



Department of  
Youth Services

**Message from DYS Director Harvey Reed  
Video Communicator Project**

October 12, 2011

Dear Staff:

Since the inception of the Video Communicator Project in October 2010, DYS has received encouraging feedback and support. Here are some comments regarding the virtual visits:

“I really like it. I think the webcam is convenient. It has helped me stay connected with my family.”

**Youth from Indian River JCF**

“Even though I can still go to the institution to visit my grandson, having the option to see him over the computer from my house is really nice. Some of my other family members can’t travel long distances, and this has been helpful to them. They just come over to my house, the PO hooks up the computer and we get to visit.”

**Grandmother of a Huron County youth**

“I have medical problems so it’s hard for me to travel, and his grandmother can’t travel because of her cancer treatments. I think the computer visits are a great thing. It helps him to know what is going on back here at home, and we can keep better track of what he is doing in there. I hope these visits continue because it’s nice to see him.”

**Mother of a Sandusky County youth**

“The use of this technology is a cost-effective way to keep families and youth engaged during periods of incarceration. It also allows community providers to stay connected with these kids to assist with the transition from confinement back to the community.”

**Sandusky County Wrap Around Coordinator**

“After the session, the youth’s ex-foster mother stated that the session was really beneficial to give support to the youth while in the institution since he is in Cleveland and she is in Columbus. She wants to continue to have more sessions and would like to bring his mentor and sister if her work schedule permits. This JPO believes that the sessions can be a positive influence on the youth to assist in curbing his thinking errors and a great incentive/support system.”

**Juvenile Parole Officer, Columbus Regional Office**

“When the webcams became available, I thought that this was finally a great opportunity to utilize the technology available to us. The youth and I have found this method of communication fun, effective and efficient in order to help keep the youth accountable. It lets the youth know that even though they are locked up, their family is just a click away. This has been a breath of fresh air in trying to change the landscape of corrections. I am thankful for all of the people who made this possible and look forward to this technology being used much more often.”

**Social Worker, Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility**

Research shows that incarcerated young people who maintain positive relationships with their loved ones are more likely to succeed. Engaging families in the treatment process from intake to discharge is a vital component of the reentry continuum, and the Video Communicator Project has been a cost-effective way of tackling the barriers that previously kept families from being active participants in the process. It provides our treatment professionals with the opportunity to get to know the families, assists youth in preparing for their transition back into the community and prepares both the family and the youth for their return home.

Harvey J. Reed, Director  
Department of Youth Services