

## **In The Spotlight with: Veronica Perry, Chief Adult Probation Officer, Medina County Adult Probation Department**

**By** Kate Feeks

In May watch for the next episode of *Law Talk*, hosted by John Celebrezze. This episode features Veronica Perry, Chief Probation Officer of the Medina County Adult Probation Department. This show can be viewed on Wadsworth Cable (WCTV) Public Access, Channel 15, Brunswick Area Television (BAT) Public Access, Channel 21, and Armstrong Cable Access, Channel 37.

In November 2011, Judge James Kimbler of the Medina County Common Pleas Court and The Medina County Adult Probation Department began offering a new program called The Family Intervention Program (FIP) designed specifically for single substance abusing mothers. The participants of this program are identified by the probation department through intervention in lieu of conviction. The Family Intervention Program is designed to help drug addicted mothers maintain their sobriety and reunite or retain custody of their children.

The program is headed up by Veronica Perry and a special core docket team made up of Judge Kimbler, a probation officer and a case worker. Together the team works with these women to help them succeed in the legal process, and ultimately get their lives back. “Most of the women are homeless by the time we get to them. We offer extra resources through a special docket fund for these women who are generally heroin addicted, homeless and have lost custody of their children. The fund offers the women assistance in finding employment, housing, transportation to and from treatment, E-cam (audio visual treatment program), additional counseling and small financial assistance.” Perry explained.

The program provides an intensive service rather than just probation to participants. To qualify for the program the offender must be a single mother with a drug addiction who is willing to participate in the program. FIP consists of a screening process and three phases.

Phase 1: First 90 days. Sessions are held with treatment team and participants are given a drug screening, parenting classes, mentor introduction, and transportation assistance.

Phase 2: Next 180 days. Sessions are held twice a month, drug testing continues, parenting classes continue, initiate family reunification, and random home visits are conducted.

Phase 3: Last 90 days. Minimum 1-6 random drug tests per month, participant reports monthly, continue meeting with team.

The goal is for each woman to complete the entire program within one year and participate in a graduation ceremony

To learn more about the Family Intervention Program with Veronica Perry, watch for her interview with John Celebrezze on *Law Talk* throughout the month of May on your local cable network and You Tube.