

# 41st Annual InterCourt Conference



Session 3B:  
Unruly to You,  
Survivor to Me

March 13, 2025  
3:15 p.m.— 4:45 p.m.

Hilton Columbus at  
Easton Town Center  
Columbus, OH

## FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES

**DODIE DAVENPORT** has worked at the Delaware County Juvenile/Probate Court for Twenty six years, ten of those years as a Child Support Enforcement Deputy Clerk, five years as a Staff Mediator and eleven years as the Mediation Coordinator. Dodie has been a member of the Ohio Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts for fifteen years.

In addition to being a trained Mediator, Parenting Coordinator, and Court approved Mediator for the Delaware County Domestic Relations Court, Dodie helps facilitate Court programs, such as Girls Groups, Victim Awareness Class and the Safe Harbor Program.

Dodie credits her many years at the Delaware County Juvenile working with families as the most valuable experience in her professional development as a mediator.

**LISA WILLIAMSON** has been employed with the Delaware County Juvenile Court since 1994. Lisa has served in many duties within the Court since 1994 including: wrap staff, intake officer, intake department head, and her current role. Lisa's current position supervises the Intake and Treatment Departments, including; Intake/Diversion, School Liaison/Attendance, Mentoring, Victim Services, Family Advocates and Treatment Court. Lisa is an advocate for youth and firm believer in Trauma Informed Care. Lisa graduated from The Ohio State University in 1993 with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Child and Family Development. Lisa received her MPA from Ohio University in December of 2017.

# Unruly to You, Survivor to Me

**Dodie Davenport**

*Mediation Coordinator*

*Delaware County Juvenile/Probation Court*

**Lisa Williamson**

*Director of Court Services*

*Delaware County Juvenile Court*



Unruly to you.  
Survivor to me.

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Do not underestimate my determination  
and abilities!

## Presenters

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**Lisa R. Williamson, DCJ, MPA**

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Delaware County Juvenile Court

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## Training Objectives

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- This presentation will focus on working with girls by looking through their lenses and life experiences.
- The presentation centers on meeting girls where they are without judgement and expectations, while forging relationships with support, connection, and consistency.
- The presentation will feature past and present court-involved girls who will discuss their experiences in the system and the impact of Girls Group.

## History of Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

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- Historically, girls have been less likely than boys to become involved in the juvenile justice system.
- Increases in cases involving girls in the 1990s brought attention to the needs of girls in the system and how their needs differ from boys.
- The unique needs of girls are not always met in the juvenile justice system.
- More than half of girls in placement are minority youth.

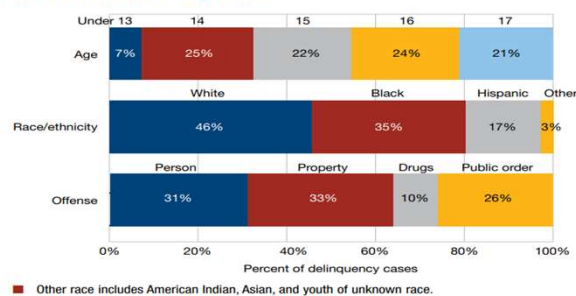
## History of Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

- Arrest rates for Disorderly Conduct increased from 26% to 35% over an eighteen year period for female youth.
- Less than one-third of delinquency cases were filed on girls.
- Nearly half of the female delinquency caseload in 2015 involved simple assault or larceny-theft offenses.
- Black girls accounted for 15% of the female youth population, but their share of delinquency was 35% of the population.

## Statistical Data by Age, Race, and Offense

ojdp.ojp.gov

**About one-third of female delinquency cases involved youth younger than 15 and 1 in 10 involved a drug offense**

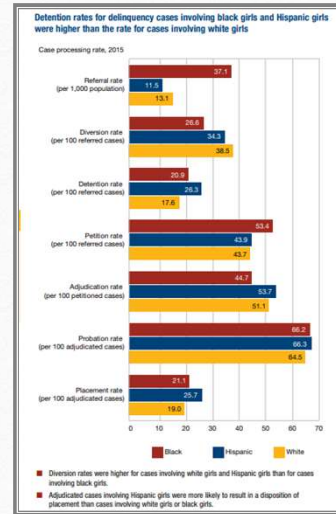


### Statistics by Race (oijdp.ojp.gov)

37% of Black females, 11.5% of Hispanic females, and 13.1% White females were referred to Juvenile Justice

20.9% of Black females, 26.3% Hispanic females, and 17.6% White females held in detention.

26.6% of Black females, 34.3% of Hispanic females, and 38.5% of White females had their case referred to Diversion programs.



Unruly Girls!

Who loves them??



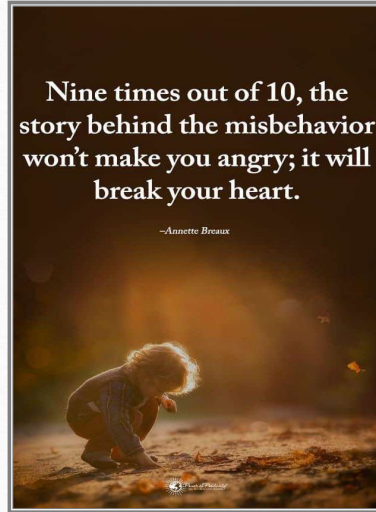


What is an unruly girl?

She is a survivor.

Nine times out of 10, the  
story behind the misbehavior  
won't make you angry; it will  
break your heart.

-Annette Breaux



## Unruly Girls

What does their  
behavior look  
like?



## What it looks like vs. What it is

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### What it looks like to “us”

- Defiance
- Truancy
- Anger
- Unengaged
- Lashing out
- Attention seeking
- Risky behavior

### What it is to “them”

- Power and control
- Lack of resources, support system
- Pain and hurt
- Mental health
- Self-preservation
- Desire for love, belonging, connectedness
- All of the above, and more

## How did we get here?

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- Trauma
- Lack of resources
- Single parent household
- Lack of supervision
- Lack of supportive adult/relationships
- Environment
- Learned behavior
- Mental health
- Drug and alcohol use/abuse
- Physical/sexual/emotional/verbal abuse

## Why is it difficult to work with unruly girls?

- Stubborn
- Disrespectful
- Guarded
- Oppositional defiant
- Emotional



overheard someone say "you cannot heal in the same environment that made you sick" and that's probably some of the best advice i've heard in a while.

## What Works?

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### The 5 Cs of working with Girls

- Connection
- Consistency
- Compassion
- Communication
- Comfortable

## Connection

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- Connection is the sense of closeness and belonging that a person can experience when having supportive relationships with those around them.
- Connection is when two or more people interact with each other and each person feels valued, seen, and heard.



## Consistency



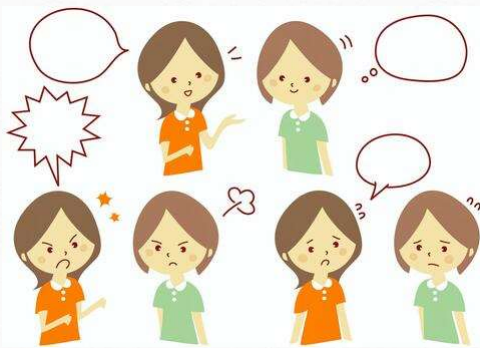
- Consistency means always behaving, performing, or happening in a similar way.
- Consistency builds trust which cultivates a positive environment, fosters open communication, and empowers youth to do their best.
- Consistency allows boundaries and expectations to be set, which actually provides children with a sense of safety.

## Compassion

- Compassion is characterized by the desire to take action to help another person
- Compassion is making the choice to honor the humanity of another
- Compassion is an action with no boundaries and/or judgement



## Communication



- Communication is a two-way means of sharing information in the form of thoughts, opinions, and ideas between two or more individuals through verbal and non-verbal methods, with the purpose of building an understanding.
- Open communication refers to the ability of individuals to freely convey their thoughts and ideas to each other without fear judgement or repercussion.

## Comfortable

- Comfortable means enjoying or providing a position of contentment and security.
- Comfortable applies to anything that encourages serenity, well-being, mental and physical ease.



## What doesn't work

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- The 5 Don'ts when working with girls

- Control
- Change
- Confinement
- Close-minded
- Condescending

## Control

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- Don't dictate their reactions, thoughts, perspective, and feelings. Guide them; empower their voice.
- Don't exert power. Give them the ability to act and speak at their own will.
- Don't control. Connect.

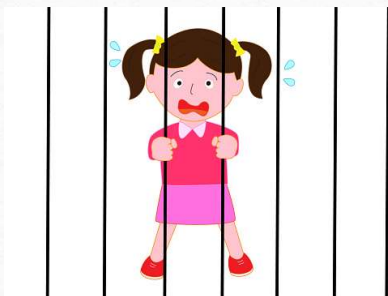
## Change

- Accept them for who they are
- Don't try to change their values, thoughts, beliefs, culture, or identity
- Respect their journey; past, present and future



## Confinement

- Don't detain
- Unruly  $\neq$  detention
- Detention increases their risk to reoffend





## Close-minded

- Not willing to consider ideas and opinions that are new or different to your own.
- Discounting their values, thoughts, beliefs, culture, or identity will lead to disconnection and opposition.



## Condescending

Your pompous attitude and condescending comments have convinced me that you are very smart and important, Said no one ever.

someecards  
user card



- Don't patronize, belittle, laugh, or judge them.
- Don't use language that is above them.
- Don't be a "Karen."

## Girls Group

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- Uses elements of “Girls Circle” by One Circle Foundation  
<https://onecirclefoundation.org/girls-circle>
- Meets weekly
- Meets in neutral location
- Provide snacks
- Consistent facilitators
- Offer community service credit for attendance
- Seasonal off-site events/activities

## Girls Group goals

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- Increase self-esteem/body image
- Conflict resolution
- Goal setting
- Advocate
- Self-expression
- Safety
- Build healthy relationships
- Healthy communication
- Empathy

## Typical Girls Group session

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- Start with weekly check-in
- Allow each girl to have a voice
- Discussion topic/worksheet
- Craft or game(s)
- Wrap-up

## Why girls come back?

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- Undivided attention from a trusted, consistent adult
- Relationships with co-facilitators and group members
- Food
- Laughter
- Comradery/shared experience(s)
- Sense of belonging/bonding
- Support
- Community service credit

## Girls Group Discussion Panel

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Questions?

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# Thank you

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There's a saying that goes, "*Hurt people will hurt people.*" But I rarely hear the opposite, "*Healed people heal people.*" Get healed. Then, go heal.

Unknown

*Youth Dynamics*

