



LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

To foster prevention and reduction of juvenile crime; respond to the needs of the victim; promote community safety, restoration and development; empower youth and their families through the interaction of the court.



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LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

JUVENILE PROBATION ADMINISTRATORS

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Thomas J. Ganser - Deputy Chief
Debra J. Kopenhaver - Supervisor
Eric M. Holben - Supervisor
Joseph M. Reichard - Supervisor
Jeffrey Nonnemacher - Supervisor
Ryan N. Schaffer – Supervisor
Sally Bortz – Court Operations Officer
Kathleen Eslinger – Office Manager

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COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE WORK SERVICE PART TIME POSITIONS

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Yazmin Ramos	Miriam Gallo	John Thompson	Linda Sheftel
Edward Deitzer	Kelly Courts	Zachary Maslany	John Shoemaker

2009 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department saw some significant changes during 2009. After 37 years as Chief of Probation, Paul Werrell retired, As a result the department underwent several managerial changes with the promotion of Elizabeth Fritz as Chief and Thomas Ganser as Deputy Chief. While the mission of the department remained the same; restructuring of management brought a renewed energy and commitment of staff.

The courthouse renovations provided the department the opportunity to relocate from a crowded third floor office with staff scattered in multiple locations to a newly designed seventh floor where the entire department is together. Despite anticipated concerns with the move, it has proven to be a welcome change. The department continued to prepare for a new case management system, the JCMS. The preparation for this was time consuming and required a thoughtful and thorough evaluation of our business processes.

With the department's new management, the staff began to focus on the evaluating the most effective ways to meet our goals of community protection, accountability and competency development. With the assistance and direction of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, the department took the opportunity to become one of the 10 counties to begin utilizing a risk needs assessment. One of the many benefits to using a risk needs assessment is the ability to respond to the risks or criminogenic needs that are most closely associated with the risk of re-offending. Training on the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) has been intensive and assisted by the National Youth Screening and Assessment Project.

By prioritizing these domains from the assessment into a case plan, developed along with the juvenile and parent; this will have the greatest impact on future delinquent behavior while appropriately matching services. With the assistance of the National Center for Juvenile Justice, our department developed and implemented an automated case plan which will continue to be enhanced in 2010; when it is anticipated that the state will have a standard automated case plan in the JCMS.

In 2009 the Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department was fortunate to be a participant in the MacArthur Foundation Model for Change initiative. Pennsylvania's reform efforts focused on coordinating the mental health and juvenile justice systems, improving aftercare services and addressing disproportionate minority contact within the system. The department was fortunate to receive funding through the Foundation to develop School Justice Panels in the middle schools of the Allentown School District. These panels, once fully implemented will provide a pre-adjudication diversion where youth are held accountable but avoid penetration further into the juvenile justice system.

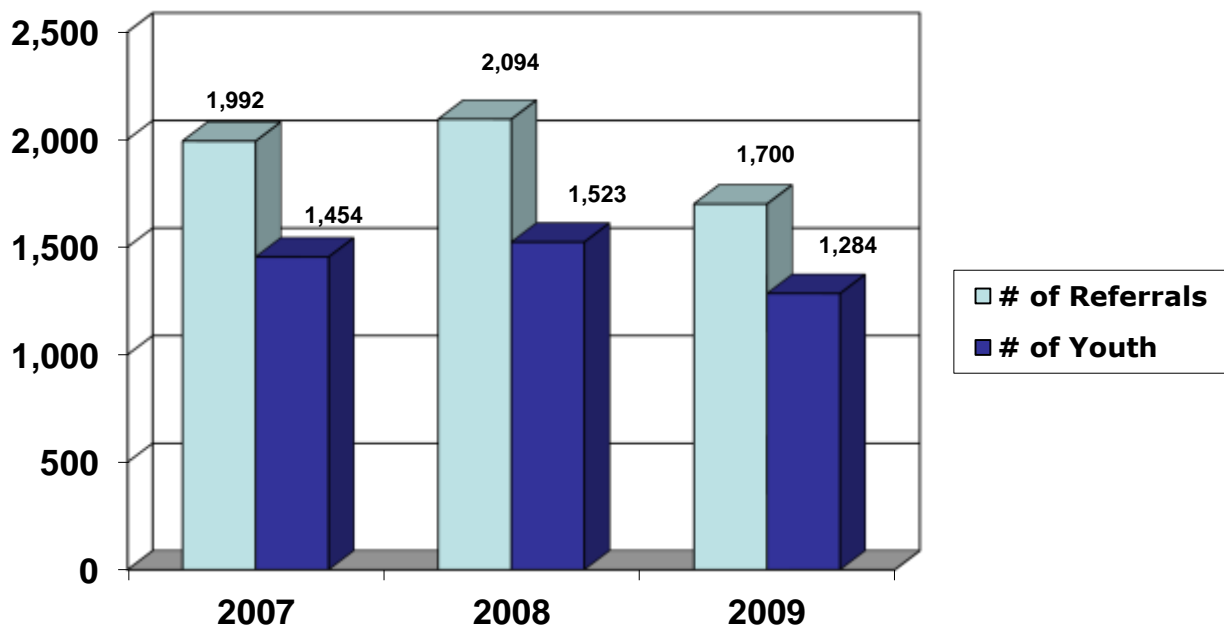
During 2009, the Juvenile Probation Department received funding through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for the development of an Evening Reporting Center which will be utilized as an alternative to secure detention. Other ERC's in the Commonwealth have shown great promise to reduce secure detention numbers while providing programming. As part of this initiative, the department began utilizing a detention risk instrument to provide a consistent, structured, and uniformed method to make our detention decisions.

The Juvenile Probation Department had many challenges during 2009. We have taken these challenges and looked at them as opportunities and realize that 2010 looks to be even more promising with improving internal operations, while enhancing our capacity to more effectively meet the needs of the youth, families and community that we serve.

Number of Referrals vs. Number of Youth

The following chart reflects the total number of cases and youths referred to our department for the past three years. Juveniles referred for multiple cases are only counted once. The number of youth referred to our department and the number of referrals reached their apex around 2004-2005 and have been trending down in the following years. There was a slight increase in cases and juveniles in 2008. However, in 2009 our referrals decreased by 19%, and the total number of juveniles referred fell by 16%. Some of this decrease is attributable to the drop in Non-Payment cases from the Magisterial District Judges. We received 109 less Non-Payment cases in 2009 compared to the previous year. The trend of decreased referrals is consistent with totals for the state.

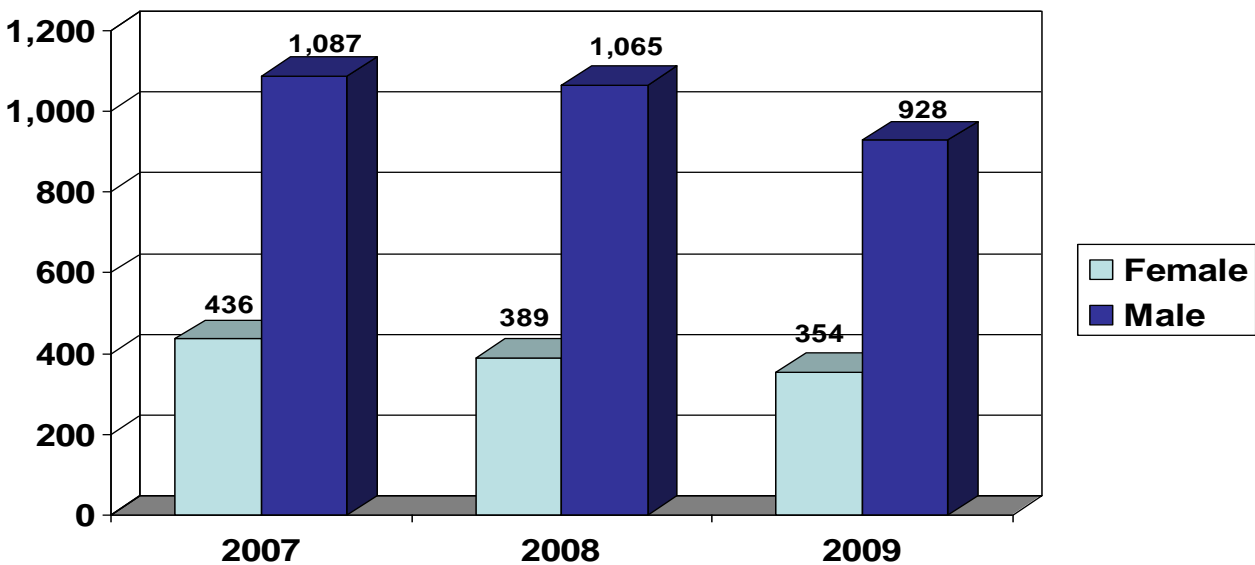
Number of Referrals vs. Number of Youth



Number of Youth by Gender

The ratio of male to female clients has remained relatively unchanged the past couple of years. The ratio was 72.5% males and 27.5% females last year. Although this ratio has remained fairly consistent the past couple of years, the female percentage has increased compared to historical numbers. The percentage of females became elevated when we began receiving more referrals for Non Payments. The male/female ratio was fairly consistent, 80% male and 20% female. However, females are referred for Non Payments of Costs and Fines at a rate of 37% and we received 350 of these types of referrals in 2009. One disturbing trend we have noticed is the increased percentage of females engaging in more assaultive and violent behavior. Females were referred for almost 30% of all assaults, terroristic threats and harassment allegations.

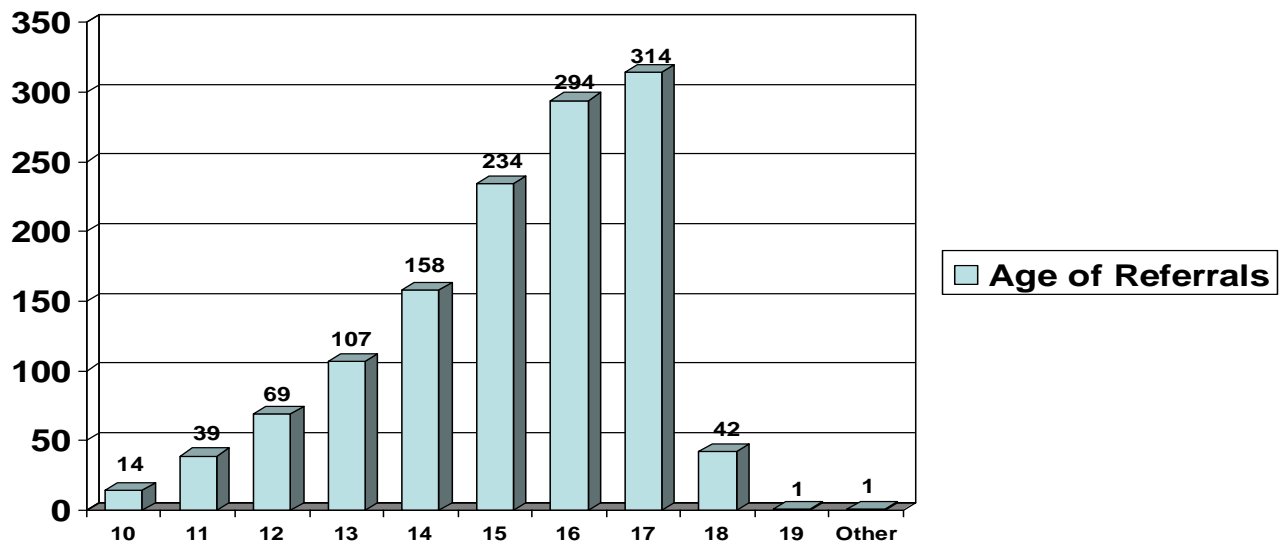
Number of Youth by Gender



Referrals by Age

The breakdown of youth referred based on their ages has been fairly consistent. Sixteen and seventeen year olds constitute a little less than half of all our referrals, 48% last year. We are especially interested in tracking the age of our most youthful offenders, the ten through thirteen age group. Research indicates a higher risk to reoffend for youth engaged in delinquent activity at a younger age. Last year, this group accounted for 18% of all referrals. This was a 3% decrease from 2008. Lehigh County's percentages are very similar to those of the rest of the state.

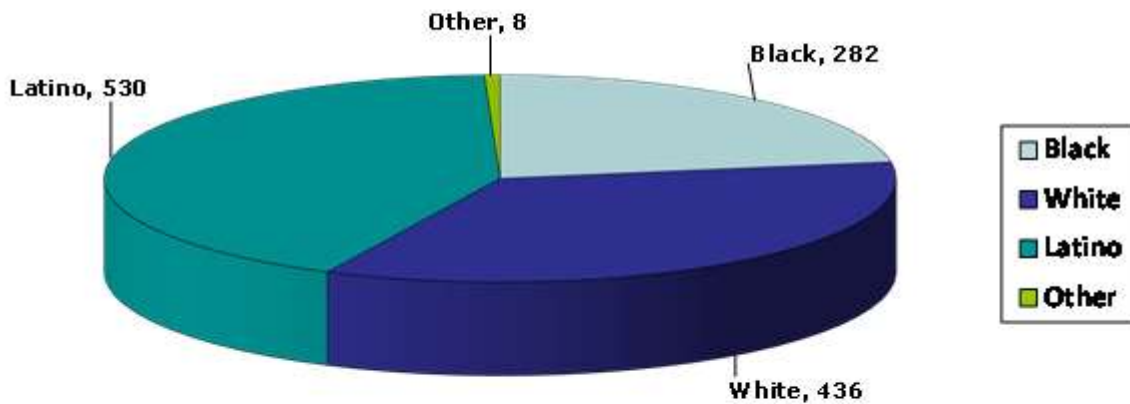
Referrals by Age - 2009



Race and Ethnicity

In recent years, the state has changed the categories of how race is reported by removing "Hispanic" as a choice. Hispanic/Latino is reported as a juvenile's ethnicity. Last year, Latino youths represented 43% of all juveniles referred compared to 35% for White youths and 22% for Black youth. The percentage of Black youth has remained unchanged for the past three years. There was a slight increase in Hispanic youth in 2008. The percentage in 2009 was almost identical to that of 2007.

Race & Ethnicity – 2009



Significant Offenses Referred

There was a 17% decrease in the significant offenses listed in the chart below from the previous year and they were 23% lower than our 2007 totals. The only significant offense that increased was Robbery, an increase of 66%. Aggravated Assault increased by 9%. Every other crime in this category decreased. The most impactful of these was Serious Sexual Offenses which decreased by 80%. There was also a 59% decrease in Criminal Mischief cases. These crimes always involve victims and restitution. Thus, any decrease means fewer victims and fewer restitution obligations to fulfill.

Significant Offenses Referred

Offenses	2007	2008	2009
Aggravated Assault	109	81	88
Arson	10	5	4
Burglary	91	68	58
Criminal Mischief	188	210	86
Drug Dealing Offenses	42	78	58
Possession of Drug Charges	137	151	136
Robbery	52	41	68
Serious Sexual Offenses	29	44	9
Simple Assault	424	351	319
Terroristic Threats	94	75	65
Theft	347	292	265
Weapons Charges	61	71	64
Totals	1584	1467	1220

Referral Sources

The majority of police departments referred less juveniles last year compared to the preceding year. The Allentown Police Department is the primary source of referrals to our department. They referred 52% of all our police referrals last year. This is down 2% from the previous year and 4% from the year before that. We received 205 less referrals from Allentown compared to 2007 totals. Whitehall Police provides the second most referrals 10%.

Other departments showed significant change in cases referred to our department. PSP-Fogelsville referrals were down 24%. Salisbury was down 60% and Whitehall 23%. Referrals from Slatington almost doubled from the previous year and PSP-Bethlehem had a 29% increase.

Referral Source	2006	2007	2008	2009
Alburtis	6	1	10	3
Allentown	770	712	653	507
Berks Lehigh	7	14	19	12
PSP-Bethlehem	69	62	31	40
Bethlehem	76	30	44	44
Catasauqua	15	16	20	19
Coopersburg	2	5	0	3
Coplay	1	1	2	4
Emmaus	65	54	66	40
PSP-Fogelsville	58	66	76	58
Fountain Hill	6	3	13	10
Macungie	5	4	7	7
Salisbury	53	27	44	18
Slatington	21	15	13	25
South Whitehall	91	89	59	61
Upper Saucon	20	36	21	22
Whitehall	114	132	124	95

Types of Disposition

The various types of dispositions have remained fairly consistent the past three years. However, the percentage of placements has steadily decreased and non court dispositions increased 5%.

Disposition	2007		2008		2009	
Informal Adjustments	214	15%	213	14%	246	19%
Consent Decrees	168	12%	181	12%	155	12%
Probation	459	32%	404	26%	382	30%
Placement	253	17%	240	16%	173	13%
Totals	1453		1525		956	

Diversion Programs

First time offenders who are alleged to have committed less serious offenses are diverted to our Community Justice Panels. The panels are recruited, trained and facilitated by the Impact Project. Panels are comprised of community volunteers and serve in every part of the county, allowing juveniles to attend panels in their own communities. The panels handle both misdemeanor and summary offenses and referrals come from police, magisterial district courts and our department. School Justice Panels were initiated this past year in the Allentown School District. The School Justice Panels utilize various professionals as panel members who assess each juvenile's circumstances and prescribe interventions to address their needs. As is evident in the table below, referrals from our department to the Community Justice Panels have been consistent, although there has been an increasingly higher percentage accepted.

YEAR	CJP cases referred	# of cases accepted	Successful completions
2007	108	62	47
2008	118	89	71
2009	104	96	49

Out of Home Services

Detention

The 670 juveniles detained last year was the lowest number of juveniles admitted to secure detention since 2004, a decrease of 10%. Mental health cases continue to drive up the daily average. Juveniles detained by our SPORE unit, which provides supervision of mental health cases, averaged over 24 days. A new electronic monitoring system utilizing GPS technology was initiated this year and has been favorably received by the staff and the court.

YEAR	# of LCDH Placement	# of Juveniles Represented	Average Time in LCDH (days)
2005	806	583	14.56
2006	801	619	15.03
2007	706	551	16.70
2008	747	576	15.77
2009	670	529	15.57

Placement

The table below represents juveniles in placement during a given year, not necessarily those committed those years. The percentage of State vs. Private placement has stayed relatively the same. Total placements decreased almost 24% from the previous year. It should also be noted that weekend sanctions were utilized 14% less last year.

	Private	State	Total
2009	206	93	299
2008	263	128	391
2007	270	125	398

COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE WORK SERVICE (CAWS)

The Community Alternative Work Service Program has been in operation since 1983. The programs have gone through many modifications and additions since that time. Presently, the CAWS programs are organized as such: The CAWS I program represents the traditional concept of community service. It is the primary means by which we hold youth accountable for their offenses. CAWS II is our Young Offenders Program. Youth who are under the age of fourteen participate in this educational program that highlights issues like personal responsibility, drug and alcohol use, and victim awareness. CAWS III is our restitution program. Juveniles perform community service and are credited for each hour they complete. Checks are sent to victims for this credited amount. CAWS IV is our competency development groups. Juveniles are assigned to our health care, culinary, 4-H, construction, and community activity groups that are led by our workcrew supervisors. Finally, we also operate a school suspension program. If a juvenile is suspended from school, they are expected to report to the department to perform community service.

Highlights

CAWS has been the main vehicle by which our department has reached out and partnered with numerous organizations and municipalities over the years. The impression the community has of our department and its mission has generally been created through the efforts of our community service programs. Workcrews have been dispatched to all parts of the county. Hundreds of different worksites were utilized throughout the county to assure the completion of hours. Last year we employed 130 different worksites and projects to accomplish our goals.

We had 290 youth complete 6900 hours at the Allentown Recycling Center. That equates to almost 19 hours per day. Their hard work made it possible for us to generate over \$59,000 for our restitution program. The recycling market fluctuated greatly this past year. In February, 2008, we generated almost \$7,000 worth of materials. However, by November the market bottomed out and we generated only \$1,000. Due to better a market in previous years, we finished the year with a surplus of \$187,000.

The total amount of community service completed by our juveniles was 38,506 hours. At the minimum wage, this would equate to over \$275,000 worth of labor that our youth gave back to the community.

We initiated the CAWS IV program to provide an opportunity for our youth to improve their competencies, expose them to unique experiences and positive role models. Early feedback has been very favorable and the department intends to continue to develop similar programs.

Below are some of the more interesting projects completed this year:

- Christmas Party for the children at Mosser Village
- Weekly workcrews at the Lower Milford Fire Company preparing and serving dinner
- Set up and take down at Musikfest and Mayfair
- 18 youth worked almost 350 hours at the Miracle League assisting handicapped children play baseball
- 36 youth worked over 900 hours at the Schnecksville Fire Company assisting with breakfasts, special events and the yearly fair
- 53 youth performed 954 hours of community service at the Salvation Army Thrift Shop
- Workcrews and assigned youth cut, split, stacked and loaded approximately 20 cords of wood
- Assistance was provided to homes in Allentown in preparation for the construction of new houses

- The annual CAWS Luncheon was held in November to honor all the agencies, workers and volunteers associated with the program
- Maintained three gardens and donated over a ton of produce to various food banks
- Over \$38,000 paid to victims through the CAWS III program
- Juveniles from the Baum Art School Program completed a mural on the second floor of the Courthouse
- Juveniles built a brick wall around a garden for Allentown's Weed and Seed Program
- Prepared and served breakfasts at the Breinigsville Fire Company and the Lehigh Masonic Lodge on a monthly basis
- "Hero Packs" were prepared and provided to families of soldiers with the help of the 4-H Program at LCCC

CAWS TOTALS	2008	2009
ACCEPTED	1117	998
CLOSED	1159	997
HOURS COMPLETED	35256	24889
CAWS III TOTALS		
ACCEPTED	107	96
PAID \$	\$39,479.96	\$54,415.91
# VICTIMS PAID	138	214

Department Programs

College Mentoring: Selected juveniles visit local colleges to receive help with homework, join activities, and learn about college enrollment.

Community Justice on Wheels: Community based probation officers have taken to the streets with a bicycle patrol to make home and school visits, enhances visibility in the community, and become more accessible for the neighborhood residents.

Victim Advocate Unit: The needs and concerns of victims of juvenile crime are addressed by victim advocates and the juvenile probation officer assigned to the case.

Community Outreach: Juvenile probation representatives meet with civic and community organizations to provide information about services and encourage involvement from the community.

Intensive Aftercare Services: Private agencies assist the Juvenile Probation Department in supervising and counseling youth upon their return from a residential treatment program.

School Based Probation: Probation officers work in the schools and address issues related to academic performance and behavior and provide classroom presentations on the consequences for illegal behavior.

1992 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award

Young Artist Program: The Young Artist Program through the Baum School of Art provides art instruction to juveniles between the ages of 13 to 18 whom are under probation supervision in Lehigh County in order for them to realize their personal strengths and their self esteem through their artistic talents. Under the direction of a professional art teacher, students engage in two hour art classes once a week for ten weeks.

Firewood Program: Selected juveniles are court ordered to perform their community service hours at the woodpile where they cut, split and stack firewood which is then sold by the truckload. The proceeds are used to pay victims of juvenile crime.

Alcohol and Drug Awareness: Probation officers provide information in a group discussion setting concerning the social and legal implications of alcohol and drug abuse.

1998 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award

S.P.O.R.E.: Special Program for Offenders in Rehabilitation & Education is a collaborative program with the Lehigh County MH/MR Agency that provides both a probation officer and a mental health caseworker for youth in need of intensive supervision and MH/MR casework services.

1999 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award

Outcome Measures

The Juvenile Probation Department has been recording and tracking outcome measures on closed cases since 2003. These outcomes serve somewhat as a report card on our department's activities. It enables us to ascertain how many juveniles completed probation successfully, how many were charged with direct file charges, how many juveniles violated their probation and how much restitution was collected, to name just a few of the areas. As we move forward, it is our intent to analyze this information more carefully, as well as a variety of other reports, in order to evaluate areas that need to be addressed or improved.

Outcome measures were completed on 667 juveniles last year

- 78% of those juveniles completed supervision without committing a new offense
- 80% completed supervision without a judicial finding of a technical violation of probation
- Median length of time on supervision was nine months
- 88% of youth completed their community service obligation
- 62% made full restitution to their victims

Staff Training

During 2009, the juvenile probation staff received training in the following areas:

- 2009 PA Conference on Juvenile Justice
- Adolescent MH Issues & Intervention Strategies
- Adult & Aging Services
- Aftercare Forum
- Animal Cruelty & Interpersonal Violence
- Case Supervision Plan
- Computer Forensics
- Computer Training
- Computers & Sex Offenses
- CPR/AED/First Aid
- D&A, I&R, HC, VA
- Defensive Tactics
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Early Intervention & MR DHS Training
- Educational Law
- Exposure Control
- Family Group Decision Making
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Firearms Familiarization
- Focused Listening
- Gender Differences in Communication
- Grief Counseling
- Heads Up
- IFSP, CASSP & Lead Case Management
- Family Dynamics & Domestic Violence
- Impact of Early Childhood Trauma
- Inappropriate Sexual Behavior in Children & Adolescents
- JCJC Phase I Curriculum
- Kinesic Level 2
- Management Skills for 1st time Supervisors
- Meth Lab Training for PO's
- Motivational Interviewing
- Olewus Bullying Program
- PA DUI Association Annual Meeting
- Pandemic Training
- Preventing Sexual Harassment
- Refusal Skills for Adolescents
- SAP Training
- School Wide Positive Behavior Support
- Sexting & Electronic Harassment
- Underage Drinking/Underage DUI Understanding Economic & Cultural Differences
- Understanding Firesetting Behavior in Adolescents Victim Offender Conferencing
- Working with Girls in 21st Century
- Working with Resistant Clients
- YLS
- YLS - Master Trainer Training