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Contact: Dawn K. Thompson
Community Relations Officer
(302) 633-2501
Dawn.Thompson@state.de.us

Delaware Children's Department and Wilmington Central YMCA Join Forces to Keep Youth on the Right Track

WILMINGTON, Del. – Starting May 2017, the Delaware Children's Department will expand its Juvenile Civil Citation Program to the Wilmington Central YMCA. Through the YMCA's Back on Track Program, even more of Delaware's youth will be able to receive the guidance and help they need to get their lives back on the right path.

Created in September 2015, Juvenile Civil Citation is a statewide civil alternative to the formal arrest and criminal prosecution of youth under 18 who commit certain low-level misdemeanor offenses. There are six eligible offenses for participation in the program: Disorderly Conduct, Criminal Trespass 3rd, Loitering, Shoplifting, Underage Possession or Consumption of Alcohol, and Possession of Marijuana. The program is managed by the Delaware Children's Department, Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS).

In cooperation with DYRS, the YMCA's Back on Track Program serves youth adjudicated to Level II probation. While in the program, youth participate in life skills and education sessions to understand the nature of their offense, recognize the impact it has on the community, and learn skills to prevent reoccurrence.

The primary purpose of Juvenile Civil Citation is to try to prevent further delinquency, and appropriately address participating youth offenses without creating a delinquency record. The program offers law enforcement the option of issuing the youth a civil citation in lieu of arrest. During the program period, eligible participating youth are required to contact pre-assigned community providers to complete an assessment to identify their risk needs, complete five hours of community service, and provide a community impact statement. All program requirements are geared towards reducing potential future contact with the juvenile justice system.

"Partnership with Back on Track is the natural evolution of this program," said Donna M. Pugh, Esq., Statewide Coordinator for the Juvenile Civil Citation Program. "We know our program is effective and is making a remarkable difference in the lives of Delaware's youth and families. We look forward to working with the YMCA to continue to grow this life-changing initiative."

"This is a great opportunity for us to work together in a positive environment to help youth be held accountable for their actions without limiting future growth and success," said Brenda Overton, Director of the Back on Track Program at the Central YMCA. "By partnering with the Civil Citation Program we are able to provide early intervention and another tool for law enforcement to move low-level first-time juvenile offenders through the system efficiently and effectively."

For more information about Juvenile Civil Citation, please contact Donna.Pugh@state.de.us or call 302.633.2633. For more information about Back on Track, visit <https://www.ymcade.org/walnut-street-ymca/> or call 302.254.9622 ext. 117.

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The Children's Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, and/or have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts as well as prevention services targeted toward all youth. For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.