



Mentors needed for children dually involved with system

There are currently 60 children in Pima County who have not only had the misfortune of being abused and neglected, but have ended up in the juvenile justice system.

Pima County Juvenile Court and Sin Puertas hope you can help them.

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Eccentric professors changed Judge Stanford's course in life

Calm, cool and collected. If anyone is asked about K.C. Stanford, chances are those are some of the words that would be used to describe this Pima County Juvenile Court judge.



Judge K.C. Stanford

Judge Stanford doesn't get "ruffled" easily. He doesn't often cut people off; they are given an opportunity to speak their minds. To him that is what due process means: notice and the opportunity to be heard.

Judge Stanford's ties to Tucson go back a long way. His father met his mother on a blind date when he was stationed at Davis

Monthan Air Force Base. The family moved around quite a bit while Judge Stanford was young, but he did attend kindergarten, junior high and high school in Tucson. While at Amphitheater High School, the future judge played tennis and football.

Originally, Judge Stanford planned to major in physics and math, but he found he didn't like his professors, who he described as "eccentric." He ended up studying government and economics and obtained his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Arizona in 1976.

When he discovered many of his debate team members were going into law school, he followed them, fell in love with the law and graduated from the UA College of Law in 1979.

Judge Stanford recalls with fondness opening his own law practice at 23 and being the first Tucson attorney to take out an ad in the Yellow Pages. Attorneys were once barred from advertising, but a United State Supreme Court case -- *Bates v State Bar of Arizona* -- changed the law in October 1979.

"Whatever law school class I took, I advertised for," Judge Stanford said with a laugh. "Thank God I had malpractice insurance and farmed out a lot of my cases."

(Contd. Page 3)

Judge Stanford spent a great deal of time between 1979 and 1989 dealing with what many consider the most volatile of all cases -- family law cases. Day in and day out he dealt with the drama that often accompanies the issues surrounding divorce, child support and parenting time. Eventually, his law firm also obtained a contract with the county to handle cases in juvenile court.

In 1989, he was appointed a Tucson City Magistrate and in 1997 he was appointed as a county court commissioner. He became a retained judge in January 2012 when Gov. Jan Brewer appointed him. He arrived at juvenile court in March 2012.

One of Judge Stanford's favorite duties is training young attorneys. His office has been the training ground for many law clerks. He also founded the Young Lawyers Division of the Pima County Bar in 1984 and served as President of the State Young Lawyers Division in 1988.

One thing is uppermost in his mind when speaking with the children and families who come through his courtroom – whether they are involved in the criminal justice system or the foster care system.

“I don't want to cause more harm than good,” Judge Stanford said.

In family law, they say judges are seeing good people on their worst day. In juvenile court, Judge Stanford said he believes he's seeing people on their best day because they've decided to move forward and put their negative past behind them.

“I like success stories. I like facilitating the resolution of problems in families,” Judge Stanford said. “Most people have to regain their emotional balance and once they do, they are able to resolve their issues.”

He chooses his words carefully. He offers words of encouragement to people, noting everyone makes mistakes. People just need a helping hand to stand back up when they are knocked down by such things as addiction or trauma.

“I see my role as both a facilitator and an authority figure,” Judge Stanford said. “I try to find some way to speak to a child or a parent about their higher purpose in life. People are here for a reason. If I can point them to their gifts and talents then perhaps they can realize something good can come from the trauma of state intervention in their private life. I like it when the light goes on and they know things are going to get better.”

When not at work, Judge Stanford loves spending time with his family, which includes his wife, his parents, two children and five grandchildren, who are between three and 13. He is active in his church and loves hiking Tumamoc Hill.

Sin Puertas offers evidenced-based treatment for kids

When most people think about therapists, they probably get a mental image of a boring office, a couch and a doctor with a clipboard. At Sin Puertas, they'll find Pictionary and Uno, Play-Doh, a pool table and a room filled with bicycles and bike parts.

Sin Puertas is part of the clinical services division of Pima Prevention Partnership, a 22-year-old non-profit organization dedicated to serving young people and their families in a variety of ways.

The name means "without doors." When Sin Puertas began 11 years ago, its founders wanted to eliminate all existing barriers to treatment for children and families suffering from both substance abuse issues and mental health disorders.

Every year, nearly 300 kids receive help from Sin Puertas, including those going through Pima County Juvenile Court's Youth Recovery Court.

The court's clinical director, Beverly Tobiason, is a strong supporter of Sin Puertas because they only use evidence-based, best practice models when treating court-involved youth.

Youth Recovery Court Judge Jane Butler also loves Sin Puertas.

"Sin Puertas is a perfect fit for kids in Youth Recovery Court. One of their therapists is a valuable member of the Youth Recovery Court team. Without violating client confidentiality, the therapist provides insight about the children's needs," Judge Butler said.



Charlie Alcaraz, clinical services director at Pima Prevention Partnership, says the folks at Sin Puertas do their best to make kids feel comfortable.

"The kids trust and love their therapists, and really enjoy learning how to have sober fun at Sin Puertas. Moreover, Sin Puertas offers a family component that models healthy family interaction. (Contd. Page 5)

I can't imagine having a juvenile drug treatment court program without Sin Puertas! They are extraordinary," Judge Butler said.

Sin Puertas offers a wide continuum of care from brief interventions up to intensive outpatient treatment, said Charlie Alcaraz, clinical services director.

The program is unique in that it is the only nationally accredited trauma-focused treatment site for adolescents in the state that is nationally accredited by The National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, Alcaraz said.

Trauma-focused therapy is especially important when one considers that between 75 and 93 percent of children entering the juvenile justice system annually have experienced some sort of trauma, including physical and sexual abuse and neglect. Included in those numbers are children who have witnessed domestic violence or lost a loved one.

Those going through intensive outpatient therapy visit Sin Puertas three days a week for three hours at a time and receive gender-specific group and family therapy, Alcaraz said. The group based therapy is further supplemented by individual sessions.

Sin Puertas is the only agency that provides gender-specific substance abuse and trauma treatment in Tucson, Tobiason said.

"It's a much-needed clinical service for our youth and community," Tobiason said.

Sin Puertas' staff must be certified trauma specialists and undergo 60 hours of training about trauma, the impact it has on the brain and on children's behavior. They are also trained motivational interviewers, Alcaraz said.

"These kids really require someone to meet them where they're at," Alcaraz said. "We need to know where they are coming from, what their perspective is so that we can help them understand why they are doing what they are doing."

The people at Sin Puertas have tried to create an atmosphere where the kids are comfortable talking, he said.

Sin Puertas "always goes above and beyond in treating youth based on the literature of what works with juvenile justice involved youth," Tobiason said.

"Sometimes juvenile justice-involved youth can be challenging to engage in services. The Sin Puertas philosophy focuses not only on research-based programming, they also see it as their responsibility to the engage youth in services, whereas less effective programs view it the responsibility of youth to engage with them," Tobiason said.

Sin Puertas also offers a recovery support program that is led by kids and a four to six-month work force development program called Mirando Adelante. Mirando Adelante is where the bikes come in. During the program, the kids can learn how to repair bicycles.

Parents of troubled youth now have a place to get support

When children get into trouble with the law, their parents often experience a variety of feelings, among them sadness, shame, anger and frustration. Help for them has arrived.

On Oct. 2, the Pima County Juvenile Court held its first-ever parent support group meeting. Sixteen relatives of children currently being detained attended the meeting, which was facilitated by Lucie Ledy, a clinician, and Paula Burns, a lead probation officer.



The group was formed to empower and support parents and legal guardians of children who are in custody or on probation, the women said.

“Parents have so much going on now,” Ledy said. “They are trying to make a living, taking care of their kids and

wondering how to get support when there’s hardly any time.”

“They often feel as though they’re a failure as a parent,” Burns added. “They want to know what they’ve done wrong, where they missed the boat and what they could’ve done differently.”

It’s hoped support group members will share their experiences and tips with each other and provide encouragement when times are tough, the women said.

The group will meet twice per month and while Ledy will introduce a new topic every meeting, group members will determine what they want to talk about.

“If something important comes up and the other parents are interested in that topic, we’ll divert,” Ledy said.

During the first meeting, Ledy spoke about how teenagers develop physically, cognitively and emotionally. (Contd. Page 7)

“The bottom line is that kids are trying to find themselves and yes, they are going to make mistakes, but we talked about how we can teach them and not condemn them,” Ledy said.

Other topics that will likely come up include how to have positive interactions with teens and de-escalate situations, consistent and pro-active discipline, setting limits,



“Some of our parents may be embarrassed and feel as though they can’t talk about their problems, but this will give them an opportunity to talk to other parents of court-involved kids,” Beverly Tobiason

community resources, how to develop social skills, stress management, substance abuse in teens and families and healthy family living.

There has long been a need for such a program, said Beverly Tobiason, Pima County Juvenile Court’s clinical director.

“There are a lot of parent education programs in the community, but when it comes to support programs for parents of court-involved youth, it’s very limited,” Tobiason said.

When developing the program, Tobiason said she and the others researched existing parent support groups. It was then they decided to develop a curriculum around effective-problem solving and improving communication skills.

Although it’s early on, they want parents to feel comfortable enough to come session after session, even once their child has been released from detention or successfully completed probation.

“Some of our parents may be embarrassed and feel as though they can’t talk about their problems, but this will give them an opportunity to talk to other parents of court-involved kids,” Tobiason said. “Sometimes parents can hear recommendations from their peers better than when it comes from professionals. They don’t feel as judged.”

The bottom line is that the court wants to give parents tools to help them help their children successfully get through the court system, Tobiason said.

The meetings are held on Thursday evenings in a detention center conference room. Spanish-speaking interpreters are available if requested in advance. Please call 724-2259 for further information.

PCJCC responding to trauma on many different levels

The folks at Pima County Juvenile Court pride themselves on the fact they've never shied away from complex issues like disproportionate minority contact and alternatives to detention. They've delved right in.

Now they are taking on a new endeavor.

The court wants be the best "trauma responsive" court it can be.

You may be thinking "Huh?"

A huge percentage of the people served by the court have been traumatized in some way. PCJCC staff members are searching for ways to make sure they aren't traumatized further when they visit the courthouse or detention center.

People can be personally traumatized by sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, psychological/emotional abuse and witnessing domestic violence. Individuals can also be traumatized by large scale events such as Sept. 11, Jan. 8 and war.

Untreated trauma victims tend to struggle with aspects of daily life (in school, at work, at home and in the community). As a result, these issues continue to turn up in future generations.

The staff at the PCJCC wants to do what they can to make sure people get the trauma-focused therapy they need, but they also want to make sure they don't exacerbate their issues when they come to the courthouse or detention center.

As a result, numerous steps have been taken over the past several months to make people feel safer and more comfortable when they visit the courthouse. (Contd. Page 9)



Some of the changes are more obvious than others and more are still to come.

Here are some of the things the court has done so far:

- Held numerous trainings on vicarious trauma, the effects of trauma, adolescent development and the correlation between trauma and delinquency.
- Installed comfortable, family-friendly furniture
- Created nooks in the courtroom and lobby for children, complete with activity books, crayons, stuffed animals, magazines
- Began screening incoming children for past trauma
- Trained juvenile detention officers how to de-escalate situations so as to reduce the use of restraints
- Implemented a trauma-responsive detention center program that offers incentives for children to change their behavior.
- Began to assign detention officers as mentors to children
- Limited the shackling of children in the courthouse
- Given children polo shirts and khaki pants to wear in detention instead of prison garb
- Sought to decrease stress levels in detention center children through the use of animal therapy, yoga, talk therapy groups, gardening, art projects and writing projects.
- Began to provide each child new under garments rather than used.
- Trained detention officers and probation officers to use motivational interviewing techniques.
- Began screening of Family Drug Court parents for past trauma
- Began providing trauma specific therapy for Family Drug Court parents
- Changed commonly used phrases and practices in pre-hearing conferences so as to put parents at ease.

Learning what trauma does to people and treating them accordingly is crucial, said Beverly Tobiason, the court's clinical director.

A child who beats up his classmates, cusses at his teacher and makes horrible grades may not have Oppositional Defiant Disorder, he may be showing the ill effects of having been abused or neglected. In fact, studies have shown that between 75 and 93 percent of children entering the juvenile justice system every year have experienced some degree of trauma.

Just limiting the number of children we detain is trauma responsive.

“We so often intuitively feel locking kids up will teach them a lesson and yet the research says there are profound negative effects when you lock children up,” Tobiason said. (Contd. Page 10)

Kids who are detained are 13.5 times more likely to be re-arrested, 3.3 times more likely to begin carrying a weapon and twice as likely to become gang members.

In addition, placing kids in detention increases substance abuse issues, school problems, violence, adjustment problems in adulthood and antisocial attitudes.

The court has worked hard to keep as many children out of detention as possible, but there are times it's unavoidable. As a result, extra attention is paid to who is hired as a juvenile detention officer and the programs that are implemented within the detention center.

"We are training our juvenile detention officers that safety comes from relationships and not power and force," Tobiason said. "We are selecting and recruiting based on whether the candidate is kid-relationship focused. Those who are all about power and control don't last long here."

As for programs, the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support program teaches the kids how to be good citizens rather than good prisoners by offering incentives, Tobiason said.

The key is to make the children feel safe, comfortable and cared for.

Animal therapy, yoga, talk therapy and art projects help keep the children's stress levels down and normal clothing and fresh underwear help them feel better about themselves.

"It's about human dignity. I don't care how often they've been laundered, it feels icky having to put on underwear worn by other people," Tobiason said.

(Contd. Page 11)



On the dependency side of the court, people have come to realize many of the parents who have had their children removed due to abuse or neglect may themselves have been abused or neglected as children.

And, just as with delinquent youth, the court must not only look at the behaviors exhibited, but at the source of the behaviors, Tobiason said. The issues that caused the children and parents to act inappropriately must be addressed through trauma-focused therapy.

“We so often intuitively feel locking kids up will teach them a lesson and yet the research says there are profound negative effects when you lock children up,” Beverly Tobiason

By addressing the issues, the hope is that the cycle of substance abuse, child abuse and neglect is brought to a halt.

The trauma committee has also never forgotten that professionals working with high-risk, high-need families can be affected by exposure to the trauma suffered by the people they serve. As a result, they’ve held training sessions

on how staff members can mentally prepare to handle the stress that comes with the job, normalize their reaction to stress and cope with it in a healthy way so as to mitigate the dangers of their job.

Back in December, the PCJCC underwent a trauma audit that was conducted by a five-member team from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and National Child Stress Network. The team spent three days assessing how trauma responsive the court is. The court also sought the team’s feedback as to how the court could continue in its efforts to improve its policies, procedures and practices court-wide.

The results of the trauma are expected to be released internally shortly and PCJCC staff will be asked for their input on the audit. They’ll also be asked for any suggestions they may have.

While the audit is under discussion, the court will be experimenting with paint and lighting in one courtroom. The hope is that the softer lighting and subdued color palette will make the room more inviting.

“Right now it’s very bright and stark,” said Jackie Olson, facilities services manager. “We think it feels very clinical and sterile. We want it to feel more inviting, safe, professional and comfortable.”

Courts' work on education front drawing attention

When the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Judiciary were looking for someone to talk about improving the educational outcomes for foster care children, they only had to look 2,300 miles away for some experts.

Pima County Juvenile Court has been working on the issue since 2003 so when Judge Jane Butler takes the stage as the keynote speaker at a Baltimore summit on Nov. 13, she will have plenty to talk about to more than 100 judges, court personnel, caseworkers, school counselors, attorneys, foster parents, providers and Court Appointed Special Advocates who are expected to attend the event.



Judge Jane Butler congratulates one of more than a dozen children who have obtained their GEDs while detained in the Pima County Juvenile Detention Center this year.

“I think it speaks well of Pima County’s education program,” Judge Butler said. “We’ve got a long history of working on education with our community partners and it’s made an impact.”

For example, Judge Butler doesn’t think there’s another juvenile court in the nation that has an education program coordinator, someone whose sole purpose is to deal with kids’ education. “

“That’s an enormous strength we have,” Judge Butler said.

Back in 2003, then-presiding Judge Hector Campoy decided judges, school district officials and other community agencies needed to start talking about ways to help foster children.

“The focus when you remove a child from a dangerous situation is safety, but no one was thinking about the one place where children are always safe and where there’s always structure and that is school,” Judge Butler said.

Judge Campoy’s instincts were accurate. (Contd. Page 13)

Since then, study after study has proven that foster children fall behind every time they are removed from a home, sometimes losing up to 12 months of education. In a recent California study, it was revealed foster children actually perform less well than children who are learning English as a second language, children from lower socio-economic classes and even developmentally disabled children.

“These kids have terrible outcomes as a group,” Judge Butler said.

The issues don’t stop in the classroom, either. Studies show more than 50 percent of former foster children are unemployed, 33 percent receive public assistance, 25 percent spend time behind bars and more than 25 percent experience homelessness.

Judge Butler said other judges have picked up Judge Campoy’s mantle, including Judge Suzanna Cuneo and Judge Patricia Escher.

Over the years, the court has:

- Sponsored a community-wide forum to discuss ways to keep children from being arrested, suspended and expelled.
- Required school districts to provide the court school records immediately following a child’s removal from the home. Such records ensure new teachers, caseworkers and attorneys are up to date on individualized education plans, special needs, grades, etc.
- Ensured that federal legislation regarding homeless children was being applied to foster children as well. The law requires that homeless children have transportation to and from school free of charge, so that they may attend their school of origin regardless of where the child lives after removal.
- Created an inter-governmental agreement with Tucson Unified School District and Sunnyside School District that allows the school districts to share data. Since 2006, the UA's School Psychology Program has been compiling data about children, including those in foster care, who have been detained in the PCJCC detention center. The database, which is stripped of the children's names, to protect their privacy, collects their age, ethnicity, offense history, special education history, academic achievements, AIMS test scores and disciplinary history. The results of the study should help provide recommendations to improve the educational outcome for children in out-of-home care and those youth in detention or on probation.
- Created a full-time educational consultant position that is funded by the court. The consultant’s office is located in the courthouse and helps expelled children find schools that will accept them and see to their needs. (Contd. Page 14)

She works with children both on the juvenile justice side of the court and dependent children. More than 50% of the children referred to the consultant are not enrolled in school. The consultant also ensures individualized education plans are being followed and works with a variety of community partners on issues relating to foster children, Disproportionate Minority Contact, homeless youth and truancy. She also facilitates educational programming for detained youth and assists their transition to school in the community after detention.

- Hosted countless training sessions to educate teachers about the foster care system and its impact on children. Educators are reminded that bad behavior may not be indicative of ADHD, but rather a symptom of trauma.
- Became the third court in the nation to join the FosterEd program. Last year, a select number of foster children were appointed an “educational champion” who works with an educational liaison to help the child improve their study habits, complete their homework and improve their test scores
- Worked with school districts and charter schools countywide to create protocols that provide guidance as to when law enforcement should be called to a school to reduce the number of children referred to the court and to provide strategies on how to safely work with those children within the school environment. This model is gaining national attention.

The court isn't resting on its laurels, either, Judge Butler said. In the coming months, as the court begins holding strategic planning sessions, decisions will be made as to what happens next on the educational front.



Mentors needed for children dually involved with system

Like many 24-year-old professionals, Jackie Hinkle spends her weekends going to movies, shopping and hiking. The one thing that sets her apart is the person she chooses to take with her on these excursions and the occasional horseback riding trip.

Hinkle is often accompanied by a 17-year-old girl she just met, a teenager who found herself in trouble with the law and in the foster care system after being abused and neglected by her parents.

Hinkle and the girl are participating in a pilot mentorship program created by the Pima County Juvenile Court and Pima Prevention Partnerships' Sin Puertas program. So far, 12 children who are involved in both the delinquency and dependency programs at the court have been matched with a mentor.



Alba Jaramillo

It's hoped the kids will benefit from having a positive adult role model in their lives, someone to spend time with and help them get on the right path.

Most of these children have witnessed or been the victims themselves of domestic violence. Many have been sexually abused and some have attempted suicide.

"These kids are the most vulnerable group of children we serve here at the court," said PCJCC volunteer coordinator Alba Jaramillo. "Most of them are in group homes. They don't have positive parental figures in their lives. All of them have a history of running away. They're very lonely. They're completely dependent upon the system and they're going through two court systems."

Brennan Kartchner, mentor coordinator at Pima Prevention Partnership, echoed Jaramillo.

"This program is ground-breaking in a way. This is a population that doesn't get a lot of attention," Kartchner said. "When you see them open up, smile and laugh, it's great because you know they haven't done that in a while."

When the court began creating the program, officials knew from the outset they wanted the mentors and teens to visit each other outside the courthouse, Jaramillo said. Sin Puertas was chosen, in part, because they have their own center complete with a pool table, games and other family-oriented amenities. (Contd. Page 16)

"We'd like the mentors to focus on pro-social activities, giving the kids an opportunity to do things other kids do," Jaramillo said. "We want them to have fun and be connected to their community."

Pima Prevention Partnership was also chosen because staff members can easily hook the teens up with the other programs they offer - substance abuse treatment, individual and group therapy and career development.

There are currently 60 children in Pima County who are dealing with both court systems, or in other words are "dually involved." Because some of these children are in residential treatment centers outside the county or aren't emotionally stable enough to participate in the program, Jaramillo hopes to eventually match 40 of the kids with mentors.

Applicants must make a one-year commitment to the program, go through an interview process and pass through a criminal background check. Mentors receive a minimum of eight hours training on such things as crisis intervention, mental illness, trauma, substance abuse and the court system. Once assigned to a child, they may receive specialized training to deal with a child's specific needs.

Hinkle and her child were matched based on their shared love of the outdoors. They met in September and have gotten together several times. The two chat on the phone and text often and Hinkle is also helping her with job applications.

The teen already has her GED and is applying to get into Pima Community College.

"We hit it off right away," Hinkle said. "She seems pretty motivated. She just got off probation and I thought it was cool to see how open and honest she's been with me about her life."

Mentoring is an excellent way to get involved in your community and the beauty of this particular program is the spontaneity of it, Hinkle said. She and her mentee get to decide when and where they want to go.

A few weeks ago, on the spur of the moment Hinkle said she and another mentor took their teens to Tucson Meet Yourself.

People need to understand that this mentoring program is unique.

"It's not exactly what people think it is. It's about sharing your time, not giving your time," Kartchner said. "It's about enjoying what you do and taking someone with you, whether it's hiking, shopping, sports, music, hobbies or movies. These kids haven't had someone to spend time with before."

If you are interested in mentoring a child, call Kartchner at 624-5806.

14th Annual Adoption Day Celebration coming up

Arizona has been making national headlines for the past few years and the news has not been good. The state has seen an alarming increase in the number of children placed in foster care. In Pima County alone, there are more than 3,800 foster care children right now. The parental rights of nearly 1,000 of those children will eventually be terminated, making the children available for adoption.

November 22 is National Adoption Day, a day to celebrate with those lucky enough to be welcomed into new homes and a day to inspire others to become adoptive parents.



Judge Jane Butler during Adoption Day 2013

Here in Tucson, we'll celebrate our own Adoption Day during a huge party at a local park. This year marks the 14th Annual Pima County Adoption in the Park Celebration.

This year, 103 children will be adopted during the party, which is sponsored by Pima County Juvenile Court and more than a dozen other organizations.

Three courtrooms will be set up at the park, complete with judges, bailiffs and court clerks. Before

and after the formalities are accomplished, families are encouraged to take advantage of jumping castles, slides, cake walk and other carnival games. They can also get their faces painted and their photographs taken.

There will also be plenty of balloons, nachos, cotton candy and hot dogs on hand.

The event is near and dear to those who deal with the children while they are in the foster care system – the attorneys, judges, case managers, court staff, therapists, etc., said Tricia Quiroz, program director for St. Nicholas of Myra Adoption Center.

“First and foremost it’s a special day because we’re achieving our end goal of adoption and permanency,” Quiroz said. “They are a family finally, emotionally and legally. It’s a happy, happy day and they are ready to move on with life.”

(Contd. Page 18)

“It’s a celebration. It’s just so good to see kids running and playing in the park. It’s what family life is supposed to be, carefree,” Quiroz said.

Judge Geoffrey Ferlan said all of the judges look forward to the annual event.

“Children are our greatest asset in Pima County, Arizona. The judges of the Juvenile Bench find it extremely gratifying when our community’s children are matched with families whose understanding, dedication and love reach a magnitude so powerful to become a child’s ‘forever family,’” Judge Ferlan said.

The event couldn’t happen if not for the hundreds of people throughout the community who donate to the event, coordinate the event and come together that day to direct people, man the games and serve the food, said Chris Swenson-Smith, Pima County Juvenile Court’s Child and Family Services director.

Families who choose to adopt at this event rather than in a courtroom say that this feels more like a celebration, is not intimidating for their children, and normalizes adoption for children who see dozens of other children joining new families, Swenson-Smith said.

The volunteers work for various government, social service and adoption agencies. Ten judges and 40-plus staff members from the PCJCC are donating their time this year.

The event is also a great way to draw attention to the need for additional foster and adoptive parents. With so many children needing to be placed in a safe environment, agencies often have to look outside the geographic boundaries of Pima County, Quiroz said.

These children have already been traumatized and having to leave their friends, neighborhood, school and extended family members just makes things worse, Quiroz said.

People should know that the new families being created are quite diverse, Quiroz said. This year the children are being welcomed into 74 families, some of them headed up by grandparents, single parents, family friends and parents from a different culture from their own.

The only thing that matters is that these children will be loved and cared for.

For more information on how to become a foster or adoptive parent, please visit:
fosterandadoptivecounciloftucson.org

While experts agree it is far better for families to openly celebrate adoptions, the court is obligated by law to protect their privacy. As a result, the exact day and location of the event is kept confidential.

Former prison inmate provides a cautionary tale

By Ramona Panas

At 15 years old, Manny was sent to prison for murder. The murder was here, in Tucson. Manny was a Pueblo High School Student. Manny served 20 years and was released. The specifics and logistics of the sentence and how it evolved was not the main focus of Manny's presentation.



The main focus of Manny's presentation was that what happened/what he had done that changed his life in an instant.

Manny asked the 15 year olds to stand – they did and he said, 'I was you.' 'I am your future if you don't make different choices. Don't be me.'

Twenty birthdays not celebrated, twenty Christmas holidays not present at, twenty years of life going on without him as he was in prison.

There was a point in his court hearings when they were trying to decide if Manny was going to be tried as an adult or as a juvenile. Manny shared that the courtroom was filled with people who had something to say to the judge on his behalf. The judge allowed everyone present to say what they had come to say on Manny's behalf. He stated that the proceeding went something like, "Hi, I'm Manny's teacher... I'm Manny's Uncle, I'm Manny's counselor, Manny's girlfriend..." on and on. Manny states that what he learned at that exact moment was that he had all of those people that could've helped him that he could have turned to. That he was not alone. All he had to do was say he needed help – he didn't because he let 'pride' get in his way – he was too 'proud' to say anything. Manny shared that those who he had put first, before himself, were no longer around... they didn't have his back... they didn't support him in any way... they didn't come to the courtroom to stand up for him. (Contd. Page 18)

Manny shared that the other individuals involved in the murder ‘are no longer with us.’ ‘One turned state’s evidence and was given a lesser sentence and placed in protective arrangements in prison. This person didn’t ‘make it from the bus to the prison gate.’ The other person involved died while serving his time.’

Manny made it. He came out the other side.

Manny shares that it isn’t easy making it on the outside with his record. He has been out 5 years and is still trying to get settled. His charges stand in the way of his progress.

Finding employment is challenging due to the question at the bottom of the application that asks if you would be able to pass a background check. This has limited the type of employment he would like to have and is capable of having.

Securing a home hasn’t happened due to his charges/ record. Securing a vehicle hasn’t happened due to his charges/

record. He has folks that gave him a vehicle and folks that have made it possible to provide him an apartment. These are some of the life things that Manny hasn’t been able to gain due to his past. He is working hard, day in and day out, to make it happen. It takes time and continues to be challenging.

Manny shared that he went to prison before he learned how to shave. He learned to drive when he got out of prison. This drove the point home of choices – ‘I am you if you don’t do right by you.’

The youth asked many questions that Manny answered willingly and truthfully.

What is prison life like?

The lights are on all the time in prison.

He kept to himself in prison.

He always held a job in prison.

He didn’t do favors for people and that gained him respect. (Contd. Page 19)



He was his own person in prison.

He read any book he could get 'his hands'.

He educated himself as best he could.

Lots of time in your cell – hour/hour and ½ out depending on the security of the prison.

He stayed out of prison gangs.

The food was terrible.

People have nothing better to do than be in other people's business... so there is always something going on with someone.

He spoke of fights that broke out in front of him and how he couldn't stop and help – he kept on going.

Manny shared of his addiction to drugs and how that directly related to his criminal acts. He cared about drugs and money.

Once arrested and placed in the Pima County Juvenile Court Detention Center, Manny sobered up.

He got the much needed rest/sleep that he needed. He came down from being high on drugs. He ate three square meals a day and regained weight and a cleared head. He never turned back to drugs period. Right then and there – he was done with them.

Choices... choices that you make in this moment affect your future. Manny told the youth to pay attention right now, at this moment, and choose right by you and not for others that are influencing you.

He spoke about peer pressure and wanting to fit in and not be considered 'weak' and how that impacted his choices. He did things he knew weren't right and that he didn't want to do because of wanting to fit in.

The presentation was powerful in that Manny spoke from the heart, face to face and looking the youth in the eye and the youth seeing the genuineness in Manny's eyes. They heard his message.

Manny shook each attendees hand as they left the Living Unit where the presentation was held.

Manny's message, to each one of them as he shook their hand, was please take care.

The youths' message, each one to Manny, was Thank You for coming and speaking with us.

Voices

Since the PCJCC is here to help strengthen kids and families, it seems only appropriate the kids in our Detention Center have a platform from which to speak. We'll be asking them questions periodically and printing some of their unedited answers here.

What is the best news you could hear right now and why?

You are released. Because I'm going to go see my fam and go Ham. - Lee

The best news I could receive right now is that I am not going to be transferred to California because if I am it will be destructive for my life. - Adriana

The best news right now would be being released, because I would like to be with my family and cousins. And so I can start looking for a job and also enroll back in school. - Francisco

The best news I could hear right now is if somebody told me I was getting released back in to my mom's custody and only if they are being serious. I would do so many good things back in my mom's custody. I would be free again and my freedom means everything to me. I would be going to school, getting involved in the community, be able to work on engines and what's better than that? Not much for me. - Issac

That my lady wasn't on the run again and she would just stay otta trouble. - Anonymous

My best news I could hear right now is that I passed my GED and I'm going to go home. Another chance and that I'm going to be able to not go to D.O.C. (Department of Corrections). - Anonymous

I want to go home and take care of my son than being in here why because I could be better father. - Anonymous

That my baby is healthy and I can go home. Because I want my future son/daughter to be healthy and 100 percent fine. The other reason is so I can go home and make sure my family is fine and my pregnant baby mamma has everything she needs. - Anonymous

To go home so I can see my fam and friends and to be out of here and I can wake up when I what. --Anonymous

The best news I could hear is that I'm going home. This is because I want to go home and chill with my mom and brother. It is also because there is a slight chance that I will go to rehab. -- Anonymous

Month in Photos



Judge Jane Butler shares a laugh with a recent Youth Recovery Court graduate.

John Jackson and Chris Vogler, assistant directors of probation, congratulate Kevin Smith upon his retirement. Smith spent 20 years with the PCJCC. Smith was presented a brick from the original Pima County Juvenile Detention Center.



We invited dozens of community providers to join us in the training center on Oct. 1. We wanted to familiarize ourselves with all available resources in Pima County so we can better serve our families.



Our kids got busy during their Winter Break. They not only began working on their Halloween and Christmas decorations, but they also created some new murals. RISE stands for Respect, Integrity, Safety and Excellence. The motto is part of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program our detention center staff implemented last year.



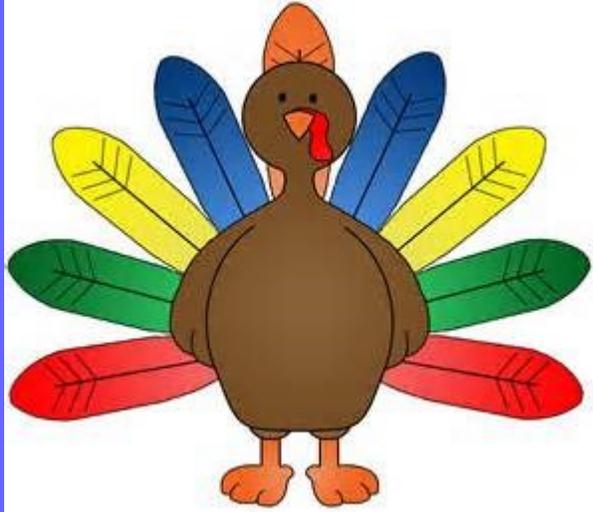
Oct. 9 was our quarterly Bring Your Pet to Work day in our Detention Center. These are just a few of the beauties brought in to visit with the kids by our staff. Pets go a long way to reducing stress and helping to keep the kids focused on the here and now.



Pima County Juvenile Court celebrated two Family Drug Court graduations during the month of October. FDC is a *voluntary* program for parents with substance abuse problems whose children are in the legal custody of the Department of Child Safety. FDC provides extra support and accountability while these parents are working on their recovery from addiction to drugs and/or alcohol. So far this year, 24 parents have graduated.



Odds & Ends



Upcoming Events

Nov. 8 — Adoption Day

Nov. 11 — Veterans' Day

Nov. 19 — Kids at Hope Day

Nov. 20 — Tamale Festival

Nov. 22 — Sibling Picnic

Nov. 27/28 — Thanksgiving Holiday

Milestones

Hang-Nga Nguyen, probation, 10 years

Michael Redmond, probation, 10 years

Gale Greene, detention, 15 years

Dawn Auman-Jihad, probation, 15 years

Robert Maerk, detention, 15 years



Don't Forget to Take Care of Yourself!

Exercise

Meditate

Journal

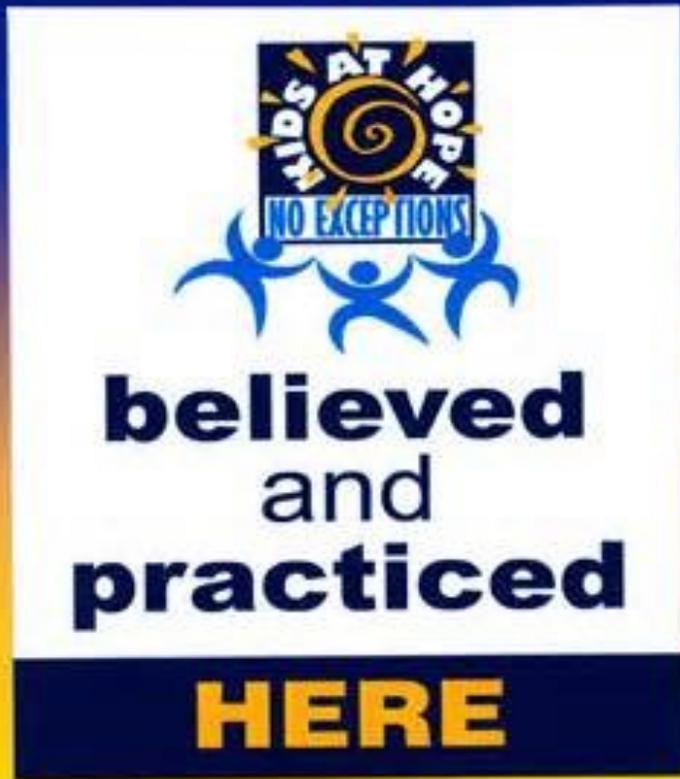
Social activities

Eat healthy

Be mindful

Massage

Hobbies



Universal Truth No. 1 –
Children succeed when they are surrounded by adults who believe they can succeed, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Universal Truth No. 2 –
Children succeed when they have meaningful and sustainable relationships with caring adults.

Universal Truth No. 3 –
Children succeed when they can articulate their future in more than one destination. (Home & Family, Community & Service, Hobbies & Recreation, Education & Career)

PCJCC Communications Bulletin

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