
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

Vol. 2, No. 43. June 18, 2010

Hello, Everyone:

It's been a great week with a lot of good news. We had a terrific training session presented by Dr. Ed Latessa of the University of Cincinnati, who discussed "What Works: Reducing Recidivism." We had approximately 200 attendees from all over the state, including providers and other stakeholders. As has been my experience, Dr. Latessa has an outstanding ability to talk about research of what works with delinquents in a way that we can embrace and clearly understand. We were able to capture his presentation on video and will soon produce DVDs so those who were not able to attend can watch Dr. Latessa's presentation at a later time. Knowledge is power – and responsibility. We are at the stage in our development as an agency where it is our responsibility to put these practices into place. We have developed a plan going forward that was presented by Chief of Operations Ellyn Peterson – OJJ and our partners have a lot of work to do but we are up to the task. As I stated at the presentation, there is no doubt in my mind, that as we are able to put these research-based practices into place with fidelity, our recidivism rate will be reduced and we will better meet our mission.

Bridge City hosted a tour this week for Judge Dawn Amacker of the 22nd JDC, St. Tammany Parish. She was able to spend time observing youth and staff interacting as well as some group processes. We are always happy to have partners in juvenile justice visit to see the good work that Director Linda London and the Bridge City staff are doing to meet the mission.

I'm sure you have heard by now that we regained custody of our two wayward BCCY youth, who made some bad choices. That's a major issue with our kids, and it's unfortunate that they made such a poor choice. Now they must learn that there are consequences for their actions. It goes to show that we still have work to do to help our youth learn to make better decisions. Thanks to all who worked to regain custody of these youth.

The legislature closes June 21 and we won't know the final outcome of our budget until the end. As promised, I will keep you posted soon as we know that the final figures are for the coming fiscal year.

I'm not much into pro basketball and I don't really watch much basketball on TV, but, congratulations to you Lakers fans out there. I guess the Lakers fans are happy, but I have one question. Is there one basketball player in the country who does not have ugly tats? And you can't even read what they say.

Yesterday Assistant Secretary Girard Melancon and I attended a nice gathering in New Orleans sponsored by Women in Fatherhood, Inc. that allowed us to network and celebrate fathers. The reception was held in Central City, an area where an effort is underway to support men and families in the community. We were happy to be invited and to participate in this event and celebrate the importance of fathers in our lives.

Father's Day is Sunday and I want to wish all the fathers and father figures in OJJ a wonderful day. My father was a strong influence on me and in my life – I am so fortunate to have George Livers as my Dad. He is a good man, a great leader and teacher. I am going to take the weekend to be with George and spend some quality time with him. I hope that every one of you who has a father or father figure in your life will be able to spend time with him this weekend. For those of you who have lost your dads, I hope you will be able to find a way to honor his memory.

I'll close now with a wish for a wonderful weekend for you all, with my thanks for all you do every day, everywhere, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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