Pennsylvania is Host Site for 2009 Conference on Family Group Decision Making and Other Family Engagement Approaches

The 2009 Conference on Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and Other Family Engagement Approaches was held June 2-5, 2009 at the Westin Convention Center in Pittsburgh. As the name suggests, the scope of this international conference – hosted annually by American Humane since 1997 – has formally expanded to focus not just on FGDM, but on other effective family engagement models and practices. The Director of American Humane’s National Center on Family Group Decision Making, Lisa Merkel-Holguin, explains the shift: “In 2008, American Humane’s National Center on FGDM released a seminal paper entitled Family Group Decision Making in Child Welfare: Purpose, Values and Processes. This document, developed in partnership with FGDM leaders worldwide, provides a clear definition of FGDM, enabling the accurate classification of family-involvement approaches as being FGDM, for the purposes of funding application, research and evaluation, and training and education. Given the increased national interest in the plethora of family engagement approaches, coupled with our belief that these approaches can build on each other to achieve positive outcomes for children and families, and our 2008 definition of FGDM, American Humane, with the guidance of our National Center on FGDM Advisory Committee, has expanded this annual conference to encompass many approaches for engaging family groups in decision making in child welfare and other systems”.

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NEW! To subscribe to the JCJC newsletter, Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice, please send your request to jcjcnews@ship.edu to be added to the distribution list. You will receive an email alert each month when the latest edition is available.
In keeping with the expanded focus and the conference site, the theme for this year’s conference was *Family: The Keystone for Systems Change*. The conference officially began on June 3rd with motivational storyteller and author D.J. Eagle Bear Vanas’ presentation, *Keeping the Fires Lit*. The conference also featured several general sessions, which included: three panel presentations – one each day featuring child welfare administrators, family members, and judges that utilize or have experienced these practices – on the effectiveness and benefits of family engagement approaches; and an international review of the research findings on family engagement models by three leading researchers. Lastly, motivational speaker Harvey Alston’s humorous and inspirational presentation, *Be the Best*, helped end the conference on a high note.

With over 600 participants from 30 states, 5 countries, and 4 Canadian provinces in attendance, Pennsylvania was strongly represented by a diverse contingent of 400 professionals and community members from various counties and agencies, including children and youth, human services, private providers, local agencies, universities, judges, police, and both adult and juvenile probation. The 3½ day conference also included six intensive pre-conference seminars and skills institutes, and sixty workshops and discussion groups, twenty-four of which were presented by Pennsylvania attendees.

*The 2010 conference will be held June 22-25, in Burlington, Vermont.*

Family Group Decision Making is a continually emerging practice across the nation, and particularly in Pennsylvania. Currently, more than 40 counties across the Commonwealth are implementing and actively involved with FGDM. Please visit the [National Center on FGDM](http://www.nationalcenteronfgdm.org) website for more information. You may also contact Christina Fatzinger, MS or Wendy Unger, MSW at the [PA Child Welfare Training Center](http://www.pacwtraining.org) for Pennsylvania-specific information and resources.
~ UPDATE ~

visit: www.jcjc.state.pa.us

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**Weekend Master’s Degree Program**
**Accepting Applications for the Class of 2012**

Applications are now being accepted for the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission-sponsored weekend Master’s Degree program at Shippensburg University. Members of the class of 2012 will begin classes in the fall of 2010. The deadline to apply is September 1, 2009.

The Shippensburg University program offers students a Master of Science degree in the Administration of Justice. This is a 36-credit hour program that includes courses in research methods, theory, administration, and policy analysis. Also featured is a practicum study which is conducted throughout the two-year program. This practicum study provides students the opportunity to evaluate an existing program or practice that serves juvenile offenders in their home county, or another existing program or practice that impacts the juvenile justice system (i.e. prevention, assessment).

Classes in this two-year program are scheduled every third weekend in the fall, spring, and summer, with no classes scheduled during the month of August. This program is available to county juvenile probation officers (and county juvenile detention staff as space allows) who will have at least two years of post-baccalaureate experience in the juvenile justice field prior to the start of classes. Other juvenile justice professionals – such as residential placement staff and victim services providers – may also apply and be accepted into the program on a “self-pay” basis (or via an employer), again, as space is available.

Applicants who have an undergraduate grade point average of less than 2.75 must take and pass the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) or the Graduate Record Examination.

Additional information about the program is available on the Graduate Education pages of the JCJC website. If you have any questions regarding eligibility or the application process, please contact Stephen Bishop at 717-477-1294.

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**Fall 2009 Juvenile Justice Academy Reminder**

The on-line segment of “Juvenile Justice Academy: Orientation for the New Professional”, which includes the on-line “Pennsylvania Juvenile Act” course and the prerequisite “On-line Learner’s Orientation” course, must be completed by all new juvenile probation officers who are planning to attend the Fall Academy (September 1-4 & September 22-25) prior to attending the program. Departments should register staff for the on-line courses as soon as possible. The “On-line Learner’s Orientation” course starts each week on Mondays. The “Pennsylvania Juvenile Act” course will be offered the weeks of July 13-17, August 10-14, and September 14-18.

Registration for both on-line courses, as well as the two weeks of live training, is a single process – all covered by the $250 registration fee. Registration is currently available on-line via the JCJC website under “Training”. For additional registration information or materials on Orientation or any other Center training programs, please contact the Center’s training program at cjltraining@ship.edu.
Updated information is available online at www.sanctuaryweb.com.
PAPPC Hosts 88th Training Institute

The Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections (PAPPC) hosted its 88th Training Institute in Harrisburg on May 17-20, 2009. The theme for this year’s institute was Achieving Success and Identifying Solutions: Making Progress. Following musical performances by Bill Bloom, and Welcome Remarks from the Honorable Bruce F. Bratton (Dauphin County Court of Common Pleas), Clay Yeager presented a dynamic and informative opening Plenary Session, Slow the Flow: The Power of Prevention and People to Reduce Crime in America. Dr. Ron Sharp further reinforced this year’s theme and inspired participants with his Closing Session presentation, Human Service: The Science of Saving Lives.

More than two hundred registrants had an opportunity to participate in a variety of thirty-one workshops, including an Introduction to Occupational Spanish seminar on Sunday. Proceeds from the Silent Auction, conducted during the conference, will benefit Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Harrisburg and New Beginnings Youth and Adult Services, also of Harrisburg.

PAPPC 2009 award recipients included: Stephen Masciantonio, Juvenile Corrections Professional of the Year; Thomas J. Hughes, Juvenile Justice Professional of the Year (bottom left); Kristin Sayers, Adult Corrections Professional of the Year; Joseph Gillespie, Adult Probation/Parole Officer of the Year; and Thomas N. Costa, Special Recognition (bottom right).

The 89th PAPPC Training Institute will be held May 23-26, 2009 at Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Seven Springs, PA.
**June 8, 2009 - Juvenile Court Judges Conference To Be Held in July**

On July 12-15, 2009, in Chicago, IL the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges will hold its annual national conference.

The conference will feature juvenile and family law topics, including trauma, custody and visitation, divorce, child abuse and neglect, truancy, domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, crossover youth, and substance abuse.

Resources:

To access additional information about the conference, including a conference brochure, and register online, visit [http://www.ncjfcj.org/content/view/1204/315/](http://www.ncjfcj.org/content/view/1204/315/).

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**June 15, 2009 - OJJDP Promotes Internet Safety**

June is National Internet Safety Month. The purpose of this observance is to raise awareness of the dangers to which children may be exposed on the Internet and ways in which they can be protected from them.

Online safety is everyone’s responsibility. Parents need to be vigilant about their children’s use of the computer and cell phone. Teachers need to promote responsible Internet usage by students. Internet safety organizations need to help youth develop the decision-making skills needed to use the Web safely. Only through such coordinated efforts can we maximize the benefits of the Internet, while minimizing its dangers.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) supports a number of programs and activities designed to raise awareness about the importance of online safety and to help protect children and youth from online exploitation and victimization.

Resources:

To obtain further information about OJJDP supported initiatives to promote Internet safety, visit:

- Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program
- Project Safe Childhood National Public Awareness Campaign
- NetSmartz
- Enough Is Enough
- i-SAFE
- WebWiseKids
- IKeepSafe Internet Safety Coalition

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**June 19, 2009 - OJJDP Fact Sheets Provide Data on Juveniles in Court**

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has released four fact sheets providing data derived from the report “Juvenile Court Statistics 2005.”

In 2005, U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction handled 1.7 million delinquency cases. One third of these cases received probation as the most serious disposition, and 25 percent of these cases involved personal offenses. For every 1,000 petitioned juvenile cases, 8 were waived to criminal court.

Resources:


The Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice

November 4-6, 2009

at the Harrisburg Hilton & 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

Youth Awards Program & Dinner
Wednesday, November 4

Annual Training and Awards Program
Thursday, November 5

Resource Day – 2009
Friday, November 6

The 2009 Annual Training and Awards Program will conclude by presenting Resource Day – 2009, 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.

VENDOR INFORMATION AVAILABLE NOW!

Early Registration....$400 After August 31st....$500

For vendor information, please call Arlene L. Prentice, 717-783-7836 or e-mail aprentice@state.pa.us

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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