



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

News for Immediate Release

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Local Autism Court Summit Educates and Trains Court Personnel and Partners

HARRISBURG — Recognizing the importance of training and education, a regional summit on Autism and the Courts hosted by Beaver and Fayette counties was held today in Canonsburg, Pa. for court personnel and partners focusing on the basics about autism, diagnosis and community support.

Spearheaded by Supreme Court Justice Kevin Dougherty on behalf of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the regional summit is part of the Autism and the Courts effort and expands on work being done statewide.

“Education, training and awareness are critical to ensuring we are providing for the needs of all court users, especially those with Autism,” Dougherty said. “The more we learn, the more we grow as a court system and as a community, but most importantly in our ability to be part of the type of positive change that will impact Pennsylvania families.”

Attendees represented 21 different organizations, including local children and youth, courthouse personnel, law enforcement, schools and community service providers. Speakers for the Beaver/Fayette summit included:

- Hon. Linda Cordaro, Court of Common Pleas of Fayette County
- Hon. Mitchell Shahen, Court of Common Pleas of Beaver County
- Dr. Tammy Hughes, Licensed School Psychologist Autism Expert, Duquesne University
- Kate Hooven, Justice Project Coordinator, Autism Services Education Resources and Training
- Scott E. Bailey, Police Officer, Fox Chapel Area School District

Nearly one in 36* Pennsylvania children and more than five million adults nationwide are diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

For more information on the Autism in the Courts initiative, visit www.pacourts.us/learn/autism-and-the-courts.

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**Statistic from Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, 2023*