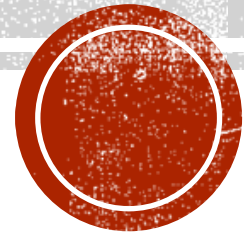


# **SPECIALTY COURTS AND DEFINED ROLES IN LOUISIANA CHILD WELFARE: ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES**

Rebecca E. May-Ricks, JD, CWLS

Ellen Doskey, JD



# COURTS AND KIDS

CINC/FINS

Dedicated Juvenile Courts

Dedicated Juvenile Sections of District Courts

Family Court/Juvenile Court combinations



# WHERE ELSE?

Family Preservation Courts

Juvenile Drug Courts

Adult Drug Courts

Assisted Outpatient Treatment Courts

Mental or Behavioral Health Courts

Sobriety Courts

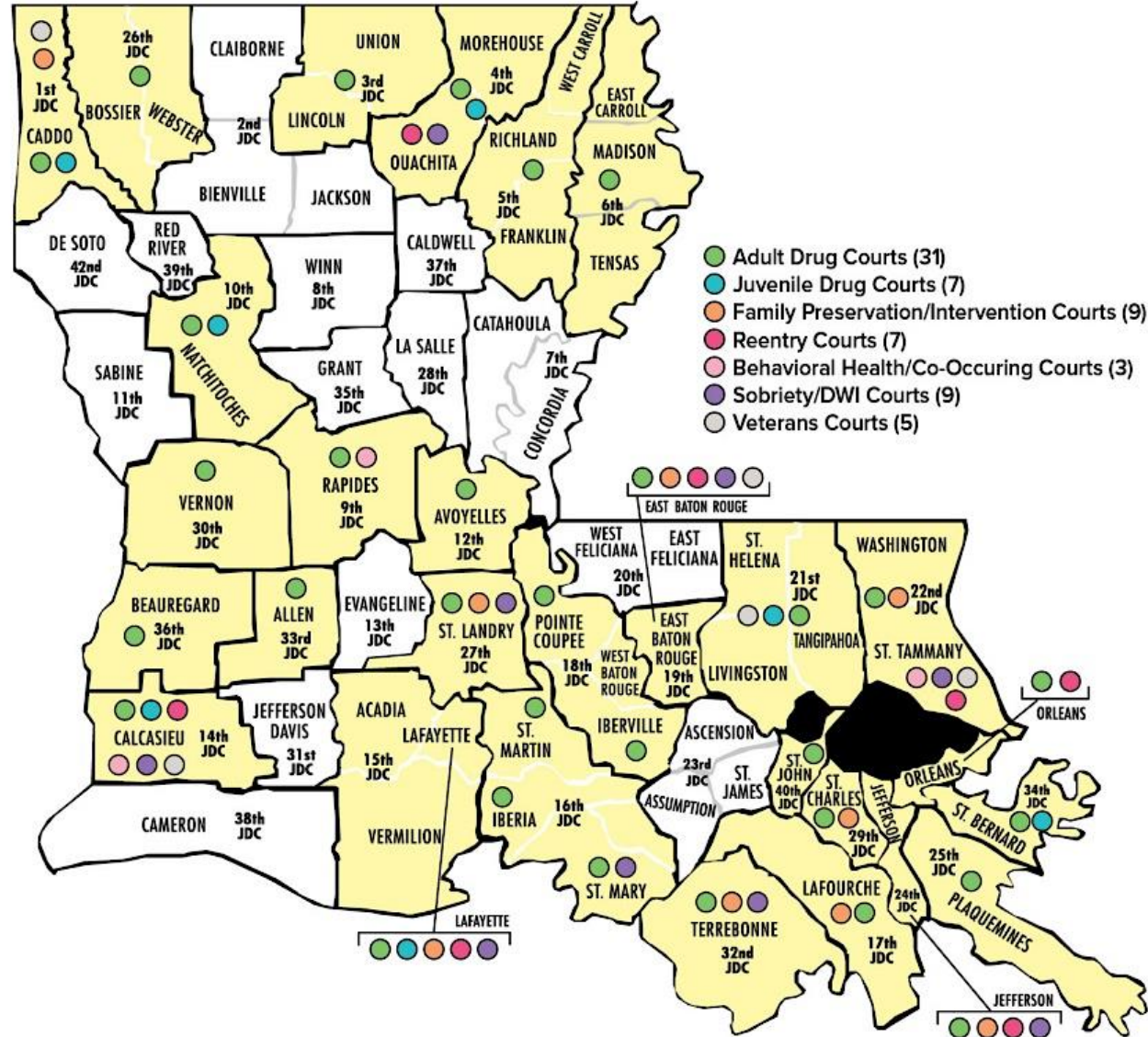
Veterans Courts

Re-Entry Courts





# LOUISIANA'S SPECIALTY COURTS



# COLLABORATION

Specialty court programs provide treatment and other services to meet the needs of program participants.

Each specialty court program is comprised of a collaborative and non-adversarial team which is led by a judge and may include a coordinator, treatment staff, prosecutor(s), public defender(s), law enforcement representative(s), case manager(s), probation officers and others who work together to ensure that the program operates according to all applicable standards and policies.

[https://www.lasc.org/Drug\\_Courts?p=FAQs](https://www.lasc.org/Drug_Courts?p=FAQs)

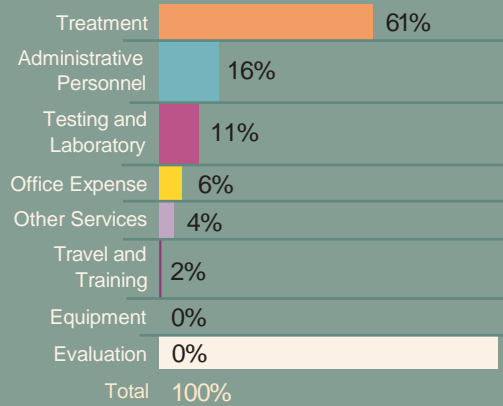




## LOUISIANA DRUG AND SPECIALTY COURTS

Funds for Louisiana's drug and specialty courts are primarily appropriated by the Louisiana Legislature and administered by the Supreme Court Drug and Specialty Court Office (SCDSCO). The SCDSCO awards funds annually to programs and monitors each program's operations throughout the year.

### EXPENDITURES



The SCDSCO works with Federal and State partners, such as the Dept. of Public Safety and Corrections, the Dept. of Children and Family Services, the LA Dept. of Health, and the LA Highway Safety Commission, to ensure accountability and promote best practices in existing specialty court programs. The office also assists with planning efforts of jurisdictions establishing new specialty court programs.

For more information on the Louisiana Supreme Court Drug and Specialty Court contact:

Louisiana Supreme Court Drug and Specialty Court Office  
400 Royal Street, Suite 1190, New Orleans, LA 70130-8101  
Phone: (504) 310-1670 • Fax: (504) 310-2587  
[www.lasc.org](http://www.lasc.org)

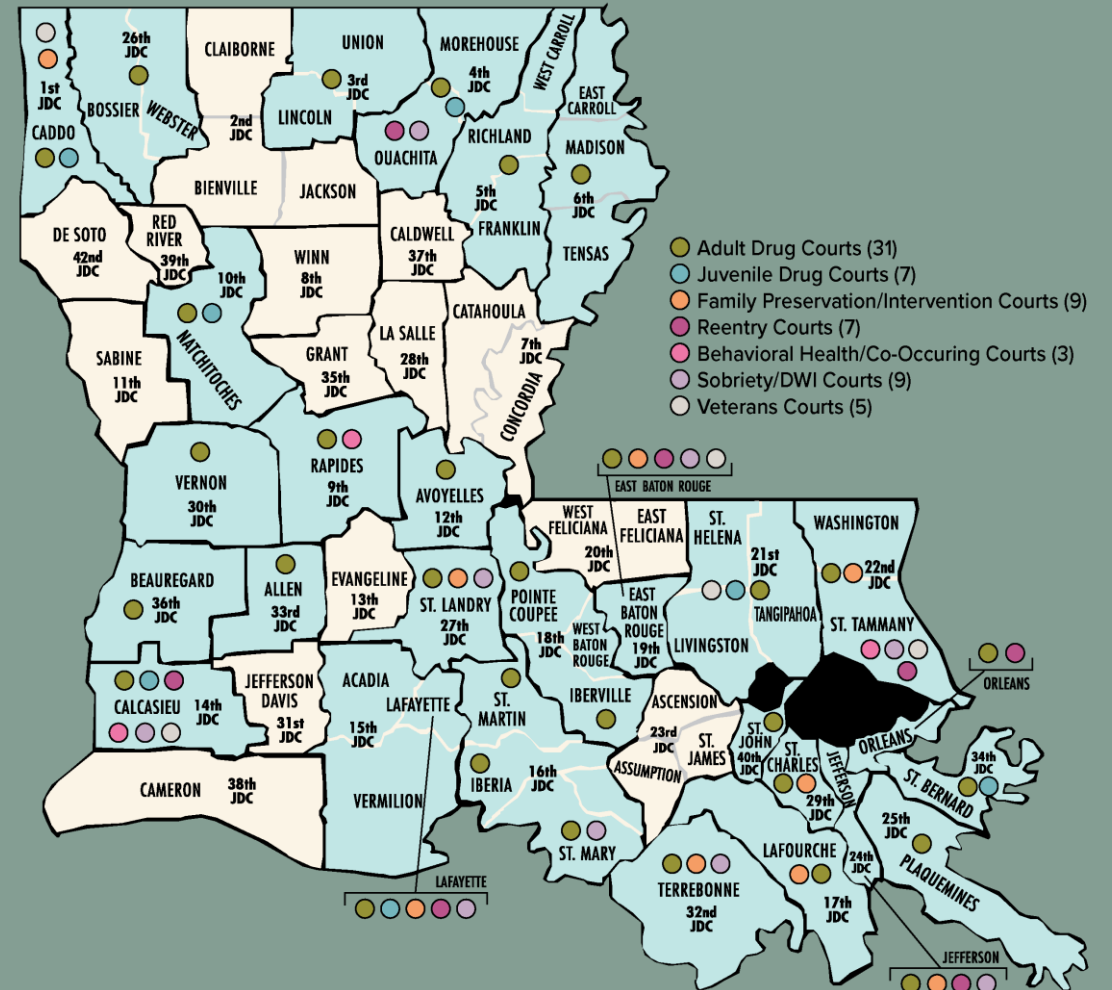
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## LOUISIANA SUPREME COURT DRUG AND SPECIALTY COURT PROGRAM

2023

## LOUISIANA DRUG AND SPECIALTY COURTS



In 2022, there were 71 operational specialty courts in Louisiana. These include Drug Courts, Family Preservation/Intervention Courts, Reentry Courts, Behavioral Health/Co-Occurring Courts, Sobriety/DWI Courts and Veterans Courts. These courts are led by a judge who works with a team of experts to ensure that they operate according to appropriate standards and policies. The SCDSCO is committed to providing necessary training to specialty court judges and team members, and has offered over twelve trainings in 2022.

# DRUG AND SPECIALTY COURTS WORK

"Addiction isn't measured in grams or fluid ounces; it's measured by the amount of harm we cause our family and ourselves. When my son was born, family preservation court presented to me an opportunity to change the direction of my life. I am grateful to have capitalized and restored health, relationships, and full custody of my son."

- 2022 32nd JDC Family Preservation Court Graduate

"I have gained so much from this time in Drug Court. I don't ever want to be that person I used to be. I have self-esteem, the respect of my family back, a new car & bought a house. I pay my bills on time & I love my life."

- 2022 26th JDC Adult Drug Court Graduate

"The Drug Court program has been a life changing experience for me because without this program I can assure you that I would have never pulled my life together."

- 2022 5th JDC Adult Drug Court Graduate

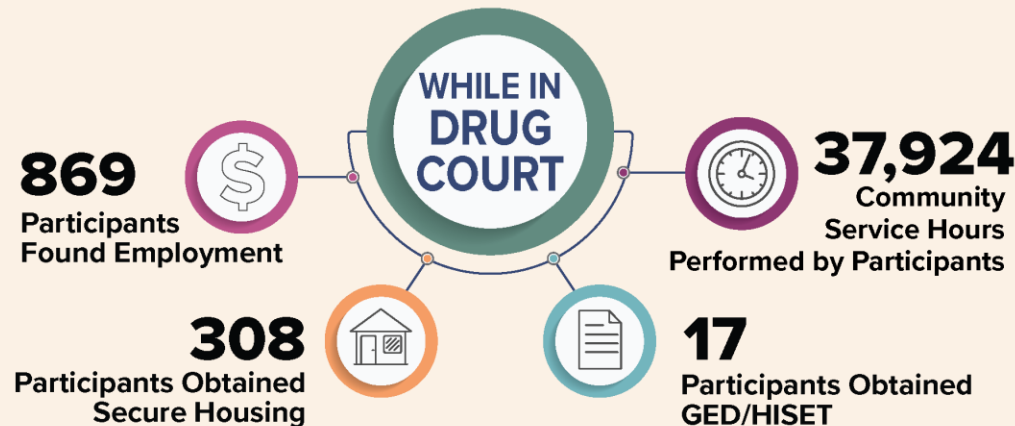
## PARTICIPANTS

Individuals Screened **2,923**    New Participants Admitted **1,944**    Participants Served **4,485**

## SERVICES

Treatment Hours **245,049**    Multi-Panel Drug Tests **137,220**

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## GRADUATES

**788** Participants Completed a Specialty Court Program

**21** Average Months in a Specialty Court Program

**18,580** Graduates Since Inception

## RECIDIVISM

**6%** RECIDIVISM RATE

**94%** Remained Free of New Convictions 3 Years After Graduation

## DRUG-FREE BIRTHS

**2022** **46** Drug Free Babies Born to Specialty Court Participants for an Estimated Savings of **\$11,500,000**

**SINCE INCEPTION** **969** TOTAL Recorded Drug-Free Births = **\$242,250,000** TOTAL SAVINGS

\*The cost of care and treatment for each child born addicted to drugs is estimated to be approximately \$250,000 for the first year of life (Office of Justice Programs, 1997).

# FAMILY

# PRESERVATION

# COURTS

What is it?

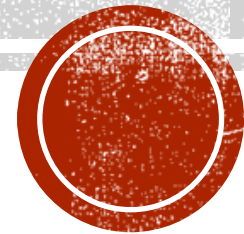
Why do we need it?

How does it work?

How to get started?

Ellen Doskey, JD

- Retired Assistant District Attorney
- Current Program Administrator for 32<sup>nd</sup> JDC Family Preservation Court





# WHAT IS FAMILY PRESERVATION COURT?



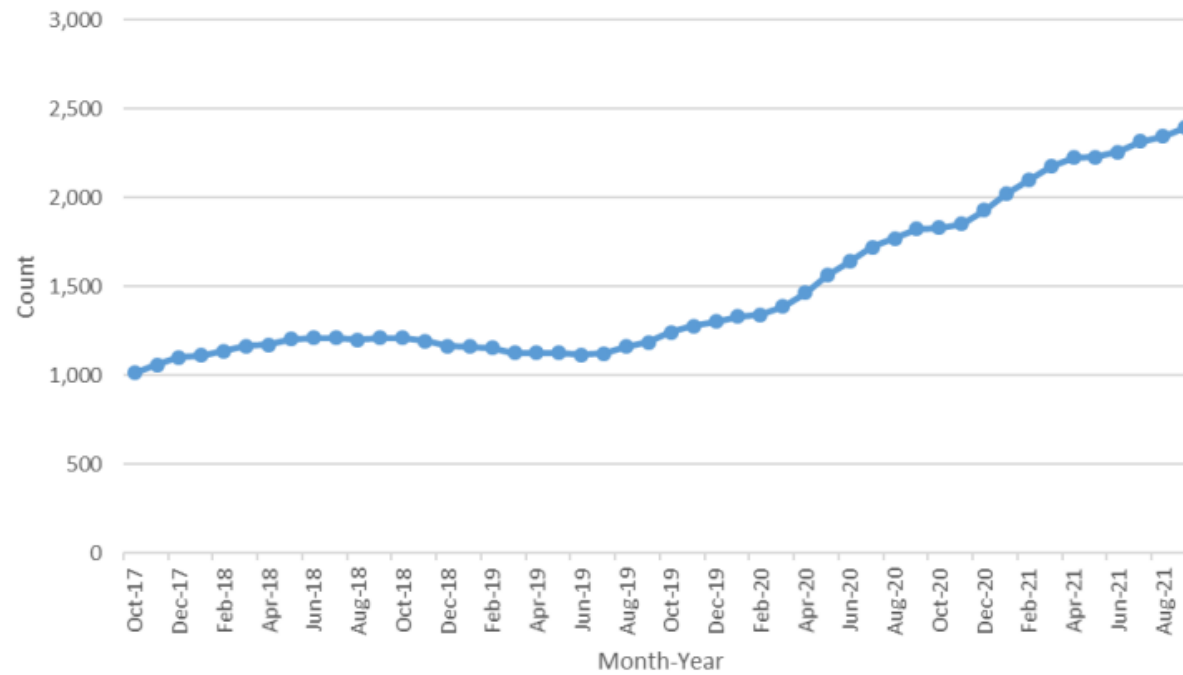


# WHY IS IT NEEDED?

- Across the country, 80% of families that are involved in child welfare have a substance use disorder.
- In 2021, Louisiana was third in the country with most drug related deaths per capita.
- In 2022, 2,463 people died from drug overdoses in State of Louisiana



## All Drug Poisoning Deaths Louisiana, 10/2017 to 9/2021 12-month provisional counts



Source: NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, extracted by Louisiana Opioid Surveillance Program.

Estimates for 2021 are based on provisional data.

Estimates for 2015-2020 are based on final data (available from: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/mortality\\_public\\_use\\_data.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/mortality_public_use_data.htm)).





# EFFECTIVENESS

- **Recovery** - parents participating in FTCs appear to enter treatment more quickly, stay in treatment longer, and complete treatment at higher rates.
- **Reunification** - families participating in an FTC were approximately twice as likely to reunify as families receiving conventional services.
- **Re-entry** - The increase in family reunification rates did not appear to have any effect on the risk of **repeat maltreatment** or **re-entry**.
- **Remain at home** - children of FTC participants experience fewer removals and fewer placement changes while in foster care.



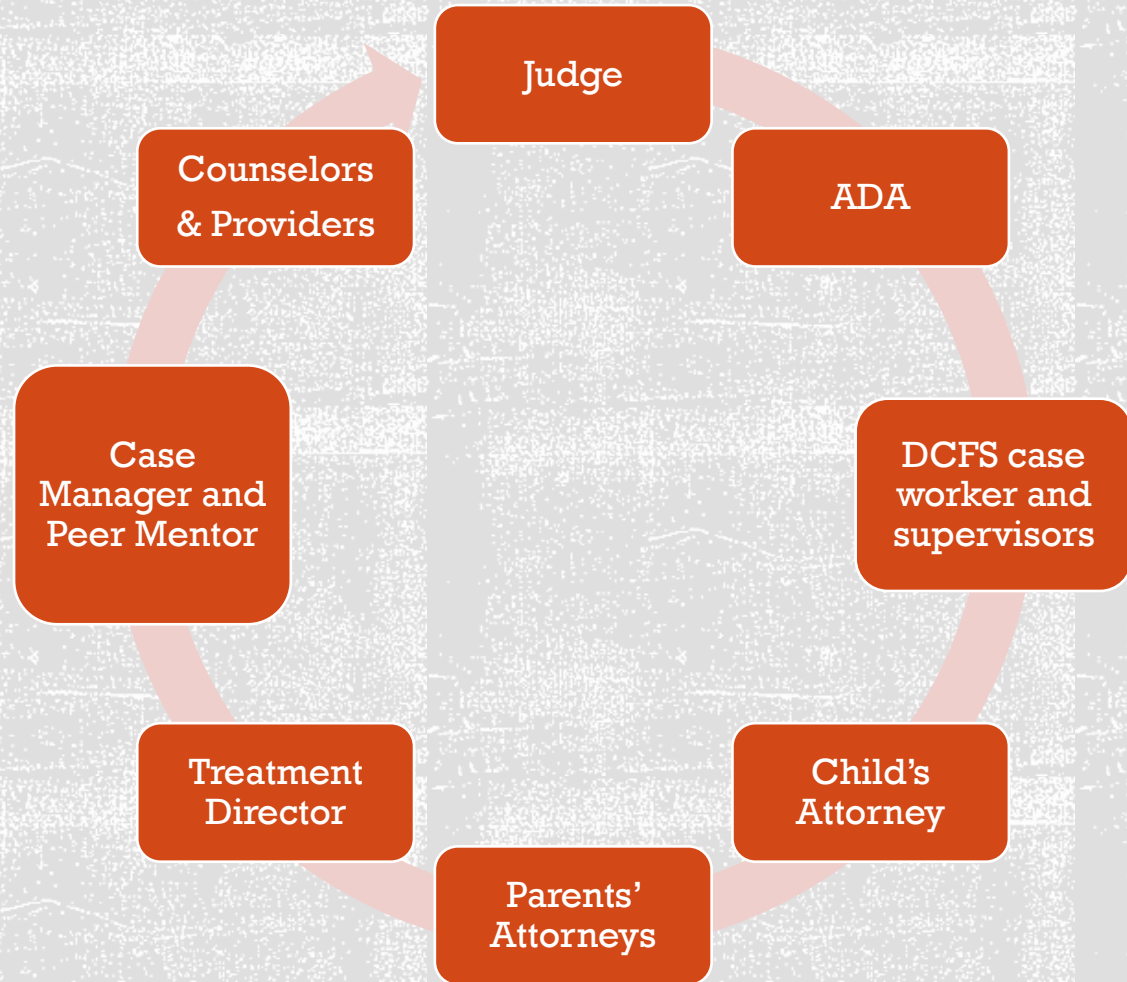


# HOW DOES IT WORK?

- **Team Approach – multidisciplinary team**
  - **Collaborative and Family Centered**
- **Trauma Informed**
- **More Intensive treatment and oversight**
- **Non- adversarial approach**
  - **Use Incentives and Adjustments to Treatment instead of jail/sanctions**



# WHO IS ON THE TEAM?







# HOW TO CHOOSE PARTICIPANTS?

- We accept referrals from all team members.
- Potential participants are informed of the program at the 72-hour hearing.
- Voluntary program



# HOW TO GET STARTED?

1. Get trained in SUD and best practices in treatment
2. Build your team
3. Create a Steering Committee
4. Build your Policies and Procedural Manual
5. Create your Participant Handbook
6. Apply for certification with Louisiana Supreme Court



# RESOURCES



**Louisiana Supreme Court**

400 Royal Street, New Orleans, LA 70130







**TOGETHER WE CAN  
CONFERENCE**

NOVEMBER 8-9, 2023

**2:30 TODAY IN EXHIBIT HALL A  
JUDGE DUPLANTIER, DARCE' BYRD, AND JOHANNA BRAUD**

**EXPLORING FAMILY PRESERVATION COURTS**



# QUESTIONS?

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