

Spring 2011

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## Dear AMIKids Space Coast Advocates,

Since our last newsletter, AMIKids Space Coast hosted the 22nd Annual Fall Fundraiser that contributed \$40,450 to our program and as a result, our graduates' success. Through the support of our donors we continue to help our troubled youth plan for a future that's different from the past that led them here. On a daily basis I'm reminded of the importance of community support. Every aspect of our campus exists because of the hard work of our advocates and their belief in our mission to protect our community and positively impact as many youth as possible. We've also been keeping our legislators informed on the positive work we're doing, despite the threat of significant budget cuts. Like most other social service agencies, our state funding is being threatened by a potential 17 percent budget cut. In order to operate at our current capacity, our reliance on individual and corporate donations increases. We encourage you, our trusted supporter, to participate in our upcoming golf tournament, schedule a campus tour with our students and invite a friend to join or call our office and find out what volunteer opportunities are available. We thank you for all that you do to care for the 1,300 youth we've served over the last 23 years and look forward to working together throughout the coming years.

Sincerely,

*Marvin Ferrell*

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Space Coast Scramble



**Former AMIKids Space Coast student gives golfing a swing**

On Saturday, May 7, AMIKids Space Coast will host its annual golf tournament in an effort to raise funds for the 74 male youth served each year. The event will be held at Suntree Country Club where registration begins at 7a.m. and the shotgun start is scheduled for 8 a.m. Breakfast will be provided by the student culinary arts program and lunch will be provided by Suntree. All participants will receive a goodie bag and prizes will be awarded to the top three teams in addition to the women's and men's closest to the pin and longest drive contest.

Players are encouraged to rally a team of four and register through the AMIKids Space Coast web site, [www.amikidsspacecoast.org](http://www.amikidsspacecoast.org) or call 321-752-3200. The player registration fee is \$125 and sponsorship opportunities begin at \$100.

Through last year's support, over \$33,000 was raised for the male youth who are working to change their lives. One student was awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to peruse his education in the medical field. The scholarship was issued by Viera Diagnostic, the event's major sponsor for the last two years. The event is also supported by FLORIDA TODAY, a long-time sponsor of the Annual Space Coast Scramble.

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See us live!  
 Come visit us for a  
 campus tour.

### Contact Information

**P: 321-752-3200**  
**F: 321-752-3203**

**AMIKids Space Coast**  
 1000 Inspiration Lane  
 Melbourne, FL 32934

[www.amikidsspacecoast.org](http://www.amikidsspacecoast.org)

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## State Budget Cuts Threaten DJJ Programs



Congressman, Bill Posey, met with students during AMIkids Tallahassee Days

As Gov. Rick Scott, the Senate and House work to diminish the state deficit, slashes are being made to the Department of Juvenile Justice budget. Across the state, non-secure residential facilities are at stake of losing "bed slots" or at worst, being closed. In total, the proposed Senate budget cut to residential programs amounts to \$38.47 million and the elimination of 983 beds.

After the Senate and the House deliberate over the proposed budget cuts, the final say can be expected May 6. Once the decision is made on

how the program funding will be cut, "DJJ decides what specific programs will feel the blow of budget cuts, unless legislators say differently," Nick Millar, AMIkids director of governmental affairs, said.

In addition to the flurry of letters and e-mails being sent and asking for programs to be "held harmless," appointments are being scheduled for students and AMIkids Space Coast representatives to meet with government officials during AMIkids' Annual Legislative Days on March 30 and 31.

"We are asking all board members, staff and parents to contact their representatives and request continued funding for our rehabilitative programs," Marvin Ferrell, executive director of AMIkids Space Coast, said. "AMIkids programs focus on the rehabilitation of youth so they are less likely to reoffend. In return, our communities are safer and our program graduates become a contributing citizen rather than a burden to our tax system and local law officials."

The Florida Senate's list of proposed cuts will eliminate residential programs for misdemeanants and will reduce the length of stay in residential programs. The current-average length of time students spend at AMIkids Space Coast is nine months compared to the previous average of six months.

While state funds are becoming unreliable, the importance of private donations becomes more essential in keeping program doors open. "Legislators appreciate the fact that AMIkids Boards raise private funds to help supplement the services (government) offers our youth," said Millar.

To reach legislative representatives, visit [myfloridahouse.gov](http://myfloridahouse.gov) or [flsenate.gov](http://flsenate.gov)

## Students Actively Participate in Community Service



**Students hand dipped over 10,000 strawberries for the 2011 Strawberry Festival**

Thirty-three sets of able hands are ready to work, and they do. Not only are the kids at AMIkids Space Coast responsible for the campus grounds, laundry, cooking and cleaning, they take their service off campus to help neighboring businesses and causes.

In addition to community service, students cater events throughout the community. Most recently, staff and students transformed the campus dorm to streamline the chocolate-dipping process of 10,000 strawberries for Habitat for Humanity's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Strawberry Festival.

Community service is often mandatory for our court ordered youth. However, community service is part of the AMIkids

Space Coast philosophy in creating meaningful community partnerships. Please contact the school for our students' assistance in community service projects and opportunities.

## Life After Graduating AMikids Space Coast

Life for Adam before AMikids Space Coast had no structure, positive influence or appreciation for education and school. Looking back, Adam describes himself as "materialistic" and was focused on what he wanted and not what he needed and went about all of it in an illegal way. "I was impulsive," he said.

After being court ordered to our program for selling drugs, as part of his rehabilitation, he was responsible for completing drug and victim awareness counseling.

"I distributed poison through my neighborhood and helped destroy many lives," Adam said.

At AMikids Space Coast, his daily routine changed to include school as a major focal point of his day. According to his Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO), Adam was earning Ds and Fs before coming to the program but while attending the program, his grades improved to As and Bs. The teachers not only cover the traditional subjects taught in high school, they also have the responsibility of teaching the at-risk students life skills and work ethic.

"I learned the importance of maintaining my work load instead of getting behind," Adam said.

All throughout the eight-and-half months Adam spent in the program, he continually showed his passion for athletics. He led his AMikids Space Coast team in the summer and winter Olympic events where they consistently took top place among competing programs in athletics, educational and skill competitions.

Adam graduated AMikids Space Coast and returned to Cocoa High School to start his senior year. He took with him his new outlook.

The program "opened my eyes and showed me the importance of structure and discipline. I respect authority figures. Now I'm doing everything opposite than what I did before."

As Adam reflected on his experience at AMikids Space Coast, he said he was "thankful" and knows that "If I don't follow through with my plan, I'll once again let down my mother, brothers and sister who love me."

His JPO said he's looking forward to moving on with his life and becoming a productive citizen. However, it did indeed take a village to raise this child. Through the strength of his support system, Adam led his high school football team to the state championship. His athletic and academic success has caught the attention of college football recruiters, potentially giving Adam a chance to attend college on a full-tuition scholarship. Ultimately, Adam would like to attend Miami University to play football and study physical therapy or become an athletic trainer.

Adam shared his words of advice with the kids currently in the program, "stay humble and set goals."



### United Way's Goal Thermometer is Off the Chart

Congratulations to the United Way of Brevard team on exceeding the \$6.8 million goal! Since 2005, AMikids Space Coast has been one of United Way of Brevard's 42 partner agencies and receives funds to supplement our teacher's salaries as part of

United Way of Brevard's focus to improve childhood success.

AMikids Space Coast is one of 250 companies that run an internal campaign each year where staff participates in the charitable campaign, giving a portion of their paychecks to United Way's causes.

Thank you United Way of Brevard donors and volunteers for making our community a better place!

## Upcoming Events

- **April 21**  
**Board Meeting**
- **May 7**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Space Coast Scramble**
- **May 19**  
**Graduation**
- **July 18-22**  
**Scuba Diving Challenge Event**

## Needs List:

AA and D Batteries  
Men's Body Wash  
Men's Deodorant  
Toothbrushes and Paste  
\$500 Field Trip Funds  
\$500 Lawn Equipment  
\$5,000 Student Uniforms  
\$10,000 Boat Repairs  
\$10,000 Facility Repairs

## Special Thank You

**Eau Gallie Rotary for  
your continuous  
generosity and  
partnership**

**Margaret Binz  
Foundation for  
supplementing our  
youths' medical  
expenses**

**Riverside Theatre in  
Vero for sponsoring our  
students' field trip**

**Congratulations to  
Judy and Bryan Roub  
on 2010 Citizen of the  
Year Award!**

# NEW

Mission Possible is going electronic. If you would like to continue receiving communications from AMIkids Space Coast, please visit [www.amikidsspacecoast.org](http://www.amikidsspacecoast.org) and through the "newsletter" tab, you may register for our online newsletter. A couple minutes of your time will save us in mailing and production expenses. Please sign up now for your electronic copy of Mission Possible.

You may also find us on Facebook. Become a fan or "like us," at AMIkids Space Coast's Facebook page.



AMIkids Space Coast is a non-profit facility that serves as an alternative to prison for male offenders aged 14-18. We provide a cost-effective second chance for kids who would otherwise be sent to jail. Since 1988, we have served over 1,300 of Florida's youth by providing educational, behavioral and mental health services in a supportive family environment.

Our program produces measurable results - **76% of our graduates do not re-offend.** Instead of being a social burden, they become productive members of society - better brothers, sons, husbands and fathers.

Funding for AMIkids Space Coast's programs comes from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, Brevard County Public Schools, grants and personal contributions from members of the community. To find out what you can do to help AMIkids Space Coast continue our mission, please contact us at **(321) 752-3200 or visit [www.amikidsspacecoast.org](http://www.amikidsspacecoast.org).**

*AMIkids Space Coast is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization serving at-risk youth.*



## DONATION

**I believe that AMIkids Space Coast is providing a meaningful service to our troubled youth.**

Please accept my gift of: \_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, my organization \_\_\_\_\_ matches charitable funds

Please make checks payable to:  
AMIkids Space Coast 1000 Inspiration Lane Melbourne, FL 32905  
Call 321-752-3200 or visit [www.amikidsspacecoast.org](http://www.amikidsspacecoast.org)  
Thank you for your support!