

PUBLIC FEEDBACK REPORT NO. 4

INTERVIEW WITH A PARENT
OF A CHILD WHO HAS
HAD CONTACT WITH THE COURT
SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

Countywide Juvenile Justice Consortium (CJJC), Shelby County, Tennessee



BACKGROUND

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: November 19, 2015, 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

LOCATION: Hickory Ridge Mall, Community Room, 6075 Winchester Rd., Memphis, Tennessee, 38116

CJJC ATTENDEES: Bridgette Bowman, Jeremy Calhoun, LaTonya Farmer, Bishop Mays, Kimbrell Owens, Thurston Smith, Bridgett Stigger, Dorothy Thomas, Freda Williams

OTHER NON-PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Marlinee Iverson (Assistant County Attorney),

RECORDER: Freda Williams

MEETING NOTICE DISSEMINATION: All prospective participants were privately contacted in order to preserve confidentiality

OVERVIEW

CJJC members met with a woman whose son was detained at Juvenile Court on two occasions and who had two delinquency matters before the Court. Other mothers were solicited to attend, and agreed to come, but for whatever reason, they did not show up for the meeting. These are the recorded notes from the interview with the mother who attended the meeting:

Interview began at 5:50

Question 1: Tell us about your child's most recent interaction with Juvenile Court.

My son was at Juvenile Court for two months, July and August of 2015. He was 17 years old. I felt that he was treated fairly and that they took good care of him. I had no issues with how he was treated. His medical needs were cared for. The staff communicated well with me. Since I visited him every day, I developed a good relationship with the guards.

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Question 2: Why was your son at Juvenile Court?

He gave some of his friends a ride to the store. One of his friends tried to rob the store and was shot. His friend died in his arms. My son was charged with facilitation of robbery.

Question 3: Were you aware of the charges against your son?

Not at first. Three days after he was at 201 Poplar, I found out the charges.

Question 4: Are you concerned about gang activity in your neighborhood?

These are a different breed of kids. They have no fear. They are more concerned about color of clothes than many other things. I have to be so careful even when I go to the store. They stand around in gangs at the store and one will approach you begging for money. When you go in your purse, they will gang up on you and take your purse.

Question 5: Have you had any other experiences with Juvenile Court?

I have had no other experience with Juvenile Court before this incident. My son was once detained when he was mistaken for a young man who shot someone around the block. He was visiting friends when they heard the shot. A police car came down the street and put him in the patrol car then took him back to the scene of the shooting. Some of the people there identified him as the shooter. Others said he was not the one. He was taken to 201 for questioning and was held for 4 days then released. I was dissatisfied with not being able to be present during his questioning. After 5 hours I was allowed to go back but I could not say anything.

Question 6: What was the outcome of your son's case?

He got probation and is working with Mediation & Restitution/Reconciliation Services (MARRS). We are working to get his record expunged. He has learned the importance of school and staying out of trouble. He is focused on graduating and having a career. I was disappointed that he did not get counseling to deal with his friend's death. They did psychological testing but no counseling.

Question 7: What else would you like to share with us?

I did not understand the process and didn't know who to go to in order to get a better understanding. Also, kids don't have enough to do after school so they won't linger around in the streets.

My first thought was the courts just don't care about our children. They have just given up on our kids. Learning about CJJC has given me hope.

Interview ended at 7:00 p.m.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Consortium members have met and discussed items brought up at the parent interview meeting, and we have the following concerns:

1. None

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. None.

Approved:
Countywide Juvenile Justice Consortium
January 2016

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