

ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR  
MICHIGAN'S GIRLS &  
YOUNG WOMEN  
*It Could Be Anybody's Daughter*



A Five-Year Strategic Plan  
Prepared by: The Michigan Gender Specific Task Force

## FOREWORD

Due to the alarming disproportionate rate of females entering the state juvenile justice system and a federal mandate, a task force comprised of volunteers from private, public, and community organizations was established in 2000. This task force continues to develop, coordinate, and advocate for gender specific programming for females within the Juvenile Justice System.

Michigan, along with the rest of the nation, struggles to provide appropriate and effective treatment to its female juvenile offenders. The successful treatment of this population, one many practitioners believe poses little threat to public safety, requires a two pronged approach. First, public perceptions about females under juvenile justice supervision must be changed. A difficult task at best, however the shifting of fundamental belief systems is a critical starting point. And in tandem with this, appropriate gender specific programming must be put into place.

Currently, females comprise approximately 30\* percent of the total youth arrests of index crimes within the state. Females are entering the system at greater percentages, younger ages and for more serious crimes. As female involvement in delinquent behavior rises, the appropriate treatment for them is of increasing interest to policy makers, practitioners, and the public.

\* Source: 2001 Uniform Crime Report, Michigan State Police