



Futures Now!

The Quarterly Newsletter of Montgomery County Juvenile Court *and* Reclaiming Futures

Summer 2009

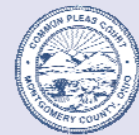
RECLAIMING FUTURES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

*Communities helping teens
overcome drugs, alcohol and crime.*

Nick Kuntz, Administrative Judge
Anthony Capizzi, Judge

Charlotte D. McGuire
Project Director
(937) 496-6737
mcguirec@mcoho.org

Ramona Wilson
Communications Chair



Montgomery County Juvenile Court
380 W. Second Street
Dayton, OH 45422
Phone: (937) 486-6884
<http://mcjc.mcoho.org/RF/>

The Reason Why...



Three and a half years ago is when the problems began with our daughter. Autumn was always a bubbly happy go lucky little girl all through elementary school. She had a group of girl friends she enjoyed spending time with. Things seemed to be going well. Then, like a light switch was turned off and for reasons we have yet to learn or understand, it all changed. She began to withdraw from life long friends and family. She wanted to change her appearance drastically like she was searching for her identity. She became lost in her search. Over the next few years she fell into a tailspin that we felt powerless to control. She found comfort with people who would lead her down a path of destructive behavior. She was looking for comfort and found it in drugs. Autumn eventually moved away for a while to live with her father in Indiana. She wanted a fresh start. We had high hopes for a change. Her drug use continued there and she found comfort with the same groups of kids that were pulling her down. This led to several stints of jail time and formal probation.

Autumn came back to live with us in June of 2008. She fell quickly into her old habits... sneaking out at night, drug usage, and general rebellious behavior. By October she was on probation in Montgomery County and was accepted into Judge Capizzi's Drug Court. This

is when her story began to change. We were able to find her a therapist that she liked talking to and she began to work through some of her problems. Judge Capizzi and his staff's support helped us through the bad times, coached us to be strong, and truly made us believe that eventually the tide would turn. By late winter 2008 the bubbly happy go lucky little girl we had lost three years ago was starting to emerge.

In early spring things were going great! Home life was different and she earned back privileges that she had not had in nearly three years. Our home was full of laughter instead of disagreements and gloom. In early spring we met Mrs. Smith at a hearing and learned of the Natural Helper Program. Autumn was very excited to be a part of the program and was eventually offered her first job. The two days a week that she has been working have taught her to take pride in both her work and herself. She's finally able to enjoy being a young girl again. She's drug free and looking forward to a bright future.

We would like to express to any parent going through a similar situation to never give up. Keep fighting until you have won and do not be afraid to ask for help. When you think all hope is lost, dig down deep inside and find the strength to press on. Display a united front. Stay strong for your kids and you will eventually win the battle.



Autumn and Bev Smith

I think every adult should volunteer to help the community in some way. As a retired high school teacher I thought that the Natural Helper Program would be a good match for my skills and interests. I enjoy being around teenagers and I have learned that most teens who get into trouble are just regular kids who need a little more guidance and time. Autumn was already on her way to recovery when we met. I can't claim credit for her success. I'm just one more person giving her positive messages, one more voice encouraging her to keep making good choices.

- Bev Smith, Natural Helper

When I first started working with Autumn and her family, I constantly received calls from her parents about her negative behavior. Since she has been linked with her Natural Helper I have seen a gradual but steady turnaround. She is working part-time and her parents have stated that they have gained a lot of trust in their relationship with their daughter.

- Alma Coleman, Drug Court Case Manager



"Creating positive futures with court-involved youth and families by building community solutions."

In This Issue

RF Spotlight	2
Viewpoint.....	2
14th Natural Helper class.....	3
RF Day	3
Special Feature.....	4

Reclaiming Futures is a new approach to help teenagers caught in the cycle of drugs, alcohol and crime.

Montgomery County, Ohio is one of only 23 communities to champion a national movement of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation along with Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention (OJJDP) and Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), Kate B. Reynolds Trust and the Montgomery County Human Services Levy.

RECLAIMING FUTURES SPOTLIGHT... GRANDMOTHER SALUTES GRANDSON'S SUCCESS



Above: Johnny Wynn celebrates his successful completion of Drug Court along with his grandmother/guardian, Barbara Robbins and his aunt, Carleen Wynn.

Johnny, age 16, was placed on probation on 10/11/2007 for a charge of Theft (M1). The youth withdrew money from his grandmother's bank account in order to purchase drugs. The youth was placed in Drug Court on 2/21/2008. When Johnny started Drug Court he was having ongoing problems in the areas of following curfew and home rules, he was performing poorly in school, he was associating with a negative peer group and he was using drugs. It appeared at first that Johnny did not want to make the necessary changes to be successful in Drug court. The youth started Drug Court testing positive for marijuana and continued to test positive for a few months. Johnny's grades and behavior were so bad that while at Wilbur Wright, he was assigned to the 9th grade at Belmont. Johnny continued to struggle with following his curfew and

following the rules at home, however, after spending time in detention on four separate occasions in early to mid 2008 he began to show improvement. Johnny began testing negative for all illicit substances as of June 2008. He then successfully completed CADAS and was working towards graduating from Drug Court in November of 2008. Unfortunately Johnny had a relapse and tested positive for morphine and opiates on the week of his scheduled graduation. As of February 2009, it has been reported that Johnny is doing very well at home, his grades have greatly improved (two A's, two B's and two C's) and the youth has been drug free since November of 2008. It must be noted that Johnny has not only quit using drugs to complete this program but has made significant improvements in other areas as well and should be commended for his efforts.

- Paul Gantner, Case Manager

VIEWPOINT... COURT AND TREATMENT STAFF "HONE" SKILLS

This past April, Montgomery County Probation Department hosted Trainer, Michael D. Clark, MSW, CSW from the Michigan Center for Strength-Based Strategies. Mike provided over 90 probation and partner agency staff booster (refresher) training in Strengths-Based Case Management and Motivational Interviewing. Now, Montgomery County Juvenile Court Probation Services Department is a national leader in using strength-based practices to help teens overcome alcohol, drugs and crime. This is did not happen

over night. Five years ago, Eric Shafer who had just became director of the department, spearheaded efforts to change the way juvenile justice professionals worked with young people on community-based probation. At the same time, Montgomery County was one of ten communities nationwide chosen to pilot the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation initiative Reclaiming Futures. One of the Reclaiming Futures benchmarks was to develop a strengths-based system of care. This became the

catalyst for Montgomery County Juvenile Court in collaboration with the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board, South Community Behavioral Health Center, Samaritan Health Inc., Crisis Care, and Reclaiming Futures Natural Helpers to train helping professionals and volunteers in Strengths-based Case Management and Motivation Interviewing. These approaches emphasize strengths and assets of youth rather than problems and mistakes. The identification of youth strengths set the stage

for youth and their families to participate in treatment, work with natural helpers and give back to the community.



Michael Clark, Strengths-Based Strategies Trainer

TEN MORE JOIN GROWING RANKS OF NATURAL HELPER VOLUNTEERS

In March/April 2009, Reclaiming Futures added 10 Natural Helpers to the growing ranks of Montgomery County volunteers. This brings the total of Natural Helpers trained to provide support and encouragement to court-involved youth and their families to 173.

Pastor David Hutman of Stillwater Seventh Day Adventist church hosted

and donated the use of his church for this training .

At the April 4, 2009 graduation celebration, speakers included New Natural Helpers LaTonya Simmons, Kim Simpkins and Chris Davidson, as well as Juvenile Court Judge Nick Kuntz; RF Project Director Charlotte McGuire and Natural Helper Coordinator Yvonne Sherrer. April's Natural Helper graduates

included a Pastor and Wife, a nurse, a school teacher and caring people that just wanted to give back by becoming a Natural Helper.

The next Natural Helper class is forming now. To learn more about Reclaiming Futures or to find out how you can become a Natural Helper, call Yvonne Sherrer at 496-6877 or visit online at:

www.mcjc.mcoho.org/departments/RF .

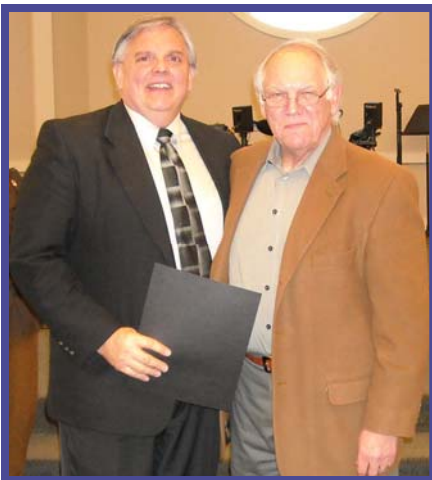


Photo on the Left: Judge Nick Kuntz with Pastor David Hutman of Stillwater Seventh Day Adventist Church



Photo on the Right: Shown at April's Natural Helper graduation are (front row) Catherine Clayburn, Don Miller, Chris Davidson (back row) Latonya Simmons, Mary Miller, Kim Simpkins, Nancy Hutman and Pastor David Hutman.

QUOTES FROM THE GRADUATING CLASS

"God has shown me that I need to do more for those around me and my community. The children are our future and it is my responsibility to help shape that future. If I can make a difference in one life while I am here, I will have made a positive impact far into the future."

- Don Miller

"I am a mother who watched one of her children choose to rebel and go against our family beliefs. I later saw her come back to God through other people who cared for and loved her. I want to reach out, love and help someone straighten their life out."

- Catherine Clayburn

"I have a college degree in Criminal Justice and I recently lost my job of 15 years. Although I am searching for a job I finally have time to give. I am ready to serve and be used of God."

- LaTonya Simmons

TROTWOOD FAITH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS RECLAIM FUTURES

"We need the help of good people and I believe good people can be found in somebody's church", said Judge Nick Kuntz in his opening remarks at Reclaiming Futures Day—Trotwood in June. Judge Kuntz along with Pastor Arthur McGuire, Faith-based Champion and, Eric Shafer, Probation Services Department Director for Montgomery County Juvenile Court made a "Call to

Action" appeal to over 30 Trotwood government and faith leaders to help teens from Trotwood who come to the attention of the Court. Vice Mayor, Joyce Cameron noted in her comments that over 700 Trotwood youths were referred to the Juvenile Court in 2007. She encouraged all Trotwood faith and civic leaders to endorse, support and recruit Natural Helpers for

Trotwood teens. Pastor Scott Matthews was the first to complete a response card and said, "Yes! We'll put our faith into action to save lives and reclaim futures". Reclaiming Futures Day is an outreach effort of the Juvenile Court to influence public attitudes about and recruit Natural Helpers for court-involved youth to help them overcome alcohol, drugs and crime.



Vice Mayor, Joyce Cameron encourage faith and civic leaders to support Reclaiming Futures

SPECIAL FEATURE... BROTHER RAYMOND FITZ AWARD WINNER

As a past Mentor of the Year honoree for Montgomery County, I was fortunate to be invited to attend the 9th Annual Brother Raymond Fitz Award Luncheon, February 20, 2009 at Sinclair Community College. This Montgomery County Family and Children First council event honors Brother Fitz, past president of the University of Dayton for his years of community leadership and service. The 2009 award went to Doris Edelman, a highly respected 20+ years employee with Montgomery County Job and Family Service. She was recognized for her grass roots leadership and efforts in nurturing and protecting children and families. As a former Probation

Officer, I had the privilege of coordinating treatment planning with Doris for Court youth. I can testify to her extraordinary caring and service to youth and their families.

A luncheon highlight was a truly moving experience when one of Doris' former clients stood up, to make a statement about her. The event concluded with acknowledgements of former award winners for the past 8 years and mentors of the year honorees including yours truly for 2008 and two other Natural helpers. If only there were more people like Doris!

- by John Allarding,
Natural Helper Advisory Board



*Doris Edelman, recipient
of the 2009 Brother
Raymond Fitz award*

QUICK FACTS

- Over 6,000 young people were referred to Montgomery County Juvenile Court for criminal and unruly acts in 2007.
- Of these more than half were in need of substance abuse and/or mental health treatment.
- Over 2,700 were girls.
- 27% were under age 15; 1.4% were age 10 and under.
- For the cost of incarcerating one person for one year, we can provide treatment for between 3 and 13 teens every year.
- Allowing one youth to leave high school for a life of crime and drug abuse costs society up to \$2.3 million.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, OHIO

Communities helping teens
overcome drugs, alcohol and crime.

Montgomery County Juvenile Court
380 West Second Street
Dayton, OH 45422

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DAYTON, OH 45401
PERMIT NO. 551