

Juvenile Justice Unit

The **Juvenile Justice Unit** aims to reduce youth violence and crime using a coordinated community approach which includes early intervention and prevention. In addition, the unit handles those serious juvenile cases where the juveniles are indicted as Youthful Offenders, thus making them subject to 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 18, with school and community-based prevention efforts. To carry out these goals the unit offers the following Juvenile Justice programs:



Additional Programs

Alcohol-Wise JV is an online course for teens (ages 14-17) charged with an Under-21 drinking violation.

Marijuana 101 is an online course for teens and young adults (ages 15 and older) charged with marijuana or other drug misdemeanor violations.

3rd Millennium Programs are online educational classes that are used by our diversion program. Program subject topics include alcohol and drug abuse prevention and shoplifting. For parents, there is Parent-Wise, an online alcohol and drug education program. Each class is an interactive program of lessons with custom results. Juveniles must complete and pass every lesson in order to pass the class. Upon completion, results will be emailed to the juvenile, the court, and the District Attorney's Office.

Shoplifting, an online course for shoplifters, provides facts about shoplifting, personalized feedback to students taking the course and skills training to change their attitude and behavior about the crime of shoplifting.

Parent-Wise, an online drug and education course that takes less than an hour to complete and helps parents have an informed conversation with their children.

Athletes and Opioids, a brief film about the risks of youth opioid exposure, especially in athletes. This film informs parents, coaches and athletes not only about potential dangers, but also arms them with ways to safely manage both their pain and their painkillers.

The film, created by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office and Searchlight Films, is being shown in high schools or can be found at the following link:

<https://vimeo.com/176348153>

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Juvenile Diversion Program

When appropriate, first time offenders under age 18 who commit minor criminal offenses will be referred to the Northwestern District Attorney's **Juvenile Diversion Program**. The program is an alternative to formal prosecution in the Juvenile Court. Participating youth are assessed on an individual basis and may be 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.

NOFIRES

Northwestern Juvenile Fire Intervention Response, Education and Safety Partnership

A Community Response to Youth-Set Fires

NoFIRES is a non-profit organization with the core mission 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 NWDA, fire departments, law enforcement and social service agencies, **NoFIRES** is committed to providing a consistent and coordinated response for youths who engage in fire-related behavior. The components of this approach include intervention and education in conjunction with diversion, prosecution or other juvenile court action.

Safe Schools Response Team



District Attorney Sullivan established a **Safe Schools Response Team** to enable the Northwestern District Attorney's Office to review and promptly respond to complaints and referrals involving harassment, bullying, and civil rights violations occurring in schools. Additional goals of this initiative are to assist local schools in their response to bullying and harassing behavior targeting students and to serve as a resource to schools, parents, and victims.



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Community Based Justice Program

The **Community Based Justice Program (CBJ)** is a statutorily mandated school-based initiative designed to establish and coordinate a partnership between schools, police and state agencies to address school violence and violence prevention. **CBJ** meetings are convened by an Assistant District Attorney in the Juvenile Unit throughout the school year and provide a forum to share information regarding at-risk youth. These meetings also serve to provide a means to build relationships and foster communication between the District Attorney's Office, local law enforcement agencies, schools and state service agencies. One of the central goals of **CBJ** meetings is to develop proactive ways to intervene in the lives of at-risk youth in a coordinated way before their conduct leads to negative consequences.