

SHERIFF'S OFFICE
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Brown County

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JOHN R. GOSSAGE
SHERIFF

CAPT. LARRY D. MALCOMSON
JAIL ADMINISTRATOR

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to show my gratitude to Harry Sydney and the "My Brother's Keeper" Program. The Brown County Juvenile Detention Center has partnered with Harry Sydney to provide programming to the at risk youth in our facility. In writing this letter, I am hopeful to show my appreciation to Harry Sydney for presenting this program to our facility free of charge every week for the past several years and to explain why I believe My Brother's Keeper is an important and effective program in the Brown County Juvenile Detention Center.

During my career I have had the luxury of seeing firsthand that our facility is committed to providing inmate programs which lead to personal growth, rehabilitation, and reintegration into the community. I live, work, and raise a family in Brown County so it is extremely important to me that every juvenile released from our custody is in a better position to succeed than they were when they arrived. I believe Harry Sydney shares these values and has helped our facility towards achieving its' mission. My Brother's Keeper teaches youth about community values and the importance of positive contributions to the community. The program encourages them to be active and help the community in many ways, such as participating in community service projects. I fully understand these teachings and am hopeful this message is well received and can help these juveniles build toward a better future and create a stronger community.

One component of My Brother's Keeper which I really value is, the program has a sound vision and outlined objectives which seem to help all juveniles strive towards a common goal. That being said, the program and Harry Sydney also offer tremendous flexibility and the ability to adapt and tailor lessons to the needs and moods of juveniles attending at any given time. I feel My Brother's Keeper has educated juveniles on the effects of their decisions and has given them tools to make better, more informed choices.

The group forum sessions held at the detention center deal with issues affecting the juveniles such as: drugs, alcohol, healthy relationships, decision making, goal setting, morals and values. The sessions aim to provide life skills necessary to proactively prevent delinquent behavior. In my opinion, these are important issues and deserve discussion. Furthermore, the issues addressed are issues most, if not all the juveniles we house struggle with daily. These group sessions encourage juveniles to be accountable for their decisions, make decisions ethically and honestly, reflect on course of action, and modify their behaviors to improve their lives and the lives of those around them.

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My Brother's Keeper attempts to teach juveniles how to better communicate, be more honest, develop traits of integrity, and become better problem solvers; all skills I feel help the juveniles develop a stronger self and greatly increase self-esteem. A Juvenile Detention Officer that I supervise stated, she noticed juveniles have been able to better relate to others, developed an increased understanding of others, and have become more respectful since attending programming. These are just some of the positive outcomes I believe the program has offered.

In addition to the group forum sessions which are held at the detention center, My Brother's Keeper also provides one on one mentoring services. I feel this service would be very beneficial to many of the youth who leave the Brown County Juvenile Detention Center. Unfortunately, many of the youth we serve have little to no positive influences and a mentor could be a life changing positive role model. I believe without positive role models and additional community resources it will be difficult for juveniles to continue moving in a positive, more productive direction.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope I have given you a better understanding of My Brother's Keeper and how important our partnership has been with Harry Sydney. I believe My Brother's Keeper strives to build youth with Integrity, Respect and Standards and the program has been a tremendous asset to our facility and to the communities in our area. If anyone has any further questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact me anytime.

Thank you,

Brian Laurent 03/07/14

Brian Laurent



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