

Lake County Juvenile Court

Judge Karen Lawson

Substance Abuse Program

The Substance Abuse Program is a program funded through a grant from the Ohio Department of Youth Services. During a period of time, the program has undergone various changes and refinements, but its original goals remain. Briefly, they are to: 1) Educate our clients about the effects and consequences of chemical use and abuse; 2) Identify and refer to appropriate community professionals those clients whose use of chemicals is causing them significant problems in adjusting to responsible adolescent living; and, 3) Provide support, guidance and direction to those youngsters and families for whom chemical dependency is a primary problem.

The Substance Abuse Program, first presented in March of 1979, continues to address the need to educate youths about the physical, emotional and psychological effects of using chemicals and challenges them to examine their personal relationship with the use of drugs and alcohol.

Drug and alcohol use assessments continue to be performed by trained Court personnel. During this process, parents, youngsters and the Court take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the impact that drug abuse has on the lives of family members. When necessary, clients are referred to appropriate resources for outpatient or inpatient evaluation. The court continues to work hand in hand with other community resources in seeing that families receive the help required.

The Substance Abuse Program continues its commitment to providing quality service to the families involved with the Lake County Juvenile Court. To that end, the program's staff is regularly offered the opportunity to attend various advanced training workshops in order to maintain a current knowledge of the field and to enhance their personal skills. In addition, every Court employee who has direct contact with clients is afforded the opportunity to be trained in the basics of identifying and dealing with the adolescent drug abuser. In this way, it is possible for the Juvenile Court to make a united effort in the struggle to address the problem of alcohol and drug abuse among our clients.