

to make referrals for children with various needs, as well as to provide education and other opportunities for both parents and children. Much of the problem with referrals is there is no where in the county to refer children, and of those that are referred to services, transportation is a problem for most working parents. In addition, those on TennCare or other HMOs are often not getting the level of treatment they need.

According to their experiences, most juvenile offenses are drug-related, while most of the adult cases are alcohol-related. The Judge has seen many “generations” of trouble, indicating that sometimes the problems are within the family unit itself.

Juvenile Services/Sheriff’s Office – John LaFever, Supervisor of the School Resource Program, and of the D.A.R.E. program attended the 1/98 meeting. In discussing data from juvenile court, he noted some issues of concern. In order for an offense to be classified as a drug offense, multiple items must appear in court documents. Sometimes specific cases are not detailed enough to be labeled as a drug offense, and data may be misleading. He believes that approximately 50% of referrals to juvenile court are directly related to alcohol and drugs, while 85%+ are indirectly related in some way.

#### **Sheriff’s Office:**

Terry Ashe, Sheriff attended the 1/98 meeting. He discussed the issue of DUI arrests. He noted that many DUIs are spanish-speaking foreigners. He also believes that current DUI laws are not working – there are too many repeat offenders. In his opinion there should be mandatory education and treatment in addition to jail time. He stated that it is important to continue working with kids in the school to educate them at an early age on the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. Programs such as the SRO program have been successful. He noted that through the SRO program, many crimes had been solved. He mentioned a “Juvenile Crime Stopline” that is in the process of being implemented. The Sheriff also stated that availability of drugs is an issue in the county – all types of drugs are on the streets.

The Sheriff mentioned that there are gangs in Wilson County. The largest gang groups are **not** ghetto-based, but are middle-class white males, primarily from the west end of the county. His recommendation is that there be more teacher in-service training on gang-related activities. There are currently many PTO/Parent trainings in place on gangs, drugs, etc. These gangs are probably kids over the age of 14. It was noted that in some schools with younger kids, there was not much gang activity.

#### **The District Attorney’s Office:**

Bobby Hibbett with the District Attorney’s Office attended the 4/98 meeting. Mr. Hibbett is also a member of the Child Fatality Review Team. Mr. Hibbett emphasized that the focus of his office is prosecution vs. prevention; the office supports agencies who focus on prevention. Based on his experiences, alcohol **and** drugs are related to 90% of youth crimes. It was discussed that there are limited opportunities for parent education in the county, and there is also a challenge of getting parents to the programs that do exist.