

Echols and Brooks counties. Still, generally, the ability to provide transportation is a huge factor in the success of each juvenile.

These juveniles are generally aged 15 to 16 and referred for some type of offense involving substances. The program will accept 14 to 17-year-olds – however, a 17 y/o will have difficulty completing the program due to time. Most of the juveniles are in an alternative academic setting. These settings frequently occur in the afternoon and evening. The court finds that many of these juveniles need assistance they are not receiving at the school. Sometimes, once the students reach the alternative school, some never leave. The court expects to serve 10 to 15 juveniles from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024.

NEEDS STATEMENT

The Lowndes County Juvenile Accountability Court has participants frequently placed in what most people consider unacceptable circumstances. The home environments are often unclean, unsupervised, unsafe, and un-nurturing. The program and the court have explored different options for addressing these challenges.

The new program already provides juveniles living in very challenging environments a safe place. This is a huge need specifically for this program but also more largely. The program has run out of options with some participants considering their home lives and other challenges. Having a place where the youth can go and feel safe and respected is critical. This money will allow that to happen.

PROJECT GOALS

- 1. Serve 15 juveniles from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024.**

The services provided by the Mental Wealth Center will help juveniles in the court program improve grades, be gainfully employed when they would otherwise be unsupervised at home or in the community, and develop new skills and opportunities for experiential learning.

- 2. Create a plan for each juvenile to return to a regular school setting.**

The juveniles will identify the factors keeping them from returning to school and develop a plan to correct them.

- 3. Provide alternative pathways when the student will not participate in school.**

The MWC can assist and/or refer juveniles to GED programs, Job Core programs, or other programs that might help the juvenile.

- 4. Increase participation.**

The center has increased participant participation. The juveniles state that they value the center and the staff. The parents and guardians became easier