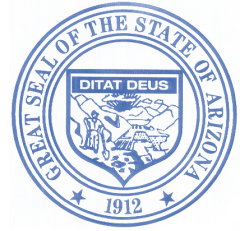




Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County Community Advisory Board



Connecting with the Community

In March 1994, the Honorable Stanley Feldman, Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court, notified the juvenile courts in each county that they should establish committees to review the administration of juvenile justice on a local level. In response to this order, the Community Advisory Board (CAB) to the Maricopa County Juvenile Court was established in January 1995.

The Community Advisory Board advises the Juvenile Court on ways to continuously improve its services to the residents of Maricopa County by:

- ◆ Identifying what the community wants from the Juvenile Court.
- ◆ Evaluating the services provided by the Court to the community.
- ◆ Making recommendations on the types and quality of service the community should receive from the Court.
- ◆ Acting as a sounding board for new ideas.

This diverse group of community volunteers has enhanced the value of Juvenile Courts within our community. CAB members have been instrumental in increasing public awareness, developing more programs to meet family needs, ensuring equitable treatment for minority youth, and welcoming new ideas from ordinary citizens within our county.

“Prior to the establishment of Community Advisory Boards, there was little connection between the community and the Courts. Our Community Advisory Board is helping the Juvenile Court Center move in new directions on behalf of the community. Together we make a difference in the lives of children and families in Maricopa County. The Court needs citizen input to keep steering an appropriate course.”

—Maricopa County Judge Maurice Portley



Serving the Needs of Arizona's Children

CAB members are dedicated to ensuring that children become productive and responsible members of the community. Chairpersons from the eight counties in Arizona with active CABs have united to form a statewide CAB. Quarterly meetings provide the time to network and gain understanding of the issues facing children and families around the state. Focusing on prevention strategies and public awareness, representatives from diverse backgrounds and perspectives have learned to come together in order to benefit Arizona's children.

CAB Involvement with Maricopa County Juvenile Courts

Juvenile Court Programs

One of the highlights of CAB membership is having the opportunity to share in the Court's success stories. In recognition of the hard work and commitment to overcoming drug addiction, members of the CAB honored recent graduates of the Juvenile Court Drug Court Program. The CAB presented graduates with framed certificates and offered words of encouragement towards their continued success. For the graduates and their families, the show of community support and acceptance through the CAB was a welcoming sign of things to come. For the CAB members, the smiles on the graduates' faces served as the inspiration to continually improve services to children and families. ***"It has been rewarding for me to work with kids in the Juvenile Court," said CAB member and retired teacher Joan Ponseigo. "I have learned so much that my eyes have been opened to the issues that kids and families are facing today."***



Community Outreach

To gain a better understanding of the needs of youth, families, and the community, the CAB actively pursues opportunities to attend trainings and present information on Court activities. CAB members participate in the Annual Victims' Rights Rally at the state capitol to learn more about how they might engage victims of juvenile crime into sharing their perspectives of Court services. They distribute membership brochures to recruit potential new members and promote the CAB's commitment to improving services to dependent children in our state. ***"The CAB shares a common goal with the Judiciary," said CAB Chairperson Donna McBride. "We are concerned about the welfare of***

children and desire to make our community a better place. As a CAB member, I have the opportunity to work with people who really care about kids and help promote one of the most effective court systems in our country."

Accountability & Prevention

Many CAB members agree that the primary interest in volunteering with the Juvenile Court was in order to make a positive difference in the lives of children. The CAB strives to promote programs that will not only hold youths accountable but also prevent them from making poor choices in the future.

◆ Some CAB members have gained first hand experience in dealing with children who have broken the law through participation on Community Justice Committees (CJC). First or second non-felony offenders meet with a panel of neighborhood volunteers to discuss their offense and receive an appropriate consequence.

◆ The CAB has also initiated a literacy program within the Maricopa County Juvenile Detention Facilities. Targeting the younger detainee, the CAB is recruiting help from the Literacy Volunteers of America to increase detainees' reading skills and prevent a future return to detention.

◆ In cooperation with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and grant money from the Administrative Office of the Court, the CAB awarded three high schools \$250 for their Safe and Sober Prom and Graduation Activity Events.

"As a CAB member, I feel so much better about our Juvenile Court System and what we, as a community, can do to help hold kids accountable," said CAB member and neighborhood action lobbyist Bob Sayers. "I am particularly pleased in the direction the Court is taking in practicing Balanced and Restorative Justice. I encourage others to get involved because I have seen the changes being made and that things are indeed getting better for kids today."

