



## **October 2016**

### **Facilities Pass PREA Audits**

In a testament to the safety of youth and sound management, I am pleased to share that all of the state's Juvenile Correctional Facilities and Community Corrections Facilities have met all of the standards of the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act.

The law, known as PREA, seeks to improve the detention, prevention and prosecution of sexual harassment and abuse in correctional facilities across the country. Ohio's three state-operated Juvenile Correctional Facilities, twelve Community Corrections Facilities, and Lighthouse Youth Center -Paint Creek have passed external audits, which are required under the law.

The results demonstrate that the safety of our youth is our top priority. Staff at each site worked diligently to meet all of the standards and ensure the strongest possible safeguards.

Under PREA, the U.S. Department of Justice identified 185 standards and sub-standards that juvenile justice agencies must follow to establish a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual misconduct. Correctional facilities across the country must undergo regular audits to ensure compliance, and independent auditors began reviewing Ohio's juvenile facilities in May 2014.

The department's zero tolerance policy dictates that anyone who engages in, fails to report or knowingly condones sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a youth shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Employees also are required to immediately report any inappropriate behavior between staff and youth. The policy protects both employees and youth against any form of retaliation when they make a report.

Juvenile Correctional Facilities that underwent audits were Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (Circleville), Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (Highland Hills), and Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility (Massillon). Community Corrections Facilities\* that underwent audits were Butler County Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (Hamilton), Central Ohio Youth Center (Marysville), Hocking Valley Community Residential Center (Nelsonville), Juvenile Residential Center of Northwest Ohio (Bowling Green), Multi-County Juvenile Attention System Community Corrections Facility (Canton), Northern Ohio Juvenile Community Corrections Facility (Sandusky), Perry/Multi-County Juvenile Facility (New Lexington), Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services (New Lebanon), Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (Xenia), Lucas County Youth Treatment Center (Toledo), North Central Ohio Rehabilitation Center (Marion), Oakview Juvenile Residential Center (St. Clairsville), and West Central Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (Troy). In addition, Lighthouse Youth Center –Paint Creek (Bainbridge), an alternative placement for youth, had its audit in 2014.

Auditors were complementary of the agency's level of compliance and commitment to implementing the standards. Their feedback through final audit reports included the following:

[Circleville JCF](#): *Staff members were knowledgeable of their duties and responsibilities as they relate to PREA.*

[Cuyahoga Hills JCF](#): *The residents interviewed spoke easily and willingly about the PREA education sessions that they had been involved in and indicated familiarity with the meaning and purpose of PREA.*

[Indian River JCF](#): *Throughout the tour staff were open, friendly, and knowledgeable about their duties. They knew PREA requirements.*

\*DYS funds nearly 100 percent of the operational costs of the twelve Community Corrections Facilities, which are operated by counties and used to treat lower-level felony delinquent youth who otherwise would be committed to a DYS facility.