

2017
Annual Report



Jeffrey J. Beigel, Judge
Shelby County Juvenile Court
Sidney, Ohio

2017 Shelby County Juvenile Court Report by Judge Jeffrey J. Beigel



On February 20, 2017 I was appointed by the Ohio Governor to serve as Judge of the Shelby County Probate & Juvenile Courts, replacing the Honorable Judge William R. Zimmerman who was elected to our Third District Court of Appeals.

We have worked hard to achieve a smooth and successful transition of the business of the Court and the services it provides to our community.

In 2017 the Shelby County Juvenile Court was very busy, handling over 1,069 cases involving our youth in Shelby County. The Court saw a 50% increase in felony related delinquency cases and continued to see the impact of the ongoing opiate crisis.

Juvenile Court handles a variety of child related cases, including delinquencies, traffic violations, unruly children, paternity cases, truancy charges and Children Services matters (abuse and neglect cases). Juvenile Court also handles custody cases involving children of unwed parents. Steve Geise now serves as my Magistrate and handles the bulk of these custody cases as well as the grandparent visitation and child support enforcement matters.

McKenzie Lotz remains the chief probation officer for the Juvenile Court along with probation officers Aja Dugan and Kory Yohey and intake officer Lorie Hurey. My team remains active in youth programs, which include partnerships with the Family Resource Center (counseling), the Shelby County Animal Shelter (community service work), the Alpha Center (victory garden), the Salvation Army (Bridging the Gap) and the Shelby County Sheriff's Department (home checks).

With funding from the Shelby County United Way, the Juvenile Court will start a seventh year with its IMPACT (Imagine Making Positive Accountable Changes Together) program. This prevention program excels in assisting at risk youth and reduces their future involvement in the juvenile justice system. Amy Simindinger, the court/school liaison, remains the director of this excellent program.

In 2017 the Court also:

- Conducted educational outreach programs for all City and County Schools and Administrators on the impact of Ohio's new truancy laws and established a Court Truancy Diversion Program to meet new legal requirements.
- Established a partnership with the Ohio Attorney General's Office for the collection of fines and costs.
- Established a Juvenile Traffic Diversion Program for first time minor traffic offenders and continued the use of the CARTEENS program to give greater driver safety awareness to new drivers.
- Utilized a Special Projects grant from the United Way to allow the Court to assist youths in obtaining birth records, state identifications and assist with the payment of graduation fees.
- Began implementation of updated Court practices to ensure continued protection of Victims Rights based upon the recent passage of the Constitutional Amendment known as Marsy's Law.

Probation Services

The probation department began the year with 48 youth on probation. There were 27 youth placed on probation and 20 youth successfully completed the terms of their probation.

In collaboration with Sidney/Shelby County Opportunity School Program, the court applied for and received a special projects grant through the United Way in December, 2016 to help youth who were not able to obtain the identification documentation required to gain employment and to help pay fees required to graduate. These grant funds helped 3 youth obtain required identification documents and 4 youth with the payment of past due school fees and graduation fees.

2017 brought many changes to Ohio's truancy laws and placed new requirements on the schools, the court and the probation department. County-wide meetings were held with all school districts, Juvenile Court and the Shelby County Prosecutor's Office to ensure the successful implementation of the House Bill requirements. Out of this, Shelby County Juvenile Court's Truancy Diversion program was designed for youth who are determined by the school to be habitually truant. This program diverts youth from the juvenile court system and provides alternatives to adjudication. Although the Diversion Program was implemented in 2017, the Court did not receive any truancy referrals from the schools.



Our youth continue to look forward to the annual probation outing, which gives them an opportunity to interact with the probation department outside of the court setting. It was held at Bel-Mar Lanes Bowling Alley this year, and the probationers enjoyed competing with their probation officers in the bowling matches.

The probation department ended the year with Chief Probation Officer McKenzie Lotz receiving the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges 2017 Court Service Award. The State-wide award is given once each year to an individual nominated by a Juvenile Court for extraordinary service. She manages a team of probation officers and has been instrumental in establishing successful counseling programs for juvenile girls. She is actively involved in many community organizations that further the Court's service to the community and serves on the board of Clear Creek Farms, a non-profit residential facility for juveniles.



Pictured L to R: OAJCA President Robert DeLamartre; McKenzie Lotz; Supreme Court Justice Sharon L. Kennedy

Programs – Incarceration - Placements

Programs

Juvenile Justice Work Program – Youth perform community service at various work sites throughout the county. The program teaches youth responsibility for negative actions and a basic work ethic.
194 days completed in 2017

Tutoring – Youth are matched with tutors to recover credits and/or help with improving grades.
3 youth received tutoring services and completed a total of 54 hours in 2017

Resource Room – Youth who are assigned to work in the resource room complete school work while serving out-of-school suspensions or meet with a tutor. 12 youth worked in the Resource Room in 2017

Home Checks – The Probation Officers make unannounced home visits to the youth in the program during the hours of 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. 494 home checks were conducted in 2017

Community Service – Youth perform community service for charitable organizations, school and churches. 341 hours completed in 2017

Bridging the Gap – This program is facilitated by The Salvation Army. The youth participate in various life skill lessons that enable them to better handle issues that young people face today. 12 youth completed in 2017

STAR (Start Today Accepting Responsibility) – This program, which is run by the West Central Juvenile Detention Center, shows youth what it is like to be placed in a secure facility for a few hours. 30 youth completed in 2017

Parent Project – This program is offered through the Shelby County Educational Service Center and educates parents while reducing juvenile crime and improving school attendance and academic performance. 10 youth and 14 parents completed in 2017

Mental Health Counseling/Alcohol & Drug Services – The services of the Shelby County Counseling Center, Catholic Social Services, Victim Services, The Family Resource Center and other counselors are utilized to address youth with mental health, behavioral and/or alcohol and drug problems. 25 youth completed alcohol & drug counseling and 39 youth completed mental health counseling in 2017

Diversion – Youth in this program admit to the offense without a formal hearing, and the youth must comply with the contract established with the diversion officer and parent(s). If the youth completes the program successfully, he/she will not have a juvenile record. 15 youth completed in 2017

Court/School Liaison – The Liaison monitors a caseload of students assigned by the Juvenile Court Judge. These youth have come into court on various charges but through a records review, it is also determined they have difficulties in the areas of school attendance, academic achievement, school behavior, or in many cases, a combination of all three. In 2017, the Liaison directly served 44 youth from the Fairlawn, Jackson Center, Sidney City, Anna and Houston School Districts, as well as youth in alternative placements in Opportunity School, the Mac-a-Cheek Learning Center and on-line programming.

IMPACT Program – Families currently participating in the program are receiving individual and family counseling, case management, drug and alcohol counseling, anger management, psychiatric services and in some cases, in-home coaching is provided to the family. In 2017, 73 youth were referred to the program, and 62 of those agreed to participate in the program.

IMPACT Program/Social Skills Class – Students participate in a small group weekly class to develop skills needed to be socially successful in the classroom, school environment and community. In 2017, the IMPACT program provided support to 4 Sidney elementary schools and served a total of 26 students through this program.

Placements

Clear Creek Farm – Children placed with this agency live in family-styled units, residence for 8 to 10 kids cared for by house parents 24 hours a day. Children are expected to participate in the family unit by doing chores and sharing responsibilities, helping with meals, doing their own laundry, and grocery shopping. They enjoy spiritual as well as recreational activities together as a family and learn to support one another. 1 youth was placed into Clear Creek in 2017.

Incarceration

DYS – The Department of Youth Services is the juvenile corrections system for the State of Ohio operating three juvenile facilities with five regional parole offices. 0 youth were placed in 2017.

Rehabilitation – There are twelve Community Corrections Facilities (CCFs) established throughout the State of Ohio to provide a dispositional alternative to Juvenile Judges when committing youth adjudicated of a felony offense to the Department of Youth Services. Youth receive cognitive behavioral therapy with the focus on thinking errors. 3 youth were placed in 2017.

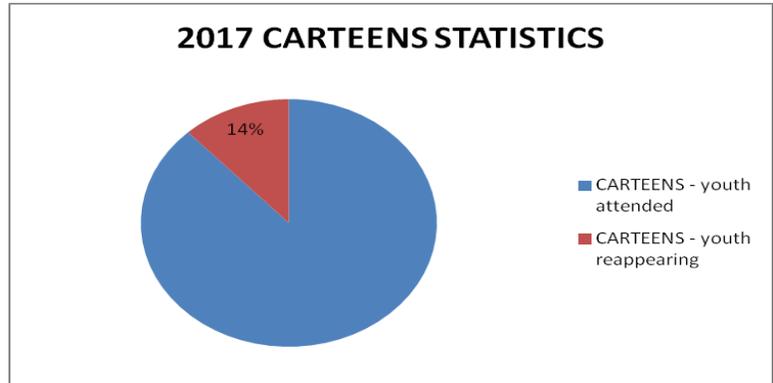
Detention – The Shelby County Commissioners have contracted with the West Central Juvenile Detention Center for 6 beds per day. The facility is a locked facility serving male and female youth between the ages of 12 and 18. 69 youth were placed and 2,268 bed days were used in 2017.

NEW CASES FILED TWO YEAR COMPARISON		
CASE TYPE	2016	2017
Delinquent	320	319
Unruly	56	73
Traffic	240	279
Adult	29	17
Other	47	3
Abuse	21	15
Neglect	55	38
Dependency	3	5
Permanent Custody	25	7

Juvenile Traffic Cases

The Court’s traffic violations bureau allows juveniles to admit to certain violations and pay their Court costs and fines without having to appear in Court. In 2017, of the 279 traffic violations filed with the Court, the bureau processed 21 cases.

The Court created a Juvenile Traffic Diversion Program for first-time minor traffic offenders and continued the use of the CARTEENS Program to give greater driver safety awareness to new drivers. The goals of the CARTEENS program are to reduce the number of repeat juvenile traffic offenders, and increase teen awareness of traffic/vehicular safety.



Domestic Relations Division

The jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court, Domestic Relations Division, is limited to resolving disputes concerning children of unmarried parents, deceased parents, or children that are not “a ward of another Court.” The Court issues decisions regarding paternity, custody, child support, and visitation. The Domestic Relations Division also enforces orders previously issued through the contempt of Court process. Juvenile Court Magistrate Steven J. Geise handles the majority of the cases filed.

Custody and visitation issues are resolved by applying the legal standard of “best interests of the child.” Child support issues are resolved by applying the Ohio Child Support Guideline Calculation Statute. Modification of custody, child support, and visitation are routinely heard by the Court with the objective of protecting the best interests of the minor children. In 2017, of the 192 total cases filed in the Domestic Relations Division, 106 cases were reactivated and 86 were new cases.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS TWO YEAR CASE FILING COMPARISON		
CASE TYPE	2016	2017
Custody/Visitation	140	91
UIFSA	11	2
Paternity	11	17
Support	139	82

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Funding Source	Amount Received	Amount Used	Purpose
Shelby County General Fund	679,339	672,592	Court operations, detention, placements
Computer Fees	5,365	1,000	Computer hardware, maintenance & supplies
Special Projects Fund	24,555	29,339*	Travel expenses, computer maintenance agreement, wireless cards, counseling services for female offenders
Probation Services Fee	388	793	Probation department travel expenses, probationer activities
Shelby County United Way			
Impact Program	40,500	42,891	Counseling services
Special Projects	2,000	457	School fees and employment documentation fees for at-risk youth
State of Ohio Funds			
510 Grant & Reclaim Funds	166,072	164,040	Probation services, GPS monitoring, tutoring, juvenile work program, court/school liaison
Federal Funds			
IV-D Funds	52,619	52,619	Costs related to the Magistrate & Clerks' Office for hearing & processing child support cases
IV-E Funds	0.00	3,445*	GPS ankle monitoring, tutoring, probation administrative costs

***When receipts are less than expenditures, accumulated/carry-over funds from previous years are used.**

Revenue collected by Juvenile Court and paid into the General Fund - \$47,729

This report was produced by the Shelby County Juvenile Court a cost of \$2.10 per copy.