



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

NEWS RELEASE

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Pennsylvania Supreme Court Slates Children's Roundtable

New Court Office Aims to Aid State's Dependent Children

HARRISBURG, June 25, 2007 - On any given day in Pennsylvania, there are some 20,000 dependent children - abused and neglected they have been placed in foster homes or temporary residential settings where they can wait, in some cases, for years before being placed in a permanent home.

"That's too many dependent children in the system," says Chief Justice of Pennsylvania Ralph J. Cappy, "and it's far too long for a child to wait to be placed in a permanent home where hopefully they will find stability and normalcy in their life."

On Tuesday, June 26 at the Hershey Motor Lodge in Hershey, PA, beginning at 9:30 a.m., the state Supreme Court will hold the first-ever State Roundtable to improve the plight of dependent children.

The State Roundtable culminates over a year of planning by the Court and the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) to establish 60 local Children Roundtables (one in each of Pennsylvania's Judicial Districts) and ten Leadership Roundtables throughout the state.

OCFC was created in Oct 2006 with the broad goal to make family courts more responsive to the needs of children and families. The roundtables were created to establish a statewide infrastructure that allows for effective administration and communication among Pennsylvania's judicial districts and child welfare services.

"We believe the State Roundtable will have a profound effect on how abused and neglected children fare in the Pennsylvania judicial system," said Justice Max Baer, a former administrative judge of family court in Allegheny County. Justice Baer is acting on behalf of the Supreme Court to guide OCFC within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts.

AGENDA

Pennsylvania's Roundtables for Children Initiative State Roundtable Meeting June 26, 2007

Proposed Objectives – "LEARN, SELECT AND PLAN FOR PENNSYLVANIA'S CHILDREN"

By attending this State Roundtable meeting, representatives will be able to:

- Learn about the worthwhile programs arising out of the Leadership Roundtables and those highlighted in national research
- Determine which programs and/or concepts deserve statewide implementation as they would best serve Pennsylvania's abused and neglected children
- Develop a plan and structure for implementation of identified statewide initiatives
- Establish liaisons with the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) for technical and other assistance.

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Light Breakfast
9:30 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.	Welcome, Overview and Presentation of Changes Requiring State Action <i>Justice Max Baer, Supreme Court of Pennsylvania</i>
10:10 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.	Explanation of Juvenile Dependency Automated System <i>Amy Ceraso, Director of Judicial Automation</i>
10:20 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Introductions and Overview of Meeting Objectives <i>Andrea Hoffman Jelin, Administrator, Office of Children and Families in the Courts</i>
10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Presentation - Family Group Decision Making <i>Honorable Todd A. Hoover and Sandy Moore, Director, Department of Human Services/Administrator of Children and Youth, Dauphin County</i>
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Presentation - Family Finding <i>Marc Cherna, Director, Department of Human Services of Allegheny County</i>
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Presentation - Family Development Credentialing <i>Kathy Moore, Children Advocacy Center of Indiana County and Center for Family Life</i>
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Presentation - Seeds of Hope <i>Diane Robinson, Court Coordinator Department of Family Services</i>
1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Presentation - Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) <i>Dennis Hockensmith, Executive Director, Pennsylvania CASA</i>
2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Open Discussion Regarding Which Programs Should be Implemented;
3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Selection of Programs for Implementation Statewide; Structure for Implementation of Statewide Initiatives
3:45 p.m.	Wrap-Up
4:00 p.m.	Adjourn