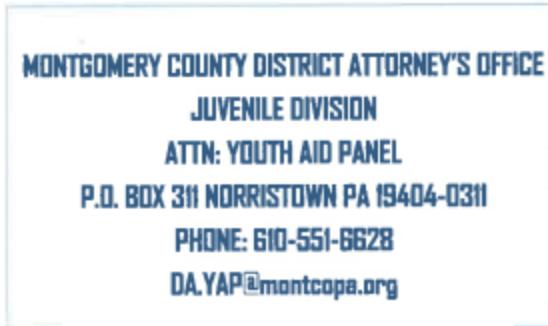


Contact Us

The Montgomery County Task Force is supported by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Upper Merion Township Police Department, and the District Attorney's Office. For more details, please contact us.



For more information visit our website at:

www.montcopa.org



Source: <http://www.clark.wa.gov/iuvenile/balanced.html>

This brochure was produced by the Racial Justice Improvement Project of the American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section and the Pennsylvania Racial Justice Task Force through funding provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance



Montgomery County Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Pilot Juvenile Diversion Program



Risa Vetri Ferman
Montgomery County District Attorney



**A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE APPROACH TO THE
JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

How Does it Work?

The Montgomery County RJIP Task Force is pleased to announce the implementation of the Montgomery County DMC Pilot Juvenile Diversion Program utilizing the Montgomery County District Attorney's Youth Aid Panel (YAP) program in cooperation with the Upper Merion Township, Norristown, East & West Norriton, and Limerick Police Departments as well as the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). This pilot diversion program will offer minority juveniles charged with an eligible summary or misdemeanor offense an opportunity to avoid arrest or initiation of court processes by completing YAP program requirements as an alternative adjudication.

This diversion program acts as an alternative to Juvenile Court or District Court and provides juveniles a chance to take accountability for their actions to the victim and the community with the intention of preventing future offenses. Juveniles and their families meet with trained community volunteer panelists who decide an appropriate resolution for the juvenile. Resolutions are tailored specifically to each case. The focus of these resolutions is to facilitate accountability and is designed to address the crime as well as the needs and talents of the juvenile. Case management will be offered to participating juveniles as support in completing program requirements. Juveniles will be contacted by Family Services and assisted throughout the YAP restorative process.

Example resolutions include:

- **Perform community service**
- **Complete educational programs**
- **Apology letter**
- **Meeting with victim in the Victim Offender Conferencing program (VDC)**
- **Restitution**

Benefits of the Program:

- **Juveniles who successfully complete the program avoid having a criminal record and learn responsibility**
- **Links the juvenile to the community through a constructive resolution**
- **Gives the victim a voice in the process and provides an avenue for restitution**
- **Increases awareness of community resources and available services**
- **Encourages competency and accountability development**

This **YAP Pilot Program** is accessible to the Upper Merion, Norristown, East & West Norriton, and Limerick Police Departments who will refer all eligible juveniles residing in the 19401 zip code. There are approximately 600 participating juveniles annually in the original program. Since the inception of the general program in 2000, 95-98% of juveniles have successfully completed the program and only 3.6% of juveniles have recidivated.

How Do I Participate?

Eligibility

The diversion program is open to juveniles who admit their involvement in an eligible summary or misdemeanor offense, pass a screening process, and receive approval from the Police Department. In addition, the following criteria must be met:

- The juvenile's age was 10-17 years old at the time of the alleged incident
- There is no pending delinquency petition
- The juvenile is not currently on probation
- The juvenile lives in zip code 19401 and the alleged offense occurred in Montgomery County
- A juvenile may be referred to the panel for a summary offense, despite a prior adjudication of delinquency on a misdemeanor offense
- A juvenile may be referred to the panel despite up to two prior summary offenses/citations (discretionary with the referring officer)
- Re-entry: Past participants who were unable to complete YAP diversion may be deemed eligible with permission of the DA's Office and YAP director

Requirements

The juvenile and his/her parents or guardians meet with the Panel, and sign a contract that includes the specific terms decided upon by the Panel. Conditions will include what actions must be taken by the juvenile during the duration of the program. Panelist members are specially trained and work directly with the juveniles and their families. Each local YAP panel links juvenile offenders with law enforcement agencies, public resources and trained volunteer community panelists to effectively deter future criminal behavior. Ultimately, panel members monitor all aspects of offender compliance, and determine whether the program has been successfully completed, allowing the juvenile to avoid a criminal record. If the juvenile successfully completes the program, then no "arrest" will occur or initiation of court process. The Public Defender's Office will assist the juvenile in expunging any pre-arrest records retained by the participating police departments

