

# what's up doc?

by Dr. Mary Livers, PH.D, MSW, Deputy Secretary

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Hello, Everyone:

This week visitors from MYSI and the Casey Foundation toured Bridge City and had the opportunity to meet with staff and youth, who did a great job of showing our guests the progress we have made with the therapeutic model. They had a great afternoon, and toured the education department and several dorms, where they observed groups and check-ins. They also had the chance to visit casually with a dorm. My compliments to the staff and youth at Bridge City—you all are doing a great job.

The Institute for Public Health and Justice (IPHJ) is holding a series of regional consensus meetings around the state, and members of our staff were able to attend this week in Lafayette, Baton Rouge and New Orleans. A meeting is scheduled Ruston in the next couple of weeks. A wide range of stakeholders attend these meetings, including district attorneys, judges, law enforcement and others with an interest in juvenile justice. The main discussion topic is an overview of the consensus findings of the 2012 meetings, with an objective look at the potential for reform in the areas of front end diversion, community intervention, placement and policy and procedure.

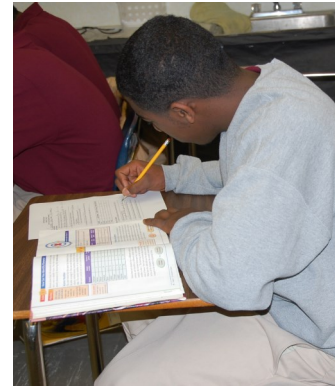
I had an update meeting on contract monitoring with Chief of Operations Ellyn Toney and Program Specialists Lane Plauche, Patty Thomas, Program Manager Melba Oubre and Undersecretary Connie Percell. As you may be aware, we have had several audit findings from the Legislative Auditor on contract monitoring issues and the way contracts have been handled over the last several years. The update showed phenomenal improvement to the system, including automated data collection, policies revised to meet the requirements and a lot of give-and-take and coordination between program specialists. I saw outstanding work by our folks and I want to compliment them for that. We will soon be presenting this information to the executive team and rolling it out to the regions shortly. It is amazing how talented our staff is, and it's great to see that when we all work together, we get quality outcomes.

How about that Superbowl? Most of you know what happened with just 42 seconds left on the clock. The decision to throw the ball that close to the goal line in the last few seconds of the game gave the appearance that it could have been made around egos, but not in the best interest of the team. If that was the deciding factor, it would appear that the Seahawks coach wanted to give the victory touchdown to their quarterback and somehow one-up Patriots QB Tom Brady's record and rub victory in their quarterback's nose. Some people suspect that might have been the motivation for such a risky play. There is a really good lesson learned when a decision is made that is not in the best interest of the team. When the decision becomes about a person, or the decision is not about the mission (winning the game), you take those great chances. If that was the motivation, and you lose the game, you have taken your eye off what's best for the team and you jeopardize the mission. Leaders lead best when they are focused on the mission and what's best for the team, not any one individual on the team. So, Team OJJ, let's stay focused on the team and meeting our mission. We cannot go wrong if we keep this as our motivation.

So, on that note, I'll close with my wish for you all to have a great weekend, with my thanks to every member of the OJJ family in every office and facility, for keeping your eye on the ball and working as a team to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

“Doc”  
*Dr. Mary Livers*



**Comments?**  
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