

RITE NOW @ ROP



What started out as a fun idea and activity for my students turned into a mission, and the students assigned to Eagles at the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center (AJATC) created “The Knowledge Tree.”

This tree is a place where each student processing through Assessment can leave a little piece of encouragement behind. Most new students processing through are afraid, apprehensive and unaware of their next move, so that’s where the leaves come in. Each leaf on the “Knowledge Tree” represents an encouraging word or inspirational quote with the student or staff’s name and date on the leaf. Ms. Tammy Johnson, the paraprofessional who works on the Eagles Unit, has created this tree to help students with their transition. She states, “to find my students drawn to this idea and excited to make a leaf is wonderful to see. The Assessment students work very hard maintaining their tree even if they are here a short time. It hopefully gives them back some solace, peace and a little bit of comfort while they are here.”

In addition, bean-bag chairs, books and magazines were added to create a cozy reading nook. This helps to encourage reading. Ms. Johnson states, “Now I can’t keep them away. It’s an amazing feeling when students finish their assignments and insists on reading quietly under the tree.”

Ms. Johnson adds, “Our motto is “ Improving the Lives of Youth”. We must provide safety for our students. I think our tree gives that and a little bit of Knowledge to take with them on their journey. Also leaving their mark behind for others.”
