

# NCJFCJ Resolves to Help Modernize Approach to Juvenile Probation

*Resolution supports the commitment to juvenile probation systems that conform to the latest knowledge of adolescent brain development.*

RENO, NEVADA, UNITED STATES, August 24, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- (Reno, Nev.) – The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges ([NCJFCJ](http://www.ncjfcj.org)) passed a resolution supporting the commitment to juvenile probation systems that conform to the latest knowledge of adolescent brain development.

Current research on adolescent brain development is key in juvenile and family court judges' understanding, anticipating and responding to the behavior of adolescents by holding them accountable in developmentally appropriate ways. The NCJFCJ encourages judicial leadership to guide policy and practice changes that incorporate these research findings.



“

The resolution outlines what judges can do to transform juvenile probation supervision to an approach that works to incentivize kids doing things right rather than a punitive approach.”

*Judge Anthony (Tony) Capizzi*

“The NCJFCJ’s resolution sets an expectation that patience, persistence, flexibility and individualized care are the priorities for juvenile probation professionals,” said Steve Bishop, senior associate, Juvenile Justice Strategy Group, Annie E. Casey Foundation. “Currently nearly one-quarter of all out-of-home placements are the result of violations of probation. We encourage juvenile probation departments to heed NCJFCJ’s call to cease imposing conditions of probation and never use secure detention or incarceration as a sanction for youth who fail to meet probation expectations.”

Research indicates the brain undergoes rapid changes during adolescence, and continues to develop into a person’s early 20s, directly affecting the way youth think and reason, indicating adolescents are developmentally different from adults. Juvenile justice system policies, programs and supervision should be tailored to reflect the distinct development needs of adolescents.

In the 2005 Juvenile Delinquency Guidelines, juvenile delinquency court judges should ensure that court dispositions are individualized and include differential responses of sanctions and incentives.

“Probation supervision continues to be the most common disposition ordered for youth adjudicated in

juvenile courts for their law violating behavior,” said Melissa Sickmund, Ph.D., director of the NCJFCJ’s National Center for Juvenile Justice. “This resolution encourages judicial leadership to push juvenile probation agencies to modernize juvenile probation—to implement evidence-based practices.”

Modernizing juvenile probation approaches to incorporate knowledge on adolescent development and behavior decision-making will: help youths understand, appreciate, and remember their probation requirements; emphasize short-term, positive outcomes for probation compliant behaviors; deliver sanctions for noncompliant behaviors in ways that enable youths to learn from their mistakes and modify their behaviors in the future; and promote affiliation with positive peers.

The resolution recommends a developmental approach to juvenile probation that leads to a normal path to adulthood, which includes family engagement and community partnerships, and using out-of-home placement as a last resort.

“The American Probation and Parole Association believes that taking an individualized and developmental approach will achieve better overall success rates for our young people,” said Veronica Cunningham, executive director, American Probation and Parole Association.

“As the resolution indicates, the juvenile justice system acknowledges the inherent differences between youth and adults. As such, juvenile probation practices should be designed to reflect those differences, and departments should modernize their approach to juvenile delinquency by incorporating knowledge about adolescent development in their work. Juvenile probation departments can play a significant role in helping young people develop the competencies and skills to become successful adults.”

Too many juvenile courts and juvenile probation departments impose conditions of probation that are not individualized, have too many requirements and lead to unnecessary detention or incarceration for technical violations. Also, probation conditions are too often subjective and exacerbate racial and ethnic disparities.

“The juvenile justice system was created to maintain a rehabilitative focus while holding youth accountable for their actions,” said Susan Vivian Mangold, Esq., executive director of Juvenile Law Center. “Juvenile Law Center has been advocating for more than two decades to ensure that the latest adolescent neurological science and behavioral science inform policies and practices that impact adolescents.”

The NCJFCJ supports and is committed to the development of robust education and training of juvenile probation staff on adolescent brain development; its impact on juvenile justice policy, practice and the law; and its relationship to juvenile probation case planning, conditions of probation, supervision, monitoring and enforcement and data collection. The NCJFCJ also encourages the use



of incentives, rather than sanctions, to modify youth behavior, and for the adoption of a developmentally designed juvenile probation system with a different response system.

“With this resolution, the NCJFCJ encourages judicial leadership to guide policy and practice changes that incorporate the research findings on adolescent brain development,” said Judge Anthony (Tony) Capizzi, NCJFCJ president. “It outlines what judges can do to transform juvenile probation supervision to an approach that works to incentivize kids doing things right rather than a punitive approach. In jurisdictions large and small, from coast to coast, judges can make a difference.”

For more NCJFCJ resolutions and policy statements, visit: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/about/resolutions-and-policy-statements>

About the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ):

Founded in 1937, the Reno, Nev.-based National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, is the nation’s oldest judicial membership organization and focused on improving the effectiveness of our nation’s juvenile and family courts. A leader in continuing education opportunities, research, and policy development in the field of juvenile and family justice, the 2,000-member organization is unique in providing practice-based resources to jurisdictions and communities nationwide.

Chrisie Yabu  
KPS3  
775-686-7737  
email us here

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2017 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.