

RITE NOW @ ROP



Providing opportunities for youth to develop job skills and explore potential career opportunities is an essential component of the Arkansas Juvenile Assessment and Treatment Center (AJTC) program. Recently, AJATC offered youth the opportunity to hone their cosmetology skills with a six-week braiding class taught by cosmetologist, Shaquita Smith. Ms. Smith has worked with AJATC for several years now, providing hair services to the girls in our program.

The hair braiding course consisted of weekly insightful topics such as life skills, hair care, behavioral expectations, mental health, self-care and more! In addition to learning the skill of hair braiding, the girls also learned about business topics including marketing their own braiding business, scheduling clients, and even how to deal with difficult clients. Ms. Smith stated, "I shared my experience of the relationship between stylist and client and the expectations. Leadership styles were taught and broken down by levels. Braids were woven with historical context and intellectual conversations were birthed. We discussed how to reach goals and achieve success as an entrepreneur through hard work, determination and faith."

On July 20th, the course participants graduated from the braiding program after demonstrating their knowledge and impressive new skills. Ms. Smith added, "With this group of girls, the relatability in me allowed them to be open, honest, and vulnerable. Gifting them with a graduation ceremony was an honor and opportunity to birth new chances at the life that they each deserve."
