



HELPING AMERICA'S YOUTH NEWS FLASH

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FEBRUARY 2008

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Helping America's Youth is a nationwide effort, led by Mrs. Laura Bush, to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school and community.

6th Regional Conference in Portland, OR

Mrs. Laura Bush will host the 6th Regional Conference on *Helping America's Youth* in Portland, Oregon on February 27-28, 2008. This conference will convene individuals and youth-serving organizations from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii and Alaska. You can view the webcast of the conference live on Thursday, February 28 at 8:30 a.m., PST. To watch the conference, visit *Helping America's Youth* online at <http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov/>.



A Caring Adult in Action

When Anthony and Anita McFarlane came to the United States from Trinidad and Tobago in 1992, they brought with them their love of the steel drums. In 1999, the McFarlanes founded Pan in the Community, Inc., home of St. Veronicas Youth Steel Orchestra. Pan in the Community was formed to give young people a creative outlet and means of developing their musical ability through teaching them to play steel drums (called "pans"). Through Pan in the Community, students are given the opportunity to redirect negative behaviors and focus on something positive. Program participants are expected to be dedicated, disciplined, sociable, attentive, responsible, well-mannered courteous – and to maintain good grades. Students are not only taught how to play the steel drums but also taught important social skills to help them lead healthier and more successful lives.

Pan in the Community, Inc. caters to young people from the various backgrounds, including the youth from high risk communities. Parent and community involvement also acts as a stabilizing factor in the lives of these young people. Their self-confidence and the ability to work with their peers will be developed as they begin to perform in the public. Participants who uphold program requirements and display an interest in performing are offered the opportunity to do so a part of the St. Veronicas Youth Steel Orchestra.

St. Veronicas Youth Steel Orchestra performed at the White House on February 7, 2008 during the signing of the Executive Order on Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs and a celebration of three years of the *Helping America's Youth initiative*.

Executive Order on Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs



On February 7, 2008, President Bush signed an Executive Order on Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs. The Executive Order establishes an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs. The working group, continues an important and productive collaboration between the youth-serving agencies in our government to encourage community efforts to care for and connect with America's young people.

Through the Executive Order, the online Community Guide to Helping America's

Youth will be expanded, and a new federal website will be developed to better equip individuals and communities interested in reaching young people. The establishment of the working group will ensure that communities seeking to take action will have resources needed to implement their plans and help them succeed. To read the Executive Order on Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs, please visit <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/02/20080207-15.html>.



-All photos by White House photographers-

HELPING AMERICA'S YOUTH INITIATIVE PARTNERS

