

## **Program Narrative:**

**The Mission** of the Collin County SOAR Program is to enable teens and their families to face addiction or habitual use of illegal substances to rewrite their behavior and relationships with each other and to develop a sense of responsibility with themselves and their community.

**The Goals and Objectives** of the Collin County SOAR Program are as follows:

1. To ensure that all participants reduce drug use while in the program and 6 months after program completion, thereby reducing juvenile drug use;
2. To ensure that 75% of participants not progress further into the juvenile or criminal justice system during program participation, thereby reducing recidivism;
3. To ensure that 75% of participants decrease antisocial behavior and increase pro-social behaviors;
4. To ensure that participants work toward or complete a high school diploma or GED; and
5. To ensure that family communication and parenting skills are improved, thereby increasing family functioning.

**The criteria** for entry into the SOAR Program are as follows:

1. The juvenile must be between the ages of 14 and 16 ½ in order to have sufficient time under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to complete the program.
2. The juvenile must have been adjudicated for an offense other than delivery of a controlled substance or a violent offense as defined by federal law.
3. The juvenile must exhibit substance use that demonstrates a need for intensive outpatient or inpatient substance abuse treatment.
4. The juvenile must be on intensive supervision probation in the juvenile court.
5. The juvenile must have a caring adult who is able to participate in the program.

**Referral** in the SOAR Program may be made by any team member, a juvenile prosecutor, a juvenile probation officer, a juvenile or his/her parent or guardian. Referral is made to the JPO Court Officer, who will interview the juvenile and parent/guardian, gather and evaluate probation records, and refer the juvenile for a substance abuse assessment. The Court Officer shall forward the referral to the SOAR Program Team for review. The Program Team shall then determine whether the juvenile meets the criteria for admission.

If the juvenile is admitted, he/she and his/her parents or guardians shall attend an orientation will be conducted by program representatives. If the juvenile and his/her family choose to enter the SOAR Program, the juvenile will begin treatment and be scheduled for court.

**Assessments** shall be done initially to determine substance abuse dependency and the appropriate level of treatment. The assessments are completed by a certified alcohol or drug abuse counselor. Depending on the results of the assessment, the juvenile's family may choose the program as long as it meets the level of treatment deemed necessary by the assessment.

**Orientation** will be held with the juvenile and family after appropriate court and legal proceedings have taken place. At orientation, the juvenile and his parents/guardians will be introduced to the components of the SOAR program. Representatives from the team will explain their role in the program and the defense attorney, either private or appointed, will be available to answer questions from the juvenile and his family. All paperwork will be completed at that time and given to the Judge for formal acceptance into the program.

**Program Components and Requirements** are as follows:

The SOAR Program is intended to last 12 to 18 months. The actual length of time in the program depends on the juvenile's progress and ability to remain drug free and comply with program requirements. The program consists of three levels. Graduation is scheduled after all levels of the program have been completed. The treatment segment of the program is based on individualized plans developed between the therapist, the juvenile, and the juvenile's family, after all assessments are completed.

The requirements of each program level may be increased or decreased depending upon the needs and ability of each juvenile. The SOAR team will review each juvenile's case weekly to determine whether his/her treatment plan and individual goals are being met. Parents/guardians may also have a treatment plan, depending on the assessment, and parents shall submit to random drug testing if necessary.

The Judge shall promote a juvenile to the next level upon successful completion of the requirements. Any failure to comply with the requirements shall be addressed in treatment and sanctions by the Judge. The recommendations for promotion or sanction shall be decided by the team but are subject to the approval of the Judge. The team may also consider whether the juvenile should be retained at a particular level, should be reduced to a lower level, or should be terminated from the SOAR program.

**Problem Statement:**

Collin County, with its 886 square miles, has been one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. The population of Collin County has increased from 491,772 in 2000 to 791,631 in 2009, an increase of 61%. The percentage of under age 18 juveniles is 28% of the population. As a result of this population increase, the juvenile probation department has experienced a growth in referrals in many areas, particularly in the area of drug related offenses. There were 122 referrals (88 misdemeanors, 33 felonies) in 2000 compared to 274 referrals (210 misdemeanors, 64 felonies) in 2010 for drug offenses. This more than doubling of referrals has also made it apparent that many juveniles are in need of drug treatment.

Treatment facilities for juveniles are limited and expensive. The county has a post-adjudication residential program that concentrates on drug treatment. Admissions to that program have grown from 41 in 2000 to 95 in 2010, and the program is consistently at or above capacity. There are no other inpatient facilities within the county for juveniles. The need for treatment continues to grow for adolescents, but the high cost of residential inpatient treatment has demanded that the Court create alternative approaches. As a result, the District Judge of the 417<sup>th</sup> District court initiated a juvenile drug court program in January 2010. The program is known as SOAR, Successfully Opting for Accountability and Recovery. The first participant began the program on the 12<sup>th</sup> of that

month and the total number of participants for the first year was capped at ten. This program addresses the drug treatment needs of juveniles by creating for each child an individualized plan with intensive outpatient treatment, aftercare requirements, and close supervision and monitoring by the Program Team, all while the child remains in his or her home. We have had 14 participants since the inception of the program and our first successful graduates will complete the program by June of 2011.

Collin County's SOAR program seeks grant funding in order to train juvenile drug court team members, to provide substance abuse treatment funding for those juveniles whose families cannot pay for it, to defray the cost of drug testing, and to fund parenting classes for the parents and guardians of participants who cannot afford that cost. The SOAR program has existed with no budget during the first year and has not received any dedicated funding from federal, state or county officials.

**Supporting Data:**

Above paragraph provides supporting data. Data is from US Census reports and Collin County Juvenile Probation Department Caseworker.

**Community Plan:** \_\_\_\_\_

Collin County has an established Community Plan.

**Goal Statement:**

The goal of this grant request is to provide outpatient and inpatient treatment for juveniles who are participating in the Juvenile Drug Court and whose families are unable to afford the desired treatment. The funding requested would ensure in-patient treatment resulting in completion of the treatment program for two juvenile respondents. An additional eight juvenile respondents would be able to complete inpatient treatment if the funding is provided.

A secondary goal of the grant is to assist the 417<sup>th</sup> Juvenile Drug Court team members to attend training nationally and in-house. Training is provided by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals as well as by local contract professionals. The goal is to provide the training for the team which consists of nine members employed by the county with an additional four members from other entities.

The third goal of the request is to provide support and parent classes for the parents and guardians whose children are participating in the juvenile drug court. The classes would be provided at no cost or low cost to the parents.

The fourth goal of the request is to provide drug testing materials and laboratory fees for urinalysis.

**Continuation Projects:**

This project is not a grant-funded continuation project.

## **Project Summary**

The purpose of this project is to assist juvenile respondents, ages 14-16.5, and their families with their substance abuse rehabilitation and to provide training for drug court team members. The population of Collin County has dramatically increased, causing the referrals to the juvenile probation department to escalate as well. The only in-patient substance abuse program in Collin County is consistently at capacity and many other juveniles are in need of substance abuse out-patient treatment. In January, 2010, the 417th District Court began a juvenile drug court program to allow juvenile respondents to become drug-free while continuing to reside in their homes. The SOAR program creates an individualized plan for each juvenile requiring substance abuse treatment, constant drug testing, intense supervision and close monitoring by the program team, completion of educational goals, and maximum utilization of community resources. Part of the supervision process also includes providing parents/guardians with tools to become more effective supervisors as well. The program team has learned in its first year that many of the families do not have the financial means in order to pay for treatment. The drug court team members also require training, both immediate and on-going, in order to meet the criteria of the ten essential characteristics of a drug court. There is no budget established or even available at the county level for these needs. Therefore, this project will provide funding for these purposes. The goal of this funding request is to provide training for team members, treatment and drug screens for those juveniles involved in the SOAR program, and parenting classes for the parents/guardians whose children are drug court participants.

## **Ten Essential Characteristics:**

### **Integration of Services:**

The Collin County Juvenile Drug Court, SOAR, was initiated in January of 2010 to facilitate the treatment and intensive supervision of juveniles who are in need of rehabilitation due to drug use and abuse. The program is designed to coordinate efforts of the 417<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court and the Collin County Juvenile Probation Department in supervising the rehabilitation of juvenile offenders as they complete treatment and remain at home under the direct supervision of their parents/guardians. The juvenile offender may be referred by the Judge or Master of the 417<sup>th</sup>, by the probation department, by the defense or by the Assistant District Attorney. The SOAR team also receives referrals from Serenity High, a McKinney Independent School District facility. Serenity provides educational services to students who have been in drug treatment and are committed to staying sober and who want to attend school in a drug-free environment. Participants in SOAR are required to submit to an assessment and then comply with recommendations of that assessment. They are to complete three levels of supervision, which includes frequent drug tests, meetings with the SOAR team, including the Judge, and their assigned probation officer and attending treatment per assessment recommendation. The participants are also expected to comply with all terms of probation before graduating from the program. Non-compliance can result in detention in the Collin County Juvenile Detention Center, additional community service, change of curfew as well as termination from the program.

### **Non-Adversarial Approach**

The juvenile participant will typically be introduced to the program pre-adjudication. After meeting with their attorney and the court liaison about SOAR, the juvenile enters a plea of true, understanding that the recommendation of the probation department is to participate in SOAR. The Assistant District Attorney is also involved in the pre-adjudication recommendation and will agree to the plea if the agreement is in the best interest of public safety, which is her role. The defense attorney represents the juvenile's due process rights, including providing the assistance and advice of counsel with respect to any alleged violations of rules or any penal law. The participant is advised that sanctions might be proposed in the event of an alleged violation of the program rules but the juvenile will be afforded an attorney in that situation.

### **Prompt Placement**

An adjudication hearing is set as soon as possible, typically the following Wednesday as hearings are held each Wednesday, after the agreement to participate in SOAR is made by all involved parties. The juvenile will have had an assessment by that time and both he/she and the guardians will have a general understanding of what the SOAR participation includes. The terms of probation will include the requirement to attend SOAR and the child and parent will be required to attend orientation which is when the details for the program are explained. The child will then attend the first weekly meeting with the drug court team on the same Wednesday.

### **Access**

SOAR provides a continuum of services in order to assist the juvenile and guardians in the treatment and recovery process. The process begins with the assessment. Depending on the treatment needs, the juvenile may be referred to outpatient or inpatient treatment or drug and alcohol education. The child may receive a referral to Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous and guardians may be provided information on Families Anonymous. During the course of the SOAR program, the juvenile and parent may be referred to additional treatment options. If the need indicates, a juvenile may be placed on the waiting list for treatment at North Texas State Hospital located in Vernon Texas or in some cases, to the Post Adjudication Program in the Collin County Juvenile Detention Center. These juveniles may have their SOAR participation interrupted until in-patient treatment can be obtained. The child may also be referred for mental health treatment, depending on the situation.

### **Abstinence Monitoring**

Upon entering the SOAR program, the juvenile will have two-three drug screenings a week. The screens, all of which are observed, will be taken both at scheduled times and at random. The juvenile probation department utilizes both instant urinalysis screens and will also submit urine samples to a contract laboratory in order to have them tested. The laboratory can also test for alcohol use and this feature is utilized on occasion. The frequency of drug testing will lessen as the participant progresses in the program and is promoted to different levels of supervision.

### **Compliance Strategy**

The Drug Court team is composed of several team members representing various disciplines. The members are: The presiding Judge of the 417<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court, her court coordinator, court officer, and reporter. Other members of the team include the appointed judicial master and defense attorney, two supervising probation officers, the court liaison probation officer, an assistant district attorney, the principal of Serenity High and the Deputy Director of juvenile probation. At least one treatment provider is also a member of the team. This team meets every Wednesday afternoon to discuss the progress of each SOAR participant. Reports are given from the supervising officers, the counselor and the school principal. The reports include information about school, work, rule violations, and results of drug screens. If there have been any probation or rule violations, the possible sanctions are discussed. Sanctions may include one day to one week spent in the detention center, house arrest, curfew modification, additional community service restitution, a writing assignment, additional chores at the house, etc. Only as a last resort is a probation modification filed and/or the juvenile is terminated from SOAR. On the other hand, if the child is progressing and all reports are positive, the child receives encouraging feedback from several team members during court meetings and will look forward to advancement to the next level or phase of the program.

### **Judicial Interaction**

Judicial interaction can come in two different forms for the SOAR, either with the 417<sup>th</sup> District Judge or her appointed judicial master. Either Judge will more than likely be familiar with the participant because of previous detention or adjudication events. During the course of the SOAR program, one or both Judges will attend the weekly team meetings. Weekly meetings occur during the first level, which can last three-to-five months. For the second level, meetings with the Judge and team occur on a bi-weekly basis over a four-to-six month period. During the final phase or level, meetings with the Judge and team are once monthly. During the drug court meetings, the juvenile and his guardian sit in front of the drug court team and the Judge facilitates the exchange of information with all drug court participants awaiting their turn in the courtroom. The guardian and juvenile are asked to give a report for the past reporting period and the Judge will ask questions to check the progress. The sobriety birthday is frequently recalled and the juvenile is congratulated and given support on his/her efforts. Any issues that need to be addressed are discussed in front of the entire team. On occasion, due to a confidentiality issue, the team may recess at the Judge's discretion in order to staff a particular issue.

### **Evaluation**

Program evaluation consists of three elements. First, all graduates complete a formal written evaluation; the evaluation uses relevant and age-appropriate language to encourage candor and completeness. Second, members of the Program team conduct exit interviews of all graduates and their parents or family members, and strive to create an atmosphere where the participants feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts and

opinions. Third, SOAR program professionals assess the program, formally two times per year, and through continuous informal feedback. By creating an open and accessible program, the SOAR program believes all who help provide candid and useful input.

Because our first graduates are completing the program in the next two to three months, we expect to assemble insights from these three elements in our annual report.

### **Education**

In June 2005, the District Judge attended the NADCP (National Association of Drug Court Professionals) Conference in Orlando, Florida. She also attended a National Drug Court Institute in Traverse City, Michigan that same year in August.

Family Drug Court Training was held on August 27, 2009 in Tyler, TX. It was attended by the District Judge, Court Coordinator, Appointed Master, Court Officer, Appointed Defense Attorney, all SOAR team members.

The SOAR core members, (District Judge, Court Coordinator, Appointed Master and JPO Deputy Director) attended "Designing Your Juvenile Drug Court" on December 1-4, 2009 as presented by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Juvenile Probation Officers, in order to maintain certification by the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, are required to attend 40 hours of training each year. The two probation officers attended the "Drug Recognition Conference" on February 1-3, 2010 specifically because of the focus on drug education and their role on the drug court team.

### **Partnerships**

The Juvenile Drug Court program, SOAR, is a collaborative effort with the Juvenile Probation Department, including probation and detention. The probation department supervision officers provide intensive supervision, including home and school visits and drug testing. The John R. Roach Juvenile Detention Center and staff provides a lock-up facility as sanctions may require on occasion. Life Management Resources, because many of the SOAR participants attend out-patient counseling there, provides a counselor who attends all the weekly meetings. The Serenity High School, a McKinney Independent School District Facility, has a principal who is present for weekly meetings of the drug court team. Each party provides a wealth of information and a referral source for the drug court.

In addition, the SOAR program seeks, through assisting juveniles with substance abuse issues, to successfully reintegrate participants from a drug-focused environment to becoming a contributor to his or her local community. The program utilizes community resources whenever appropriate and necessary, and continues to develop a network of resources for its participants. Each participant participates in community service as a part of the SOAR program requirements. Program participants are encouraged to locate sponsors or mentors in Phase Two of the program through local clubs and AA/NA groups. Many participants begin part-time employment, and become re-involved in sports and outside activities as part of reintegrating into their communities. Finally, the

program utilizes psychological, psychiatric and counseling services for participants and their families to assist with issues that will allow the juvenile to remain substance-free.

## **General**

This Juvenile Drug Court accepts juveniles who are post-adjudication and/or reentry candidates.

Each member of the drug court team has observed at least one drug court staffing session and hearing.

The Drug Court has developed and maintains written policies and procedures for the operation of the program.

The Drug Court will submit a copy of any project evaluations, evaluation plans, recidivism studies or related reports that are completed during the grant period to Criminal Justice Department.

The Jurisdiction is the 417<sup>th</sup> Judicial District.

The Juvenile Drug Court was established on January 12, 2010.

The Drug Court type is Juvenile.

The court will accept DWI offenders.

The presiding Judge (Cynthia Wheless) is an active judge holding elective office.

Phone and e-mail Address:

[Cwheless@co.collin.tx.us](mailto:Cwheless@co.collin.tx.us)

972/548-4658

The Drug court coordinator is Angel Marksberry.

Phone and e-mail Address:

[Amarksberry@co.collin.tx.us](mailto:Amarksberry@co.collin.tx.us)

972/548-4658

Federal Funding:

The Juvenile Drug Court has never applied for federal funding.

The Juvenile Drug Court has never received federal funding.

Judge Cynthia Wheless will register with the Texas Department of State Health Services-Clinical Management for Behavioral Health Services (CMBHS) database.

Geographic Area: Referrals are accepted on Juveniles who reside in the County of Collin.

Target Audience: Any juvenile who exhibits substance use that demonstrates a need for intensive outpatient or inpatient substance abuse treatment.

Gender: Male and Female

Ages: Between the ages of 14 and 16.5.

**Special Characteristics:**

In need of intensive supervision and substance abuse treatment;  
 Adjudicated for offense other than delivery of a controlled substance or a violent offense;  
 Must have a caring adult who is able to actively participate;.

**Budget**

Activity	Number of Participants	Cost
In-patient treatment	2 (90 days @350 a day)	63,000
Out-patient	8 (\$2160 for 3 months)	17,280
Conference Training	13 (\$1947 each)	25,311
Parenting Classes	10 (8 weeks each@\$35 session.)	2800
Drug Screens	Synthetic Marijuana (50@\$35)	1750
Instant	\$2.65ea for 500, shipping \$45	1370
	Total	\$111,511

Input Measures	current	target
Number of paid inpatient treatment	0	2
Number of paid outpatient treatment	0	8
Number of team members attending a conference	4	13
Number of in-house training events	0	2
Number of parents attending parenting class	0	10
Outcome Measures	current	target
Number of Juveniles to graduate program	0	8
Number of Juveniles to participate	10	15

March 27, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

Serenity High has been a collaborative partner with SOAR , McKinney's Teen Drug Court since its inception in 2010. As the Principal of Serenity, I serve on the drug court team, also comprised of Judges, probation officers, counselors, lawyers and other court personnel. Serenity has had the fortunate experience of enrolling five drug court students in our school. The first enrollee has earned her diploma.

As a tremendous statement of pride for her accomplishments, an entire section \_had representatives from the drug court attend her graduation. Seeing that the support and interaction with drug court members had been ongoing during this graduate's tenure at Serenity, this was a natural culmination for this milestone event.

Other examples of involvement with our school include but are not limited to: probation officers visiting our drug court Serenity students, not only to administer drug tests but to encourage and monitor their academic progress, drug court members sharing current trends in the field to enhance our ability to assist our parents and students, and the overall willingness of any member of the team to be available to counsel and support both parents and students at any time.

As I leave the drug court sessions each week, I reflect on the tremendous impact the SOAR team is making in the lives of students and their parents. How often do you see, Judges, lawyers, probation officers, counselors and court personnel function as a powerful unit, exploring all creative options to empower the student and his family who in the past have felt defeated and powerless. This powerful team reaffirms the respect for humanity and the ability to make a difference so our drug court students can become contributing members of society.

Cordially,

Juli-Ann Ferraro  
Principal of Serenity High

**COOPERATIVE WORKING AGREEMENT**

This is to certify that the objectives of the grant application submitted to the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Governor have been reviewed and that it is mutually agreed to cooperate to whatever extent is necessary in carrying out the objectives described in this application.

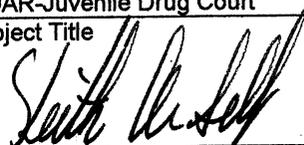
In addition, if the outside organization has personnel assigned to the grant-funded project, that agency certifies that it is cognizant of the rules and regulations governing the operation of the grant and agrees to abide by any and all such rules or special conditions relating to the application.

**Part I: Applicant Organization**

Collin County  
Applicant's Organization

SOAR-Juvenile Drug Court  
Project Title

Judge Keith Self  
Printed Name and Title of Applicant's  
Authorized Official

  
Signature of the Applicant's Authorized  
Official

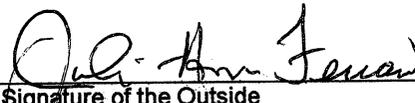
4/19/11  
Date

**Part II: Outside Organization**

MISD Serenity High  
Outside Organization

SOAR-Juvenile Drug Court  
Project Title

Julie Ferraro, Principal  
Printed Name and Title of Outside  
Organization's Authorized Official

  
Signature of the Outside  
Organization's Authorized Official

3-29-11  
Date