



# Family Living

## An update on juvenile justice

BY MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Many Americans believe there is a rising wave of youth crime in our country. But contrary to popular perception, youth crime and violence are actually declining. More than nine out of 10 of the children involved in the juvenile justice system are nonviolent offenders, and the majority of juvenile crime involves property offenses: arson, burglary, car theft, and larceny. About seven percent of youths in the juvenile justice system are serious, habitual violent offenders who pose a real threat to their communities, but there has been a 30 percent drop in the arrest rate for juvenile violent crime since 1994. Despite the good news, Black children continue to be overrepresented in all aspects of juvenile crime.

A report from the U.S. Department of Justice found one-quarter of all reported murders of juveniles in 1997 occurred in just five counties: the counties containing Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and Detroit. It also found 25 percent of all identified juvenile murderers in the country in 1997 came from one of eight counties: the counties containing Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, New York, Baltimore, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Dallas. This shows a large number of the youths who are murder victims and who commit murder are concentrated in a very few places in our country—places where many Black children live. Black youths across all age groups are far more likely to be victims of violent crimes than their White counterparts. When children who have committed crimes enter the juvenile justice system, minority youths are overrepresented at every step. They are more likely to be stopped, questioned, arrested, jailed, sent to court, convicted, and given harsher sentences than White youths. The same Department of Justice report found minorities made up just 34 percent of the youth population, but 67 percent of the youths committed to public facilities.

This disproportionate minority confinement is worst of all for Black youths who are held in residential facilities at five times the rate as White youths. They are more than twice as likely as White youths to be held in a detention facility for similar offenses and are held an average of two weeks longer than White youths who committed the same crimes.

Violent youth crime peaks between 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. Every community needs the resources to provide after-school and summer programs which give children positive opportunities during the hours they are not at school. Job training programs help youths get a foothold in the job market and reduce the odds of their involvement in crime and other risky behaviors. The Department of Justice report found that one youth leaving high school for a life of crime and drug abuse costs taxpayers approximately two million dollars. Imagine what kinds of positive alternatives for young people could be funded with the same amount? Despite proven results America still puts far more money into prisons than prevention programs. We need to reverse these priorities and invest in children before they get into trouble.

Above all, we need to invest in children by making them feel connected to parents and other caring adult mentors. Young people need these critical connections to have a sense of value and purpose. When they are connected to their schools and families they are less likely to have their futures cut short by risky behavior and bad choices, and much more likely to choose safe and positive paths for their own lives and contribute to a healthy, safe community.

## UPE Club celebrates annual banquet



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The Union Pacific Employee Club celebrated its annual banquet at the Lloyd Center Double Tree last week from August 8 to the 11.

The program was hosted by Nine the local Portland Chapter.

Louise Waters, club Nine President welcomed 500 people from 13 states.

On Tuesday, August 8 they raised more than \$5,000 in an auction for Portland Charities. The money will go to the Make A Wish Foundation, The Shriners' and Breast Cancer research. Next years banquet will be held in Denver, Colorado.

## Reverse mortgage linked to LTC Care Insurance

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In an effort to assist homeowners to purchase long-term care insurance plans, Congressman John J. LaFalce, D-N.Y. has authored legislation that would reduce the cost of financing U.S. government-insured reverse mortgage, while concurrently saving Medicaid funds from being eroded unnecessarily. As part of the "American Home Ownership and Economic Opportunity Act" (H.R. 1776), the bill was unanimously passed by the House Banking Subcommittee on February 15, 2000. "Long-term care insurance can be an effective way to protect savings built up over a lifetime," LaFalce states, "and reverse mortgage allow seniors to access the equity in their home to pay the premium, with no monthly principal and interest due on such loans. Using a reverse mortgage to pay for long-term care insurance is a natural fit," LaFalce pointed out. The Federal Housing Administration's reverse mortgage

program enables homeowners age 62 and older the opportunity to turn their locked-up home equity into tax-free income while maintaining ownership and requiring no monthly repayment. Eligibility requirements are quite simple and do not impose any standards based on income, assets, credit or employment. By linking the reverse mortgage to long-term care insurance, homeowners can protect their saving against the potentially devastating expense of extend care.

## Summer concerts in Portland's parks

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What better way to enjoy these warm August evenings than by packing a picnic and attending one of the many free concerts taking place in parks throughout Portland! Lents Founders Day Celebration takes place in Lents Park, SE 92 & Holgate, on the weekend of August 12-13 with concerts featured on Saturday, 11:00 AM-3:00 PM, on the Farmer's Market Stage (honky tonk, country, and bluegrass) and the Boys & Girls Club Stage (blues and folk). On Sunday, 1:00-4:00 PM, neighborhood performers and the Providence Stage Band will perform in the gazebo.

A series of Tuesday evening concerts are taking place in Couch Park, NW 20 & Gilsan, 6:30-8:30 PM. August 8: Babes With Axes, August 15: Dancing Trees Marimba Band, and August 22: Mirage.

## Do We have to go Back to School Already ???

What: Wal-Mart the nation's leading retailer and a major back-to-school merchandiser, offers tips to parents about what's hot this year...and how to get your kids ready for the school year.

We have developed a number of feature items (including the tips below) for your audience about this traditional - and important - family matter!

Talk to your kids. Ask them what's cool. Encourage them to educate you on everything from toe socks to leopard print handbags.

Make shopping fun. Go with your kids and tie in lunch or a movie to enhance the experience.

Know your limitations. Check with your local school on dress codes.

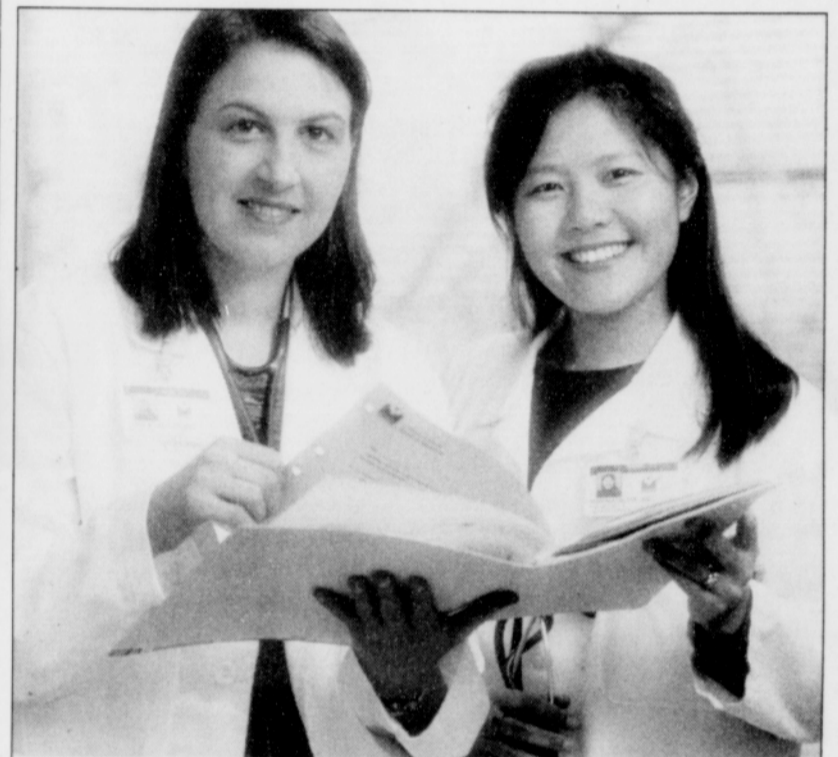
Even schools that require uniforms often allow some discretion. Use your family's time wisely. Some area stores, for example, feature hair styling and vision centers in addition to back-to-school clothing and school supplies.

Take comfort in the fact that some day your kids will be as clueless as you.

Who: Your local Wal-Mart store manager and /or Rob Phillips, senior manager for U.S. media relations for Wal-Mart Stores

When: At your earliest convenience.

Contact: Diane Brown at (201) 568-0662, or dbrownpr@aol.com



## If you're looking for a doctor, your search is over

Legacy Clinic Northeast welcomes two new primary care physicians, Lisa Alberts, M.D. (left), and Robina Wong, M.D. Both doctors, trained internists, are accepting new patients and join Sharadan Lisk, M.D., and Bernie Sperley, D.O., at the clinic. They welcome your call.

**Legacy Clinic Northeast**  
2800 N. Vancouver Avenue, Suite 231,  
Portland  
Hours are 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.,  
Monday through Friday

For appointments, call (503) 413-4134  
[www.legacyhealth.org](http://www.legacyhealth.org)



Legacy Health System includes Emanuel Hospital & Health Center, Emanuel Children's Hospital, Good Samaritan Hospital & Medical Center, Meridian Park Hospital, Mount Hood Medical Center, Visiting Nurse Association, Legacy Clinics and CareMark/Managed HealthCare Northwest PPO. ©2000

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