



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON

**children  
& families**

Raising Voices to Make Every Kid Count

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### **Statewide Conference to Focus on Best Practices in Juvenile Justice**

Research Points to Strategies for Improving State's Approach to Youth Corrections

(Madison)--National experts and a wide range of professionals working in the field of juvenile justice in Wisconsin will gather in Madison on **Tuesday, April 15 and Wednesday, April 16** for a two-day conference hosted by the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. The conference, "**Moving Forward: A Justice System That Works for Juveniles and the Community,**" will focus on strategies for transforming the state's juvenile justice system to better align with best practices and a more complete understanding of the needs of youth based on the most current research. It will take place at the **Concourse Hotel, located at 1 W. Dayton in downtown Madison.**

Attendees will include a broad range of professionals who work with juveniles, including social workers, juvenile court workers, attorneys, psychologists, teachers, court and corrections personnel and judges. WCCF is presenting this conference with support from the Governor's Juvenile Justice Commission and the Office of Justice Assistance.

This conference will cover a number of issues that have received substantial attention in Wisconsin in recent months, as policy makers weigh options for improving the state's juvenile justice system. In particular, a proposal to return 17-year-olds to the juvenile system and a report commissioned by the Governor on racial disparities in the system have been topics of considerable discussion.

On display during the conference will be **an exhibit of artwork by youth incarcerated in either the juvenile or adult corrections system. The collection, "Art from the Inside,"** has received strong praise during each of its two previous public exhibitions.

Featured speakers at the conference will include:

**Shay Bilchik**, founder and Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute. Prior to his work at Georgetown, Bilchik was president and CEO of the Child Welfare League of America, and before that he headed the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the U.S. Department of Justice, where he advocated for and supported a balanced and multi-systems approach to attacking juvenile crime.

**Marty Beyer**, juvenile justice and child welfare consultant, and author of several influential publications on juvenile justice best practices. In addition to helping states design effective delinquency services, her work with juveniles focuses on how a young person's cognitive development, disabilities and history of trauma are related to the offense and must be considered

rehabilitation planning. Beyer has provided expert testimony in a number of high-profile Wisconsin criminal cases involving youth offenders.

For more information about the conference, visit [http://www.wccf.org/event\\_movingforward\\_2008.php](http://www.wccf.org/event_movingforward_2008.php), or contact Wendy Paget Henderson at (608) 284-0580, ext. 308 or [whenderson@wccf.org](mailto:whenderson@wccf.org).