

Subject: Keeping kids in class = Juvenile justice

From:

Date:

To:



**Success For Children And The Community;
Help troubled kids obtain needed services and keep them in class**

Skipping school. Drinking alcohol. Running away from home. Under current Georgia law, children can be locked up for these and other offenses that wouldn't be a crime if they were committed by an adult. Is an 'unruly child' in need of a secure detention facility or in need of services to address the issues contributing to the problem behavior? That is the focus of Article 6, Children in Need of Services (CHINS), of the proposed Georgia juvenile code (SB 292) championed by Georgia Appleseed and its JUSTGeorgia coalition partners.



In testimony this week before the full Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by **Senator Bill Hamrick** (R-Carrollton), **Georgia Appleseed Executive Director Sharon Hill** drew upon her years of experience on the bench as a Fulton County juvenile court judge and the statewide stakeholder input concerning status offenders found in [*Common Wisdom: Making the Case for a New Georgia Juvenile Code*](#) (see page 3). "Labels are not helpful," Hill told the



members. "Labeling a child as a status offender, unruly, ungovernable, doesn't get at what's going on in that child's life, that child's family." CHINS would create a family-focused approach to identify appropriate services and reach resolutions before the juvenile court hearing process is formally engaged.

According to **JUSTGeorgia Project Manager Julia Neighbors**, "this was the best hearing we've had to date and the level of stakeholder and coalition support, as well as interest from the Senate Committee, was impressive."

Introduced by Sen. Hamrick in April, 2009 as SB 292, the bill must be reintroduced in 2011. To learn more, visit www.JUSTGeorgia.org

As more and more schools are turning to the juvenile court system to deal with problem school behaviors, Georgia Appleseed has launched the second phase of its school discipline analysis project, **Effective School Discipline: Keeping Kids in Class (ESD: KKC)**. Schools need to maintain a safe learning environment. Equally so, children need the opportunity to achieve at least a quality high school education. The balance between these two interests is the focus of this research. Phase I explored current Georgia law and zero tolerance and other public school discipline policies in select schools and districts. Phase II will undertake interviews with front line stakeholders in school discipline to identify concerns and needs and possible responses to address them.

Download the [Phase I report and appendices](#) here. Phase II is due for completion in December 2010.

[Learn more about the ESD:KKC project here](#)

www.GaAppleseed.org
info@GaAppleseed.org
phone: 404-685-6750

Join Our Mailing List!

 SafeUnsubscribe™

