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November 1, 2009

Honorable Ulysses Currie, Chair
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Honorable Norman H. Conway, Chair
House Appropriations Committee
Lowe House Office Bldg., Rm 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: Problem Solving Courts

Dear Chairman Currie and Chairman Conway:

As directed in the *2007 Joint Chairmen's Report*, enclosed is the Annual Report of the Office of Problem Solving Courts for Fiscal Year 2009. As you will see, these court programs seek to address the behavioral manifestations associated with drug and alcohol addiction, mental health problems, and habitual truancy.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Broccolina
State Court Administrator

cc: Judicial Cabinet
Judicial Council
Honorable Jamey H. Hueston
Honorable Kathleen Gallogly Cox
Faye D. Gaskin
Kelley O'Connor
Gray Barton
Jennifer Moore
Flora Arabo

ANNUAL REPORT

Problem-Solving Courts

Fiscal Year 2009



Administrative Office of the Courts

Office of Problem-Solving Courts

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Introduction

In 1994, one of the first drug courts in the country was initiated in Baltimore City to address substance abuse issues for those caught in the seemingly never-ending cycle of the criminal justice system. Since that first program, there have been 41 other drug courts started in Maryland. In addition to drug courts, there are now 3 mental health courts and 7 truancy reduction courts implemented across the State. These Judicially led programs have grown as the public and the government continues to look towards the courts to help address the problem of crime through non-traditional methods.

In 2002, the Maryland Judiciary established the Drug Treatment Court Commission (Commission) for the purpose of supporting the development of drug court programs throughout Maryland. The Commission was recognized as the lead agency in the Judiciary's effort to operate and maintain drug treatment court programs in the State. Commission members included: Circuit and District Court Judges, legislators, and representatives from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Juvenile Services, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, State's Attorney's Offices, the Office of the Public Defender, and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

Problem-Solving Court Definition

Problem-Solving Courts address matters that are under the court's jurisdiction through a multidisciplinary and integrated approach that incorporates collaboration between courts, government, and community organizations.

In December of 2006, Chief Judge Robert M. Bell issued an administrative order to establish a Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts to institutionalize the work of the Commission and to expand its scope to all problem-solving courts.

Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts

The mission of the Judicial Conference Committee on Problem-Solving Courts (Committee) is to promote, oversee, and sustain a comprehensive and collaborative approach for court-involved persons through the development, implementation, and operation of Problem-Solving Courts. The Committee supports and facilitates the access and delivery of effective and appropriate treatment and other community based services to achieve positive measurable results. The Committee ensures that Problem-Solving Courts employ best practices by providing evidenced-based training, technical assistance, research, funding, and technical support.

The Committee developed an oversight plan to ensure the continued and optimum operation of problem-solving courts by focusing on: alignment of goals and objectives with levels of need, widespread implementation of best practices, identifying emerging problems, and consistency in procedures and operations.

The plan specifically includes the following strategies:

- Periodic problem-solving courts site visits;
- Regular committee review of program capacity rates;
- Periodic committee review of Progress and Statistical Reports;
- Assistance to courts to reach designated capacity levels, as needed;
- Evaluation Implementation Plan to assist local jurisdictions in reviewing and executing evaluation recommendations;
- Update and facilitate the Committee Application Process;
- Augment and coordinate training, education and enhanced contact throughout the problem-solving court field; and
- Improve service of technical assistance to the PSC field.

Components of Problem-Solving Courts

1. Team approach with court as leader.
2. Integrated services with court system processing.
3. Early identification, prompt screening, assessment, and placement of services.
4. Provide access to a continuum of services.
5. Ongoing judicial interaction with each participant.
6. Coordinated strategy including use of incentives and sanctions to promote participant compliance.
7. Achieve desired goals using a non-adversarial process while protecting the due process rights of participants.
8. Frequent monitoring and reporting of participant behavior.
9. Partnership with public agencies and community-based organizations to facilitate delivery of services, program effectiveness, and generate local support.
10. Use of management information systems to evaluate achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness.
11. Continuing interdisciplinary education of judges, partners, staff, and community.
12. Commitment to cultural competency and diversity issues.

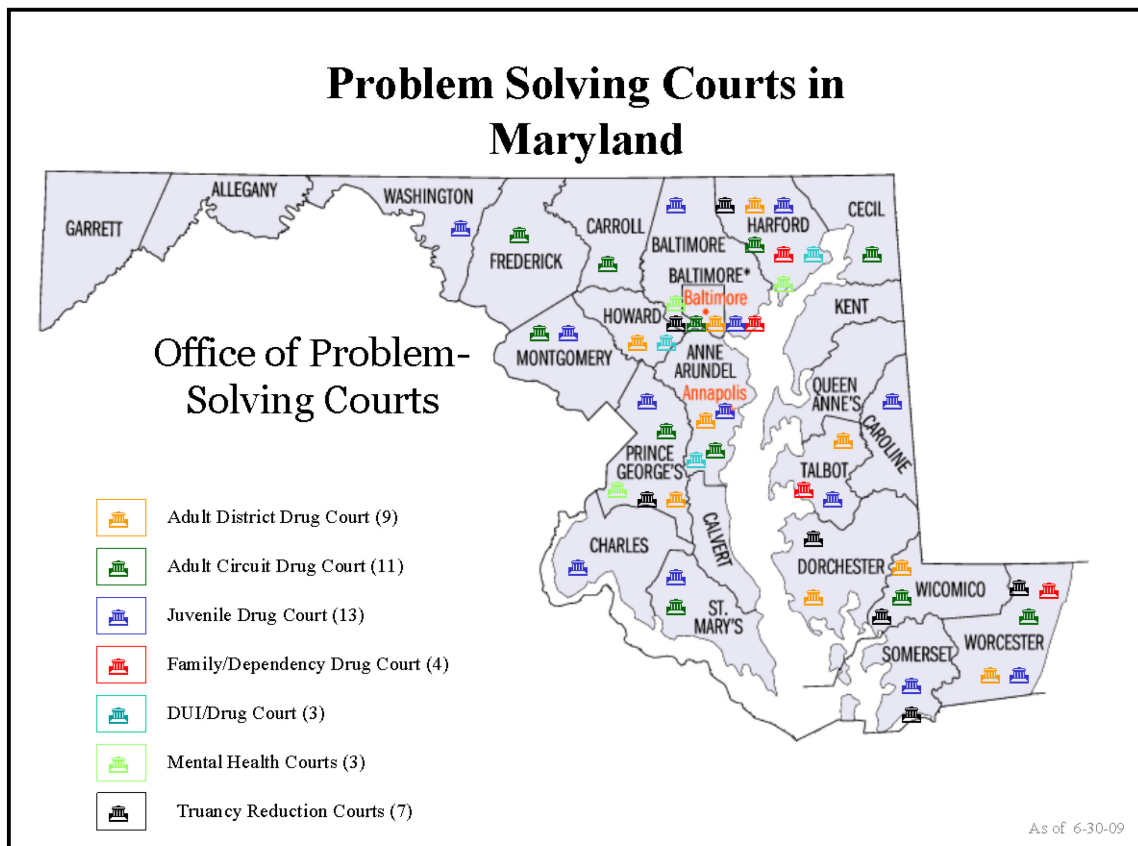
Future plans for the Committee include collaboration with other Judicial Conference Committees to identify projects of mutual interest and to avoid duplication of effort. Additionally, the Committee will continue to develop plans for monitoring important and emerging issues related to problem solving courts and develop long term strategies for integration and implementation of problem solving courts state-wide.

Office of Problem Solving Courts

The Office of Problem Solving Courts (OPSC) is a department in the Administrative Office of the Courts and is responsible for assisting the problem-solving courts in developing and maintaining a judicially led collaborative therapeutic system. OPSC has overseen the creation of problem-solving programs in 20 of the 24 political subdivisions

in Maryland and works with public and private stakeholders to develop and establish best practices in problem-solving courts.

The OPSC has become the infrastructure for the development and advancement of problem-solving courts throughout Maryland. The OPSC coordinates financial responsibility for problem-solving courts, while it has also begun to take on additional responsibilities in setting and enforcing programmatic guidelines, creating statewide management information systems, and targeting new and expanding populations for problem-solving courts. Centralized oversight seems necessary for problem-solving courts to continue to thrive and it is necessary that the OPSC continue to be the focal point for the advancement of problem-solving courts in Maryland.



Problem-Solving Court Grants

In Fiscal Year 2009, the Office of Problem-Solving Courts solicited grant applications to support and expand the capacity of existing drug and mental health courts across Maryland.

The Problem-Solving Court Discretionary Grant core purpose areas are to support Judiciary staff assigned to problem-solving courts and to enhance the problem-solving courts and their ancillary services for the betterment of the community members served by those court programs.

During Fiscal Year 2009, the OPSC updated the grants management and audit policies to better oversee the grants supported by this office. This outlined the process for grant reviews and audits that includes site visits, fiscal and statistical reporting, and file documentation.

Drug Courts

Drug courts are a Judicially led, coordinated system that demands accountability of all participants and ensures immediate, intensive and comprehensive drug treatment, supervision and support services using a cadre of incentives and sanctions to encourage participant compliance. Drug courts represent the coordinated efforts of the criminal justice agencies, mental health, social service, and treatment communities to actively intervene and break the cycle of substance abuse, addiction, and crime. As an alternative to less effective interventions such as incarceration or general probation, drug courts quickly identify substance-abusing offenders and places them under strict court monitoring and community supervision, coupled with effective, individually assessed treatment services.

According to over a decade of research, drug courts significantly improve substance abuse treatment outcomes, substantially reduce crime, and produce greater cost benefits than any other justice strategy. Scientist from the Treatment Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania reported in 2003, “To put it bluntly, we know that drug courts out perform virtually all other strategies that have been used with the drug-involved offenders.”(Marlowe, DeMatteo, & Festinger, 2003)

In Fiscal Year 2009, there were 57,680 drug arrests in Maryland; however, only 5.5% of those were referred to drug courts. Drug courts continually are underutilized despite research verifying that no other justice intervention can rival the results produced by drug courts. Drug courts consistently and repeatedly demonstrate their effectiveness on national, state, and local levels. Operational drug courts in the United States have risen from 1 in 1989 to over 2,300 in 2009. As of June 30, 2009, Maryland has 40 operational adult, juvenile, DUI, and family dependency drug courts.

Despite proven drug court effectiveness, on September 1, 2008, the Juvenile Drug Court in the Circuit Court for Dorchester County and the Juvenile Drug Court in the Circuit Court for Calvert County on June 30, 2009, suspended services as operational drug court programs. In both cases, prior to the program suspension, the programs conducted several team meetings, as well as consulted with the OPSC to determine the most appropriate course of action. As a result of the individual program assessments, it was concluded that continuing to support full time staff and resources for caseloads that were consistently less than half their projected caseload size was not sufficient. The individual program assessments also indicated that referrals received from the Department of Juvenile Services were not sufficient to maintain the resources and funding set aside to continue operations of these programs.

Drug Court Statistical Report Summary

July 1, 2008—June 20, 2009

County	Location	Type of Program	Year Est.	Current number of Participants *	# Entered Program	# Graduated	# Administratively Discharged	# Discharged w/o Violation	# Unsuccessfully Discharged	Total # Served in FY 2009
Anne Arundel	Circuit Court	Adult	Dec-05	84	66	15	1	0	12	112
Anne Arundel	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Mar-02	28	24	14	1	3	4	50
Anne Arundel	District Court	Adult	Feb-97	156	174	77	3	0	64	309
Anne Arundel	District Court	DUI	Jan-05	22	14	15	0	0	4	41
Baltimore City	Circuit Court	Adult	Oct-94	503	270	110	2	112	80	1066
Baltimore City	Circuit Court	Family	Aug-05	107	157	64	22	0	66	274
Baltimore City	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Sep-98	62	26	2	2	0	7	91
Baltimore City	District Court	Adult	Mar-94	430	250	95	6	30	116	696
Baltimore County	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Mar-03	54	46	15	9	2	9	89
Calvert	Circuit Court	Juvenile	May-06	0	1	6	0	2	4	14
Caroline	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Jul-04	11	14	5	0	0	4	23
Carroll	Circuit Court	Adult	Apr-07	35	27	8	0	0	16	58
Cecil	Circuit Court	Adult	Jun-06	59	30	6	3	0	12	81
Charles	Circuit Court	Juvenile	May-06	12	17	8	1	0	6	27
Dorchester	Circuit Court	Juvenile	July-04	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Dorchester	District Court	Adult	Jul-04	13	14	5	1	0	3	21
Frederick	Circuit Court	Adult	May-05	41	24	11	0	0	4	56
Harford	Circuit Court	Adult	Jan-04	0	0	2	1	0	3	2
Harford	Circuit Court	Family	May-04	13	19	14	6	13	0	41
Harford	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Oct-01	12	20	10	8	0	9	47
Harford	District Court	Adult	Nov-97	16	19	16	0	0	5	32
Harford	District Court	DUI	Jan-05	19	15	9	1	0	0	25
Howard	District Court	Adult	Jul-04	13	9	8	0	1	2	24
Howard	District Court	DUI	Jul-04	17	11	18	1	0	2	39
Montgomery	Circuit Court	Adult	Nov-05	60	32	18	0	0	7	85
Montgomery	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Nov-05	12	10	7	1	0	4	24
Prince George's	Circuit Court	Adult	Aug-02	106	42	22	0	12	22	152
Prince George's	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Aug-02	20	20	9	0	0	10	45
Prince George's	District Court	Adult	Apr-06	52	36	5	2	0	1	64
Somerset	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Apr-06	8	9	4	0	0	2	14
St. Mary's	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Feb-04	17	13	6	0	1	5	32
St. Mary's	Circuit Court	Adult	July-09	9	13	0	0	0	5	13
Talbot	District Court	Adult	Jan-08	8	10	4	0	0	3	17
Talbot	Circuit Court	Family	Aug-07	1	2	1	3	0	0	5
Talbot	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Oct-04	9	11	3	0	7	3	26
Washington	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Jun-07	6	6	3	1	1	6	17
Wicomico	Circuit Court	Adult	Sep-05	27	14	12	2	0	8	49

Wicomico	District Court	Adult	Apr-08	7	8	0	0	0	3	10
Worcester	Circuit Court	Adult	Dec-05	14	14	2	0	0	5	22
Worcester	Circuit Court	Juvenile	Oct-05	9	14	12	1	8	4	20
Worcester	Circuit Court	Family	June-07	7	7	3	2	0	0	13
Worcester	District Court	Adult	Dec-05	12	14	8	0	0	6	26
Total				2091	1522	652	80	192	526	3852

*Number of Participants as of June 30, 2009

Evaluations

In Fiscal Year 2009, fifteen separate evaluations were completed by NPC Research for the Office of Problem-Solving Courts on drug courts which included process, outcome, and cost benefit studies. Complete copies of these and all drug court evaluations can be found at <http://mdcourts.gov/opsc/dtc/reports.html>. Below are highlights of the cost-benefit evaluations completed during the fiscal year.

Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Court Program: 10-Year Outcome and Cost Benefit Study

With approximately 4,100 participants being served since 1994, the Baltimore City District Adult Drug Court Program has averaged approximately 200 admissions per year. Approximately 25% (955 participants) of participants graduated from the program successfully with an average length of time in the program being 13 to 14 months.

The Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Court demonstrated a 10-year cost savings per participant of \$2,945 compared to the non-drug court comparison group used in this study. The cost savings increased for graduates to a cost savings of \$46,207 per graduate over the 10-year study period. This is clearly a cost savings to the agencies and to the taxpayer. Other results identified in the 10-Year Outcome and Cost Benefit Study are:

- The odds of re-offending decreased by 7% with each additional year older the participant was at DTC start and increased 48% with each additional year prior arrest.
- The optimal length of stay in the program, approximately 13-14 months, was associated with no cumulative subsequent arrests.
- By the second year after program entry, a slightly (but not significantly) smaller percent of drug court participants than the comparison group had at least one subsequent arrest. Beginning at Year 6 on, this difference is significant, with a smaller proportion of the all drug court group re-offending compared to the comparison group.

Baltimore City Family Recovery Program (FRP) Independent Evaluation: Outcome and Cost Report:

- This study indicates less foster care is utilized by using the FRP. On average, during the Child In Need of Assistance (CINA) case, children in families served by the FRP spent 252 days in non-kinship foster care as compared to 346 days for children in non-FRP served families
- 70% of FRP families achieved reunification compared to 45% of non-FRP families.
- FRP participants were twice as likely to complete treatment. 64% of FRP parents completed treatment compared to 36% of non-FRP participants.
- Cost savings attributed to the FRP is due to the more infrequent use of foster care services. FRP cases were less costly to the child welfare system than other CINA cases. Thus, the total net cost savings per year of Baltimore City FRP operations was nearly \$1,004,456 or approximately \$5,022 per family served by the FRP.

Harford County Family Recovery Court (FRC) Evaluation: Process, Outcome and Cost Report:

- This study indicates less foster care is utilized by using the Family Recovery Court (FRC). On average, during the CINA case, children in families served by the FRC spent 136 days in non-kinship foster care as compared to 443 days for children in non-FRP served families resulting in a cost savings of \$624,525.
- 60% of FRC families achieved reunification compared to 30% of non-FRC families.
- FRC participants were twice as likely to complete treatment. Eight-five percent of FRC parents completed treatment compared to 29% of non-FRP participants.
- The cost savings from one year of FRC operations is over \$317,000 or approximately \$12,000 per family served by the FRC.

County / Court	Evaluation Type	Completed
Howard County District Court Adult/DUI Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	August 2008
Baltimore City Circuit Court Family Recovery Court Program	Process, Outcome, and Cost	August 2008
Montgomery County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	August 2008
Worcester County District Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	August 2008
Worcester County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	August 2008
Cecil County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	August 2008

Somerset Circuit Court Juvenile Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	September 2008
Calvert County Circuit Court Juvenile Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	October 2008
Prince George's County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Outcome and Cost Benefit	October 2008
Charles County Circuit Court Juvenile Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	January 2009
Anne Arundel County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	February 2009
Worcester County Circuit Court Juvenile Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	April 2009
Dorchester County District Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	April 2009
Harford County Circuit Court Adult Drug Court Program	Process Evaluation	April 2009
Baltimore City District Court Adult Drug Court Program	Outcome/Cost Benefit 10 Year Study	June 2009

Brown vs. State

This last year has been one of heightened interest throughout the problem-solving court community. In September 2008, the Maryland Court of Appeals granted certiorari in the case of Robert Calvin Brown, III v. State of Maryland. Nancy S. Forster, Maryland's Public Defender argued: (1) Do Maryland's problem-solving courts, including the Baltimore City Adult Felony Drug Treatment Court, lack fundamental jurisdiction, and (2) Does imposition of a 35 day jail sentence for violating a drug court rule followed by the same act after the sanction of 35 days has been served, violate double jeopardy rules against multiple punishment for the same offense?

The decision by the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) to petition for writ of certiorari had direct impact on the number of referrals and admissions of participants into drug court programs statewide. Since the OPD made a decision to minimize and in some cases withhold staff from drug court programs across the state, the rate of referrals into drug courts declined in Fiscal Year 2009. Drug court admissions, though increasing over the Fiscal Year 2008 levels, did so at a lower rate.

On May 18, 2009, the Court of Appeals found that problem-solving courts do have jurisdiction and that double jeopardy was not preserved for appellate review. As a result of this case, the Judiciary's Rules Committee has established a Special

WHAT THE COURT HELD

Case: Robert Calvin Brown III v. State, CA No. 118, Sept. Term 2008. Reported. Opinion by Murphy, J. Filed May 18, 2009.

Issue: Do Maryland's problem-solving courts lack fundamental jurisdiction? Do successive jail sentences, for violating a drug court rule and violating probation, constitute multiple punishments for the same offense?

Holding: Affirmed. (1) Drug courts have proper jurisdiction; improper exercise of jurisdiction may be appealed in individual cases; (2) the double jeopardy issue was not preserved for appellate review.

Subcommittee on Problem-Solving Judicial Programs to explore the development of basic standards or guidelines for the operation of problem-solving courts that can give some greater understanding of authenticity, clarity, and uniformity to problem-solving courts.

Subcommittees Reports

Training

Annual Drug Court Winter Symposium

The 6th Annual Drug Court Winter Symposium was held at the Judicial Education and Conference Center in Annapolis on February 11 – 12, 2009. The symposium hosted over 250 drug court team members over the course of a two-day training session. The symposium provided sessions for adult, DUI, juvenile, and family drug courts utilizing both state and national experts who presented subject matters such as Clinical Assessments, Learning Theory, Re-entry, Drug Testing, Difficult Case Solutions, THC and Juveniles, and Treating Juvenile's with Appropriate Levels of Services.

Roles Training

In Fiscal Year 2009, the Office of Problem-Solving Courts, in collaboration with Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake, completed the first year of roles training for Drug Court case managers. The roles training was conducted over a period of six months with classes held approximately every two weeks.

Offering over 60 hours of training, this curriculum provided training for case managers for courts, health departments, and the Department of Juvenile Services, as well as probation agents for the Division of Parole and Probation. These included full-day courses on subjects such as: Motivational Interviewing, Introduction to Treatment, Introduction to Clinical Assessment Tools and American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria, Case Notes Development, Ethics and Confidentiality, Case Plan Development, and Client Supervision and Response Techniques. The OPSC collaborated with the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission to authorize education credits for the entire curriculum.

Drug Court 101/102

In Fiscal Year 2009, the OPSC continued to provide an introduction to drug court titled *Drug Court 101*. The course is a three-hour non-credit course that is provided to introduce new and existing staff to the problem-solving court model, the key components of drug court, and the Office of Problem-Solving Courts. The courses are provided at the Judiciary Education and Conference Center and to date this course has been provided to over 125 drug court colleagues.

Drug Court 102 is a 3-hour non-credit course, which is provided to drug court practitioners to illustrate the specifics of drug court roles and responsibilities. This course provides a description of the scope of each primary role of the drug court team.

The course is intended for new staff and to date, the OPSC has provided this course to approximately 100 participants since its inception.

National Drug Court Institute

The Judiciary partnered with National Drug Court Institute (NDCI) by hosting the Treatment Provider and Defense Counsel drug court roles training in the Fall of 2008 at the Judicial Education and Conference Center in Annapolis. By hosting the drug court practitioners' trainings in Maryland, the drug courts practitioners were able to receive some of the best evidence-based training afforded to drug court professionals. NDCI has emerged as the preeminent source of cutting-edge training and technical assistance to the drug court field, providing research-driven solutions to address the changing needs of treating substance-abusing offenders. This year, Annapolis hosted over 100 drug court professionals from virtually every U.S. state and territory.

ASAM Patient Placement Training

In December 2008, the OPSC and Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration collaborated on a training for over 60 treatment staff who perform drug court assessments for treatment providers across Maryland. Conducted by Dr. David Mee-Lee, the training identified underlying principles of the ASAM Patient Placement Criteria; update new developments in the ASAM patient placement criteria, and apply the ASAM Criteria role in individualized treatment and care management.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This subcommittee was tasked with the development of the Drug Court Certification Process to be completed during the 2008 calendar year. This effort was suspended in lieu of the already established Problem-Solving Court Application and the drafted Evaluation Review Plan. It was determined that the certification process was a duplication of those two tasks and would not provide any additional support for drug courts.

Partnership and Collaboration

This subcommittee is tasked with planning and instituting strategies to increase availability and access to ancillary services that include, but are not limited, to housing, employment, health and hygiene, legal, family, fiscal, vocational services, and education programs.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the subcommittee began work to construct a non-clinical case management tool to provide drug court case managers with a comprehensive document to conduct a thorough history of the drug court participants to better construct effective case plans. This tool should be completed in Fiscal Year 2010.

Goodwill Industries

The Goodwill Industries (GWI) of the Chesapeake entered into a service agreement with OPSC in Fiscal Year 2009 for a second straight year. Under this agreement, GWI provided services and staff to three political subdivisions (Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, and Wicomico Counties) and assisted in the development and facilitation of a 60 credit case management curriculum and a secondary project to do an exhaustive survey of the workforce development opportunities available across the State.

Though funding that supports this partnership expired on June 30, 2009, GWI plans to continue to provide access to the drug court participants in Baltimore City and Wicomico County on a limited basis until other funding sources can be obtained. Both agencies are making every effort to secure funding from alternative resources to continue this service to drug court participants.

Cooperative Extension

The OPSC established a partnership with the University of Maryland, Cooperative Extension Service. Each drug court program has access to the local cooperative extension service in their county. University of Maryland, Cooperative Extension Service and local drug courts collaborated to develop such services as: family consumer science, agriculture resources, community planning, and various participant projects.

Drug Court Data Management

A statewide management information system allowing for the collection and standardization of data directly related to drug court outcomes has been developed in collaboration with the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration. The Statewide Maryland Automated Record Tracking (SMART) system is a web-based data management system that has been modified to support the advanced needs of the problem-solving courts. In Fiscal Year 2009, the OPSC contracted with the University of Maryland's Institute for Governmental Services and Research (IGSR) to hire a programmer and trainer specifically to enhance the application and use of SMART among drug court team members. Some of the outcomes derived from this contract include:

- Conducted quarterly Drug Court User Group meetings in Baltimore City and Annapolis to provide over 150 drug court team members using SMART technical assistance and updated information about the system;
- Trained all but 3 jurisdictions in SMART to enable them to use the system fully in Fiscal Year 2009;
- Conducted specialized training for individual courts for new drug court team members or those in need refresher trainings; and
- Provided technical assistance for courts and their partner agencies, via email, phone, or in person.

Drug Court Month

Maryland celebrated its 6th Drug Court Month in 2009. Drug Court Month is a national, state, and local celebration in recognition of the many accomplishments of our drug court participants. Drug court programs in Maryland use that month to showcase the programs participant progress, program services, and partnerships. Common activities include: family reunification ceremonies, graduations, open houses, volunteer service projects, athletic and sporting events, and organized picnics.



Talbot Co Juvenile Drug Court Participants in the Annual Cardboard Boat Race to support Special Olympics.

Drug Court teams involve community organizations non-profit agencies, local officials, executive branch partners and judicial staff to honor the participants and their successes and strides in their recovery. During the month of May, the drug courts sponsored no less than 50 separate events across the state to honor drug court participants and staff.

Mental Health Courts

A Mental Health Court is a specialized court docket established for defendants with mental illness that substitutes a problem-solving approach for the traditional adversarial criminal court processing. Participants are identified through mental health screening and assessments and voluntarily participate in a judicially-supervised treatment plan developed jointly by a team of court staff and mental health professionals. (Justice Center, Bureau of Justice Assistance) The overarching goal of the Mental Health Court is to decrease the frequency of participants contacts with the criminal justice system by providing participants with judicial leadership to improve the social functioning, employment linkage, housing needs, treatment, and support services of participants.

Mental Health Courts rely on individualized treatment plans and ongoing judicial monitoring to address both the mental health needs of offenders and public safety concerns of communities. These courts also seek to address the underlying problems that contribute to criminal behavior, and to assist with the avoidance of recurring correctional visits, as well as to overall lower the recidivism of this population.

Baltimore City Mental Health Court

In 2002, the District Court in Baltimore City established a Mental Health Court that began by consolidating cases into one docket where competency evaluations were ordered. Prior to this, competency cases were scattered among nine jurisdictions within the City.

These case consolidations would set the stage for the onset of the first ever problem-solving court in Maryland designed to assist defendants diagnosed with mental illness. The court strives to avoid repeated incarceration for mentally ill defendants by engaging them into wrap-around treatment services within their community.



Baltimore City Mental Health Court Team

Prince George's County District Mental Health Court

The Prince George's County Mental Health Court was designed to increase the collaboration and cooperation between the mental health treatment system, the criminal justice system, and the Judiciary by addressing the needs of defendants with mental disorders. The program offers defendants with mental illness an opportunity to obtain an array of services within the community, which assist in improving the quality of life by making more effective use of the current criminal justice and mental health resources.

Judge Patrice Lewis received a "Leaders in Collaboration Award" from the Prince George's County Health Department, as well as engaged in various speaking engagements on behalf of the Mental Health Court Team.

Harford County Mental Health Diversion Program

In 2003, the Harford County Criminal Justice Council identified the development of a Mental Health Court Diversion Program (MHCDP) as a priority in Harford County. The MHCDP was established in order to divert mentally-ill offenders from the criminal justice system into community-based services. The program strives to reduce the number of instances mentally-ill offenders come into contact with the criminal justice system; improving the mental health and well-being of participants; and developing more comprehensive linkages for the mentally-ill defendants throughout the community.

Mental Health Court Statistical Report Summary
July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

County	Location	Type of Program	Program Capacity	Year Est.	Current number of Participants *	# Entered Program	# Graduated	Discharged from Program	Total # Served in FY 2009
Baltimore City	District Court	Mental Health	250	Oct-02	187	146	0	145	338
Harford	District Court	Adult	20	Jan-03	5	12	0	7	12
Prince George's	District Court	Adult	450	Jul-07	507	378	0	226	733
Total					699	536	0	378	1083

* As of June 30, 2009

Evaluations of Mental Health Courts

The University of Maryland's Institute for Governmental Services and Research (IGSR) and Morgan State University have entered into a contract with the Administrative Office of the Court's Court Research and Development Department to evaluate the current operational Mental Health Courts. Process evaluations are on schedule to be completed in Fiscal Year 2010 while outcome studies should be completed in Fiscal Year 2011.

Mental Health Oversight Committee

The Mental Health Oversight Committee led by retired District Court Judge Charlotte Cooksey and comprised of various partners including the Judiciary, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Developmental Disabled Administration, Mental Hygiene Administration, Public Safety, National Alliance on the Mental Illness, the Office of Public Defender, and State's Attorney's Offices. The primary goal of this committee is to provide oversight to the three operational mental health courts

Subcommittee Reports

Training

The Training Subcommittee focused on fulfilling training needs for practitioners working within Maryland's mental health courts in the Fall. There is currently a discussion in the subcommittee to have both the Drug Court Winter Symposium and the Fall Mental

Health Court Training combined in Fiscal Year 2010 to allow for a more diverse training setting.

Fall Mental Health Court Training Seminar

The OPSC hosted its first Fall Mental Health Court Training Seminar in October 2008. The training took place in Annapolis with over 70 guests from the three operational mental health courts. The eight-hour training session addressed HIPPA Confidentiality Laws, Co-Occurring Disorders in the Mentally Ill Offender, and Effective Aftercare Planning.

Mental Health Court Guidelines

The Mental Health Court Guideline subcommittee is tasked to establish guidelines for planning and operating mental health courts in Maryland. The structure of the guidelines will be modeled closely after the Drug Court Guidelines established by the Drug Court Oversight Committee several years ago. It is the goal of the committee to complete these guidelines in Fiscal Year 2010.

Glossary

The Glossary subcommittee has been tasked with compiling glossary terms in a format for mental health court professionals. All problem-solving courts invoke participation among several stakeholders with the community. Very often, terminology can hamper discussions and cooperation among these stakeholders. The goal of this committee is to create a Mental Health Court Glossary to assist in the navigation of the mental health and criminal justice systems terminology.

Technology and Research

The Technology and Research subcommittee focuses on data collection issues, as well as staying abreast of all the technology issues that may impact mental health courts statewide. This subcommittee monitors program evaluations and updates the full committee on any pivotal changes to processes and procedures.

Truancy Courts

Truancy Courts were initiated through legislation in 2004. The initial Truancy Reduction Pilot Program (TRPP) only involved the First Judicial Circuit (Wicomico, Dorchester, Somerset, Worcester Counties). Participating students are ordered to attend school, complete mandatory projects, and to report to court on time for regular review hearings. The students are held accountable for their actions and may be provided incentives for success, or sanctioned for non-compliance.

During 2007, the General Assembly extended the pilot to 2009 and authorized the establishment of a Truancy Reduction Pilot Program in Prince George's and Harford Counties.

Basic Rules for Truancy Court Participation

- ❑ Attend School regularly, without any unexcused absences
- ❑ No out of school suspensions
- ❑ Abide by any/all directions given by principals, counselors, and/or teachers of the respective county board of education
- ❑ Permit representatives from the court and/or school system the ability to visit your home
- ❑ Conform to all rules of conduct, including those of the school and social activities

During 2009, the General Assembly repealed the termination date relating to a Truancy Reduction Pilot Program.

The collaborative effort between the Circuit Courts and the local Boards of Education was designed to address the causes of truancy and improve the student's attendance, achievement, and attachment to school. Currently the First Judicial Circuit, Harford, and Prince George's Counties have established a truancy court docket. Judges and Masters in each jurisdiction have the ability to tailor each order to the individual students needs. In each respective jurisdiction, community partnerships have been developed to ensure timely service delivery to students and their families.

Truancy Reduction Statistical Report Summary July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

County	Location	Type of Program	Program Capacity	Year Est.	Current number of Participants *	# Entered Program	# Graduated	Discharged from Program	Total # Served in FY 2009
Dorchester	Circuit	Truancy	30	Mar-07	5	17	2	10	20
Harford	Circuit	Truancy	8	Jan-08	9	7	1	2	9
Somerset	Circuit	Truancy	30	Nov-05	9	12	5	13	25
Prince George's	Circuit	Truancy	40	May-09	18	19	0	1	19
Wicomico	Circuit	Truancy	50	Dec-04	23		15	40	59
Worcester	Circuit	Truancy	30	Jan-07	13	17	11	20	35
Total					77	72	34	86	167

*As of June 30, 2009

University of Baltimore Truancy Court Program

The University of Baltimore Truancy Program (TCP) also operated truancy reduction programs in schools throughout Baltimore City in Fiscal Year 2009. Though not technically a problem-solving court as defined by guidelines established by the Judiciary's Problem-Solving Court Committee, it is being evaluated by the Judiciary and thus is being monitored by the OPSC and the Family Administration Department of the Administrative Office of the Courts.



The program is voluntary, and consists of 10 weekly in-school meetings to include the student, the child's guardian, a judge/master who volunteers their time and effort, a student fellow and a supervisor. Interventions include parenting classes, tutoring, mentoring, training in basic skills, counseling and anger management. The program targeted 165 students with recurring unexcused absences throughout six Baltimore City schools during the 2008-2009 academic school year.

Baltimore City Truancy Court Program Annual Reception with Judge Catherine O'Malley at the Governor's Mansion.

Current data for the program is not available; however, initial data indicates an overall 75% decrease in absenteeism for students during and immediately following their TCP participation. The program has been granted funding under a \$500,000 federal grant to expand the truancy reduction program to other counties within Maryland.

Evaluations

The University of Maryland School of Social Work has entered into a contract with the Administrative Office of the Court's Court Research and Development Department to evaluate the all the Truancy Reduction Courts currently in operation. The evaluations are to be completed by the end of Fiscal Year 2010.