

JCJC Empowered to Advise Judges Regarding Dependent Children

Governor Rendell signed SB 117(1466) into law on December 4, 2007 as Act 64 of 2007. This [legislation](#), which was sponsored by Senator Jay Costa of Allegheny County, transferred the enabling legislation of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) to Title 42 and expanded the duties of the JCJC to include advising juvenile court judges regarding the proper care and maintenance of dependent children. The legislation became effective immediately.

This legislation was developed to authorize the JCJC to work in partnership with the Supreme Court's new Office of Children and Families in the courts to achieve its goals related to improving the outcomes for children and families who come within the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania's juvenile courts in the context of child welfare proceedings. Justice Max Baer, who is spearheading this initiative for the Supreme Court, met with the JCJC to request our consideration of the concept for this legislation. The JCJC subsequently voted unanimously to support the concept, as an alternative to the creation of a wholly new advisory body by the Supreme Court.

Since its creation in 1959, the legislative mandate of the JCJC focused exclusively on delinquent children. Originally created within the former Department of Justice, the JCJC has been housed administratively within the Governor's Office of General Counsel (OGC) since the passage of the Commonwealth Attorneys Act in 1980. The existing authority of the JCJC to make grants to political subdivisions for the development and improvement of probation services for juveniles was also transferred to Title 42 by Act 64.

Conference Caucuses Offer Forum for Discussion

Participants at the 2007 *Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice* had an opportunity to join with colleagues from their areas of specialty within Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest.

Juvenile Court Judges and Juvenile Court Masters discussed a variety of issues including: teen courts and peer juries; termination of juvenile court supervision as it relates to the Juvenile Court Procedural Rules; payment of restitution and restitution programs; filing of judgments; issues relating to extending juvenile court jurisdiction beyond age 21; timeframes for hearings; transfers from criminal court; secure Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs); out-of-state placements; increased use of firearms by juveniles and related issues such as the collection of data regarding these offenses, education, availability of firearms, and programs; and alternatives to detention.

Over 30 **Chief Juvenile Probation Officers** and deputy chiefs spoke at length about Medical Assistance Realignment. For most of the larger counties, there was consensus that Medical Assistance (MA) realignment has been a fiscal success, saving county and state funds but not leading to any additional services for juvenile offenders. Some of the counties have experienced financial strain. There was discussion of an existing contingency fund available to counties. Concern was expressed regarding increased lengths of stay in detention for certain adjudicated delinquents due to the increased paperwork for medical necessity determinations. This is exacerbated in smaller counties because the evaluation services are not sufficient. Concern was voiced over pressure being applied to juvenile justice-oriented programs to become RTFs and that the reimbursement process has or will impinge on the dispositional-making function of juvenile court judges.

Concern was expressed about potential efforts to classify truancy as a delinquent act. There was consensus that rather than including truancy within the definition of a delinquent act, more emphasis should be placed on creating programs that address this issue. Finally, there was a need expressed for probation offices to hire or train staff who can effectively deal with a growing Hispanic population.

Juvenile probation supervisors discussed tech-

nology, training, safety and aftercare. There was a brief discussion regarding the use of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Restitution System (PaJCRS) and its availability to counties. There was interest in improving the utility of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS) for supervisory/administrative needs. Allegheny County has created a module within JCMS that addresses some of these needs and offered to share information on the module.

Discussion occurred regarding training for juvenile probation officers and the importance of new juvenile probation officers having related work experience and computer skills. At the conclusion of the caucus, a brief discussion occurred regarding the MacArthur Foundation and the work associated with the improvement of aftercare services.

Juvenile probation officers discussed the PaJCMS, MA realignment, mental health needs of juveniles, and training. One county reported difficulty with accessing the PaJCMS remotely; and some concern was expressed regarding the duplication of information into the case closing forms being collected by the PaJCMS and the National Center for Juvenile Justice.

MA realignment was discussed at length. In some counties, monthly treatment team meetings occur. Concern was expressed regarding increased lengths of stay in detention, and the timeliness of psychological evaluations. There was a consensus regarding the insufficient number of mental health providers. One county expressed a desire for an assessment instrument to assist in determining an appropriate level of supervision. Another expressed a need for training on how to integrate mental health services into the juvenile justice system. The Models for Change initiative was mentioned in this regard, as well as the training that has occurred in this area.

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This publication is produced monthly at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University.

Guest articles are always welcome; please submit them by email or on a disk. We particularly enjoy your photographs.

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Chiefs and Service Providers Meet at Annual Conference

On October 31, 2007, chief juvenile probation officers and service providers from across Pennsylvania held a forum at the Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice to discuss issues of mutual concern. This year's agenda included topics such as the need for specific types of services, funding of services and educational credit for juveniles placed outside of their home school district.

Philadelphia and Allegheny counties are participating in a joint initiative to develop an approved academic curriculum which includes vocational programming. The goal of the initiative is for youth who are returning home from placement to receive acceptable academic credit from their home school district for the work they completed while in placement. Chiefs and providers agreed that this is a critical piece to aftercare transition and re-entry.

Work continues on the competency development domains. The expectation for providers will be consistent planning, from admission through discharge from a placement, on continuum-based competency development domains. It was agreed that implementing this process may have to occur in segments that include addressing provider cost implications and existing balanced and restorative justice programming.

Allegheny and Philadelphia counties reported that Medical Assistance (MA) Realignment has not impacted the role of the judge during disposition. In Allegheny County, the court has a more involved role in mental health issues. In Philadelphia, there was concern that the lengths of stay in detention may increase but, thus far, there has not been a significant impact. Providers expressed concern about how MA Realignment will impact the long-term sustainability of programs.

The chiefs expressed a need for services for females. There was discussion about the statewide initiative on gender-responsive programming that involves the Department of Public Welfare, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, and the Female Services Subcommittee of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Providers are examining existing approaches to treating girls with post-traumatic stress disorder and developing trauma-informed care. Adequate and appropriate services for females are recognized as a necessary

area of improvement for Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system. Both the providers and chiefs appreciated the opportunity the forum provides to discuss broader systemic issues.

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One county mentioned that evidenced-based programs were recently initiated, and inquired how effective these programs have been in other counties. Another county mentioned the need for gender-responsive programming. The current initiative through the Department of Public Welfare and the Female Services Subcommittee of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to educate professionals about the need for these services was discussed.

As the caucus concluded, issues relating to staff safety, probation officer retention, statewide policy initiatives, and parent involvement were mentioned. It was recommended that training occur regarding sex offender identification and treatment, gangs and firearm recognition.

The **victim service providers** discussed compliance with the Bill of Rights for Victims of Juvenile Crime and strategic planning through the Victims Services Advisory Committee of the PCCD. Work continues with respect to how to best address non-compliance with the "bill of rights". The importance of information sharing and role clarification was also discussed.

Along with restitution, appropriate and timely reimbursement to the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund was discussed. It was suggested that a document be developed to clarify issues regarding the collection of restitution.

Discussion regarding victim impact statements centered on the need for juvenile justice professionals to understand the law and Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure regarding statements, including confidentiality. It was recommended that probation officers learn how to incorporate the statements into case plans, and that victims be made aware of how the statements are utilized. Victim advocates also expressed concern about "in-court apologies", that are not recognized as good practice as youth are often not prepared to make an appropriate apology.

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Westmoreland Celebrates 26TH Juvenile Court Week

By Adeline Beighley, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer



Each year during “Juvenile Justice Week”, many of Pennsylvania’s counties sponsor activities and programs designed to promote a greater understanding of the importance and complex responsibilities of our juvenile justice system. For the past 26 years, Westmoreland County has celebrated Juvenile Court Week. During the first week of October, middle school students from each of the 17 school districts, along with neighboring parochial schools in Westmoreland County, were invited to visit the juvenile detention facility for an educational experience regarding the functions of the juvenile court system. The tour, guided by probation officers and detention staff, was followed by a skit including a mock court proceeding. In addition, several inmates from the Greensburg State Correctional Institute spoke about the consequences of poor decision making. The local police department’s K-9 Unit also made a presentation.

Rather than the traditional poster contest, a challenge was issued for schools to become more involved by “Going M.A.D (MAKE A DIFFERENCE)”, by creating a Community Service Work Project. Many schools accepted the challenge. A prize of \$500, sponsored by “Outside In” School of Experiential Education, will be awarded the school with the most creative project. Each participating school will make a final presentation by early 2008.

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The need for impact of crime training for administrators of law enforcement agencies and providers was mentioned. The Adam Walsh legislation was discussed, and advocates agreed that it could have a negative impact on crime victims, given the registration requirements. Advocates believe that many of these crimes will go unreported, and that defense attorneys will limit plea bargaining in these cases.

Participants in the **prevention** caucus discussed a myriad of issues including the recommendations of the Governor’s Commission on Children and Families recommendations regarding delinquency prevention efforts. Participants agreed that there is a lack of attachment to community – kids don’t feel like they belong. There was consensus that Balanced and Restorative Justice principles are important in addressing this issue because they seek to build a sense of community through restorative practices.

Much of the discussion focused on community efforts to identify existing resources and where service gaps lie. Participants agreed that an individualized community plan must be developed as well as a means for information sharing among Communities that Care (CTC) sites. Many of the participants shared information about what is happening in their respective jurisdictions. One CTC site requires parents of students who want to attend the prom to attend a workshop. The regional Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) forums that were held to improve relations between police and youth were viewed as a good example of community efforts to address issues of delinquent behavior and substance abuse. Gangs and the definition of a “gang” was discussed. Even in smaller, rural counties, children are reporting they are part of a gang.

The need to engage youth in service learning was expressed, and it was suggested that it would be helpful to see or hear examples of youth programs in operation at future conferences. Some successful innovative programs mentioned were 25th Hour, SWOOP (Blair County), Monessen CTC Youth Council, and research-based programs that engage families along with the youth such as Strengthening Families and FAST. It was mentioned that there is new information on bullying prevention available from the Center for School and Communities. Many police departments have officers trained to assist parents with online safety, and the Pennsyl-

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JDCAP Hosts Conference

The Juvenile Detention Centers Association of Pennsylvania (JDCAP) held their annual conference October 3-5, 2007. The conference was held at the Nittany Lion Inn, State College and featured fifteen workshops on a range of topics including family engagement, youth sexual identity issues, behavioral management, trainer liability, child abuse reporting, internet safety and success strategies for working with girls.

During the Awards Banquet, the following individuals and detention centers were recognized for their outstanding service and achievement:

[Laura Kempton](#), Herbert A. Schaffner Youth Center, Dauphin County – Distinguished Service Award Within Juvenile Detention

[Sanford Krevsky](#), Senior Hearing Examiner, Dauphin County – Distinguished Service Award Outside Juvenile Detention

[Carrie Avery](#), Chester County Youth Center – Rookie Staff Person of the Year

[Elias Lee Herrera](#), Berks County Youth Center – Staff Person of the Year

[Barbara Galyean](#), Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center – Educator of the Year

[Nancy Stanley](#), Chester County Youth Center – Nurse of the Year

[“Undercover Book Club”](#), Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center – Program of the Year

[Charlie Mack’s Party 4 Peace Celebrity Weekend](#), Philadelphia Youth Study Center – Special Event of the Year

Amber M. of Berks County was the winner of the poster contest. As the winner, Amber received a one hundred dollar savings bond for her entry which was displayed on the cover of the conference booklet. The Ethel Beaver Children’s Fund was this year’s charity recipient. The fund, administered by the Centre County Children and Youth Advisory Committee, utilizes community donations to provide “extras” for children in the care of Children and Youth Services. Since 1996, the fund has been donating stuffed animals and toiletries to youth at the Central Counties Youth Center during the Christmas holiday.

Elections for the offices of Treasurer, Secretary and Training Chair also took place during the conference. The following are the newly elected officers:

[Jim Jones](#), Secretary (Central Counties Youth Center)

[Lee Ann Wright](#), Training Committee Chair (Berks County Youth Center)

[Wayne Bear](#), Treasurer (York County Youth Development Center)

In 2008, JDCAP will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary. The annual conference will be a joint conference with the National Partnership for Juvenile Services to be held October 5-8, 2008 at the Sheraton Station Square, Pittsburgh.

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vania Parental Information and Resource Center (PIRC) or PA-PIRC, has a website that serves as a resource center to link families to resources and information on No Child Left Behind.

The caucus ended with a discussion on funding. Sustainability continues to present significant challenges. Working with economically deprived communities and dwindling funding is an ever-present obstacle.

The caucus for **service providers** included over 40 participants. Restraint reduction dominated the discussion. It was reported that restraint reduction actions have had an impact on detention placements. Some facilities are now not accepting children who are at higher risk of restraint, which results in longer stays in secure detention. There remains concern that there is not a valid or accurate data base that accurately depicts the impact of restraint reduction. Programs are frustrated over the increased frequency of issuing provisional licenses for restraints, as well as not appropriately intervening in situations that escalate. There are concerns that information about aggressive kids may not be shared with facilities in order to ensure placement acceptance. It is hoped that better screening and assessment processes will occur to assist with proper placement recommendations.

There is a need for more training and money to develop and teach proper alternatives to restraints. It is necessary to identify “what TO do” and “what

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Juvenile Court Consultant Vacancies

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is seeking candidates to fill two full-time Juvenile Court Consultant positions in the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, Harrisburg, PA. One position will serve as the primary point of contact for juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers regarding Specialized Probation Services Programs and provide on-site monitoring and evaluations of Specialized Probation Services Programs to ensure compliance with relevant program standards. The second position will serve as the Director of the Graduate Education Program at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University. Both positions will provide on-going technical assistance to juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers regarding the implementation of balanced and restorative justice principles.

The minimum experience and training requirements for the positions are: Five years of experience as a juvenile probation officer and a master's degree in criminal justice, criminology, or the behavioral sciences.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania offers a comprehensive benefit package. The starting annual salary for the positions is \$45,438. Appointments above the starting rate may be considered and will be commensurate with the candidates' education, work experience, and salary history. These are Civil Service positions that require Pennsylvania residency. An eligible list will be established through the evaluation of job-related experience and training of qualified applicants by the Civil Service Commission, based on the submission of written application materials provided by the candidate on the civil service application and application supplement. You may complete your application and Application Supplement No. 2008-094-1 online at the [State Civil Service website](#) or you may submit your completed paper application and paper application supplement to: State Civil Service Commission (ATTN: Applications) P.O. Box 569, Harrisburg, PA 17108-0569, **postmarked by no later than February 15, 2008**. Please contact [Keith Snyder](#) at (717) 787-5634, for additional information.

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NOT TO do". It was recommended that programs and the Department of Public Welfare should work together to provide training on restraint alternatives and study and develop best practices to accomplish what amounts to a "culture shift". Facilities cannot change practice overnight or cannot do it without dollars to support this change. Private providers would like to see data from the state operated programs and how they are adjusting to the change. More attention is being given to identifying and training for staff on alternatives to restraint. There are concerns that a "bad restraint" will overshadow the many more positive outcomes from the same facility. Providers are fearful that the emphasis on restraint reduction will have a negative impact on staff recruitment and retention.

The need for secure RTFs was briefly discussed. Providers did not clearly understand what population they would be dealing with and, therefore, were reluctant to take on such program development. Staff retention, transfer of records and licensing issues were mentioned as concerns. Education issues were also discussed, including concern over attracting qualified teachers and developing best practices for education in facilities. The transfer of credits needs to be streamlined as well as communication with home schools.

Feedback from each of the caucuses indicated that professionals appreciated the opportunity to meet with colleagues and share information on what they encounter on a daily basis. A summary of the information collected will be reviewed by JCJC staff and the Executive Committee of the Pa. Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.

Do the Right Thing

By Kathy Peffer, Lower Dauphin Communities That Care

When the Lower Dauphin School District conducted surveys for its recent strategic plan, students were very clear that they don't feel they get enough recognition for positive behaviors. Those findings are backed up by the results of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey in which students report a lack of community rewards for prosocial involvement.

So when Hummelstown Borough Police Chief Charles Dowell was away at a conference last year, he heard about a youth recognition program in Miami, Fla. and thought it might work well in his southern Dauphin County community. Working in partnership with Lower Dauphin Communities That Care, a local, grass-roots prevention services provider, Chief Dowell's department introduced the first "Do the Right Thing" chapter in Pennsylvania.

The "Do the Right Thing" program seeks to recognize Lower Dauphin School District students who have distinguished themselves through their accomplishments, attitude or outstanding efforts. This program provides a way to recognize good deeds and reinforce exemplary behavior. The residents of the Lower Dauphin School District can see the many "good things" the young people of our community are doing, and that "good kids" are newsworthy, too.

Some examples that students may be nominated for are: keeping their school safe; being selfless by volunteering their time in our community or to charitable organizations; helping someone in need; improvement in school grades and behavior; overcoming personal challenges; or helping police solve a crime.

School staff members and police officers typically nominate students whose positive actions come to their attention, but any adult over the age of 18 can nominate a child. A volunteer committee reviews the student nominations on a monthly basis and selects a winner each month.

Local businesses have stepped up to the plate by sponsoring a month of this program for \$100. All nominees will receive a certificate and be recognized in the local media. Monthly winners receive a certificate, \$50 US Savings Bond, T-shirt and a small prize package. All of the monthly winners and their families are invited to attend an annual banquet in June to again recognize them for their efforts where an overall winner for the year will be announced and will receive additional prizes.

Lower Dauphin High School junior Tierney Haselhoff was recognized as the "Do The Right Thing" student for October. She was recognized for providing information to the police that resulted in the solving of a crime. In November, Lower Dauphin Middle School eighth-grader Courtney Keefer was recognized for turning in \$26 in cash that she found on a school bus.

If you would like information on how to start a "Do The Right Thing" chapter in your community, please contact Hummelstown Police Chief Chuck Dowell at (717) 566-2555 or Lower Dauphin Communities That Care Mobilizer Kathy Peffer at 566-6096.

CJIT&R Begins Web-based Registration

Beginning with the release of the Spring 2008 Staff Development Schedule, registration for Center-sponsored workshops will be streamlined and simplified. Upon visiting the [JCJC website](#) you will be able to click on training and be linked to the training calendar. You will be able to review descriptions of all 25 programs being offered next spring, access hotel information and register for training within the website. All registrations will need to be made using the website. You will be asked to enter your name (as you would like it to appear on your certificate), agency, and the e-mail address of the registrant and/or the training coordinator arranging the registration. While it may take a few minutes to become familiar with navigating the website, it is designed to be very user friendly. There will no longer be a need to download, complete, and return an Excel file.

Confirmations of your registration will be returned automatically, and you will be able to return to the website at any time to modify, cancel or add registrations as needed. Registration reminders will be automatically delivered. You will receive an e-mail alerting you when the Spring schedule has been posted on the JCJC website, and the printed booklet will follow.

Also, chief juvenile probation officers and/or departmental training coordinators are reminded that new juvenile probation officers should be registered for Orientation training once they begin their employment. Registrations will be accepted on a running basis rather than coinciding with the twice-a-year release of the new staff development schedules. By registering staff upon their hiring, you can simultaneously register them to take the Juvenile Act on-line component of Orientation, which is offered beginning on the second Monday of each month, rather than waiting for the live portion of the program. The live Orientation workshops will continue to be scheduled in February and late-August. The fee for the Juvenile Act distance learning course is included in the registration fee for the entire Orientation program. In order to be prepared for the Juvenile Act course, participants must also take the "On-line Learner's Orientation" course which begins every Monday throughout the year. Again, you can select dates for each of these on-line courses when you register for the next live Orientation program. Once a par-

ticipant is registered for the on-line segments, we will expect those officers to participate in the next scheduled live Orientation.

By registering early, you can arrange for new staff to complete this important training on the Juvenile Act within a month of their start date.

Programs That Work Featured

The December 2007 issue of the *Pennsylvania Child Adolescent Service System Program (PA CASSP) Newsletter*, features six evidence-based programs that are operating in Pennsylvania. Four of these programs are distinguished as Blueprints for Violence Prevention Model Programs at the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado. They include: Nurse-Family Partnership, Multisystemic Therapy, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care and Functional Family Therapy. Please visit the [PACASSP website](#) for more information.

