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## Highfields Director of Residential Services to Speak at Juvenile Justice Conference

Derek Hitchcock, director of residential services at Highfields, will speak at the Juvenile Justice Vision 20/20 Spring Conference Thursday, June 4 at Grand Valley State University.

The topic of the talk will be “Nuts and Bolts: From Assessments to Treatment Plans” and will focus on how to use classification systems and what risk assessments are available. Hitchcock said the use of risk assessment has become a nation-wide issue and using these assessments helps programs to better utilize available resources.

According to the Michigan Juvenile Offender Risk Assessment Survey Report, 2013, "timely assessment and well-chosen interventions that fit the individual needs of each youth and family have been proven to change lives for the better and improve quality of life for each participant as well as the greater community."

Hitchcock will speak with Joseph Hall, treatment services supervisor at Oakland County Children’s Village and Michele Bell, director of court services and program development for the 42nd circuit court family division in Midland. Each has implemented risk assessments in their own areas of work.

“It’s important that we all are giving our best interventions to our youth to make our communities a better place,” said Bell. “It gives our youth the best chance to be successful.”

Hitchcock said Highfields was one of the first to use structured risk assessments and he sees the value of sharing this information with others.

“It lets people know that Highfields is continually seeking ways to provide better and more cost-effective treatment to client youth,” said Hitchcock.

Hitchcock and Bell have both been speaking and giving trainings on risk assessment in various settings for the past five years.

“I think Michigan is on a good track to provide top-notch juvenile services in our communities,” said Bell.



Highfields is a human services nonprofit organization serving 11 Michigan counties through their residential treatment program, community services and educational services. More information about Highfields can be found at [www.highfields.org](http://www.highfields.org)

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