

# SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA

Pima County Juvenile Court  
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TUCSON, ARIZONA 85713-6295



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An Organization committed to:  
\*Community Protection  
\*Restoring Victims  
\*Successful Youth and Families

## Domestic Violence Program

Juvenile Court was awarded a Community-based Problem-solving Criminal Justice Initiative grant from the Bureau Of Justice Administration in September of 2005. After a lengthy recruitment process for the Domestic Violence Program Coordinator position, S. Michelle Rios was selected and she began her duties in April 2006. Stakeholders from the community participated in several work groups to develop new or alternative strategies for working with domestic violence cases in Pima County. One of the work groups, attended by members from Probation, Law Enforcement, the County Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office, established a general consensus among the local law enforcement agencies on which specific domestic violence offenses police officers could divert away from secure care. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been drafted and identifies specific domestic violence offenses that may be diverted to the alternative center and a list of offenses that can not be transported to the alternative center. The MOA also specifies criteria (i.e. age, level of cooperation, warrant status, etc.) to assist police officers in identifying youth appropriate for the alternative center. Local mental health Networks (Pantano, Providence and La Frontera), as members of a work group which also includes the local Regional Behavioral Health Authority (CPSA) and CPS, have discussed their roles in responding to field calls from families, law enforcement and Probation. The three Networks have procedures in place to respond to crisis calls. Details on the handling of domestic violence related calls, including responding to the scene of the domestic violence incident, to the alternative center or Intake at Juvenile Court, will be addressed as the program continues to develop.

Through the Administrative Offices of the Court, Probation has contracted with a community provider, Open Inn, and has secured a site where the Domestic Violence Alternative Center will be located. Orientation to the Domestic Violence Program has been completed with the six participating police departments. We have identified, trained and assigned probation staff to be co-located at the Alternative Center. Implementation of the program and the collection of data for program participants in the Domestic Violence Program will begin August 1, 2007.

The initial service goals of the Domestic Violence Alternative Center include providing immediate assessment and stabilization services to domestic violence offenders and their families along with assisting the Court and community in providing viable alternatives to the Detention Center. Additional goals include assisting the families in resolving conflicts and initiating referrals to community resources i.e.; Pima County Teen Court, Pre-Adolescent Diversion Workshops, Accountability Conferencing, and domestic violence education, prevention and intervention programs to address the long term needs of the families. Victim restitution and community restoration will be included in Probation's response to the domestic violence referrals. Domestic violence cases referred to the alternative center will be jointly screened by alternative center staff and an on-site Probation Officer to ensure the appropriateness of the referral. The youth will receive services including, but not limited to, assessment, crisis intervention, resource information and referrals to appropriate community services. Temporary out-of-home placement, as coordinated by alternative center staff and Probation, could include respite, crisis shelter, relative placement or other options coordinated with mental health and CPS.

The Probation Division is implementing changes within the probation teams as a means to facilitate more effective case processing of domestic violence cases. Probation teams will dedicate an Evaluation worker to be the point person for domestic violence referrals on their teams. This practice will help the probation officers gain a greater familiarity with family violence issues, will be more conducive to assisting officers with training issues and ultimately helping them to become more familiar with the functions of the Alternative Center and other domestic violence related services, providers and resources. As a means to create consistency among our probation officers when responding to domestic violence cases, separate contracts, specific to domestic violence offenses, were created at the Evaluation and Diversion levels of supervision.

Domestic violence cases can be complex, very challenging and often require a multi-agency response to address the dysfunctional relationships in the home. Pima County's Domestic Violence Program is implementing a multi-disciplinary approach to improve the outcomes for youth referred for domestic violence offenses. Implementing the collaborative efforts of law enforcement, mental health, community providers, Probation and the state's first Domestic Violence Alternative Center is going to increase the likelihood of successful interventions benefiting our youth, families and the community.

MR / 7-07

**Ending the Cycle**