

# CASE STUDY

# INGHAM COUNTY

# FAMILY CENTER

## Overview

- Family Center needed to update old facility to meet their needs
- Surveillance and video monitoring was needed throughout the campus
- Cameras with audio/video recording capabilities were installed
- Surveillance videos help to train staff and prevent situations from escalating



The Ingham County Family Center is located in a former elementary school that needed several modifications in order to accommodate its new mission of keeping students, faculty, and property safe in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The Ingham County Family Center is home to programs dedicated to helping adjudicated youth continue their education outside of a traditional school program. During the day, approximately 50 students attend Ingham Academy where they attend classes related to not only academics, but behavior modification and other therapeutic interventions. This allows students who are unable to attend a traditional high school to work towards earning a high school diploma or acquire vocational skills.

The center houses an evening reporting program for a special group of at-risk youth. "Most youth-based crimes are committed during the hours of noon and 10:00 p.m.," explains Maureen Winslow, Deputy Court Administrator, Juvenile Division for Ingham County. "The evening reporting program provides tutoring, homework assistance, behavior groups, and other activities such as a gym and community service events." The evening reporting program serves about 20 juveniles each night.

Many of the students who attend the center have been directed to do so by the court system. Because of the nature of this population, there are strict rules regarding student behavior while in class and therefore a heightened need for a more advanced security and surveillance system.

## Action

IDS turned to its video surveillance partner OnSSI, and the Family Center building was upgraded from an old analog security system to a cloud-based solution. "There is a 1GB fiber connection to the building," explains Tom Shewchuk, Director of IT for Ingham County. "We push video from the Family Center to our data center, which is about 20 miles away." A security team monitors the live video when

the family center is in use. When the center is closed, cameras automatically monitor the property 24 hours a day and can detect motion or objects being removed.

"Nine cameras monitor hallways, doors, and the gym. We recently added 12 cameras to monitor classrooms, our bus area, the computer lab, library and locker rooms. We also monitor the exterior of the building; we've had problems with trespassing and vandalism that we have successfully stopped with the addition these cameras," said Tom.

Remote employees, who have the proper permissions, are able to review live and archived video from their desktops. "We wanted something simple to use but very flexible," said Tom.

## Results

Students are aware that the facility is monitored, however, showing a student the video of their misbehavior or acting out is very powerful. "Word gets out quickly that an event was monitored, and it helps improve behavior of all students," Maureen said.

Along with the traditional security features that a surveillance system often provides, the OnSSI system delivered additional benefits that even surprised the staff at the Family Center.

*“WE CAN REVIEW STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND STAFF RESPONSES AND WE HAVE EVEN STARTED IMPLEMENTING THESE VIDEOS INTO OUR WEEKLY REVIEWS WITH THE STAFF.”*

*MAUREEN WINSLOW  
DEPUTY COURT ADMINISTRATOR,  
JUVENILE DIVISION*

"We use it as a training and learning tool. We can review student behavior and staff responses and we have even started implementing these videos into our weekly reviews with the staff," Maureen explained.

When faculty and staff review the video in their weekly sessions, they use it as an opportunity to review their own skills, what worked, what didn't, and how could the staff improve their response to future situations.

Although no video from the facility has ever needed to be brought into the courtroom, it can if the situation arises. "We did have a judge view some video clips from our evening program outside of the courtroom, and he was extremely impressed with the system," said Maureen.

The OnSSI System is so easy to use that the Family Center staff has never called the IT Department for help. "Our security team received training from IDS and they are now able to use it on their own. It frees up my team to work on other projects," said Tom.

In the future, Ingham County plans to upgrade all of their analog security systems to a cloud-based solution. "The system is easy to use and allows us control on a very granular level," said Tom.

The upgrade will include the jail and sheriff's office, as well as the downtown areas. This will be an addition of at least 80 cameras and new monitors in their command center.



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