

Reality Check program participants get added incentive

BY R. NORMAN MOODY • FLORIDA TODAY • DECEMBER 9, 2008

MELBOURNE — The Brevard County Juvenile Court system is approving eight community service hours for all participants who complete Brevard County's Reality Check Program.

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In addition, many college-bound high school students are taking advantage of this program to reach their 75 hours of community service required for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Reality Check Program lets teens and young adults see the consequences of bad choices and illegal activity.

"I'm not their father, mother, teacher, counselor, or the police. I am an ex-con and paralegal who doesn't sugarcoat it. They understand and listen to someone who has been there. I tell them the reality of going down the wrong path," said Lawrence Lawton, founder of the program.

Lawton was convicted of racketeering in connection with jewelry robberies and spent 11 years in federal prisons. He founded the Reality Check Program after being released. His three-hour program gives participants a glimpse into prison life; encourages participants to stay on the straight and narrow, addresses respect issues, and making good choices in all their actions.

The program will be held Jan. 10 at the Primerica Office (next to the Driver's License Bureau) 3542 Harbor City Blvd., Melbourne, from noon to 3p.m. The cost is \$50 per participant and all attendees must pre-register.

To learn more about the Reality Check Program or register for the January 10th class, go to www.RealityCheckProgram.org or call Vivian Fountaine, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 327-2921.