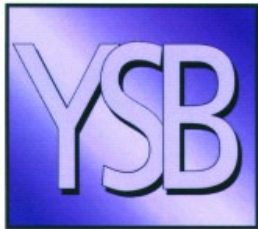


Youth Services Bureau
of Monroe County
615 S. Adams Street
Bloomington, IN 47403

www.youthservicesbureau.net



“Laying the Groundwork for
Building Positive Youth and
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YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU OF MONROE COUNTY

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Robin Donaldson

Assistant Director

Former National Safe Place Coordinator of the Year

Moves to National Safe Place Organization

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Good-byes are never easy and after twelve years, I am not leaving a job but a family. In April 1996, I began at Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County as a part-time counselor. Within two months, I was full-time and fresh out of graduate school. As a single mom who at the time had three young sons, I purposefully moved to Bloomington to raise my boys. I have not regretted a single moment of it. Bloomington has offered our family a wealth of warmth and experiences that have been invaluable and YSB has given me the chance to learn and grow, personally and professionally.

When we lost our home and belongings in a fire in 1999, the county was very accommodating and supportive. The community outpouring of support and help was overwhelming. My boys experienced firsthand, the amazing benefit of living in a caring and generous community. A tragedy became a blessing.

In Bloomington, I have watched my boys grow into fine young men, in no small part due to the experiences offered here: Star of Indiana band, Little League baseball, Cub Scouts, drama club and the wonderful foreign language programs offered in the MCCSC schools. My fourth and youngest son will have fond memories of his last summer in Bloomington and all the new things he saw and learned about at Kid YSB has also afforded my boys a chance to grow and participate in giving back to the community through participation in the Youth In Action youth group, volunteering at the Monroe County Fair, credit for a community-service class through school, and yes, even counseling.

It has been my employment at YSB that has led to the opportunity to pursue a career change to serve children at a national level. YSB is a host agency for the Safe Place Program of Monroe, Greene (and soon to be added Owen) Counties. Safe Place is an outreach program which partners with area businesses and other community organizations to provide youth with safe places to go and seek help regardless of where they are.

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615 S. ADAMS STREET BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47403 (812) 349-2506



Director's Report

By Ron Thompson, Executive Director

A new website, everychildmatters.org, is dedicated to making children a priority. Multiple data sources show the United States to rank poorly when compared to other wealthy nations when it comes to the treatment of children. Even more disconcerting is the fact that on a national scale, Indiana ranks in the bottom half of state rankings in most categories of child well-being.

How can we make children a higher priority? We do it by telling elected officials and policy makers that we care about our children. Time after time funding for children's programming is cut to fund another budget category. Historically, Departments of Correction have been funded at the expense of education.

In 2001, Congress was on the verge of passing a "Younger Americans Act" modeled after the Older Americans Act that provided programs and funding for seniors. The Younger Americans Act legislation was quickly shelved after 9-11-01. It was deemed that there would not be ample

funding for the legislation because of the cost of homeland security. Ironically, we are now engaged in a two front war at a cost of half a trillion dollars a year. No one questioned the cost prior to the initiation of hostilities. We don't have the money. The tab is just being credited to the national debt. Again it's a matter of priorities and children, especially our most vulnerable, don't rank very high.

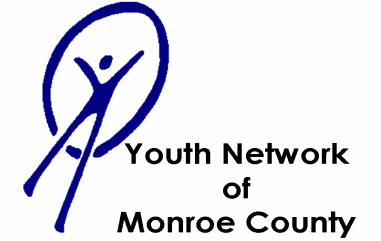
Everchildmatters.org has designated September 16, 2008 as "Every Child Matters Day." Youth advocates will assemble at their respective 50 statehouses and nationally renowned pediatrician, Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, will speak to the National Press Club about children's issues in collaboration with the event.

Your help is needed. When communicating to your elected officials, tell them that dealing with youth issues is more effective and less costly than waiting until adulthood. While prevention measures have proven their worthiness time and time again, government often deals with crisis management and the squeaky wheel.



Brittany Todd

Youth Network Coordinator



Hello! I'm Brittany Todd the new Youth Network Coordinator. I'd like to introduce myself with some information to get to know me. First off, I grew up in Brown County, Indiana. After high school, I went to Earlham College where I played basketball and studied abroad in London, England. Upon graduation, I got my degree in Business and Non-Profit Management. Throughout college, I was quite active in the community. I worked with youth through various capacities including; the Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, Girls Inc., along with coaching, refereeing, and volunteering.

After college, I worked for the Cleveland Cavaliers coordinating events and activities for youth. The following two years I handled philanthropic outreach in Michigan. And then most recently, I've returned from teaching English to youth in South Korea with my fiancé. Also, my fiancé and I've recently settled into a cute home and are planning a wedding. I will soon be Brittany Armstrong.

I'm thrilled to be back in Bloomington and can't wait to get involved in this community!

I am especially excited to meet and work with the wonderful youth who make up this great town.

"Building trust is a process, not an event; time is the key. Simply caring about a child is all that it takes to start. Listening, regular time together, playing with, validating, respecting, and empowering a youngster will build a positive connection, for children don't care about how much adults know until they know how much adults care."

