

MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN NOVEMBER 2013

JUDGE DUNN USES SKYPE WITH SOLDIER OVERSEAS FOR ADOPTION HEARING

It was 10 months and nine days since an Ohio couple filed their petition for the adoption of a baby boy born in January of this year. They filled out applications, completed months of background checks, interviews and home studies, all in preparation for November 25, 2013. This would be the day, if all went according to plan, that Judge Kevin Dunn would declare them the legal parents at their petition for adoption hearing.

M.B.* and her husband K.B.*, an active duty sergeant in the Ohio National Guard, couldn't wait. But eight months before their hearing, K.B. found out he was being deployed to Afghanistan.

M.B. said they tried to get his deployment delayed until after the hearing, but there was nothing they could do. In an adoption case, both parents have to be present at the hearing, otherwise finalization of the adoption would have to be set out for a later date.

That is when Judge Dunn, the couple and their attorney, Richard Marco, and the Court's Network Administrator Mike Stiles devised the plan to utilize the technology available to the Court.

The Judge said this was a special circumstance. K.B. wanted to be physically present, but it was beyond his control. Judge Dunn didn't want to make the couple wait any longer, so he planned to use the common video chatting program, Skype, to contact K.B. overseas from

an alternative courtroom set up with a monitor and microphone. This way, K.B. could be present and they could conclude the adoption.

"We always knew there would be a chance he would have to leave," M.B. said. "That's why we talked with our attorney and Mike and had contingency plans in place."

The Judge had never performed a hearing using Skype before, but Stiles assured him it could be done, and at no cost to the Court.

Apart from a slight delay, the picture was perfectly clear. K.B. initially noted some disturbances in the sound, but it was quickly resolved after M.B. and their attorney moved closer to the microphone, making the baby boy in her arms center

screen with grandparents watching from the back of the courtroom.

"This was a group effort with the parents to make sure this would work," Stiles said. "I don't think it could have gone better."

After a quick photo with the Judge in front of the screen, the family had some time to speak with K.B. alone in the courtroom.

"That was absolutely cool," Judge Dunn said. "It's so nice that we were able to reach out and give this benefit to one of our country's service members."

*Because adoption cases are confidential, the family's names could not be used.

44

**ADOPTIONS FILED
IN MEDINA COUNTY
PROBATE COURT
THIS YEAR**

(as of Nov. 26, 2013)

JUDGE DUNN HOSTS JDC ADVISORY PANEL

Community members from local schools, churches, the MCDAC board, attorneys and representatives in the health field met with Judge Kevin Dunn and Juvenile Detention Center administrators for the JDC's annual advisory panel meeting. Panel members reviewed the daily resident schedule, annual statistics and inspection results.

Here are some of the resident statistics discussed November 21, 2013.

438

Youth admitted
to the JDC as of
Nov. 21, 2013

20

Average daily
population in
the 30-bed
facility

21

Average length
of stay for a
resident at the
JDC *days

To read more about the Juvenile Detention Center Advisory Panel, visit MedinaJuvenile.org and click on Court News for a related press release.

MEDINA JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT CLOSINGS

Nov. 28

Closed for
Thanksgiving

Dec. 20

Closed at
1:30 P.M.

Dec. 24

Closed at
12:00 P.M.

Dec. 25

Closed for
Christmas

Jan. 1

Closed for New
Year's Day

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BREAKDOWN OF THIS YEAR'S ADVISORY PANEL

Every year, the Medina County Juvenile Court compiles data from Court programs, projects, and the probation department to provide the community a brief overview of the Court's work. The Citizens Advisory Panel members, including the Court, law enforcement, mental health agencies, alcohol and drug agencies, schools, the public defender and local businesses, met November 14 at the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center. Below is a snapshot of the data discussed as of September 30, 2013.

Supervision

Probation:

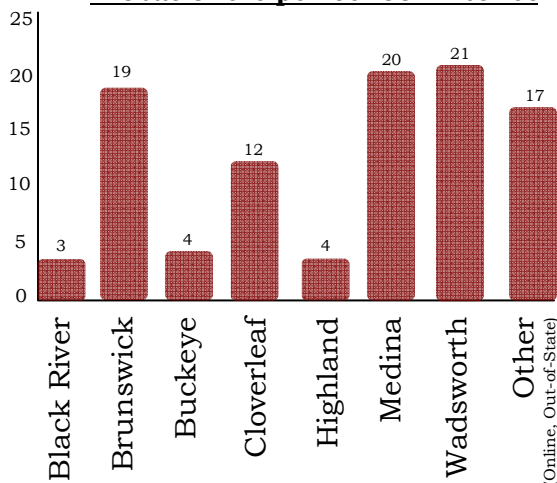
Medina County currently has one Chief Probation Officer and three P.O.s who have worked in both juvenile corrections and probation, totaling 46 years of experience.

76 youth placed on Probation between 1/1/13 and 9/30/13

56 males, **20** females

Youngest: **11**, Oldest: **19**

Probationers per School District



Offenses:

The following are the number of offenses for juveniles placed on Probation as of Oct. 1, 2013 for the year:

26% of juvenile charges filed were drug and alcohol offenses

- 19** felonies
- 33** misdemeanors
- 24** status offense
- 0** traffic

Family Resource Court:

60 families have been served since July 2009. This program helps reduce Court intervention by reducing barriers to community services, while increasing the safety and well-being of each family. Typical cases include truancy, school disobedience and unruly.

Compliance Officer:

46 youth were monitored as of September 30, 2013 for compliance with court orders involving school attendance, drug testing, counseling and restitution.

Electronic Monitoring:

312 youth have been monitored using Global Positioning Satellite technology since 2007.

Number of youth monitored each year

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
56	59	64	67	36	21	9

As of 9/30/13

Drug Court:

32 youth currently in Drug Court, a program to help free children from dependency on drugs or alcohol, deter crimes associated with substance abuse, promote a pro-social family environment and to develop the skills and attitudes to remain drug free.

Recidivism Rates: Juveniles convicted of a new crime after graduating Drug Court

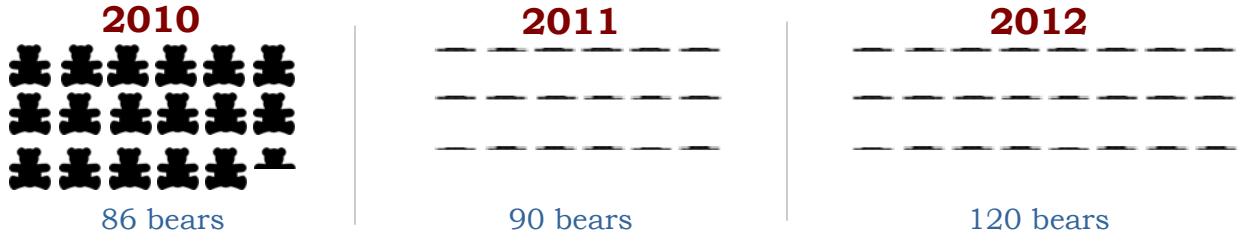
Length	2010	2011	2012
6 months	9%	8%	21%
12 months	17%	13%	tbd

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Program Participation

Build-A-Bear: 551 teddy bears built by community service youth have been given to special needs children since the program began in 2007. 160 bears are expected to be delivered in Dec. 2013.



Camp Integrity: 576 high risk youth have been supervised in this after school program since it began in 2005.

Community Service: 144 youth were ordered community service hours as of Sept. 30, 2013.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy: 65 families have worked with horses as therapy partners to address emotional, behavioral and mental problems since the program began in Jan. 2007.

Girls Circle: Since July 2009, 64 girls have successfully graduated from the skill building group.

ID-21: 687 youth charged with underage consumption were ordered to spend 21 consecutive hours at the Juvenile Detention Center since 2005.

Law Enforcement Diversion Programs: 814 youth participated in law enforcement centered programs targeting drug and alcohol prevention, school issues and family dynamics.

Parent Project: Since this guidance and support program for parents began in July 2009, 151 families have participated.

Teen Court: 51 juvenile offenders have completed the Teen Court Diversion Program which began in March 2010.

Theft Offenders Youth Education Services: 125 low risk youth involved with the Court because of theft-related offenses completed at-home lesson plans and exercises since Jan. 2009.

Court Action

114 Night Court cases were heard between Sept. 2012 to Sept. 2013 to help eliminate school and work absences due to court appearances.

\$414,201.39

paid for in COPPER* costs by parents to offset program and court expenses since 2008.

*Costs of Programming and Probation Expenses and Reimbursement

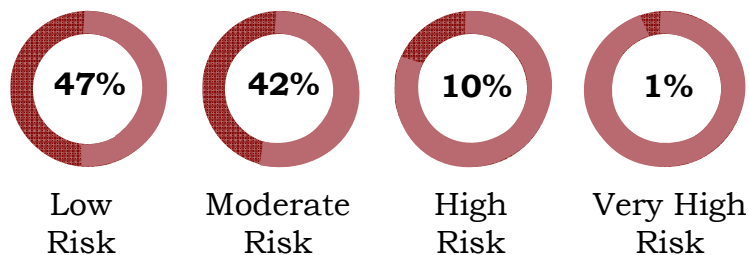
Families served with Intensive Service Coordination since July 2009:

ICAT*: **61** CARE teams: **121**

*Intersystems Collaborative Assistance Team

Ohio Youth Assessment System Risk Screens uniformly identify risk and need to provide juveniles appropriate programs, supervision and services.

The following chart shows the risk levels for 155 youth screened from Jan. to Sept. 2013:



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EXHIBIT OFFERS TIPS ON RECOGNIZING DRUG USE

It could be as innocent looking as a pen simply missing the ink, or as obvious as a manipulated water bottle with marijuana residue; the goal of the Hidden In Plain Sight traveling exhibit is to help parents notice warning signs of risky behaviors that can be found in their child's bedroom.

This was the 53rd presentation of the exhibit, created by the Bath Township and Copley Police Departments, November 19 hosted at Buckeye High School. Approximately 45 parents and school administrators were in attendance, as well as Judge Kevin Dunn and Chief Probation Officer Jodi Albertson, who were there to share drug use and possession trends seen in the Court.

Judge Dunn said, unfortunately, the Court is seeing a high percentage of marijuana use in juveniles after they have been adjudicated of a crime.

In an effort to encourage parent involvement in decreasing drug use, the Juvenile Court orders a minimum six-month license suspension for any drug-related charge for a juvenile at disposition.



Officer Scott of the Copley Township Police Department shows parents signs of risky behavior to look for.

“A license suspension also hurts the parents,” Judge Dunn said. “They don't want to have to drive their child all over town. The hope is that this suspension will motivate them to help their kids change their behaviors.”

Officers from Copley PD informed parents that smoking devices can be created from typical items kids find in their home, such as tin foil or fruit. The

presenters also revealed some tricky hiding spots to look for, such as a deceptive safe made to look like a soda can or water bottle, or a tube of lipstick that is actually a smoking pipe. Attendees then had a chance to look at drug contraband seized by local police departments and donated to the exhibit.

“You could see the shock value on some of these parents' faces,” Albertson said. “Kids are so creative but this exhibit is great because it's keeping adults informed and showing them the new tricks and tips to look for.”

To learn more about the Hidden in Plain Sight traveling exhibit or upcoming dates, visit www.BathTownship.org.

JUVENILE COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKERS RECEIVE COOKING CLASS AS A THANK YOU FOR HELPING

Medina County Community Service youth assisted in the first planting of vegetables in the Medina County community garden back in early May. Throughout the summer and fall, they returned on a weekly basis to help weed, water and harvest the crops.

When the project first began, Community Service Supervisor Sheila Shuttera and Sandy Calvert, Executive Director of Feeding Medina County, knew this project would come full circle for the youth. They planted, harvested and now they are learning to cook.

Seven youth spent their Saturday morning at Williams on the Lake November 23 learning

how to make Thanksgiving dinner with the help of General Manager Mark Williams, assisted by chef Jeremi Miller. They made stuffing from scratch, mashed potatoes and learned how to cut a turkey. They also made rolls to donate to Cups Café for the holiday.

“This was our way to say thank you to the kids for their help in the garden and a way to increase their knowledge and skill set,” Calvert said.

This was the second cooking class the community service youth have taken part in this year.

“They say if you give a man a fish you feed him for a day, but teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime,” Williams said. “Cooking is

my passion and it's so important to me to help teach these kids. It's also a marketable job skill for them.”

All youth were provided with a cookbook, *Clueless in the Kitchen*, and an apron, provided through Feeding Medina County grant funding, so they can continue to increase their cooking abilities at home. All participants also received a Feeding Medina County t-shirt donated by Graffiti in Cleveland.

Shuttera said she and Calvert have plans to return to the Lafayette Road garden in May 2014 for another planting and will also continue cooking classes for the youth next year.

If you would like to get involved in the Feeding Medina County Community Garden, visit FeedingMedinaCounty.org and click on the “get involved” link.