

Need help with an unruly child? Coshocton Resource Center offers those services



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Coshocton Tribune

- The Coshocton Family Resource Center recently opened at 1523 Walnut St. on the lower level. It has been offering services since April through the Coshocton County Juvenile Court.
- It's being funded by a \$125,000 state grant over the next two years with local support from other agencies for salaries, office equipment, computers and IT infrastructure.
- The center offers assistance to families with children who may be experiencing a variety of issues prior to entering the court system for delinquent behaviors, abuse or neglect.
- The top three issues the center has seen so far from families needing help is with vaping, sexting and running away from home.

COSHOCTON – Offering proactive assistance to families with issues in Coshocton County before they enter the court system is the goal of a new family resource center being offered by the Coshocton County Juvenile Court.

Services have been offered since April, but they've recently moved into a permanent home on the lower level of 1523 Walnut St. It features a reception area, two offices, a conference room and a youth room.

Staff members include Leondra Davis, Garrison Bryant and Heather Newell. Davis, center director, said they're actively engaged with about 10 families, but more than 360 youth have been identified in the community that could use resource center assistance via families calling in, local school districts and the Coshocton County Sheriff's Office.



Participation is voluntary. The center provides case management support and referrals for community-based resources and services to at-risk youth and their families. It's for youth exhibiting pre-delinquent behavior that puts them at risk of new or increased involvement in the juvenile justice arena. The center is working with other agencies in the community.

The center is being funded through a \$125,000 two-year Ohio Department of Youth Services State Fiscal Year subsidy grant that will assist with salaries, office equipment and establishing IT infrastructure, said court administrator Doug Schonauer. They've also received additional support from the Mental Health and Recovery Services board, Coshocton Regional Medical Center and others.

"Community providers were thrilled we had an opportunity to apply for something like this, because everybody is kind of struggling with some of the same things," Schonauer said. "It's really meant to be separate from the court and not seen as court intervention or court involvement."



Coshocton County Juvenile and Probate Court Judge Jason Given said the resource center is not just about keeping children out of his courtroom, but for families to avoid children services involvement for abuse, neglect and other factors.

"This is trying to prevent all that. Maybe they're not in the system, so they don't know about all the services. This is a way to operate outside of the system to get them to the services they need," Given said.

Davis said the phrase they see most often on forms is "unruly," but that can take many manifestations. She said the top two issues they've been asked to assist with has been sexting and vaping.

Next is running away, which isn't what most think it is. Davis said it's youth not coming home when they're supposed to or maybe hanging out at a friend's house because they don't want to go home.



Davis said the resource center is all about empowering parents to make effective changes in their homes and a way for children to express the needs they have, which might be coming out in certain language and behaviors. She stressed it's not about getting anybody in trouble. Involvement is also short term with 30, 60 and 90 day plans created. Of course, they can be involved longer if needed at the family's request. People can come back in the future for other needs as well.

"We're asking families first, what is it that you need? What is it that you want from us to help you with? We're not giving (clients) directives, (they are) giving us our directives," Davis said.

The Coshocton County Juvenile Court Family Resource Center can be reached at 740-295-7315 or emailed at crc@coshoctoncounty.net.

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