
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Well, it's the end of another busy week. I had the opportunity to visit our friends in Missouri once again, along with Chief Justice Catherine "Kitty" Kimball, Jody Montelaro, Policy Advisor to Governor Jindal, and a legislative delegation that included Senate President ProTempore Sharon Weston-Broome, Senator Lydia Jackson, Representative Rosalind Jones and Representative Walter Leger.

This trip, I was able to see some of Missouri's facilities in the St. Louis area for the first time. As was the case on my first visit, the youth in Missouri were a joy to interact with, and it's a pleasure to see that the staff are truly positive about the work they are doing there. I appreciate the fact that so many legislators are interested in learning more about the therapeutic model that we are now using in our secure facilities. Each time our legislators take time from their busy schedules to learn more about best practices in juvenile justice, we get positive support for the work you are doing every day. (Just as a note, we are moving toward implementation of the therapeutic model in the residential facilities operated by our private providers, as well.)

Thursday I spent most of the day with staff from Bridge City, Probation and Parole staff from the New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office and central office in a QA Review meeting, reviewing PbS reports and CQIS audits. Friday was Jetson's QA Review, that included facility staff, Baton Rouge Regional Office Probation and Parole staff and folks from central office. Jetson has recently re-entered the process and is doing very well, busily refining and working the La MOD process. At both meetings, we recognized a lot of improvements, and realized that the reviews are positive – it's a good thing for staff to interact with one another in a situation where they can trust and learn from each other.

Part of the La MOD process is positive peer interaction, and holding each other accountable. Staff and kids hold each other accountable with consistent messaging and actions. We, as staff, have to model the behavior before we can expect the same of the kids. I am seeing phenomenal changes in our staff. We can see that staff are exhibiting great accountability to each other. I am very proud of the progress that our secure facilities are making.

It is so gratifying to see that we all feel safe in these QA meetings, with staff from the facility, P & P staff from the regional offices, and central office, all there together, and everyone supporting one another. As an agency, we **are** all holding one another accountable – I can feel it in the QA meetings and I can feel it as I walk on our campuses.

I know we are all stretched and stressed out at times. Constant change, new initiatives, and just getting our work done every day means we are always busy. We all have different ways of handling stress. But I'm a little concerned about Deputy Assistant Secretary Carolyn Lewis.....I'm worried that she is going to find some melted ice cream or a nasty thawed-out frozen dinner wherever it is that she usually stores hardware. She tells us that she recently went to the freezer for something and discovered...an extension cord. I hope Carolyn gets some rest and has a quiet, relaxing weekend.

Wishing each of you a great weekend, with my thanks for all you do daily to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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