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Annual Conference Commemorates the 100th Anniversary of the First Juvenile Court

Nearly 1,000 participants are expected to attend the 1999 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice which will take place November 3-5, at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers. The format of this year's conference has changed and expanded and the result is expected to be bigger and better than ever.

This year the conference will begin on Wednesday afternoon, November 3, 1999, with an important and historic discussion commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first juvenile court in Cook County, Illinois. A distinguished group of policymakers and practitioners from Pennsylvania and across the nation will offer their insights on the development, history, impact and future of juvenile courts in America. The discussion will take place in the Sunoco Theater at the brand new Whitaker Center for the Performing Arts, located next to the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers. Governor Tom Ridge has been invited to offer remarks to attendees at the opening session.

A reception hosted by the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile

Probation Officers will be held in the ballroom of the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers beginning at 9 p.m. It will provide a festive and informal setting for attendees to gather and renew professional acquaintances; light refreshments and entertainment by "Pentagon" will be featured.

Thursday morning at 9 a.m. the Opening General Session of the conference will begin. Shay Bilchik, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the United States Department of Justice, will offer opening remarks. At the conclusion of the welcome, attendees will convene in group caucuses. Individual sessions will be available for facilitated discussions for Juvenile Court Judges, Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, line probation officers, victim services providers, specialized probation officers, detention, and private- and public-residential program providers. Additional caucuses will be offered for other groups if a sufficient number register for the program. Each caucus will be led by a facilitator and a group recorder and will be highly interactive, intended to encourage

participants to speak out on issues of concern. Summary reports from each group's discussion will be prepared and made available at a later date.

The Youth Awards Program and Luncheon will begin at 11 a.m. in the Ballroom of the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers. Young people from within Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system will be recognized for their individual achievements. This program underscores the importance and impact of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system and the dedicated people working on behalf of thousands of young people. This year's special guest speaker is David Pelzer, a remarkable and dynamic man who travels the country speaking out on behalf of young people at risk. He should know, he was one. David Pelzer was at one time a client of the system. He has experienced a truly extraordinary life. As a child, he endured the horrors of child abuse, including physical torture, mental cruelty, and near starvation. Pelzer was a child who could have given up, destined for a life of delinquency and violence.

Instead, after being rescued at age 12, he was determined to better himself – no matter what the odds. A gifted author, speaker, and humorist, his unique accomplishments have been recognized in this country and throughout the world. In 1993, he was recognized by the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce as one of Ten Outstanding Young Americans, joining a select group of previous honorees including John F. Kennedy, Anne Bancroft, Walt Disney and Nelson Rockefeller. A year later, he was *the only American* to receive the Outstanding Young Persons of the World award, given by the Junior Chamber International at the World Congress in Kobe, Japan. Recognized as one of the nation's most effective and gifted communicators, his personal, emotional and inspirational message touches the hearts of audiences everywhere. A former juvenile probation officer, detention center counselor, and Air Force veteran who served in Operations Desert Storm, Desert Shield, and Just Cause, he has recently completed *The Lost Boy*, the second book in his planned trilogy. His first publication, *A Child Called 'It'*, was nominated for the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.

At the conclusion of the Youth Awards program, a unique and memorable production, "*A Centennial Remembrance 1899-1999*," will be presented on stage in the ballroom. The California-based *Raven Radio Theater of the Air* will present "To Be A Child's Friend", a specially written 'live' radio broadcast, circa 1935, that tells the story of Jane Addams as she looks back on the creation of the nation's first Juvenile Court in Cook County, Illinois. Performed on a sound stage by conference 'volunteers' with

period microphones and a variety of imaginative sound effects, this truly unforgettable performance takes the audience back to a time in American history when many issues were as relevant as they are today.

Thursday evening will feature the "Annual Awards Dinner and Program," honoring outstanding individuals and programs from Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system for their dedication and commitment to improving the lives of children. This annual tribute honors those special people who have helped shape the lives of thousands of young people.

On Friday morning the 1999 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice will conclude with *Resource Day - 1999*, offering participants an informal juvenile justice marketplace and providing an opportunity to meet with representatives from nearly 80 public and private residential service providers, informational services, and others whose products and services are available to improve juvenile justice in Pennsylvania. This year's Conference promises to be a truly memorable event.

Amy Zarefoss Joins Staff at CJJT&R

Amy Zarefoss recently joined the staff at CJJT&R as a Communities That Care Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator. She had been employed as a CTC Community Mobilizer in Somerset County; under her leadership the Somerset County CTC team received a state award for "Outstanding Plan for Leveraging Community Resources" at the 1998 Pennsylvania CTC Conference. Zarefoss also had seven years of experience with the Somerset County Children and Youth Agency.

A graduate of West Virginia University with a BS in Journalism, she received her MBA from Frostburg State University. Zarefoss has served on several local advisory boards, including the Somerset County Board of Family Services, the Cambria/Somerset Planned Parent Advisory Board and the Red Ribbon Week Committee. She will be working with Mike Kovacevic to coordinate statewide training and technical assistance activities related to CTC, and can be reached at 717-477-1149.

PERSEUS HOUSE, INC. Positions Available

Counselors, Counselor Assistants, and Case Manager positions for residential and non-residential programs for adolescents require a bachelor's degree in a human service field. Mental Health Therapist positions require a master's degree. Additional experience and training is helpful. Benefits include medical, prescription, dental, vision, vacation and sick days, holidays, and 401(K) plan.

Please submit resume or call for more information: Thomas McCalmont, Director of Administrative Operations Perseus House, Inc., United Business Center, 1946 West 25th Street, Erie, PA 16508

OCYF / JCJC Sponsor Four Regional ASFA Trainings

The Office of Children, Youth and Families and the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission recently sponsored a training program titled *"Pennsylvania's Implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act: Sharing the Responsibility."* The training, held in four locations across Pennsylvania, was attended by more than 500 people representing 66 Pennsylvania counties. Juvenile court judges, juvenile court masters, representatives from children and youth agencies and juvenile probation departments, guardian ad litem, solicitors, parent attorneys, court appointed special advocates, and others came to Valley Forge, Harrisburg, Clarks Summit and Pittsburgh.

Each of the four programs began with opening remarks from OCYF Deputy Secretary Jo Ann Lawer and JCJC Executive

Director James Anderson. The Honorable Isaac S. Garb also presented opening remarks on behalf of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission at the Clarks Summit training. Opening remarks were followed by a panel discussion that included juvenile court judges, children and youth administrators, county solicitors, guardian ad litem, and parent attorneys. The panelists discussed how the changes in Pennsylvania law have affected their jurisdictions.

Mimi Laver, who represented the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, then compared the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act to Pennsylvania's implementation efforts, including the Juvenile Act amendments that brought Pennsylvania into compliance with the federal law. The audience had the opportunity to raise implementation issues which

Laver addressed from her knowledge of Pennsylvania law and her national perspective on the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act.

During a working lunch, participants were seated by discipline and asked to identify important issues and the assistance that is needed to enhance implementation efforts. Lucy Johnston-Walsh, representing the Pennsylvania Bar Association and Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, then facilitated the reporting out of this information by discipline.

Participants returned to their county teams after lunch and were asked to complete an action plan, to identify local issues and steps that will be taken toward implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

Communities That Care National Conference in Hershey

General Colin L. Powell, USA (Retired) highlighted the annual Communities That Care National Conference in Hershey, October 24-26. General Powell was a special guest, along with Governor Tom Ridge, at a luncheon celebration October 25, which was attended by more than 400 representatives of Communities That Care Projects throughout the United States. The conference, sponsored by the Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children, Developmental Research and Programs of Seattle, WA, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the Center for Juvenile

Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University celebrated the accomplishments of Communities That Care projects nationwide and in Pennsylvania.

General Powell is the author of a best-selling autobiography *My American Journey*, which traces his life from his birth to Jamaican immigrant parents in Harlem to his advisory roles in the Reagan, Bush and Clinton administrations. He is the recipient of numerous U.S. military awards and decorations, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal,

Legion of Merit, Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart. General Powell has also received many civilian awards, which include two Presidential Medals of Freedom, the Presidential Citizen's Medal, and the Secretary of Energy Distinguished Service Medal. He has also been awarded honorary knighthood bestowed by H.M. Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain. Gen. Powell chaired the Presidents' Summit for America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth in 1997. This national movement is aimed at increasing positive youth development support for all children.

The event also recognized outstanding CTC programs, projects and volunteers. National Award Winners were: Outstanding Youth Involvement, Las Vegas Communities That Care, Las Vegas, NM; Best Use of Technology for Effective Prevention, 19th Judicial District Community Planning Team, Winfield, KS; Successful Resource Acquisition, Cumberland County Communicare, Inc., Fayetteville, NC; Best Plan Implementation, LINKS, Scotsdale, AZ; Best Co-Collaboration, Philadelphia's Communities That Care, Philadelphia, PA; Best Co-Collaboration, Shared Services Network Executive Round Table, St. Lucie, FL.

A separate luncheon honoring Pennsylvania CTC projects was held October 26. Pennsylvania winners were:

Erie County— Long Term Key Leader Involvement. In Erie County, an unprecedented level of collaboration on behalf of children has emerged. This collaboration includes the county government, the courts, the school district, private providers and citizens. Early indications are that the collaboration is very successful at providing more integrated, more effective and often, less expensive services to the children and families in the county.

In 1994, Erie County created the Erie County Prevention Policy Board. In 1995, the board was expanded to be called the Erie County Policy and Planning Council for Children and Families. It received the sanction of the Erie County Council to promote collaborative planning and outcome-based management of preventive services to children and youth in the community. The

Council is dedicated to improving the well-being of children and families in Erie County by broadening input into the planning process, through careful policy analysis, cross-system planning, and the use of a data-based planning model which reviews both risk factors and outcomes. The council has adopted a more holistic and less fragmented approach to service provision.

McKean County—Authentic Youth Involvement. Since the summer of 1997, the Port Allegheny Family Center has had active participation from teens. They formed a teen council starting with five members that has grown to fifty in the past two years. These teens work hard to achieve the Communities That Care action plan. They helped develop the CTC vision to create a safe and positive environment where the future adults and families will be healthy, educated, self sufficient, responsible, compassionate and community minded.

The Port Allegheny teen council is very active in the McKean County tobacco coalition. They attended the Northwest Regional Youth Tobacco Prevention Conference and in the "Do the Right Thing" Rally held in Harrisburg sponsored by the American Cancer Society. They have also worked with the State Health Department doing Snyder Compliance Checks.

The youth have a great respect for the community and they have earned that respect in return. The group strives very hard to make a difference in the community and to peers-- not just of their own age, but to younger children, as well.

McKean County—Outcome Based Planning. Since 1996 under the Family Service System Reform Initiative, McKean County has

coordinated prevention planning and implementation under a countywide collaborative board. In 1998 when the Communities that Care Initiative began, CTC and FSSR outcome planning merged in order to reduce fragmentation and help board members focus on a common approach.

Four goal areas are highlighted in McKean County's Community Prevention Plan: Stable Families, Healthy Children, School Success and Safe Communities. Currently the Collaborative Board is coordinating several initiatives that impact these goals: CTC, Family Centers, Family Service System Reform, the Governor's Partnership for Community Building, Head Start State Collaboration Project and Abstinence Education and Related Services. "Begin with the end in mind" is a motto coined through CTC and adopted in McKean County.

Community Plan to Leverage Resources—Delaware County Although no longer receiving direct support through state CTC funds, the CTC Network has successfully leveraged more than \$300,000 in middle school programs. A city-wide middle school band program, a peer pressure response program, a swimming certification program and a martial arts development program serving more than 700 children have resulted in the removal of over 9,000 hours of unsupervised after-school time from the streets of Chester. Promising Approaches like Families and Students Together (FAST) program sponsored through Network member Family and Community Services and initiated through CTC have directly addressed risk factors such as Family Manage-

ment problems with the added benefit of increasing the involvement of parents in the schools. Monthly CTC meetings continue to draw new agencies and organizations into the Network, including visitors from neighboring communities about to embark on the Communities That Care Model for their community members. Their ability to access schools and parents makes CTC the contact of choice in supporting and developing programs to benefit the school community.

Clearfield County—Community Plan to Leverage Resources.

Clearfield County became involved in Communities that Care in 1997. As a result, focus has been directed at prevention in terms of programs and services.

The two new programs developed are the Collaborative Approach to Reducing Delinquency (CARD) and Project S.U.C.C.E.S.S. The CARD program has created a collaborative delinquency prevention strategy and Project S.U.C.C.E.S.S. has created a coordinated network of Community Learning Centers.

The purpose of the programs is to facilitate the enhancement of positive skills and reduce anti-social behaviors in both the school and community. In addition to funding opportunities, the CTC process has increased prevention services to youth and obtained a strong commitment to collaboration among agencies. As a result, developing and assessing outcomes have become an integral part of all grant submissions that are collaboratively developed. The CTC process and a strong commitment from the community has enabled Clearfield County to leverage an additional \$2,995,000.

Outstanding Volunteer—Marven Smith, Clearfield County

Marven Smith has been described at age 64 as “an all-out activist—a human dynamo running in support of Clearfield’s kids.” Smith is a long-time father figure in his own Park Avenue neighborhood. Since retiring from the Pennsylvania Electric Company in 1994, he has directed his very considerable energies to borough-wide youth causes.

In his spare time, Smith hits the bricks, seeking out at-risk teens on street corners, in parking lots and at local hangouts. It looks strange to see this tall, balding man in his mid-60s standing around chatting with 15 year-olds in gothic getups and safety-pinned eyebrows, but Smith says that if you are straight out with the kids and up front, they’ll talk to you.

He is known for his willingness to pursue anyone or anything in his quest to help at risk youth and has knocked on doors of county commissioners, judges, school superintendents, the mayor and anyone else he believes can help. Smith is a friend, confidant, and mentor to the children of Clearfield County and an asset to the entire community.

Unsung Hero Dorothy Armond, Bloomsdale-Fleetwing.

Since it’s implementation in 1996, Dorothy Armond has served in some capacity with Project A.C.T.—Aspire with Courage and Tenacity. First she was a volunteer, then a book-keeper and now she is the project director. The road to mobilization is not an easy one. If one were to map out the road this project has traveled, he would find many potholes, some of which might more closely resemble a crater. Armond had never allowed a

pothole—even one that looked like a crater—to stop the forward progress of the project.

When children were showing up at the program hungry, she cooked for them. She can’t walk down the streets of Bloomsdale-Fleetwing without the children calling out to “Miss Dorothy” and giving her a hug. Her commitment to community, her love of children and her unflinching belief in and commitment to creating positive change make Armond unique.

She seeks no thanks for her efforts. She just works quietly, efficiently and tirelessly behind the scenes. Her reward comes in the form of successful programs, happy children and signs of positive change that have occurred. It has been said that you can move mountains as long as you don’t care who gets credit. Armond has moved more than her share of mountains and the credit has always gone to others.

Outstanding Youth—Joanna Belcher, Cumberland County

Joanna Belcher has been active in the Cumberland County CTC Youth Advisory Committee since its inception in 1997. She served as its president in the 1998-99 school year. Belcher was instrumental in the success of YAC and its community projects. These projects included making and serving dinner at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen and a homeless shelter, a work day at a domestic violence center, and the American Cancer Society’s Walk for Life. She also organized a Carlisle/South Middleton High School Habitat for Humanity Day, and developed CTC for Kids, a mentoring and tutoring program for at-risk, elementary school children. Along with

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Mentoring Is Restoring Our Youth

by Susan Goss, Venango County

The Venango County Juvenile Justice Restitution and Restoration Project consists of two programs; one to address the issue of non-payment of restitution and the other to provide meaningful community service opportunities. The project was designed following the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice and the Ten Blueprints for Violence Prevention, specifically the mentoring aspect of Big Brother/Big Sister.

Both programs are designed to be individualized to the offender by providing opportunities to develop skill, victim empathy, and community awareness. Adults from the community volunteer to work with juveniles as mentors and supervise the juveniles as they work. When juvenile offenders are court-ordered to pay restitution and have no visible means of payment, or when they are ordered to do community service, they are assigned to the JJRRP. An in-depth interview with the juvenile and his/her parents occurs to gather information on the child's strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Information on the extent to which the juvenile recognizes the consequences of their actions is revealed. This information is used to place the child at a jobsite where he/she can build on an existing interest or strength.

The mentor acts as a support system to the juvenile at the jobsite, and teaches skills in vocational areas, work ethics, and victim/community awareness. The goal is to provide the juvenile with a positive adult role model with whom the juvenile can develop a caring relationship.

The mentor will help the juvenile be restored to the community by creating a bond between the community and the juvenile. At the same time, the mentor will assist the juvenile in developing specific life skills—realizing the impact their behavior has had on the victim, on themselves, and on the community, handling job stress, and using leisure time constructively.

Juveniles in the community service program are required to appear before a community board wherein they explain what offense they have committed and what they plan to do for restitution to the community. The board offers a measure of the accountability that has been lacking, and helps the youth to develop a plan for reconciling the harm caused. The board provides the mentors and supervision for the community service project, while working in a partnership with juvenile probation.

While acknowledging that this is a complex approach which takes a variety of worksites and mentors to meet the individual needs of each child, it has been very effective. At the end of the first two years, 124 juveniles have been placed with this project. The recidivism rate for juveniles participating in the project is 17.4 percent, and 12 of the youth have been given employment outside the program. The juveniles have completed 6,990.5 hours of work, and paid 83 victims a total \$18,872.58 in restitution. The community has recognized the value of this program; it will become institutionalized into juvenile probation beginning in January, 2000.

HB 114 Reported from Judiciary Committee

HB 114(2396) was reported from the House Judiciary Committee on October 5, 1999, and is awaiting consideration by the House of Representatives. As amended by the Judiciary Committee, this legislation would amend the Juvenile Act to exclude the crime of "Homicide while driving under the influence" from the definition of "Delinquent act." If enacted, this legislation would place such offenses committed by juveniles within the original jurisdiction of the criminal court.

HB 114(2396) would amend The Juvenile Act as follows: 42 Pa.C.S. §6302. Definitions. "Delinquent act."

(2) The term shall not include:

(vi) Prohibited conduct which, if committed by an adult, would be classified as "Homicide while driving under the influence" as defined in 75 Pa.C.S. §3735 (relating to "Homicide by vehicle while driving under the influence").

This legislation was introduced by Representative Matt Baker (R-Bradford and Tioga Counties). As originally introduced, the bill would also have excluded the crime of "Aggravated assault by vehicle while driving under the influence" (75 Pa.C.S. §3735.1) from the definition of "Delinquent act". However, this provision was stricken by the House Judiciary Committee.

Position Available

CORNELL ABRAXAS is seeking a Program Director for a new residential treatment facility scheduled to open in October, 2000. To be located in eastern Pennsylvania, the New Morgan Academy will be a secure residential treatment facility housing 216 youth and encompassing several specialized treatment programs, including drug & alcohol, sex offender, mental health, habitual offender, and diagnostic services.

Minimum qualifications include a masters degree in healthcare, chemical dependency, psychology, social work, counseling, public administration, or criminal justice, or other related field, and 5 years of experience in a human service agency, preferably in a drug & alcohol, mental health, or secure residential treatment setting, with at least 3 years of supervisory and/or managerial/supervisory practices and budgetary principles and practices, knowledge of accepted "best practices" working with troubled youth required.

Excellent salary and benefits, including medical, 401k and tuition reimbursement plans. Please send resume, along with salary requirements to Human Resources Director, One Gateway Center, 5th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

CTC Conference, *continued from page 5*

several other YAC members, Belcher remodeled a vacant space at the Memorial Park train Station to house the program and was responsible for all aspects of its operation.

Belcher was also instrumental in the success of the Youth Forum held last spring. The countywide project brought together 142 students from six area schools. The purpose of the forum was to provide First Lady Michelle Ridge and the Children's Partnership with an opportunity to hear first-hand the issues and concerns of Pennsylvania's teens.

Site Hopes to Help Youth Workers Surf the Web

The National Assembly's National Collaboration for Youth has recently launched the National Youth Development Information Center web site at www.NYDIC.org. The site is meant to be a one-stop shop for youth-development professionals seeking information on everything from curriculum to funding.

National Collaboration for Youth is an umbrella organization that lobbies Congress on behalf of youth and provides technical assistance to its member organizations, which represent most of the largest national youth development organizations. Members include Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America, Girl Scouts of the USA, Child Welfare League of America, the National 4-H, National Urban League, and the YMCA of the USA.

Rather than putting resources and information into books on shelves, the goal of the National

Youth Development Information Center is to put the information into cyberspace. The site adds about 60 documents every other month.

The NYDIC home page offers 12 sections, including one titled, "What's Youth Development." In the *Evaluation* section there is information on how to evaluate youth development programs. The *Research* section contains the latest research on youth development and its effectiveness. There is a *Funding* section that has information on program funding opportunities, and a *Policy* section which contains federal and state policy issues impacting children and youth. The other sections are *What's New on NYDIC*, which has a news archive in it; *Talk to NYDIC*; *Publications*; *Careers*; *Projects*; *Training*; and *Statistics*. There are two other features which make it a very user-friendly web site. One is the toll-free number, where you can get

personal assistance with your questions, and the other is an e-mail-for-help feature on-line, which can help you refine your search to find exactly what you need.

Improving the Juvenile Court Response to Victims

A program designed by the National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges and the National Office for Victims of Crime

**Harrisburg Holiday Inn East
December 8-10, 1999**

For more information phone Susan Blackburn, 717-705-2290, or email: sblackburn@state.pa.us