

## Juvenile Court Delinquency and Prevention Unit

The Juvenile Court Delinquency and Prevention Unit aims to reduce youth violence and crime using a coordinated community approach which includes early intervention and prevention. In addition, the unit handles serious juvenile delinquents who are indicted as Youthful Offenders, thus making them subject to full adult criminal prosecution. The unit includes prosecutors, a diversion specialist and several victim-witness advocates.

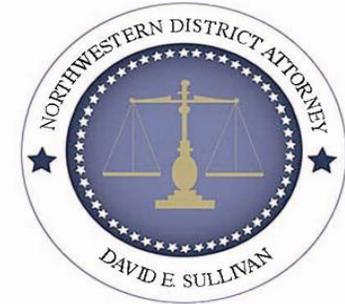
The unit's goal is to balance legal work in the form of prosecution of persons under age 17, with school and community-based prevention efforts.



## Additional Programs

- Parent Wisely is an interactive CD-ROM designed for parents of children ages 3-18. The program is designed to reduce child behavior problems, delinquency and substance abuse among adolescents, improve parenting knowledge and skills, and strengthen the relationship between parent and child. The program offers nine typical family problems and the common ways in which parents try to handle them. After every family problem, Parent Wisely explains the best way to handle the situation and explains methods to help improve family relationships.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium Programs are online educational classes that are used by the courts, diversion programs, and probation departments. Program subject topics include alcohol and drug abuse, shoplifting, and marijuana usage. Each online class is an interactive program with custom results. The juvenile must complete and pass every lesson in order to successfully complete the class. Upon completion, results will be emailed to the juvenile, the court/agency, and the District Attorney's Office.

## Juvenile Justice



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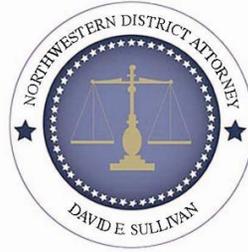
## **Juvenile Diversion Program (NWDA-JDP)**

When appropriate, first time offenders under age 17 who commit minor criminal offenses will be referred to the Northwestern District Attorney's Juvenile Diversion Program. The program is an alternative to the court system. Participating youth are required to attend and complete counseling/education programs, perform community service, and, when applicable, pay restitution. Youth who successfully complete the Juvenile Diversion Program prior to arraignment will have no court record. Cases not appropriate for diversion will be prosecuted through the Juvenile Court.

## **Truancy Diversion – "School Is Where It's At" (SIWIA)**

Truancy is a problem that has long-term effects on children, families and the community. The recognition of the significant correlation between a failed school experience and delinquent behavior has been well documented. The "School Is Where It's At" program is a two-step process involving progressively stronger measures to compel students ages 6 to 16 and their parents to address the problem in a positive manner. The program was developed to send the consistent message that education, personal responsibility and

respect for the law are important values in the Northwestern District. The District Attorney assists any school interested in creating or enhancing its attendance or anti-truancy program.



## **Northwestern Fire Intervention, Response, Education and Safety (NoFIRES)**

The core mission of NoFIRES is to protect our youth, their families and the communities in which they live from the dangerous and sometimes fatal act of setting fires. A collaboration of law enforcement and social service agencies, NoFIRES is committed to providing a consistent, and coordinated response for youths who set fires or engage in fire-related behavior. The components of this approach include intervention and education in conjunction with prosecution or other juvenile court action.

## **Safe School Response Team**

The new Massachusetts bullying law offers a definition of bullying, but as victims, educators, and parents have learned, there is no specific criminal charge of bullying.

However, bullying behavior may fit specific criminal charges already in existence, such as Threat to Commit a Crime, Criminal Harassment, Civil Right Violations, and others.

Therefore, the NWDA developed a team of prosecutors and victim-advocates to review certain complaints of bullying to determine if the behavior rises to the level of a criminal charge.

The team is not a substitute for school investigations. Schools must still follow their own state mandated policies as to bullying complaints and investigations.

However, the NWDA team can help review that work and in addition, can provide information and support for parents and victims.

**Visit us at [NorthwesternDA.org](http://NorthwesternDA.org)**