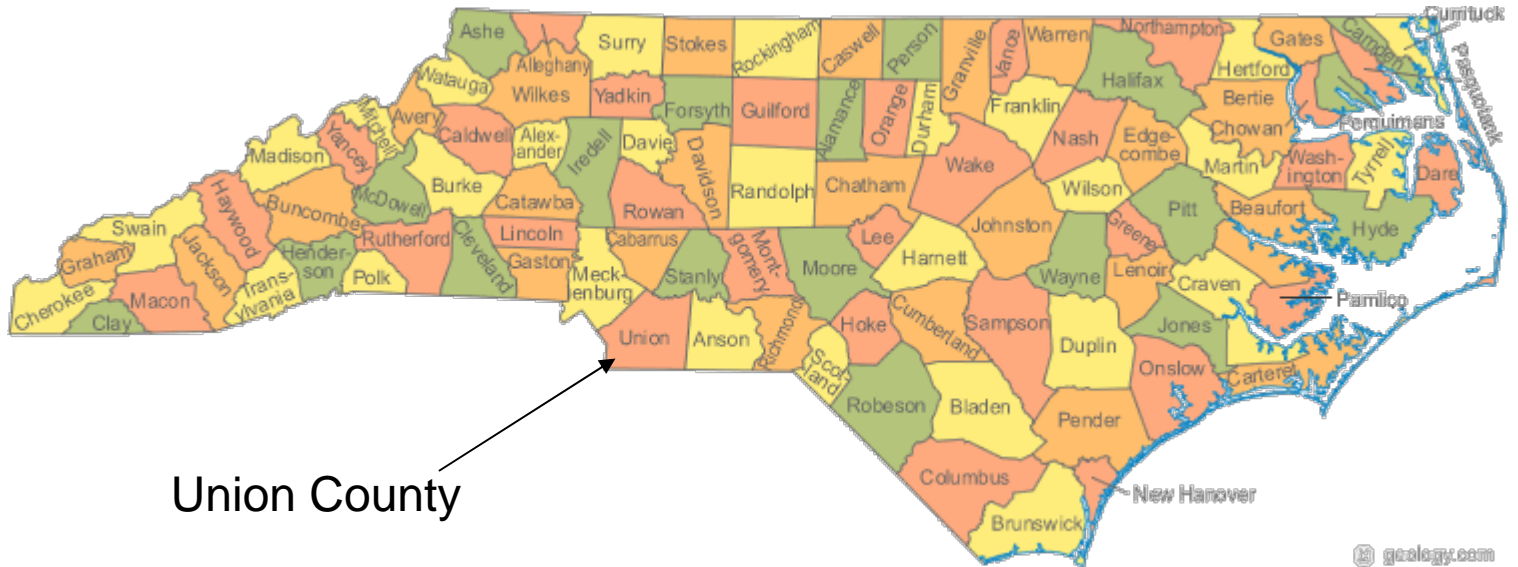




Diversions From The Juvenile Justice System

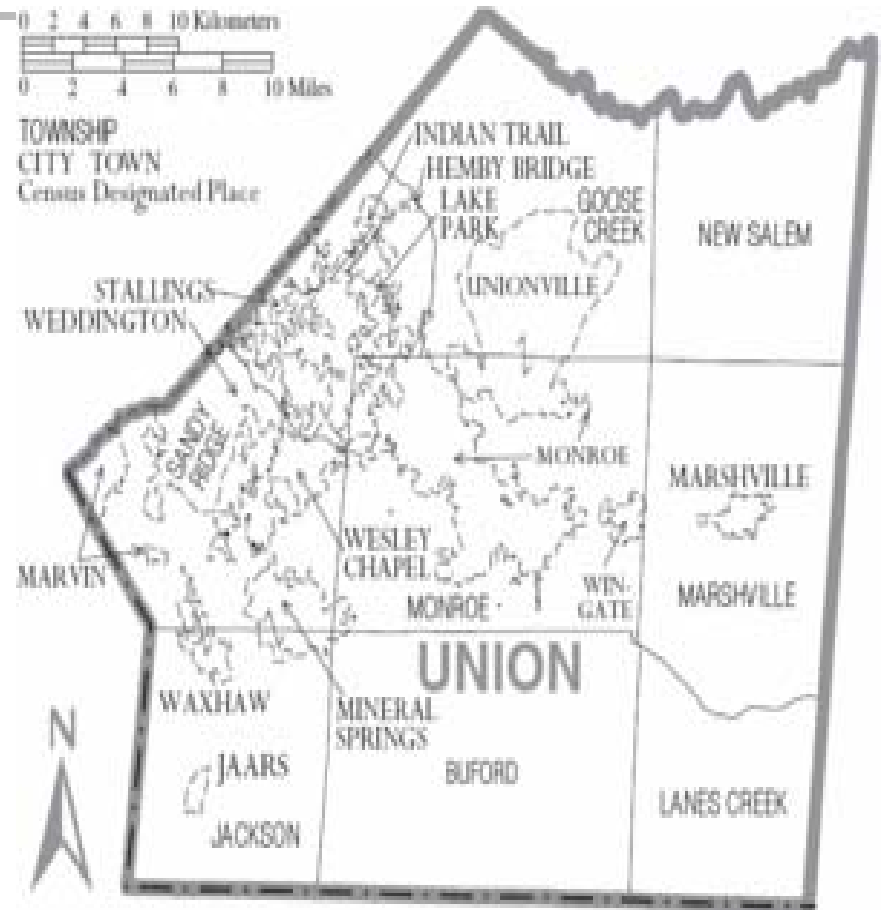
Rebecca Smith
DMC Project Director
Union County, NC



Union County

Union County Facts

- 15th fastest growing county in the US
- County population
 - Total = 153,652
 - Juvenile = 34,400
- Youth Demographics:
 - 71.09% White
 - 14.49% Black
 - 10.66% Hispanic
 - 02.24% Multiracial
 - 01.52% Other





Local Initiatives

- Law Enforcement Training/Education on juvenile complaint process
- Development and distribution of resource guide
- Increase in formal diversion from court through NC DJJDP



Law Enforcement Training

- Developed training guide
 - NC Statutes
 - Local procedures for filing complaints
 - Secure custody criteria
 - On call court counselor information
- Met with local law enforcement agencies and school resource officers separately
- Distributed guide to all field officers and supervisors



Results

- District Attorney's Office reports increase in completed information/complaint packets
- Less frivolous complaints
- Officers more confident when dealing with juveniles and their families



Resource Guide

- Researched and compiled information on local agencies and what services they offer
- Distributed resource guide
 - School administrators and guidance counselors
 - Juvenile Court Counselors
 - Law Enforcement field officers and resource officers



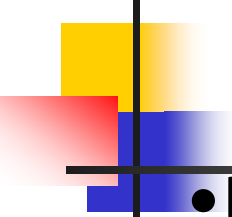
Results

- Increase in use of local resources
- Decrease in referrals to NC DJJDP in order for juveniles just to receive services



Diversion

- Formal alternatives available through NC General Statutes
- Three alternatives
 - Close with no further action
 - Divert with a plan
 - Divert with a contract
 - Can be approved for court if juvenile and family do not follow through with the plan or contract

- 
-
- Limited use in the past with minimal face to face contact with juveniles
 - Increased use of diversion within the last year
 - Diversion plans and contracts supervised above minimum standards
 - Two court counselors assigned to monitor diversion contracts/plans
 - Few are approved post-diversion