

“Each Thursday at 3:00 p.m. the South Central Juvenile Drug Court team meets to go over the child’s past week. Each team member is given the opportunity to discuss each child, each week and determine what reward or what sanction is appropriate for the child to receive. From a defense attorney’s viewpoint, these weekly staff sessions pose the biggest obstacle/challenge. As an attorney who has spent a great deal of my career doing criminal defense and juvenile defense, the weekly staffing was a tough pill to swallow.



My initial reaction at the weekly staffing was to put up the defense attorney shield and make the same arguments that I have made time and again and hope the judge sees it my way. After a few sessions with the South Central Juvenile Drug Court, I quickly realized this is not how a juvenile drug court operates. In order for a child to be successful the team approach is necessary. Yes, there are disagreements on what course of action is appropriate, but at the end of the weekly staffing the decision of the team is the decision of the whole team. I wish each of you had the opportunity to sit in on a staffing to capture the personalities and the way decisions are made collectively. It is an amazing sociological experiment trying to figure out what is the best course of action for a child. It is not uncommon for my position to be supported by law enforcement and for me to support a prosecutor’s sanction recommendation.”

— Brad Peterson, defense attorney and member of the South Central Juvenile Drug Court team

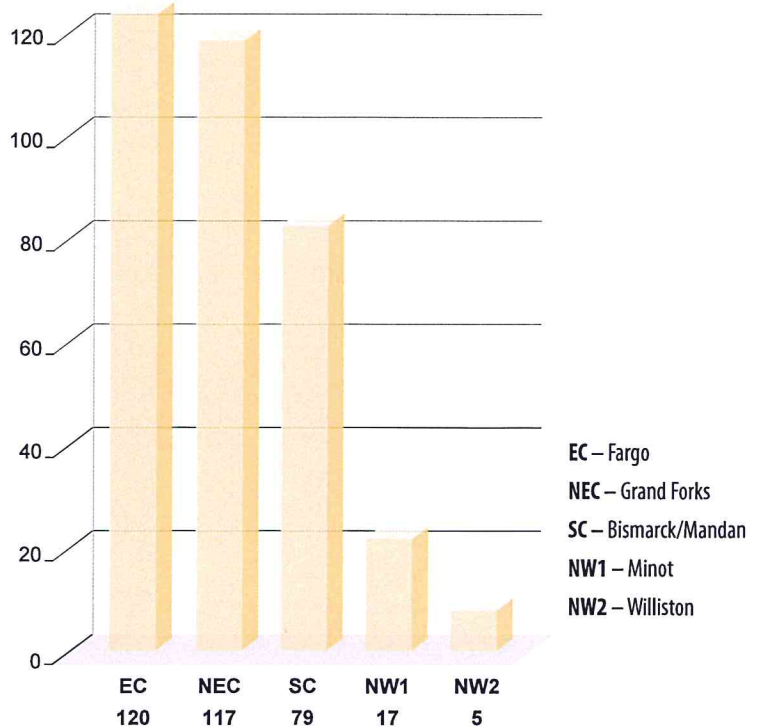
Juvenile Drug Court Expands

A second juvenile drug court began in the Northwest Judicial District with the start of the Williston Juvenile Drug Court in 2008. Lead by Judge David Nelson, the court had five participants and one graduation in its first year.

Preparation for the newest drug court in Devils Lake began in 2008. Judge Donovan Foughty will open the doors to Devils Lake Juvenile Drug Court in March 2009. A drug court requires a team of individuals from a community who develop an individualized plan for the participants and participate in weekly staffing and court sessions. The drug court team is comprised of a judge, treatment provider, defense counsel, school representative, probation officer, drug court coordinator, prosecutor, and law enforcement representative. Devils Lake team members joining Judge Foughty are Judge Lee Christofferson, Maren Halbach, Douglas Broden, Lisa Nihill, Karen Olson, Shawn Meier, Linda Duckwitz, Ryan Hanson, John Maritato, Andy Horner, and Cathy Ann Wolfe. The team members received their training from the National Drug Court Institute and instate training with the Grand Forks Juvenile Drug Court team. Devils Lake joins the state’s five other juvenile drug courts in Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, and Williston.

Drug court participants and parents attend a closed court session each week. The participants are between the age of 13 and 17, and have been assessed with an alcohol or substance abuse problem. The program lasts a minimum of nine months. Participants are required to have random drug testing, curfew checks, attend alcohol or substance abuse treatment, and complete community service projects. Participants are also required to attend school or be employed.

Drug Court Participants by Location 2000-2008



Individual Court Statistics and Information for 2008

Unit 1

Juvenile Drug Court Highlights

- Hon. Karen Braaten presides over the juvenile court proceedings
- Seventeen juveniles entered the program
- There were four graduations.
- There are currently 10 participants.
- Participants completed 557 hours of community service

Unit 2

Juvenile Drug Court Highlights

- Hon. Wade Webb presides over the drug court proceedings.
- Twenty-five participants entered the drug court program.
- There were five graduations
- There are currently 12 participants.
- Participants completed 770 hours of community service.

Unit 3

Juvenile Drug Court Highlights

- Referee John Grinsteiner presides over the drug court proceedings.
- Nineteen participants entered the drug court program.
- There were five graduations
- There are currently seven participants.
- Participants completed 1,097 hours of community service.

Unit 4

Juvenile Drug Court Highlights

- Hon. Doug Mattson presides over the drug court proceedings for Minot's Juvenile Drug Court Program.
- There were 10 participants in the drug court program.
- There were four graduations.
- Participants completed 172 hours of community service.
- Hon. David Nelson presides over the drug court proceedings for Williston's Juvenile Drug Court Program.
- There were five participants in the program.
- There was one graduation.
- There are currently two active participants.
- Williston's drug court participants completed 391 hours of community service.

Statewide Data as of December 31, 2008

- 338 juveniles have entered the drug court programs.
- 136 have successfully graduated from the drug court programs.
- There are currently 34 participants.
- Participants completed a total of 2,987 community service hours in 2008.
- At least 50 percent of the participants were terminated from the program because of noncompliance and further offenses.
- Average age at entry is 16.5 years.
- \$2,024 in restitution was collected from the participants in 2008.
- There were 2,838 drug tests administered in 2008 and 2,762 alcohol tests administered.
- 298 drug and alcohol tests were positive.