



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JOHN HOWARD ASSOCIATION'S REPORT ON JUVENILE DETENTION CENTERS: THE ROBERT W. DEPKE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMPLEX

In May, the John Howard Association (JHA) was invited to visit the Robert W. Depke Juvenile Justice Complex in Vernon Hills. The Complex houses the Hulse Juvenile Detention Center, including classrooms and a gymnasium, juvenile probation offices, a residential treatment facility for youth, and two juvenile courtrooms. The visit would provide JHA the occasion not only to tour and view the facilities, but also the opportunity to talk with administrators about the operation of the juvenile complex and its practices and programs that have been initiated and currently exist.

While inspections of juvenile detention facilities by the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice are held annually, there is no ongoing independent monitoring of juvenile detention facilities in Illinois. Additionally, collection and production of juvenile data is not standardized and varies among jurisdictions throughout the State.

"I have now received a published report and evaluation by the John Howard Association regarding the 19th Judicial Circuit's juvenile programs and detention facilities located in Vernon Hills, and I couldn't be more proud," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. "It is an outstanding report regarding transparency, accountability, and best practices, and it

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suggests that other juvenile facilities look at the 19th Judicial Circuit as a model for others. Once again this demonstrates the commitment and hard work of our staff who continue to place the 19th Judicial Circuit at the forefront as one of the most progressive court and juvenile justice systems nationwide.”

The John Howard Association of Illinois (JHA) advocates that every juvenile detention center and residential facility in the state should: (1) be subject to independent public oversight through regular and ongoing outside monitoring; and (2) regularly publish data on monthly, rather than yearly basis, tracking county juvenile detention populations, operations, practices, policies, and goals.

The John Howard Association was founded in 1901 to provide critical citizen oversight of the state’s adult and juvenile correctional facilities.

To view the report, please visit JHA’s website at http://www.thejha.org/special_reports.

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