



# MEDINA COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

## Probate and Juvenile Divisions

93 Public Square, Room 104, Medina, Ohio 44256

KEVIN W. DUNN  
Judge

MEDIA RELEASE

March 2, 2020

## Gov. DeWine Visits Medina County Career Center to Show Support for Take Control Program

*Judge Kevin W. Dunn and Montville Police Chief Terry Grice met with Governor DeWine and state and local officials to share the advantages of the Take Control teen driving program*



Juvenile and Probate Judge Kevin W. Dunn; Ohio Governor Mike DeWine; Montville Police Department Executive Assistant Rebecca Byrne; and Montville Police Department Chief Terry Grice

month, offers teen drivers increased awareness and development of driving techniques such as eye positioning, shuffle steering, skid recovery, vehicle pivot points in forward and reverse, emergency braking, and collision avoidance.

“This program means a lot to our community,” Judge Dunn said. “The founding families, the Court, the police departments, Westfield Insurance, and all of the other sponsors put in a lot of effort to make this successful. We are all pushing in the same direction for one goal.”

That goal, as everyone at the round table meeting agreed, is to do whatever possible to decrease the amount of teen driving crashes and fatalities. Take Control is funded by three main foundations – Ehrbar

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*To learn more about the Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court or Court programs, visit our websites at [www.MedinaJuvenile.org](http://www.MedinaJuvenile.org) and [www.MedinaProbate.org](http://www.MedinaProbate.org).*

Angels Foundation, MStar Foundation, and the Jessica Lynn Schaffer Memorial Fund – as well as the Medina County Juvenile Court, and local donations.

Ehrbar Angels was launched by Laura Ehrbar-DePiero after her two children, Erin and Andrew, were killed on their way to school when a speeding car slammed into them as they were pulling out of their driveway.

“Any tools we can give these kids, whether it’s advanced drivers training, diversion training, it’s our goal,” said Laura DePiero.

Governor DeWine applauded the families and all sponsors for their efforts with the Take Control Program, noting that there are initiatives to make distracted driving and failure to wear a seatbelt a primary offense in Ohio.

“We can’t have tolerance for seeing young children killed,” Gov. DeWine said. “We need to take action.”

Gov. DeWine looked to the State of Ohio BMV Registrar and the Ohio Traffic Safety Office representative noting that this program should be replicated all over the State. Judge Dunn and Chief Grice explained that while the structure of the program is already complete, other counties would need to form partnerships with law enforcement and sponsors, as well as a dealership to lease vehicles, and find a location to host the program. An additional advantage is that the program is free to participants.

“Defensive driving training shouldn’t be an opportunity only for those who can afford it,” said Gretchen Long of Westfield Insurance.

While there are no hard numbers to prove how many lives Take Control has impacted or saved, a research study was conducted in 2016 to show the tangible advantages to the program within the community. The Center for Innovation and Growth at Baldwin Wallace University conducted a study and presented results on the program, comparing Take Control to similar teen-driving safety programs nationally based on cost, focus, duration, and instruction techniques. The CIG survey found that graduates ranked themselves higher in confidence and safety after completing the program, with 68 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that they are confident in their ability to use shuffle steering, to maneuver their vehicle in reverse or to avoid a road hazard, to recover from a skid, and to use Anti-lock Braking System. The graduates’ ability to use skills to avoid accidents taught during Take Control is evident with 92 percent of the graduates reporting a near miss accident after completing the program. The most significant finding of the study was that Take Control is distinctive as it is free, taught by officers, and has a level of parent involvement.

“Take Control teaches youth anything beyond what I could teach them as a parent,” said Tammy Schaffer. “We can never bring our children back, but maybe we can save one.”

To learn more about Take Control or register for the program, visit [www.TakeControlDriving.org](http://www.TakeControlDriving.org).

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