
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

If everybody thinks change is hard, just try having a new cell phone. We went from AT&T blackberries to Verizon smart phones. Can you hear me now? The answer is “No, I cannot.” I do not know how to work this thing. Somebody’s got to teach this old dog new tricks. I know it’s gotta be me, because this phone is not ringing. At least I know we are all going through this together. So, Brian and Chris in IT, if you are reading this, I have been humbled once again, this time by a Verizon phone.

We had a CSoc kickoff meeting this week for regions interested in becoming the pilot sites for implementation. There was standing room only in the DHH conference room – all regions were represented and about 150 people were there. I was glad to see so many people interested in CSoc.

After that, I attended a meeting of the Children’s Cabinet. I appreciate the members of the Advisory Board for the work they do and for the huge role they played in juvenile justice reform. They continue to advocate for the best interests of the children in our state.

Onward to Jetson for a legislative tour. Thanks to Rep. Dalton Honore’ and April Hawthorne, legislative assistant to Sen. Sharon Weston Broome, for attending. It was a beautiful day, and it’s always good to visit and see our staff and youth doing so well.

Thursday, DAS Sean Hamilton and I, along with several members of the central office staff, met with OJJ staff from around the state to assess the current state of LaMOD, and discuss how to continue to improve our treatment model next year. Louis Moten, a consultant from MYSI, was also there, and he has been working closely with the Swanson staff this year. He had some good feedback for us, and encouraged us on our progress. We should all be reminded of how far we have come in a very short time, although we still have much to do. We should also remember that it took Missouri many years to get where they are today, so we should be proud of where we are.

So, here is something I want everybody to think about. I launched this idea at the LaMOD meeting, and I really want all of you to be thinking about it. We have really worked hard on the therapeutic program at the facilities, and we have worked hard on release planning. There is a new policy coming out soon, and the staff is already moving toward a new emphasis on release planning. Now it’s time to think about aftercare. Aftercare is the wraparound piece providing natural supports in the community over a one to three year period, to ensure the success of our youth. More to come on these thoughts. Treatment - release planning - aftercare. Please put your thinking caps on - we are all members of the treatment team.

Well, it’s been a busy week and next week will be busier. Things are looking up for the planned Acadiana Center for Youth – there are now several interested parties who have contacted us and are anxious to explore our options. I hope all of you enjoy a great weekend, and this fabulous weather – the sun is shining and the temperature is perfect. Let’s enjoy it while we can, before summer gets here. And, as ever, my thanks to every member of the OJJ team, in every OJJ location, for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

“Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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