

Youngstown Vindicator

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YOUNGSTOWN — Juvenile crime is declining locally because of the successful collaboration among agencies that serve children and teenagers, the county juvenile court judge said.

The benefits of this collaboration will be a major theme of the first juvenile-crime summit in Mahoning County beginning at 8 a.m. Tuesday at the Mahoning County High School, which is in the former Sheridan School building at 3321 Hudson Ave.

“You do not have departments, agencies and courts working in a vacuum. You have them now working together,” said Judge Theresa Dellick of Mahoning County Juvenile Court. “By working together, it’s a better use of resources, and everyone knows what’s happening,” she added.

“Juvenile court is addressing the community needs of all the juveniles that appear before the court,” said Judge Dellick. “We do so in a way that’s smart. We’re not soft on crime. We’re smart on crime. That’s how you get better results,” she added.

Speakers at the summit will include Judge Dellick; U.S. Reps. Charlie Wilson and Tim Ryan; Tom J. Stickrath, director of the Ohio Department of Youth Services; U. S. Attorney Duane Deskins; Dr. Wendy Webb, city schools superintendent; and Denise Stewart, director of the county Children Services Board.

“We’ve had excellent collaboration and good programs and good outcomes for kids,” said Stewart, whose agency serves neglected and abused children. “As family problems become more complex, all the systems have to work together because divided systems are less effective,” she added.

Among the topics of the summit will be juvenile delinquency, probation, day reporting, sports programs, counseling and parental responsibility.

“I think it will be very informative for the public just to see all the programs that are available and how the systems work together,” Stewart said. Sometimes CSB is confused with the child-support enforcement system, she noted. “It’ll just provide some clarification and some information,” she said of the event.

Representatives of agencies that serve children and teenagers will be present to consult with attendees concerning their specific questions and needs.

The Mahoning County High School, where the seminar will take place, is a school that allows students suspended or expelled from their home schools to continue their educations.

“They’re not wandering the streets or sitting at home. They’re in school receiving credits,” the judge said.

The county high school, developed in consultation with CSB, is a collaborative effort of the juvenile court and the Mahoning County Educational Service Center, formerly known as the county board of education.