

2015 Community Engagement Plan

I. Situation Statement

During recent years, there has been much discussion about the Court's perception within the community, most notably the Court's perception among African-Americans. The concerns stem from many factors including historical occurrences, general public skepticism and the questions and findings stemming from the recent Department of Justice investigation and agreement. Based upon the DOJ's findings and public concerns expressed during a series of town hall meetings, the Court designated a Community Outreach liaison to begin the process of creating a larger Community Outreach Program, the purpose of which is to spell out the ways in which the Court will address the concerns of the public while also providing updates and information about the reforms taking place.

II. Goals

The purpose of designing a Community Outreach program is, most importantly, to reach all citizens of Shelby County. However, the focus of the program is to reach out to members of the African-American community who have expressed their dissatisfaction with past and current programs and policies of the Court. It is the expressed goal of the Court to have a presence in the communities most affected by Juvenile Court programs and policies in order receive feedback and gain a sense of trust and familiarity with the Court's processes.

III. Target Audience(s)/Stakeholders

As noted above, all citizens of Shelby County are members of the Community Outreach target audience. However, the Court's focus is on reaching out to those areas whose children have the most contact with Juvenile Court.

The Court also participates in numerous stakeholder meetings on a regular basis. The Community Outreach Program will utilize interagency involvement in order to reach a wide variety of people who have an interest in the Court's programs and policies.

IV. Message

The Court wants to ensure that all children who go through the juvenile court process are treated fairly. The Court wants the public to be confident in court policies and procedures and to be able to provide input into those procedures and policies. The Court recognizes that community input and participation is an invaluable tool in creating public confidence and trust.

V. Engaging Targeted People and Organizations:

Stakeholder: School system

Incentive: Increase lines of communication between schools and Court. Give children a better understanding of court processes and the law.

Plan: To talk to children about the juvenile process.

Stakeholder: Local ministers/faith based community.

Incentive: Provide more opportunities for outreach ministry for local places of worship.

Plan: Meet with faith based leaders to learn how the Court can be of assistance to people

in their congregations and community. Inform church leaders how their influence can assist functions of the Court.

Stakeholder: NAACP

Incentive: Learn more about the Court's programs and policies. Be able to provide direct input, share concerns and have a role in the Court's development and implementation of procedures.

Plan: Contact members of the local NAACP chapter and schedule a meeting to provide information about the Court. Inquire as to what the Court can do to build relationships in the African-American community.

Stakeholder: Countywide Juvenile Justice Consortium

Incentive: Increase the information sharing between the Court and CJJC. Make the Court a resource for CJJC's public interaction.

Plan: Provide documentation and information to the members on an as-requested basis. Include the CJJC in planning of community meetings and serve as a resource to CJJC for any meetings it holds.

VI. Outreach Methods

Interagency Services Report- The Court has always distributed an Interagency Services report (internally) which details the numerous ways in which the Court is involved in community functions. Starting in 2014 the Court released that report to external groups including television and print mediums. The Court will release the report to groups such as the CJJC, JJB, JDAI Governing Committee, Operation Safe Community/Crime Commission, County Commission, MPD, Sheriff, U. S. Attorney, SCS Superintendent, DMC Taskforce, county and some state officials, child advocacy agencies, and media outlets. The purpose is to show the various recipients the degree of the Court's ongoing engagement in agencies, partnerships, projects and initiatives.

Court Web Pages-The Juvenile Court's main web page is

<http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/index.aspx?NID=226> and the web address to the DOJ compliance page is <http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/index.aspx?NID=2782> . Those pages provide information about the Court as well as providing updates about the Court's compliance with the DOJ Agreement.

The Court (with the technical assistance of Shelby County IT) has published its "Data Dashboard" as required by the DOJ MOA. <http://dashboard.shelbycountyttn.gov/>

Facebook- The Court has had a Facebook page since early 2013

(www.facebook.com/mscjc). That page provides information about Court events and posts informative links to Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare issues.

Twitter-The Court also has a Twitter feed (@shelbyjuvenile or

www.twitter.com/shelbyjuvenile) that provides real-time comments about Court happenings and juvenile law related events.

Linchub- is an online communications vehicle of LINC/2-1-1 at the Memphis Public Library. It is designed for use by and for organizations, agencies and individuals that provide information and referral services and/or direct social services in the greater

Memphis area.

Commercial Appeal-Is the predominant daily newspaper of Memphis, Tennessee, and its surrounding metropolitan area.

Tri-State Defender-Is one of the longest, continuously-published African-American papers in the United States.

Memphis Flyer-Is the city's largest alternative newsweekly.

Speaker Series-The Juvenile Court "Speakers Series" will be an organized Court effort to avail Court personnel to make appearances to speak at the request of any organization or group. The Court will promote the availability of speakers through its web page, Facebook and Twitter as well as reaching out to major media outlets to promote the availability of Court personnel to speak on Juvenile and Child Welfare issues.

School Involvement-The Court will reach out to the Unified School System to arrange four events each semester in which employees of the Court will talk to students about juvenile court related issues. The Court will arrange for speakers at two alternative school and two schools that have a high representation of juveniles in the court system. The Court will work with each school to create a targeted message that best reflects the needs and attitudes of the children that attend that particular school.

Stakeholder Meetings-Variou Community meetings that are held throughout the year that involve various members of the juvenile and child welfare realm.

Local Radio-AM and FM radio stations that broadcast in the Shelby County listening area.

Memphis Bar Association- In existence since 1874, the Memphis Bar Association is a voluntary association of attorneys and judges whose purposes are to: Uphold high standards of integrity and honor in the legal profession. Encourage and assist lawyers in maintaining and improving their competence so they can better serve their clients and the public. Assist in making legal services available to all in the community who need such services. Aid and educate the public with reference to the law and the administration of justice. Exert the Association's influence in connection with issues involving the profession of law and the administration of justice to the end that it will enhance the quality of life in the community. Cultivate a spirit of good fellowship among members of the legal profession.

Countywide Juvenile Justice Consortium- Members of the Countywide Juvenile Justice Consortium (CJJC) are comprised of representatives of the Memphis/Shelby Juvenile Justice Board and key stakeholders, including, but not limited to, six to nine citizens appointed by the County Mayor and approved by the Commission who are reflective of the cultural and ethnic diversity of the County, to include no less than two parents of children who have had delinquency matters before the Memphis-Shelby County Juvenile Court, a person under the age of twenty-one (21) who has had direct contact with the juvenile justice system, and community advocates.

VII. Spokesperson(s)

Thomas Coupé, Community Outreach Coordinator

Sherry Schedler, Interagency Services Director

Lisa Hill, County DMC Coordinator

VIII. Tools or Measures to Assess Progress

In December of each year, the Court will determine the six zip codes in which the most delinquency petitions were filed and schedule community forums in those six zip codes

during the year. The Court will focus specialized discussions (detention, judicial, protective services, probation/YSB etc) in those zip codes to better serve the needs of those areas.

The Court will schedule two large open meeting in the year to inform the public of the Court's compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement.

The Court will request the Commercial Appeal to write an article on the Court's status of compliance in advance of the June 2015 open meeting. The Court will also approach the Tri-State Defender and Memphis Flyer about writing articles about the Court's compliance with the DOJ Agreement or any other matters related to the Agreement.

The Court will reach out to the school system to request that it allows different members of the Court to talk to children about Juvenile Court. The Court will plan on having a representative speak to four alternative schools in the fall semester.

An individual funded by the OJJDP will conduct an in-depth survey by mid-2015, as soon as funding is procured.

The survey will measure various aspects of the Court's perception and performance. Prior to the request for funding, the Court will reach out to employees and the public about what information they would like to see compiled in the survey.

Since early 2014, the Court has issued a monthly summary report to all major media outlets as well as posting the information on the Court's web page. The summary includes any major developments or impediments with the DOJ Agreement and provides monthly numbers in key areas of the Court's performance.

IX. Proposed Timeline for June 2015-December 2015.

June: Open Meeting

July: Community Meeting (Judicial)

August: Contact School system about speaking; Speak at Alternative School (tentative);
Community Meeting (Detention)

September: Contact Memphis Flyer; Speak at two Alternative Schools; Community Meeting
(Prosecution/Defense Attorneys)

October: Speak at Alternative School (tentative)

November: Community Meeting (Court Processes)

December: Open Meeting

X. Media Outlets

Commercial Appeal

Memphis Flyer

Tri-State Defender

WDIA

K97/Clear Channel Communication

Local Channels 3, 5, 13, 24 and 30.

County Lines (external County Government newsletter)

Linchub