

Lake County Juvenile Court

Judge Karen Lawson

Achievement Program

The Achievement program serves youth between the ages of 12 and 18 years who are adjudicated delinquent and diagnosed with substance abuse or dependency and a serious emotional disorder. They generally have a history of failed attempts to comply with treatment, failed ability to sustain substance free and criminal free living after residential treatment, repeated criminal offenses and/or probation violations, and family disorganization. Although the majority of these youth are at risk for out-of-home placement, they have a designated caregiver who agrees to participate with the youth in an intensive, home-based intervention.

The Achievement program has four phases, each with its own goals and activities that encourage the juvenile's sobriety, mood regulation and improved functioning. The activities utilized include frequent urine screens, court hearings, 12-step mentoring, experiential group sessions, co-occurring in home treatment, and case management services extended to include the entire family. Coordination with school, jobs, and community activities is essential. The program length is minimally ten to twelve months, however successful completion is based on individual performance, compliance with program rules, and achievement of case plan goals and objectives. Judge Lawson and the Achievement Program place a strong emphasis on family involvement, honesty, integrity, and accountability. In addition to the juvenile's commitment to participate, parent(s) or guardian(s) are required to invest in their child's long-term behavioral and emotional health by participating in the Program's parental component and encouraging their son or daughter to achieve his or her goals. The activities and requirements of the program are dependent upon each participant's identified risk and needs.