

# MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN DECEMBER 2015

## 75 STUFFED ANIMALS BUILT FOR EIGHTH ANNUAL BUILD-A-BEAR DELIVERY PROJECT



Judge Kevin Dunn and approximately 17 others from his staff and the Juvenile Court Community Service Program built and dressed 75 stuffed bears, dogs and bunnies to deliver to young children, as well as wards involved with the Volunteer Guardianship Program during the holiday season.

With the assistance from the Build-A-Bear Strongsville-Southpark team, the stuffed animals were assembled in less than a hour November 10 at the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center, dressed in Star Wars t-shirts, sparkly holiday dresses and Ohio State sweatshirts.

Through donations from the Medina Sunrise Rotary, the Juvenile Court donation fund, and other community donations—and in addition to the bears left over from last year's holiday bear build— eight Volunteer Guardianship Program wards and 85 children from the Windfall School and children placed

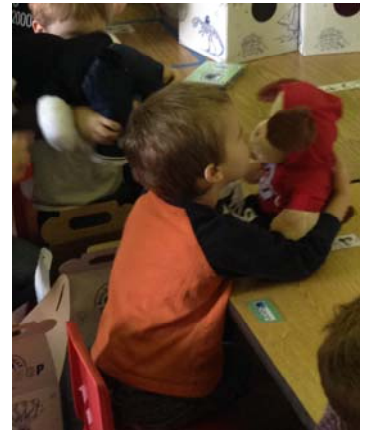
in the Medina County foster care system were surprised with a Build-A-Bear stuffed animal during the month of December.

“We love coming to deliver these bears and seeing these smiling faces,” Judge Dunn told Windfall staff. “It’s the highlight of our year.”

This was the eighth annual Build-A-Bear delivery day since the program began in 2007.



Community Service youth place hearts in the bears before it is stitched shut, dressed and boxed for delivery.



**Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court will be closed for  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day January 18, 2016.**

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## VGP WARDS ALSO SURPRISED WITH A STUFFED BUILD-A-BEAR FOR THE HOLIDAY

Volunteer Guardians who work with the Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program stopped by the Probate Court to pick up their stuffed Build-A-Bears to deliver to their wards just before the holiday.

This is the second year wards who are living in group homes for developmental disabilities, Medina County Home and nursing homes we surprised with their own

stuffed bear.

Nicki Shook, Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program Coordinator, said many of the county's wards have little family to celebrate the holidays with and the soft bears are a great tool to provide them comfort throughout the year.



## MILLER PROMOTED AS JUVENILE COURT PROGRAMMING, GRANTS COORDINATOR



Tony Miller, Medina County Juvenile Court Programming and Grants Coordinator

Tony Miller, who has worked with the Medina County Juvenile Court since 2003 and served as the Drug Court Coordinator since 2008, was promoted to Programming and Grants Coordinator in November.

Miller is replacing former Director of Programming Phillip Titterington, who is now serving as Director of the Medina County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board (ADAMH).

In his new role as Programming and Grants Coordinator, Miller will be responsible for overseeing all of the Juvenile Court programs and personnel, applying and maintaining

Juvenile Court grants and contracts, as well as continuing community outreach, among other duties.

Miller says he's sure he will face some challenges transitioning into his new role, but believes his familiarity with the Court and his fellow staff is easing the process.

"I know this position will be challenging at times but it's nice that I don't have to concern myself with the additional task of learning who is responsible for what in which department, which can be daunting," Miller said.

A new Drug Court Coordinator is expected to begin in January 2016.



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### PROACTIVE PLAN ADDRESSES HEROIN USE IN MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE COURT

**Judge Kevin Dunn has planned a preemptive strike against highly addictive drugs in his Court, creating a best practices plan that the Court will enforce to help address the issue of increased heroin use in our community.**

With heroin use on the rise in Medina County, Judge Kevin W. Dunn's Court has implemented a plan of action for court-involved teens engaged in opiate abuse or trafficking.

"Heroin has become a serious concern to the citizens of our county," Judge Dunn said. "It is on the rise at an alarming rate and the Court is doing everything possible to connect kids and families to services."

As of October 14, 2015, the Medina County Drug Task Force reports 118 heroin overdoses in Medina County for the year, resulting in 20 reported deaths. Medina County Juvenile Court has also seen a considerable increase in court-involved teens testing positive for opiates within the past year.

The Court's best practices plan will be used to help determine the depth of a juvenile's drug use and dependence, as well as determine necessary treatment and supervision needs. The plan also calls for a parental education component designated to give parents the critical tools to address this crisis.

If a youth tests positive for opiates or is charged with an opiate-related offense, the Court will determine the appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the juvenile and the community. Each child will be evaluated and based upon

his or her needs, the Court will determine appropriate orders. The Court may order a juvenile to be detained at the Juvenile Detention Center, be placed on intensive probation services, including Drug Court Probation, and place the youth on a path of intensive inpatient or outpatient treatment and counseling.

"With the prominence of social media, children and teens connect to people who may pose a high risk of harm to them without your knowledge," Judge Dunn said. "I encourage parents to be vigilant and to avail themselves of programs such as Hidden in Plain Sight when available in local schools, secure your medications, alcohol and weapons, and remember that as parents, kids don't have the right to privacy. You have the right and duty to know what your children are doing, what they are involved in and who their friends are because you are the first line of defense. If you have any concerns, address them immediately, directly and through counseling."

For a list of available programs and services for teens and adults who may be struggling with heroin abuse, visit [www.MedinaJuvenile.org](http://www.MedinaJuvenile.org) or the Medina County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board website at [www.MedinaMentalHealth.com](http://www.MedinaMentalHealth.com).

### RESOURCES

Below is a list of local resources that may be able to help those struggling with opiate abuse.

#### **Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board**

The ADAMH Board is responsible for seeing that effective and affordable treatment and prevention services are available in Medina County for adults, teens and children.

246 Northland Drive Medina, Ohio

Phone: (330) 723-9642

[www.medinamentalhealth.com](http://www.medinamentalhealth.com)

#### **Solutions Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.**

Solutions Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. is a full service, comprehensive, outpatient behavioral healthcare organization that provides services for children, adolescents, and adults of all ages dealing with concerns related to mental health, psychiatric, relationship or alcohol and drug use problems.

246 Northland Drive Medina, Ohio 44256

Phone: (330) 723-9600

[www.solutionsbh.org](http://www.solutionsbh.org)

#### **Alternative Paths**

Alternative Paths provides outpatient behavioral healthcare services with a multidisciplinary clinical team of psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, clinical social workers, clinical counselors, case managers and chemical dependency clinicians.

246 Northland Drive Medina, Ohio 44256

Phone: (330) 725-9195

[www.alternativepaths.org](http://www.alternativepaths.org)

#### **Robby's Voice**

A community-based organization focused on promoting awareness and education surrounding drug addiction. Robby's Voice provides in-person programs sharing the story and personal experience of losing a son and brother to addiction.

1114 N. Court Street #123 Medina, Ohio 44256

[www.robbyvoice.com](http://www.robbyvoice.com)

For additional resources, visit [www.MedinaJuvenile.org](http://www.MedinaJuvenile.org)

The Medina County Juvenile & Probate Court, Judge Kevin W. Dunn, nor the Court's employees or affiliates endorse any private treatment facility listed herein.

It is not the intention of the Court to provide specific treatment or medical advice, but rather to provide users with information to better understand the available services in our community. The list is not a comprehensive list of all treatment providers and will be updated as treatment providers become available.

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## Preventing Heroin Use at Home

Medina County Juvenile Court has initiated a plan to address the increased use of heroin among teens in Medina County, however, not all youth who use heroin end up court-involved. This is why Judge Kevin Dunn encourages parents to be vigilant and know what their children are doing and who they spend time with.

Below are some facts about heroin, and examples of both environmental and physical warning signs to look for if you suspect someone is using. For more information, visit websites such as LetsFaceHeroin.com, AboveTheInfluence.com and DrugAbuse.gov.



### ▶ WHAT IS HEROIN?

Heroin is an opioid that is synthesized from morphine, a naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed pod of the Asian opium poppy plant. In many cases, heroin will also contain additives that will not dissolve in the bloodstream easily causing a blood clot to form and travel to the lungs, liver, heart or brain, which is instantly fatal.

Heroin enters the brain very quickly making it particularly addictive, and suppresses breathing, which is why using heroin always carries the risk of overdose and death.

In addition to the risk of a fatal overdose, heroin use can lead to a number of serious health conditions, including infectious diseases like hepatitis and HIV. Users may also develop collapsed veins, infection of the heart lining and valves, abscesses, constipation and gastrointestinal cramping, liver or kidney disease, and pulmonary complications including various types of pneumonia.

- National Institute on Drug Abuse

**It's estimated that almost one-fourth of the people who try heroin become addicted.**

- National Institute on Drug Abuse

### ▶ ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNS OF HEROIN USE:

- **Burned Carpet**—Black spots or areas where carpet has been burned, usually from cooked heroin spilling
- **Torn corners of plastic baggies**—Often used to distribute heroin
- **Burnt foil/spoons/tea candle tins**—Used to cook heroin and will accumulate soot from open flames
- **Pen parts/straws**—Used to snort heroin or crush opiate pills
- **Torn Q-tip buds or cut cigarette filters**—Used to filter heroin liquid when filling needles
- **Plastic bottle caps**—Used to mix heroin powder with water prior to injecting
- **Folded receipts**—Innocent looking packaging used to carry heroin powder

### ▶ BEHAVIORAL SIGNS OF HEROIN USE:

- **Stealing**—Money is needed to support the habit
- **Loss of appetite/weight**—Opiate use suppresses appetite and the frequent vomiting makes food unappealing
- **Itchy arms, neck and legs**—Frequent injections may cause skin irritation
- **Wearing long sleeves**—when it seems inappropriate to cover needle marks
- **Constricting/pinpoint pupils**—An involuntary effect unlike other drugs that dilate pupils
- **Nodding off**—Addiction drains the body of energy causing a sleep-like effect
- **Isolation**—social needs become secondary to heroin use

### ▶ SYMPTOMS OF A HEROIN OVERDOSE:

- Choking or gurgling sound
- White patches on tongue
- Ashen or blue skin, fingernails
- Awake but unable to talk
- Weak or no pulse

**If you suspect a heroin overdose, call 911 immediately.**