The solution to crime prevention does not lie solely with the police, the courts or the probation office. It is the community stepping forward to assist those parties in carrying out their duties that can prevent crime.

For example, community organizations, faith communities and schools have intensive long-term contact with children and can have positive influences on them. We are convinced that a child develops not only through services but also through support and opportunities provided by his/her community.

The Westmoreland County Juvenile Court partners with communities to reach the goals of the Juvenile Justice System, an approach that promises to increase positive outcomes for all those involved. Our pledge is to make Balanced and Restorative Justice work for victims of juvenile crime, communities and youth offenders.

During the fiscal year 2007-08 the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department participated in a collaborative effort in conjunction with the cities of New Kensington and Arnold known as the Ride Along Project. The Police departments wrote a grant to enhance public safety by improving the communication and cooperation between the police and juvenile probation. One probation officer and one police officer cruise the designated neighborhoods in a marked police vehicle, contacting and interacting with youth in the communities where they reside. The Ride Alongs take place in the evening hours and began in September 2007. During this time, the Juvenile Probation Department, along with the police department from both municipalities conducted curfew checks on juvenile probationers on 26 separate occasions. There were a total of 549 curfew checks performed during this time period and the compliance rate increased from 30% to 80% by the end of the 12 month period. This project was made possible by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). This project will continue into the fiscal year 2008-09 due to the city of Arnold once again securing the grant through PCCD. Our department is looking forward to continuing as a participant in this effort to positively impact the communities of New Kensington and Arnold.
For the past twenty-six years, the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department has opened its doors to local public and parochial schools during Juvenile Court Week. In 2007, instead of the traditional Poster Contest, each of the attending schools was challenged to “GO MAD” (Make a Difference) in their communities. Schools were given five months to develop and implement a project that would make a positive contribution to their community.

The schools were then visited by the “MAD Team” which included probation officers and representatives from Outside In School of Experiential Education, Inc who sponsored the event. Youth residents of Outside In reviewed the community service projects submitted and chose the winning school. The winner of the 2007-2008 “MAD” contest was Derry Area Middle School. They completed a Literacy Workshop for preschool age children in their community. Their school board was so impressed that they decided to make this an annual event. Derry was awarded the “MAD” Cup at a ceremony held at the Westmoreland County Community College in March 2008. In addition, the students won $500 for their school and a pizza party. On hand to present the award was Westmoreland County Juvenile Court Judge John J. Driscoll, Franco Harris, former Pittsburgh Steeler and member of the NFL Hall of Fame and Teresa Conn, owner and co-head coach of the Pittsburgh Passion, the Independent women’s Football League. This was the first year Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation implemented this type of contest and we look forward to many more community projects in the future. This is a wonderful way to motivate students to take initiative and spread community service work throughout municipalities.
On April 16, 2008 the first ever joint forum between the County’s 17 school districts and the Juvenile Probation Department was held at the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit #7. The event was a huge success. To kick off the historic event participants were greeted by the Honorable John J. Driscoll, Administrative Judge of Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation. He challenged them on the theme “Creating a Seamless Transition from Placement to Schools,” indicating the goal of the day was to establish ongoing dialog and create an even better relationship between the organizations. He then introduced one of the morning’s speakers, Ms. Kelly Franklin, Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers Aftercare Specialist.

Kelly provided the audience with a PowerPoint on the Models for Change Initiative and shared her excitement on the Forum. As the morning continued Ms. Nancy Hubley, Educational Law Center Managing Attorney, greeted the participants and encouraged them to think of our returning students as “works in progress.” She stressed with guidance and supports these youngsters could undoubtedly be capable of great success. In addition she shared several available forms of resources available to all professionals working with students. Addie Beighley, Director of Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation then introduced the facilitator for the Forum, Dr. Luanne Matta, Executive Director Westmoreland Intermediate Unit #7. Dr. Matta led the group in a strategic planning session on the topic of, “How can we ensure a seamless transition from placements to schools?” The 65 participants were broken into smaller groups, and developed what the transition could look like and what would be needed for this to occur. After processing the feedback, an extensive list of responses was documented and will be utilized in the planning of Westmoreland County’s Aftercare Plan. One of the most exciting outcomes of the Forum came about when Addie asked for volunteers from the County’s schools to be part of the Westmoreland’s Aftercare Team, over half of the participants signed on to take part in this history breaking initiative!
Accountability

“When a crime is committed by a juvenile, an obligation to the victim is incurred. Offenders should make every effort to assume responsibility for their actions and to restore losses suffered by victims.”

- 95% of Juveniles Completed Assigned Community Service
- Over 3,000 Hours of Community Service were Completed
- $64,038 of Restitution was paid to victims
- 87% of Juveniles made full restitution to their victim(s)

Community Protection

“The public has a right to a safe and secure community, including protection from known offenders.”

- 80% of Juvenile Offenders Successfully Completed Supervision
- 76% of Juvenile Offenders Complied with their Conditions of Supervision

Pennsylvania’s vision for the future of juvenile justice is one that involves every community; assists all victims; supports all families; and helps all juveniles to become responsible citizens.”

The Mission of the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department

"To provide supervision and rehabilitation to youth and families while providing community protection, victim restoration and youth redemption"

2008 Award

The Community Based Juvenile Probation Officer, Ms. Kristine Johnson was selected as The Juvenile Probation Professional of the Year by the Pennsylvania Association on Probation Parole and Corrections in recognition of outstanding service to Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System.

Competency Development

“Offenders should leave the Juvenile Justice System more capable of being responsible and productive members of their communities.”

- 94% of Juveniles were employed or in an educational or vocational activity
- 91% of Juveniles successfully completed a competency development activity
The Youth Commission Program allows the community to assist youth in taking responsibility for a first time offense, and agree, with his or her family, to participate with the Youth Commission’s findings. Now serving all of Westmoreland County, each of the 18 local commissions consists of volunteers who assist youth, and solve the harm done to victims and the community by their actions. The Westmoreland County Youth Commission Enhancement Team was developed several years ago with juvenile probation staff and youth commission volunteers. The purpose is to identify ways in which services may be improved to the volunteer members and the youth, families, victims, and the community. This team established liaisons to every Commission, and created a standardize Orientation Training for every new member. It also provides for ongoing training of existing members. Currently we have 127 active Youth Commission Community Volunteers. In 2007, local commissions heard 123 cases, thus freeing the case loads of the Magisterial District Courts and the Juvenile Court.

Understanding Rights for Victims through the Juvenile Court

Since most of the Community is unaware of the workings of the juvenile court it is important for victims to know what rights they have and whether they will be reimbursed for damages or loss of property. This department is designed to answer many of those questions and to ensure that the victim’s voice is heard by the Court.
Since the PTSD Project began in 1999, several thousand professionals have been educated in the topics of PTSD and Stress in Adolescence, it is thrilling to see the interest still remains!

We have received remarkable success in obtaining funding for this project, $500,000 was awarded to Westmoreland County. We now have the unique opportunity to provide on-going training for providers, caseworkers, probation officers, police, school officials and other juvenile justice professionals. We now have the unique opportunity to provide on-going training for providers, caseworkers, probation officers, police, school officials and other juvenile justice professionals. I look forward to our contribution to enhance Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System further by assessing and treating all girls and young women entering our system.

Westmoreland County is proud to have been chosen as a demonstration site for Pennsylvania’s Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Project. When we accepted this challenge we had no idea how the project would grow. We are very grateful to the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency for their financial support over the last four years. We are also thankful to the PA Department of Public Welfare for their cooperation and belief in Westmoreland County for without their support through the Needs Based Budget, Westmoreland County could no longer participate or continue to expand the PTSD project in Pennsylvania.

Ultimately this project could not have grown over the past four years without the complete support, cooperation and encouragement from the Westmoreland County Commissioners and the Honorable John J. Driscoll, Westmoreland County Family Court and Administrative Judge. It is their strong belief in helping youth in the Juvenile Justice System that drives this dedication.

All workshops offered were highly rated and valued by the professionals attending. Participants were thrilled with so much free material and resources available. Several dozen books, videos/DVDs, and pamphlets were provided throughout the conference.

By: Addie Beighley, Director, Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation

It is with great pleasure that I inform you of our good news in Westmoreland County. The Westmoreland County Salary Board unanimously voted to create two positions at the county level, a Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Coordinator and a secretary to help us carry on the PTSD Project in Pennsylvania. We have received remarkable success in obtaining funding for this project, $500,000 was awarded to Westmoreland County through grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency in the past four years and prior to that; additional funding was provided since the beginning of the project in 1999.

We have been built into our Needs Based Budget. I have been informed that this is the first time in history that DPW has agreed to fund a Juvenile Probation Officer and a Juvenile Probation Secretary position. This will be accomplished through an Inter-Agency Agreement with Juvenile Probation and our local Children and Youth Agency. We have achieved great success and recognition in the last four years. Statistics show that the number of girls arrested in Westmoreland County is decreasing and we are working toward decreasing the number of placement days as well.
No other County in the Commonwealth has conducted such an in depth program and hosted so many school students for this length of time. We are very proud of our dedication to this program and have escorted approximately 20,000 school students through our Center over the years.

During the week:

- 800 Middle School Students from public and parochial Westmoreland County schools received a tour of the Juvenile Detention Center.

- All schools were encouraged to participate and compete with other schools in a Community Service Project of their choice. Students became actively involved in selecting the project. The winner, Derry Area Middle School, received $500, a pizza party and won the M.A.D. Cup for 2007-2008.

  Meaningful community service increases positive relationships between the students and their communities. Projects were judged on the following criteria:
  * The impact on the community,
  * the quality of the project,
  * the number of people involved in the project and the quality of the presentation.

- A simulated juvenile hearing was performed.

- An opportunity to hear from juveniles in the system who were removed from their homes and placed in juvenile facilities.

- Adult Prisoners from the State Correctional Institute of Greensburg spoke to students about prison life.

- Police officers presented their Canine Partners.
In 2008, the Westmoreland County CSW Program provided clients with several opportunities to learn, grow, and serve the community while fulfilling their court ordered obligations.

Early 2008, saw the end of another successful season with Overly’s Country Christmas. Since 1994, the Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department has worked with Overly’s Country Christmas. Enabling youth to learn team building and life skills. This helps our troubled youth give back and help provide holiday memories and traditions to everyone in the community. This is a major charitable fundraiser that benefits children’s causes.

Overly’s is a nationally recognized holiday light display that has been featured on “Good Morning America” and other ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliated television programs. In 1983, Good Housekeeping Magazine named Overly’s Country Christmas one of America’s Best Outdoor Light Displays. The display features 2.4 million twinkling lights covering 15 acres of the Westmoreland Fairgrounds.

In preparation of the holiday season, youths were able to provide Overly’s a great deal of assistance hanging Christmas lights and splitting firewood. During the season some of our probationers help prepare and serve the food. The most popular treat is hot cocoa!

Throughout the winter months juveniles help the Westmoreland County Food Bank by packaging food items that are distributed to several senior citizen groups and WIC participants.

As the weather warmed, numerous opportunities became available assisting local communities throughout the county. Areas served include Irwin Borough, Mt. Pleasant Borough, the City of Jeannette, The City of New Kensington and many independent sites such as St. Vincent College, The Salvation Army, churches, libraries, and volunteer fire departments throughout the county.

As of 6/30/08, approximately 3000 hours of CSW have been completed. We will continue to provide services to our current sites while seeking new agencies in which to work. We will strive to offer meaningful learning experiences to all our juvenile clients.
**Case Closing Comparisons**  
**Westmoreland County: 2004 through 2007**

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**Percent of Closed Cases that Paid Restitution Obligations in Full**

- 2004: 76%
- 2005: 78%
- 2006: 80%
- 2007: 82%
- 2008: 84%
- 2009: 86%
- 2010: 88%

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**Juvenile Offenders Successfully Completed Supervision**

- 2004: 0%
- 2005: 10%
- 2006: 20%
- 2007: 30%
- 2008: 40%
- 2009: 50%
- 2010: 60%

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**Percent of Closed Cases that Paid Restitution Obligations in Full**

- 2004: 86%
- 2005: 88%
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- 2007: 82%
- 2008: 80%
- 2009: 78%
- 2010: 76%
MISSION STATEMENT FOR Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System

“JUVENILE JUSTICE: COMMUNITY PROTECTION; VICTIM RESTORATION; YOUTH REDEMPTION.”

Community Protection refers to the right of all Pennsylvania citizens to be and feel safe from crime.

Victim Restoration emphasizes that, in Pennsylvania, a juvenile who commits a crime harms the victim of the crime and the community, and thereby incurs an obligation to repair that harm to the greatest extent possible.

Youth Redemption embodies the belief that juvenile offenders in Pennsylvania have strengths, are capable of change, can earn redemption, and can become responsible and productive members of their communities.

Furthermore, all of the services designed and implemented to achieve this mission and all hearings and decisions under the Juvenile Act—indeed all aspects of the juvenile justice system—must be provided in a fair and unbiased manner. The United States and Pennsylvania Constitutions guarantee rights and privileges to all citizens, regardless of race, color, creed, gender, national origin or handicap.
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