

THE LINK

CONNECTING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD WELFARE

Reclaiming Futures: Building Community Solutions to Substance Abuse and Delinquency

by Laura Burney Nissen, Director, Reclaiming Futures, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Juvenile delinquency has decreased in recent years, but juvenile court caseloads and media hype regarding youth offenders continue to grow. A primary cause of this trend is the increasing number of offender youth entering the juvenile justice system on drug-related charges (DOJ, 1999). Research has established the substance abuse patterns of youth in the juvenile justice system are dramatically higher than those of the general youth population, and this relationship is a key precursor to a delinquent career (Dilulio & Baldwin Grossman, 1997). In addition, many of these youth have cooccurring mental health problems, presenting additional challenges (Cocozza & Skowyra, 2000).

During the last 15 years, the juvenile justice system has devised a variety of approaches to effectively intervene in this nexus of opportunity between the juvenile justice and public health/substance abuse treatment systems. An "integrated treatment network" model, drawing on simultaneous developments in child welfare, children's mental health, and other human services systems, is the most promising advanced to date. (Nissen, Vanderburg, Embree-Bever, & Mankey, 1999). Key features of this approach include

- matching the individual with an appropriate treatment intervention in conjunction with whatever sanctions are deemed appropriate for the offense;
- mobilizing a range of resources across sectors of the offender's life, as well as relevant programs to ensure treatment will be effective and the offender will achieve a higher level of functioning; and
- activating a coalition of community stakeholders to coordinate these steps, under the direction of and sanctioned through a specific juvenile court and primary judicial leader.

Despite the success of these types of substance abuse "network" programs, widespread acceptance and integration of the model has been slow. The juvenile justice practices of the early 21st century provide critical decision points for charting a more effective strategy. Community frustration with rising justice costs without a concurrent sense of increased public safety can provide the essential momentum needed to chart a more cost-effective, humane course. Stronger links are needed between the role of shortages of substance abuse treatment and community health and safety.

Thanks to advances in other areas of juvenile justice reform, such as community, balanced, and restora-

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- identifying a juvenile offender's substance abuse problem as early as possible through appropriate screening and assessment at all system levels;

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The mission of CWLA's Juvenile Justice Division was clearly articulated and defined in a recent publication authored by the division and reviewed by CWLA's National Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice. Entitled *Raising the Level of Awareness Regarding the Connection Between Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: Framing the Agenda for the Future*, the document affirms that we are serving the overall mission of CWLA in behalf of children and families involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems by

- providing national leadership in promoting coordination and integration between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems;
- collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information on child welfare and juvenile justice practices and policies that promote positive youth development;
- advocating for implementation of sound legislation, policies, and procedures that contribute to juvenile justice reform and improvement and to effective delinquency prevention and intervention programs and practices;
- promoting effective community-based intervention and treatment alternatives to reduce the reliance on incarceration for accused or adjudicated delinquent youth; and
- providing consultation, training, and technical assistance to implement systems integration and reform and appropriate and effective responses to reduce juvenile delinquency and juvenile victimization.

Our work in all of these arenas is well under way, and we are expanding our efforts. The division is poised to address the increased interest in our efforts to raise awareness of the connection between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency and its devastating long-term effects on our youth, families, and communities. The Juvenile Justice Division's increased outreach efforts, including publications, juvenile justice workshops during CWLA and other conferences and training events, and the dissemination of data and research informing the field on the current landscape of child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency have fueled this interest.

We are actively engaged in emerging and ongoing partnerships in California, Florida, South Dakota, Texas, and the District of Columbia. This work is contributing to the recognition that reducing delinquency and overreliance on incarceration, through a focus on the integration of child welfare and juvenile justice systems, is critical to those who are concerned with the health and well-being of our children, youth, families, and communities.

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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.

A list of staff in CWLA service areas is available on the internet at www.cwla.org/whowhat/serviceareas.htm.

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Seniors Partner to Help Juveniles

by Joseph Montgomery, Program Manager, CWLA Senior Services

Like many Americans, Eloise Bowers and Joan Gross recognize the need for additional support for juveniles as they develop and mature into adulthood. These seniors, however, decided to give back to the community and develop positive relationships with juveniles through the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP).

Through FGP, Grandma Bowers and Grandma Gross have been linked with the City Lights School as foster grandparents and have committed themselves to helping juveniles develop healthy, productive, and independent lives. City Lights is a nonprofit, alternative school in the District of Columbia that specializes in providing comprehensive academic assistance, counseling, and family support services to emotionally disturbed, court-involved, and disadvantaged youth. It has earned a national reputation for a unique interactive curriculum that helps students achieve academically and addresses academic, emotional, and behavioral needs. The school incorporates seniors from FGP into its staff and recognizes and appreciates them as invaluable sources of wisdom and guidance in the school.

The “grandmas,” now in their second year with the program, have helped more than 50 of the most at-risk youth in the District of Columbia turn their lives around. “It is our job to help youth link with their peers and the community, as well as help their community and their peers link with them. For the link to be strong, it must be mutual,” they stress. “Even though we fight traffic in our commute for about one hour a day to volunteer for four hours a day, we never feel we are fighting the youth,” Bowers says. “We are fighting to shape another generation.”

Some youth in the program have children of their own and need child-rearing tips. Others use inappropriate language and need to expand their vocabulary. Many respond with violence and need avenues to vent anger, while others dress in inappropriate clothes and need fashion tips. “We are committed to helping these youth help themselves. We want to help the youth embrace the world with their numerous gifts and talents, instead of the world embracing youth with handcuffs and incarceration,” explains Bowers.

Bowers and Gross say their goals as foster grandparents are to serve as role models; make appropriate referrals for resources; teach respect with language and dress; share ways to manage anger, conflict, and anxiety; support successful transitions to mainstream

schools, job training, and employment; and provide sincere love and understanding.

“These goals are not always easy to meet when some of the youth are disruptive and behave in inappropriate ways at first,” Gross says. “But we look beyond all of that and realize that often they are just mirroring inappropriate behavior or learned behavior—behavior that is a reality of their community.” Smiling, Bowers says, “We just wear them down with our patience and consistency. We never give up on them, because they are our future.”

Both grandmas have seen some of the youth in the community outside of school. “The youth were very polite and said ‘Hello Grandma.’ Many may have never had a ‘senior’ grandma, so they welcome the new relationship,” say Gross and Bowers. “Sure it takes time to build trust, but that is true in all types of relationships. Trust is something you can’t force. You have to earn it. Once the trust is there, the link is that much stronger.”

“Once the trust is there, we can also share information with them from a ‘seasoned’ or ‘experienced’ view. The youth seek us out for assistance, attention, and encouragement. We love to tell them about the value of a good education and being productive, contributing citizens.”

Some of the grandmothers’ family members and friends have voiced concern regarding their safety. “The youth range in age from 12 to 22, and some of them tower over us,” Bowers reports. “Some even shared that they have participated in criminal activity,” Gross adds. “We don’t even concern ourselves with all of that. Some would rather work with younger children because they are afraid of the older children. Violence is everywhere! There is nothing to be afraid of here. But every senior needs to decide

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CWLA SENIOR SERVICE PROGRAM

CWLA is pleased to announce the formation of the Senior Service Program. This new program is the result of our partnership with the Corporation for National Service. The Senior Service Program will enable the League to direct greater attention on using the gifts of seniors to create more effective approaches for working with children, youth, and their families. The League will strive to implement these approaches in a comprehensive way in local communities. For more information, contact Joseph Montgomery at jmontgomery@cwla.org or 202/942-0310.

from **Director**, page 2

A February 2001 National Institute of Justice report, *Research in Brief: An Update on the Cycle of Violence*, revealed that experiencing childhood abuse and neglect increased the likelihood of juvenile arrest by 59%. More specifically, children who were abused or neglected are more likely to be arrested as juveniles compared with a control group (27% versus 17%), as adults (42% versus 33%), and for violent crimes (18% versus 14%). The negative impact is also apparent in mental health concerns (a higher rate of suicide attempts), educational problems (extremely low IQ scores and reading ability), occupational difficulties (high rates of unemployment), and public health and safety issues (prostitution in males and females and alcohol problems in females).

Clearly, the work in which we are engaged can have a significant impact on the sustained reduction of juvenile delinquency and improving the overall well-being of our children, families, and communities.

As I write in the physical and chronological shadow of the horrific events of September 11, I would be remiss if I did not offer a closing note regarding this recent tragedy. Most everyone with the written forum to express their thoughts began by offering their deepest sympathies to those who lost family members, friends, and loved ones. I, too, offer my heartfelt prayers and thoughts. I believe, however, that out of adversity we must seek to learn and overcome.

I am heartened that my two sons, Austin (12) and Zachary (6), are able to witness the nation's unity of purpose, resolve, and patriotism. I am heartened that they are able to see a redefinition and proper identification of heroism through the extraordinary efforts of firefighters, police, rescue workers, armed forces personnel, and the thousands of volunteers sacrificing personal interests for others.

We can hope these elements, rising from the devastation, will grow and be sustained. Perhaps one of the positive, long-term outcomes from this incredible tragedy will be that our individual and collective introspection regarding priorities will allow us to once again recognize and commit the full measure of resources to our most remarkable, enduring, and valuable resource—our children, youth, and families.

Sincerely,



John Tuell
Director, CWLA Juvenile Justice Division

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE

House Passes Juvenile Justice Legislation

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 1900, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2001 (JJJPA), on September 20. This legislation, which reauthorizes JJJPA, is a marked improvement over proposals in the last two sessions of Congress, although concerns remain regarding the separation and removal protections, as well as funding for prevention.

H.R. 1900 weakens the separation protections by permitting some degree of visual and verbal contact between juveniles and adult inmates. The removal protections are weakened by extending the time during which a juvenile may be held in an adult jail from 24 hours to 48 hours. H.R. 1900 adds an additional exception to the jail removal protection for children by allowing children to be placed in adult facilities with parental consent.

H.R. 1900 fails to invest adequately in prevention. Investments in primary prevention are best achieved by maintaining and strengthening the current federal law, Title V Local Delinquency Prevention program. Any reauthorization of JJJPA should preserve this important program. Although improvements were made to the Juvenile Delinquency Block Grant in H.R. 1900, the block grant fails to adequately prioritize investment in primary prevention.

Attention now shifts to the Senate, which has yet to act on juvenile justice except to introduce two major proposals: S. 1174, the Children's Confinement Conditions Improvement Act of 2001, introduced by Senators Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT); and S. 1165, the Juvenile Crime Prevention and Control Act of 2001, introduced by Senators Joseph Biden (D-DE) and Herb Kohl (D-WI). It is unclear when action on these proposals will take place.

For the most up-to-date information, visit www.cwla.org/advocacy.

Project Confirm of New York City

Bridging the Gap Between Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice

by John Tuell, Director, CWLA Juvenile Justice Division

Recently, I had the privilege of traveling to New York City to visit the home office of the Vera Institute of Justice and meet with Molly Armstrong, Coordinator of Demonstration Projects for the Vera Institute. Armstrong was the original director of Project Confirm, a program designed to bridge the gap and overlap between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. I also met with India Baird, the current director of Project Confirm, and her dedicated staff. The visit provided an opportunity to observe this promising approach that enhances the collaboration and services to children and youth in the child welfare system who have entered the juvenile justice system.

The Vera Institute is a private, nonprofit organization “dedicated to making government policies and practices fairer, more humane, and more efficient.” Working in collaboration with public officials and communities in New York state, throughout the United States, and internationally, the Vera Institute designs and implements innovative programs that expand the provision of justice and improve the quality of urban life. Vera also conducts research to improve government operations and create projects to test the most promising ideas.

The Vera Institute assesses the entire cycle of activity involved in programming. Currently, the organization is working with government agencies and other foundations in the areas of juvenile justice, foster care, school safety, and treatment of drug offenders.

In 1997, the Vera Institute began one such collaboration with the New York City Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) to study the flow of adolescents into ACS care through other government systems. ACS was concerned with youth entering care through the juvenile justice, mental health, and PINS (“persons in need of supervision,” or status offender) systems. This concern had been heightened by an apparent rise in the number of adolescents arriving at the Emergency Children’s Services Center for care and treatment.

Vera worked with staff at ACS and several additional state and local agencies to chart the movement of juveniles among these agencies and to estimate the numbers moving along each pathway. In most cases, no precise measurement was possible, but a combination of agency data, interviews, observation, and original data collection produced reasonable estimates.

This initial effort resulted in two important documents that subsequently led to the development of the Project Confirm demonstration effort. These included the *Overlap Study Report: Adolescents in Child Welfare and Juvenile Detention* (April 1998, not available for unauthorized distribution or citation) and *Adolescent Pathways: Exploring the Intersections Between Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice, PINS, and Mental Health* (May 1998).

The reports revealed a large number of youth moving among these government agencies, but not always in the expected patterns. A key finding of the second report

indicated that 15% of the population age 12–16 in secure custody were in the child welfare system at the time of detention. This is approximately eight times higher than expected when compared with the percentage of foster care youth of the same age in the overall population (1.9%).

These results were even more surprising in light of the finding that ACS youth are committing comparatively less serious offenses but are being detained at a higher rate. For example, ACS staff initially believed many adolescents entered care through the juvenile justice system, but the analysis showed most adolescents received from the juvenile justice system were actually being returned to ACS and had been in ACS care at the time of their arrests.

The study also documented pathways that are well known to people in the agencies but previously had not been measured. For example, youth start in the PINS system, but are voluntarily placed in ACS care by their parents before the PINS case is completed. Another example cited included the flow of children from the mental health system into ACS placements.

Finally, the study documented a lack of mutual understanding and cooperation between the agencies, which resulted in overuse of ACS placements in some situations and underuse in others. The analysis also identified duplication of services, unnecessary transaction costs, and poor results for some of the most troubled adolescents in the care of the city.

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The crisis at ACS that spurred interest in this study was a symptom of the inefficiencies and poor coordination that characterized the movement of adolescents between the systems. The report recommended strengthening interagency partnerships in three specific areas, resulting in the proffer that coordination should be improved in the PINS system between the diversion program, ACS field offices, and the Family Court. Additionally, a partnership between ACS and the juvenile justice system should aim to eliminate the costly and unnecessary detention of ACS adolescents. The report also recommended the partnership between ACS and the mental health system should be strengthened with the addition of more therapeutic foster beds for adolescents.

The Pathways

An increased dialogue and these findings led to an innovative effort to coordinate the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to mitigate against the circumstances that lead to the apparent bias against foster care children and youth entering the juvenile justice system. When teenagers are arrested in cities across the United States, their parents usually show up at the police station or courthouse and take them home. When kids in foster care are arrested, often no responsible parents, custodians, or guardians appear, and the court remands these children to a juvenile detention center. The result is a bias against foster children in decisions about detention and costly overcrowding in secure juvenile facilities.

The responsibility to appear on behalf of foster children lies with the child welfare system, but police and juvenile justice officials often do not know they have

arrested a child in foster care or whom they should call. Even when the child provides this information, the foster parents and caseworkers are often reluctant to come to court, confused about their individual responsibilities and sometimes even hopeful that another system will take the child off of their hands.

In New York City, ACS provides foster care directly and through 60 contract agencies using 8,000 caseworkers. In the past, police and juvenile probation officers and detention staff struggled to identify kids in care, reach the adults responsible for them, and get them to come to the station or court house. As a result, many foster children spent time in locked facilities unnecessarily, lost their beds in foster homes, and had to go through a lengthy re-placement process that increased the period of incarceration and exacerbated financial and emotional costs.

For three years, Project Confirm has helped the New York City child welfare and juvenile justice systems work together to reduce and eliminate the detention bias against children in foster care. Upon arrest of a juvenile, the project's staff check child welfare records to confirm which youth are in foster care and then notify the appropriate agencies—informing them of their obligation to provide information and stand up for these kids in court, and guiding them through the sometimes intimidating court process.

Project Confirm can offer a range of benefits. The child welfare system is less frequently required to find new homes for arrested foster care children and youth. The ability to learn about arrests immediately helps caseworkers provide access to a range of support and appropriate intervention services to this troubled population.

Additionally, sharply reducing unnecessary detention makes better use of this scarce and costly resource. The dedicated staff, however, would argue that the children and youth benefit most of all. They no longer get lost in the juvenile justice system simply because they are in foster care.

The disconnect between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is common nationwide. A body of research reflects that this population is at significantly higher risk of juvenile delinquency, violent criminal behavior, and adult criminality. The findings from a National Institute of Justice report, *An Update on the Cycle of Violence*, revealed that persons who had been abused or neglected as children were 59% more likely to be arrested as juveniles. According to Project Confirm administrative staff, officials in Georgia, Illinois, South Carolina, and Washington state are currently learning from the experiences of Project Confirm and adapting aspects of the project to reduce the unnecessary detention of foster children in their jurisdictions.

Bridging the Gap: The Process

By examining the critical components of Project Confirm more specifically, we can provide a greater opportunity for replication in jurisdictions throughout the country. The work is characterized by four phases:

Identification. A mandatory referral and cross-referencing mechanism is crucial to identify youth in foster care when they are arrested. By calling the project's telephone hotline, police and juvenile justice practitioners learn almost immediately whether an arrested youth is in foster care. At Project Confirm, essential information is gathered from the juvenile justice official

and a screening process is initiated by accessing existing child welfare databases. Different jurisdictions will have varying systems and capacities, but the project must receive referrals from the juvenile justice system and be able to identify foster youth quickly and accurately.

Notification. Once an arrested youth in foster care is identified, project staff contact the youth's caseworker by phone and fax to confirm the youth's placement and explain how to proceed. The project staff personnel serve as a liaison between juvenile justice and child welfare officials. Since exchanged information is sometimes confidential, agency officials are contacted directly and reminded of the sensitivity of case information.

Coordinated Response. In New York City, most cases are not diverted before court. Due to this jurisdictional particularity, Project Confirm emphasizes the court appearance as the point of coordinated response. In other places, however, detention intake or probation intake may be a more productive point of intervention. In either case, notification alone is not enough. A proper guardian must be present at the courthouse (or detention center or probation intake) as an information and release resource.

Project Confirm is most successful when staff are able to meet with caregivers and caseworkers, explain justice system procedures, and guide them through the process. Project staff facilitate the child welfare worker's conversations with probation officers, prosecutors, and judges about whether release is the right decision and how to prevent future offenses. Even if the jurisdiction is not able to support the staff to meet caseworkers at the courthouse, these

conversations may be facilitated through teleconferencing.

A coordinated response is also important when placement is an issue in the delinquency case. For example, when an incident happens within a group home, returning to that home may not be ideal. When changing placements is in the adolescent's best interest, project staff help ensure the transition is well planned and does not rely on routing youth through emergency placement services. If a youth is detained, project staff contact the juvenile detention center to inform them of the youth's proper guardian, as well as any special medical, mental health, or educational needs.

Accountability Mechanisms. To ensure that child welfare workers are aware of their responsibilities following the arrest of youth on their caseloads, an accountability mechanism must be in place. Project Confirm secured an official memorandum from the director of the child welfare agency outlining the workers' responsibilities upon the arrest of a youth in foster care and underscoring that emergency re-placement is not an option. The cooperation of the other agencies involved may also rely on such a mechanism. Although staff training plays an important role in gaining line staff support and understanding of the project, a formal directive calling for interagency cooperation is always persuasive.

Project Confirm has produced two important results. The effort has contributed to an increased rate of appearance for responsible custodians and

child care workers. The available data, covering a 12-month period, reflect that in 97% of the cases screened by project staff, successful notification of the contract agency was achieved. This contact resulted in the appearance of caseworkers in 83% of cases. The collaboration has also consistently achieved the goal of a 60% release rate for the affected population. This standard necessarily recognizes the seriousness of the alleged offense and other mitigating circumstances that may appropriately require secure confinement to protect the interests of public safety.

As the Juvenile Justice Division of CWLA continues to advance the understanding of the critical connection between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency, successful efforts to address this connection must be recognized, evaluated, and offered as replicable solutions. The tireless effort of the Project Confirm staff, the collaboration of the involved agencies and systems, and the support of the Vera Institute of Justice, have all contributed to an excellent solution at work in behalf of children, youth, and families.

For more information, contact Project Confirm, 492 First Avenue, Ground Floor, New York, NY 10016; 212/966-8146 or (877) KID-CHECK; or www.vera.org.

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tive justice models; detention reform; disproportionate minority confinement reduction; and others, a climate of continuing reform persists through the white-water of changing political trends and shifting public attitudes. America is faced with both a crisis of substance abuse treatment capacity throughout the juvenile justice system and a clear opportunity to innovate in ways that can boost public safety while cutting rising juvenile corrections costs.

The Problem and Current Efforts

Although delinquency is down overall nationally, in the last few years drug violations by juveniles have increased 144%, and drug cases formally processed among juvenile offenders have increased 183% (DOJ, 1999). One study showed a 291% increase in the rate at which young people were incarcerated because of drug involvement and a 539% increase in drug-related incarcerations for young African American men over the last 10 years (Schiraldi, Holman, & Beatty, 2000). Availability of consistent screening, assessment, and substance abuse treatment (or other services related to the frequent phenomenon of co-occurring disorders) is uneven nationally, further exacerbating a crisis in the capacity to address the problem. Only 36% of juvenile corrections facilities offer any type of substance abuse treatment (SAMHSA, 1997), and juvenile probation departments cite substance abuse treatment as one of their top four program expansion needs (Torbett, 1999).

Model programs that have laid the groundwork for the integrated treatment network ideal include TASC (Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime), juvenile assessment centers, and juvenile drug courts. Each has contributed to a deeper understanding of the extent of substance abuse challenges in juvenile offender populations. Additionally, they have illuminated the extent to which youth entering the juvenile justice system come with a complex array of previously unrealized issues, including physical and mental health problems, learning challenges, family crises, and indifferent community ties. All of these factors must be understood and addressed to mobilize youth's strengths and intervene effectively. The integrated treatment model adapts successful aspects of all of these approaches, but incorporates additional components. Comprehensive policy change to redirect multiple youth-serving systems toward common goals in an integrated fashion, involving families as partners in the work of reclaiming their children, and organizing community partners and traditional service providers in innovative ways.

Despite these advances, the successful integration of these models across more than 2,800 distinct juvenile justice systems nationwide has been inconsistent. Obstacles to moving such approaches forward include increasingly punitive attitudes toward juvenile offenders; shortages of substance abuse treatment in general, but particularly for youth; and lack of resources to build infrastructure to systematically afford appropriate substance abuse and related mental health services throughout the juvenile justice system.

An Updated Framework for Solution Building and a Call to Action

We have an opportunity to energize and promote a new generation of best practices for these youth and their families. Through the dedicated work of a generation of researchers and of juvenile justice, substance abuse, and mental health innovators, the integrated juvenile justice substance abuse treatment network model has emerged as a preferred method for addressing this complex community problem. The model not only addresses gaps and barriers, but does so in a way that accesses and mobilizes community strengths and energy as essential for meaningful change. Three central themes further clarify the direction necessary to bring the network model to life:

- 1. More substance abuse treatment and related services are needed for youth in general, but specifically for youth in the juvenile justice system.** Addressing the shortage of treatment for this group of Americans must be one of this country's central public health and public safety investments. Adequate substance abuse treatment and related services, such as mental health, must be effectively advocated for and expanded.
- 2. Better substance treatment and related services are needed for youth in the juvenile justice system.** Key to designing an effective substance abuse intervention is to acknowledge that it must be adapted to the developmental, cultural, and gender-specific needs of the youth being served. Disproportionate confinement of youth of color is still a primary area of juvenile justice reform—and innovations in this arena have demonstrated that to effectively achieve the goal of redirecting the lives of these youth, we need more culturally relevant professionals and practices. We have to move away from merely adapting successful adult programs. Further development of adolescent-centered treatment that accentuates youth development principles while cultivating youth accountability and improved relationships in the community is the new goal.

3. More than substance abuse treatment services are needed to treat youth. Clearly, an effective substance abuse or other mental health intervention is critical, but it's only a beginning step in the trajectory of a young person choosing to change his or her life. Coordination, integration, and synergy among programs, services, and systems designed to rehabilitate, hold accountable, and reconnect these youth to their families and communities in a new way is a central need for all professionals with a stake in the outcomes for these youth.

Youth not only need integrated services, but a range of opportunities to extend beyond the traditional rehabilitative menu (Bazemore & Nissen, 2000). Youth development opportunities should provide youth the chance to demonstrate their willingness to take responsibility in meaningful, creative, and self-directed ways whenever possible. Because youth development occurs in families and communities, concurrent focus should include clear development of community enthusiasm, receptivity, support, and resultant social capital for the network model to be ultimately effective.

What Will It Take to Innovate Effectively?

Stakeholders concerned with encouraging youth success despite their substance abuse and delinquency have an opportunity to join together to advocate for a new generation of coordinated, integrated, and visionary service networking. Missed opportunities to use evidence-based methods must be transformed. Fragmented systems must be redressed. Community frustration and indifference must be mobilized into community outreach and opportunity development for youth who are willing to change their lives, demonstrate accountability, and mature.

Evaluations of previous efforts have demonstrated clear cost savings and public safety improvements as youth engage in, complete, and transition out of treatment. We must shift from approaches that rely excessively on punishment to a more enlightened, civil, and far-sighted paradigm incorporating state-of-the-art public safety, public health, and community development principles.

Reclaiming Futures

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has demonstrated its long-standing commitment to addressing substance abuse problems as one of the most pressing health risks for all Americans. As a leader and innovator in focusing national attention on some of the highest-risk, highest-need groups, it has recently

introduced a five-year, \$21 million initiative to invest in systems change for juvenile justice and substance abuse treatment communities. The foundation will seek to stimulate and cultivate continued development of the integrated treatment network model in select communities nationwide. Just over a year old, this initiative, *Reclaiming Futures: Building Community Solutions to Substance Abuse and Delinquency*, is in the process of selecting initial sites, with other communities invited to participate in a variety of ways as the project progresses. *Reclaiming Futures* has three primary components: network development, treatment improvement and enhancement, and a judicial leadership program.

During the next five years, a national training and technical assistance office will develop and disseminate lessons learned, emerging best practices, and opportunities for national network development among like-minded practitioners. This effort will stimulate national dialogue and serve as a repository for data and evidence-based practice. Centrally, *Reclaiming Futures* will identify and advocate for the continued growth and strengthening of systems, structures, and methods best equipped to reclaim these youth and help reconnect them with the people around them in more positive and productive ways.

To learn more, visit www.reclaimingfutures.org.

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JUVENILE JUSTICE NEWS AND RESOURCES

New from OJJDP

Juvenile Delinquency and Serious Injury Victimization (NCJ 188676) draws on data from two OJJDP longitudinal studies on the causes and correlates of juvenile delinquency—the Denver Youth Survey and the Pittsburgh Youth Study—to explore the interrelationship between delinquency and victimization. This bulletin, part of OJJDP’s Youth Development Series, focuses on victims of violence who have sustained serious injuries as a result of the victimization. Being victimized may lead to victimizing others. The studies found that many victims were prone to engage in illegal activities, associate with delinquent peers, victimize other delinquents, and avoid legal recourse in resolving conflicts. A clearer understanding of the patterns and predictors of victimization offers the potential for increased effectiveness in designing and implementing strategies to reduce both victimization and offending.

Truancy Reduction: Keeping Students in School (NCJ 188947) highlights major research regarding truancy and illustrates why communities should work to prevent and reduce its incidence. Chronic truancy has long been identified as a key predictor for negative outcomes in education, employment, and social success. Truancy has been linked to serious delinquent activity in youth and to significant negative behavior and characteristics in adults, including substance abuse, gang activity, burglary, auto theft, and vandalism. This bulletin discusses two programs—Abolish Chronic Truancy Now and OJJDP’s Truancy Reduction Demonstration Program—that have worked to intervene with chronic truants, address the causes of truancy, and stop youth’s progression from truancy into more serious and violent behaviors.

The National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse (FS 200133), discusses the center’s OJJDP-funded program to help investigators and prosecutors sharpen their skills to handle child and adolescent abuse cases. Staff assistance includes conducting research, deciphering complex medical and forensic evidence, and brainstorming with law enforcement officials and prosecutors to develop investigative and trial strategies. The center offers a variety of training classes and a full range of technical support, consultation services, and information. This fact sheet details the center’s ability to meet the growing demand for expertise in the area of juvenile and criminal justice.

Gun Use by Male Juveniles: Research and Prevention (NCJ 188992) examines patterns of gun ownership and gun carrying among adolescents, drawing on data from OJJDP’s Rochester Youth Development Study. The bulletin, part of the Youth Development Series, also addresses the interrelationship between gangs and guns and describes prevention programs, including the Boston Gun Initiative, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services’ Youth Firearms Violence Initiative, and OJJDP’s Partnerships to Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence program. Effective efforts to reduce illegal gun carrying and gun violence among youth require the support and participation of multiple community agencies. The information presented in this bulletin is intended to enhance those efforts.

OJJDP bulletins and fact sheets 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 PO Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000.

National Study Compares Boot Camps to Traditional Facilities for Juvenile Offenders

This *Sentencing and Corrections Research in Brief*, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the Corrections Program Office, compares 27 boot camps with 22 more traditional facilities by measuring components of the institutional environment in each setting and their role in treatment. It also examines results from site visits; staff surveys; surveys of juveniles, given twice to examine changes over time; and structured interviews with facility administrators. The study found that juveniles and staff each rate boot camps more favorably than traditional programs.

Juveniles and staff in the survey perceived that boot camps provided more structure and a safer environment. Further examination suggested that, perhaps even more important to the positive assessment of boot camps, their selection process admitted few juveniles who had either psychological problems or more serious offenses on their records. Together, the results from this study suggest boot camps are successful in the first step—creating a positive environment. They are no more effective, however, in reducing recidivism than are traditional facilities. For a summary or the complete brief, visit www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/187680.pdf.

Forbes Magazine Selects The Children with Disabilities Website as a "Forbes Favorite"

The summer 2001 list of *Forbes* Favorites: Best of the Web included the OJJDP website on *Children with Disabilities*. It is one of eight sites chosen by the *Forbes* editors as a winner in the health category.

The website includes topics covering the basic needs of children with disabilities, such as health, housing, education, and employment, as well as technical assistance and legal advocacy. Additionally, the website provides a state-by-state index on a range of organizations offering relevant services and information.

The website is one of two developed with the support of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The other site, launched in 2000, is Parenting Resources for the 21st Century. Through this website, the council provides parents with links to federal, state, and local resources and information that can help them meet the challenges of raising children. The websites can be found at www.childrenwithdisabilities.ncjrs.org and www.parentingresources.ncjrs.org.

Action without Borders Online Suggests How to Get Involved

Are you, or do you know, a young person who is looking for ways to get involved in the community? Check out a new website for kids, teens, and teachers at www.idealists.org/kt.

The site includes organizations started by kids, volunteer opportunities for youth, resources for starting community projects and addressing personal questions and problems, links to a variety of nonprofit sites for kids, and information on how to use Idealist in the classroom.

All About the Girls

Girls are the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population, despite an overall drop in juvenile crime. The number of girls in detention facilities, jails, and prisons has risen; likewise, arrest rates for girls in almost all offense categories have increased over the last 20 years. The American Bar Association and the National Bar Association have made the report, *Justice by Gender: The Lack of Appropriate Prevention, Diversion and Treatment Alternatives for Girls in the Justice System*, available online at www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/justicebygender.pdf.

Book Review: Teen Self-Help Guide

In *The African-American Teenagers' Guide To Personal Growth, Health, Safety, Sex, and Survival: Living and Learning in the 21st Century*, Debrah Harris-Johnson provides African American teenagers with a valuable tool for improving their lives.

Teens will find information to help them make good decisions and handle situations on their own, and it will bring parents and teenagers together in planning a healthy and successful future. *The African-American Teenagers' Guide* teaches readers the value of time and responsibility in relation to their family, friends, classmates, teachers, associates, and selves. Readers learn the right way to change frightening situations into enlightening situations; discover who they really are; learn to understand themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually; and learn how to use their attributes in a positive way. Teens also learn to handle money matters, including planning, earning, and saving toward college expenses.

The African-American Teenagers' Guide answers teens' questions about sex, pregnancy, dating, rape, gangs, homosexuality, friendship, peer pressure, and depression. This 368-page book delivers factual information that will help shape positive futures. Published by Amber Books, May 2001

CWLA National Conference

March 6–8, 2002

Children 2002: Making Children a National Priority

Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC

Register online at www.cwla.org/conferences.

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individually where they would feel most comfortable contributing. Even though foster grandparents go through training, it is not healthy to feel unsafe. Make the choice that is best for you and the youth you would like to serve.”

With the permission and support of the school’s administration, Bowers and Gross created the Foster Grandparents’ Most Improved Award. This award allows the foster grandparents to observe the youth in the graduating class and determine awards at the end of the academic year. The grandmas initiated the award to give the youth something to work toward. The recipients, one male and one female, must show improvement by ceasing their violent behavior and consistently displaying respect for their educators and peers. Award winners have expressed the positive difference the grandmas have made in their lives and encouraged other youth to listen and model their rewarded behavior. Many of the youth are asking about the award this school year.

Asked how they were recruited, Bowers explains, “A friend recruited me, and I recruited Grandma Gross.”

The grandmas encourage parents, caregivers, and anyone else who comes in contact with youth to talk to them and develop a positive relationship. They stress that words chosen in conversation should be loving. “If we want our youth to respect, we must teach them how to respect. We must be a positive role model and provide the link!”

Foster Grandparent Program

The Foster Grandparent Program is one of many volunteer programs offered by the Corporation for National Service (www.cns.gov). The program offers seniors opportunities to serve as mentors, tutors, and loving caregivers for children and youth with special needs. They serve in community organizations such as schools, hospitals, Head Start programs, and youth centers.

Foster Grandparents offer emotional support to children who have been abused and neglected, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities. Their personal attention helps these young people grow, gain confidence, and become full and productive members of society. In the process, Foster Grandparents strengthen communities by providing youth services that community budgets cannot afford and by building bridges across generations.

Foster Grandparents

- thrive on direct interaction with children;
- devote their volunteer service to children with special or exceptional needs;
- believe they can make a difference in the lives of children;
- serve children directly with one-on-one, hands-on service;
- serve 20 hours a week, usually 4 hours a day Monday through Friday;
- are 60 years of age or older;
- meet certain income eligibility guidelines;
- receive modest tax-free stipends to offset the cost of volunteering;
- receive reimbursement for transportation, meals during service, an annual physical, and accident and liability insurance while on duty; and
- attend preservice and monthly training sessions.

If you are interested in becoming a foster grandparent or in having foster grandparents work within your agency, contact the Corporation for National Service office in your state, visit www.seniorcorps.org/joining/finding_nssc.html, or contact Joseph Montgomery, Program Manager, CWLA Senior Services, at 202/942.0310 or jmontgomery@cwla.org.