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MONROE COUNTY RANKS FIRST IN FLORIDA JUVENILE CIVIL CITATION STUDY

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Monroe County ranks first in 2016 Florida juvenile civil citation study

Stepping Up: Florida's Top Civil Citation Efforts recognizes 11 counties, including Monroe County, as the state's top-performers for the second year.

TALLAHASSEE, FL— Florida's second annual comprehensive study of alternatives to juvenile arrests for common youth misbehavior – called **"Stepping Up: Florida's Top Juvenile Civil Citation Efforts 2016"** – ranks Monroe County the best in the state. Juvenile civil citations are an alternative to arrest for common youth misbehavior.

Authored by one of Florida's top juvenile civil citation experts and supported by state and national juvenile justice reform organizations, the study also shows increasing the use of civil citations statewide up to 75% would enable law & order entities to invest up to \$62 million in preventing and addressing felonies and serious crimes; as well as significantly improve life outcomes for nearly 7,000 arrested youth.

"This year's study supports – in more depth and with more data – last year's findings that civil citations increase public safety, improve youth outcomes and save taxpayer money," said study author Dewey Caruthers, president of dewey & associates. "We are unable to find any data that shows arresting youth for common youth misbehavior instead of issuing civil citations is a good idea," Caruthers said, noting the Stepping Up 2016 recommends law enforcement arrest only in rare and exceptional circumstances instead of issuing a civil citation.

Stepping Up recognizes the state's top-performing counties, school districts and law enforcement agencies, which are categorized by division based on eligible youth. There are 11 counties that are ranked as the state's top-performers for the second year (in alpha order): Baker, Broward, Dade, Lafayette, Leon, Marion, Monroe, Pinellas, Seminole, Union, Wakulla.

"These top-performing counties recognized by *Stepping Up 2016* are the best in the state at not arresting juveniles for common youth misbehavior, said Roy Miller, president of The Children's Campaign, Florida's leading child advocacy organization for juvenile justice reform. "Without a doubt, arrests close doors to youth for future education and employment. We are calling on all counties, school districts and law enforcement agencies to get on board and dramatically increase utilization rates."

The nonpartisan study is supported by The Children's Campaign, Southern Poverty Law Center, ACLU, Joseph W. & Terrell S. Clark, Jessie Ball duPont Fund, Florida State University Project on Accountable Justice, James Madison Institute and Florida PTA.