



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma Ahluwalia
Director

COMMISSION ON JUVENILE JUSTICE
Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2017

CITIZEN MEMBERS PRESENT: Shezhad Akhtar, Bonnie DeWitt, Chris Fogleman, Christopher Jennison, Perry Paylor, Erynn Penn, Roberta Pieczenik, Wendy Pulliam, and Tisha Wiley.

AGENCY MEMBERS PRESENT: Amy Bills, Gloria Bowen, Francha Davis, Frank Duncan, Susan Farag, Risa Mainprize, Mary Siegfried, and Michael Subin

ABSENT MEMBERS: Maria Blaeuer, Carole Brown, Cary Fellows, Karen Frances, Mike Gruenberg, Stacey Gurian-Sherman, Captain Jim Humphries, Carlean Ponder (Chair), and Elijah Wheeler

STAFF LIAISON PRESENT: Diane Lininger

SPEAKERS: Honorable Anne Albright, Honorable Cynthia Callahan, and Honorable Joan E. Ryon

GUESTS: Karyn Gross, Marianne Hendricks, Regina Morales, Nick Moroney, Matt Paris, Tia Scott, .and Judy Rupp,

Commission on Juvenile Justice

7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600, Rockville, Maryland 20855 • 240-777-3317 • 240-777-4447
facsimile

1. How often do the Montgomery County Juvenile Judges meet with other juvenile judges in nearby counties to discuss common issues presented in their court rooms?

There are 3 different ways that the Judges from different counties get together to discuss common issues; 1 formal and 2 informal. There is the CANDO conference which is a 2- day conference offered in various locations within the State. Experts are brought in from all over the country for this conference. Various topics are discussed, such as, human trafficking, substance abuse, and trauma. The Judges get together and compare their notes on how to handle these issues. Other opportunities are committees that the Judges sit on. For example, Judge Albright sits on the Juvenile Law committee, which meets weekly by telephone to discuss recommendations on legislatives.

2. What do you think are some of the most effective strategies in reducing recidivism rates?

Montgomery County does not have Magistrates, instead there are Judges only who sit in a rotation for 18 months. If a child has a strong team for their Court related process, they are more likely to do better. Sometimes, Judges in Montgomery County will carry a case over with them into their next rotation. For example, Judge Callahan took 150 kids (cases) with her when she was off the rotation. The reasoning behind this is that the Judge already knows the child's story, how to interact with them, and what issues they have. The Judges believe that recidivism is a big issue for children with delinquency cases; they mentioned that this is no fault of DJS but that this is in fact a legislative issue. Also mentioned was the ERC and its helpfulness to the youth involved. Judge Ryon stated that it would be beneficial to get a program such as the Evening Reporting Center (ERC) for post-disposition.

3. When the Judges are sharing of information for "crossover youth" when the children involved with CWS are not CINA. For example, when a DJS-involved youth is the offender in a sibling sex abuse case, Child Welfare is often involved with the family, either through an open investigation or continuing services. However, if the victims and/or the DJS-involved youth are not CINA, the "crossover youth" policy does not permit DJS to share information with Child Welfare Services and in my experience, this is frustrating and prevents us from effectively working with victims of sibling sexual abuse.

With the new Crossover Youth Policy, in-home services will be covered. The Court is permitted to order the two Departments (CWS and DJS) to speak with one another if the Judge deems it appropriate.

- 4. An Alternative disposition was Juvenile Drug Court, since it no longer exists, do you feel that it would be helpful to have Juvenile Drug Court back again as an available disposition?**

The Judges stated that this was a hard sale due to their not being enough constituents. Therefore, it is not likely that this will become available to Montgomery County.

- 5. How many cases regarding school discipline referrals come before the Juvenile Court? Do these cases come before the Court and why?**

None; there are mediators from the States Attorney's Office (SAO) trained for Juvenile issues. According to the SAO, there were 2 issues mediated by them in 2016. DJS handles juvenile peace orders and try their best to divert it but parents want court according to Frank Duncan.

- 6. Do you believe that Montgomery County provides adequate services for girls and young women who are involved or at risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system?**

No, and there are some things that girls need to have that are different from boys. There are no resources out there because no one has hit the right key. Matt Paris from the ERC was present and added that available resources, such as the ERC, are not being fully utilized. According to Mr. Paris, only 3 youth are currently at the ERC. Judge Callahan made a point that there needs to be more visitation houses in the county as well, as it is a resource that is needed all throughout Montgomery County and not just Rockville.

- 7. What do you see as your biggest challenges this past year in Court?**

The biggest challenge this year has been the lack of clarity on State and Local officials on immigration laws. Victims of Domestic Violence are not filing charges because they are scared of being deported. The language barrier, even with use of an interpreter, is also an issue.

- 8. How can the Commission support you in addressing those concerns or others?**

Advocate and make noise for more resources.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00pm