each week; their Passports grow larger over time.
- My Good Deeds: During the day, staff make notes of a girl's positive behaviors or actions. For example, staff might note that a girl tried something new, was kind to someone, or handled a tough situation well.
- My Court Visit: These pages help girls through the process of court reviews. Before they go to court, the girls fill out a page explaining what they have been working on

since the last court review. The Judge reviews the page in court and answers any questions the girls might have. After court girls fill out another page asking them to recall what the Judge said during the hearing.

- My Trip Abroad: These pages help the girls set goals for home or community passes. Girls explain what they are going to do on the pass and talk about how they will handle tough situations. When they return from their pass, there is another page that helps them review what happened and set goals for the next pass.
- My Big Question: Any adult at Camp can assign a short essay question for the girl to answer. These questions might pertain to a specific incident a girl has encountered, or may be more philosophical. Later the staff person reviews the girl's answer and they discuss it.
- I'm Ready to Travel: This section contains a girl's transition plan as she prepares to leave Camp. She works on this section with her assigned Camp Counselor and her Probation Officer.

Girls take pride in their Passports, often decorating them with photos, drawings, and stickers.

Staff have said that the Passport facilitates interaction between staff and girls, helps girls track their goals, and provides a forum for staff to provide positive reinforcement. Some staff comments include:

- The expectations and rules are always readily available inside the Passports.
- It gives [girls] a sense of accomplishment and boosts self-esteem when they get good deeds.
- They are able to see the good things they do on a daily basis and communicate through writing, which is often easier than verbally.
- It provides for girls to look back and see their goals and if they are achieving them.
- It is reflective. Girls have the opportunity to look back and see which goals they've accomplished and how much they are progressing.

Some comments from girls include:

- My Good Deeds shows the good things we do. [It] shows what we're doing good instead of always bad. The Judge gets to see your good deeds.
- Showing my parents what I've been doing, looking at my good deeds for encouragement.
- I can remember things by looking at the schedule.
- Keeps me on track.
- It helps me communicating with staff and the Judge.
- I like looking back to when I first got here.

For more information about the Journeys program, contact Sharon Jones, Management Analyst, at (650) 312-5241 or sjones@co.sanmateo.ca.us.