



News Release

January 21, 2021

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Program Aims to Help Address Youth Violence

ROCKFORD, Ill. – Under the guidance of the Mayor’s Office of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Prevention, the Juvenile Enhanced Response Team (JVERT) recently launched a new intervention and prevention program.

The new program, Step-Up, is a nationally recognized adolescent family violence intervention program designed to address youth violence toward family members. Violent behavior includes threats, intimidation, property destruction, degrading language and physical violence. The overall goal of Step-Up is to stop the cycle of family violence.

“Learning respectful relationship skills during adolescence helps to prevent violence and abuse in their future relationships and families,” explains Annie Hobson, Youth Services Manager at the Family Peace Center.

Youth who are involved in minor crimes can be considered for the program as an alternative to entering the court system. The program combines youth and their parents/guardians for evidence-based treatment in 21-weekly sessions using a set curriculum.

Lead agencies on this program are the City of Rockford, Youth Services Network, Juvenile Probation and the Amanda Reed Foundation.

JVERT is a multi-disciplinary team that identifies children in trauma from violence in the home and develop pathways to restoration and safety so they do not become involved in the criminal justice system, either as a victim or perpetrator.

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