

# WELLS COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

## 1998 ANNUAL REPORT

*This report is to provide a brief overview of probation services, and will include statistics and general details for an overall account of the Probation Department activities in 1998. The Probation Department staff welcomes opportunities to talk to individuals and groups in greater detail about probation services in Indiana and Wells County.*

### **The Wells County Probation Department**

The Wells County Probation Department is an administrative arm of the courts in regards to criminal matters and juvenile delinquency. The Wells County Probation Department is responsible to the courts for supervising persons placed on probation, preparing presentence and predispositional investigation reports, conducting preliminary inquiries, and completing other administrative tasks as directed by the courts. In completing these assignments, the Probation Department provides protection of the community by identifying continued criminal behavior and providing appropriate services and programs for offenders to support their rehabilitation.

The Department is under the authority of the Wells Circuit and Wells Superior Courts. The personnel within the Department consists of the chief probation officer, four probation officers, and two secretaries. During 1998, the Probation Department also supervised the services of one intern from Ball State University.

Wells County benefits from the mature experience of the Probation Department staff. Combined, the staff can boast over sixty-six (66) years of experience, which averages to approximately 9.5 years per staff member. This level of experience is important when quality decisions and services are expected by this community.

The following individuals comprised the Wells County Probation Department for the entire year in 1998:

**David L. Hanselman, Sr., Circuit Court Judge**  
**Everett E. Goshorn, Superior Court Judge**

**Gregory E. Werich, Chief Probation Officer**  
**Vicki L. Cale, Probation Officer**  
**Marci A. Burch, Probation Officer**  
**Scott N. Ailor, Probation Officer**  
**Dianne E. Schwarzkopf, Secretary**  
**Susan K. Reinhard, Secretary**

### **Adult Services**

- **Presentence Investigation Reports** Presentence reports are background investigations of offenders, and are used by the courts to determine appropriate sentences. These reports require between 4 and 6 hours to prepare on average, and the Wells County Probation Department prepared 101 reports in 1998: 87 were prepared for Circuit Court and 14 for Superior Court.
  
- **Supervision** The Wells County Probation Department began 1998 with 386

supervisions. By the year's end, 392 supervisions were pending for the new year as being supervised. The total number of individuals referred to or supervised by the Probation Department was 956 in 1998.

When offenders commit violations of their probation conditions, revocation petitions are filed. Out of 196 revocation petitions filed in 1998, 77 resulted in probation being revoked.

The following table provides a quick numerical review of the cases supervised by the Probation Department for each court and those supervised as transferred-in from other jurisdictions:

	<u>Superior Court</u>	<u>Circuit Court</u>	<u>Transferred Cases-In</u>
Felons	45	139	30
Misdemeanant	654	66	17
Violations	162	34	

### **Juvenile Services**

The Wells County Probation Department worked with a total of 334 juveniles in 1998. This number includes pending supervisions and new referrals. The following sections will provide more information about these services.

- Intakes/Preliminary Inquiries Preliminary Inquires are the first step in the judicial process and requires a probation officer to determine a recommendation as to disposition of a juvenile referral. The Wells County Probation Department completed 279 Intakes/Preliminary Inquiries in 1998.
- Predispositional Investigation Reports The Wells County Probation Department prepared 27 full Predispositional Reports in 1998. The Preliminary Inquiry becomes the Predispositional Report in a majority of the delinquency cases that go before the Court; however, when the Court specifically orders a Predispositional Report and sets a dispositional hearing, a full dispositional report is prepared and filed. The juvenile is interviewed with his/her parents, guardians, or custodians, often taking more than one appointment and requiring between 4 and 8 hours to prepare.
- Placements Probation Officers are required to make recommendations to the Court as to the best placement alternatives for juvenile offenders. When a child must be removed from the home, it is in compliance with the Indiana Code, and the child's progress is followed regularly with regular visits by their Probation Officer. The placement of each child is determined by the facility's program for working with the unique needs of a juvenile, ability to communicate regularly with the Probation Department, and the proximity of the facility to Wells County. Wells County makes diligent efforts to balance

all these factors, plus any other relevant ones, to best rehabilitate juvenile offenders.

Placements can be divided into two categories for costs: those paid by the commissioners from the County's General Fund and those paid by the Wells County Office, Division of Family and Children. The Commissioners pay for any predispositional detentions (facilities where the child is simply being held until the disposition of a case is made, awaiting a different placement, or holding for a fixed period of time as a disposition) and placements (facilities where the juveniles receive specialized treatment and rehabilitative services), and any postdispositional detentions. The Wells County Office, Division of Family and Children pays the claims of any postdispositional placements. The following table indicates those facilities used in 1998 with the number of children placed at those facilities and the aggregate number of bed days Wells County juveniles occupied on delinquency matters:

Facility	Juveniles	Bed Days
Jay County Youth Service Bureau	14	1516
Wood Youth Center	13	175
Youth Opportunity Center	13	521
Henry County	8	501
Kinsey Youth Center	1	15
Whites	1	211
Evergreen	3	93
Resolute	2	87
Gibault	2	455
Behavioral Health Care	1	161
Blacklake Lodge	1	78
Indiana United Methodist Church Children's Home	1	10
Oaklawn	1	86
SAVY	1	133
Whittington Homes	1	72

The aggregate cost of detention /placements paid by the Wells County Commissioners for juvenile offenders in 1998 was \$195,682, the aggregate cost of placement paid by the Wells County Office, Division of Family and Children for placements in 1998 was \$388,692. These totals paid for 64 juveniles who were held for a total of 4295 bed-days. Additionally, five juveniles were committed to the Indiana Department of Correction, three were committed to Indiana Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, and one was evaluated by the Indiana Department of Correction.

- Supervision The Wells County Probation Department maintains active supervision of all juvenile offenders placed on Program of Informal Adjustment or Formal Probation. The quarterly reports filed with the State Court Administration Office indicate that we began the 1998 year with 63 supervisions (Formal and Program of Informal Adjustments) and ended the 1998 year with 64.

In October, 1998, the Probation Department was provided a dispositional alternative in-lieu-of supervision - the Wells County Teen Court. This program was operational by the end of 1998; however, our department had only begun making referrals by the end of the calendar year. The Probation Department looks forward to using this program more in 1999.

### **Miscellaneous Reviews**

- Community Supervision The Probation Department stepped up its supervision of offenders and juveniles in 1998 by increasing the number of contacts in the community. Days and evenings were set aside, apart from the normal working hours, to call on persons under the Probation Department's supervision. The purpose of these contacts ranged from determining curfew compliance, confirming residence of probationers, and looking for alcohol/drug use. Officer Scott Ailor took the leadership role in coordinating field operations and maintaining statistics for these field visit contacts. He reported that the Probation Officers contacted 361 individuals (264 juveniles and 97 adults) in 1998 with these contacts taking place on 38 different days over the year. To make these visits, the Probation Officers traveled 1,482.2 miles, for an average of 39 miles per day.
- Community Schools The Probation Department makes every effort possible to coordinate its efforts in rehabilitating offenders with collary agencies. Local schools have been extremely helpful in working with the Probation Department with staff meetings, referrals, and reports. Officer Marci Burch was the liaison officer between the Probation Department and school systems, and took the initiative of setting up a joint meeting with key school officials at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the meeting was to review the referral procedures and discuss how best to exchange information to minimize the knowledge that any juvenile is on probation to only those who need to know. All three school systems in Wells County were represented and resulted in better mutual understanding of each other's needs.
- Transferred Cases One of the misleading factors in the adult quarterly reports prepared for the State Court Administration Office is the number of "open" cases in our department. The state reports discount transferred-out cases (from Wells County to other counties and states) by listing them as closed in our department. However, our Department considers these cases active until their probation periods are complete, and maintains these files as open until each offender is released from probation. During the year, 161 cases were on transfer-out status, and Officer Vicki Cale took the responsibility of supervising these file records. Since the offenders are being

supervised by another probation department, Vicki requested progress reports from the accepting jurisdictions,

and when our office received notice of a violation, she filed the revocation petition and attended the revocation hearings.

- Continuing Education/Training The Wells County Probation Officers are required to obtain a minimum of 12 continuing education hours to comply with Indiana probation officer standards, and regularly qualify with self-defense tools. These trainings and qualifications are completed through conferences, workshops, and classes over the course of the year, and all of Wells County’s Probation Officers satisfied the required training/education needs. These were satisfied by attendance at the Indiana Judicial Conference’s Annual Probation Officers Conference, the Probation Officers’ Professional Association of Indiana’s Annual Conference, and various workshops hosted by Behavioral Health Care of Northern Indiana, Charter-Beacon Hospital, the Bluffton Police Department, the Wells County Sheriff’s Department, and the Wells County Office, Division of Family and Children, and the Family Centered Services. Park Center provided an in-service training on local substance abuse issues and the Probation Department also took advantage of free satellite conferences by the United States Department of Justice.

**Financial Information**

- Collections The Probation Department is responsible for collecting various service fees from persons placed on probation. The following table reports the various collections of the Probation Department.

<u>Type of Fee</u>	<u>Amount Collected</u> <u>in 1998</u>	<u>Fund Balance</u> <u>As of 12-31-98</u>
Adult Probation Users Fee Circuit Court	\$6,007	\$63,783.44 ✕
Adult Probation User’s Fee Superior Court	\$30,573	
Juvenile Probation User’s Fee	\$5,008	\$29,178.11
Urinalysis Fees	\$4,903	\$10,741.55

(✕ Users fees from Circuit Court and Superior Court are deposited into one common fund.)

- Disbursements The Wells County Probation Department is required to submit its own annual budget. During the 1998 fiscal year, the Probation Department submitted claims for the total amount of expenditure.

<u>Budget Source</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>
General Budget:	Personal Services -	\$188,844
	Supplies -	1,777
	Other Services -	14,509
	Capital Outlay -	300
Juvenile Users Fees		5,000
Adult Users Fees		6,219
Urinalysis Fees		6,070
CADA Grant (Indigent Fund)		115
CADA Grant (Training)		508
	<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$ 223,342</b>

### Referral Agencies

While resources are limited in a small community, the Wells County Probation Department still has the benefit of working with outstanding programs. In alphabetical order, the following programs have been used for referral sources:

- Ball State University - internship
- C.A.P., Inc.
- Caylor-Nickel Medical Center
- Center for Non-Violence
- Family Centered Services
- Family & Children Services
- Family Service Society
- Park Center, Inc.
- Veterans Administration, Fort Wayne, Indiana
- Wells County Office, Division of Family & Children
- Wells County Community Corrections

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory E. Werich  
Chief Probation Officer

March 1, 1999