



# Youth Court Services

## Eleventh Judicial District

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Law & Justice Interim Committee

Dear committee members:

Our office adopted a Leadership Agenda in January 2010 that formalized our approach in conducting the work of the Youth Court as being based in the philosophy of Restorative Justice. Even though, as an organization, we had been moving in that direction informally for several years, it had never been implemented systemically. The guiding purpose of the Leadership Agenda is to focus our energies, resources, and vision for our community in Restorative Justice.

We have & continue to develop youth serving programs based in restorative justice best practices in collaboration with the Center for Restorative Youth Justice. That partnership has resulted in a number of restorative opportunities for youth, parents, and especially victims of juvenile crime.

We have gone from historically limited victim contact & outreach to being able to provide crime victims with opportunities to meet with the juvenile perpetrators of the crimes against them & fashion restorative agreements to restore both the victim & offender to their rightful place in our community. Victims of juvenile crimes are finally being given an opportunity to participate in the juvenile justice system in a meaningful way.

Our shift in focus from more traditional probation practices to restorative practices is an important factor that has resulted in fewer youth being placed under probation supervision, reduced use of detention and length of stay, reduced out-of-home placements, increased community protection & victim satisfaction with the juvenile justice system, and improved competency of youth under the jurisdiction of the Youth Court.

The Youth Court Judges in the 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial District fully support the restorative approach as evidenced by their approval of funding plans for restorative programs and a willingness to require youth participation in those same programs.

Thank you for your consideration of restorative justice practices in the juvenile justice system.

Respectfully,

Nick Nyman  
Chief Probation Officer