

**ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
STUDY COMMITTEE ON JUVENILE JUSTICE  
TO THE ILLINOIS JUDICIAL CONFERENCE**

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## I. STATEMENT ON COMMITTEE CONTINUATION

The charge of the Study Committee on Juvenile Justice (Committee) is to study and make recommendations on aspects of the juvenile justice system, including training for judges, and to prepare and update the *Juvenile Law Benchbook*. The major work of the Committee has been the completion of the two-volume set of the *Illinois Juvenile Law Benchbook*, which is designed to provide judges with a practical and convenient guide to procedural, evidentiary, and substantive issues arising in juvenile court proceedings.

Annual updates of both volumes of the benchbook are necessary due to the rapid evolution of juvenile law. In light of legislative and caselaw changes in this area of the law, the Committee believes that continued instruction of judges concerning all aspects of juvenile law is necessary. Therefore, the Committee requests that it be permitted to continue implementing its assigned charge.

## II. SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

### A. Juvenile Law Benchbook

The *Juvenile Law Benchbook* is divided into two volumes; however, the discussion in each volume is organized transactionally, whereby issues are identified and discussed in the order in which they arise during the course of a case. In general, the discussions begin with an examination of how a case arrives in juvenile court and ends with post-dispositional matters such as termination of parental rights proceedings, termination of wardship, and appeal. Each volume provides judges with an overview of juvenile court proceedings, directs them to relevant statutory and caselaw, highlights recent amendments, and identifies areas that present special challenges. The appendix in each volume contains procedural checklists and sample forms that can be used or adapted to meet the needs of each judge and the requirements of the county and circuit in which he or she sits. Additionally, uniform court orders for abuse, neglect, and dependency cases and their accompanying instructions can be found in the Appendix of Volume II.

During this Conference year, the Committee will complete its update of Volume I of the *Juvenile Law Benchbook*. Volume I, published in 2000, addresses juvenile court proceedings involving allegations of delinquency, minors requiring authoritative intervention (MRAI) and addicted minors. The Committee reasonably anticipates that an update to Volume I will be available by December 2005. The Committee plans to work with the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts to make this update available in CD-ROM format to judges around the state.

Upon completion of the update to Volume I, the Committee will commence updating Volume II of the *Juvenile Law Benchbook*. Volume II, published in 2002, addresses proceedings brought in juvenile court which involve allegations of abuse, neglect, and dependency. The Committee anticipates updating each volume annually.

### B. Education

Various Committee members served as faculty for judicial education seminars presented under the auspices of the Judicial Conference Committee on Education, which is charged with identifying and developing training needs of the judiciary. More specifically, Committee members served on the faculty of the Abuse and Neglect portion of the January 2005 New Judge Seminar, which was designed to give new judges an overview of child protection issues and help them

identify and develop skills needed for that particular court call. The Juvenile Delinquency Regional Seminar held in March 2005, focused on adolescent development and delinquency, caselaw, legislative updates, and evidence-based practices in juvenile cases. The Committee would like to acknowledge the Education Committee for its commitment to offering comprehensive educational opportunities. The Committee will continue to offer its assistance in presenting judicial education programs in the rapidly changing area of juvenile law.

C. *Juvenile Court Initiatives*

The Committee continued to discuss at great length programs and initiatives that directly impact juvenile court policy and practice. Specifically, the Committee identified and compiled information on various statewide juvenile justice initiatives, including *Redeploy Illinois* and juvenile drug courts.

The Committee also continued to stay apprised of other matters affecting juvenile law including: (1) the federal Child and Family Services Review process and progress on the state Program Improvement Plan, as well as the judiciary's response to these activities, which is being managed by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts through the state Court Improvement Program and its Judicial Advisory Committee; (2) the status of pending juvenile law legislation; (3) the Chapin Hall Report regarding the outcomes for youth aging-out of the child welfare system; and (4) the best practice guidelines for delinquency cases as established by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

### III. PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT CONFERENCE YEAR

During the 2006 Conference Year, the Committee will publish the update to Volume I of the *Illinois Juvenile Law Benchbook* and commence updating Volume II. The Committee also intends to recommend and participate in the presentation of juvenile law education programs. The Committee will continue to monitor other proposed and enacted legislation, executive initiatives, and common law developments that may affect the juvenile justice system.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is making no recommendations to the Conference at this time.

## 2005 REPORT