
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

This week's message will be a little different, because I've been out of the office all week, not attending meetings, not pushing paper, not being the decision-maker. I've been taking care of important business, though, the personal kind that just needs attention, things you have to do that can't be done when you are working a 40+ hour week at the office. So, as the biggest proponent of life balance – and I'm always supportive of staff who need time away to maintain that balance – I am more than proud to say that I was able to take time to do what needed to be done, thanks to every member of the OJJ team in every office and facility throughout our system. (Although I do regret that I missed Swanson's graduation today, but I heard it was a wonderful celebration.)

Let me explain. If things were chaotic and unsettled, it would be a poor decision to be away for personal reasons. But things are quiet, our work is going well, kids are receiving quality services and our secure facilities are running smoothly. In our business there are always issues that arise, but we have well-qualified, experienced people in place who can routinely handle whatever happens. (Of course, all members of the leadership team are always just a call or email away at all times in a pinch.) So, when the opportunity arose, I felt comfortable in exercising that balance I always talk about for myself.

Thanks to the great work that our Probation and Parole Officers (as well as their supervisors and regional managers) are doing, more and more of our youth are receiving services and being treated in their communities. Were it not for our PPOs, we would be seeing more youth in secure care. Their work with the SAVRY, through Service Coordination, and with CSoc (as challenging as it is sometimes) means that we can more often work within the community to provide needed services to our youth.

Our secure care staff are doing an outstanding job working with our incarcerated youth, helping to turn these young people's lives around and showing them how to become law-abiding, productive citizens. I'm happy to say that our frontline staff are fully engaged in providing therapeutic services to our youth and we are seeing the benefit.

And of course, thanks to my executive team, who ensured that everything has been going smoothly this week. They managed everything that came up this week in a very professional way, and they have my total confidence.

Our staff – PPOs and JJSs – are the backbone of the agency and you are making a noticeable difference.

So, I'll close for now with my hope that you will all enjoy a wonderful weekend, with my heartfelt thanks to every member of the OJJ family – every Probation and Parole Officer, supervisor, manager, every Juvenile Justice Specialist, supervisor, director, food service worker, administrative support staff, maintenance worker, central office staff (if I've missed anyone, you get the idea), for being dedicated, for putting in 110 percent every day, to meet the mission. Your dedication and professionalism means that I can take a few days off without constant worry. That says it all.

OJJ, YOU ROCK!

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