



For Immediate Release

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MADIGAN'S OFFICE SCHEDULED TO HOST THIRD YOUTH COURT SUMMIT IN GURNEE ON MONDAY, JANUARY 23

Chicago – In a continued effort to increase participation in youth courts, the office of Attorney General Lisa Madigan has scheduled the **third in a series of Youth Court Summits to be held at the Holiday Inn, in Gurnee, on Monday, January 23**. Based on the success of the first two summits in Galesburg and Effingham, 150 attendees from across northern Illinois are expected to attend.

Madigan also announced today that through a \$40,000 grant from the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority, mini-grants will be offered to assist counties in the creation and expansion of youth court programs. Further information and applications can be found at www.ivpa.org or www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/communities/youthadvocacy/iyca.html.

The third youth court summit will take place in Lake County, home of the largest community-based Youth Court Program in Illinois.

In addition to members from Madigan's office, featured speakers include Jeffrey A. Butts, Ph.D., currently research director on juvenile justice policy at the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall Center for Children. Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin is scheduled to discuss youth courts funding opportunities. Additionally, youth court experts from around the state and youth volunteers from Lake County will share their experiences with summit attendees.

One of the summit panels will provide valuable information to attendees regarding a youth court funding mechanism available to every county in Illinois. Recognizing that youth courts help to keep at-risk youth out of the corrections system, the Illinois General Assembly passed this funding mechanism (PA 93-0892), which became effective January 1, 2005. Counties now have the ability to pass a resolution to increase penalties for certain criminal offenses as source of funding for operation and administration of youth courts and other diversion programs. Madigan said she hopes this funding mechanism, along with the mini-grant opportunity, will encourage counties to develop youth courts if they have not already done so.

Currently, Illinois has 100 operational youth courts, also known as teen courts or peer juries, with a number of new youth court programs in development. These specialized intervention programs for first-time, usually non-violent,

teen offenders have been cited as the fastest growing crime intervention program in the nation. According to the American Youth Policy Forum, during the past 10 years, youth courts have grown by more than 1,300 percent and expanded to 48 states.

Studies have shown that youth courts are associated with lower recidivism. In addition, youth courts benefit counties because they offer the opportunity for collaboration between police, prosecutors, juvenile justice agencies, schools, non-profit agencies and the community.

The youth court summit series is sponsored by Madigan's office and the Illinois Youth Court Association, along with the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority, Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Illinois Juvenile Officers' Association, Illinois Probation and Court Services Association, Illinois Coalition for Community Services, Constitutional Rights Foundation of Chicago and Illinois State's Attorneys Association.

Further information on youth court programs is available on Madigan's Web site at

www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/communities/youthadvocacy/iyca.html.

The youth court summit is scheduled for **Monday, January 23, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Gurnee, 6161 Grand Ave., in Gurnee.** While registration currently is full, media are encouraged to attend.

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