

PROBATE/JUVENILE DIVISION LICKING COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



2008 Annual Report

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PROBATE-JUVENILE DIVISION
LICKING COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT



LICKING COUNTY COMMON PLEAS COURT
PROBATE – JUVENILE DIVISION

Courthouse, Newark, Ohio 43055 – Phone (740) 670-5624

JUDGE
ROBERT H. HOOVER

MAGISTRATES
JEFFREY A. PLUNKETT
CHRISTOPHER A. STREFELT

June 19, 2009

To the Citizens of Licking County:

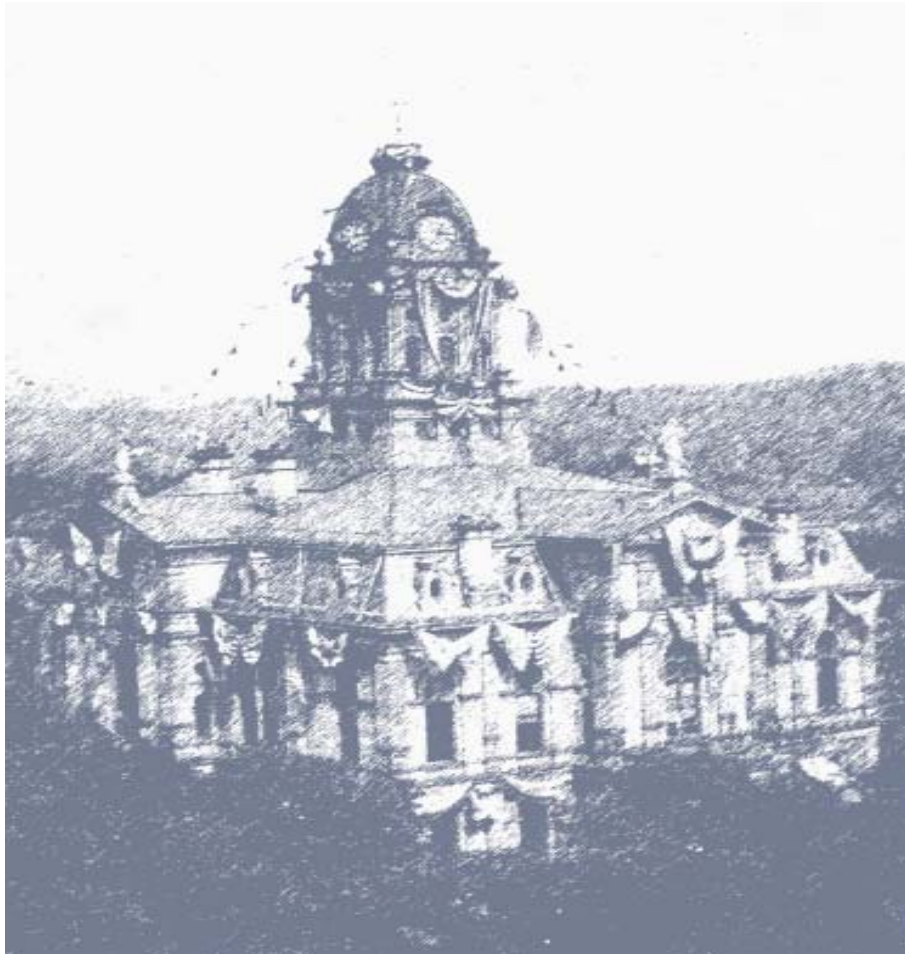
This annual report is a summary of the activities, efforts and achievements of the Licking County Probate-Juvenile Court and its partners. It includes facts and statistics of the Court and those we serve.

The Court applauds you, the citizens of Licking County, for your continued support of our community's youth and families! Without collaboration and partnerships with many other agencies and individuals, we would be unable to accomplish our mission.

Thank-you for allowing me the privilege of continuing to serve as your Probate-Juvenile Court Judge!

Very truly yours,

Judge Robert H. Hoover



The Licking County Juvenile Court administers justice and provides quality services to offenders and their families, to victims, and to the citizens of the community. The court's services focus on:

- Holding youth accountable for their actions.
- Providing victims with a voice in the justice process.
- Providing community safety for all citizens.
- Building healthy communities for healthy youth.

The efforts of our Court reflect a proactive approach to developing and supporting partnerships in all facets of the Licking County community. The following pages will provide an overview of the Probate-Juvenile Court services for Licking County citizens.

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LICKING COUNTY PROBATE-JUVENILE COURT

Our mission is to provide effective, efficient and professional services for our community to enhance its quality of life.

We accomplish this **by**:

- √ Treating people with dignity and respect.
- √ Developing holistic, goal-oriented, individualized, customer-driven, and community-based plans organization wide.
- √ Being very organized! (automation)
- √ Efficiently implementing plans, including clear and honest communication.
- √ Being a partner in the development of a shared sense of community responsibility.
- √ Developing a culture of continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation and professional development.
- √ Prioritizing and developing resources.
- √ Meeting basic responsibilities, including: timely justice, providing services to victims, community protection, reduction of recidivism and development of healthy families.
- √ Supporting treatment efforts and being more visible in the community.
- √ Developing a proactive, open and participatory organizational structure that supports and guides quality services and high standards.

JUDGE ROBERT H. HOOVER
& Staff

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year of 2008 was an exciting year for the Juvenile and Probate Courts of Licking County. Our community continues to grow and evolve with every passing year. We believe that it is our duty to grow and change as Licking County continues to move forward. There were several high profile cases in our court that caught statewide and even national attention, and there were many more families and youth that worked together with the court to address their own personal challenges.

The year of 2008 saw several trends remain the same and several change. Juvenile delinquency filings increased to their highest point since 2003, while juvenile traffic offense continued to decline. Adjudications for felony rape charges were again on the rise with 36 counts adjudicated in 2008. Total felony adjudications remained somewhat constant at 63, but commitments to the Ohio Department of Youth Services dipped to 22 or 35%. Sexually oriented offenses continue to account for a significant percentage of felony adjudications as well as commitments to the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

Programmatically, the Court increased its commitment to collaboration with community providers. The Court continues to partner with Kraner Behavioral Health in the provision of a substance abuse counselor that works on site with our clinical staff. Work with community stakeholders progressed in fulfilling the Licking County Community Blueprint strategic plan. This included the Children and Families First Council employing a “team facilitator”. This person works with multi-disciplinary teams in the coordination of services and treatment for families involved in multiple systems. As the community’s Drug Free Communities Grant has now evolved into the “Our Futures in Licking County” initiative. Court personnel have played an integral part in taking the initiative to its next stage in eliminating drug and alcohol abuse in Licking County. In 2008, this initiative saw the introduction of strategies developed by Dr. Dennis Embry of the Paxis Institute. This work will continue into 2009.

Assessment of risk and needs continued to be a priority at intake, with each youth that was charged with the equivalent of a felony having an in-home assessment prior to adjudication. The Licking County Juvenile Court assisted the University of Cincinnati and the Ohio Department of Youth Services in the development of a new comprehensive assessment instrument. The Juvenile Court will act as a pilot site for the implementation of this new statewide initiative in 2009.

This past year has been a one of change and progress. We thank our staff, community partners and families for working together toward our common goals of Licking County continuing to be a safe and healthy community to raise a family and in the improvement of our county as a whole.

We fulfill our role in our community through our most important asset, our staff....

LICKING COUNTY PROBATE-JUVENILE COURT STAFF

Judge Robert H. Hoover

Court Administrator

David Edelblute

Administrative Office

Vivian Zigan

Judge's Paralegal/Assistant

Sue Knight

Administrative Assistant

Jerry Kaneff

Judge's Bailiff

Youth Responsibility Project

Cora Fulton

Director

Rita Revercomb

Assistant

Dustin Sorrell

Americorps Volunteer

Beth Underwood

Americorps Volunteer

Teresa Hurst

Secretary

Diversion Department

Debbie DePaso

Director

Nikki Debo

Diversion Officer

Kristie Bush

Diversion Officer

Dave Vozzella

Diversion Officer

Finance Department

Brad Cottrell

Director

Rebecca Kirk

Staff Accountant

Magistrates

Jeff Plunkett

Christopher Strefelt

Juvenile Clerks Office

Vicki Frick

Chief Deputy Clerk

Rhonda Sorrell

Senior Deputy Clerk

Dawn Cochran

Deputy Clerk

Rose Lindsey

Deputy Clerk

Mary Wilson

Deputy Clerk

Sally Keck

Part-time Deputy Clerk

Donna Gosnell

Receptionist/Deputy Clerk

Family Intervention Services

John Fry, MSSA, LISW

Clinical Director

Clinical Unit

Donna Layton, MSW, LISW

Counselor

Sara Burton, MSW, LISW

Counselor

Sue Hebert, MSW, LSW

Counselor

Cecil M. Miller, Ph.D.

Psychologist

Jennifer Eagle

Administrative Secretary

Julie Green

Temporary Administrative Secretary

Jessame Winegardner

Part-time Secretary

Sharon Holman

Part-time Secretary

Mediation Program

Lesley Hill
Coordinator/Mediator
Jeffrey Gill
Part-time Mediator

Probation Department

Kandy Humphrey
Director
Richard Christian
Senior Probation Officer
Adam Arcuri
Probation Officer
Ryan Bush
Probation Officer
Michael Evans
Probation Officer
Sarah Grady
Probation Officer
Kristiana Hess
Probation Officer
Alan Hunt
Probation Officer
Gayle Lunsford
Probation Officer
Michael Martin
On Call Officer
Steven Mercer
Probation Officer
James Darby Riley
Probation Officer
Joshua Saylor
IVE Placement Coordinator/Officer
Anthony Wedemeyer
Probation Officer
Jessica Wetzel
Probation Officer
Linda Eisel
Administrative Secretary
Rebecca Hile
Administrative Secretary

Transportation Officers

David Goodman
Transportation Officer
Robert Sensabaugh
Transportation Officer
Leisa Herren
Asst. Transportation Officer
Thomas Metcalf
Asst. Transportation Officer
Lawrence Stock
Asst. Transportation Officer

Probate Clerk's Office

William Fisher
Chief Deputy Clerk
Shannon Edwards
Senior Deputy Clerk/Bookkeeper/Bailiff
Amista Buxton
Deputy Clerk
Cathryn Helton
Deputy Clerk
Melinda Maines
Deputy Clerk
Amanda McWilliams
Part-Time Deputy Clerk
Jennie Richards, L.S.W.
Court Investigator/Adoption Specialist

Security

Brian Debo
Director/Bailiff
Linda Farrell
Bailiff
Jim Lanfear
Part-time Bailiff
Mark VanWinkle
Part-time Bailiff

Collaboration:

Understanding that we share the responsibility to achieve our mission with many associations, organizations, departments and individuals in Licking County; we value the collaborative working relationships in which we have been privileged to engage. Below are a few of these partnerships.

GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL SERVICE

Licking County Juvenile Intervention Roundtable, Collaboration Taskforce:

The multiple challenges facing youth and families in the juvenile justice system have always been a major concern of the Probate and Juvenile Courts, especially those families that are concurrently involved in multiple government and treatment systems. With the goal of increasing the effectiveness and coordination of services in Licking County, Judge Hoover convened a "roundtable" of treatment, judicial and social service providers and funders in 2004. This work continues on today.

The taskforce charter statement is: *Creating a more Comprehensive Treatment Continuum in Licking County.* As a result of this group's work, there has been a coordinated effort to facilitate more effective interventions. Work continued in 2005 as the Court actively became involved in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers Initiative. Work continued through 2006 and on into 2007 with periodic meetings of behavioral health providers and other youth/family serving entities. Some of the local accomplishments include the availability of emergency psychiatric evaluations for both the Juvenile Court and Children's Services, integration of efforts into the Licking County Community Blueprint strategic plan, development of a co-occurring (substance abuse/

addiction and mental health issues) homebased treatment strategy, coordination of and greater collaboration and coordination of cases involving multiple entities.

2008 saw the implementation of a new team implementation process for youth and families involved with multiple service providers. A new team facilitator was hired by the Licking County Children and Families First Council to facilitate intervention teams that wrap around the identified families and children. This process has been developed and implemented by the expertise of Dr. Richard Shepler of the Center for Innovative Practices.

Teamworks!:

The Court recognizes a need to provide support for alternative educational and/or vocational assessment and intervention services to high-risk youth who continue to fail in the traditional educational settings offered by public education. The Court contracts with Kairos Academy to assess and develop an educational success plan for identified youth. An educational evaluation includes assessment of the student and family including definition of roles, expectations, motivation, asset evaluation, assessment of learning styles, educational achievement and expressed interests. Utilizing information gathered from the assessment an individual educational plan is developed. The Plan will encourage family involvement and includes the following life domains: academic, social, vocational, psychological, emotional, and spiritual. The Plan includes goals, steps to attain the goals and projected deadlines. The Individual Learning

Plans identify a venue (school, family, work experience and community interest areas) for each goal and activity identified.

Emergency Psychiatric Services:

Licking County reflects many communities across the state struggling with limited psychiatric services for children and adolescents. Acknowledging that the Court serves many high-risk mentally ill youth in the county, Moundbuilders Guidance Center offers the Juvenile Court regular emergency psychiatric appointment slots for Court involved youth. This provides the Court the ability to access psychiatric services for youth who are critically in need of evaluation and medication. These services have also been extended to Children Services. Licking County is truly blessed to have these services available for our youth and families.

Drug and Alcohol Treatment Integration:

As a result of collaboration between the Sheryl L. Kraner, Esq. Youth and Family Behavioral Health Campus and the Licking County Juvenile Court, an on-site Drug and Alcohol Dependency and Abuse specialist is currently working with the Court's forensic assessment and treatment team. Many of the youth and families that come into contact with the Juvenile Court have significant alcohol or other drug issues. It is not uncommon for these issues to co-exist with significant mental health issues. Through this collaboration, Kraner Behavioral Health is able to provide an on-site specialist that works directly with Court Staff to assess and address these issues. This increased capacity allows a truly integrated approach when working with families.

Licking County Children and Families First Council:

The Licking County Probate-Juvenile Court is an active member of our "Council." The mission of the Licking County Children and Families First Council is: *Connecting, strengthening and building resources into a caring community which promotes the well-being of our children and families.*" The Council consists of representatives from all social service systems; as well as education, religion, and parent representatives.

Some of the collaborative projects of the Council include the **Family Stability Incentive Fund, the Wellness Block Grant, Clinical Committee, Early Start, Safe and Drug Free Communities, Partnerships for Success and various foundation grants.**

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS & INITIATIVES

Volunteers have become integral in taking the mission of the Court forward. Parents, dedicated teachers and compassionate and concerned citizens give their time, talents and resources to assist the Court in improving the quality of living in Licking County.

Helping Hands, Garden of Hope Program:

Since 1999, the Juvenile Court, Denison University and various community agencies have operated a unique organic gardening program for girls involved in the juvenile justice system. Combining skill building, nutritional education, community service and mentoring, young women plan, plant, maintain and harvest vegetables from this community garden that is located on the south side

of the City of Newark. Much of the harvested vegetables are then donated to local food pantries. Over 90 girls have provided 4,000 hours of community service through their participation in the garden over the past eight years. Together, they have donated over one ton of produce to local pantries.

Our Futures in Licking County:

In 2004 and again in 2005 the Licking County Juvenile Court assisted the Licking County Children and Families First Council in an application for a federal "Safe and Drug Free Communities" grant. In the fall of 2005, Licking County's application was accepted and funded for approximately \$500,000 over five years, which can be renewed for up to ten years.

By combing the resources of this grant and other community funds, Our Futures in Licking County has evolved. This effort gathers both the public and private sectors around the common concerns of substance abuse and child abuse.

In 2008, the community initiative partnered with the United Way and the Licking and Knox Counties Community Mental Health and Recovery Board in the utilization of Dr. Dennis Embry's Paxis Institute concepts.

Through the guidance of Dr. Embry, low cost, proven strategies called "kernels" are being implemented across Licking County. The Licking County Probate-Juvenile Court is proud to be a partner in this effort and we believe that by working together we will effectively reduce substance abuse, child abuse and juvenile delinquency in all of Licking County.

EDUCATION

The Juvenile Court partnered with school districts and private school systems in Licking County to support school attendance and success for students. Court staff participates on task groups with school staff, working to develop initiatives to reduce challenges and increase students' school success.

Probation and Diversion Officers are assigned geographically by school district and work formally and informally with school buildings and administration.

Services provided to local schools include regular Truancy Court sessions, conducted by Judge Hoover; truancy mediation; and in-school counseling.

Student Internship Programs:

Fieldwork is a collaborative partnership between the school, community, and social work professionals and students. The Court has partnered with various institutions of higher learning to provide an opportunity for the student to apply theory acquired in the classroom with real life experiences. The students provide tutoring, mentoring, information and referral, and counseling services to a number of youth and families involved with the Court system.



COMMUNITY SERVICE SITES

Restorative Justice is based on the principle that the community must be involved in holding offenders accountable. The following is a listing of community groups in Licking County that assisted in supporting the offender in the obligation to make restoration. These groups provided community service sites and supervision to Court-involved youth in 2008.

American Cancer Society
 Bassett House
 Belmont Harris Program
 Buckeye Lake Street Dept.
 C-Tec
 Center for Disability Services
 Center for New Beginnings
 Charlie Franks
 Children of Mary Convent
 Christian Apostolic Church
 Christian Life Center
 City of Newark
 Parks & Recreation
 Jeff Hotchkiss
 Coalition for Housing
 Columbus Cancer Clinic
 Food Pantry Network
 Frank Johnson
 Garden of Hope, Denison Univ.
 Goodwill Store
 Newark (2 stores)
 Johnstown
 Mt. Vernon
 Pataskala
 Pony Express Program
 Utica
 Youth Works Program
 Heartbeats
 7 Habits of Highly
 Effective Teens
 Heath Sertoma
 Heritage Middle School
 Jacksontown United Methodist
 Jersey Baptist Church
 Johnstown Water Plant
 Kirkersville Elementary School
 Lakewood High School
 Licking County Humane
 Society
 Licking Valley High School
 Licking Valley Middle School
 MaryAnn Vol. Fire Dept.
 Morgan County Engineers Ofc
 Moundbuilders Guidance
 Center
 Mt. Vernon High School
 Nationwide Children's Hospital

Newark Baptist Temple
 Newark High School
 New Life Tabernacle Church
 Northridge High School
 Ohio Department of Agriculture
 Ohio Department of
 Transportation
 Adopt-A-
 Highway
 Programs (2)
 Ohio Youth Basketball
 Pataskala Cemetery
 Pataskala City Depts
 Pataskala Leads Center
 Pataskala Utilities Dept
 Reynoldsburg High School
 Salvation Army, Newark
 Salvation Army, Columbus
 Smith Chapel UMC
 Southwest Licking Bus Garage
 St. Vincent DePaul Donation Ctr
 State Highway Patrol Granville
 Post
 The Ridge Museum
 The Teen Center
 Utica High School
 Village of St. Louisville
 Waggoner Road Jr. High School
 Washington Square Apts.
 Water's Edge UM Ministries
 Watkins Memorial High School
 Watkins Memorial Middle School
 Woodlands
 Family Connections

YES Program
 YMCA of Gahanna
 YMCA of Licking County, Newark
 YMCA Western Branch, Pataskala
 Youth for Christ

Churches available on Request

Apostolic Unity Church
 Christ the King Church
 Christian Community Church
 Church of God of Licking County
 Church of God of Prophecy
 Cross Roads Worship Center
 Croton Church of Christ
 Fellowship Baptist Church
 First Baptist Church (Newark)
 First Baptist Church (Granville)
 First Christian Union Church
 First Church of the Nazarene
 First United Methodist Church
 Focus Ministries
 Fletcher Chapel
 Frazeyburg United Methodist
 Heath Church of Christ
 Heath United Methodist Church
 Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
 Kirkersville United Methodist Church
 Linnwood Baptist Church
 Maple Avenue Christian Union
 Neal Avenue United Methodist
 New Bethel Christian Union Church
 Newark Grace Brethren Church
 Old Country Church
 Open Door Baptist Church
 Our Savior Lutheran Church
 Perryton Church of Christ
 Plymouth United Church of Christ
 Second Church of Christ
 Second Presbyterian Church
 Second Street Church of Christ
 St. Edward the Confessor
 St. John's United Methodist Church
 Shiloh Baptist Church
 Victory Baptist Church
 Wagram United Methodist Church
 West End Church of Christ



Prevention:

We understand that our resources are most effective when utilized to prevent undesirable behavior or situations before they happen. Under the Ohio Revised Code, Juvenile Courts are given the latitude to address and facilitate prevention efforts within their jurisdiction. Along with many community partners, the Licking County Probate-Juvenile Court works to provide all families and youth with the opportunity, skills and resources to have a satisfying and fulfilling life.

Fostering School Success:

Academic failure, lack of commitment to school, and early and persistent antisocial behavior in school are risk factors for substance abuse, delinquency, violence, teenage pregnancy, and school dropout. Early interventions targeting the reduction of these risks and promoting protective factors are fundamental in developing healthy children.

The Licking County Juvenile Court is committed to supporting each school system to assist in building school success and to ensure that children have the opportunity to become capable and responsible citizens.

Truancy Mediation:

Truancy Mediation includes the student, parent(s), teacher and/or school administrator, and attendance officer, all working with a mediator to identify and resolve issues that are negatively affecting school attendance. Together, they work to develop a solution that will promote school success. Truancy mediation is offered to all schools in the county from elementary through high school, resulting in 46 completed truancy mediations for 2008.

School Attendance Officers:

Monitoring school attendance, coupled with contingent reinforcement of attendance, effectively reduces truancy in elementary, middle and high schools.

The Licking County Juvenile Court assists county and city schools by

supporting student attendance. Court staff work directly with School Attendance Officers to address school attendance issues. School Attendance Officers work with schools and families in resolving problems of youth who are, or are at risk of, becoming habitually truant. Through intervention efforts, the area's school systems provide alternatives for the use of probation services for truant youth.



School Unruly Program:

The Diversion Department and area schools have joined efforts to promote school success by:

Supporting communication between home, school and community.

Linking community resources to family and youth.

Providing Court services.

Officers schedule regular meetings with school administrators, teachers,

attendance officers, and guidance counselors to address and prevent Court involvement due to behavioral issues.

Truancy Court:

Truancy Court has been in existence since 1997. Truancy Court has a partnership with the following schools:

- Newark City
- Lakewood District
- Licking Heights School District
- Watkins School District

Judge Robert Hoover presides over informal meetings at the various schools with habitually absent and truant students and their parents on issues contributing to continued absence from school.

There are two levels of informal involvement with Truancy Court. The first level is a group meeting in which the Judge discusses the importance of school attendance and the potential consequences to the student and parent for not attending class. Following the meeting with the Judge, each individual family meets with Court staff or school official to develop an intervention plan to increase school attendance. In the case where the student's attendance continues to be an issue, the family is requested to attend an individual family meeting with the Judge. At this second level, the Judge addresses the individual family issues concerning the student's continued absence from school. If problems continue, the school attendance officer may pursue charges against the juvenile and/or the parent.

Secondary Level Prevention - *Informal Intervention Services:*

Many times the underlying issues that bring a youth or family to the attention of the Juvenile Court can be addressed prior to becoming "officially" involved. The Court, working with community partners, engages family and youth in secondary prevention interventions to prevent future undesirable behavior.

The Diversion Department:

Many youth and families that come into contact with the Juvenile Court have no history of involvement. Their offenses may be relatively minor in nature (misdemeanor or status offenses). Experience and research has shown that future Court involvement can be prevented through the development of a comprehensive plan that utilizes the resources of the community and family. This process "diverts" the youth from formal Court involvement. The Diversion Department's program provides an alternative, non-judicial method of working with the youthful offender. The goals of the diversion program are to:

- **Allow the youth to take responsibility for his or her actions with appropriate consequences.**
- **Provide the youth and family with needed resources.**
- **Prevent future involvement of the youth with the juvenile justice system.**

Youth eligible have no prior official or unofficial records and are alleged to have committed "status" (unruly, truancy, or curfew violations) or misdemeanor-level offenses.

Once referred, the Diversion Officer sets a diversion interview with the youth and parent (guardian). At the interview, the Diversion Officer asks the youth and parent to provide

information concerning the youth, the family, and the alleged offense. The Diversion Officer reads the complaint or the police report to the youth. At this time, the youth can admit or deny the offense. The youth is encouraged to share his or her side of the story. If the youth admits to the offense, the diversion interview will continue. If the youth denies the offense, the diversion interview will end. The youth has the right to an adjudicatory hearing, therefore, the report will be referred to the prosecutor for the youth to respond to the charges in court.

The Diversion Officer assesses the youth and family for concerns in areas such as school, peer relations, and drug/alcohol involvement. They also provide the youth and their family with information about court and community resources to resolve problematic issues. The final stage of the interview involves the youth accepting responsibility for the offense by complying with certain conditions and consequences, which are written into a contract. The agreement is signed by both the youth and the parent. Contract terms are highly variable and depend on the offense, the youth, and family needs. Some examples of terms utilized in the past are community service, counseling, mediation, essays, drug/alcohol treatment, restitution, and apology letters. If a youth does not fulfill the agreements of the Diversion Contract, the offense report may be referred to the Prosecutor's Office for review and formal prosecution.

In 2008, the Diversion Department served a total of 410 youth and families. This total included 257 males and 153 females.

Diversion Unruly Program:

This program has been developed specifically to address unruly youth and their families.

The Unruly Program is a three-tier process empowering the family to resolve their issues by utilizing community support services. This voluntary program requests that the family complete the first two phases before utilizing traditional diversion services.

Programmatic goals are as follows:

1. **Decrease the number of inappropriate referrals to the traditional diversion program.**
2. **Provide information about community services to families.**
3. **Empower the family to resolve their own issues.**
4. **Create an ongoing family support group.**
5. **Identify and connect with multiple levels of community resources in an effort to reduce the number of unrulies transferred to official status.**

This tiered process for unruly youth developed by the Licking County

Juvenile Court's Diversion Department has served as a model for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Active Parenting of Teens:

In 1997, the Court collaborated with The Woodlands to develop a parent education and support program for families with teens. The Woodlands of Licking County provides a six-week educational series for parents and their teenage children that is taught by professional facilitators. The program accomplishes its goals by: promoting a positive approach to raising responsible children; utilizing lectures, group discussion, video vignettes, homework, and role-plays to increase the parent's knowledge, insight, and skills.

Substance Abuse

Screens:

Adolescent substance use and abuse continue to be concerns of the Court. The Court refers youth to local treatment and educational programs for assessment and intervention. In 1996, the Court began utilizing trained Court staff to conduct in-house drug screening. Having test

results immediately provides the staff the ability to hold the juvenile accountable at the time of testing. Judge Hoover has provided parents who attend Truancy Court the opportunity to utilize the Court's screening program to enable them to make informed intervention choices for their child.

Mediation:

Mediation is a process used through-out the continuum of Court services, from prevention through re-entry to the community out of the Ohio Department of Youth Services. This process is designed to promote reconciliation, create well-crafted settlements, or find compromise.

In this Court, mediation has evolved as an effective tool for resolving issues between family members and among peers; mediation also works for those victimized by offenses to reach restitution with offenders. Schools, students, and family find mediation helpful in identifying and resolving issues that can lead to truancy.

This developing model of mediation moves the process from a "settlement driven" model of problem solving to a "dialogue driven" participant centered approach that promotes peacemaking and the healing of relationships in the community. The emphasis is on making

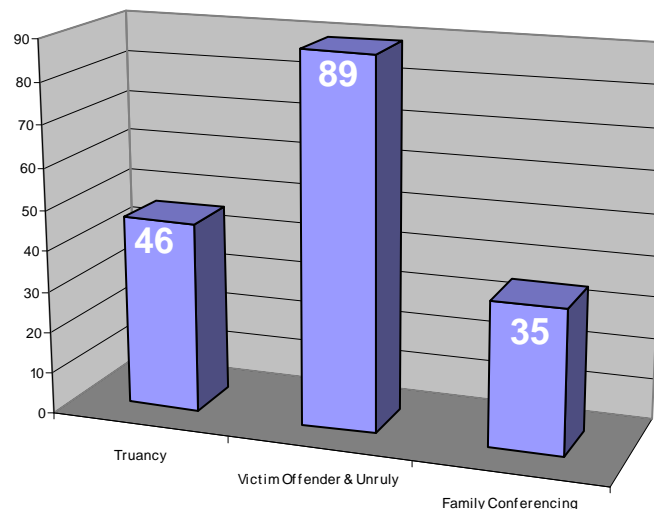
a space for dialogue, that allows each party to the mediation to discuss the full impact of the conflict, lets them help each other in determining the most suitable resolution, and to recognize each other as fellow members of a connected community, despite the conflict.

Mediation is a facilitated process, helping individuals work together to create their own solutions, and take responsibility for working out an agreement, both at the mediation, and afterwards, back out in the community.

In Truancy Mediation, the mediator facilitates dialogue between the school, attendance officer, parents, and student, to develop a solution that will promote school success. Truancy mediation is provided to all schools in the county from elementary through high school. There were 46 completed truancy mediations in 2008.

Parent/Child (Unruly) Mediation provides a place for child and parent to communicate their needs and resolve how the family together can meet needs of each member. This type of mediation can involve multiple sessions where the family chooses to work on a few issues at a time, building a base for themselves of increased trust, responsibility, and independence.

Juvenile Court Mediations in 2008



Victim/Offender Mediation involves the community and especially the person(s) victimized by an offense in the working of the juvenile justice process. It can be one process where restorative justice is promoted, allowing the victim to meet face-to-face with the offender involved, and share with that young person the full impact of the event, as well as have a say in the reparations. It provides the offender an opportunity to fully understand, from the victim's perspective, the impact of their actions beyond even what they realized. For some offenders, this may be the first time he or she had an awareness of the personal suffering caused to another human being, and the ripple effects of what they have done.

Mediation is an effective method to reach resolution and make restitution when appropriate. Participants gain valuable skills for handling future issues, and report positive feedback on the process from their perspective in follow-up surveys.

One hundred and seventy mediations were completed in 2008.

Family Conferencing:

Since 2002, in response to House Bill

57 and in collaboration with Licking County Job and Family Services, a pilot project began in Licking County Juvenile Court to serve a population that does not fit neatly into any existing service category.

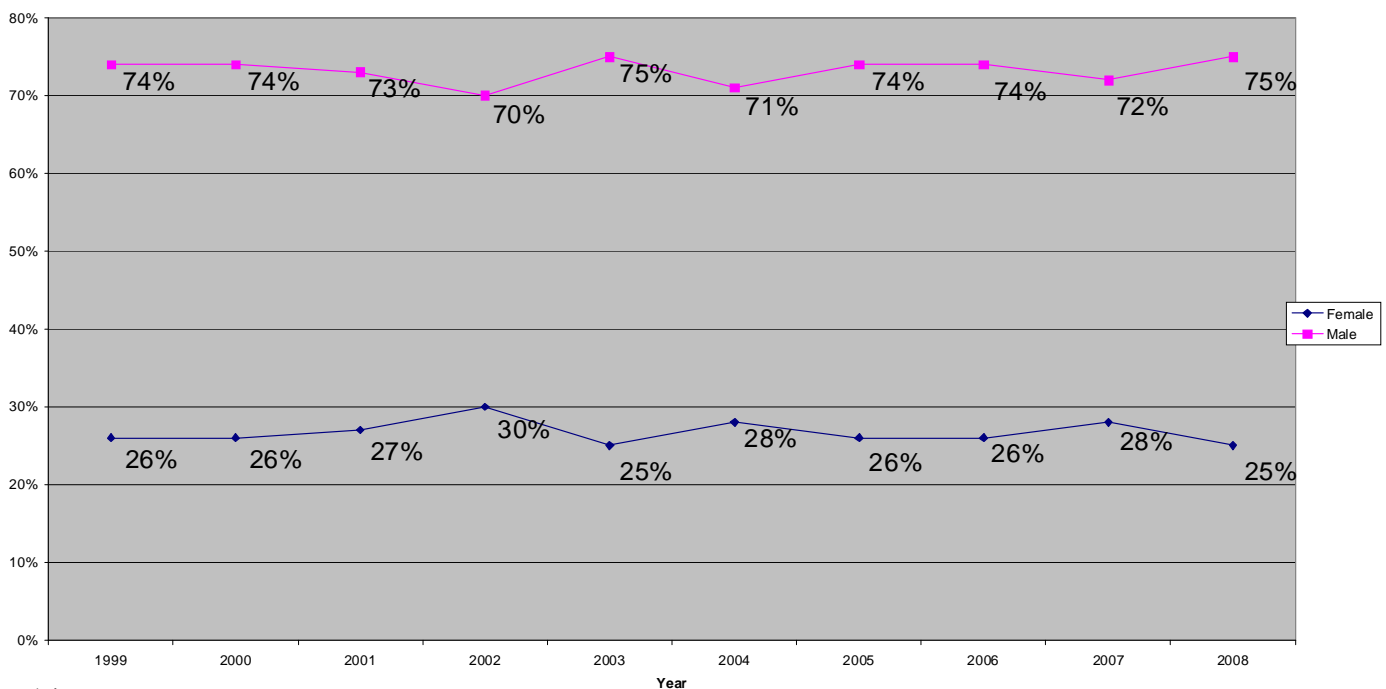
For juveniles who are not criminals, are not clearly cases of abuse or neglect, or are not severely mentally disabled, some obvious paths to assistance are not readily available to them or their families. The family may deal with multiple issues like conflict, lack of supervision, drug and alcohol use, mental health, and/or lack of school success. These are the settings for youth whom the family and community ask the juvenile court system: "Do something!"

Traditionally, these youth have been under the umbrella of Court services through the Diversion Program, and they tend to move quickly from unofficial diversion status to official probation status. Putting these youth into detention is neither an option, nor a solution; we want to address the often complicated underlying issues confronting the youth and their family. One way to do that is called "family conferencing."

Thirty-five families chose to make use of family conferencing in 2008, addressing their own unique concerns and needs, using a mediator and therapist working in tandem. A Diversion Officer of the Court may recommend family conferencing, using a current counselor/therapist the family is working with, or asking for a staff therapist to be included in the mediation. Using the continuum of family services under the Court "umbrella," the idea is to divert the youth from official Court involvement, and to provide the family with services that will reduce the unruly behaviors of the youth.

The focus is on promoting self-determination and skill-building, providing a place where the family can work constructively on resolving the issues that brought them to the Court staff's attention. When healthy conversation gets started, problem solving will begin and the conference participants can work on a family plan that makes sense in the family's particular setting. They are provided support and encouragement by the mediator and therapist that often leads to referral and linkage with other community support systems.

Adjudication Percentages by Gender



Therapeutic Services:

It is primary to our operations to address the underlying issue or issues that brings a family to the Licking County Juvenile Court. Utilizing evidenced-based therapeutic interventions and assessments allows the Bench and our staff the ability to comprehensively address the issues that may cause a family to return to our system.

Individual and Family Therapy:

In the early 1980s, the Court developed a small clinical department to provide free assessment and counseling services to the population of juvenile offenders and their families. Over the past 27 years, the services have evolved to meet the ever-changing needs of the adolescent and family. Today, services are family focused vs. child focused; interventions are driven by comprehensive family assessments utilizing a number of different tools, and children and adolescents are served at all levels of Court involvement (pre-diversion, diversion, probation, and in-placement). The Court's treatment unit provides clinical assessments, individual and family counseling, participates in family conferencing and provides follow-up services, case management services, emergency suicide and homicide risk assessments, and consultative services. The counselors team with Mediation staff, Probation, and Diversion Officers to provide holistic case planning for youth.

In an effort to meet the unique needs of each family, clinical staff visits the youth and their family in their home, school, employment, and in the office in order to address all areas affecting the youth and family's life. Clinicians provide services in the evening as well as on the weekend to reduce the need to remove adolescents from school or the parent from his or her workplace.

The clinical staff utilizes several different treatment modalities while working with youth and family. Utilizing *brief cognitive therapy*, the counselor and family develop goals in the initial sessions and work towards

overcoming barriers in the thinking process towards achieving goals. Ideally, the counseling process would last no longer than five to eight sessions. *Family systems therapy* examines the family as a functioning system operating with other systems (school, work, and community). This modality also examines the family dynamics and looks to change dysfunctional patterns through restructuring family communication patterns and utilizing external systems.

In addition to working with youth referred from the Bench, probation, and diversion, clinicians accept referrals from School Attendance Officers and Truancy Court as well as the Department of Youth Services' Aftercare Division. In 2008, the clinical unit provided individual, family, and group counseling to over 309 youths and their families and participated in 35 family conference meetings. The clinical staff conducted 96 clinical assessments for the Bench.

Psychological Assessments:

In an effort to gain a clear understanding of the underlying issues that promote criminal or unruly behaviors and through that understanding provide meaningful and potentially effective interventions, psychological evaluations are provided at the request of Court staff. Psychological evaluations are utilized to aid in the final disposition of a youth in regards to Court-ordered treatment and placement decisions. The Court contracts service from a licensed psychologist with forensic, adolescent and family work experience and knowledge of community resources and services. Contracting on a weekly basis greatly reduces time lag between adjudication and disposition. The psychologist bases his final

recommendations on information from MMPI test results, face-to-face interviews with youth and family, phone interviews and written records from Court, staff, schools, and other systems involved with youth and family.

In 2008, there were 54 psychological evaluations prepared.

Pro-Social Skill Building:

In 2006, the Court adopted a family-based Pro-Social Skill Building program designed for youth and family members to learn appropriate social skills, new ways to control anger, and to help improve moral development.

In Pro-Social Skill Building, parents and child are asked to participate in a group session with five other families, one night per week for a period of eight to ten weeks. Groups are divided by gender, with different sessions for male and female children. The families are taught sets of skills they can use at home and in their everyday life, such as Listening, Negotiating, Understanding the Feelings of Others and Keeping Out of Fights. Trainers model each new skill, have the participants practice the skill, and then provide feedback. Parents and children are given homework to practice the new skill and asked to report back each week.

Family participation is an important key to the success of Pro-Social Skill Building. Focusing on the whole family, instead of just the child, enables learning to be accelerated and practiced regularly in a "real world" environment and allows the family to reinforce new positive behaviors together.

In 2008, there were 57 families and children who participated in Pro-Social Skill Building through the Licking County Juvenile Court.

Community Service & Victim Services:

The Juvenile Court is charged to "remove the taint of criminality" from the juvenile offender. By addressing the needs of the victim and allowing them to participate in the justice process, we are assisting in moving the individual and family forward. By giving the juvenile offender an attempt to give back to the victim and community, they have an opportunity to begin to "make right" what they have done wrong.

Youth Responsibility Project Community Service Components:

The Youth Responsibility Project (YRP) provides the Court-involved youth of Licking County the opportunity to participate in community service work. The Court sends a clear message to the youth that his or her actions have violated public trust. Community Service provides the opportunity to regain that trust by giving back to the community through service. This project provides the opportunity for youth to develop new skills and build quality relationships with adult mentors. In 2008, the Project worked with numerous nonprofit organizations throughout Licking County to provide 379 youth the opportunity to volunteer. A total of 17,905 hours were contributed to community service. Twenty-three youth, under Court jurisdiction performed 1,073 hours of community service during their school suspensions/expulsions. Based upon the State minimum wage of \$7.30 an hour, \$138,539.40 was given back to the community through this program.

Adopt-A-Highway Program:

Licking County Juvenile Court is a member of the Adopt-A-Highway Program sponsored by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Our two designated areas are located on Routes 13 & 40 in the Jacksontown area. YRP's staff maintain this area with Court-involved youth during the months of March through mid-November.

YRP Restitution Program:

Juvenile offenders are held directly accountable for their actions. As part of the youth's probation, he or she may be ordered to provide restitution to a specific victim for any out-of-pocket losses the victim may have incurred.

Packets are mailed to each victim providing them with information on their rights, a loss verification statement, and the opportunity to write a victim impact statement. Victims are notified at a later date in regards to the restitution which they will be receiving from the juvenile. In 2008, a total of \$25,065.00 was returned to victims of crime. During this year, 71% of youth ordered to pay restitution paid their victims in full by the end of the year.

Bridge to Employment

Bridge to Employment is a program that works with Licking County youth that are eager to earn wages and contribute to their communities. The program provides these youths with the skills necessary to assist them in becoming the kind of highly employable young people that businesses want to hire. All of those involved in the program go through an intensive training program that teaches them how to be a successful member of the workforce.

When a business hires a "Bridge to Employment" youth, they gain an enthusiastic and skilled employee, while the youth gains the opportunity to learn a craft and contribute to their community in a positive way.

Victim's Advocate (Prosecutor's Office):

Since 1998, the Licking County Probate-Juvenile Court has housed a Victim's Advocate that is employed by the Licking County Prosecutor's Office.

Community Safety:

To provide community safety and hold the youth accountable for his or her actions, it may become necessary for the youth to be placed on community-based surveillance or removed from his or her home and placed in a detention facility or foster home. The Court uses a variety of options to meet the varied needs and risk levels of adjudicated youth.

Probation:

The role of the Probation Officer is to monitor and enforce Court orders of youth who are officially involved with the Court (youth who have been adjudicated delinquent). All youth placed on probation are given specific Court orders tailored to the youth and to the offense. The Officer is charged with monitoring these Court orders, assessing the youth, and formulating a plan to assist the youth in his or her rehabilitation as a youthful offender.

Risk of reoffending determines the level of supervision and monitoring conducted by the Officer. Probation Officers work in the field, spending time in their assigned schools working with administrators, teachers, and youth; in homes with the youth and his or her family; and in the community.

According to computer records, youth

were adjudicated delinquent or unruly in 734 cases (not including probation violations). Twenty-two of these youth were committed or recommitted to the Department of Youth Services. At any given time throughout the year, there were approximately 355 youth on probation, with each Probation Officer carrying an average caseload of between 40 and 60 youth.

On-Call Officer:

The Court provides evening and weekend emergency services to the community through the Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP). A full-time, on-call Court Officer provides curfew monitoring, surveillance and emergency services to the community and will answer requests from local law enforcement and citizens on an urgent or emergency basis pertaining to issues

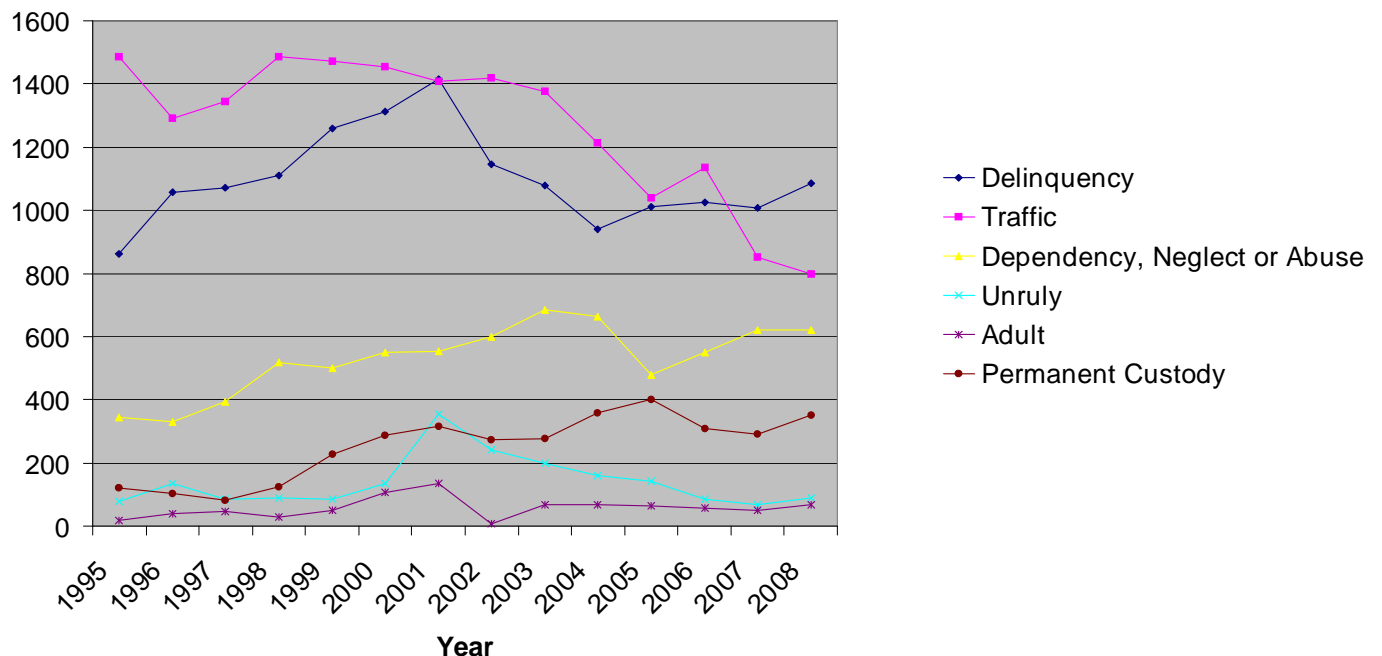
of public safety.

This On-Call Officer, through the use of electronic monitoring, is able to place an offender on electronic house arrest and monitor his or her compliance. Youth sentenced to electronic monitoring by the Court will also be monitored throughout non-business hours.

Electronic Monitoring Device (EMD):

Electronic Monitoring Devices have been utilized by the Court for over 15 years. The Court orders a youth to be placed on EMD when it is an appropriate alternative to detention, when a youth is being released from detention and the Court wishes to limit his or her activities, or when detention space is not available. Through this monitoring device, the youth's movement outside the home is recorded. If the recorded time does not

Historical Juvenile Court Filing Comparison



correspond to school or job hours, then the youth is in violation and further Court action will be required. In 2008 the Court began the utilization of GPS aided systems.

Juvenile Detention:

Licking County is a member of the Fairfield, Hocking, Licking and Perry County Multi-County Juvenile Detention District. In 2004, the District opened a new, state of the art, detention facility in Lancaster, Ohio. The new detention center is a 50 bed facility, of which Licking County utilizes an average of 20 beds a day. The detention center is utilized when there is a need to confine a youth for his/her safety or for the safety of others, or as a result of a court disposition.

Foster Care:

Foster Care is utilized as a last resort for youth who are adjudicated delinquent, but also lack the care, guidance, and support at home to change this behavior. Foster Care has also been utilized on a

short-term basis for respite services for youth.

The Court contracts with various foster care networks in the area who are licensed by the State Department of Human Services to provide these services.

Perry Multi-County Juvenile Facility

The Perry Multi-County Juvenile Facility is the product of a collaboration between seven counties and the Ohio Department of Youth Services. Opening in 2002, it is a 20-bed community corrections facility for youth that have been adjudicated delinquent on a felony offense as an alternative to a commitment to a Department of Youth Services Facility.

Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS):

The Department of Youth Services' role is to enhance public safety by confining serious juvenile offenders.

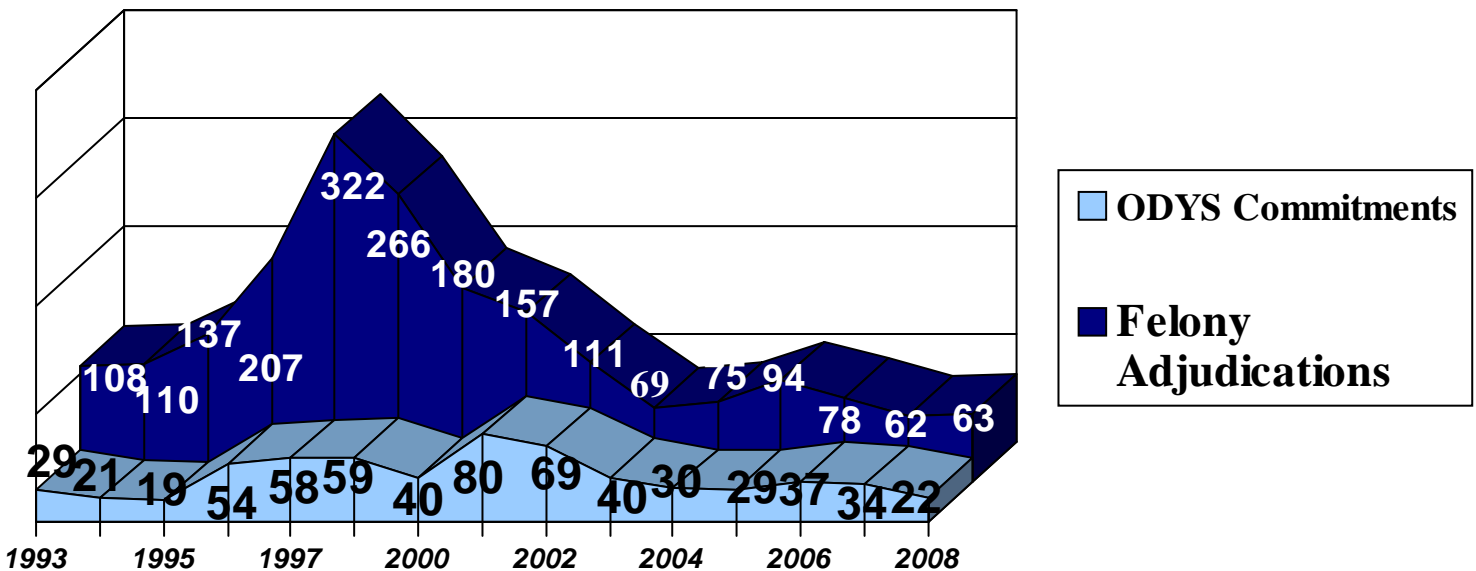
DYS institutions provide a variety of services, which include educational, psychological, vocational, and counseling services. The Department provides specialized services to youth who have committed sex offenses or who have a history of substance abuse or drug trafficking.

In 2008, Licking County Juvenile Court committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services 22 youth.

Sargus Gender Specific Program:

The Licking County Juvenile Court recognizes the unique needs of females in the juvenile justice system. Intervention and care strategies should be designed to meet these unique needs. To aid in this process, the Juvenile Court utilizes the Sargus Gender Specific residential program in St. Clairsville, Ohio.

Comparison of Felony Adjudications to Commitments to the Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS)



2008 Detail Breakout of Juvenile Court Adjudications/Dispositions

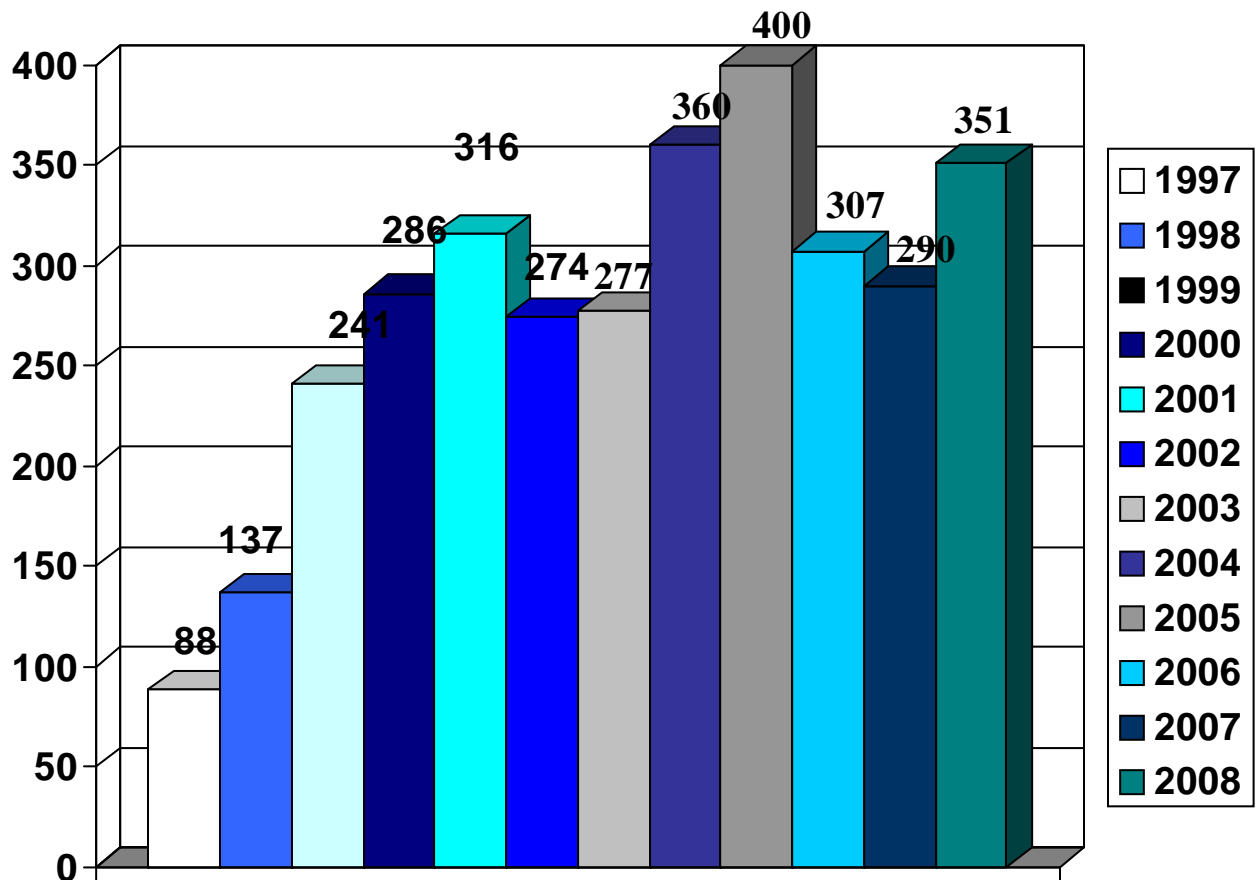
Offense	Female	%	Male	%	Total
Aggravated Arson	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Aggravated Menacing	1	10.00%	9	90.00%	10
Aggravated Possession of Drugs	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Aggravated Robbery	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Arson	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	5
Assault	19	30.16%	44	69.84%	63
Attempted Theft	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Breaking & Entering	0	0.00%	22	100.00%	22
Burglary	5	41.67%	7	58.33%	12
Carrying a Concealed Weapon	0	0.00%	4	100.00%	4
Chronic Truancy	8	38.10%	13	61.90%	21
Complicity	1	33.33%	2	66.67%	3
Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Corruption with Drugs	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Counterfeit Controlled Substances	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Criminal Damaging	12	26.67%	33	73.33%	45
Criminal Mischief	1	6.25%	15	93.75%	16
Criminal Trespassing	3	15.79%	16	84.21%	19
Cruelty to Animals	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2
Disorderly Conduct	11	47.83%	12	52.17%	23
Disrupting Public Service	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Disseminating Material Harmful to Juveniles	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Domestic Violence	16	40.00%	24	60.00%	40
Endangering Children	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1
Escape	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	5
Failure to Comply with a Peace Officer	0	0.00%	4	100.00%	4
Falsification	1	25.00%	3	75.00%	4
Felonious Assault	0	0.00%	10	100.00%	10
Forgery	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	2
Grand Theft of a Motor Vehicle	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Gross Sexual Imposition	0	0.00%	14	100.00%	14
Illegal Possession of a Weapon	0	0.00%	7	100.00%	7
Inducing Panic	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2
Injuring an Animal	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Kidnapping	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Menacing	0	0.00%	11	100.00%	11
Obstruction of Official Business	5	38.46%	8	61.54%	13
Operating a Prohibited Vehicle	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Possession of Criminal Tools	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	5	26.32%	14	73.68%	19
Possession of Drugs	13	32.50%	27	67.50%	40
Probation Violation	60	24.39%	186	75.61%	246
Public Indecency	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2
Rape	0	0.00%	36	100.00%	36
Receiving Stolen Property	3	25.00%	9	75.00%	12
Resisting Arrest	3	50.00%	3	50.00%	6
Retaliation	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Robbery	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Tampering with Evidence	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Telephone Harassment	3	60.00%	2	40.00%	5
Theft & Petty Theft	21	25.61%	61	74.39%	82
Tobacco Violation	13	31.71%	28	68.29%	41
Trafficking in Drugs	3	42.86%	4	57.14%	7
Truancy	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle	0	0.00%	9	100.00%	9
Underage Alcohol Violations	16	31.37%	35	68.63%	51
Unruly	15	44.12%	19	55.88%	34
Using a Weapon while Intoxicated	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Vandalism	0	0.00%	5	100.00%	5
Vehicular Vandalism	0	0.00%	2	100.00%	2
Violation of a Protective Order	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1
TOTALS	246	25.10%	734	74.90%	980

Abuse, Neglect & Dependency Cases:

"The victimization of the weak by the strong—in this case, of children by adults—is one of the most shameful constants in human history. Unfortunately, contemporary American society is not immune from this repugnant behavior. The National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse estimates that one million children suffered maltreatment in the United States in 1995." (Shay Bilchik, Administrator - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention)

The Licking County Juvenile Court processed 187 new neglect, abuse, and dependency cases in 2008. These cases are managed by the Licking County Department of Job and Family Services, Children's Services Division. The Court reviews these cases on a bi-annual basis ensuring that relevant, safe, quality services are being provided. In each case filed, the Court provides additional support through appointed Guardian ad Litem (GAL's), whose responsibility is to represent the best interest of the children.

Total Permanent Custody Filings



Juvenile Traffic:

The Licking County Juvenile Court holds Traffic Court twice a week. The Court is responsible for processing all citations issued to individuals under the age of 18 who live in Licking County, or who were cited in Licking County.

Youth who admit or who are adjudicated a traffic offender, are Court ordered to one of two county programs offered to teen drivers: 4-H CARTEENS, and the National Safety Council Defensive Driving Course.

4-H CARTEENS:

The CAR in CARTEENS stands for **C**autious **A**nd **R**esponsible, which are two of the objectives of the program.

The Ohio State University Extension's 4-H CARTEENS Program is a traffic safety education program for first-time juvenile traffic offenders. The Ohio State University Extension 4-H Youth Development Office collaborated with the Juvenile Court to provide this valuable program. The program's primary goal is to reduce the number of repeat juvenile traffic offenders.

The unique quality of the 4-H CARTEENS Program is that teens, sixteen to nineteen (16-19) years of

age, will serve as the instructors for a two-hour session. This class is for first-time offenders who must attend as part of their disposition. The teens facilitate, develop lesson plans, course format, and conduct the program for teen traffic offenders. Juvenile Court and Officer Perry Broseus of the Heath Police Department are also involved, serving as guest speakers to the teens.

The program includes the following topics:

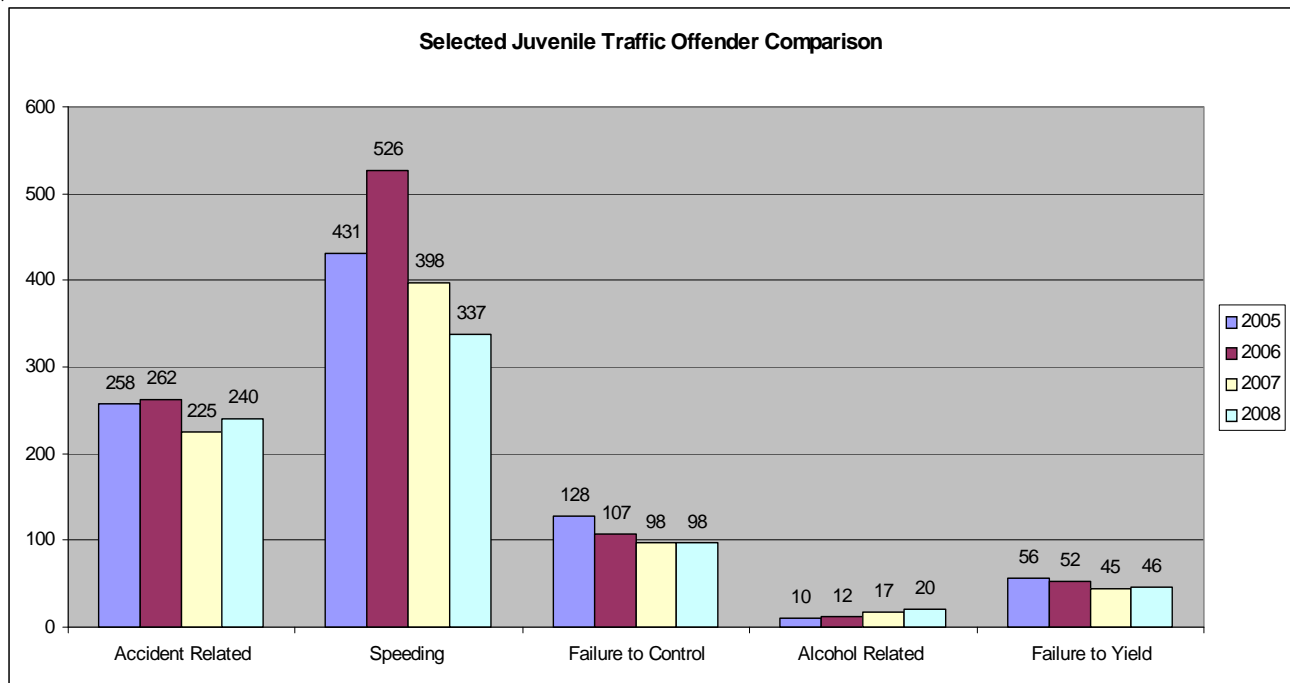
- Drinking and driving
- Seat belt safety
- Insurance rates
- Peer pressure

- Safe driving tips
- Consequences of unsafe driving

The program format utilizes visuals, videos, guest speakers, group discussion, skits, statistics, and an evaluation instrument.

Defensive Driving Course:

The Court refers youth to a Defensive Driving Course conducted by the National Safety Council at CTEC. The course is eight hours long. The course provides classroom instruction on defensive driving skills.



Probate Court:

The term “probate” comes from the Latin word *probation*, meaning, “to prove”, wherein matters in early English religious courts were proven before an ecclesiastical judge. Early American probate courts may be traced back to English courts of Chancery and ecclesiastical, or religious courts, which had jurisdiction over the probate of wills, administration of estates and guardianships. (Taken from “The Ohio Court System,” published by the Judicial College of the Supreme Court of Ohio.)

The Probate Division of the Licking County Common Pleas Court has jurisdiction of over 200 duties in the local legal system. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- The administration of estates, wills.
- Consent for medical treatment.
- Guardianships.
- Conservatorships.
- Adoptions.
- Birth certificates (delayed registration and correction).
- Changes of name.
- Marriage licenses.
- Land appropriations.
- Testamentary trusts.
- Appointments to boards and commissions.

The Probate Court is also a well-used resource for genealogical research.

Administration of Estates:

The Court is responsible for the “probating” of wills and the administration of estates and trusts of deceased persons. It is the Probate Court’s task to interpret last wills in the event of uncertainty or conflict over the will’s meaning or to determine rights to an estate where the person has died “intestate” (without a will). In 2008, there were 706 new estate filings in the Licking County Probate Court. Seven hundred and thirty-five filings were closed, and there were 406 estates pending as of December 31, 2008.

Guardianships:

The Probate Court may appoint, after appropriate legal investigations and proceedings, a guardian for a minor or an adult who is found incompetent to take care of himself/herself or his/

her property. Under Court supervision, the guardian is responsible for making personal and/or financial decisions for the ward. In 2008, there were 103 new filings, with 85 closed and 572 pending on December 31, 2008.

Conservatorships:

Conservatorships are granted when the conservatee, person subject to conservatorship, agrees to the action. The conservatee must be mentally competent but physically infirm.

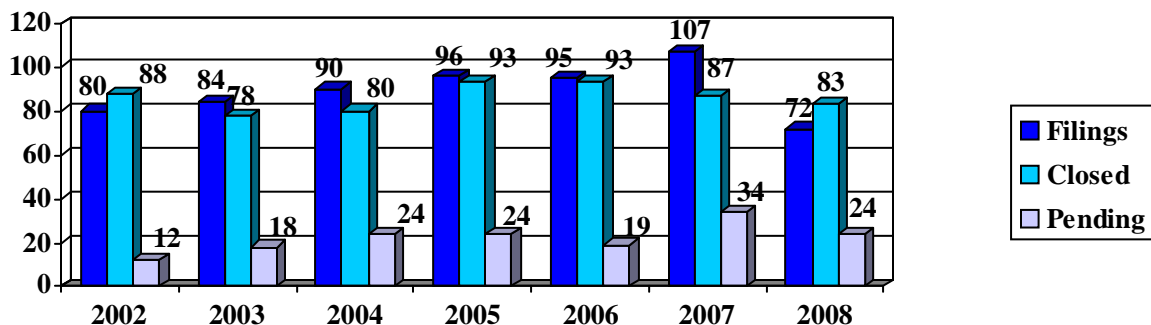
Mental Illness and Mental Retardation:

Civil involuntary commitments of retarded and mentally ill citizens to state hospitals are the responsibility of the Probate Court. Hearings must be held to determine the appropriateness and length of treatment. In 2007, there were 5 new filings.

Adoptions:

All adoptions must be approved by the

Adoptions



Probate Court before finalization. The person or persons applying for adoption must submit to an investigation to ensure a suitable placement.

Changes of Name:

The Probate Court receives applications for a change of name. The hearing date for the request of a name change must be published. If good reason and proper cause exist, the Court may grant the name change. In 2008, the Court received 63 filings for name changes.

Testamentary and Inter Vivos Trusts:

The Probate Court is responsible for ensuring the compliance with the terms of testamentary trusts (those created by a will). Periodic accountings to the Court are

submitted to accomplish this duty. Questions involving interpretation and enforcement of both testamentary and inter vivos trusts (those created during a person's lifetime) may be submitted to the Court. At the end of 2008, there were 190 pending trusts.

Land Appropriations:

The Probate Court has concurrent jurisdiction with the General Division of the Common Pleas Court to hear land appropriation cases. In a land appropriation, real property is being taken by the state, city, county, or a public utility under the laws of eminent domain, for a public purpose such as highway or power line construction.

Wills:

The Probate Court has a variety of responsibilities for wills. These include the safekeeping of wills that are

filed with the court, the probating of wills as described above, and the determining of the validity of a will if it is contested.

Birth Certificates (Registration and Correction):

In cases where a birth has not been recorded or the birth certificate has been lost, destroyed or is not recorded accurately, the Probate Court has the power to require recording or correction of the certificate. In 2008, there were 11 filings.

Marriage Licenses:

The Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction to issue marriage licenses. After an application has been submitted, a license can be issued by a deputy clerk.

Marriage Licenses

