

# Girl Connection

For those who serve adolescent females  
February 2012  
Written by: Kathy Nesteby  
Iowa Task Force for Young Women



## Task Force Update

There have been many changes happening to the Iowa Task Force for Young Women in recent months. Let the Girl Connection bring you up to date!

- ❖ Beginning with the April edition, the Girl Connection newsletter will now be an electronic-only newsletter. Anyone who currently receives a hard copy of the Girl Connection will be able to access it on-line ([www.women.iowa.gov/girls/TF\\_publications.html](http://www.women.iowa.gov/girls/TF_publications.html)) or can submit an email address to begin receiving it electronically. This change to the Girl Connection will also include an expansion of content and a new look, so keep your eyes peeled for the April edition!
- ❖ The Iowa Task Force for Young Women (ITFYW) is sad to announce that after 15 years, the Whispers & Screams conference for professionals who work with young women involved in the juvenile justice system will no longer go on. The Juvenile Justice Advisory Council, of which the ITFYW is a subcommittee, voted to discontinue the Whispers & Screams conference for the foreseeable future due to cuts in federal funding. This includes the 2012 dates of May 31-June 1. Thank you for your attendance over the past 15 years!
- ❖ The ITFYW will now meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting will take place May 4<sup>th</sup> at 10am with the location TBD. Meeting details can be found on the ITFYW website ([www.women.iowa.gov/girls](http://www.women.iowa.gov/girls)) and will be in future editions of the Girl Connection newsletter. If you are interested in becoming a member of the ITFYW, you are welcome to attend one of these public meetings. The ITFYW has two committees you may be interested in as well:
  - ~The *Policy & Special Projects Committee* is responsible for creating position papers, oversight of the bi-annual data report, ITFYW protocols and other projects related to policy.
  - ~The *Training Committee* is responsible for direction of the Gender Responsive Program Assessment tool, trainings offered by the Coordinator and any other efforts related to training and technical assistance.
- ❖ The Gender Responsive Program Assessment tool, site visit and technical assistance will still be offered.

Created by Dr. Stephanie Covington and Dr. Barbara Bloom (Center for Gender and Justice) and based on their earlier work for the National Institute of Corrections, the *Gender Responsive Program Assessment tool*<sup>®</sup> facilitates program evaluation of services to females involved in or at risk for involvement in the juvenile justice system, whether in single or mixed gender environments. There is no cost associated with the assessment or complementary training/technical assistance. It is part of the ongoing effort of the Iowa Task Force for Young Women to facilitate a comprehensive fundamental change in the juvenile justice system that will enhance the understanding and utilization of innovative gender-responsive approaches in all programs and services.

**What to expect:**

1. You will need to create a team of staff, preferably who possess varied responsibilities within the program.
2. Your team will complete the assessment tool without assistance from trained evaluators.
3. A minimum of two trained evaluators will visit your program, generally for a full day, and will complete the assessment tool relying on documentation you provide as well as observation and interviews with program staff and young women.

**What you will receive:**

- Evaluators will compile a report outlining the assessment results, including strengths, areas for improvement and recommendations.
- The Coordinator of the Task Force for Young Women will be available to provide and/or arrange training/technical assistance as requested.

As a positive force for young women in juvenile justice, the Iowa Task Force for Young Women looks forward to continuing its efforts and hopes you will join us!

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## February 2012 ~ Task Force Update The Girl Connection

Newsletter is provided as a service of the Iowa Task Force for Young Women. For back issues of the *The Girl Connection*, more information about the ITFYW or any information included in this newsletter, please contact us:

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