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22 Juvenile Probation Departments Volunteer to Begin Screening Program Using MAYSI-2

The Mental Health/Juvenile Justice workgroup of Pennsylvania's *Models for Change* initiative is committed to implementing policies and programs that promote the early identification of youth with mental health and co-occurring substance abuse needs. This effort is needed because many youth in the juvenile justice system have significant mental health and substance abuse needs. When these needs are not identified, youth are unable to fully participate in family, school and community activities and are at a high risk of becoming involved in additional offending behavior. They also are less likely to participate in their own rehabilitation, be accountable for their actions and develop competencies.

The screening and assessment subcommittee of the Mental Health/Juvenile Justice workgroup established criteria to review existing screening and assessment instruments and it has recommended the use of the Massachusetts Adolescent and Youth Screening Inventory – Version 2 (MAYSI-2) to identify youth who may have mental health and co-occurring substance abuse needs. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency has agreed to provide funding for hardware and software costs associated with this initiative.

Twenty-two juvenile probation departments (click here to see map of counties) have volunteered to implement a screening program using the MAYSI-2. Cross-systems collaboration is a major component of this initiative and juvenile justice, mental health and drug and alcohol policymakers must collaborate on the local level to ensure the program's success. A training program for county teams has been scheduled for March 15, 2007. Contact Keith Snyder at (717) 787-5634 or at ksnyder@state.pa.us, to ask questions or request additional information.

To sign up for the Governor's newsletter, click here www.governor.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice Model Presented

Several members of the balanced and restorative justice committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers recently had the opportunity to provide Maryland juvenile justice practitioners with an overview of Pennsylvania's approach to implementing balanced and restorative justice. Maryland has legislation that is similar to Pennsylvania's law. However, a state-wide system has been slow to materialize there.

Traveling to Columbia on Nov. 17 to participate in the morning plenary session were Ms. Valerie Bender, senior research assistant for the National Center for Juvenile Justice; Susan Blackburn, balanced and restorative justice specialist for the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission; Andrew DeAngelo, deputy chief juvenile probation officer for the Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department and chair of the public relations and education committee; and James Rieland director of Allegheny County Juvenile Court Services and the chair of the balanced and restorative Justice committee.

The group presented a workshop to talk about the implementation, integration and sustainability of balanced and restorative justice principles and practices in Pennsylvania. They also addressed various topics, such as: how stakeholders can benefit; Pennsylvania's victim/community awareness curriculum; and the measurement of state and local outcomes.



York County Appoints Chief Juvenile Probation Officer

Bryce Wickard has been selected by the York County Court of Common Pleas as the county's new chief juvenile probation officer. His appointment became effective Jan. 1, 2007, and filled the vacancy created by the retirement of Dan Rhoads.

Bryce is a 1986 summa cum laude graduate of Messiah College where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree. After graduation, he served as a pastor for 17 years and then worked with delinquent youth in the mental health field. Wickard began his juvenile justice career in 1999 as a juvenile probation officer in York County. He was later promoted to assistant supervisor and supervisor.

Bryce reports that his vision for the York County Juvenile Probation Department includes the following objectives:

- To maintain a department that rises to the highest expectations of the court;
- To foster an affable working environment within the department;
- To encourage and support officers in being creative and forward thinking; and
- To expand partnerships with other community agencies to maximize services for juveniles after discharge from the jurisdiction of the court.

"Dan Rhoads laid a foundation of excellence for the York County Juvenile Probation Department. My goal is to maintain and build upon that standard in the years to come," Bryce said.

Wickard lives in southern York County with his wife, daughter and son. The family enjoys camping and other outdoor activities.

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

Guest articles, especially those with photographs, are always welcome; please submit them by email.

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Juvenile Drug Courts in Pennsylvania

Juvenile drug courts have been in existence since the late 1980s and are considered specialty courts where juveniles receive more individualized attention from treatment team members. Stakeholders believe in the effectiveness of drug courts because they help to reduce recidivism and improve the quality of life for juvenile substance abusers, their families, and the communities at large.

The interest in drug courts first spread to Pennsylvania in 2000 when the York County Juvenile Probation Department endorsed the concept and began using a plan it created. There are currently seven juvenile drug courts in Pennsylvania. In most counties, new procedures have helped to promote collaboration among agencies, including procedures that support the frequent sharing of information. The following chart lists the counties which presently operate juvenile drug courts, including the judge overseeing the court and the date the drug court began:

County and Date Drug Court Began	Judge
York January 2002	Hon. Michael J. Brillhart
Lackawanna January 2002	Hon. Michael J. Mabasse
Somerset April 2003	Hon. John M. Cascio
Lycoming May 2004	Hon. Nancy L. Butts
Philadelphia September 2004	Hon. Kevin M. Dougherty & Hon. Abram Frank Reynolds (Effective April 2006)
Erie May 2005	Hon. William R. Cunningham
Mifflin August 2006	Hon. Rick A. Williams

Members of a drug court team may vary according to the treatment needs of a youth. Half of the counties operating drug courts have reported some turnover in the membership of the treatment teams, which can be hurt the program and the help its designed to offer. As new members join the team, it is important that a proactive approach be taken to discuss the differences among team members so issues can be resolved and the team can move toward consensus. Often, this means a change in mindset for some members who have traditionally assumed adversarial roles. All of the courts stress an awareness of cultural differences and strive to reduce any real or perceived barriers that may hinder communication with juveniles and their families

Most of the counties operating drug courts accept only non-violent juvenile offenders who have an identified substance abuse problem. One county originally began their drug court as an alternative to placement for juveniles under probation who tested positive for illegal drug use.

All juveniles involved with drug courts receive some type of formal screening and/or assessment. Results of assessments are used as a tool for treatment planning in each of the jurisdictions. Family input into treatment plans is also encouraged. Juveniles receive age-appropriate substance abuse treatment services, as well as mental health treatment when appropriate. Some counties provide mentoring programs, and one county provides gender-specific drug and/or alcohol services. Community service is typical as long as it's consistent

Drug Court, continued on page 4

Drug Court, continued from page 3

with the principles of balanced and restorative justice.

All participants report to open hearings in court at the same time and cases are heard in the presence of all drug court participants. Typically, the juveniles who appear first before the judge have been in treatment the longest. Almost all of the drug courts in Pennsylvania have a four-phase program. Juveniles typically appear in court at least weekly for the first four-to-eight weeks (Phase one). As they make their way through the program, juveniles do appear less frequently before the drug court. Pre-court team meetings are held to discuss issues and reach consensus on recommendations to be made in court, with the judge having the final say.

All of the juvenile drug courts in Pennsylvania say they use goal-oriented incentives and sanctions. Most of the counties have a system of graduated responses from written essays, community service hours, electronic monitoring, weekend programs and long-term placement when warranted. Depending on what behavior caused a sanction, some counties will seek family input before they apply the sanction. Judges administer sanctions, rewards, and recognition in open court for goals or phases that are completed.

Most of the drug courts begin in late afternoon to accommodate working parents. Family support and involvement are viewed as critical to the success of each juvenile, and all of the counties report that the family remains involved throughout all phases of the program. Parental participation is strongly encouraged but it's not required.

It is widely agreed that because the drug court field is relatively new, further research is needed to determine the effectiveness of the programs. All of the counties have developed their own database for the collection of data. Some counties track outcome measures such as recidivism, successful completion, school performance and continued drug and alcohol use. In two counties, outside evaluators from local universities are conducting research on the outcomes of their drug courts.

Juvenile drug courts may vary somewhat from county to county. However, they all have in common the frequent interaction between a juvenile court judge, a multi-disciplinary team, and juveniles and their families.

Stand Tall By RICH WYKOFF

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Stand up – stand proud – stand tall... that is the motto of students at Central Mountain Middle School (CMMS) and High school who have chosen to be members of the Stand Tall program.

Initiated almost 10 years ago at the middle school, this positive peer pressure approach has provided area youth with the opportunity to take a stand against the use of alcohol and other drugs. Students who participate must undergo random drug tests, strengthening their resolve to be positive peers to their friends, the school and the community in general, organizers say.

The program was recently expanded to include Central Mountain High School (CMHS), offering students the opportunity to continue program activities from sixth grade through graduation.

Stand Tall is different in that the program targets the environment within which students interact and are susceptible to effects of negative peer pressure. A team comprised of community services, Keystone Central School District police officers, teachers and Stand Tall student members meet regularly to plan activities that create an environment in which students can socialize without the pressure to use alcohol and other drugs.

Co-Coordinator for Stand Tall are Keystone Police Officers Brandon Coleman and Ed Higgins. Under their care, the Stand Tall program has experienced a resurgence of growth at CMMS and CMHS.

At the high school, 45 percent of the 1,320 students are involved in the program. Students continue to request consent forms. They are planning a homecoming tailgate party at the football game, open gym night during parent conferences, and have taken many trips in the past, noted Mike Kramer. Kramer is a teacher and co-chair of the Stand Tall team at Central Mountain High School.

Kramer commended Lock Haven University for all of its efforts and also the community for the support of the program. He also thanked Valley Prevention and Communities That Care for their hard work and support in keeping Stand Tall alive at CMHS.

Members of Stand Tall plan, organize, and participate in activities that provide enjoyment without the use of alcohol and other drugs throughout the year.

According to Officer Higgins, when students enter Stand Tall, they are required to take a drug test.

Higgins believes this has helped stabilize membership. Members who test positive are not arrested. Stand Tall staff find help for the students and notify their parents. These students are removed from the program for a period of time.

Stand Tall is a Valley Prevention and Communities That Care initiative.

Geoff Arthur of Valley Prevention Services sees the Stand Tall program as a meaningful, positive intervention that focuses on opinions students have about peers using alcohol and other drugs.

“In the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, they begin to chip away at that attitude ... that misperception that they have. Part of that process is that we’re going to do some healthy alternatives — dances, bowling... things that don’t involve alcohol or other drugs. It (Stand Tall) is an effort, not a curriculum that you purchase, and they learn something. It’s really kids taking a stand and saying they choose not to use alcohol and other drugs. And we want people to know that,” said Arthur.

Officers Higgins and Coleman have been instrumental in encouraging the growth of the program. In the past two years, membership has grown from 75 members to 781 student members or 79 percent of the middle school student body.

Residential Program Aftercare Survey Initiated

The Pennsylvania Models for Change Aftercare Project, supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, is continuing efforts to gather information about aftercare practices and procedures across the commonwealth. Initial data was collected from 67 county juvenile probation departments, with an understanding that companion data from residential facilities for delinquent youth would also be essential. It was determined that the best way to accomplish this task would be through the development of a survey.

The residential aftercare survey was created through the collaborative efforts of the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission, Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, Juvenile Law Center, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, National Center for Juvenile Justice, and the five model aftercare counties.

An e-mail notification was sent to many residential service providers in early 2007, informing them of the availability of the electronic aftercare survey. Providers were asked to have appropriate staff complete a full survey for each licensed program under their direction. It is anticipated that the results of the survey will provide program level information regarding activities and practices that relate to the aftercare process, specific to the type of service offered.

Information regarding referral/acceptance activities, individual service plan (ISP)/master case plan (MCP) development practices, educational and vocational activities, family involvement strategies, reintegration planning, utilization of home passes, post release activities, and a host of other practices is currently being collected with the *Joint Policy Statement on Aftercare* serving as the basis for the body of the survey.

Providers of residential services to delinquent youth are asked to coordinate the completion of this web-based survey by all licensed programs under their direction by accessing it at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=538462802706>

For additional information regarding this or other activities of the Models for Change Aftercare Project, contact Rick Steele, JCJC Aftercare Specialist (c-rsteele@state.pa.us) or Kelly Franklin (kfranklin@epix.net) Aftercare Specialist of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.

Juvenile Information Sharing Report Available

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention announces the availability of “[Guidelines for Juvenile Information Sharing](#),” an online report that outlines a course of action for states and local jurisdictions involved in efforts to improve information sharing among key agencies that work with at-risk youth and juvenile offenders.

The guidelines integrate the three critical components of juvenile information sharing—collaboration, confidentiality, and technology—into an effective developmental framework. Resources:

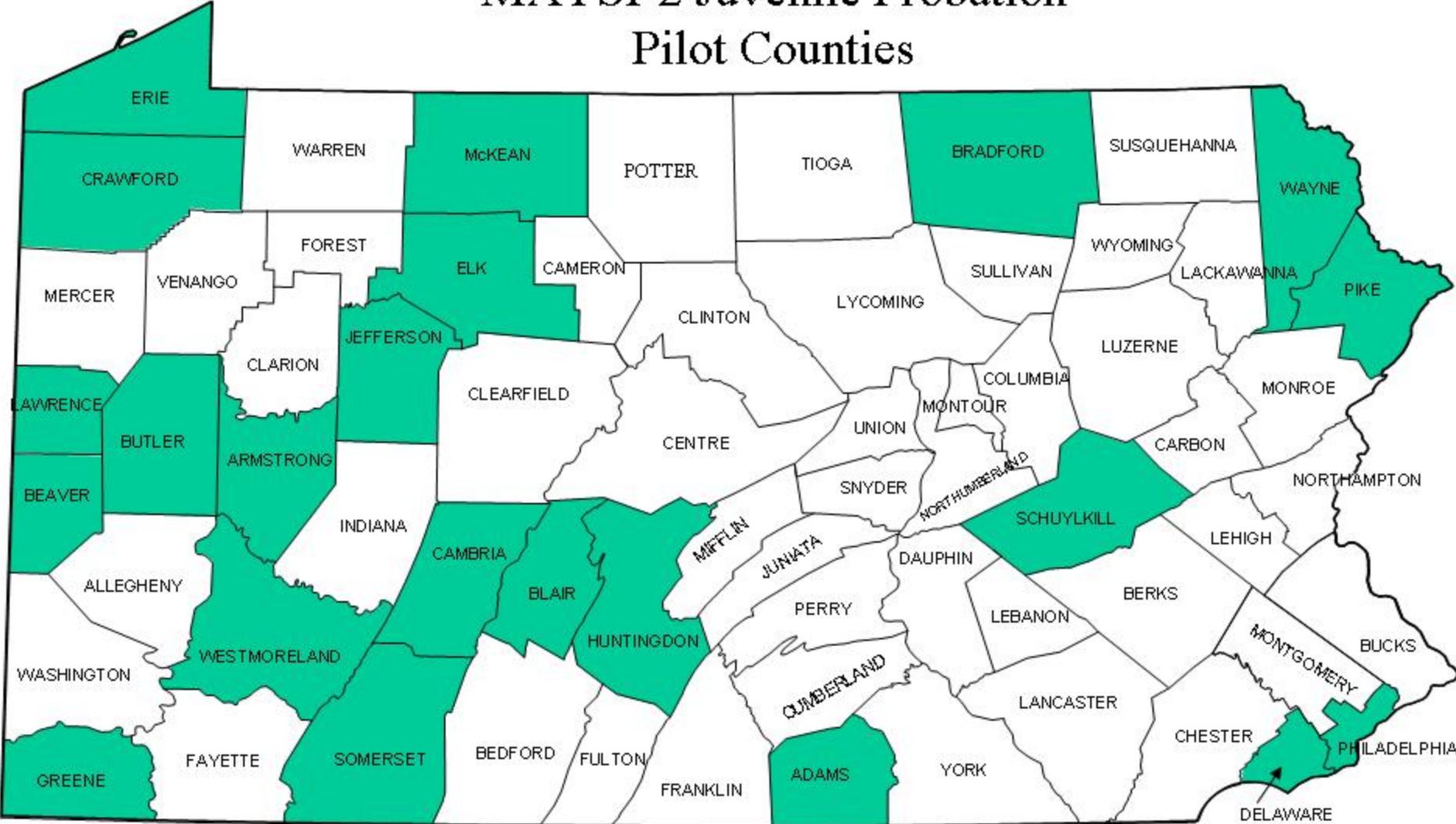
“Guidelines for Juvenile Information Sharing” is available online at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=237372>.

The [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention](#) is a component of the [Office of Justice Programs](#) in the [U.S. Department of Justice](#).

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MAYSI-2 Juvenile Probation Pilot Counties



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