



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Putnam Juvenile Drug Court to open** **For immediate release Monday, February 14, 2011**

WINFIELD, W.Va. – A ceremony celebrating the opening of the Putnam County Juvenile Drug Court will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 17, in Circuit Judge Phillip M. Stowers' courtroom on the third floor of the Putnam County Judicial Annex in Winfield.

Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury, Director of Probation Services Mike Lacy and a representative of the Division of Juvenile Services are scheduled to speak.

Xerxes Rahmati, the Putnam County Juvenile Drug Court Probation Officer, will coordinate the program under the supervision of Judge Stowers. It will be the tenth juvenile drug court in West Virginia.

As of January 1, 45 youths had graduated from the four programs that were in operation before July 1, 2010. The Cabell County program and Wayne County programs were established under Supreme Court supervision in 2007 and the Logan County and Mercer County programs in 2009. Other programs have opened since July 1 in Brooke/Hancock, Lincoln/Boone, Monongalia, Randolph, and Wood Counties.

Juvenile drug courts are cooperative efforts of the juvenile justice, social service, law enforcement and education systems in West Virginia. They divert non-violent youths ages 10 to 17 who abuse alcohol or drugs from the juvenile court system into an intensive, individualized treatment process which includes parental involvement and cooperation. Juvenile drug court programs include intensive out-patient drug and alcohol treatment, intensive probation case management and compliance monitoring.

Each juvenile drug court has four phases. The time a participant spends in the program varies according to that person's needs, but is at least six months. Six months of aftercare also is offered to each participant.

Juvenile drug courts are paid for with legislative funds, grant funds and other funds made to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals Administrative Office. Each county selected for a juvenile drug court has the support of county officials, including a circuit judge, a sufficient juvenile case load and substance abuse indicator data to support the program.

The goal of juvenile drug courts is to prevent participants from having any further contact with the juvenile justice system by helping each youth learn to deal with challenges as they arise and increasing family self-sufficiency.

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