

Unified Family Courts of North Carolina

Family Court Counties

<i>Anson</i>	<i>Buncombe</i>
<i>Burke</i>	<i>Caldwell</i>
<i>Catawba</i>	<i>Cumberland</i>
<i>Durham</i>	<i>Greene</i>
<i>Halifax</i>	<i>Lenoir</i>
<i>Mecklenburg</i>	<i>New Hanover</i>
<i>Pender</i>	<i>Richmond</i>
<i>Stanly</i>	<i>Union</i>
<i>Wake</i>	<i>Wayne</i>

OUR MISSION

To help resolve cases involving children and families through combined efforts of the family, the Court, and community services.

To approach each case in a way that is not overly adversarial or intrusive but always in a just, timely, and efficient manner.

To be courteous, safe, and accessible and to provide quality service to those in need.

DISTRICT 20A FAMILY COURT ANSON, RICHMOND, & STANLY COUNTIES

Civic Video—Our district applied for a North Carolina Education Consortium Grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and on January 8, 2007 we were awarded funds to produce a video for elementary and middle school aged students. The video was filmed in Courtroom 2 of the Anson County Courthouse on March 2nd. Local court personnel from Anson, Richmond, and Stanly Counties and students from Peachland/Polkton Elementary and Richmond Senior High School participated in mock courtroom proceedings to illustrate concepts such as the right to counsel, due process of law, and prohibitions against ex post facto laws and cruel and unusual punishment. All of the filming and editing was performed by the Richmond Senior High School radio/television class.

This video will serve as a supplemental teaching tool in the civic education curriculum of elementary and middle school students in North Carolina, enhancing their knowledge of the North Carolina judicial system and its groundings in the United States Constitution.

A written test was developed and given to the third graders to determine the video's effectiveness in conveying information to students in the target audience. They took a pre and post test with the test score improving 64%.

Truancy Court—The seventh year of truancy court began on January 25th. The spring semester truancy court was held at Richmond Primary School with eight students along with their parents and siblings. The court was held from 7:30am-8:20am every Thursday morning for seven weeks. The participants received a book each week with a character trait. The books were on: Cooperation, Honesty, Tolerance, Consideration, Responsibility, and Self-Discipline. We fin-

ished off with a celebration at Pizza Inn in Rockingham on March 16th.

The parents of the children participating in this program were asked to fill out a 'Parent Satisfaction Survey' and they were ALL returned with favorable remarks to Truancy Court. One parent stated Truancy Court is a great program because "It let me see how my child was doing in his class-work and in class. And how my child was wanting to do more."

Access and Visitation—On April 11-13 the Access and Visitation (A&V) Coordinators attended "Minority Male Mentoring: Men Are Nurturers, Too! Statewide Collaboration Conference" in Durham. On April 12th, Jimmy Lewis, Jr. (of Durham County), Levernard Speight (of Halifax County), Carolyn Green (of Anson, Richmond, Stanly, and Union Counties), Kimberly Granelle (of Buncombe County), and Brian Bell (of Cumberland County) were presenters of a session entitled "Processes of Access and Visitation for Non-Custodial Parents." The session highlighted access and visitation service components that are unique to each North Carolina Family Court District. The session featured services such as supervised visitation, clinics/legal issues, parent education, and the need for support groups. Jimmy gave the brief history of the A&V program and spoke about Mediation along with the File it Yourself Clinic in Durham. Levernard talked about Halifax's Legal Clinic. Carolyn discussed the need and importance of support groups. Kimberly gave a presentation about Parent Education. Brian informed the participants about Cumberland's Supervised Visitation and Exchanges Center. Over 700 people attended the conference. Special thanks to Sharon Johnson with Child Support Enforcement and DeShield Smith with the Administrative Office of the Courts for their support.

FAMILY COURT NEWS FLASHES

Halifax County—Family Court and Chief District Court Judge Paul McCoy and Family Court Administrator Susan Horrell were recently interviewed by Ellen Ozier-Hayes of the Jordan School of Social Work at UNC - Chapel Hill. She is currently working on an issue of *Practice Notes*, an academic newsletter created in partnership with the NC Division of Social Services and the Family and Children's Resource Program at the UNC School of Social Work. The upcoming issue focuses on rural child welfare practices and will feature an article on Family Court and how it improves outcomes for families and children. Ms. Ozier-Hayes was impressed by the innovative practices and successful outcomes Halifax County Family Court has had in resolving juvenile and family issues in a rural setting. The completed article will be published in the May issue of *Practice Notes*. Susan.W.Horrell@nccourts.org

Buncombe County—Ellen Rose began as the new Family Court Administrator (FCA) on February 26th. She moved here from South Florida where she practiced law and family mediation for over twenty years. Ellen.G.Rose@nccourts.org

Wake County—Wake Family Court sponsored two training sessions for Juvenile Abuse/Neglect/Dependency stakeholders on March 16, 2007. In the morning, thirty-one parent attorneys learned about: the nuts and bolts for each type of court hearing, the American Bar Association's National Standards of Practice, practice management tips, trial counsel's responsibility in an appeal, how to preserve the record for appeal, and highlights from the local forms and rules. In the afternoon, fifty-six social workers, Guardian ad Litem volunteers, and parent attorneys attended *MISSING OUT: Incarcerated Parents & Special Parent Visitation Issues*. A stakeholder panel shared advice on working with parents who are incarcerated. A video on parent-child bonding and attachment versus reasonable efforts was shown and followed by an active group discussion.

Greene, Lenoir and Wayne Counties—District 8, working together with DJJDP, applied for and received a Governor's Crime Commission grant for a Gang Prevention and Intervention program in all three counties. Mona.N.Williams@nccourts.org

Union County—With the addition of a fourth judge, Tripp Helms, Union County Family Court has added domestic court time to help bring all domestic cases within the Family Court time standards of disposition within one year of filing. Family Drug Treatment Court is now underway with treatment services, an advisory committee, incentives, sanctions and strong community support. "Lunch & Learn" continues with a session on May 8th titled "Potential Pitfalls, Avoidable Appeals, Timely Trends/Roles and Responsibilities of Parties in the Juvenile Court" featuring Professor Janet Mason of the School of Government and a panel of professionals. Martha.S.Hall@nccourts.org

New Hanover/Pender County—(5th Judicial District) Family Court had a "Lunch and Learn" CLE in January entitled "Professionalism and Cultural Competency" for which the attendees earned 2.0 hours of ethics towards their CLE. The guest speaker was Dr. Dudley Flood, who most recently was the Executive Director of the NC Association of School Administrators, and who was awarded the "Order of the Longleaf Pine" by two different Governors of our State. Suann.N.Bechtel@nccourts.org

Cumberland County—The Cumberland County Bar Members and Courts participated in this year's Law Day on May 3rd. Attorneys, judges and court personnel volunteered their time teaching students about the law at area public schools and by doing repairs on two buildings—one of which was Safe Havens Visitation Center. Approximately 15 people volunteered by cleaning, painting, and repairing the front and back porches. Senator Tony Rand and House Representative Margret Dickson have both proposed legislation that would include permanent funding for Safe Havens and provide funds for new centers around the state. Lisa.M.Stolarski@nccourts.org

<p>Percent of Pending Domestic Cases More Than 1 yr. Old July 2006-March 2007: Family Court Districts: 26.1% Non-Family Court Districts: 46.6%</p>
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