
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

It's nice to be first on the "good" lists. This week we presented a two-day training on PREA (the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act) issues for our investigators, presented by consultants from NIC (National Institute of Corrections). Louisiana is the first state in the country to present this training for a juvenile corrections system. Two people from the state of Oregon came down to participate along with our staff. I was actually able to sit in on some of the sessions, and the training was excellent. Our people and the two from Oregon seemed to benefit greatly. We are grateful to NIC for supporting our request with a grant award that paid for the training.

At the same time, we conducted the last two days of a six-day La MOD training for the southern region's contract providers. I was able to give the closing remarks, and I was so pleased to see such a motivated group. People were really excited about what they had learned and they were anxious to go back to their group homes to implement the program. They were extremely grateful for the opportunity for the training, and are really supportive of OJJ having a model that provides for consistent services all over the state. The participants were very complimentary of our trainers, **Staff Development Director Fran Martin, Program Manager Nancy Gautreau, Program Manager Arlona Morgan** and **Jetson LaMod Coordinator Faoud Harb**.

In addition to those activities, we also had a tabletop exercise on hurricane preparedness conducted by **Asst. Secretary Dr. Girard Melancon** and **Deputy Assistant Secretary/Facilities Philippe Magloire**. The exercise involved staff from central office, the facilities and the regional offices. The purpose was to assess our readiness for a hurricane and to identify any gaps we might need to work on. Hopefully we will not have to put our plans to use, but we are well-served by being prepared.

Of course that gives me another opportunity to encourage our staff to be personally prepared and have a plan for our families in case of an emergency. Now is the time when prices are not outrageous to think about stocking up on the items we would need in case of a hurricane – batteries (lots of batteries), water, staple goods including canned tuna, charcoal for our grills. We need to start emptying our freezers, too – don't put food into the freezer, it's time to deplete our freezer stock. I just hate to have to clean out a freezer and throw away food because the power has been out for several days.

The Fourth of July is almost here – Independence Day. I'm sure it is by design that we celebrate Memorial Day in May, to honor our men and women in the service who gave the ultimate sacrifice so the rest of us can enjoy our freedom, and it's only natural that Independence Day follows, when we celebrate the fact that we can enjoy the freedoms for which our service men and women gave their all. We Americans do enjoy more freedoms than people in many other countries.

At this time of year, I enjoy more than ever seeing the showing of the flag. In fact, I just went out and bought a new flag for the house. This is the time to show our appreciation for our freedom – if you have a flag, now is the time to fly it.

As you celebrate this weekend, please be sure to cook your hamburgers all the way through, so you don't get a case of e.coli. We hope it won't rain on our outdoor plans, although H. Alex may have something to say about that. This was my weekend to play golf, but I have a feeling I probably won't be able to get out on the fairway this weekend.

I know some of you will be working this weekend, and you will help our youth have a good holiday, complete with good food and activities that celebrate our freedom and independence. For that I thank you, and to every one of you in every OJJ location, thanks for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc"

Dr. Mary Livers

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