



**ROCK COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
P. O. BOX 1649, 3530 N. COUNTY TRUNK F
JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN 53547-1649**

To: The Human Services Board
From: Charmian Klyve, Human Services Director
Re: Juvenile Justice Issues
Date: August 25, 2009

I am writing to you in order to inform you of a number of issues.

1. Our Juvenile Justice Division Manager, Kerrie Kaner (Bischoff) has resigned. We have been aware of her possible resignation for some months and her move to the State of Michigan. We wish her well. In the interim, I have appointed Jason Witt, Deputy Director, to oversee the Juvenile Justice Division while we recruit and hire a new Division Manager.
2. In the course of the recent discussions related to the Detention Center and as Mr. Witt has begun his transition into his interim role in Juvenile Justice, we have met with the Janesville and Beloit Probation units and also with various system partners. In doing so, we have learned that there is a great deal of discontent within the Juvenile Justice Division, particularly in the Janesville office. We became aware of some of these concerns in January of 2009, particularly a serious allegation that workers were told to lie in court or to act unethically. Upon investigation, Ms. Kaner reported that the allegations were unfounded. The Department would not condone such behavior.

With Ms. Kaner's departure, certain workers are again raising concerns about the filing of sanctions with supervisory input and use of alternative programs, among others, that need to be examined and addressed.

Further, we have also learned that there is a need to improve communication with our system partners (law enforcement, schools, and District Attorney's office) regarding the methods used to hold youth accountable and the alternative programs we have put into place.

We have work to do, both internally and with our system partners. We are committed to improving those relationships. As first steps, we have done the following:

- a. Created three committees within the Juvenile Justice Division, with participation of Probation Officers, to help draft written policies related to three critical areas of our Juvenile Justice system:
 1. Intake/Sanctions;
 2. Diversion programs;
 3. Running Rebels.
- b. Met with, or shortly will meet with, all Juvenile Justice system partners to improve communication, discuss common issues and develop on-going collaborative working relationships and to seek input from our partners on the draft written policies. These include the law enforcement agencies, schools and District Attorney's office.
3. We are also seeking an external and independent evaluation to examine the path that our Juvenile Justice system has taken and to provide input into the direction we will be taking in the future. This is a perfect time to accomplish that task given the departure of the Juvenile Justice Division Manager and the discontentment of certain staff and system partners. We will be discussing how to best proceed with this process at the Human Services Board meeting on August 26th.

The intent of all these actions is to move forward with a clear vision of our future in Juvenile Justice, consistent with best practice in the field and the shared values of our community. Please feel free to give either me a call (Tel. #757-5270) or Jason Witt (Tel. #757-5204) a call if you have any questions. Thank you very much.

cc: County Board Members
Mr. Craig Knutson, County Administrator
Mr. Jeff Kuglitsch