

## Editorial: Truancy court ... tackling an intractable problem

By Staff Reports

Saturday, April 25, 2009

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It's an ongoing, uphill battle.

Still, it is a battle worth fighting.

It is reassuring to know someone is in the trenches with the best interests of our children at heart.

When participants in Collier County Truancy Court addressed the League of Women Voters the other day, there were gasps from the luncheon audience about the depth of the problem. When officials told league members that drugs are a culprit, the case of a sixth-grader was used as an example.

Another part of the presentation, about results, ought to bring gasps of a different kind — nearly a 50 percent success rate with further chronic school-skipping once parents get involved.

Their appearance in court and participation in counseling or punishment is part of the program.

We are impressed every time we hear about organized efforts to combat problems that seem so pervasive and rooted that it would be easier to shrug and walk away. We put separate courts for teen and drug offenders and those with mental illness in the same league. Participants are so dedicated and they work against such tall odds. The community's encouragement ought to be extended to them all.

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