



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Supreme Court to Host First Annual Children's Summit
Dependency Court Judges, Children and Youth Officials
Collaborate to Help Dependent Children

HARRISBURG, November 18, 2009 – On Thursday, November 19 beginning at 1p.m. in the Pittsburgh Omni William Penn, the State Supreme Court will host Pennsylvania's First Annual Children's Roundtable Summit where county dependency court judges, and children and youth service professionals will collaborate with national experts to develop county specific plans to help abused and neglected children. **Your coverage is invited.**

State Supreme Court Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille and Justices J. Michael Eakin and Max Baer, will be present. Chief Justice Castille, Allegheny County President Judge Donna Jo McDaniel, and State Court Administrator Zygmunt Pines will provide opening remarks for the three-day summit. Sandy Moore, Administrator, Office of Children and Families in the Courts, and Lehigh County Common Pleas Court Judge Brian Johnson will present a Child Dependency System Mission Statement & Guiding Principles document and unveil a Dependency System Logo and new Office of Children and Families in the Court's (OCFC) website aimed at assisting judges and legal professionals, parents and families, and children with dependency issues.

The new child dependency website can be found at www.ocfcpacourts.us.

Officials from more than 50 counties throughout the state will be participating in the summit. They will hear from national experts, including Judge Stephen Rubin, Pima County, Arizona; Judge Charles Pratt, Allen County, Indiana; Judith Silver, PhD, Pediatric Psychologist Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Larry Brown, Casey Family Programs Consultant, and Barbara Needell, PhD, Researcher, University of California at Berkeley. These experts will provide a national perspective of the work being done to help dependent children and families and share strategies used to successfully address issues similar to those facing Pennsylvania's child dependency system.

Please see attached agenda and complete list of participants.

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First Annual Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Summit

November 19-21, 2009



Thursday, November 19, 2009

8:00am — 1:00pm **Conference Registration**

1:00pm — 1:10pm **Presentation of the Colors**

Boy Scouts of America, Greater Pittsburgh Council

National Anthem

Johnathan Walke, Auberle Group Home

1:10pm — 1:40pm **Opening Remarks**

Honorable Donna Jo McDaniel, President Judge, Allegheny County
Honorable Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille, Pennsylvania Supreme Court
Zygmunt Pines, Esq., Pennsylvania Court Administrator

1:40pm — 1:50pm **Presentations:**

Pennsylvania Child Dependency System Logo
Pennsylvania Child Dependency Mission & Guiding Principles
Office of Children & Families in the Courts Website

Honorable Max Baer, Justice, Pennsylvania Supreme Court
Honorable Brian Johnson, Lehigh County Court of Common Pleas

1:50pm — 2:00pm **Summit Overview**

Sandy Moore, Administrator,
Office of Children & Families in the Courts





SESSION 1

2:00pm — 3:15pm



Building Effective Decision Making Teams

Honorable Stephen Rubin, Pima County, Arizona

“Collaboration Works” Communities working together have improved outcomes for children and families in the foster care system. This opening session will provide a national perspective of the work being done to help dependent children and their families. Judge Rubin will share experience and lessons learned from various model court jurisdictions highlighting specific strategies used to successfully address issues similar to those facing Pennsylvania’s child dependency system. A study of one Jurisdiction’s efforts over 14 years will be used to illustrate what can happen when cross system collaboration focuses on achieving measurable goals.

3:15pm — 3:30pm

Break

3:30pm — 4:15pm

Panel Discussion: Local Children’s Roundtables

Moderator: Sandra Moore, Administrator, Office of Children & Families in the Courts

Marc Cherna, Human Services Director, Allegheny County
Cindy Stoltz, Esq., Administrator, Allegheny County Children’s Court
Honorable David Wecht, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County
Honorable Jolene Grubb-Kopriva, Court of Common Pleas of Blair County
Honorable Brian Johnson, Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County

4:15pm — 5:15pm

Team Planning Time (Our local Children’s Roundtables: An effective Decision Making Team)

5:30pm — 7:30pm

Dinner Reception at the Allegheny County Family Courthouse — “A Taste of Pittsburgh”



Friday, November 20, 2009

7:00am — 8:00am

Breakfast/Team Time/Registration

8:00am — 8:15am

Welcome-Day 2

Honorable Max Baer, Justice, Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice



8:15am — 9:45am

The Changing Culture of Dependency Courts

SESSION 2

Honorable Charles Pratt, Allen County, Indiana



The protection and best interests of children has been the primary purpose of the nation's juvenile courts. The increased complexity of child and family issues are significant challenges for the court as it struggles to meet its historic purpose. The need for true court reform based on evidence based practices is clear. Court reform that incorporates dependency mediation and similar strength based practices will give extended families the opportunity to serve as partners in a child's protection, will lend the court greater legitimacy from multiple community sectors and interest groups, will better enable the court to meet state and federal outcomes, and will better serve the needs of the families and children that the court was created to serve. This presentation will highlight sound research that, when holistically considered, will support a significant paradigm shift in Dependency Courts.

9:45am — 10:45pm

Panel Discussion: Agency/Court Collaboration

Moderator: Jim Anderson, Executive Director, Juvenile Court Judge's Commission

Honorable Kelly Streib, Court of Common Pleas of Butler County
Bill Browning, Administrator, Lackawanna County Children & Youth Services
Honorable Chet Harhut, Court of Common Pleas of Lackawanna County
Bill Cisek, Solicitor, Venango County Children & Youth

10:45am — 11:00am

Break

11:00am — 12:00pm

Team Planning Time—Agency/Court Collaboration: Advancing System Change

12:00pm — 1:30pm

Lunch/Team Time/Entertainment

Adoption Day Invitation

Honorable David Wecht, Administrative Judge, Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County

Light of the City Singers, Pine Valley Camp

Presentation of the Office of Children & Families in the Courts Website

Sandra Moore, Administrator, Office of Children & Families in the Courts
Elke Moyer, Executive Assistant, Office of Children & Families in the Courts

1:30pm — 2:45pm

Emotional Impact of Family Separation





SESSION 3



*Judith Silver, PhD, Pediatric Psychologist
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

Channeling King Solomon: Reducing Disrupted Relationships and Improving Permanency

Discontinuity of relationships is a central feature of children's experiences within the child dependency system. The impact of family separation is inevitably compounded by additional changes in placement and caregivers. Decision makers often confront less than optimal choices to ensure children's safety, well-being, and permanency. This session will address the impact of family separation on young children and their parents and a strategic approach to visitation. Helping children deal with transitions among relationships and assessment of caregiver capacity for reunification will be discussed.

2:45pm — 3:30pm

Panel Discussion: Former Pennsylvania Foster Youth

Moderator: Todd Lloyd, Child Welfare Director;
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children — Porch Light Project

Barbara Huggins
Jacquan Jones
Soilymar Centeno

3:30pm — 3:45pm

Break

3:45pm — 5:00pm

Team Planning Time: Minimizing Systemic Trauma

Dinner on your own



Saturday, November 21, 2009

7:00am — 8:00am

Breakfast/Team Time/Registration

8:00am — 8:10am

Welcome-Day 3

Honorable Kim Berkeley Clark, Summit Planning
Committee Chairperson



SESSION 4



8:10am—9:15am

Making Data Informed Decisions



Larry Brown, Casey Family Programs Consultant/Larry Brown Associates

Barbara Needell, M.S.W., PhD, Researcher, California State University at Berkeley



Data can be overwhelming and obfuscate or it can be laser-like in pointing to issues and tracking progress. The key is in knowing which kinds of data are most helpful in advancing understanding and which create problems. Strategies for selecting the proper data that will help you see and manage change will be advanced. Experiences with communicating publicly about data, watching for unintended consequences and tying broad outcomes to front-line practice will be explored. County teams will be asked to look at their respective child welfare and court data to select what will be most helpful in advancing their system improvements.

9:15am — 9:45am

Panel Discussion: Using Data to manage change

Moderator: Richard Gold, Deputy Secretary, Office of Children, Youth & Families

Sue Cohick, Administrator, Dauphin County Social Services for Children & Youth

Honorable Todd Hoover, Court of Common Pleas of Dauphin County

Denise Aylward, IT Manager, Judicial Automation, AOPC

9:45am — 10:45am

Team Planning Time — Developing a Local Data Strategy

10:45am—11:15am

Discussion on themes and reporting out

Facilitator: Frank Cervone, Executive Director, Support Center for Child Advocates

11:15am—11:30am

Closing Remarks

Honorable Max Baer, Justice, Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice

12:00pm

Allegheny County Adoption Day (lunch provided)

