
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

Vol. 1, No. 24. February 6, 2009

Dear Colleagues:

The large group that has been visiting Missouri is back home today, reporting a valuable and enlightening experience. We look forward to hearing about the trip and everything they learned.

Training on the SAVRY, our recently adopted risk assessment tool that we will use for all our kids, began this week for the four pilot regional offices. Baton Rouge, Hammond, New Orleans and Thibodaux will lead, with all the other regional offices not far behind. We expect full implementation statewide by next January. I'll keep you posted on the progress.

This week, members of the Executive Team and I met with the Division of Administration regarding possible budget cuts. This meeting was just the beginning of a lengthy process, and we have not been advised yet what the numbers will look like. It's just too early to tell what the impact will be, and with talk of a federal stimulus package providing some funds to state governments, there is some hope that the predictions may not be as dire as we thought.

And – as bad as the budget shortfalls sound in Louisiana, we are still not affected nearly as badly as the rest of the country. In fact, yesterday's paper in Baton Rouge had a story about Baton Rouge making *Business Week* magazine's list of "ten best cities to ride out the recession." So, just maybe things won't be so bad. We'll have to wait and see, and I promise you, I will keep you informed of any developments.

I'd like to talk about the *Guiding Principles*. Last week we talked about the mission, and that won't be the last time. The mission is what we do – the Guiding Principles are how we do it. If you don't know them all, check the website: click on the Mission button on the left. An easy way to remember the Guiding Principles is the acrostic HAVE FAITH.

The first principle starts with the letter H - *Honesty: to be honest; do everything with integrity*. Honesty just means to tell the truth. Early in my career, I made a choice. I wasn't going to lie about anything. You have to decide who you are and who you want to be. If asked about something, I will not lie, for my own or anyone else's benefit. You know, it's actually much simpler to tell the truth. That way you don't have to remember your lies. If you lie, you are going to get caught sooner or later. Eventually someone is going to discover that you told a lie and that will be a problem. Telling the truth is less trouble and just a better way to live.

If someone in authority over you asks you to lie, that's wrong, you should not do it, and you should report it. If a friend asks you to lie, they are not your friend and do not care for your welfare. Don't lie for anybody.

Honesty and integrity go hand-in-hand. To me, integrity means doing the right thing. It's not always easy to do the right thing. Sometimes it's much harder than doing otherwise. If you want to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and you want other people to respect you, you should be honest. If you say you are going to do something, do it. What does integrity mean to you?

In some cases we find that acting with integrity may even be an act of courage. When everyone around you is doing the wrong thing, and you choose the other path, it can make you unpopular. My advice: do the right thing anyway.

I look forward to visiting with you again next week. As always, thanks for all you do, every day, to meet the mission and do the right thing.

Sincerely,

"Doc"

Dr. Mary Livers

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary