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CONNECTING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD WELFARE

Oregon Crafts Guidelines for Effective Girls' Programming

By Pam Patton and Marcia Morgan

Research and experience show that although troubled boys tend to visibly act out—causing problems at school or committing crimes or acts of violence—troubled girls act out in ways that may be less visible—developing eating disorders, attempting suicide, running away, abusing drugs, or turning to prostitution.

Further, girls and boys are socialized differently in American society. As a result, males and females face different issues and challenges and chart different pathways to problem behaviors. Models for responding to girls' and boys' needs, therefore, must be gender-specific to be effective.

Gender-specific services address the needs of a gender group and foster positive gender identity. Gender-responsive programming for girls uses gender to guide services so they respond to the issues and needs of the girls and young women being served. Program sites, staff, content, and materials all reflect an understanding of the realities of girls' lives.

In 1993, the Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls helped pass legislation making Oregon the only state to require agencies serving children to ensure that girls and boys have equal access to appropriate services, treatment, and facilities. State agencies must also implement plans to provide girls with equal (although not necessarily identical) access to social services, juvenile justice services, and community services; remove existing barriers to such services; and provide services that are appropriate and equally meaningful to each gender.

Because of this law and the heightened awareness surrounding girls' issues, the Oregon Commission on Children and Families and Criminal Justice Commission, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, funded the development of gender-specific guidelines and an accompanying manual on how to implement gender-responsive programming for girls. These guide-

lines provide information and suggestions to help organizations working with girls age 10–19 as they construct program design, practices, and evaluation. The approaches are not intended to be all-inclusive, but serve as a catalyst encouraging professionals to look critically at how they provide services to girls. The guidelines are interconnected and build on each other to create an environment to enhance and maximize program effectiveness.

Guidelines are divided into two sections: administering and managing gender-specific programs and program content. The first section addresses program structure (program policies and design, data collection, assessment tools, screening instruments, intake practices, and outcome measurements) and staff considerations unique to girls' issues (hiring, staff diversity, and training).

The program content guidelines address the importance of program environment and how to achieve holistic, relationship-based, strength-based, and health-based programming, all detailed herein.

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It's tempting to use this space to launch a harangue about the FY 2005 budget recently released by the White House. There is no question such a diatribe would be appropriate, given the failed commitment to children's issues contained within the proposed budget, notably juvenile justice. Since FY 2002, the President's budgets have resulted in a 67% decline in funding for juvenile justice programs, including major program areas such as Title II Formula Grants, Title V Delinquency Prevention, and the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant. This most recent budget continues the downward spiral of diminished support for federal programs in juvenile justice and child welfare.

CWLA's Government Affairs and Juvenile Justice Division will continue to advocate in behalf of the preservation of important funding programs. I implore you to become active in this effort as well by working diligently in your state and through your congressional representatives.

Looking to the future, the annual CWLA Juvenile Justice Symposium is on the horizon, to be held June 7–11 in Indianapolis. I am excited that Joseph Ryan and Mark Testa, whose research is detailed on page 6, will lead a plenary session to open the symposium. We are also pleased Judge James Ray, a distinguished jurist from Lucas County, Ohio, will provide keynote remarks during a general session. Ray is a major proponent of coordinating the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and will address the impact of zero-tolerance policies in our education settings. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Administrator J. Robert Flores will provide keynote remarks at our main general session. The event promises to be an exciting opportunity to advance our work in a variety of areas critical to juvenile justice practice and reform. I hope you will join us.

In other news, I'm also pleased to note we have established an ongoing relationship with a newly formed Executive Steering Committee in King County, Washington, to construct more integrated child welfare and juvenile justice systems. I also have been working closely with Janet Wiig to complete our *Community Implementation Guide*, which is now available. We also anticipate the release of our latest Issue Brief on the disproportionate representation of minorities in the juvenile justice systems early this summer. As you can tell, we are busy with a range of activities.

I hope to have the opportunity to speak with you in the coming months as we continue to address the critical issues confronting juvenile justice and other child-serving systems, striving to improve outcomes for our children, youth, and families through improved programs, practices, and old-fashioned hard work.

John A. Tuell
Deputy Director, National Center for Program Leadership

Provide physical safety

Girls should meet or live in an area safe from violence, physical and sexual abuse, verbal harassment, bullying, teasing, and stalking. Staff need to create an environment where boundaries are clear, acting out is addressed, and physical safety is taken seriously.

Provide emotional safety

Girls should meet or live in a nurturing and safe environment where they can express themselves, share feelings, and develop trust, all within the context of building ongoing relationships. Girls need to feel emotionally safe and free from negative or coercive behaviors, bias, racism, sexism, and demands for attention by adolescent males.

Programs can offer emotional safety by low staff-to-participant ratios to provide opportunities for girls to establish trust and successfully move through the program. The staff and program must foster social conditions where physical violence is unacceptable, as is emotional harm through "relational aggression," such as put-downs, gossip, and manipulation.

Surroundings should value females

All program settings should have books, magazines, posters, videos, wall decorations, and other items that celebrate females' current and historical achievements and contributions to the world. Surroundings should enhance girls' understanding of female development, honor and respect the female perspective, respond to girls' diverse heritages and life experiences, and empower girls to reach their full potential.

Use a holistic approach

A holistic approach to the individual girl addresses the whole girl within the social context of her life, relationships, systems she encounters, and society. A holistic approach to programming integrates the contributions of each staff member in creating a gender-responsive environment and fostering positive identity development for girls in the program.

Understand that girls need relationships

Programs should embody an understanding of the significant roll that relationships play in the lives of

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Mid-West Region Training Conference

National Juvenile Justice Summit

Indiana Juvenile Judges Symposium

Look for your registration program in the mail, or visit www.cwla.org/ conferences for more information.

This conference highlights the importance of systems and communities working together to strengthen our children and families. Improving services for children, youth, and families in the child welfare system can only come from the combined effort of direct service practitioners, supervisors, senior management, executive leadership, board leaders, and foster and adoptive parents. These efforts must be reinforced by training and networking opportunities that sharpen our skills and promote the exploration of sound collaborations.

Workshops will highlight

- dynamic programs in the child welfare community
- cutting-edge initiatives that positively affect the juvenile justice system
- services that empower and support families and kinship caregivers
- the work of supervisors and directors of nonprofit and public sector organizations that are charged with protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable children and their families

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young women. The quality of staff-to-client relationships is critical to girls' success in any program, because if girls do not connect with staff, they may feel alienated and jeopardize success by acting out or running away. Distrust is common among girls who have been emotionally or physically abused, which makes developing healthy connections challenging.

When possible, girls should be matched with counselors or case managers who can effectively respond to their needs and personalities. Programs should also include a process for resolving conflict between girls and staff. Give girls the opportunity to visit programs so they may begin developing relationships with staff and peers. Conduct a similar process when girls exit a program, allowing them to make new relationships in a new environment. Overall, taking time to help girls build and maintain relationships improves program success and eases the transition process.

Build relationships through interaction

Formal mechanisms need to be built into a program to enhance relationships and trust through one-on-one interactions. This doesn't mean staff members need to drop everything and listen to every young woman every moment she wants to talk. The key is to make space in program schedules to allow for this type of interaction. When working with young women, it's important to know that part of their purpose in communicating is to build trust and relationships. To understand female communication styles it's also important to listen effectively.

Use single-gender programming

Although girls often resist girls-only programming, it's important to give young women the time to work on overcoming a value system that commonly prioritizes male relationships over female relationships. Many girls are taught to accommodate and please males, putting their own needs aside. Consequently, girls require time by themselves to be themselves and focus on their own issues and growth. This means teaching them relationships with self and others are just as important as being with boys, and that it is okay to make self-care a priority.

Build relationships with caring adults

Help girls establish significant relationships with caring adults through mentor programs. Match girls with mentors who have similar ethnicity, culture, and backgrounds, if possible. Mentors can play a significant role in a girl's success, especially with reliable, ongoing contact that avoids competition with a girl's mother and family. Girls also need to see women who can model and support survival and growth along with resistance and change. Staff members and other adult mentors can play this role. Teach new skills built on existing strengths

Teach skills based on strengths

Create opportunities for girls to learn new skills and build on existing strengths. Gaining competence in new areas can build self-esteem, control, and positive social behaviors. When girls master new skills, they expand their opportunities and become less dependent on old, nonproductive, harmful behaviors. Skill-building based on girls' strengths encompass all levels of programming. The more girls have a sense of control and competence in multiple areas, the stronger their self-esteem will be.

Teach personal respect

Girls need language and other skills to develop personal respect and respect for others. Self-esteem enhancement programs teach girls to appreciate and respect themselves rather than relying on others for validation. Self-monitoring skills also can be incorporated into girls' programming. Staff members can also model these behaviors.

In general, females tend to look to external sources to define self-esteem. It's imperative, therefore, that programs do not reinforce these patterns. Instead, programs must integrate approaches that teach young women how to value their perspective, celebrate and honor the female experience, and respect themselves for the unique individuals they are.

Give girls control

Gender-responsive programs for girls should support and encourage girls to hope, have realistic expectations for the future, and teach the skills needed to reach their goals. Girls need help in developing a plan for the future, and opportunities to practice the skills that will help them realize their goals. Girls need to be shown they can affect outcomes in their lives. Programs need to help girls find their voices to be expressive and powerful in positive, productive ways. All of these efforts provide girls with a sense of control.

Address victimization and trauma

Many girls have experienced trauma such as neglect, domestic violence, and sexual, physical, emotional, or verbal abuse. Such experiences deeply affect their sense of self. Girls need to learn to view themselves not as victims, but as survivors and thrivers. Before girls can address past abuse during treatment, they must first build confidence in themselves and trust in

others. Then they can begin to develop and maintain healthy boundaries in mutual, nonsexual, and empathetic relationships. Program staff can support girls as they begin to understand the connection between victimization and the anger, acting out behavior, and trust issues that are a result of such trauma.

Address physical, sexual health

There is more to consider in girls' health than preventing pregnancy. Programs should provide information about female development, personal care, fitness, and overall physical health, as well as menstruation, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, and sexuality.

Address emotional, mental health

Girls need accurate information about emotional and mental health issues, such as eating disorders, body image, addiction, and depression. Programs should assess girls for emotional and mental health needs and refer them to counseling or therapy with professionals who have experience with female adolescents.

Emphasize drug-free health

The connection between drug use and self-medication as a way of dealing with abuse and depression is best addressed in single-sex treatment programming.

Prevention and intervention programs need to understand female adolescent development and incorporate programming that is specific to females.

Address spiritual health and rites of passage

Set aside time for girls to explore their spirituality and inner strength, develop hope, and become strong, centered, and at peace. This might include time for personal reflection and discussions about life, values, morals, and ethics. Remember that spiritual health is not the same as religion; spirituality can take many forms. Develop rites of passage celebrations for significant events or milestones in girls' daily routines.

Oregon's guidelines for effective programming for girls have been in place a little more than three years, and have been an important first step for a state that wants to be responsive to the needs of girls and young women in all programs and services.

To access *How to Implement Oregon's Guidelines for Effective Gender-Responsive Programming for Girls,* visit www.ocjc.state.or.us/JCP/GenderSpecific.pdf.

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PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE: Juvenile Justice Funding Cut

Funding for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention has been cut drastically for FY 2004 in the budget signed into law January 23, and the President's proposed budget for FY 2005, introduced February 2, would cut funding even further. The FY 2005 budget for juvenile justice and delinquency prevention was cut slightly more than 40%, from $308 million to $180 million, a more than two-thirds decrease from FY 2002.

These funding cuts are particularly troubling since a strong and effective juvenile justice system was recently reaffirmed by passage of the bipartisan re-authorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) in 2002. This law gives states and local governments more flexibility to address juvenile crime and delinquency with a greater emphasis on prevention, treatment, and alternatives to incarceration. But without adequate funding for programs, progress in these areas will continue to be severely hampered.

The FY 2004 budget slashed funding for the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program (JABG), which provides states and local governments with funds to develop programs promoting greater accountability in the juvenile justice system, to $60 million, down from $190 million in FY 2003. The FY 2005 budget proposes eliminating JABG funding entirely.

Title V Local Delinquency Prevention Grant, which funds collaborative, community-based delinquency prevention efforts for high-risk youth, has an FY 2004 funding level of $80 million, with earmarks for special purposes totaling $61 million—leaving only $19 million for grants. Although this is an increase over the FY 2003 level, it is a cut from previous years, and the President's FY 2005 budget cuts funding for Title V to $37.3 million.

The new Delinquency Prevention Block Grant (DPBG), created in the recently reauthorized JJDPA, is intended to fund activities that prevent and reduce juvenile crime, including treatment to juvenile offenders and juveniles who are at risk of becoming juvenile offenders. No funding is provided for DPBG in the FY 2004 budget, yet the FY 2005 budget appropriates $39.1 million for DPBG.

Linking Child Placement and Juvenile Delinquency
Research examines the role of placement in increased delinquency rates

Research indicates between 9% and 29% of maltreated children engage in delinquent behavior. Despite the consensus that maltreatment increases the risk of delinquency, there is little agreement about the mechanisms responsible for this increase. This is problematic for delinquency theorists, child welfare practitioners, and policymakers interested in the development of effective social interventions.

The use of substitute care placement and placement instability often are correlated with increased delinquency. *Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: Investigating the Role of Placement and Placement Instability* identifies selected factors related to child maltreatment and delinquency and disentangles the timing of delinquency petitions relative to movements within the child welfare system.

The study, by Joseph P. Ryan and Mark F. Testa of the Children and Family Research Center, School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, compares delinquency rates for all maltreated and nonmaltreated children in Chicago and surrounding suburbs, identifies which victims of abuse and neglect a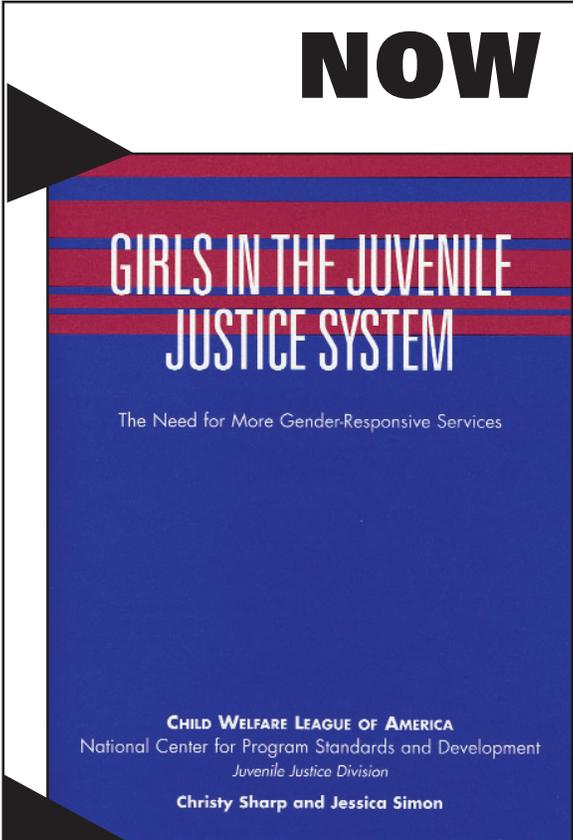re more likely to engage in delinquency, and determines whether or not substitute care placement and placement instability mediates the experience of maltreatment and delinquency.

The results indicate that victims of maltreatment have delinquency rates an average 47% higher than children not abused or neglected. In addition, approximately 16% of children placed into substitute care experience at least one delinquency petition, compared with 7% of maltreatment victims who are not removed from their family. Placement instability further increases the risk of delinquency for male foster children, but not for female foster children.

These findings suggest that the well-being of maltreated children cannot be fully understood without investigating their experiences across multiple service settings. Research that systematically and rigorously investigates the mechanisms that connect the experiences of child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency might lead to effective prevention efforts.

For a copy of the complete report, contact Joseph Ryan, Children and Family Research Center, School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1207 West Oregon Street, Urbana, IL 61801; or e-mail jpryan@uiuc.edu.

JUVENILE JUSTICE NEWS AND RESOURCES

Explanations for the Decline in Child Sexual Abuse Cases
Finkelhor, D., and Jones, L. M. (January 2004). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

This 12-page bulletin, the latest in OJJDP's Crimes Against Children Series, discusses the decline in the number of sexual abuse cases substantiated by child protective service agencies between 1992 and 2000. It explores the strengths and weaknesses of six possible explanations for the decline by using data from a number of different sources, including aggregate data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.

How Families and Communities Influence Youth Victimization
Lauritsen, J. L. (November 2003). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

This 12-page report focuses on the influence of individual, family, and community factors on the risk for nonlethal violence among U.S. youth ages 12–17. OJJDP looked at risk factors among youth of different racial and ethnic groups, analyzed which factors are the most significant for understanding violent victimization, and found that disadvantaged communities with high proportions of young people and single-parent families experience the greatest difficulty in protecting youth from victimization.

Juvenile Arrests 2001
Snyder, H. N. (December 2003). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

This OJJDP bulletin summarizes and analyzes national and state juvenile arrest data presented in the FBI's report, *Crime in the United States 2001*, which shows juvenile violent crime arrests increased dramatically from the late 1980s through 1994 and then began a steady downward trend. In 2001, the juvenile arrest rate for violent crime was 44% below its peak in 1994, reaching its lowest level since 1983.

Reentry of Young Offenders from the Justice System: A Developmental Perspective
Steinberg, Lawrence; Chung, He L.; Little, Michelle. (January 2004). Sage Publications.

This book presents a developmental perspective on the reentry of young offenders into the community.

The authors discuss the psychosocial tasks of late adolescence, consider contextual influences on the successful negotiation of these psychosocial tasks, and examine how the environments that young offenders are exposed in the justice system are likely to facilitate normative psychosocial development. Finally, they argue that the psychosocial development of youthful offenders is disrupted by their experiences within the justice system. Interventions designed to facilitate the successful reentry of young offenders into the community must be informed by knowledge about healthy psychosocial development in late adolescence.

An Empirical Portrait of the Youth Reentry Population
Snyder, Howard N. (January 2004). Sage Publications.

Each year, nearly 100,000 juvenile offenders are released from custody facilities following adjudication or conviction, arguably all candidates for reentry programs. Their numbers increased substantially in the 1990s. These youth have spent a great proportion of their teenage years in custody. Most are male, minority, and nonviolent offenders. About half spent their childhoods primarily in a single-parent family. About one-fourth have a sibling, and about one-fourth have a father who has been incarcerated. Two-thirds report regular drug use other than alcohol. Two-thirds of committed males have a mental health disorder and the rate is higher for females. This article concludes that the justice system cannot rely on others to provide the necessary services if it ever hopes to control its own workload and reduce the problems caused by these youth.

Blueprints for Violence Prevention: From Research to Real-World Settings—Factors Influencing the Successful Replication of Model Programs
Mihalic, Sharon F.; Irwin, Katherine (October 2003). Sage Publications.

As science-based programs become more readily available to practitioners, the need to identify and overcome problems associated with the implementation process becomes critical. The Blueprints for Violence Prevention initiative has focused on enhancing the understanding of program implementation by studying the influence of factors that challenge successful implementation. This publication describes

the results of a process evaluation on common implementation obstacles faced by 42 sites implementing eight Blueprints programs. Most sites involved in the project faced many challenges when implementing programs in real-world settings. The quality of technical assistance, ideal program characteristics, consistent staffing, and community support were important influences on one or more measures of success.

Outcome Evaluation of Washington State's Research-Based Programs for Juvenile Offenders
Barnoski, Robert (January 2004).
Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

In 1997, the Washington State Legislature passed the Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA) to reduce juvenile crime by establishing research-based programs in the state's juvenile courts. CJAA funded the nation's first statewide experiment in research-based programs for juvenile justice. Although selected treatment programs had already been researched elsewhere in the United States, usually as small-scale pilot projects, it wasn't clear if they would work when applied statewide in a real-world setting. This report indicates that when programs are competently delivered, they can be successful.

### Sins of the Fathers: A Look at the Relationship Between Child Abuse and Delinquency
Petersen, Dane Elmar (2003).
American Probation & Parole Association Publications.

Petersen shares his 30 years of experience working with delinquent youth and presents a unique perspective on the pathways to delinquency. This book, particularly useful to correctional staff, probation and parole practitioners, social service providers, educators, and treatment professionals working with juveniles, presents readers with new typologies, observations on interventions and treatment, and promising interventions Petersen has developed in his work with delinquents. The book also explain Petersen's typology of abused delinquents, especially important because it includes stages of development, characterizes the purpose of delinquent behavior for each group, and provides characteristic behavior. This information, when coupled with information about normal adolescent development, provides insights that can improve the work of juvenile justice practitioners in both correctional and community settings.

Effective Intervention With High-Conflict Families: How Judges Can Promote and Recognize Competent Treatment in Family Court
Greenberg, Lyn R.; Gould, Jonathan W.; Schnider, Robert Alan; Gould-Saltman, Dianna J.; Martindale, David A. (2003).
Journal of the Center for Families, Children & the Courts.

The emotional and psychological risks to children of high-conflict divorce have led to the increased involvement of mental health professionals in child custody cases. Various intervention and service models have been developed to help families negotiate the transition successfully and support children's needs. Competent mental health professionals may help children learn effective coping skills and help parents reduce conflict. Conversely, inappropriate mental health practice can cause conflict, undermine children's development, and contaminate data considered by the court. This article provides a framework that judicial officers and counsel may find useful in structuring orders for court-related treatment and assessing the competency and appropriateness of services provided. It's also useful for casework practitioners and managers in juvenile justice and child welfare.
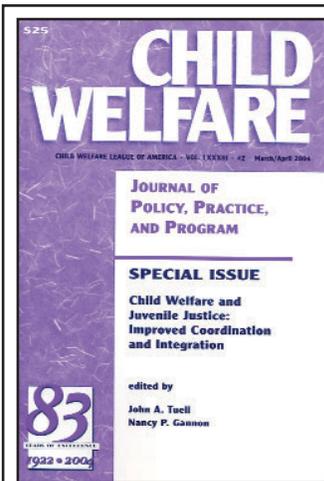
Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice: Improved Coordination and Integration

The Child Welfare Journal *devoted its March/April 2004 issue to juvenile justice and child welfare practice. For only $25, you can read current research regarding the link between childhood maltreatment and future involvement with juvenile delinquency and other problem behaviors. Learn about efforts to reduce the detention bias for foster care populations and jurisdictional coordination of community-based services for abused and neglected youth populations involved with the juvenile justice system. There are also plenty of examples of statewide reform, and integrated and consolidated funding streams to better serve shared populations of children, youth, and families. For ordering information, visit www.cwla.org/pubs/pubdetails.asp?PUBID=10226.*

Unlocking the Future: Detention Reform in the Juvenile Justice System

By Eve N. Munson

Today, an alarmingly high number of youth with serious emotional, behavioral, and substance abuse issues, and a disproportionately high number of youth of color, are behind locked doors awaiting court hearings. According to the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ), an estimated 27,000 youth reside in locked detention centers every day. CJJ also estimates that each year 300,000–600,000 children and teens cycle through secure detention facilities in the United States.

Secure detention in the juvenile court system exists for statutory purposes: to prevent high-risk youth from committing new offenses while awaiting trial and to guarantee their appearance in court. Unfortunately, secure detention is frequently used even when such risk factors are not present. In many areas few alternative to detention centers exist. Some youth spend a few days in custody and are released to family, while others are held for weeks, often because there's no responsible adult to care for them or family members won't let them return home. Some law enforcement officials regard juvenile incarceration as "shock therapy" to scare nonviolent offenders straight by teaching them a lesson. And, sadly, sometimes the unstated reason for youth detainment is the simple fact that officials in charge don't know what else to do.

CJJ's top priorities are preventing youth delinquency, ensuring children are treated fairly, and providing youth and families opportunities to make positive life changes. Through its nationwide network, CJJ supports community initiatives to provide preschool education, mentors, job skills, youth development, mental health treatment, family support, and other effective services for children and families at risk.

In the recently released research report, *Unlocking the Future: Detention Reform in the Juvenile Justice System*, CJJ reports that despite a continual decline in juvenile offending over the past decade, the population of youth confined in pretrial secure detention has grown steadily, increasing 72%.

Such findings notwithstanding, a nationwide counter-movement to reduce the use of detention has been gathering momentum. Several reasons suggest why reform is happening now. First, given the fiscal crisis facing most state and local governments, reform has become an appealing option, as it helps the bottom line. Second, jurisdictions are discovering they do not have to create detention reform from scratch: Well-documented models around the country provide inspiration and practical strategies. Third, says Bart Lubow of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, "When juvenile crime is down, the space to consider reforms is much greater than when there is public outcry over crime and politicians feel obligated to propose easy but ineffective solutions, such as more incarceration."

Examples of reform abound. In Bernalillo County, New Mexico, for example, the average daily detention population has dropped 40% since May 2000, due to a concerted reform effort that includes implementing a risk-assessment tool, improving case handling, and increasing alternatives to detention. Richard Lindahl, a juvenile justice specialist in New Mexico, reports that surrounding counties have also begun implementing reform.

In Santa Clara County, California, even as new detention beds are being added using state funds, the county is implementing detention reform to keep those beds empty. The first step has been to standardize police treatment of youth among the county's 13 law enforcement agencies. New criteria allow officers to use the detention facility only if a youth's alleged crime is as serious as murder, rape, or robbery with a firearm. The plan was promoted and approved by the county's Police Chiefs Association. Another proponent, a juvenile prosecutor, predicts a 40% decline in juvenile hall intake.

In Boise, Idaho, development of a risk-assessment team and instrument, and establishment of a community custody center, have helped reduce the average daily population in secure detention from 87 to 29 youth, without a parallel rise in juvenile crime.

The detention reform movement did not happen overnight. Its roots are found in a 1987 federal class-action lawsuit alleging cruel and unsafe conditions, filed against the state agency that operates the regional detention center in Broward County, Florida. At the time, the facility was appallingly overcrowded. Children slept on classroom floors, physical abuse was reported, and extended periods of isolation were common.

For more than a year, the parties remained dead-locked until mediation was arranged through the Center for the Study of Youth Policy at Nova Southeastern University. The settlement provided an outline for system changes, with the intention of narrowing the pathways to the detention facility, agreeing on objective admission criteria, and developing the risk-assessment instrument that would determine where a youth should be placed.

Officials developed new alternatives to detention, including a day reporting center for youth on home detention who were unemployed or unable to attend school, and a shelter for homeless detention-eligible youth. Because the shelter was operated by the detention center, youth who were alleged delinquent and youth in the child welfare system were not held under the same roof.

Over the next two years, despite growing numbers of delinquency referrals, Broward County saw dramatic reductions in its average daily detention population, from 160 youth in 1987–88 to fewer than 47 youth. This was coupled with improved conditions for youth who remained in detention. Most important for public safety, when the population under secure detention was lowered, the more serious offenders were able to be housed in the center.

These changes did not lead to increased costs to the system, and may have saved the county the expense of building an additional 50–60 beds, at an estimated cost of $2.5million–$3 million, along with operating expenses of about $1 million per year.

The experience in Broward County provided an encouraging sign that reform is possible and helped establish the philosophy of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI): Interagency collaboration and data-driven policies and programs can reduce the number of youth behind bars without sacrificing public safety or court appearance rates.

In 1992, the foundation launched a multiyear, multi-million dollar detention reform project at five sites. By the end of 1998, three of the original sites remained. Each had implemented an array of detention strategies that transformed their systems to make them smarter, fairer, more efficient, and more effective.

Detention reform emphasizes meaningful, long-lasting change in multiple areas of policy, practice, and programming. It may not happen easily, as there may be resistance from inside and outside the system. Although reform will look different in each jurisdiction, typically similar issues must be addressed. Taken together, these three lessons from around the country add up to a picture of reform.

Cook County, Illinois

During the early 1990s, little collaboration took place between the agencies that comprise the Cook County, Illinois, juvenile court system. The 498-bed secure detention facility was chronically overcrowded, due in part to an arbitrary admissions process. In the mid-1990s, the daily population frequently topped 700, making conditions for youth and staff depressing and dangerous.

In 1994, Cook County became one of the five original sites to use the JDAI approach to streamline its detention system, and as a result decreased the number of youth in secure detention dropped from a high of 848 in 1996 to today's average daily detention population of 445. A range of programs has served more than 45,000 youth in the community since 1994. According to the probation department, the average success rate—youth who remain arrest-free during their placement in these programs—is more than 90%, with staff-secure shelters citing success rates of more than 96%.

As part of its reforms, Cook County implemented a new screening process, accelerated case processing, and reduced the time between issuing a summons to a juvenile and his or her court appearance. A notification system to remind youth of their scheduled court date has helped reduce failure-to-appear rates from almost 40% in 1994 to 11% today.

The county also established a range of community-based alternatives, including shelters and evening reporting centers, which have served more than 10,000 youth, 92% of whom remain arrest-free during their time in the program. These centers are generally located in low-income neighborhoods with elevated crime rates, where many of the youth live. Neighborhood activist groups receive contracts for centers to provide an infusion of funds to local groups and establish strong ties with community activists.

The Girl's Evening Reporting Center, for example, is run by Family Focus in a community center on Chicago's west side. The center is open after school during the peak hours for juvenile delinquency. On a typical evening, six young women, all with

pending court cases, sit in the large, bright room at a U-shaped table doing homework, supervised by three counselors. The center's goal is to ensure each girl makes her scheduled court appearances and remains arrest-free. The center also provides an opportunity for youth to develop relationships with caring adults and exchange positive ideas with girls their own age.

In addition to evening reporting centers, Cook County operates two staff-secure shelters, one for boys and one for girls, for youth who need more intensive supervision. In addition to ensuring that youth stay crime-free and attend all court hearings, these shelters provide safety, structure, and supportive outreach to families.

The Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission and the Casey Foundation have initiated detention reform projects in 10 sites throughout the state.

Tarrant County, Texas

A juvenile court judge with 29 years of experience took the lead on detention reform in Tarrant County, Texas. Judge Scott Moore led efforts to remove children from incarceration in the Tarrant County jail and oversaw construction of a new juvenile detention facility. Moore emphasized the importance of timely case processing, based on the belief that a child's time spent in detention is not conducive to growth and development. Tarrant County, therefore, aims for a juvenile justice culture based on efficient movement, working to process cases and provide alternatives to detention as quickly as possible following a youth's referral.

Alternatives to detention include electronically monitored home detention and community-based detention, which provides in-home supervision for nonviolent youth awaiting disposition. This alternative for preadjudicated youth, the Tarrant County Advocate Program, uses trained advocates to provide face-to-face supervision of youths' activities, monitors their whereabouts and school and work attendance, and provides family assistance and support.

Tarrant County is still working to improve case processing and decrease the average length of time youth remain in detention. Organizers are also trying to improve emergency psychiatric services for detained youth experiencing serious emotional disturbances. The department is collaborating with the local county hospital to streamline services and aftercare in these cases. Although there's always room for improvement, the juvenile justice center in Tarrant County operates 72 beds, with an average daily population of 66, the lowest among Texas's seven largest urban counties.

Multnomah County, Oregon

In 1992, Multnomah County was under a federal consent decree to reduce crowding at its aging detention center. Although the center was replaced with a new facility, when the county became one of the original JDAI sites, changes went beyond cosmetic.

Agency heads and department managers quickly agreed on plans to place appropriate youth into community-based programs instead of the detention center. They also agreed to address the disproportionate percentage of minority youth being detained. Front-line staff, police, probation officers, and prosecutors, who perceived reform to be "soft on crime," were a harder sell. But when county officials pointed out that reform did not aim to eliminate detention but to make sure the right youth were detained, front-line staff became invested in the process.

The county created a 24-hour reception center to work with youth and families to find better placements and access services for the 2,000 status offenders detained every year. An expeditor now monitors the status of detained youth and speeds up case processing. Organizers also implemented an array of alternatives to detention, including a home confinement program, a day reporting center and shelters for youth who cannot return home.

The county also adopted a risk assessment instrument, an objective point-based tool used to assess a youth's risk of reoffending or failing to appear for hearings. Before implementing its reforms, the average daily detention population in Multnomah County was 96; today it is 20. The average length of stay has decreased from nine days to seven, and case-processing time has been reduced 28%.

In addition, Multnomah County has made inroads in addressing disproportionate minority confinement, including diversifying probation, establishing alternatives to detention in communities where detained youth of color live, and using consistent monitoring to find trouble spots in the system. Further, developing an objective risk assessment instrument had an immediate effect. Until then, intake counselors frequently made placement decisions based on experience and personal feelings.

As soon as the risk-assessment instrument was put to use, the detention population fell, along with the percentage of minority youth. In 1994, 55 of the 96 youth

in secure detention were African American; black youth were 11% more likely than white youth to be detained at some point during their case. By 2000, the difference dropped to 3%.

Disproportionate representation remains a constant challenge, however, and Multnomah County is always examining its data to determine why youth of color are still detained inappropriately. The county recently determined a disproportionate number of youth of color were being detained for drug offenses, and created a new diversion program. The department is also working closely with local stakeholders to address system-wide issues related to disproportionality.

Conclusion

In *Unlocking the Future: Detention Reform in the Juvenile Justice System,* CJJ reports that for each youth in detention, the United States spends upwards of $36,000 per year, causing a growing number of policymakers to rethink the use of detention, shift

philosophies, and implement system reforms to keep youth out of secure detention.

The importance of detention reform cannot be understated, as studies indicate that detained youth are more likely to be incarcerated in the future. As successful examples from around the country demonstrate, detention reform must be more than a patchwork of new programs or a system tweaks that solve one problem while creating another.

Rather, true detention reform is an opportunity to do things in a different, more effective, more efficient way by implementing complex changes in multiple areas of policy, practice, and programming. When we look at jurisdictions that have enacted reforms, interpret the data, and talk to judges, prosecutors, probation officers, families, and youth, it's impossible not to come away ready for change.

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