

JuST Conference Outline  
HOPE Court – Washington DC  
Megan Aniton and Rashida Prioleau

- I. Introduction
  - a) OAG's Role
  - b) Our individual positions: Neglect and PINS/DEL cases
- II. History – How did we get here
  - a) Presiding Judge of Family Court created CSEC Committee to focus efforts of court involved agencies and providers regarding CSEC cases.
  - b) Attended meetings quarterly or every other month
  - c) PINS Cases
    - i) Can be charged with truancy or runaway – considered status offense in DC
    - ii) Saw a lot of youth with PINS-Runaway cases with red flags/warning signs for human trafficking
    - iii) Started to refer those youth, when appropriate to JBDP to get a more specialized court plan.
    - iv) Showed the need to for a treatment court. New chief judge came in that was very supportive.
- III. Multi-Disciplinary Team
  - a) Case Study – Washington Post Article with A.C.
  - b) Who is involved
    - i) OAG-PSD, OAG-CPS, CFSA, MPD, DYRS, CNMC, DBH, CSS, CGC, DYRS, Safe Shores CAC
      - (1) These organizations are listed in our statute
  - c) Met once a month until HOPE Court started – then started meeting twice a month.
  - d) MOU – follow the sex abuse case review MOU
- IV. HOPE Court
  - a) PINS/Delinquency Side
  - b) Neglect Side
  - c) Stakeholders

- i) OAG, CSS, Child Guidance Clinic, Defense Bar, DBH, Direct Service Providers, CLC, CFSA, Safe Shores, Rights 4 Girls (helped develop)
- d) How we created it
  - i) Visited other jurisdictions
    - (1) GRACE Court (met at JuST)
    - (2) WRAP Court
    - (3) Conversations with DREAM and STAR Court in LA
    - (4) Santa Fe Girls Court
  - ii) Monthly to weekly meetings

V. How it differs from other court rooms

- a) Staffing/hearing
- b) Specially trained team
  - i) POs specific to HOPE Court
  - ii) Case Study: T.D.
- c) Relationships between stakeholders
  - i) Case Study G.V.D.
- d) Judge sits in the well of the court room addresses the youth first, then other parties speak.
- e) Whole team is invited to participate in hearing
- f) Youth led – GOAL worksheet
- g) Neglect cases that are in HOPE Court have a complete shift from a traditional neglect calendar.

VI. Referral Process

- a) STAR
  - i) Explain STAR
- b) Mod High to High are automatic referrals
- c) Other CSEC factors or red flags can elicit a referral
- d) Anyone can refer a youth: probation officer, defense attorney, prosecutor, GAL, social worker, judge, etc.
- e) Discuss some of the challenges with neglect cases that were certified judge to judge and did not go through the complete referral process.
  - i) Case Study: A.B.M./D.B.

- f) Explain the CFSA internal process to identify high risk youth and discuss HOPE Court eligibility.

## VII. Once Eligibility is Determined

- a) Cases can come (PINS/DEL):
  - i) Pre-plea
  - ii) Post-plea
  - iii) Condition of probation
- b) Notify AAG assigned to the case and they discuss with defense counsel
- c) Cases can come (NEG):
  - i) Post neglect adjudication
  - ii) Case remain in HOPE Court until permanency achieved or child ages out of the child welfare system.
  - iii) The entire neglect case for that youth transfers to HOPE Court, thus all matters, including adoption, TPR, TaL would be heard by the HOPE Court Judge.

## VIII. Life of a Case/Hearings

- a) Status Hearings every 2-6 weeks
- b) Family Group Conference
- c) Ongoing Case Management
- d) Discussion of dual jacket case teaming
  - i) Case study: A.B./G.V.D.

## IX. Graduations

- a) How do we measure success NEG vs. DEL/PINS?
  - i) Case Study: G.S.
- b) Celebration

## X. Challenges Within HOPE Court

- a) No placement options
- b) No specialized defense panel in PINS/DEL cases
- c) Creating a process to service youth in the child welfare system that are victims of familial trafficking

XI. Challenges While Creating HOPE Court

- a) Individual committees became one small committee
- b) Monthly updates to the court
- c) Court took a back seat