

Reaching for the STARS

STAR Court

Fall 2005



Marion County STAR Court News

Times are Changing (a little)

Beginning in October, STAR Court changed a few structural components, including revising the participant handbook and changing the way that participants interface with the court.

With the implementation of the Wellness Program, STAR Court youth now attend court less frequently. But, they still come to the Juvenile Department Campus to participate in STAR Court activities.

Schedules are now arranged based on the week of the month, and activities are determined by level in the program. For example, every first Wednesday, participants on Level One, Two, and Four must attend court, while participants on Level Three attend the Wellness Program. Parents are always encouraged to attend the Parent Support Program, which runs concurrently with court and Wellness activities, but only when their kids attend Wellness are parents expected to attend the Support Program.

"They like to change the rules," one youth was heard saying. But program coordinator Mike Maryanov explained that the new schedule makes it easier for everyone to know where to go on any given Wednesday. The STAR Court team reserved fifth Wednesdays for special activities, graduations, and field trips.

With the changes in schedule, the Participant Manual was also revised. The current version is sleeker, down to 12 pages from 30, and it includes language drafted by the participants in the section called The Rules and Benefits of Them.

Have Fun!? Are We There Yet?

Star Court's editorial staff recently came across a fine online resource - an email newsletter called Tips and Topics from David Mee-Lee, MD. Dr Mee-Lee provides a wealth of information, including this little gem, in which he quotes Judge Carmen Dolny from the Pima County, AZ Mental Health Court. Judge Dolny suggests, when working with mandated clients, to **HAVE FUN** with them.

H - Help by providing Hope and Healing

A - Appreciate successes, even small ones; appreciate everyone: probation officers, treatment counselors, teachers, case managers

V - Validate each person and Value them as people too, not just as offenders

E - Encourage and Empower clients and team members in what they do

F - Facilitate change through collaborative treatment and communication

U - Understand the hardships that many clients have based on past history and current obstacles

N - Non-judgemental and non-adversarial collaboration will enhance success, not confrontation.

That sounds downright **STRENGTH-BASED** to the STAR Court News, and thus, we applaud! Have Fun.

For more information, check out <http://www.dmlmd.com>



Better Luck Next Time

Star Court and Juvenile Department staff learned recently that two federal grant applications submitted in the Spring of 2005 were not awarded. The STAR court team, while understandably disappointed, will continue moving forward, including applying for federal grants in the 2006 funding cycle.

This year's grant process was extremely competitive, with only a handful of awards going to drug courts nationally.

Looking to the Future

For the first time, STAR Court, along with the other drug court programs across the state, will have the opportunity to seek state funding support to expand treatment and program capacity. In 2006, the state will provide grants to drug court programs, using a competitive application process managed by the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). STAR Court staff is very excited by the support from the Oregon Legislature and hopes to use state funding to double program capacity.

In the meantime, STAR Court Coordinator Mike Maryanov, who was appointed to the Oregon Chief Justice's Treatment Court Advisory Committee in 2004, joined the Performance Measure Subcommittee. This group is working with CJC and Oregon Judicial Department staff to devise appropriate drug court performance measures that will be used to determine program effectiveness and ongoing funding support. Primary measures will include improved drug test results over time and reduction in recidivism. Details are still in the works, but the granting process is expected to begin in early 2006, with funds to be released by summer.

New Database Means New Data!

Thanks to the Oregon Judicial Department's Court Programs and Services Division, STAR court now uses the new and improved Oregon Treatment Court Management



System, or OTCMS. The OTCMS was developed in 2005, using an older version of the state drug court database, ODCMS, as a foundation. The older version was created for a handful of Oregon Adult Drug Courts that were required to submit specific information for federal grants that they received in 2000/01. The original database was not Juvenile-friendly, and thus limited the scope of data that STAR Court could capture.

The new version works better for Juvenile programs like STAR Court. Now, with the OTCMS, STAR Court, and other Juvenile, Family-Dependency, and even Mental Health courts across Oregon can collect and manage important data. The OTCMS can be customized to account for differences or specifications among programs, such as STAR Court tracking participation in the Wellness and Parent Support programs.

STAR Court captures a wide variety of information, including education, employment, family environments, criminal background, court appearances, drug test results, attendance for required activities, and goals and outcomes. This data will be used for program evaluation, interagency reviews, and grant applications.

Guild by Association?

Did you know that there is an Oregon Association of Drug Court Professionals? The OADCP is a forum for drug court team members from around the state to gather and share information, and also to help guide the directions that drug courts take in their own development efforts. OADCP members include judges, community corrections, defense attorneys, district attorneys, treatment professionals, and more. STAR Court Coordinator Mike Maryanov was just nominated to serve his third term on the OADCP Executive Committee, as the Drug Court Coordinator's Representative to the Committee. The OADCP convenes quarterly. The next meeting is December 9, 2005, and will include the announcement of the Drug Court Professional of the Year.



Voices from the Community

We at Reaching for the STARS hope to include regular pieces from STAR Court participants. Here is our first, an article published in *Alternatives Magazine*, (www.alternativemagazine.com) and reprinted, with minor edits, with permission. Our thanks for the use!

Death of a Victim By Asia Kindred Moore

It would be nice to say that I started to rebel against the system when I was 13, that I took on the authority and gained the maturity of someone who's lived it out... But that would all be a lie. It was the lie I kept telling myself and everybody else for about a thousand days.

Underneath, I was busy being a victim. When anything bad happened to me, and it did all the time, I could just say, "g^#@*^% pigs", or "stupid parents", or "a\$\$*&# teachers", or "f&^#\$*up world." It was never really my fault, it was always theirs.

And there was a lot of fault to go around. I have been in my fair share of trouble over the past few years. I knew that I had committed the crimes, but there was no way in hell that you could get me to take responsibility for it. I blamed my cutting and my drug and alcohol use on my depression, I blamed my depression on my thoughts and feelings, and I blamed my thoughts and feelings on events happening outside of my control. In the end, it was one huge spiral of lies, a web that I continued to spin long after I realized that I was doing it.

When I got into my worst trouble and was sent to the Marion County Juvenile Detention Hall, I sat in my cell and had an epiphany. Why was I subjecting myself to being the victim when the entire time I wanted to be the victor?! How was I going to regain my freedom from the system when everything I did helped the system to take my freedom away?! It was schizophrenic, but not the clinical diagnosis kind. This was schizophrenia by choice, without the bad brain chemistry. I realized that I had been reinforcing the power that they had over me by taking this pathetic role and using it as my accomplice. From the beginning of my teenage years I had based my actions on the very something that I was trying to avoid. And that was me giving away my personal power. They weren't doing it to me, I was doing it to myself.

Why do people choose this victim role? I think I know. After all, who wants to take responsibility for a lie they



told, a person they hurt, or a mistake they made? Especially when they are terrified of the consequences. That kind of victim just doesn't want to take responsibility for their actions. Somehow it seems easier to act like it's no big deal, or lie about it and hope you don't get caught. When you do get caught, blame them. I've been there.

But there's another, more complicated kind of victim, and I've been that too. It's something that is cultural, something that is learned. An example is, look at the relationship between man and woman over the centuries. The average wife was oppressed or treated as a prize. Women had little say in what they wanted and their primary role was to please the husband, or raise the children. Is this not a tradition passed down from mother to daughter, like a dark inheritance from countless generations back? This is learned victimization. It has to stop with me. I will never teach my own daughters to play the victim to any man or boss or organization. More important, I won't teach my daughters to play the victim to their own spiral of lies.

There are real victims, i.e. the innocent person hurt by something out of their own control. Which is to say there are real injustices out there. Victimization is common and I think it should be a central issue for those of us who care about freedom. It's a dangerous world and you have to look out.

What we must realize is that we can help counter victimization by doing simple conscious acts. How often do we see and hear people being discriminated against, but do nothing about it? Most people don't want to get involved in other peoples' business, but by tolerating the intolerable we ourselves turn into the victim—or the victimizer.

Since my realization, I have been trying to counter the victim inside me by saying what I think, feel, and know. Of course I'm only human, as human as it gets, and I slip up every once in awhile, maybe everyday. People make mistakes, I make mistakes, its impossible to be perfect. But when I say, "I won't be a victim," it means that I put conscious effort into it. It'll take time for me to be that aware all the time, because years of being a victim is something that you just can't change at the drop of a hat.



Graduation Time Again!

STAR Court was again pleased to celebrate a graduation ceremony. Most recently, on October 5, one participant moved on out of the program, after 15 months of hard work and determination. This young woman overcame her biggest obstacle, herself, to achieve success, including completing drug and alcohol treatment, finding employment, maintaining full-time school attendance, AND even finding time for a couple college courses at Chemeketa. She also managed to publish an article, all the while, keeping her sense of humor, creativity, and philosophical world view intact.

To say that STAR Court was thrilled to work with someone who has a clearly defined world view is an understatement. STAR Court staff enjoyed playing mental chess with this young woman!

Three Cheers to her for reemerging into the community with so much to offer!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in Intellect:

God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please,--you can never have both. Between these, as a pendulum, man (or Woman) oscillates.

She in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy, the first political party she meets,--most likely her father's. She gets rest, commodity, and reputation; but she shuts the door of truth.

She in whom the love of truth predominates will keep herself aloof from all moorings, and afloat.

She will abstain from dogmatism, and recognize all the opposite negations between which, as walls, her being is swung.

She submits to the inconvenience of suspense and imperfect opinion, but She is a candidate for truth, as the other is not, and respects the highest law of her being.

A CANDIDATE FOR TRUTH!

The Door is Ajar

On October 27, the Marion County Juvenile Department, Juvenile Court, and Board of Commissioners celebrated the opening of the long-awaited new court room and detention facility. The building is spectacular! STAR Court is excited for the transition and the team cannot wait to begin processing cases in the new and most excellent court room, which the judges of Marion County Circuit Court dedicated to Chief Justice Wallace P. Carson for his work statewide to promote and elevate the work of juvenile courts.

The People's Champ

In light of the recent ribbon-cutting for the new Court and Detention Complex, STAR Court is pleased also to acknowledge Oregon Chief Justice Wallace P. Carson, Jr. Chief Justice Carson has long been a friend of STAR Court, including speaking at the first and a number of subsequent graduations, offering insight and hearty cheers to participants, and helping the court system maintain a mindfulness necessary to work with young people. But more than just a supporter of juvenile and other drug courts, Chief Justice Carson is an ardent supporter of young people. Period. His leadership on children's issues, his compassion and energy make him a role model's role model. STAR Court is strong today because of his support.

Thanks Chief Justice Carson!



STAR Court - Supervised Treatment and Recovery - is Marion County's Juvenile Drug Court. Since May 2001, STAR Court has been serving adolescents who are on probation and who have significant drug and alcohol problems. STAR Court works with young people between the ages of 13 and 18, and their families.

STAR Court stresses accountability and goal attainment, using a strength-based format to motivate participants towards a new way of living, towards committing to a recovery life-style by embracing sobriety and replacing unhealthy activities with healthy ones.



Drug treatment is mandatory. Also, participants meet with their probation officer weekly and must participate in court or other STAR Court activities. STAR Court works with participants to engage in community support activities, stay in school, and find jobs.

The program takes approximately 12 months to complete. When a youth graduates, he or she receives the benefit of having their juvenile record dismissed by the court. They are off probation with the opportunity to reengage in the community with a clean slate.

We're on the web at:
<http://www.ojd.state.or.us/mar/drugcourt/juvenile.htm>

STAR Court
Marion County Juvenile Department
3030 Center Street
Salem, OR 97301
(503)584-4831
mmaryanov@co.marion.or.us

...If you treat an individual as she is, she will stay as she is.

BUT,

*if you treat her as if she were what she ought to be and could be,
she will become what she ought to be and could be.*

~ Goethe

