

NCJFCJ Releases Resolution Regarding Access to Medication-Assisted Treatment for Teens and Adults

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges released its latest resolution.

RENO, NV, UNITED STATES, December 4, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges \(NCJFCJ\)](http://www.ncjfcj.org) released its latest resolution regarding access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for adolescents and adults in the juvenile and family justice system.

Research revealed that substance abuse including alcohol, opioids and methamphetamines is increasing in the juvenile, family and tribal justice systems. Generally, the rates of substance use disorder for those involved in the criminal justice system are more than four times that of the general population. Research also shows that 159,000 or .6 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 receive any substance use treatment and only 547,000 or 1.6 percent of young adults aged 18 to 25 received any substance use treatment in the past year.

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*Judge Anthony (Tony) Capizzi,
NCJFCJ past president*

“We know that those leaving the criminal justice system are at an extremely high risk of overdose death,” said Devin Reaves, MSW, executive director and co-founder of the Pennsylvania Harm Reduction Coalition. “Providing FDA-approved medications for opioid use disorders for individuals in the criminal justice system will increase recovery and public safety. The Pennsylvania Harm Reduction Coalition supports the NCJFCJ’s resolution whole heartedly.”

The NCJFCJ recognizes that juvenile court judges have the responsibility to protect and provide adequate resources to the youth within their jurisdiction, and therefore supports the effective, evidence-based, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved medication-assisted treatment (MAT) options for adolescents and adults with substance abuse disorders.

“As stated in our Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards, The National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) fully supports referrals to FDA-approved medication-assisted treatment within treatment courts and throughout the justice system,” said Carson Fox, NADCP chief executive officer. “NADCP applauds the leadership of the NCJFCJ on this critical issue and will continue to work with our partners on expanding access to this life-saving treatment.”

The NCJFCJ also recognizes that the juvenile and family justice system may be a primary referral



source for substance use treatment including MAT and supports and commits to the development of training and technical assistance to disseminate information of FDA-approved prescription medications. In addition, they encourage funding for additional research on the use of MAT for adolescents. The NCJFCJ commits to target training to address and correct misconceptions regarding the use of MAT to treat substance use disorders, as well as promoting evidence-based practices.

“The NCJFCJ is committed to collaborating with allied organizations, including state, tribal, and federal partners to provide comprehensive services to juvenile and family justice professionals,” said the Honorable Anthony (Tony) Capizzi, NCJFCJ past president. “It is important to improve knowledge and decision-making capabilities of all court stakeholders regarding effective substance use treatment, especially medication-assisted treatment.”

The NCJFCJ encourages juvenile and family court judges, attorneys, and other court stakeholders to follow the guidance from the U.S. Department of Justice related to ensuring access to MAT, as well as the use of MAT as prescribed.

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.

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