

Pima County Juvenile Court
Communication Bulletin
June 2013



Court making big strides in becoming trauma responsive

What conclusions would you draw about James if he cussed at his teachers, was always starting fights with his classmates and recently stabbed a fellow student?

Would you change your mind if you knew James witnessed his mother strangled four times by her boyfriend, was himself threatened with a gun by the same boyfriend, has an alcoholic father, suffers nightmares and has spent time living in a battered women’s shelter?

Read more Pages 3-5

Check out these other stories in this month’s bulletin:



Pima County Juvenile Court recently celebrated a big milestone.

Read more Page 10



Kids’ green thumbs could mean tastier detention center meals.

Read more Page 2



The Navajo rug in Anne Chamberlin’s office isn’t just a pretty wall hanging.

Read more Page 6

Kids in detention growing in more ways than one



So what do you do when you work in a detention center and you no longer need restraint beds? You make flower beds, of course! And a vegetable garden.

Five years ago, Christina DeGroot was sitting in the Pima County Juvenile Detention Center's library when she looked outside and had a brainstorm.

The detention officer had been researching detention alternatives and therapeutic programs

when it occurred to her gardening is a therapeutic activity.

Encouraged by her bosses and co-workers -- who came up with the idea of using the restraint beds as growing containers -- DeGroot quickly submitted a proposal for a gardening program.

Although DeGroot eventually became an adult probation officer, the garden became a reality in 2011.

For the past two years, the kids have been learning the fine art of planting and tending to vegetables, herbs and flowers.

Some of the produce is grown in wooden beds once used to restrain out-of-control kids and some is grown in containers made out of recycled milk containers.

Folks from the University of Arizona Pima County Cooperative Extension and the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona visit regularly to give tips to staff and kids.

The crops have been donated to the community food bank, but it may one day end up in the kids' meals.

Stacy Peercy, an instruction specialist with the extension, is helping staff apply to the Arizona Department of Health Services to become part of the School Garden program.

If accepted, the kids' onions, tomatoes, cilantro, peppers, spinach, beans, lettuce, parsley, radishes and oregano could be used by detention center cooks.

Leona Davis, the food bank's education and advocacy coordinator, said gardening gives the kids a connection to the outside world, the experience of taking care of a living thing and educates them about where our food comes from.

"It's such a healing process for anyone going through a troubling time," Davis said. "We (also) love that they have been donating the food, it's such a sweet gesture."

DR learned so much during his five weeks in detention, he's decided to become a landscaper. He is looking forward to his upcoming placement at Canyon State because they have an agricultural program.

He loved being outdoors taking care of plants and helping the community, he said.

"I didn't really care about the community when I got here, I only thought about myself," DR said. "Being here has taught me my manners and a different way of seeing things."

PCJCC working toward becoming trauma responsive

What conclusions would you draw about James if he cussed at his teachers, was always starting fights with his classmates and recently stabbed a fellow student?

Would you change your mind if you knew James witnessed his mother strangled four times by her boyfriend, was himself threatened with a gun by the same boyfriend, has an alcoholic father, suffers nightmares and has spent time living in a battered women's shelter?

Better yet, would it change how you understood and worked with James and the kind of resources and services you would provide?

Such was the scenario presented by social psychologist Shawn Marsh during a recent workshop on trauma sponsored by Pima County Juvenile Court.



Social psychologist Shawn Marsh

Knowing just what might be behind a child's challenging behavior and then acting accordingly could have an important impact on the rest of that child's life.

Combat veterans often come back from war suffering the effects of what they've seen and experienced. They may have flashbacks, can be easily startled and seem to have constant "flight or fight" responses.

What people don't necessarily realize is childhood trauma can cause those symptoms and a whole host of others in children. Those symptoms can last a lifetime if not addressed.

What is a traumatic event?

- Child maltreatment – sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, psychological/emotional abuse, witnessing domestic violence.
- Witnessing violence
- Interpersonal victimization
- Violent injury
- Terrorism/War
- Natural disasters
- Loss of loved ones
- Serious accidents
- Medical trauma
- Domestic violence

In fact, Marsh believes many children have been diagnosed as having Attention Deficit, Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder or Bi-Polar, when, in fact, they may be suffering the ill effects of being traumatized.

Pima County Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Karen Adam is behind a push to become among the first courts in the nation to recognize and address the impact trauma has had on the children and parents who come through the courthouse door.

(Contd. Page 4)

It is well established trauma permeates the work we do. We all make the best decisions possible for children, families and community safety when we are guided by evidence, information, and resource availability, Judge Adam said.

“Thinking first about **what happened** to a child or a parent rather than **what is wrong** with that child or parent enables us to better understand and thus better decide, what the best course of action is for them,” Judge Adam said.

Judge Adam also notes vicarious trauma can be experienced by court staff. Working everyday with difficult cases involving children and families can cause employees heartache, trauma and chronic stress.

“Learning about our own history helps us understand our reactions and responses to people and situations. Becoming a trauma responsive court will allow us to strengthen ourselves, our children and families, and our community,” Judge Adam said.

Marsh is just one of several experts on childhood trauma to visit the court and community over the past several weeks.

In addition to Marsh, who is the current director of the Juvenile and Family Law Department of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Juliet Fortino, a registered play therapist from Presidio Counseling, also recently gave a lecture and provided examples on how trauma may present itself in children five and younger, six to 11 and 12 to 17-year-olds.

Vincent Felitti, a medical doctor and researcher, also recently provided a lecture, organized by Casa de los Ninos, on his Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study.

Felitti helped conduct the ACE Study on 17,000 middle-aged, middle-income adults. The study revealed the relationship

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between childhood trauma, future at-risk coping behaviors, and their compromised physical and mental health as adults.

All three speakers agree trauma can impact the development of a child physically, socially, behaviorally, emotionally and cognitively. As a result, maltreated children can have difficulty describing their feelings and controlling their behavior. They have a higher chance of getting arrested and don’t see much of a future for themselves.

Children, whose trauma has not been addressed can have physical, medical and mental health issues as adults, have a more difficult time getting and holding on to jobs and can have challenges in developing stable social supports. They are, again, more likely to be arrested.

Trauma is a known response to overwhelming circumstances. Understanding and strengthening resilience is an important consideration to prevent and address trauma. (Contd. Page 5)

Resilience is a protective factor that supports our physical, emotional and relational well-being and helps when we encounter risks to our well-being. By becoming more resilient, children and parents can enhance their capacity to 'bounce back' when faced with difficult feelings and experiences and life's challenges.

According to a 2012 study, child maltreatment cost the U.S. \$124 billion in 2008 because of medical costs, productivity losses, child welfare costs, criminal justice costs and special education.

Whether they are involved in the delinquency or dependency system, Judge Adam wants those who work within the court system to know about every child's experiences so we can respond appropriately. For example, by being able to spot early warning signs and risk factors, we can help children calm themselves, build on their strengths and support their resilience.

Reminders of frightening events, such as loud noises, certain behaviors or words, or even the time of day, might cause a child to become distressed. Early warning signs could include restlessness, pacing, sweating, tightness in the chest, etc.

If the adults around the child are aware of the signs, they could suggest the child go for a walk, talk it through, work out or listen to music.

Stress can be good, because it makes us adapt to our surroundings, but it's when stress becomes overwhelming that it results in trauma, Marsh said.

"Our brain and body don't do 'just because,'" Marsh said. "They react certain ways for a reason."

People who suffered the following as children are more likely to suffer from heart disease as adults:*

Emotional abuse: 1.7 times more likely

Physical abuse: 1.5 times more likely

Sexual abuse: 1.4 times more likely

Domestic violence: 1.4 times more likely

Mental Illness: 1.4 times more likely

Substance abuse: 1.3 times more likely

Household criminality: 1.7 times more likely

Emotional neglect: 1.3 times more likely

Physical neglect: 1.4 times more likely

*The study took into account other risk factors, including age, race, smoking habits and diabetes.

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For more information:

<http://www.cestudy.org/>

<http://www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/trauma-informed-system-care>

If you have insights, comments or suggestions on becoming a trauma responsive court, please contact Karen Abman at 740-4421.

Family Drug Court forges close relationships



Mary Louise Shidezhi Derrick and Anne Chamberlin show off Mary's gift to Anne, a Navajo rug she worked on for more than two years using skills she learned from her grandmother.

and it shows," Mary said. "She was so supportive and non-judgmental."

Anne and the other people in drug court kept track of her and her youngest son, who was placed into a foster home and then with her mother, Mary said.

"I just received all-around support. They were always there at all of my meetings and court

dates and always affirming me, telling me 'Good job and keep it up,'" Mary said.

Mary graduated from Family Drug Court in June 2012 and was reunited with her now 4-year-old son the following month. She also has a closer relationship with her 9-year-old, who was adopted by a relative.

Mary is doing so well she received her bachelor's degree in social work from Arizona State University on May 10 after spending two (Contd. Page 7)

The Navajo rug in Anne Chamberlin's office isn't just a pretty wall hanging.

It tells a story.

It tells Mary Louise Shidezhi Derrick's story, one with a happy ending.

Mary, 31, began drinking and smoking marijuana at 10.

She went into recovery at 19, but started using methamphetamine and crack cocaine three years later.

Things got so bad, CPS got involved and she relin-

quished her rights to her first born son. She got sober, had another son, but relapsed again when her father became terminally ill.

During her second time through the system, she received trauma therapy, outpatient drug treatment and aftercare. She also attended parenting classes and Family Drug Court, which is where she met Chamberlin, the drug court program manager.

"I like Anne's style. I like that she really likes people

semesters working as an intern with the Family Drug Court program. She will start on her master's degree in August.

Knowing first-hand what it's like to struggle, Mary has become a mentor and an advocate. She also gives presentations at an intensive outpatient program called Mothers Caring About Self.

Just recently, Mary has also been expressing her outrage that people who lose their children lose their state-funded medical insurance. If the goal is to reunify families, parents should have access to the medications they need, Mary said.

She has given speeches and emailed state lawmakers statements she collected from 30 drug court clients on the topic.

Chamberlin describes Mary as an "amazing," self-motivated woman who has overcome a lot.

Her experiences will make her an excellent social worker, Chamberlin said.

Chamberlin grew emotional when Mary presented the rug and explained each of the symbols on it. The stars represent her children, the eagle and roadrunners are symbols of her recovery and the staircase illustrates the 12 steps.

She began the rug when she got clean the first time around and it was one of the only things saved after she relapsed and lost everything.

Her grandmother, who was Navajo and Hopi, taught her to weave when she was 8.

"It was important for me to give it to Anne because she was one of my biggest advocates," Mary said. "I gave it to her from me, but also from all of the others she's helped."

The rug is one of her most prized possessions, Chamberlin said.

"I'm just really honored and proud," Chamberlin said.

Presiding Juvenile Court Judge receives accolades

Family Drug Court graduate Mary Louise Shidezhi Derrick is one grateful woman. Not only did she weave a Navajo rug for program manager Anne Chamberlin, she is behind one of the prestigious awards Presiding Pima County Juvenile Court Judge Karen Adam recently received.

Judge Adam was named the 2013 Citizen of the Year by the Arizona Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Derrick nominated her for the award.

The organization honors people who show outstanding commitment to areas of concern for social workers and display the values and ethics of social workers, said Jeremy Arp, executive director of the state organization.

"Judge Adam had a huge impact on me when I was a client," Mary said. "She made me feel like I wasn't being judged and coming from someone like her; it made me feel like I could do anything I set out to do."

Judge Adam was also recently honored by the Arizona Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts for her "distinguished contributions" in the field.

Judge Adam has been an "instrumental" part of the organization for years, said AFCC President-Elect Michael Aaron.

He described Judge Adam as "a great leader and a great motivator."

New program to address foster kids' educational needs

The numbers are heartbreaking and shocking. Only 50 percent of foster kids graduate from high school, more than 50 percent are unemployed, 33 percent receive public assistance, 25 percent spend time behind bars and more than 25 percent experience homelessness.

Pima County Juvenile Court is only the third court in the nation that has been hand-selected to take part in the FosterEd program, one designed to turn those numbers around.

Starting in August, a select number of children in the foster care system in Pima County will be appointed an "educational champion" who will work with an educational liaison to help the child improve their study habits, complete their homework and improve their test scores using a variety of methods taught by education experts, said Peter Hershberger, FosterEd manager.

Each child's strengths and needs will be assessed at the beginning of the program, an individual plan will be created and their progress will be measured carefully, Hershberger, a licensed professional counselor and former lawmaker said.

"We'll be telling schools for the first time who their foster children are and DES will know in real time how they are doing," Hershberger said. "We'll know about their test scores, grades, grade progression and behavior."

The children initially selected to participate will have the highest need for a champion, but Hershberger said he hopes



the program will expand as time goes on. If the program has been deemed a success at the end of two years, it will be expanded statewide.

The California-based organization has given Arizona a \$1.25 million grant and a five-year commitment, Hershberger said. The organization will be working with Pima County Juvenile Court, the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts, Attorney General's Office, Department of Economic Security, Department of Education, Governor's Office, and State Board of Education, Hershberger said.

The educational champions will be someone the child knows, someone who has the time to get involved and someone who will stay involved after they are no longer in foster care, Hershberger said. (Contd. Page 9)

The hope is that most of them will, in fact, be the child's natural parent.

Parents clearly have a vested interest in their child's future and will more than likely be happy to take advantage of the services they will be offered by the FosterEd program, Hershberger said.

They will be able to meet with educational liaisons one-on-one, in group settings or online, they'll be taught how to talk to school officials and how to obtain services, Hershberger said.

"We want our educational champions to believe that this program is the best way to convince a judge they can be a good parent, that they deserve to get their child back," Hershberger said.

The children picked for the FosterEd program will range from infants up through 18, Hershberger said.

The programs underway in Indiana and Santa Cruz County, California are focusing on kids between 5 and 18.

For more information: <http://www.foster-ed.org/>

Pima County Juvenile Court's national reputation and strong ties with local school districts led to our selection, said Pima County Juvenile Court Judge Jane Butler.

She is hopeful the program will be a success, given that there are 4,000 children in foster care in Pima County right now.

"These children are the future of our community and we're setting up 4,000 kids to have a less than adequate education," Judge Butler said.

She pointed out kids in foster care lose between six and 12 months of education every time they are removed from a home.

They lose ground because they are understandably distracted, have behavioral issues, their records aren't transferred in a timely manner and there are curriculum differences, Judge Butler said.

"For a lot of kids who are abused and neglected, the only consistent thing is school, their teachers, friends and school nurse," Judge Butler said. "When they are removed, that's eight hours of consistency gone."

Hopefully, the FosterEd program will help these children become high achievers, Judge Butler said.

"What I want for these kids is what I want for my daughter," she said.

Mediation program celebrates 15th Anniversary

By Susan Parnell

When I came to Pima County Juvenile Court 15 years ago, no one was quite sure what to think.

Dependency mediation was a new field and the introduction of this voluntary, confidential, collaborative decision-making process required a paradigm shift. I was hired to work on the development of a dependency mediation program at a time when many major changes were being made on the handling of dependency cases.

Although the going was slow at first, the stakeholders in dependency cases were able to make that shift and integrate mediation into their practice. During my first year I mediated barely 100 cases. By the end of this year, myself and my three colleagues are expected to have over 2000 sessions set on their calendars.

In the beginning, I only mediated visitation and service issues. Over the years, as confidence in the mediation process, the program and I took root, the topics that came to mediation expanded. By the time the second mediator was hired in 2005, I was facilitating settlement conferences on the matter of the dependency and mediating any number of issues that arise during the course of a child welfare case. Placement of the children, permanency planning issues, termination of parental rights, and family law matters (custody and parenting time) made their way to my mediation round table and are still addressed in the sessions conducted today.

The fact that the mediators saved the court more than 800 hours of trial time last year is just a side benefit to my way of thinking. I define my job as creating a space at the courthouse where parties can engage in a confidential, respectful, yet candid dialogue on any case-related issues.

To me, a successful session is when people come, they are engaged, and they are willing to explore possibilities for planning or settlement. People need to know they are heard and understood. They don't necessarily need to be agreed with, but they need to believe that they've been heard and understood. At that point things can move forward.

When people come across as angry, they are usually just scared. I try to listen, intervene and diffuse the anger in order to get to what's really going on.

The mediation program, which started out as a 2-year grant project, became institutionalized when its usefulness was demonstrated. The past fifteen years have passed swiftly and I'm grateful I've had the opportunity to do meaningful work that helps others.



Detention Center holds first-ever graduation ceremony

Ernest Rose had a simple message for the six young men who donned caps and gowns June 5 at Pima County Juvenile Court's first-ever GED celebration.

"If I can do it, you can do it too -- as long as you set your mind to it," Rose said.

Rose was talking about becoming a success story.

Rose started out just like the young men gathered earlier this month. He made some bad decisions, dropped out of school and ended up getting his general equivalency diploma.

After he received his GED, his mother told him he was the first in their family to get either a GED or a high school diploma. She urged him to continue his education.

Rose now holds a doctorate's and is the regional superintendent of the Maricopa County School District. He's studied at Harvard and in China and he's vacationed in Italy.

So far this year, 19 kids detained in the Pima County Juvenile Detention Center have received

their GED, thereby setting a record for the number of detained youths to get their GEDs in one year.

All of the kids and their loved ones were invited to the court's training center for a graduation ceremony. Rose was the keynote speaker. He, Court Administrator Stephen Rubin and Judge Jane Butler congratulated the kids on their accomplishment, describing it as "huge."

One of the graduates, PN, told the other kids that they alone hold the pen that can write the rest of their story. He wished them luck.

Rose urged the young men to surround themselves

with caring adults, adults who want what's best for them, will hold them accountable and push them to succeed.

"It doesn't stop here," Rose said. "It's only the beginning."

His decision to pursue his GED prompted his mother and his sister to go on and get theirs, Rose said.

"You can be an inspiration," Rose said.

"In life you're going to have disappointments, and that's OK, but don't get discouraged. Don't let them stop you from achieving your goals."



Judges travel, share the wealth, collect ideas

Part and parcel of being a court that prides itself on being progressive is not only finding new and innovative evidence-based programs, but sharing our experiences and educating others.

Earlier this month, Pima County Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Karen Adam went to Minneapolis, Minn. to work with a group that hopes to develop a uniform way to assess domestic violence in custody cases and respond appropriately. The project is funded by the Violence Against Women Act, a federal law which was originally passed in 1994 and was extended in February.

Judge Adam was also one of several national experts to speak on Capitol Hill this month. The overall topic was Substance Use Disorders in Child Welfare: What Works for Children and Families. Judge Adam's panel spoke specifically about "Improving Outcomes for Children, Adolescents and their Families."

Judge Lisa Abrams attended the 50th Anniversary Conference for the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts in Los Angeles between May 29 and June 1. At the conference, Rebecca Stahl from the Office of Court Appointed Counsel and the judge presented on the topic of "Crossing the Divide: Family Law and Juvenile Court Issues."

Among the other topics of discussion were: online dispute resolution, developing parenting plans, taking children's testimony and children in mediation.

As part of the key note speech, Judge Abrams said she learned about the collaborative efforts between Sesame Street and the AFCC to create an educational tool kit for preschoolers whose parents are divorcing or separating. The kit includes a DVD is narrated by Abby Cadabby. The kit is available free of charge on the Sesame Street webpage: <http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/topics>



Judge Lisa Abrams and Tucson attorney Laura Belleau with Abby Cadabby.

Odds & Ends



This month, we have three people who were selected for a “Gem” by the Bravo Team after being nominated for an award by a colleague: **Denise Ortiz** from Calendar Services, **Patricia McMillon** from Probation and **Erica Scheeren** from Detention Services.

Here are snippets from those who nominated them:

- Ortiz: “On a daily basis, Denise is confronted with parents and minors who are confused, frustrated, and angry...Denise has an awesome way of being compassionate, patient, and respectful and will usually calm these people...Denise is always

cheerful and has something nice to say to everybody, which makes their day. We are very fortunate to have a person who LOVES her job and does it well!”

McMillon and Scheeren both pitched in for colleagues while they took some time off.

- McMillon: “Patricia has always been a great team player on the SW Cholla team and willingly offers assistance to anyone, which is a positive trait...”
- Scheeren: “I know that our team was in great hands. I truly and sincerely appreciate all you do.”

By the way...

We have three current and former University of Arizona students working with us. A fourth is scheduled to start in August.

Jenn Parlin is working on her Master’s degree in Public Health Policy and Management. She’s working in the detention center this summer and creating a curriculum that will link kids with community health services once they are released. Linking kids to appropriate services will help lower recidivism rates, Parlin said.

Stacy Peercy, who is also working in the detention center, is focusing on recidivism rates and family engagement. She hopes to identify existing resources and support systems so that families will become more involved in the process and improve their children’s chances of success.

Comel Belin earned her doctorate in school psychology from the UA in August 2011 and is working toward her professional licensure here under the supervision of our clinical psychologist Gustavo Perez. She will be doing psychological evaluations of kids going through the delinquency system and some consulting work.

Sacha Brown is a third-year doctoral student in the clinical psychology and evolutionary psychology program at the UA. She, too, will be going psychological evaluations and consulting work once she comes aboard in August.

Milestones

- Juliana Abril, probation, 5 years
- Timothy Hart, probation, 5 years
 - Richard Myer, IT 10 years
- Edward Beltran, detention, 10 years
- Andrea Jackson, detention, 10 years
- Daniel Payette, detention, 10 years

Check us out!



[https://
www.facebook.com/
PimaCountyJuvenileCourt](https://www.facebook.com/PimaCountyJuvenileCourt)

Did you know?

There were 28 participants of the county's Courts Are Us program visiting us on June 11? Courts Are Us was created by retired Pima County Superior Court Judge Norman Fenton in 1992 shortly after the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles.

Judge Fenton wanted to educate young people about the criminal justice system. Every year, hand-selected youths between 14 and 21 earn minimum wage by performing clerical work in Pima County Superior Court, Tucson Municipal Court, Pima County Justice Court and various other court-related departments and agencies.

The youth are also hooked up with mentors - lawyers and judges - who often invite the teens to watch them in action and who make themselves available for advice and questions. Participants also go on field trips to U.S. District Court and Pima County Juvenile Court.

Participants are selected based on applications offered through their schools or other youth employment programs, test scores, their age and neighborhood. The program, which is paid for by the county, is aimed at disadvantaged youth.

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For more information about the court, visit our website: <http://www.pcjcc.pima.gov/>

The Month in Pictures



Carol Casebier, intake supervisor, shares a laugh with Family and Child Services Director Chris Swenson-Smith during Carol's retirement party.



Each of our GED graduates received their diplomas along with a rose to give to a loved one.



Our detention center kids are learning that part of gardening is rain water harvesting, pruning, cleaning up and of course, enjoying the fruits of their labor.

Thursday, June 20th was Bring Your Pet to Work day in the PCJCC Detention Center. The kids not only got to hug and pet more than a dozen dogs and one ferret, but they learned about responsible pet ownership, doggy behavior and the Top 10 favorite breeds. Three of our judges, Lisa Abrams, Christopher Staring and Wayne Yehling brought Theo, Sara, Nigel and Simon to visit.

