



**League of Woman Voters Santa Clara County
Hosts Juvenile Justice Public Forum
October 28, 2015
Mountain View City Hall Council Chambers**

Santa Clara County's Juvenile Justice System is viewed at being successful at meeting the needs and challenges of the youth and families within its system and for youth in the county. Headed by the Honorable Patrick Tondreau, the speakers discussed the collaborative, cooperative steps to meet the challenges of our youth including youth trafficking, particularly at large public events. This forum's topic is very timely as our county welcomes Super Bowl 50 to be played February 7th, 2016 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara.

Keynote Speaker

The Honorable Patrick Tondreau, Supervising Judge, Juvenile Division, Santa Clara County Superior Court

Participating Speakers

Chris Arriola, Supervising Deputy District Attorney, Santa Clara County

Elisa Carias, Supervising Probation Officer Juvenile Division, Santa Clara County

Moderator: Gloria Chun Hoo, President of the League of Women Voter Santa Clara County Council

Organized by the LWV Santa Clara Council Juvenile Justice Committee, most notably Crownie Billick and Barbara Emerich, who are part of the Los Altos Mountain View League

Recording available from KMTV at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOoVMmmyGpl>

Summary

Over the last decade, Santa Clara County has instituted cross-system collaboration between its Juvenile Justice, Probation and child welfare systems. The agencies serving at-risk youth follow evidence based practices toward the goal of creating a safer community with increased support for at-risk youth. Santa Clara County is one of only a dozen California counties that can boast this level of cross-system coordination. This has led to a large reduction in juvenile arrests: the [Juvenile Felony Arrest Rate](#) in 1998 was 21 arrests per 1000 youth, while by 2014 it was down to 7 arrests per 1000 youth – at one-third the 1998 level.

Over the last several years further collaborative efforts have reduced the number of youth processed by the Juvenile Justice System. Whereas in 2009 there were 13,000 arrests and 3000 petitions filed.

2015 to date has had 5000 arrests and 1500 petitions. Over the last 5-6 years, average daily attendance at Juvenile Hall has decreased from 305 to 106 youth today at the Hall. These declines are results of the cross department collaboration and training put in place during the past several years.

Highlights of the Juvenile Justice Forum

The Honorable Patrick Tondreau is the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court and supervisor on the Juvenile Justice. The Legislature created these oversight roles to ensure that someone is looking at the entire system, and can trouble shoot and intervene when needed.

Judge Tondreau addressed three areas of collaboration across departments which have helped drive the positive results of the Juvenile Justice system, reducing number of arrests and recidivism:

- 1) Cross over youth – Collaboration between the Juvenile Justice and Dependency system ensures that when a youth is released from the Juvenile Justice system, he/she will be placed in a home with appropriate services.
- 2) The Juvenile Justice System's use of evidence-based practices to implement risk assessment instruments that help with determine if the youth should go to Juvenile Hall, and the range of services most likely to benefit the youth.
- 3) Collaboration between Juvenile Justice and Probation Office to more quickly process incoming youth and better identify services that would address the youth's issues in a trauma-informed and holistic way.

Reduction in the over representation of boys of color in the Juvenile Justice System. Nationally, there has been a decrease in Juvenile crime particularly among boys of color, typically overrepresented for the local population. In Santa Clara County, about 70-80% of the kids in the system are Hispanic boys. For the overall population of Santa Clara County, 36% of our population's youth are Hispanic. Santa Clara County has achieved a great decline of 50-60% for these populations-- due to the collaborative nature of our county. The result is a safer community and protection to the rights of victims.

Prevention Programs – collaboration with the police department: The police department has implemented multiple prevention programs, such as the truancy abatement program. Police pick up truant kids and return them to the school campus to deal with their issues on the school campus, rather than refer them to the Court. The County has established a "no arrest" policy, contributing to reduction in kids in Juvenile Hall and a commensurate drop in crime.

Victims of abuse can become offenders or users themselves. Through the City of San Jose Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force, social workers go to Valley Medical Center when a youth has been brought in for a gun shot or stabbing wound. The social worker offers services to the victim while they are in the hospital. Traditionally, about 60% of victims are likely to be offenders in the future. This more immediate intervention not only helps reduce arrest and incarceration rates, it can help reduce the number of violent crimes.

Initiatives to reduce human trafficking - Commercially and Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)

As Supervisor for the County's Probation Department, Elisa Carias has been very concerned over issues of human and sex trafficking. She helped found the Commercially and Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) workgroup. The CSEC workgroup developed a law enforcement protocol to deal with the girls in these situations. It is trauma informed and victim centered. They developed a coordinated response and are able to identify a youth as CSEC and then appropriate services more quickly. They use

evidence-based practices for training the staff that includes motivational interviews, stages of change, cognitive behavioral, harm reduction models, trauma informed care are key to get our kids to engage.

The state gave Santa Clara County a \$1 million grant for a cross agency pilot program to develop **protocol for identifying CSEC youth**. The county enforcement agency created a Human Trafficking taskforce with the District Attorney, Sheriff and police and other county agencies. Over an 18 month period starting March 2013, they identified 60 youth CSEC or high risk for CSEC. They recognize these girls as victims and survivors not as criminals. The Probation Department needs a better Data Retrieval system in the probation department. They would like to expand our CAFA (Court Appointed Friend and Advocate) program. They would like to build more teams of social workers and probation officers to work with the youth and their families.

While they do not expect a large increase in trafficking during the Super Bowl, our agencies work to reduce trafficking on an ongoing basis. Their focus is to catch the Johns, and send them to diversion programs. The **South Bay Human Trafficking Commission** is the driving force against human trafficking in the Bay area. It has organized a [“No Traffic Ahead”](#) campaign. The Polaris project has set up a **national hotline (1-888-373-7888)** to provide tips for victims and community members on human trafficking.

The San Jose Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force, an interagency collaborative, has helped reduce gang related issues and crime. Of the 100 kids in Juvenile Hall, 40-50 are in for violent crimes, of which half of those (~25) could be considered gang related crimes.

Parent support programs run from the social services department such as the Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) help parents gain better parenting communication, emotional support and access to resources. The Triple P program is a partnership between social services and health welfare department, intended for parents of younger kids who might be at risk going into the foster or dependency system. The District Attorney’s office runs the Parent Project which focuses on helping parents understand adolescent behaviors and interact with their teen-aged children.

School expulsion and suspensions reduced. School Resource and probation officers on school campuses can help calm events down and establish alternative detention programs. Leadership from east San Jose and the East Side Union High School District has helped to develop on-campus alternatives to expulsion and suspension. The Probation Office works with school resource officers to develop programming for girls who have been identified as at risk.

Ways League and community members can help support at-risk youth.

- 1) Become more knowledgeable about the Juvenile Justice System, and let local politicians know what you feel is working. Contact Judge Tondreau to arrange a visit to the Juvenile Justice Court. Attend a Juvenile Justice Commission meeting which take place the first Tuesday of the month at the Crime Lab at noon.
- 2) A positive adult mentor can have great influence on an at-risk youth’s life. Volunteer to become a mentor for an at-risk youth. You can volunteer through the CAFA program to help a foster youth or through the Boys and Girls Club, and Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY.)
- 3) Help raise money for the organizations that have mentor programs.
- 4) Volunteer with the South Bay Human Trafficking Commission’s [“No Traffic Ahead”](#) campaign. You can sign up on the No Traffic Ahead website before, during and after the Super Bowl game.