



DHS News Flash

Dispositional Planning Process Begins in D Court

Each year, thousands of children walk through the doors of Family Court at 1801 Vine Street.

with a multitude of comprehensive, multidisciplinary information from the youth and family as well as ancillary sources, including DHS history, Community Behavioral Health (CBH) history and Juvenile Probation history.

With all of the facts presented in a consistent manner for every case, identifying youth in need of more specialized and intensive mental health evaluations such as further psychological or psychiatric evaluations or drug and alcohol assessments, will be more efficient and straightforward.

ing the appropriateness of a child to be assessed by the Children & Youth Division (CYD), the Division of Community Based Prevention Services or the Juvenile Justice System.

CANS will rate the child's needs and strengths on a variety of levels including: criminal and delinquent behavior, substance abuse complications, other risk behaviors, mental health needs, child safety, and family/caregiver needs and strengths.

Any child who is found guilty of a delinquent act and who has not been placed simply on probation, will immediately be eligible to receive the CANS, and will be referred to one of the two CANS assessors now located in Family Court directly after their hearing.

If the child is being detained by the delinquency system, the turn around time for this information will be 48 hours; therefore, social work staff will be contacted via telephone for a brief interview and record review.

As we move forward, the dispositional planning process will assist in providing the court with dependent history and prevent duplication of services, interruption of services, and inappropriate referrals.

Please contact Jascinth Scott-Findley at 3-6066 for additional information.



These children come from all walks of life and from all parts of the city. The stories that bring these children here are varied, but the city's responsibility to them is steadfast.

As Mayor Street has proclaimed, "Philadelphia cannot be a first class city, if we treat our children like second-class citizens." To that end, and in city government's synergistic spirit, the Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS), along with Family Court and Elwyn Incorporated have created an extended evaluation unit to conduct dispositional planning for delinquent youth in an effort to produce better outcomes for our children.

Launched as a pilot program on January 6, 2004 in Judge Kevin Dougherty's D Court, the dispositional planning process will ensure that all parties in the delinquency proceeding have the necessary information to make appropriate referrals to the various system streams.

Through consistent and intensive evaluations, the Judge will be able to make rulings about a child's future

By utilizing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength Assessment (CANS) – Philadelphia Juvenile Justice Version, the need for a full battery of tests and evaluations, formerly known as a BHE is eliminated, as the information needed to make appropriate referrals to mental health professionals is now readily available.

Providing a means for quick and consistent recommendations about a youth's intensity of care needs, including the level of supervision, the CANS tool also assists in document-

A Look At the Process

