
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

Well, folks, I guess if you haven't taken your summer vacation yet, you're out of luck. Summer is gone. The kids are back in school. Deer are already on the move in anticipation of hunting season. (Go, Bambi, go!) Football is here. And hopefully, hurricanes have also passed up the summer, too, so maybe they won't bother us this year. Labor Day has come and gone. I guess that means we are going to have to labor some more. And life goes on.

Well, this was a short week, and you all know how short weeks are – very intense. You try to get everything you need to do done in only four days with that kind of week.

Last week I failed to mention in WUD that Asst. Secretary Sean Hamilton and I had the opportunity to address the supervisors' group in the Northern region, at the supervisors training session. We got there toward the end, but everybody seemed to have had a good day. We didn't see any heads on the desks. Good job, Staff Development Director Fran Martin, Family Liaison Donna Bowie, DAS Beth Touchet-Morgan and RD Carolyn Lewis for making this great training happen. I had the chance to do some Q&A and give an update on what's going on in the agency. We also had the opportunity to do the same thing this week for the Central/Southwestern region, held here at central office. Thursday, the Southeastern region conducted their supervisor training but I didn't have the chance to go. Sean Hamilton was able to go and present the agency updates. Again, thanks to Fran Martin, Donna Bowie, Beth Touchet-Morgan and RD Johnny Qualls and RD Susan Miller for conducting excellent sessions. I am very happy that we are able to conduct this series of supervisors' training events. Training is an investment in our people and is extremely important to our continued development and professionalism. So, thanks to all the supervisors who took part. I am sure that we welcome any ideas and suggestions you may have for future training topics.

I am very pleased to announce that two of our regional offices have new leaders. Our two new Acting Regional Managers are swapping places, as Clay Dupuy of the Alexandria office moves to the Natchitoches office, where RM Randy Hill recently retired, and Simon Sarpy of Natchitoches steps into the Alexandria regional manager spot. Congratulations to both Simon and Clay – I am confident that both of them will do a great job in leading their respective P&P offices. Watch for a news bulletin with more information about our two new regional managers.

We had a judges' meeting today and I got a chance to hear your praises consistently throughout our discussion. Most of the judges were very complimentary of the work going on in their areas. That's not to say that we don't have issues to address, and we talked about ideas for improvement. But I'm pleased to say that OJJ enjoys a very positive and collaborative relationship with our juvenile judges.

DAS Beth Touchet-Morgan brought another great commemoration to my attention – *Worldwide Just Because Day*. This was created by someone, at some time, to give us a chance to do something without rhyme or reason, not because we have to, or it's expected of us. None of those reasons apply on that day, which was Aug 27. Or maybe it was in May. Or we can just designate a date. But I think it's a good idea to take a day to do something that we would really like to do, but there isn't a reason or any logic for doing it. A day to go out and do something "just because" - an uncommon, or unexpected activity. You can go with the first thing that comes to your mind, "just because." I think most of us will get the hang of this special day and have a lot of fun with it. Just don't do anything immoral, illegal, unethical - or stupid. Yes, you can still have fun.

I hope that each of you in every OJJ office and facility will have the chance to do something "just because" this weekend – with my sincere thanks for all the work you do, every day and everywhere, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary

Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov