

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Montgomery County Juvenile Court  
 380 W. Second St  
 Dayton, OH 45422  
 (937) 496-7908  
[www.mcjcoho.org](http://www.mcjcoho.org)



## HELEN WALLACE, ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE

Judge Wallace is the administrative judge of Montgomery County Juvenile Court, leading the organization of approximately 450 employees who strive to provide individualized justice for children and to protect the community, while carefully balancing the interests of both.

Judge Wallace presides over specialized dockets including Juvenile Wellness Court and Juvenile Treatment Court. Wellness Court offers mental health support and rehabilitation to youth. Judge Wallace encourages family involvement and collaboration between treatment providers, probation and the youth in an effort to reduce recidivism and promote positive, healthy futures. Treatment Court assists in rehabilitation of juveniles who have been adversely affected by drugs and alcohol.

In 2023, Judge Wallace was appointed by Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy to the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission. She was subsequently appointed by the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission to reconvene and chair the Juvenile Justice subcommittee.

Judge Wallace earned her law degree from George Washington University Law School after obtaining a bachelor's degree in International Affairs from the University of Cincinnati.



## JULIE BRUNS, JUDGE

Judge Julie A. Bruns began serving as a Montgomery County Juvenile Court judge in January 2023. She had previously worked as a Juvenile Court magistrate since 2019, presiding over juvenile traffic cases and private custody cases, and serving as chief magistrate.

Judge Bruns currently co-chairs the Dayton Bar Association's Juvenile Law Committee, and the Ohio Attorney General's Criminal Justice and Mental Health Task Force.

Before becoming a magistrate, Judge Bruns was an assistant prosecuting attorney for 23 years where she prosecuted cases in the Juvenile Division, Adult Trial Division, CARE House (Montgomery County's Child Advocacy Center), and ultimately served as the Juvenile Division Chief from 2005-2019. During her employment in the Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office, Judge Bruns was instrumental in developing one of the first Juvenile Sexting Diversion programs in the nation, which became a model for similar programs in multiple states throughout the US. She also served on several committees through the Ohio Supreme Court and the Governor's Office, including work on Senate Bill 10, also known as the Adam Walsh Act, and Ohio's Juvenile Competency statute.

Judge Bruns received her undergraduate degree from Miami University in 1993, and her law degree from the University of Dayton School of Law in 1996.

## FOCUSED ON YOUTH

**DELINQUENCY DOCKET:** The Juvenile Delinquency Docket has jurisdiction over all offenses involving children under the age of 18, as well as cases involving juvenile protection orders, unruly filings, and juvenile traffic offenders.

**ABUSE, NEGLECT, DEPENDENCY DOCKET:** Juvenile Court presides over cases regarding children alleged to be abused, neglected, or dependent. The goal is to strengthen families so that children can safely remain with their families whenever possible, and to find permanent homes for children when that is not possible.

**PRIVATE CUSTODY, CHILD SUPPORT & VISITATION DOCKET:** The Private Custody, Child Support, and Visitation Docket has jurisdiction involving the issues of paternity, custody, parenting time, visitation, and child support when the child's parents were not married at the time of their birth, when the child's parents married after their birth but have not filed for divorce, or when a non-parent initiates a filing.

## MAGISTRATES



Magistrate  
Todd Calaway



Magistrate  
Kelsie Carson



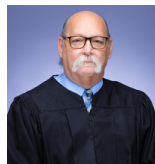
Magistrate  
Paula Durden



Chief Magistrate  
Gina Feller



Magistrate  
Matt Kimmel



Magistrate  
John Kolberg



Magistrate (retired)  
Marshall Lachman



Magistrate  
Kathleen Lenski



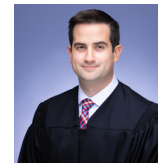
Magistrate  
Jeffrey Livingston



Magistrate  
Moira Murty



Magistrate  
Hope Smalls



Magistrate  
Trent Sulek



Magistrate  
Autumn White



# DETENTION CENTER OFFERS SAFETY, TREATMENT

Detention Services provides a comprehensive program for pre and post dispositional youth, in a safe and secure environment, while protecting the public safety. Youth range in age from 10 to 20-years old. Detention Services houses five distinct populations within its 144-bed facility - offering evidence based programming, educational, mental health, medical, physical, and life-skills programming.

In 2023, Detention Services continued to transition from restrictive programming practices created by Covid-19. This was the first year (post-Covid) that full, in-person programming returned. A few examples include a Black History Program, Science Fair, Skill Streaming Harvest Fest, assemblies with professional and local motivational speakers, and weekend incentivized activities for detained youth.

Detention Services continued to meet its staffing goals to ensure proper supervision of an increased youth population. The facility continued to incorporate PBIS standards and practices to incentivize youth for positive behaviors. In 2023 Detention Services earned a Silver level rating with the Schools of Excellence Program.



The five distinct populations and the numbers of youth served in 2023 include:  
Detention Services - those awaiting the legal process or transfer to approved placements. (1,012 youth in 2023)

The Juvenile Cognitive Alternative Rehabilitative Effort-Specialized Treatment Program (JCARE-STP) is designated for male sex offenders ages 14 to 18 of all felony levels. (6 served)

Juvenile Cognitive Alternative Rehabilitative Effort-Aggression Replacement Training (JCARE-ART) is a treatment program in the Ohio Youth

Assessment System for those identified as moderate- to high-risk male youth, ages 12 to 19; who would otherwise be committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services. (30 served)

The Corrections Program is an alternative for adjudicated youth who have demonstrated the need for an immediate short-term commitment, either for 5 or 10-days. The program is designated for youth between the ages of 10-17. (41 served)

The Detention Certified program is for youth under age 21, whose cases are transferred to adult court for prosecution, but who can be behaviorally maintained in a juvenile setting. (3 served)

# YOUTH SUCCEED WITH YEAR-ROUND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The Juvenile Court's Education Department is chartered by the Ohio Department of Education and offers comprehensive and individualized year-round programming for students placed in each of three facilities within the County: Nicholas Residential Treatment Center (NRTC), Center for Adolescent Services (CAS), and the Detention Center.

Some highlights from each facility include:

Detention Center standardized tests or STAR results showed average student growth in Reading to be 1.4 grade levels, and .7 grade level in Math during their stay.

More than 500 credits were awarded over the course of the year with an average of 70% of students making A or A-B honor roll.

Students also hosted a science fair with the prize-winning first place entry being a research project into supertasters.



NRTC students averaged almost a full grade level growth in Reading and 1.5 grade level growth in Math during 2023, with several gaining more than 2 grade levels, and one student advancing over 5 grade levels.

High school students at NRTC earned almost 300 credits during 2023.

During June and July summer programming, NRTC students partnered with Five Rivers Metro Parks to conduct a Forest Health Survey at Possum Creek Metropark.

CAS high school students earned 296.7 credits during 2023; five students also graduated while in placement. Forty students earned Honor Roll awards (several multiple times). Honor Roll is awarded at the end of each quarter and students' grades must be a B or higher in all classes.

CAS continues to partner with Faith Worship Center in New Lebanon to collect books for our student library. In addition, CAS has worked with Sinclair Community College to provide learning experiences for students in the areas of Small Business Management, Nursing (remote/online classes), and an on-site STEM program.

MCJC Schools resumed its partnership with Dayton Metro Library to provide books and related learning experiences for students across all three facilities.



## COURT VALUES VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

Volunteer Services welcomed 24 new volunteers to the team of approximately 100 total volunteers who are committed to serving as trained advocates for the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, or positive mentors for the Natural Helper Program.

More than 300 youth and their families were served by both the CASA and Natural Helpers programs.

Volunteers received training on crucial topics including abuse and trauma issues, mental health awareness, and homelessness.

The Natural Helpers Program received funding from the Montgomery County Human Services Levy. Other local donations came from community organizations, including Stitches of Love, Rylee Sellars Foundation, and American Legion Post 776.

The Juvenile Court Foundation also provided financial support for monthly activities such as bowling, painting class, corn maze, and meals for youth.

# PROBATION ADDS NEW EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE

The Probation Department added another Evidence Based Practice (EBP) to provide interventions to youth and families served with Roca Rewire. Roca Rewire Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) was systematically integrated into the training curriculum for probation officers and leadership, equipping them with a comprehensive framework focused on teaching youth seven essential social skills.

This program aims to enhance the skills of probation staff so they can navigate through potentially risky situations involving the youth, their peers, their family, and other factors that could pose challenges within their probationary responsibilities. By instilling these skills, Roca Rewire CBT empowers probation officers and leadership to proactively address and manage the complexities associated with their roles, fostering a more effective and informed approach to probation supervision. This EBP goes along with Transformational Probation by continuing our efforts to make long-lasting changes for youth.

Probation has worked to evaluate every service/program to better understand what is working and what may need to be adjusted.

2023 Data:

Total Youth Served: 910

Total New Youth Admitted: 560

Total Terminated: 517 (with 88% success rate)

Average Length of Stay: 8.3 months

Recidivism Rates Up to 1 Year Post Termination (national average for juvenile offenders is 55%).

- 2018: 14.9%
- 2019: 15.3%
- 2020: 13.8%
- 2021: 16.3%
- 2022: 21.3%



Juvenile Treatment Court and Wellness Court are two separate specialized dockets within the Court that assist in the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders who have been adversely affected by substance use issues and/or mental health concerns. Combined, both dockets provide intensive services to approximately 50 youth and their families at any time. These programs are individually paced and successful completion typically takes 15 months. Both of these dockets were granted renewal for their Ohio Specialized Docket Certifications in 2023.

The Montgomery Family Treatment Court (pictured above), another specialized docket that serves adults with substance use issues, will undergo re-certification in 2024.

# RESIDENTIAL SERVICES LEADERSHIP COMBINES

In an effort to streamline operations, leadership of both the Center for Adolescent Services (CAS) and the Nicholas Residential Treatment Center (NRTC) was combined under one director - William Shafer. Elizabeth Yingst (left) serves as deputy director at NRTC and Erin Griffith (right) serves as deputy director at CAS.

CAS is a Community Correctional Facility located in New Lebanon which provides evidence-based therapeutic and treatment services for felony adjudicated youth. In 2023, CAS admitted 62 residents into placement, and provided services to 92 residents.

The Center was awarded the Gold Award in the Schools of Excellence Prevention Program for continued services for residents and staff. CAS engages the residents in cognitive behavioral interventions with oversight and support provided by the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute. Additional services provided to residents are educational services, mental health and psychiatric services, occupational therapy, medical services,



pet therapy, and religious services. In 2023 the residents at the Center for Adolescent Services completed 2,286.5 hours of community service/restitution.

The Nicholas Residential Treatment Center (NRTC) is a 24-hour, non-secure residential facility that offers behavioral intervention, substance abuse, and mental health treatment for males and females, age 11-17, who reside in Montgomery County. NRTC accepts referrals from the Montgomery County Juvenile Court and Montgomery County Job and Family Services, Children Services Division, and has the capacity to serve 25 youth.

NRTC is licensed as a Qualified Residential

Treatment Program, as outlined by the Family First Prevention Services Act, by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

In 2023 NRTC served 52 youth, including 25 with a felony offense, 16 with a misdemeanor offense, and 11 with no offense.

# INTERVENTION CENTER CONNECTS FAMILIES TO RESOURCES

The Intervention Center (IC), located at the Juvenile Justice Center, is a 24-hour, 7-day a week single point of entry for court services for unruly and delinquent youth. With the onsite support of outside agencies, the IC can provide a triage for youth and their families when more in-depth intervention is needed. Youth are connected to resources such as individual counseling services, certified peer recovery services, and opportunities for restorative justice through community service activities.

In 2023, the Intervention Center conducted 1,766 administrative hearings, monitored 689 youth in the Electronic Home Monitoring program, and facilitated the placement of 110 youth into Emergency Foster Care.

Programming opportunities for diversion of low-risk youth included:

- Disproportionate Minority Contact Diversion Program (DMC/DP) - 231 referrals in 2023;
- 10 & Under Program - 120 referrals;
- Sexually Oriented Diversion Approach (SODA)- 14 accepted referrals in 2023;
- Screening Brief Intervention Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)-58 referrals;
- Tobacco Program -71 referrals;
- Traditional Diversion-156 referrals;
- Education Unit – 414 referrals.



# SEVERAL ADMINISTRATION CHANGES IN 2023

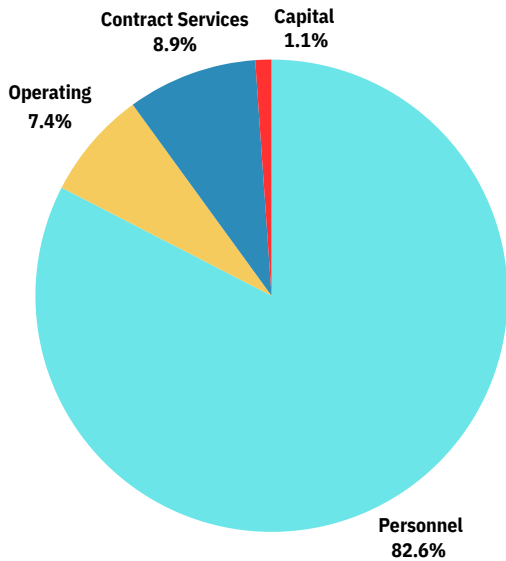
In 2023, Judge Helen Wallace took over as administrative judge and Judge Julie Bruns took her seat on the bench.

Long-time assistant administrator James Cole retired in April. Magistrate Gina Feller took on the role of chief magistrate.

Three new directors, Vanessa Bradfield in Court Services, Shawn Rock in Information Technology, and Brian Sanders in Finance, joined the Court under the direction of Administrator Eric Shafer.

The administrator supervises all operations of the Court, including approximately 450 full and part-time staff. The directors of the ten Court departments, as well as Volunteer Services, Psychological Services, Public Information, and the coordinators of Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative & Positive Behavior Intervention & Support report to the administrator.

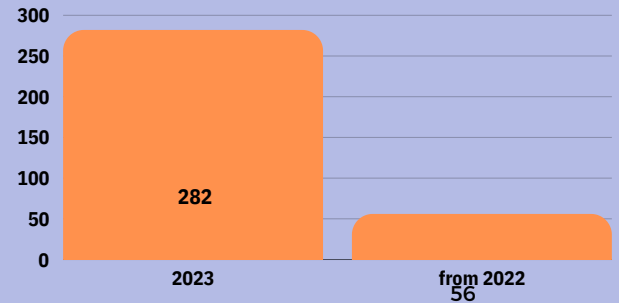
## COURT BUDGET: \$39,769,424



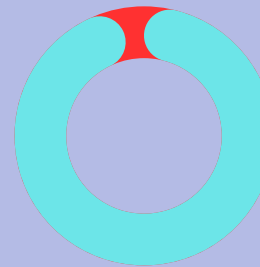
## 2023 TRUANCY DATA

414 Total Referrals in 2023

### 338 CASES HANDLED INFORMALLY



### 11 HABITUAL TRUANCY COMPLAINTS



1 case was filed on truancy only, and 10 truancy referrals were filed officially due to the youth receiving other delinquent charges

### PLACED IN ALTERNATIVES TO ADJUDICATION



This includes all referrals handled in 2023, which started out with alternative diversion attempts

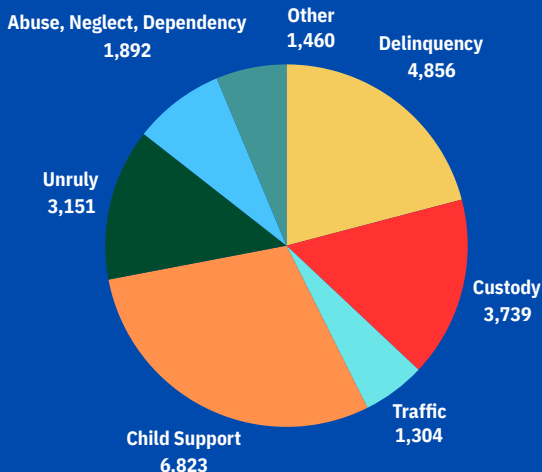
### SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED ALTERNATIVES TO ADJUDICATION

Neutral can be those who turned 18, or moved out of county or state.

The number of youth who failed to complete alternatives & were adjudicated unruly: 1



## 2023 CASE STATISTICS



## COURT SERVICES KEEPS COURT RUNNING

In 2023, the Clerk's Office processed 4,118 new cases, and 10,874 motions for a total of 14,992 filings. To assist clients with their Juvenile Court filings, the Citizens Services office added a paralegal position. The department also began the e-filing process in 2023, in conjunction with the Child Support Enforcement Agency and the Montgomery County Prosecutors office.