

COURT SELECTED FOR RESEARCH STUDY

Judge Van Blanchard II is pleased to report that Coshocton County Juvenile Court was recently selected as one of 13 Ohio courts to participate in state's second Quality Hearing Research Study in conjunction with the Supreme Court of Ohio. The initial study was conducted in 2018 and involved 12 courts working closely with Alecia Summers, PhD and her research team to provide learning opportunities for local courts to improve the quality of abuse, neglect and dependency court hearings. A follow-up was completed with each site 2 years later to identify how the sites had changed since the original study.

As a participant in the 2022 study, Dr. Summers and her research team will assess hearing quality by reviewing various child welfare hearings conducted by Coshocton Juvenile Court in 2021. Upon review, they will be coded for best practices in hearings, such as those found in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judge's (2016) *Enhanced Resources Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*. Based on the results of the study, the Court will also work with Dr. Summers to create an action plan to improve practice related to current research. Information contained in the report is aggregate data only, and confidentiality agreements are in place to protect all case specific protected information. The final report will provide training recommendations to help Ohio further strengthen practices, with a goal of improving outcomes for children and families.

Dr. Summers is the Director of Data Savvy Consulting, a company that focuses on research and evaluation primarily with child welfare and court systems. She currently serves as the Director of Research for the Capacity Building Center for Courts and works directly with Court Improvement Programs on evaluation efforts. In addition to applied research, Dr. Summers serves as Associate Faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno in the Interdisciplinary Social Psychology Program.

Submitted 4-25-2022 by Doug Schonauer, Court Administrator