

# Unified Family Courts of North Carolina



For more information, click: <http://www.nccourts.org/Citizens/CPrograms/Family/Default.asp>

## SUPPORT FOR FAMILY COURTS

Family Courts provide a constructive and effective approach to very tough problems.

Justice Robin Hudson  
North Carolina Supreme Court

In the eyes of a child, time is a critical factor. A month can seem like a year. Four months an eternity. Being deliberate and swift in making decisions about a child's permanence is CRITICAL. The data clearly shows that the Family Court is a much more time efficient process for children and families.

Executive Director Frank  
Crawford Youth Homes

I am dismayed that each year we have to justify the progress we have made in the handling of family law cases in order to maintain this level of progress. Funding of Family Court should no longer be considered as optional. There is clear and convincing evidence that Family Courts are an effective method of handling a high volume of cases that are charged with emotion and complex legal and factual issues. Yearly justification should be unnecessary.

Regan Miller, District Court Judge  
Mecklenburg County

Family Court (1) allows families to access the court system in an environment that is "family friendly" and supportive; (2) reduces processing time and costs; and, (3) improves compliance with court directives.

Sharon Kugelmass, Ph.D.  
Mecklenburg County

## Accountable & Cost Effective Justice for North Carolina Families

Since its inception in 1999, Family Court has helped families resolve difficult legal issues of divorce, child custody, child support and property distribution in a timely and respectful manner. It has also improved outcomes for families engaged in the Juvenile Courts. Accountable and cost effective case management practices are the hallmark of North Carolina Family Courts!

**Results!** Families in crisis seek timely resolution of legal claims. As of February 28, 2011, the median age of a case pending in a Family Court district was 97 days. The median age of a case filed in a non-family court district was 305 days.

- ▶ Family Court hearings and trials are scheduled by case managers and are monitored to ensure resolution is achieved within established time standards.
- ▶ The inclusion of Alternate Dispute Resolution has afforded families a less adversarial and more affordable method of settling disputes.

**Cost Effective!** North Carolina Family Courts prevent needless delays and save money. What is the cost of delay to families and to state expenditures?

- \$ Delays result in the postponement of establishing child support and distributing marital assets. Parent and children are often forced to seek public assistance if their cases languish.
- \$ Delays result in the postponement of permanent placement for children who are the custody of the Department of Social Services. Such delays equate to higher expenditures in foster care costs.
- \$ Delays increase the length of time children who have been adjudicated delinquent remain in detention facilities rather than being monitored, educated and treated in the community.

**North Carolina Family Courts promote accountable and cost-effective justice for families and children.**