

Pam Clark

**President – National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA)
2006-2008**



Ms. Clark's first connection with juvenile justice was in law enforcement as an LA County Deputy Sheriff. She worked in custody at the women's jail from 1984 to 1988, and later became a patrol officer. She decided to reroute her career and work within the juvenile justice system as a residential counselor. After achieving her MSW, she went on to lead two community-based organizations. She has also been the Director at Bartholomew County Youth Services Center in Columbus, Indiana. Ms. Clark joined the Indiana Juvenile Detention Association and served as its President in the early 2000s. She enacted that group's first statewide training conference. She became involved with National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) when she attended its national conference and stated that she was "blown away by the quality of people and the passion of people working in the facilities across the nation." She has been involved ever since, including serving as President of the NJDA.

Since her retirement in 2008, Pam has helped to create a credential for staff working with youth in confinement. She went on to become a member of the national Child and Youth Care Certification Board representing the field of juvenile justice. She, along with her colleagues, underscores the importance of understanding youth and their different developmental stages as a part of the process to provide the best care possible.

Pam believes in the importance of creating position statements to support best practice in the field of juvenile justice. During her term as President of the NJDA, she focused on addressing the issues of overcrowding and age of admittance into juvenile detention and correction centers.

Pam recognizes the efforts of programs such as the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative that are attempting to address issues within the juvenile justice system and has high hopes that improvements will continue to be made in ensuring that only high risk youth are placed in detention.

As the National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS) looks to the future, her concerns pertain to the types of services available to the diverse population in juvenile detention and correctional institutions. She emphasizes the reality that a percentage of these kids have significant needs that are not always being addressed, because the proper resources are not in place to help them. It's important to understand the multitude of factors that affect these children's lives and identify interventions to address the entire population in the most efficient and effective manner.

Ms. Clark has continued to pave a solid path for juvenile justice leaders. One of her biggest concerns is that the leadership in juvenile justice is beginning to age out. She encourages a commitment to growing a new group of young leaders to continue the progress that has been made since the beginning of NJDA, a founding member of NPJS.

I have no doubt that NJDA will continue to have a positive impact on juvenile policies and procedures with such influential contributors to look up to.