



# NEWS RELEASE

## APACHE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

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**ST. JOHNS** – Apache County Superior Court and Juvenile Probation Services are committed to serving the public by appropriately placing and treating children under its jurisdiction. A great deal of research goes into determining what is most appropriate for each child that enters the juvenile justice system. When a child is able to be rehabilitated and treated in the local community, probation is the most appropriate sanction; however, when a child's needs and public protection concerns indicate that in-community rehabilitation services are not appropriate, probation is not a viable option. The sentencing judge makes a decision on the most appropriate disposition for each child based on the needs of the child, the nature of the offense, victim impact and community protection.

Apache County Court Administration is concerned about recent allegations in a high profile juvenile case that insinuate that funding was a driving force behind disposition recommendations.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), Apache County Juvenile Probation and Court Administration have worked for the past several months diligently to develop an appropriate disposition based on recommendations by numerous experts.

Unfortunately, the Apache County Attorney's Office entered into a plea agreement without consulting with other agencies and without first having the expert reports available to determine appropriate services. The Juvenile Probation Department worked very hard to identify a means of implementing the terms of the Plea Agreement. The allegations speculating that the AOC and Juvenile Probation made decisions and recommendations based upon funding are untrue. Clearly, funding is an issue in these difficult economic times, but the needs of the child, the nature of the offense, impact on the victims, and community protection are the primary consideration in any juvenile case.

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