



ANNUAL REPORT

June 2016

FAIRFIELD COUNTY JUVENILE & PROBATE COURT
JUDGE TERRE L. VANDERVOORT

JUVENILE COURT

For the Fairfield County Juvenile Court, 2016 was another year of expanding, enhancing and evaluating exciting new programs, services, and intervention philosophies that align with nationally recognized evidence-based models. The transformation of our court operations to more effectively meet the needs of the youth and families of our community continued, with additional research into best practice programs from courts throughout Ohio and across the nation. My primary goals for the Juvenile Court are to reduce the number of youth who re-offend, to prepare young people to contribute to society, and to protect the citizens of Fairfield County.



PROBATE COURT

This annual report highlights many of the new and enhanced programs offered by the Court in 2016, in both the Juvenile and Probate Court. I thank each of the Court staff, the Prosecutors, and Defense Counsel for their patience, dedication, and just plain hard work and long hours to provide services to the public, the youth, and families in our Court system. The cooperation among local officials, schools, law enforcement, and other agencies has again been amazing.

A special thanks to the Fairfield County Commissioners and their team members for listening to our concerns, and for their efforts to help us better serve our youth and families in Fairfield County.

Sincerely,

Judge Terre L. Vandervoort

CC: Fairfield County Board of Commissioners
Ohio Supreme Court
Fairfield County Library
Website

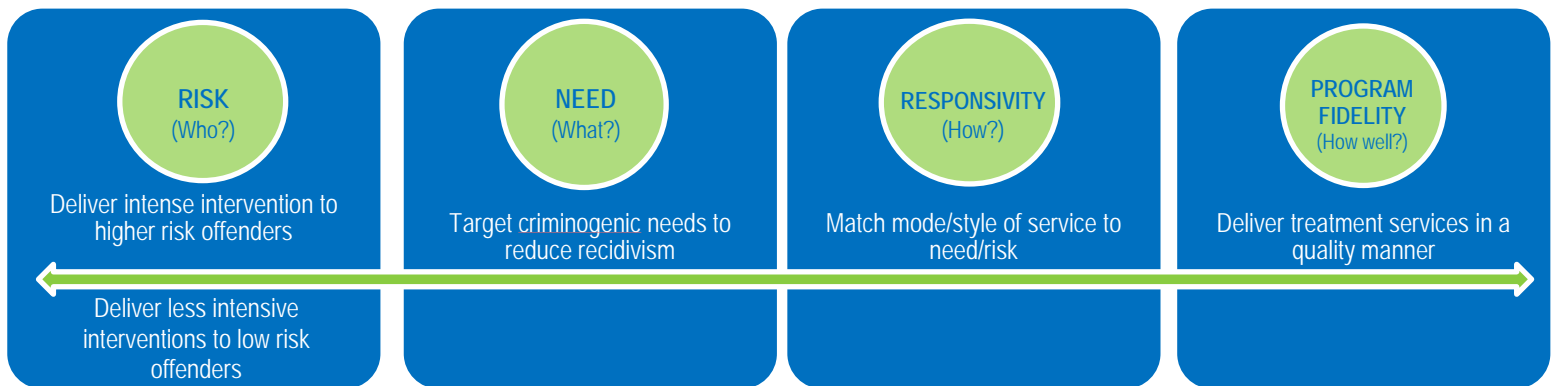
WHAT WORKS?

JUVENILE DIVISION
JUDGE TERRE L. VANDERVOORT

Evidence shows that the incarceration of low risk youth **INCREASES** that youth's likelihood of **reoffending** and is thus actually **harmful to the youth**. In lieu of detention, evidence shows that community services such as mentoring, counseling, academic support, workforce development, in home case management, and family interventions are more successful in preventing recidivism.

WHO – WHAT – HOW – HOW WELL

The most effective programs for at risk juveniles are based on several principles of effective interventions?



ASSESSING RISK: WHO?

The research indicates that to reduce the likelihood that a youth will re-offend, courts should focus resources on individuals most likely to offend. Through an evidence-based risk assessment tool, all youth that come before the Court are identified as low, medium, or high risk for re-offending.

ASSESSING NEED: WHAT?

Risk factors correlated with criminal conduct that the Court must strategically target with each youth are:

- Criminal History
- Antisocial Attitudes
- Antisocial Peers
- Temperament and Personality Factors
- Education & Employment
- Substance Abuse
- Leisure & Recreation

ASSESSING RESPONSE: HOW?

- **Deliver greater dosage** of treatment to high risk offenders
- **Avoid including lower risk offenders** in more intensive services
- **Match density and intensity** of service to risk level
- **Use cognitive-behavioral strategies** to decrease antisocial behaviors and increase pro-social behaviors
- **Match the style and mode of service** to key offenders' key characteristics and learning styles
- **Target & restructure** antisocial behavior
- **Teach & model** new social and coping skills
- **Teach** problem solving
- **Reinforce** pro-social behaviors
- **Sanction** antisocial behavior

PROGRAM FIDELITY: HOW WELL?

The Court must track the statistical outcomes of its programs to ensure they are achieving the intended outcome.

JUVENILE FUNDING

JUVENILE DIVISION
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JUVENILE COURT FUNDING

SOURCE	PROVIDES FOR	2015	2016
County General Fund	Court Operations Employees	1,797,010	1,856,247
Department of Youth Services 510	Employees Counselors Psychological Evaluations Training	770,616.26	779,472.73
Juvenile Recovery Fund	Employees	24,139.59	178,417.56
Computer/Computer Research	Maintenance/Upgrades to Software Equipment Website	19,655.10	15,908.64
Alternative School Fund	Closed	1,274.51	249.25
Drug Court Fund	Drug Court Operations	65,164.85	108,900.00
Multi-System Pooled Fund	Mental Health Counselors	130,000	130,000.00
Title IV-E Fund	Foster Care Diversion Facility	821,714.51	305,564.37
TOTAL JUVENILE REVENUE		3,629,574.82	3,374,759.55

JUVENILE COURT STATISTICS

JUVENILE DIVISION
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NEW CHARGES	2015	2016
Felony Cases Filed	68	50
Felony Adjudications	50	38
Bind-overs as an Adult	1	0
Victim Over 65	0	1
All Charges Involving Drugs & Alcohol	102	72
Informal Cases Filed	168	188
Dependency, Neglect, or Abuse Filings	171	169
Permanent Custody Motions Filed	23	25
Custody, Change of Custody, Visitation	23	28
Adult Cases Filed	58	136
Diversion – Traditional via Matrix	144	183

PROPERTY & THEFT CHARGES	2015	2016
Criminal Trespass	9	18
Criminal Mischief	128	7
Criminal Damaging/Vandalism	36	28
Theft	74	60
Burglary, Robbery, Breaking & Entering	13	8
Receiving Stolen Property	6	9
Arson	1	2
Disorderly Conduct	74	37

VIOLENT CRIMES	2015	2016
Menacing/Aggravated Menacing	14	23
Assault/Aggravated Assault	46	42
Domestic Violence	21	24
Against Elderly/Handicapped	0	1

SEXUAL OFFENSES	2015	2016
Rape/Sexual Battery	26	5
Gross Sexual Imposition	27	7
Dissemination	9	2

TRAFFIC	2015	2016
Speed	328	347
ACDA	80	85
OVI	6	14
Felony	0	0
Vehicular Homicide	0	0
Other	309	328

JUVENILE COURT STATISTICS

JUVENILE DIVISION
JUDGE TERRE L. VANDERVOORT

UNITS OF SERVICE (Youth Served by Program)	2015	2016
1. PROBATION CASES	536	351
2. COMMUNITY CONTROL CASES	17	14
3. INFORMALS	168	188
4. DIVERSION	144	183
5. CRS	n/a	27
TOTAL YOUTH SERVED (Non-Duplicative)	865	763
6. Truancy Court	88	117
7. Truancy Block	55	89
8. Reporting Center	n/a	29
9. Academic Services	55	148
11. Family Court	10	17
12. Drug Court	21	14
13. SAFE Court	n/a	11
14. Intake & Assessment	188	194
15. Behavioral Health Services	201	158
16. Youth Accountability Program	172	123
17. Traffic Court	723	774
18. Mentoring	9	40
19. IV-E Placement	8	7
TOTAL SERVICE UNITS TO YOUTH (Possible duplication of youth)	1530	1721

COURT PROGRAMS

JUVENILE DIVISION
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ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

ACADEMIC SERVICES	2015	2016
Youth provided academic assistance	55	148

The Court employs a local retired school administrator to work as a liaison between youth and the schools to determine the needs, proper placement, supportive academic services needed and available, and determine the academic goals of the student. The Court also contracts with academic tutors to work one on one with youth at the Reporting Center.

Academic success is one of five pro-social priority areas in the Fairfield County Juvenile Court and probate court vision statement and Guiding Principles. The Court has directed our resources, interventions, and decisions, from intake to case closure toward improving academic performance and reducing school behavior and truancy problems. The Court began an Academic Success program to provide assistance to court involved youth who are struggling academically.

ADULT CASES

ADULT CASES	2015	2016
Failure to send	14	84
Contributing	16	10
Educational Neglect	0	0
Non-Support	28	42
TOTAL YOUTH SERVED	58	136

Juvenile Court has jurisdiction of misdemeanor cases involving adults in the area of truancy, contributing to the delinquency of a minor and criminal non-support for failure to pay Child Support.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services)

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CASES	2015	2016
Lethality Assessments	31	27
Mental Health Assessments	104	57
Youth in ongoing treatment	66	74
TOTAL YOUTH SERVED	201	158

In 2015 the Court eliminated most of the full time Behavior Health Unit, maintaining a small clinical department to provide assessments (including lethality) along with counseling services to juvenile offenders and their families. The goal is always to refer the youth and family to local resources for

ongoing treatment. Behavioral health staff and contracted services not only provide services to individual youth, but serve in a consulting role to the Court to enable all parties involved with a case to understand the unique needs of a youth as it relates to mental health and substance abuse issues. The counselors team with Probation Officers, Diversion Officers, Magistrates and the Judge to provide holistic case planning for youth.

COMMUNITY CONTROL

COMMUNITY CONTROL	2015	2016
Caseload	17	14

Community Control is a legal status that empowers the Court to enforce participation in programming orders such as mental health counseling, traffic safety school, and skill building while not immersing the juvenile deeper into the

juvenile system through probation. A Community Control officer monitors compliance with orders and upon completion, the juvenile has successfully completed the program.

COMMUNITY REQUEST FOR SERVICES (CRS)

CRS	2015	2016
Caseload	n/a	27

The CRS prevention program allows families dealing with at-risk youth to request informal assistance from the Court to identify risk factors and refer the family to services. The program has piloted in several county schools and received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

DETENTION

DAYS OF DETENTION SERVED	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Days served	6,767	5,869	5,110	4,835	6,132	4,486	2,961	2,061

Fairfield County has a Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center. As the Court adds more evidence based programs to reduce recidivism, the use of the Detention Center has dramatically been reduced in recent years.

DIVERSION

DIVERSION CASES	2015	2016
Youth referred to Diversion	144	183
Successful completion	85.6%	85%
Unsuccessful completion	13.4%	12.4%
Neutral outcome due to medical reasons	1.0%	2.7%

The Fairfield County Juvenile Diversion Program provides first-time non-violent juvenile offenders with early intervention services as an alternative to the official court system and a permanent record.

Many youth and families that come into contact with the Juvenile Court have no history of previous involvement. Their offenses may be relatively minor in nature. Experience and research have shown that future Court involvement can be prevented through the development of a comprehensive plan that

TYPES OF DIVERSION CASES	2015	2016
Felony	1.4%	0
Misdemeanor	92%	70.4%
Status Offense	6.5%	29.6%

utilizes the resources of the family and community. This process “diverts” the youth from formal Court involvement to community based programs. The goals of the

program are to:

- Teach youth that their actions have consequences and that the choices they make now will affect them the rest of their lives, and;
- Provide the family with needed resources, and;
- Prevent future involvement of the youth with the Juvenile Justice system

The program requires participation from both the juvenile and the parents. Youth meet with and are monitored by their Diversion Officer to complete a contract which may include, but is not limited to, community service, restitution, improving school attendance and grades, apology letters, and referral to behavioral health services. Offenses that are commonly referred to Diversion by the Fairfield County Prosecutors office are underage consumption, petty theft, disorderly conduct, and truancy.

DRUG COURT

JUVENILE DRUG COURT	2015	2016
Participants	21	17
Participants graduated from high school	2	3
Participants terminated	3	4
Status hearings	99	91
Graduates	5	6
TOTAL SERVICED	130	121

Juvenile Drug Court is an intensive, court supervised, drug treatment program that provides an alternative to regular probation for those youth who have a serious drug problem that brought them into the juvenile justice system. The three phase program includes frequent contacts at home and in the community with a probation officer, as

well as, intensive treatment. Multiple court appearances with the entire treatment team ensure appropriate services are in place, family remains engaged, and positive incentives and sanctions are administered immediately. Drug Court youth have random and frequent drug testing in addition to other supportive services to ensure their success in both the home and the community. Participants who successfully complete the program have their criminal charge dismissed.

Fairfield County Juvenile Drug Court is a certified specialized docket through the Ohio Supreme Court.

FAMILY COURT

FAMILY COURT	2015	2016
Participants	10	15
Participants Terminated	2	6
Status Hearings	36	85
Graduates	6	1
TOTAL SERVICED	54	107

Fairfield County Juvenile Court's Family court was established in 2005 to address the growing substance abuse problem in Fairfield County. Based upon the Drug Court model, Family Court is designed for parents who have a significant substance abuse problem and are involved in the judicial system by way of an abuse, neglect, or dependency matter that has been filed in court by Child Protective Services. Frequent status hearings before the Court are combined with coordinated services by Child Protective Services and treatment providers. Parents are encouraged to participate in this intensive treatment program to facilitate a faster reunification process with their children. Fairfield County Family Court is a certified specialized docket with the Ohio Supreme Court.

INFORMALS

INFORMALS	2015	2016
Caseload	168	188

Certain offenses such as curfew and tobacco violations are scheduled for a meeting with a court officer to address risk factors and family solutions.

INTAKE & ASSESSMENT

INTAKE & ASSESSMENT CASES	2015	2016
Cases referred to I&A	188	194
Average length of time in I & A before transfer to Probation	58 Days	62 Days

In 2015, the Fairfield County Juvenile Court created an Intake & Assessment unit to assist the Court in understanding the risk factors and family/educational/mental health history of a youth and family to better enable the Court to impose orders

that were specific to each family's unique circumstances. All cases that are formally filed with the Court (except Diversion cases) are assigned to an Intake & Assessment Officer who meets with the youth and family to gather information. Questions relate to: risk to reoffend, mental health/substance abuse concerns, education and any other factors that assist the Court in determining the best disposition of the case. This enables us to help the youth and family access needed services and to keep the community and youth safe. In addition to the family/youth interview, screenings are conducted, (risk, mental health, substance abuse, trauma) and collateral information is gathered.

IV-E PLACEMENT

IV-E	2015	2016
Court Care & Control	8	7

The Care and Control of a juvenile is placed in a relative or non-relative kinship home. Care and Control means Fairfield County Juvenile Court has assumed responsibility of said child to assure the safety and well-being of said child through a Court Order. The biological parents of said child maintain residual rights and shall continue to participate in school activities, receive updates regarding progress their child is making, and be included in any educational planning for said child. The Court must comply with the same standards of placement followed by Child Protective Services.

MENTORING

MENTORING	2015	2016
Reporting Center	n/a	29
HYPE	2	3
GLOW	7	8
TOTAL YOUTH SERVED	9	40

Evidence shows that mentoring is successful in reducing recidivism. The Court currently has three (3) mentoring programs:

1. The Reporting Center Mentoring Project– where community volunteers are working with Court youth at the Reporting Center to develop life skills discuss issues and concerns, and to share time and experiences.
2. HYPE (Helping Young People Excel) – Young men led by a male probation officer that follows a 10 week agenda. Activities include Adopt a Highway, personal hygiene, grilling, bowling, getting haircuts, and hiking.
3. GLOW (Girls Light Our World) – Young women led by female probation officers that follows a 10 week agenda. Activities include: arts/crafts, bake sale for donations to Salvation Army, health & fitness, positive self-image, and various community events.

PROBATION

PROBATION CASELOAD (Diversion began in 2015)	2015	2016
Caseload	536	351

Consistent with the Court's Guiding Principles, the primary objective of the Probation Department is to achieve balanced attention to the protection of the community,

imposition of accountability, and the development of skills and competencies needed to improve youth and family functioning.

The Probation Department team members have completed extensive cognitive based intervention training (*T4C – Thinking for a Change, EPICS – Effective Practices in Community Supervision, and COG – Cognitive Based Interventions*) to equip them with the skills needed to most effectively impact and serve our young people and their families. Probation Officers develop individualized case plans for each youth, including terms and conditions of probation, identification of strengths and needs, and linkages to services.

The Probation Department's goal is to monitor each juvenile's probation terms and conditions so that a timely completion of their case plan can be obtained. Our interventions are based around the five primary areas for competency development; pro-social skills, moral reasoning skills, academic skills, workforce development skills, and independent living skills using a graduated sanction philosophy. It is our belief that working with the youth, families, educators, and community partners to address competency development needs most closely associated with the juvenile's offending behavior will build confidence and strength to support them as they continue on their life path.

REPORTING CENTER

REPORTING CENTER (Started in 2016)	2015	2016
Youth ordered in lieu of detention	n/a	29
Days served in lieu of detention	n/a	454

The Reporting Center is an innovative detention alternative that provides a restricted environment during evening hours for youth who have violated probation or that simply

need greater supervision and support services. A variety of programs offered at the Reporting Center include academic assist, health and fitness, art and music, life skills, mentoring, and workforce development training.

SAFE COURT

SAFE COURT	2015	2016
Participants	n/a	4
Participants Terminated	n/a	0
Status Hearings	n/a	16
Graduates	n/a	1
TOTAL YOUTH SERVICED	n/a	21

SAFE Court is a pilot project with Fairfield County Child Protective Services which allows parents to voluntarily enter the program prior to formal action by FCCPS. The program allows families to receive wrap around services to combat addiction while the family remains intact.

TRAFFIC COURT

TRAFFIC COURT	2015	2016
Traffic Court Cases	723	774

Traffic Court is held every Wednesday. All juvenile traffic offenders are seen.

TRUANCY BLOCK

TRUANCY BLOCK	2015	2016
Truancy cases seen in block	55	89
Truancy cases diverted	9	51
Successful diversion of truancy cases	7	80.4%
Unsuccessful diversion of truancy resulting in unruly adjudication	2	19.6%

Truancy Block is a multi-disciplinary approach to truancy. Families appear at a scheduled time prior to their appearance to meet with team members which may include Diversion Officers, Mental Health team members, CPS, and Intake and Assessment members. The goal is to quickly identify risk factors and attempt to divert the juvenile from the juvenile system to the Diversion Program.

TRUANCY COURT

TRUANCY COURT	2015	2016
Students in Truancy Court (Lancaster City & Amanda-Clearcreek)	88	117
Students eventually charged for failure to improve attendance	16	14
Successful Interventions	82%	88%
Required further involvement	18%	12%

Truancy Court is one piece of a combined effort on the part of area schools and the Fairfield County Juvenile Court to encourage academic success for all students. Our shared goal is to improve student attendance and foster greater opportunities for student achievement.

Truancy court also provides students and families who have not made daily attendance the priority it should be with the chance to avoid formal charges from the district and/or the Court. Truancy Court reminds students and their parents and guardians of potential consequences in an informal setting focused on identifying both cause and solutions for the attendance problem at hand. Court team members meet with families to develop family success plans to reduce truancy.



YOUTH ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM

YOUTH ORDERED TO PERFORM COMMUNITY SERVICE	2015	2016
Community Service Ordered	174	123
Hours completed during the time period	3,654.25 hrs.	2,291.75 hrs.

The Court's Youth Accountability Program provides youth who are involved with the Court an opportunity to volunteer in community services. A

key factor in youth working community service hours is the clear message that their actions have violated a public trust and that youth must regain that trust.

The Youth Accountability Program helps young offenders develop new skills and positive competencies as well as build assets through interaction supervised in community work service with positive adult role models. The goal is to re-establish public trust and thereby reduce the likelihood of recurring acts of unruliness or delinquency. Sample of locations where community service has been performed: Habitat for Humanity, Lancaster Parks and Recs, Lancaster Historical Parks, Buckeye Lake, AHA, Community Action, Meals on Wheels, Company Wrench, United Way, Maywood Mission, Violet Festival, Destination Downtown and Lions Club.

PROBATE DIVISION

JUDGE TERRE L. VANDERVOORT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PROBATE COURT

Fairfield County Probate Court strives to provide professional services to its customers that are timely, responsive and based on best practice.

PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED DURING THE YEAR

Ongoing guardianship training occurs through the Court to comply with the new Rules of Superintendence adopted by the Ohio Supreme Court.

A draft of new Probate Court Rules were completed and 2017 will see the Court holding work sessions with the local boards to make changes prior to adoption in the 3rd quarter of 2017.

The Court hired a Court Investigator in partnership with Domestic Relations Court to assist the Court in fact gathering in guardianship cases.

GOALS FOR 2017

- Adoption of the new Probate Rules in collaboration with the Fairfield County Bar Association.
- Activation of a records retention committee to deal with the probate records held by the Court and any potential for imaging.
- Work with Fairfield County Bar Association on resolving the shortage of attorneys to work on Guardianships.

FUNDING

NEW PROBATE CASES	2015	2016
Adoptions & Placements	45	58
Civil Actions	49	51
Estates	589	522
Wrongful Death Actions	3	6
Guardianships (All Types)	73	57
Mental Affidavits	34	35
Name Changes	81	65
Minor's Settlements	12	12
Birth Record Corrections	3	9
Trusts	8	5
Conservatorships	0	0
Marriage Licenses Issued	875	834
TOTAL SERVICED	1,772	1,654

SOURCE	PROVIDES FOR	2015	2016
County General Fund	Court Operations Employees	\$549,784	\$653,257.00
Computer/Computer Research	Maintenance/ Upgrades	\$33,362	\$42,826.62
Indigent Guardian Funds	Guardians/Attorney for Indigent Wards	\$17,299	\$13,650.00
Special Projects	Court Special Projects	\$33,269.26	\$50,278.08
TOTAL PROBATE REVENUE		\$633,678.26	Juvenile \$39,368.08 Probate \$10,910.00