

Steven Bonville

From: Tabitha Jarrett <tjarrett@arcnj.org>
Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2016 2:23 PM
To: Comments Mailbox
Subject: Indiscriminate Shackling of Juveniles in Court

To Whom This May Concern:

Hi, my name is Tabitha Jarrett. I am not speaking on behalf of The Arc of New Jersey, but as a concerned citizen. I support the recommendations made by the Working Group because the use of shackles of youths goes against the core principle of rehabilitation in the juvenile justice system. I also feel that youths sitting home with an ankle bracelet is not in agreement with the core principle as well.

Because youths are considered innocent until proven guilty, this form of shackles shouldn't be used either. If the parent or legal guardian can guarantee that the youth will appear in court as requested by the Judge, then holding a youth in a Detention Center or on an ankle bracelet should not be necessary.

In addition, the shackling of youths in Court and or in their homes, may confuse the youth in thinking that s/he is being punished for crimes. Again the youths have not even been found guilty and adjudicated as an delinquent, where at that time s/he should be punished for the crime committed.

Instead, the youth who now feels that s/he has been punished for what seems like "forever", is more than likely going to act out in the future. Simply because we fail to understand that shackles in any form in the Court and in their homes is a form of punishment. Are we trying to traumatize and excessively punish our youth? Again, our core principle of rehabilitation doesn't start after sentencing, but rather from the arrest. Youth need to be given opportunities that resemble our core principle. I hope this letter fulfills your request and my comments are helpful.

Best regards,

Tabitha Jarrett