

a newsletter of the

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Juvenile Court
Judges'
Commission

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Act 21 of 2003 to become effective in February

As reported in the August 2003 edition of *Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice*, Governor Rendell signed SB 521 (1108) into law as Act 21 of 2003 on August 14, 2003. This legislation amends Title 42 to create a new Chapter 64, "Court-ordered Involuntary Treatment of Certain Sexually Violent Persons." In addition, Act 21 amended the Juvenile Act to create a new 42 Pa. C.S. §6358 "Assessment of Delinquent Children by the State Sexual Offenders Assessment Board." Act 21 will become effective on February 10, 2004.

In correspondence dated December 19, 2003, the State Sexual Offenders Assessment Board (SSOAB) wrote to all Chief Juvenile Probation Officers requesting assistance in obtaining access to delinquent children subject to the provisions of Act 21 of 2003 and any information required by the SSOAB in performing the assessment. The SSOAB also distributed a notification form in the correspondence for juvenile probation departments to utilize when notifying the SSOAB of the status of a delinquent child and the institution or other facility where the child is located.

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) wrote to all juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers, in correspondence dated December 31, 2003, to provide additional information and recommendations with respect to the release of the juvenile court file to the SSOAB. It is the recommendation of the JCJC that a copy of the entire court file relating to a child who is subject to an assessment be provided to the SSOAB pursuant to a court order. However, it is the view of the JCJC that the substance of any confidential communication from a delinquent child to a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist in the course of treatment must be redacted from the file prior to providing this information to the SSOAB. {See 42 Pa. C.S. §5944 "Confidential communications to psychiatrists or licensed psychologists" and *Commonwealth v. Carter*, 821 A.2d 601 (Pa. Superior, 2003)}.

The JCJC further recommended that chief juvenile probation officers facilitate the process of obtaining court orders to release the juvenile court file to the SSOAB. A model court order was included within the aforementioned correspondence that contains the following provisions:

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Staff Development News

The CJJT&R Spring 2004 Staff Development Schedule has been mailed. If you would like to receive an e-mail copy of the entire schedule, send an e-mail request to nsweav@wharf.ship.edu. Registrations should be returned by January 26. As usual, the Center will continue to accept registrations on a space-available basis until the day prior to each program. Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and many programs are expected to reach capacity on or before that date or shortly thereafter. The early return of registration materials is strongly encouraged as each season programs seem to fill as soon as a week or more before the registration deadline. Payment of registration fees may follow later.

The schedule may also be reviewed at the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission website www.jcjc.state.pa.us and registrations, changes, confirmations, and cancellations may be made via e-mail directed to nsweav@wharf.ship.edu or leave a message at 717-477-1448.

It should be noted that beginning in 2004 the Holiday Inn Harrisburg West (Wanda's), Mechanicsburg will once again be the site of all Center-sponsored Harrisburg area workshops. The hotel is located at 5401 Carlisle Pike (U.S. Route 11) at the intersection of I-581. The hotel is conveniently accessible from both the PA Turnpike and Interstate 81. Please make note of this change!

The schedule includes 32 programs blending several new offerings with programs that were held in the
Staff Development, continued on page 4

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, but we ask that these be mailed - we will be happy to return them to you.

Greg Young is the editor. Our address is CJJT&R, Shippensburg University, 1871 Old Main Drive, Shippensburg, PA 17257-2299. (gyoung@state.pa.us)

Please send additions or changes to the mailing list to Julie Bozich at Signal Graphics Printing, 1010 Wesley Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (SigGraph60@aol.com)

Officers participate in Operation Town Watch

Since the summer of 1998, Philadelphia juvenile probation officers have joined community members and activists to promote community protection and increase community collaboration. With the support of administrators in Family Court, juvenile probation supervisor Lynn Roman became the official liaison with Philadelphia's Operation Town Watch. The idea was formulated when Ms. Roman's own neighborhood became certified as an official Town Watch group. Certification requires completion of a four-day training program.

Common concerns for the group include community protection, crime and delinquency prevention, and quality of life issues. The involvement of juvenile probation provided a link between the citizens and community relations officers, who are local law enforcement officers. It also provides the opportunity to educate community members on juvenile justice. Consequently, it has alleviated feelings of frustration with a system that is often misunderstood and viewed as too lenient. Another benefit to this collaboration has been an increase in meaningful community service projects.

Ms. Roman and other officers regularly speak at town meetings, which are held at police district offices. They have participated in the National Night Out Against Crime, Police District Advisory Council (PDAC), with victim services specialists, and they have provided information to the public at community fairs. In addition to workshops conducted at the Annual Operation Town Watch Conference, the liaisons have given parents valuable information on delinquency prevention and other service programs available to local youth.

Operation Town Watch liaisons find their work to be both challenging and rewarding. They encourage other probation departments to get involved in their own communities.

Juvenile Delinquency Probation Caseload, 1990-1999

by Charles M. Puzzanchera

Four of every ten delinquency cases resulted in probation in 1999

Courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled nearly 1.7 million delinquency cases in 1999. Probation supervision was the most severe disposition in 40 percent (677,000) of all delinquency cases. The number of cases placed on probation grew 44 percent between 1990 and 1999. During that time, the overall delinquency caseload increased 27 percent. These findings are based on national data on delinquency cases processed by juvenile courts from 1990 through 1999. The national estimates were generated using information contributed to the National Juvenile Court Data Archive. The analysis is based on data from nearly 2,000 jurisdictions containing 70 percent of the U.S. juvenile population (youth age 10 through the upper age of original juvenile court jurisdiction in each state).

Probation can be court-ordered or voluntary

Some youth are ordered to probation after being adjudicated delinquent (analogous to being convicted in criminal court). In contrast to court-ordered probation, some youth who are not adjudicated delinquent voluntarily agree to abide by certain probation conditions, often with the understanding that if they successfully complete their probationary period, their case will be terminated without any formal processing.

In 1999, adjudicated delinquents ordered to probation (398,200 cases) accounted for more than half (59 percent) of all delinquency cases placed on probation. In the remaining delinquency cases (41 percent), the youth agreed to some form of voluntary, or informal, probation. The number of adjudicated cases that resulted in court-ordered probation rose 80 percent from 1990 through 1999. In comparison, the number of cases that resulted in informal probation increased 12 percent, reflecting the trend toward more formal processing of delinquency cases.

The demographic profile of probation cases changed little since 1990

In 1999, 69 percent of cases placed on probation involved white juveniles, 28 percent involved black juveniles, and 3 percent involved juveniles of other races.¹ Between 1990 and 1999, the probation caseload grew 38 percent for black juveniles (from 135,200 to 186,600) and 47 percent for white juveniles (from 320,500 to 470,400). Most cases (76 percent) placed on probation in 1999 involved

males (about 514,600 cases). However, the female share of the probation caseload has grown in the last decade from 19 percent in 1990 to 24 percent in 1999. Juveniles who were 14 to 16 years old accounted for 62 percent (about 421,700 cases) of the probation caseload in 1999.

Property offense cases made up the greatest proportion of the probation caseload

The offense profile of the probation caseload has changed somewhat since 1990. Property offense cases continued to account for the majority of cases placed on probation, but their share of the probation caseload declined. For example, the proportion of adjudicated cases that involved property offenses and received formal probation as the most severe disposition declined 18 percentage points between 1990 and 1999 (from 59 percent to 41 percent). As a result, the profile of the formal probation caseload contained greater proportions of person, drug, and public order offense cases in 1999 than in 1990.

For further information

This Fact Sheet is based on the forthcoming Report Juvenile Court Statistics 1999, which will be available on the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Web site (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp). To learn more about juvenile court cases, visit OJJDP's Statistical Briefing Book (ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstatbb/index.html) and click on "Juveniles in Court." OJJDP also supports Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics, a Web-based application that analyzes the data files used for the Juvenile Court Statistics Report. This application is available from the Statistical Briefing Book.

1 Juveniles of Hispanic ethnicity can be of any race, but most are included in the white racial category.

Charles M. Puzzanchera is a research assistant with the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, which is supported by an OJJDP grant. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

Act 21, from page one

1. That the chief juvenile probation officer (or a designated supervisor) shall review the entire file regarding a delinquent child subject to an assessment and redact the substance of any confidential communication from a delinquent child to a psychiatrist or psychologist in the court of treatment (see 42 Pa. C.S.A. §5944);
2. That the chief juvenile probation officer (or designated supervisor) immediately notify counsel for the child upon the completion of the redaction;
3. That upon receipt of such notice, counsel shall have the opportunity to review the file and may, within five days of such notice, file with the court a written request for additional redaction pursuant to 42 Pa. C.S. A. §5944;
4. That absent a timely written request, the chief juvenile probation officer shall immediately forward the file to the SSOAB; and
5. That copies of the court order be served upon the district attorney, counsel for the child, the chief juvenile probation officer, and the SSOAB.

It was recommended that each juvenile court adopt local policies and procedures to ensure the timely notification to the SSOAB as required by Act 21 of 2003.

The JCJC will be working with the SSOAB to provide additional guidance to chief juvenile probation officers with regard to the issue of redacting confidential communications pursuant to 42 Pa. C.S.A. §5344. Please contact Keith Snyder at 717-787-5634, or ksnyder@state.pa.us, if you have any questions or desire additional information.

Staff Development, from page 2

last few years that either received stellar evaluation feedback and/or where programs filled, interested participants had to be turned away and we were asked to repeat sessions.

Because of several program's non-traditional schedules, and the continuing use of five separate training sites, in order to avoid confusion, we are urging administrators and/or agency training coordinators to provide each registrant with a photocopy of the one-page program description, excerpted from the training booklet, for each program they will be

attending to serve as a reminder of the program's learning objectives, dates, times and location.

The Juvenile Justice Academy for New Juvenile Probation Officers will be held on February 2-6, and will conclude on February 23-27. Also in February on the 19th and 20th we will be sponsoring the "Enhancing Parent Effectiveness" workshop, last sponsored about two years ago, where participants will learn tested techniques and strategy to help parents become more effective with their children.

One month further into the spring schedule practitioners will have four other programs to choose from including: "Developing and Achieving Successful Outcomes for Probation Through Assessment and Case Planning" on March 3-5 in Mechanicsburg; "Understanding and Treating Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in Adolescent Girls" on March 11-12 in Mechanicsburg; The first of two regional sessions on "The Sociological Influences on Troubled Adolescents" on March 18-19 in the Allentown area; and, "Victims Services in the Juvenile Justice System" scheduled especially to allow chiefs and supervisors to attend on March 24-25, just prior to the PA Chief's Council's General Membership meeting on March 26 at the Days Inn Penn State.

If you have not received a copy of the Center's training schedule, or if you have questions, please contact Susan Blackburn at 717-477-1411 or John Herb at 717- 477-1185 and press 3.

Judge Kevin Dougherty appointed to the JCJC

On October 31, 2003, Governor Rendell appointed Judge Kevin M. Dougherty as a member of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Judge Abram Frank Reynolds. Judge Dougherty presently serves as the supervising judge of the Juvenile Court for the Family Court Division of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. Judge Dougherty was appointed to the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas in 2001 and elected to the bench for a ten-year term in 2002. Prior to his judicial appointment, Judge Dougherty was in private practice and also served as a Special Master for the Philadelphia Family Court truancy program. Judge Dougherty also served as an Assistant District Attorney in Philadelphia from 1990 to 1995.

Mark your Calendar!

The Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice

November 3, 4 & 5, 2004

Harrisburg Hilton and Towers

sponsored by

*The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission
The Juvenile Court Section of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges
The Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers
The Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research*

**Youth Awards Program & Dinner
Wednesday, November 3**

**Annual Training and Awards Program
Thursday, November 4**

**Resource Day—2004
Friday, November 5**

The 2004 Annual Training and Awards Program will conclude by presenting Resource Day—2004, during which representatives from residential programs, electronic monitoring companies, drug testing companies, and other service providers will “set up shop” to discuss their programs with the Pennsylvania juvenile justice community. This informal marketplace will offer an important opportunity for consumers to learn about new and innovative services.

For Vendor information, please call Arlene L. Prentice, 717-783-7836

Vendor information will be mailed in April, 2004

“Victims Speak Out: Help, Hope, and Healing”

The Office for Victims of Crime recently produced a new video which illustrates victims’ perceptions of the justice system, voices victims’ major concerns and needs, and offers suggestions for how the justice system can reduce victims’ trauma and respond to victims’ needs.

This 25-minute video features vignettes of 14 victims of violent crime and is divided into six segments:

- victims’ personal experiences with crime;
- obstacles to reporting crime;
- victim safety and support;
- victim notification and participation in justice processes;
- victim satisfaction with outcomes; and,
- help, hope and healing.

The video comes with a discussion guide to spark dialogue about the issues raised in the video. Viewers not only gain insight into the victims’ experiences but also discover ways to alleviate some

of the trauma caused by crime.

“Victims Speak Out: Help, Hope, and Healing” is an excellent tool for training. It can be used to introduce new staff to victim issues or for continuing education of existing staff. It may also be appropriate for public education to increase understanding of victim rights or for use in some victim awareness programs with juvenile offenders.

For further information please contact the Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center at P.O. Box 6000, Rockville MD 20849; 1-800-627-6872 or www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ovcres

Would you like to receive a copy of the CJJT&R Training schedule at least a week early?

How would you like to be kept up to date with notices of space becoming available for workshops that had filled?

What about having access to training information (sessions, hotel phone numbers, directions, etc.) at your fingertips—in your computer, rather than waiting for a paper copy to circulate around in your office?

If you provide us with your e-mail address we can provide you with all of this...and more.

Beginning in the summer of 2004 (next season’s training schedule) will ONLY be distributed electronically—unless you specifically request a paper copy.

We need your e-mail address! Any number of individuals in an agency may request to receive training information directly from us, simply by providing us with your address.

To add your address to our e-mail address book please e-mail Nina Weaver at: nsweav@wharf.ship.edu

Registrations, changes and cancellations can all be easily handled via e-mail to the same address.

