



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Eleventh Judicial Circuit Hosts Meeting to Improve Services for Children

For immediate release Thursday, November 14, 2019

LEWISBURG, W.Va. – Professionals who work with youths in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit (Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties) met for three hours on Wednesday morning to discuss how to improve services to children.

"We wanted everyone who is involved in the juvenile justice system here in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit to be aware of developments in the law and in the services available to address the issues faced by juveniles in Pocahontas and Greenbrier Counties," said Chief Circuit Judge Robert Richardson. "This meeting was an opportunity to bring together the various organizations and individuals who work with juveniles, to learn from one another and to see how we might improve our ability to deal with the problems faced by juveniles in our communities.

"I was particularly pleased with the variety of disciplines represented at the meeting," Judge Richardson said. "We had strong participation from law enforcement officers, mental health professionals, educators, lawyers, probation officers, service providers and others, coming together with the goal of keeping our kids safe and giving them opportunities for a better life."

Circuit Judge Jennifer Dent said, "The program provided an excellent opportunity for individuals from various professional disciplines to learn of the Family First Initiative and to receive an update on the Managed Care Model to be implemented in our state. It further provided an opportunity to learn of the current services available to youth and families within Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties and how those services might be implemented to not only reduce the number of youth within the judicial system, but more adequately serve the needs of youth within the judicial system. The level of participation truly represented the desire of professional disciplines within our Circuit to meet the needs of our juveniles. "

About 70 people attended the morning meeting at the Greenbrier County Courthouse.

There were presentations by Cindy Largent-Hill, Director of the Supreme Court's Division of Children and Juvenile Services; Brenda Hoylman, Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice Manager for the Supreme Court; and Gabe Conley, Kandi Greter, and Andria Jones of the Supreme Court's Court Improvement Program. They talked about the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) Family First Initiative; new

legislation, policies, and rules; juvenile placements; and West Virginia Court Improvement Program projects and processes.

Juvenile Probation officers Jenna Hinkle and Dustin Martin talked about pre-trial diversion for juveniles and there was a discussion about juvenile services offered in Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties led by Melandee Heaster, Attendance Director for Greenbrier County Board of Education; Russell Fridley of the DHHR; and David Jonese, Director the Youth Reporting Center in Greenbrier and Pocahontas Counties.

Costs associated with the meeting were paid by the West Virginia Court Improvement Program Board.

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