

WHAT TO DO WITH A TEENAGER? 180

What happens when you have a youth whose negative behavior has put them into first contact with the criminal justice system? What do you do when your young person shuts you out and will not respond to your attempts at communication? What do you do when you want to have a one-on-one interaction with your youth in a friendly non-threatening environment? Well, you can call the 1-Eighty Program Coordinators, Joe Jackson and Kim McNac and ask them to help you. What can they do? They can help you with some ideas that would get you and your youth moving in the right direction. What is the 1-Eighty Program? The 1-Eighty Program is a service of the Okmulgee-Okfuskee County Youth Services, Inc. and it offers the parent and the child the opportunity to interact in a positive learning environment that is designed to enhance the youth to parent relationship

A youth does not have to be in trouble with the law to qualify for the 1-Eighty Program services. A youth can be struggling with behavior problems such as anger management, drug or alcohol addiction, or could be displaying negative responses to authority figures. A parent, school official, social worker, law enforcement officer, municipal court, or concerned guardian can make a referral to the program. A youth qualifies for the program if they are from the ages of 11-17 and are having difficulties managing their behaviors. A referral can be made as easily as picking up the telephone and dialing 756-7700 and asking for Joe Jackson or Kim McNac. Joe or Kim will speak with you and help you start services with an intake, and then they will get you going with the classes.

The 1-Eighty Program classes require that the parent and child attend together. This enables them to build communication skills, help them understand each other, and respond to each other in new and healthy ways. The class meets every Monday night from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Anne Moroney Youth Services Building, located at 1950 N. Okmulgee, Okmulgee, OK 74447. The classes are spread over seven weeks and offer the following services to parents and their youth: Adolescent Development/Handling Peer Pressure, two sessions on communicating more positively and effectively, anger management, alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse education. If you need some help with your youth and you want to be a part of a supportive group where you can share your ideas and interact with other concerned parents, then the 1-Eighty Program may be just the help that you are seeking. Please contact Joe Jackson or Kim McNac at the Okmulgee-Okfuskee County Youth services at 918-756-7700 for help with your youth.

By Joseph J. Jackson