

THE LINK

CONNECTING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD WELFARE

Building Stronger Partnerships Builds a Stronger System

When crafting the guiding principles of CWLA's new strategic plan, three were especially important to the philosophy behind creating CWLA's Juvenile Justice Division and this newsletter: collaboration, integrated efforts, and prevention.

Our commitment to the division reflects these guiding principles. To address child welfare as a whole, we must address children in all systems, especially acknowledging the link between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Granted, not all children in the juvenile justice system are involved in the child welfare system, or vice versa. Yet an undeniable connection exists, and our resources and efforts are best put to use if we collaborate. We can examine how to prevent delinquency for youth victims of abuse and neglect, and can better assess the child welfare issues that may have led many juveniles to become offenders.

The two systems tend to operate on parallel tracks; CWLA and the Juvenile Justice Division are helping them converge. We aim to increase communication across systems to prevent polarization, focusing on coordinating efforts and jointly developing initiatives. As child-serving professionals, we are aware that our work can't take place in a vacuum and still enable us to do our best work for children, youth, and families. Working in isolation only serves to take us further from our intended goals.

Forming strong bonds with professionals and community members within and outside the traditional scope of child welfare is how we will achieve best

practice. Establishing the CWLA Juvenile Justice Division and publication of *The Link* are positive steps toward this goal. Of course, as with any successful initiative, your support and feedback are critical. I encourage you to contact the Juvenile Justice Division staff with your feedback, questions, or submissions for the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you in the future to strengthen the partnership between juvenile justice and child welfare.

—*Shay Bilchik*
 CWLA Executive Director

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Director's Message</i>	2
<i>Juvenile Justice News and Resources</i>	3
<i>Youth Development, Juvenile Justice in the 107th Congress</i>	4
<i>Building Blocks for Youth: Protecting Minority Youth in the Juvenile Justice System</i>	5
<i>Wraparound Milwaukee Provides Innovative Approach to System of Care</i>	6
<i>Younger Americans Act Reintroduced in Congress with Bipartisan Support</i>	7
<i>CWLA Leads Development of Behavior Management Best Practice Guidelines</i>	7
<i>Statistics Show Drop in Juvenile Crime for Sixth Straight Year</i>	8

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present to you the first issue of *The Link*, a newsletter focused on building linkages between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Supported by a grant from the MacArthur Foundation, CWLA has established the Juvenile Justice Division to address efforts to break the cycle of child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency and reduce the reliance on incarceration by advocating for appropriate, least-restrictive placements for youth in the juvenile justice system.

To promote awareness of the links between child welfare and juvenile justice, the Juvenile Justice Division staff will draw upon the strengths of child welfare and juvenile justice experts, including other CWLA staff, by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating related information. CWLA will also monitor and analyze public policy and promote the adoption of proven prevention and treatment services. *The Link* will serve as one vehicle to disseminate information.

In addition, CWLA will be adding additional workshops and panels to our regional and national conferences to provide information to the juvenile justice and child welfare communities. The 2001 CWLA National Conference, *Children 2001: Creating Connected Communities*, will convene March 7-9, 2001, in Washington, DC. Of the many workshops of interest to judges, prosecutors, juvenile justice practitioners, and law enforcement officers, the conference will include sessions on promoting sound juvenile justice policy; establishing a national framework for children, youth, and families; the Younger Americans Act; effective mental health treatment models for youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems; alternatives to incarceration; linking children and youth in care with community-based activities; data-driven community engagement; minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems; and developing guidelines regarding the use of restraints and seclusion.

We hope that you find the information in this and future issues of *The Link* both informative and useful. I also hope to see you at the CWLA National Conference.

Sincerely,



Rodney L. Albert
Director
Juvenile Justice Division

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The Child Welfare League of America is the nation's oldest and largest membership-based child welfare organization. We are committed to engaging people everywhere in promoting the well-being of children, youth, and their families, and protecting every child from harm.

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JUVENILE JUSTICE NEWS AND RESOURCES

Nurturing Parenting Programs Help Break Cycle of Abuse and Neglect

The Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) recently released a Family Strengthening Series Bulletin that describes how parenting patterns are learned and how the Nurturing Parenting Programs help stop the cycle of violence by building effective parenting skills.

Studies show that a leading cause of abuse and neglect is the generational cycle of violence. The Nurturing Parenting Programs, a family-centered parenting initiative designed to address the generational cycle of abuse and neglect, focus on the violence parents experienced as children and the prevention of a continued cycle of violence. One of the ultimate objectives of the programs is to reduce the rate of juvenile delinquency among high-risk youth.

The Family Strengthening Series Bulletins provide assistance to ongoing efforts across the country to strengthen the family unit by discussing the effectiveness of family intervention programs and providing resources to families and communities.

Free copies of the Family Strengthening Series Bulletins are

available online at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org from the Publications section of the OJJDP website. Bulletins also can be requested from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse by phone at 800/638-8736, by e-mail at puborder@ncjrs.org, or by mail at P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000. Request #NCJ 172848.

New Report Asserts Effectiveness of Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth

A new report presents the findings of the Taskforce on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth. The taskforce was convened by the Home Builders Institute and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment, and Training Administration, and OJJDP.

According to the report, youth crime and the preparedness of court-involved youth to enter the labor market are serious concerns. Youth who commit status offenses and delinquent acts must be held responsible for their behavior, yet they also need to learn skills to help them grow into productive, law-abiding citizens. Offering training and employment to help these youth successfully enter the labor market will help reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

The taskforce's report discusses effective strategies for linking court-involved youth to the job market and describes exemplary practices and promising programs currently serving court-involved youth. Systems collaboration models that successfully counter the obstacles that prevent court-involved youth from entering the labor market are also highlighted.

The report is available online from OJJDP by visiting <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/court.html#182787>. To order by phone, contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 800/638-8736 and request #NCJ 182787.

New Book Discusses Emotional Maturity of Juvenile Offenders

Youth on Trial: A Developmental Perspective on Juvenile Justice is a newly published book that asserts a criminal justice system that tries and punishes youth with no regard to their developmental maturity is an unfair system.

Developed by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice, *Youth on Trial* explores the differences between adolescents and adults by focusing on two critical questions:

see **Resources**, page 4

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Remember to visit CWLA's Juvenile Justice Division website, www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice, for additional juvenile justice-related resources and the latest information.

from *Resources*, page 3

- 1) Do youth have the same abilities as adults to participate in the trial process?
- 2) Should youth be held to the same level of accountability as adults when they break the law?

The authors of *Youth on Trial* maintain that a developmental psychology perspective offers promise for a more rational juvenile justice system—one that both protects society and is fair to youth accused of illegal acts.

To order *Youth on Trial: A Developmental Perspective on Juvenile Justice*, contact the University of Chicago Press at 800/621-2736, or visit www.press.uchicago.edu.

New Web Resource from SAMHSA

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), one of three centers that are part of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services, has launched a new website, the Decision Support System (DSS). CSAP provides national leadership in developing policies, programs, and services to prevent the onset of illegal drug use and underage alcohol and tobacco use, and to reduce the negative consequences of substance abuse.

DSS gives community and state-level substance abuse professionals access to the most current information available about effective prevention strategies and planning, implementing, and evaluating prevention programs. DSS's seven-step approach to online technical assistance, training, and other resources identifies "best and promising" approaches to needs assessment, capacity

building, intervention program selection, evaluation, and reporting. Visit the DSS website at www.preventiondss.org.

WAY Program Publishes Results of 15-Year Study

The WAY to Work, An Independent Living/Aftercare Program for Youth Leaving the Foster Care System and Other High-Risk Youth, recently published by CWLA, provides detailed data, lessons learned, programmatic challenges and directions for future research, that emerged during a 15-year longitudinal study of the Work Appreciation for Youth (WAY) Scholarship Program.

The WAY program, created by the Children's Village of New York in 1985, is designed to help youth graduate from high school and develop positive work attitudes and skills. The five-year program prepares youth for the transition from residential treatment to their families and communities through less-restrictive settings or independent living.

The WAY to Work reports positive outcomes for WAY youth:

- 76% of youth completed the program,
- 34% of youth who left the program early committed crimes,
- 95% of youth who completed the program showed more self-sufficiency,
- 33% of program graduates are enrolled in college, and
- youth who participated in the program at least 2.5 years had significantly lower criminality rates (5%) than youth who left the program before 2.5 years (35%).

The WAY to Work (stock #8048) is \$16.95. To order, call 800/407-6273, or visit www.cwla.org/pubs.

CWLA NAMES YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, JUVENILE JUSTICE PRIORITY ADVOCACY EFFORTS FOR 107TH CONGRESS

Youth development and juvenile justice will be high priorities for CWLA's advocacy efforts during the 107th Congress. Two major bills will top that priority list.

CWLA will be at the forefront in advocating for the Younger Americans Act (YAA). When fully implemented, YAA will provide \$2 billion per year for community-based organizations to provide positive youth development activities. YAA was reintroduced in the House (H.R. 17) this month with bipartisan support (see "Younger Americans Act Reintroduced in Congress with Bipartisan Support," page 7). CWLA plans to work toward introducing the bill in the Senate, also with bipartisan support, in the near future.

There also will be a major effort to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act. Legislation has yet to be introduced, so it is unclear whether the focus of the proposals will be on punitive measures, as has been the case with the past two Congresses. CWLA will emphasize preservation of the fundamental protections to youth provided for in the JJDP Act as well as prevention and positive approaches.

Passing these bills, however, or other significant legislation could be difficult. The narrow margin between parties in the House and Senate, the high degree of partisanship, and the bitterness resulting from the contested presidential election create the potential for a polarized Congress. CWLA will watch closely in the coming months to see the extent to which Congress is willing to work together.

For more information or to lend support, visit CWLA's advocacy page, www.cwla.org/cwla.advocacy.html.

Building Blocks for Youth:

Protecting Minority Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

A requirement of any effective juvenile justice system is treating every youth offender as an individual and providing all with the necessary services. There are troubling indications, however, that the U.S. juvenile justice system is not meeting this standard, as evidenced by the overrepresentation of minorities within every aspect of the juvenile justice system, particularly secure confinement.

Research shows that in almost every state, youth of color are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. In recent years, more than 40 states have changed their laws to allow increased prosecution of youth in adult court. Further, Congress has considered legislation that would give federal prosecutors the authority to charge youth as adults, make many crimes federal offenses, impose lengthy mandatory sentences, and allow youth charged with federal crimes to be detained with adult inmates.

These increasingly punitive changes are taking place despite 1999 crime data from the U.S. Justice Department that show a decline in youth-committed crime for the sixth straight year. The impact of these policies falls disproportionately on minority youth.

In response, the Building Blocks for Youth initiative has developed a national campaign that includes five major components:

- 1) research on juvenile justice policies,
- 2) analysis of decisionmaking in the field,
- 3) direct advocacy for minority youth in the justice system,

4) building a constituency for change, and

5) public education.

The initiative also identifies civic and community leaders, juvenile court judges, religious leaders, police, corrections officials, and other individuals who can be spokespeople on the issue of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

Building Blocks for Youth is an alliance of leading children's advocates, researchers, law enforcement professionals, and community organizers who aim to address unfairness in the juvenile justice system and promote rational, effective justice policies. Partners in the initiative are the Youth Law Center, the American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Center, Communication Works, the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, the Juvenile Law Center, Minorities in Law Enforcement, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, and the Pretrial Services Resource Center.

Building Blocks has released three reports highlighting the issues associated with transferring youth to the adult criminal justice system and the overrepresentation of minority youth in the justice system.

The Color of Justice: An Analysis of Juvenile Adult Court Transfers in California, by Mike Males and Dan Macallair from the Justice Policy Institute, is the first analysis of racial and ethnic disparity in the transfer of youth to adult court and sentencing to California Youth Authority facilities in California.

This study reveals that minority youth are 8.3 times more likely

than white youth to be sentenced by an adult court to imprisonment in a California Youth Authority facility.

In ***And Justice for Some***, Eileen Poe-Yamagata and Michael A. Jones, of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, analyze state and federal data on arrest, referral, detention, case processing, waiver to adult court, and incarceration.

The report builds a comprehensive view of the treatment of youth of color in the justice system and shows that youth of color are overrepresented throughout the system and that the disadvantage accumulates as youth move through the system. Key findings of the report reveal:

- Minority youth are overrepresented in the detained population in nearly all states.
- Nationally, custody rates were five times greater for African American youth than for white youth. Custody rates for Latino youth and American Indian youth were twice the custody rate of white youth.
- African American youth with no prior admissions were six times more likely to be incarcerated in public facilities than white youth with the same backgrounds. Latino youth were three times more likely than white youth to be incarcerated.

Youth Crime/Adult Time, Is Justice Served? by Jolanta Juszkiewicz from the Pretrial Services Resource Center, calls on the new administration and Congress to strengthen protec-

see ***Building Blocks***, page 8

Wraparound Milwaukee Provides Innovative Approach to System of Care

Typically, the juvenile justice system's treatment of youth with emotional, behavioral, and/or mental health needs is a residential placement or day treatment program. The Children's Mental Health Services Division in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, however, has developed a system of care that combines the city's mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, and educational services systems in an initiative called Wraparound Milwaukee. The Milwaukee County Human Services Department, Milwaukee County Mental Health Division provides juvenile probation and child welfare services; Wraparound Milwaukee is a part of this division.

With the increasing awareness of youth with mental health disorders involved in the juvenile justice system, this system's integrated approach has proven to be an effective treatment model for the complex needs of youth and families in the community.

Initiated in 1994 and directed by Bruce Kamradt, Wraparound Milwaukee provides community-based services to youth with severe emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs, and their families. Many of the youth receiving services from the program have been adjudicated delinquent.

Wraparound Milwaukee is based on providing youth with individualized, flexible, and unconditional care. The program pools resources from juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health streams to provide youth and families with services based on each youth's individual needs. Its collaborative approach is achieved through case rates paid by the child welfare and

juvenile justice systems, a monthly capitation payment for each Medicaid child enrolled, and coordination of other insurance and Supplemental Security Income payments to form an insurance pool.

In 1999, Wraparound Milwaukee received more than \$26 million in pooled funds. This approach allows the program to cover any services that families need, offer the same range of services to all enrolled families, and cover any costs that exceed the pooled funds.

Wraparound Milwaukee is grounded in four key components:

- 1) **Care Coordination.** Care coordinators perform strength-based assessments, assemble the Child and Family Team, and conduct plan-of-care meetings.
- 2) **The Child and Family Team.** Wraparound plans are family-driven and include family members; natural supports such as relatives, members of faith communities, and friends; and systems personnel, including probation and child welfare workers.
- 3) **A Mobile Crisis Team.** Consisting of psychologists and social workers trained in intervening in family crisis situations, this team meets the needs of youth and families when a care coordinator is unavailable. The crisis team helps Wraparound Milwaukee nearly eliminate the use of inpatient psychiatric care for most youth in the project.
- 4) **A Provider Network.** Including more than 170 agencies, the provider network increases the choices families have when

selecting agencies from which to receive services.

Wraparound Milwaukee is quite successful, so much so that residential placement of youth has decreased by more than 60% since its inception. Also, hospitalization in inpatient psychiatric facilities has decreased by 80%. The overall cost of care per child has dropped from more than \$5,000 per month to less than \$3,300 per month. The reduced recidivism rates for delinquent youth enrolled in the program have been even more encouraging; continued studies are planned to measure the long-term effects of the program.

Nationally, several states and communities have incorporated aspects of wraparound care into their own systems. The Center for Mental Health Services describes Wraparound Milwaukee as a most promising practice in children's mental health that offers an innovative approach and an alternative to punitive approaches to juvenile violence and delinquency.

GET MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Wraparound Milwaukee, call 414/257-7611.

Wraparound Milwaukee Director Bruce Kamradt will be conducting a workshop at CWLA's 2001 National Conference, Children 2001: Creating Connected Communities. The conference will be held March 7-9, 2001, in Washington, DC. For more information about the conference, or to register, visit us on the Web at www.cwla.org/conferences.

Younger Americans Act Reintroduced in 107th Congress with Bipartisan Support

On January 3, 2001, Reps. George Miller (D-CA), Marge Roukema (R-NJ), Benjamin Gilman (R-NY), Jack Quinn (R-NY), and Bob Clement (D-TN) reintroduced the Younger Americans Act (H.R. 17) in the 107th Congress. Reps. Miller, Roukema, and Gilman, joined by Sens. Jim Jeffords (R-VT) and Edward Kennedy (D-MA), first introduced the bill during the 106th Congress in September 2000.

YAA creates a national youth policy and authorizes funds to mobilize American communities to ensure all youth have access to the competencies and character development they need to be fully prepared as adults and effective citizens. It will provide federal support for community programs to reach out to all youth and also allow communities to help young people facing great challenges due to abuse, neglect, lack of family support, court involvement, or poverty. The bill will make available much needed resources for community-based efforts to provide:

- 1) ongoing relationships with caring adults;
- 2) safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours;
- 3) access to services that promote healthy lifestyles, including those designed to improve physical and behavioral health;
- 4) marketable skills and competencies through education and youth development; and
- 5) opportunities for community service and civic participation.

To qualify, each local program would be required to adopt a comprehensive, coordinated system of

youth programs with each of the five general components.

"I am pleased to reintroduce the Younger Americans Act," Rep. Miller said. "This is landmark legislation that will dramatically increase afterschool opportunities for youth by providing them with adult mentors, education, sports, and volunteer activities."

YAA will help coordinate and fund youth-mentoring, community service through volunteerism, structured academic and recreational opportunities, and other activities aimed at fostering the positive educational and social development of teens and preteens. Funding for local programs in the initial year would be \$500 million, rising to \$2 billion in 2006, in addition to matching funds provided by local and state governments and the private sector. Thirty percent of funds would be targeted to youth programs that address specific urgent areas of need such as urban and rural communities.

"Under the Younger Americans Act, our national youth policy will not regard young people as problems or only seek to prevent risky behaviors, as do most existing federal programs for youth," Rep. Roukema said. "Rather, it will support positive youth development efforts, creating positive goals and outcomes for our country's youth. The Younger Americans Act is a common sense approach to what should be a high national priority. Young people are 23% of our population, but 100% of our future."

For more information about YAA, visit the CWLA Juvenile Justice Division website, www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice, or visit www.nydic.org/YAA.html.

CWLA LEADS DEVELOPMENT OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

On November 1, 2000, CWLA convened the National Best Practice Behavior Management Taskforce, a multidisciplinary assembly of child advocates including physicians; attorneys; juvenile justice, child day care, foster care, and group care professionals; behavior management training organizations; and mental health organizations. The taskforce's mission is to develop generic behavior management best practice guidelines to address the need to care safely and appropriately for children and youth. The guidelines would be the first by a national organization.

CWLA previously worked toward and currently is involved in developing and revising behavior management licensing rules and regulations in an effort to address concerns of states, accrediting bodies, and standard-setting bodies. The taskforce's goal is for states to use the guidelines in the development or revision of their restraints and seclusion standards. Further, the guidelines would be available to agencies or facilities interested in improving practice, including those serving youth involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.

The taskforce is scheduled to complete the project by October 2001. The guidelines will address ethics and legal framework, administration, continuum of interventions, professional development and support for staff and caregivers, and medical issues.

For more information about the taskforce, contact Lloyd Bullard, CWLA Director of Residential Programs, at 202/942-0280, or e-mail lbullard@cwla.org.

Statistics Show Drop in Juvenile Crime for Sixth Straight Year

New data from the Justice Department show the youth crime rate is at its lowest level in years. The data report a 68% decline in the juvenile arrest rate for murder in the United States from 1993 to 1999, the lowest level since 1966. OJJDP's 1999 juvenile crime statistics show:

- a 31% drop in rape from 1994 to 1999, the lowest level since 1980;
- a 53% decline in robbery from 1994 to 1999, the lowest level since 1980;
- a 24% decline in aggravated assault from 1994 to 1999, the lowest level since 1989;
- a 39% drop in the juvenile arrest rate for weapons

violations, the lowest level since 1988; and

- a 23% drop in the juvenile arrest rate for property crime from 1997 to 1999.

The Justice Department also reports the juvenile arrest rate for violent crime overall dropped 36% from 1994 to 1999, and is at its lowest level since 1988.

Since many Americans base their opinions about crime on media reports, and because the media rarely report on the declines in juvenile crime, CWLA will work toward providing the public with more accurate information about youth crime rates to help change negative opinions regarding this issue.

from *Building Blocks*, page 5

tions for minority youth at all points in the justice system, from police contact to incarceration.

The authors also urge strengthening federal law to reduce the disproportionate involvement of minority youth at all points in the justice system and prohibit the incarceration of children in adult jails and prisons.

Among the report's key findings:

- Overall, 82% of the youth charged in adult court were minorities.
- Drug cases were filed against African American youth at five times the rate of white youth (17% vs. 3%).

For more information on the Building Blocks Initiative, or to order copies of the reports, visit www.buildingblocksforyouth.org.