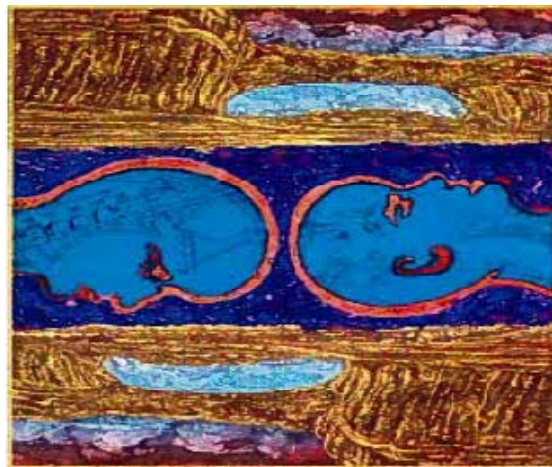




# **Texas Summit on Mental Health & Juvenile Justice**



**January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010**



Special thanks to the students of Travis County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP), Chief Estela Medina, and her staff for providing the following artwork and poetry.

## criminal

We are not criminals but in your eyes we are,  
because of the shirt you see us wearing when  
we step on the bus in the morning.  
Just because of a bad choice we made in  
school or  
on the streets  
you see us as people who are  
not good at making choices of their own  
just to fit in a group and get recognized.  
But you don't know me or what kind of person  
I really am,  
but no  
just because you see me in these blue jean  
pants  
and this jjaep shirt  
you see me as a CRIMINAL.

~ Joseph B. & Anthony G.



*Alone At All Times*  
*- Justin D.*

*I am all alone.*  
*I don't know what to do,*  
*I don't have anybody,*  
*and I need somebody to be there for me.*

*I like to have friends,*  
*but I don't have anybody there with me.*  
*I don't have any friends*  
*and nobody is here with me.*

*I like my family*  
*but they're never there for me.*  
*I always feel like I am alone.*  
*I don't have anybody with me all day long.*

## *The Truth about Me is...*

*That I want more, I need more.  
I need to feel one with everything around me,  
spiritually and physically one.  
I'm so far from the end, so close to the end.  
I'm a child.*

*I strive for control of this machine.  
I strive to unleash the monster inside of me.  
I strive for fear of vanity, I hide for fear of insanity.  
The world is spinning too slow.  
My life is spinning too fast.  
I found myself.  
I found that I am lost.  
I found that I'm a balloon being - transparent.  
The truth about me is that I'm scared.*

*-Devin*

## Dreams

I have these dreams, to do better things.  
But when everyone's just pulling me down and telling me I can't do it,  
all I have are those dreams.  
Getting out of this mess,  
graduating,  
going to college,  
having a career,  
being successful.  
Those are my dreams.  
But do I really want that, or is that just what my parents want.  
I mean yeah,  
I want to be successful and go to college,  
But do I want to do it for me, or just to prove them wrong.  
I know I need to do it for me,  
but all I can think about  
is proving them wrong.

- Rcss



**pain**

**Is it just in your head or your  
heart?**

**Maybe it's the feel of it when it  
touches**

**your flesh**

**Pain is everywhere we go**

**Everything we do**

**All day long pain is around you**

**Not just physically but**

**Emotionally too**

**~Anthony**

# JUST COMPREHEND

By N. Bethea

I am from the great state of Texas  
Cities ranging from Austin, San Antonio, to H-Town  
Never a dull moment in my life  
I moved over eight times

You see, 'cause things appear different from the view of my eyes  
Raised by a single mother from the ages of six to sixteen  
Always on a struggle, strivin' to survive  
Now I am with my father, yet times seem a bit harder

Always too mature for my age  
Can't remember a time when I could just play  
Too concerned with the persistence of time  
Barely having time to relax and unwind

But the past is the past  
And it is what it is  
So don't be concerned with where I am from,  
Just comprehend...

...I know where I am going

# Many Thanks to our Partners



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