

## REGISTRATION FOR THE 2008 CONFERENCE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE IS NOW OPEN!

### JCJC Adopts Statement of Policy

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) has adopted a Statement of Policy which amended 37 Pa. Code Chapter 200, Subchapter I, "Standards Governing the Release of Information Contained in Juvenile Court Records and Reports", and created a new Subchapter K, "Standards Governing the Operation of a Juvenile Probation Merit System."

The [JCJC Statement of Policy](#) was published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on August 23, 2008 (37 Pa. B. 2517), and sets forth amendments to Subchapter I to ensure conformity with the modifications to Rules 160, 330, and 515 of the Pennsylvania Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure (Pa. R.J.C.P.). A definition for "clerk of courts" was included in §200.801 (relating to definitions) because Pa. R.J.C.P. Rules 330 and 515 require the clerk of courts to create a public document that provides limited public information pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. §6307(b)(1)(i) and (ii).

§200.804(a) (relating to public availability) was modified pursuant to Pa. R.J.C.P. 515 to require that the dispositional order entered following an adjudication of delinquency include a designation as to whether the case is eligible for limited public information pursuant to 42 Pa. C.S. §6307(b)(1)(i), and deleted references as to the specific information that is to be disclosed. §200.804(b) was created to specify information to be included in the public document created by the clerk of courts.

§200.804(c) contains provisions consistent with Pa. R.J.C.P. 330, to require that the petition include an averment as to whether the case is eligible for limited public information pursuant to 42 Pa. C.S. §6307(b)(1)(ii). §200.804(d) was created to specify the information contained in the public document created by the clerk of courts.

The JCJC "Standards Governing the Operation of a Juvenile Probation Merit System" are intended to provide guidance to juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers regarding equal employment opportunity policies, juvenile probation officer employment qualifications and juvenile probation department policies and procedures. All 67 county juvenile probation departments are required to comply with the Standards Governing the Operation of a Juvenile Probation Merit System, as a condition for participation in the Grant-In-Aid Program of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.

Please contact Lisa Freese at (717) 705-9003 or at [lfreese@state.pa.us](mailto:lfreese@state.pa.us) if you have any questions or desire additional information.

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## PA Sentencing Commission Adopts Guideline Revisions Governing Prior Record Score

The Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing has adopted revisions to the Sentencing Guidelines, which would amend 204 Pa. Code §§ 303.1-303.18. The [guideline revisions](#) were published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin (37 Pa. B. 2517) on September 6, 2008.

Prior juvenile adjudications of delinquency for the so-called “four point offenses” listed in § 303.7(a) of the Guidelines currently never “lapse” and are always included in the calculation of the Prior Record Score. The “four point offenses” include murder, attempted murder, and solicitation or conspiracy to commit murder; and any “crime of violence”, excluding the inchoates, as defined in 42 Pa. C.S. § 9714(g). However, all other adjudications of delinquency currently “lapse” and are not counted in the Prior Record Score calculation for a former juvenile offender if the offender is 28 years of age or older at the time of the offense for which he is to be sentenced.

The revisions to the Sentencing Guidelines would amend §303.6 (relating to Prior Record Score-prior juvenile adjudications) to require additional criteria in subsection (c) (relating to lapsing of juvenile adjudications). The revisions add a new requirement that the offender must remain crime-free during a ten-year period immediately preceding the offender’s 28th birthday. Included in the definition of crime-free is any summary offense and/or one misdemeanor offense with a statutory maximum of one year or less.

According to 42 Pa. C.S. §2155 (relating to publication of guidelines for sentencing), the General Assembly has 90 days from the date of the publication (September 6, 2008) to review the revisions to the Sentencing Guidelines. The revised Guidelines will become effective on Friday, December 5, 2008 and will apply to all offenses committed on or after that date, unless the revised Guidelines are rejected by concurrent resolution prior to that date.

## Missouri’s Division Of Youth Services Honored As Innovations In American Government Award Winner

[http://content.knowledgeplex.org/streams/ksg/AshInstitute/09.09.08\\_DYS.pdf](http://content.knowledgeplex.org/streams/ksg/AshInstitute/09.09.08_DYS.pdf)

Cambridge, Mass., – Sept. 9, 2008 – The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School today announced Missouri’s Division of Youth Services as the winner of the 2008 Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform. The Division of Youth Services of Missouri’s Department of Social Services serves youth offenders in small, dormitory settings and focuses on individualized and group treatment approaches. As one of the six government programs honored at tonight’s Innovations in American Government Awards gala in Washington, D.C., the Division of Youth Services will receive \$100,000 toward replication

and dissemination around the country.

Recognized as “the guiding light for reform in juvenile justice” by the American Youth Policy Forum, the Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS) forwards a promising new philosophy in treatment of youth offenders at its 42 locations across the state. Instead of the predominant punitive practices, DYS takes a therapeutic approach, viewing youth as a direct product of their experiences and capable of turning their lives around through a step by step change process. DYS youth participate in daily group meetings with 10 to 12 of their peers to talk through challenges and serve as positive role models for each other. Each young person receives individualized

educational assistance and participates in a host of volunteer and community engagement activities. For many DYS youth, such positive experiences carry enormous weight; often these are some of the very first accomplishments for which they can feel proud. In addition to youth served at DYS treatment centers, many are diverted from the juvenile justice system all together through community-based programs supported by the Division, while other low risk youth receive day treatment and family support while living at home.

Through ongoing group therapy, dedicated staff, relationships with the court system, and strong community support in the form of liaison

councils and neighborhood advisory boards, the program cites measurable results in halting the cycle of juvenile crime. Not only does the program note significant reductions in violence while youth are enrolled in DYS, over 90 percent of youth avoid further incarceration for three years or more after graduating from the program. According to studies of other states that count recidivism in a similar way, Missouri's nine percent rate is well below states such as Florida, Maryland, and Louisiana with new juvenile re-offense rates of 29 percent, 30 percent, and 45 percent respectively. Moreover, the program model enforces the importance of academic achievement and reports all time high graduation and GED rates: 90 percent of youth earn high school credits, 48 percent return to public schools, and 70 percent progress more rapidly than same-age peers in core subjects.

"Missouri's Division of Youth Services is leading the nation in developing more effective and humane responses to juvenile delinquency," said Douglas W. Nelson, president and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. "We are very pleased that DYS has been chosen as this year's Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform winner. The 'Missouri Model' demonstrates that improved treatment, education, and support is cost-effective, reduces recidivism rates, and most importantly, provides troubled youth with the opportunity to turn their lives around and become contributing members of their communities."

"It's an honor to receive the 2008 Annie E. Casey Innovations Award in Children and Family System Reform," said Tim Decker, director of

the Division of Youth Services. "Our system is based on the belief that the public interest is best served by helping young people turn their lives around and become law-abiding and productive citizens. Our treatment and education approach, combined with job preparation and family and community engagement to support the life changes they are making, gives us the system we have today. We are always working to achieve better outcomes."

"As states across the nation grapple with the most effective ways to rehabilitate and reform juvenile offenders, Missouri demonstrates a truly unique approach to halting the pernicious cycle of youth delinquency," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Awards Program at Harvard Kennedy School. "By offering youth and their families a community of support networks, these adolescents are able to succeed beyond what was ever deemed possible. In honoring this program, we hope other states will develop similar strategies for transforming offenders into productive citizens."

Since 1986, the Ash Institute's Innovations in American Government Award Program at Harvard Kennedy School has honored 187 federal, state, and local government agencies through Ford Foundation support. In highlighting exemplary models of government innovation, the Program drives continued progress in improving the quality of life of citizens and encourages scholarly research and teaching cases at Harvard University and institutions worldwide. Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas, and have

served as harbingers of today's reform strategies or as forerunners to state and federal legislation.

### **About the Annie E. Casey Foundation**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private charitable organization, whose primary mission is to foster public policies, human-service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org).

### **About the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation**

The Roy and Lila Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Institute fosters creative and effective government problem-solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world's citizens. Asia Programs, a school-wide initiative integrating Asia-related activities, joined the Ash Institute in July 2008. The Ford Foundation is a founding donor of the Institute. Additional information about the Ash Institute is available at [www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu](http://www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu). Applicants for the 2009 Innovations in American Government Awards are encouraged to apply at [www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu](http://www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu).

### **See Also:**

<http://www.youtube.com/AshInstitute>

## Monessen Communities That Care Inspires Youth Success

The Monessen Communities That Cares (CTC) Youth Council currently consists of approximately 35 students in grades 9-12 from the Monessen School District, eight of which are members of the Senior Class of 2008. These students have consistently attended Youth Council meetings and participated in most of the activities with the council. They have attended 4-H Leadership Development Conferences, provided peer education, learned and taught prevention strategies, visited job sites and involved themselves in career exploration with the Youth Council. Additionally, the group has gone to several local college/university campuses and attended forums and seminars.

Of the eight eligible graduates from the Youth Council, all eight have graduated; and all eight will be attending colleges, universities, or technical training schools for secondary education. Here are some of their stories:

- Abria Hariston, ranked third in her class and has obtained a full scholarship to Penn State University. She enjoys working within the community setting and wants to help other people to achieve their full potential. She will be the first person in her family to attend college.
- Youth Council President, Ryan McNeil, stated how Youth Council supported him during a traumatic loss in his life. He also stated the youth council gave him confidence to lead and speak publicly.
- Vice-President, Sha-Nikka Dickerson, cites CTC Youth Council as her motivation for wanting to work in the juvenile justice system to become a role model and provide guidance for youth.
- Secretary, Shayla Womack, would also like to be involved in the juvenile justice field and hopes to someday be a Juvenile Court Judge or become a lawyer or advocate for troubled youth.
- Youth Council Officer, Ashley Wall, learned that serving her community could be fun. She is attending one of the colleges that the Youth Council visited because she liked the campus' atmosphere and what they had to offer towards her life's goals.
- Brittany Scales was influenced by the council's visit to a local hospital. She will be attending a business school to get a degree to work in the medical field.
- Deana Hill says that CTC Youth Council has taught her to care for others and she wants to become a registered nurse or a nurse anaesthetist.

All of the students have discovered from their youth council experiences that advancing their education is a necessity for them to succeed and prosper. The Monessen CTC Advisory Board tries to support the students' efforts financially by helping them purchase books and by giving them a small scholarship of anywhere from \$250-\$500.

This year, a local business owner and CTC community partner graciously agreed to donate proceeds from an upcoming event to fund the scholarships for these students. Ms. Vonda Frezell, the owner and operator of "Sanctified Scissors Hair Salon" sponsored a hair show in August and donated the proceeds towards the scholarships for the Youth Council graduates.

## Bucks County Youth Center welcomes its New Director



Ted Rice moved from his position with the Montgomery County Youth Center as the Assistant Director to assume his new duties as Director of the Bucks County Youth Center on August 18, 2008. Ted has 14 years of experience in juvenile justice, and holds an MS in Administration of Justice from Shippensburg University. Ted's experiences in Montgomery County's juvenile justice system are varied and include having been a Juvenile Probation Officer, a Secure Detention Counselor, a Secure Detention Coordinator, and his recent position of Assistant Director.

# Assessing the Effectiveness of Juvenile Transfer Laws

Portions of this article are excerpts from OJJDP's August 2008 Juvenile Justice Bulletin

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has recently published "[Juvenile Transfer Laws: An Effective Deterrent to Delinquency?](#)" by Richard Redding. The [August 2008 Juvenile Justice Bulletin](#), a publication of the OJJDP, provides an overview of research on the deterrent effects of such transfers, focusing on OJJDP-funded studies on the effect of transfer laws on recidivism.

In an effort to strengthen the sanctions for serious juvenile crimes, a number of States have enacted laws increasing the types of offenders and offenses eligible for transfer from the juvenile court to the adult criminal court for trial and potential sentencing. These laws have lowered the minimum transfer age, increased the number of offenses eligible for transfer, and limited judicial discretion, while expanding prosecutorial discretion for transfers. Among the principal goals of such transfer laws are: 1) the deterrence of juvenile crime; and 2) a reduction in the rate of recidivism

The research is not conclusive regarding the general deterrent effect of transfers on juvenile crime and how many would-be offenders avoided potential delinquency because of existing transfer laws. While some studies of states with transfer laws indicate no reduction, or even a slight increase, in juvenile arrest rates, other similar studies do show a reduction in juvenile crime. The limited extant research falls far short of providing definitive conclusions; however, the bulk of the empirical evidence suggests that transfer laws, as currently implemented, probably have little general deterrent effect on would-be juvenile offenders.

As to the specific deterrent effect of transfer laws, the research clearly indicates that the practice of transferring juveniles for trial and sentencing in adult criminal court has produced the unintended effect of increasing recidivism, particularly in violent offenders, and thereby of promoting life-course criminality. For instance, one study found that:

- Overall, 49 percent of the transferred offenders reoffended, compared with 35 percent of the retained offenders.

- For violent offenses, 24 percent of the transferred offenders reoffended, compared with 16 percent of the retained offenders.
- For drug offenses, 11 percent of the transferred offenders reoffended, compared with 9 percent of the retained offenders.
- For property offenses, 14 percent of the transferred offenders reoffended, compared with 10 percent of the retained offenders.

Experts have identified several possible explanations for the higher recidivism rates of juvenile offenders tried in criminal court as compared to those adjudicated in juvenile court, among them are: 1) the stigmatization and other negative effects of labeling juveniles as convicted felons; 2) the sense of resentment and injustice juveniles feel about being tried and punished as adults; 3) the learning of criminal mores and behavior while incarcerated with adult offenders; and 4) the decreased focus on rehabilitation and family support in the adult system.

While much work remains in determining whether: 1) transfer differentially impacts recidivism as a function of offense type (violent offenses, property offenses, drug offenses), and 2) what features of the criminal justice system increase recidivism, this Bulletin is intended to inform public discussion and policy decisions on the transfer of juvenile offenders to adult criminal courts. The complete bulletin can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/220595.pdf>.



## Mediating an Appropriate Disposition

By: Jeremy Olson

Some 21 years after Albuquerque, victim-offender mediation programs have sprung up across the nation and have been met with high levels of success when implemented correctly. A new question has now come up; can we mediate offenders without victims?

Mediation is nothing more than a process where people get help identifying underlying reasons and behavioral patterns causing conflicts between them. Once identified, these underlying issues can be addressed and the conflict can be resolved. Mediation allows for the equal exploration of interests creating behavior and for the equal say in the resolution of the conflicts. It is not therapy, but can have therapeutic effects.

Pennsylvania has long held that many of the young people coming through our system are not in need of treatment, but rather need some form of building social and educational skill sets (Torbet and Thomas, 2005). Recent research has indicated that delinquent recidivism can be reduced by increasing the empathy and by decreasing the use of self-serving cognitive distortions within young offenders (Barriga, Sullivan-Cosetti and Gibbs, pending). Due to mediation being focused, when appropriately implemented, on truly individual needs, behaviors and interests, it can help uncover and change these self-serving cognitive distortions and, therefore, work to reduce recidivism while building social and educational skill sets.

One caution is important here the mediator should have some level of expertise in working with American teenagers. This is because, to be truly effective, the mediator has to be sure to target the world-view of the child and his or her family members in regards to offending behaviors. By focusing on these very specific tasks, the mediator can help ensure that the perceptions are changed and that new behaviors will come out in the future. This is an important distinction from therapy (Strasser and Randolph, 2004).

A final question to answer is; where in Juvenile Justice is mediation appropriate? Successful mediation, as proposed herein, would require the participation of the offender and his or her family. Therefore, it is suggested that the most appropriate dispositions to include mediation would be diversions, within Consent Decrees, as a condition to a probation term or as part of an aftercare plan.

Ultimately, if the offender can be worked with at home and is not prone to violence, mediation implemented by the right people is likely to help reduce recidivism.

Barriga, A.Q., Sullivan-Cosetti, M. and Gibbs, J.C. (pending publication). *Moral Cognitive Correlates of Empathy in Juvenile Delinquents*. Research conducted at Seton Hill University and Ohio State University.

Strasser, F. and Randolph, P. (2005). *Mediation: A Psychological Insight into Conflict Resolution*. Continuum: New York.

Torbet, P. and Thomas, D. (2005). *Advancing Competency Development: A White Paper for Pennsylvania*. Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice. Accessed July 31, 2008 at [www.jcjc.state.pa.us/jcjc/lib/jcjc/barj/comp\\_dev\\_white\\_paper.pdf](http://www.jcjc.state.pa.us/jcjc/lib/jcjc/barj/comp_dev_white_paper.pdf)

Jeremy Olson is a private practice mediator and former Juvenile Probation Officer. He served on the first DACUM Panel for Pennsylvania juvenile justice (1996) and is a graduate of the Shippensburg Master's Program (1997). Jeremy is on staff as an adjunct professor of psychology at Seton Hill University and can be reached at [olson@setonhill.edu](mailto:olson@setonhill.edu) or at (724) 875-0026.

## Classroom in Your Home Room

This article was reprinted from the Spring 2008 edition of **TechBeat**, the quarterly newsmagazine of the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center

*During the first day of a mandatory class on Pennsylvania's Juvenile Act for newly hired probation officers, the snow fell while road crews struggled to keep even the major routes open offices, businesses, and schools around Pennsylvania closed. But the class went on without a hitch.*

*The Pennsylvania Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R), sponsor of the class, had used the Community Corrections E-Learning Collaborative (CCELC) to revamp classroom instruction into online training. While a major snowstorm raged that wintry day in February of last year, many of the first students to take the revised class sat down at their home computers and prepared to learn.*

Originally funded by the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC)–Rocky Mountain, a program of the Office of Justice Programs' National Institute of Justice, CCELC is now independently operated by The Education Coalition, which has offered nationwide online e-learning opportunities to the corrections community since 2004. CJJT&R has tried to promote training courses to the corrections community, but with limited success. The Center decided it was time to push the online learning experience a step farther.

*"We needed a way to push the envelope... toward online learning," says Stephen Bishop, then Assistant Director of Training at CJJT&R. "We decided to take a piece out of our academy, put it online... in the hopes that the experience would make them more open to taking other courses on their own."*

Although Bishop says it may be too soon to tell if students are indeed moving on and taking other courses, he adds that CJJT&R has received plenty of positive feedback on the class and that scores on the final exam have been extremely high. The online course uses multiple media such as video, slides, and graphics, and spreads what would have been a full day of classroom training into 90-minute segments each day for a week.

"Adult learning works best if spread over time; learners can apply the content while they're learning, and they come up with more and better questions," says CCELC's Dr. Carla Lane, who played a key role in the course development.

CCELC provided national expertise in online course development, course conversion, and production of all course aspects, and trained and mentored the JCJC/CJJT&R facilitators in online teaching. The Center will maintain the course content on the Web and update and enhance it as needed. Lane hopes that the Pennsylvania experience will open the door for other states and agencies to request development of their own specialized training. Several states have made the national CCELC courses mandatory, but Pennsylvania was the first to request development of a course tailored to specific needs.

*"The Juvenile Act is a piece of legislation that can be dry in a classroom, but it lent itself well to going online because it is a straightforward piece of content," says Bishop. "I'm not sure what the next step is yet... but I hope it is the first of more to come."*

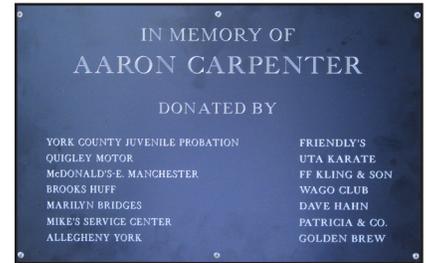
*Lane points out that putting a routine training program, such as this one, online can be a cost-effective alternative. "Agencies don't have to spend money for a hotel, for per diem, and there's no time lost out of the office. Putting basic courses online frees up funds to do advanced training face-to-face when it is needed." Bishop concurs, adding, "This is a great way to stretch those training dollars a little bit more."*

Also, he adds, this particular course contains information new hires need to learn immediately to do their jobs. Face-to-face sessions on the Act were offered only twice a year, opening up the possibility that an individual could be on the job for as long as 5 months before receiving an opportunity to take the class. With online offerings available monthly, now no one is on the job for more than a few weeks without an opportunity at taking the Juvenile Act training. The online class also often helps individuals improve their computer skills, which is an asset in other aspects of their jobs, Bishop says.

*"It's such a different way of doing things than traditional classroom teaching, but they're coming along really well," Lane says. "The great thing about online instruction is you... really can be in two places at one time."*

# “THE AARON CARPENTER PROJECT”

Written By - Heather Bupp-Crone, Melissa Adams and Chad Haas  
York County Juvenile Probation



Saddened and inspired by the sudden death of a 3 year-old boy, Aaron Carpenter, in a local York County community, a select group of York County Juvenile Probation Officers wanted to do something in his memory. After reading several newspaper articles referencing his love of trucks, juvenile probation officers went into action. They decided to place a wooden monster truck at a park in the town in which Aaron and his mother lived. After four months of seeking donations from local businesses and organizing various fundraisers, enough money was raised to purchase the monster truck and materials. On August 23, 2008, a dedication ceremony was held at the park. Family, probationers and local community members who assisted in the project were in attendance. Local businesses donated food for the event.

Heather Bupp-Crone stated, “Seeing everything come together as we had planned was rewarding and at the same time bittersweet. The family was very touched by the project and said they were pleased to have something nearby that would bring enjoyment to the other kids in the town as well as remind them of Aaron every time they



passed by it”. Very few words were exchanged that day but words weren't needed, the feelings and thoughts were understood and, momentarily, pain and loneliness were replaced with community and compassion. “This is just amazing that you guys did this for him and how the community came together brings comfort in knowing that other people are thinking of you and feeling for you in times of struggle”, Linda Myers, grandmother of Aaron Carpenter.



## Orientation Training for New Hires Can Begin Without Delay

Chiefs and supervisors are encouraged to arrange for newly hired juvenile probation officers, who missed the fall cycle of Orientation training, to register their staff for next spring's program as soon as possible. This will enable them to be scheduled to take the online Juvenile Act course right away, rather than waiting until December or January, with the live portion of the program beginning in February.



The one-week-long Juvenile Act course is scheduled to occur on the second Monday of every month. Officers must first complete the Online Learner's Orientation Program in one of the weeks preceding the Juvenile Act course. These mini-courses begin every Monday throughout the year. Registration for the online courses and the upcoming live training in February is one seamless process.

You may register new staff for Orientation by visiting here: [Spring Registration](#)

We urge you to arrange for them to complete this online course as soon as they have an e-mail address established.



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 e-mail or on a disk. We particularly enjoy your photographs.

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