

Models for Change is working in Pennsylvania to accelerate the pace of the Commonwealth's progress towards a more fair, effective, rational and developmentally friendly juvenile justice system. The initiative in Pennsylvania is focused on three Targeted Areas of Improvement: aftercare, disproportionate minority contact, and mental health and juvenile justice system coordination. For more information on Models for Change, go to www.modelsforchange.net.

The purpose of this monthly newsletter is to increase communication across and within the targeted areas of improvement in Pennsylvania; disseminate reports and other products created through this initiative; and increase awareness of upcoming events and training opportunities

We welcome your feedback - please send content suggestions and comments to mfc-pa@jlc.org.

What Do You Think?

January Question: What is the biggest obstacle to diverting youths from the juvenile justice system, and what is your suggestion for overcoming it?

Selected Responses:

The biggest obstacle to diverting youths from the juvenile justice system

- It is youth with serious mental health problems and the issues regarding treatment for these individuals. My suggestion to overcome this obstacle is adequate assessment tools and staff training.
- It is the lack of resources available to offset the youths that are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system. One response is to enhance the availability of mentoring and other diversion programs that target at-risk youth and provide services on the front end before the youth reaches the juvenile justice system
- It is that what used to be fights/squabbles between kids is now simple assault, a terrorist threat, or some other criminal activity. I feel that in some ways the police/schools can take things to the extreme and blow things out of proportion. The fact of the matter is that a juvenile cannot do what we did when we were kids because today is different and every little thing kids do can have serious consequences involving the court system. A fight is no longer just a fight it is a criminal act.

Other answers cited barriers, such as:

- Parents and parenting skills
- Education
- Early intervention
- Peer pressure
- Societal issues/systems barriers, including over-reaction of authorities to a small number of widely publicized cases

February Question: What specific issues related to the three targeted areas of improvement (aftercare, disproportionate minority contact, and mental health/juvenile justice system coordination) would you like to see more focus on through the Models for Change initiative? Do you have suggestions for how the issue(s) could be (better) addressed?

Targeted Areas of Improvement (TAI) Updates

Aftercare

Five counties began work in 2004 to enhance aftercare: Allegheny, Cambria, Lycoming, Philadelphia, and York. Four are funded by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) – Allegheny, Cambria, Lycoming, and York – while MacArthur is providing support to Philadelphia's effort. An aftercare policy group was established to work to identify and recommend changes to state policies that are important for aftercare to succeed in the counties. For more information on this TAI, go to <http://www.modelsforchange.net/issues/aftercare/>.

- *Focus on aftercare expanding to fifteen additional counties*
Twenty counties, including the five aftercare pilot counties have volunteered to implement the *Joint Position Statement on Aftercare for Delinquent Youth* in their jurisdictions by the year 2010. The 20 counties are: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Erie, Franklin, Lycoming, McKean, Northampton, Philadelphia, Venango, Warren, Westmoreland, Wyoming, and York. These counties will be working closely with the aftercare specialists Rick Steele (JCJC) and Kelly Franklin (Chiefs of Council) as they undergo a rigorous self assessment process and identify priority areas on which to focus their change efforts. To download a copy of the Joint Position Statement, go to www.modelsforchange.net/resources/ and click on "aftercare."

If you have specific questions, or would like additional information about the work of the aftercare TAI, contact Autumn Dickman at Juvenile Law Center, 215-625-0551, adickman@jlc.org.

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

The initial reform goals in this targeted area are to move Pennsylvania toward becoming a model of DMC data collection and to use the data collected to bring about needed change. The DMC work is focused in three counties: Allegheny, Berks, and Philadelphia. The policy work is coordinated at the state level with the DMC Subcommittee of PCCD's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee, chaired by Dan Elby. For additional information about the work of this TAI, go to <http://www.modelsforchange.net/issues/> and click on "racial fairness."

- *Berks County is well on the way to becoming a national exemplar in how to effectively and comprehensively address issues of DMC, thanks to active community engagement and strong leadership by Judge Arthur Grim. Recent activities, include:*
 - Training on Education Reintegration and Special Education Law
On February 6, 130 people attended a training conducted by the Education Law Center on the *Educational Aftercare & Reintegration Toolkit for Juvenile Justice Professionals* and on special education law. This program was designed to help professionals working with youth in the juvenile justice system to understand education challenges faced by youth returning from juvenile justice placements and also schools' special education responsibilities.

Attendees included juvenile probation officers, defense attorneys, assistant district attorneys who practice in juvenile court, judges, police, school administrators

from a number of the school systems in Berks County, service providers and representatives from the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission. The report can be downloaded at: <http://www.elc-pa.org/pubs/downloads/english/juv-JPO%20Toolkit%2010-11-06.pdf>.

- Development of Cultural Competency Standards for Service Providers
The Language Capability and Cultural Diversity Task Force of the Berks County DMC Reduction Steering Committee held a meeting on February 20 to begin development of cultural competency standards for service providers. Informed by models from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Santa Cruz County, the task force will work to create standards to be applied to agencies seeking to provide services paid for by the juvenile court. The task force is working to ensure that all necessary stakeholders are included in the development process to ensure agency support. The task force will also begin to review court agency documents translated to Spanish to ensure that the translations are accurate and address the needs of the community.

- Berks County Delegates to Tour Evening Reporting Centers
Delegates from Berks County will be visiting evening reporting centers in Allegheny County and Cook County, Illinois (Chicago) to explore their programs and meet with probation staff and service providers involved with them. The Illinois site is a model for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

If you have specific questions, or would like additional information about the work of the DMC TAI, contact Dana Shoenberg (dshoenberg@cclp.org) or Ruby Sherrod (rjsherrod@cclp.org), 202-637-0377 at the Center for Children's Law and Policy.

For information about the Latino Juvenile Justice Network, contact Cassandra Villanueva, cvillanueva@nclr.org, 202-776-1810 at the National Council of La Raza.

Mental Health & Juvenile Justice System Coordination (MH/JJ)

Three counties (Allegheny, Chester, and Erie) began work in 2005 to enhance the coordination between the mental health and juvenile justice systems. At the policy level, the Mental Health/Juvenile Justice State Group is working to identify and change state policies that are important for mental health/juvenile justice system coordination to succeed in the counties. For more information on this TAI, go to: <http://www.modelsforchange.net/issues/mental/>.

- *22 Juvenile Probation Departments Volunteer to Pilot Screening Program Using MAYSI-2*
The Screening and Assessment Subcommittee of the Mental Health/Juvenile Justice State Group established criteria to review existing screening and assessment instruments and has recommended the use of the Massachusetts Adolescent and Youth Screening Inventory ó Version 2 (MAYSI-2) to identify youth who may have mental health and co-occurring substance abuse needs. Twenty-two juvenile probation departments have volunteered to implement a screening program using the MAYSI-2. This effort is being led by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission with extensive technical assistance support from the instrument

developers at the National Youth Screening Assistance Project and from the National Center for Juvenile Justice. Additional financial support for the effort is being provided by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Participating counties are: Adams, Armstrong, Beaver, Blair, Bradford, Butler, Cambria, Crawford, Delaware, Elk, Erie, Green, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Philadelphia, Pike, Schuylkill, Somerset, Wayne, and Westmoreland. A training program for county teams has been scheduled for March 15, 2007. Contact Keith Snyder or Alan Tezak, to ask questions or request additional information.

If you would like information about the work of the MH/JJ State Group, contact Keith Snyder (ksnyder@state.pa.us) or Alan Tezak, (alantezak@comcast.net).

For additional information about the work of the MH/JJ TAI, and the Comprehensive Systems of Care Initiative (CSCI) that is being implemented in the model counties, contact Kim Godfrey (kim.godfrey@cjca.net) or Jennie Shufelt (jshufelt@prainc.com) from the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ).

Information Exchange: Resources, MfC Publications, and MfC-PA in the News

- *Working With Families of Children in the Juvenile Justice and Corrections System: A Guide for Education Program Leaders, Principals, and Building Administrators*

This guide was developed to help institutions caring for youth who are neglected or delinquent build collaborations and support family participation to maximize educational experiences for youth in care, as well as during their transition back into the community.

The guide was produced by the National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk (NDTAC), through a contract with the Department of Education. The publication can be downloaded at:

http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/nd/docs/Family%20Involvement%20Guide_FINAL.pdf

- *Pennsylvania Progress: Aftercare Reality and Reform*

The most recent issue of PCCD's *Pennsylvania Progress* series lays out the findings of the state aftercare specialists' 67-county aftercare assessment, addresses what it will take to bring aftercare practice into line with the goals of the *Joint Position Statement on Aftercare for Delinquent Youth*, and describes the work being done to make "comprehensive aftercare" a reality in Pennsylvania. It is downloadable at:

http://modelsforchange.net/pdfs/Aftercare_Reality_and_Reform_07.pdf

Upcoming Trainings, Events, and Meetings

Training on the *Educational Aftercare & Reintegration Toolkit for Juvenile Justice Professionals*

- March 22 in Allentown, Lehigh County
- April 4 in Monroeville, Allegheny County

Both of these trainings are through the Center for Juvenile Justice, Training & Research (CJJT&R). These trainings are open to anyone involved with juvenile justice or a related field. To access the Spring 2007 calendar, and for information on training locations, directions, and lodging, go to: www.jcjc.state.pa.us. Click on the "Training" tab on the left side, and then on "Spring 2007."

- April 10 (3:30-5:30) *Berks County DMC Reduction Steering Committee meeting.*
The meeting is open to the public and will be held at the Reading Area Community College. Contact Dana Shoenberg (dshoenberg@cclp.org) for additional information.
- April 24-27 *Nineteenth Annual Children's Interagency Training Conference*
The theme for the 2007 CASSP conference is "How Does Your Garden Grow? Cultivating Cross-System, Family-Driven, and Youth-Guided Partnerships." The conference agenda includes several Models for Change related workshops.

To access the full conference program, and to register, log onto:

<http://pacassp.psych.psu.edu/docs/2007conferenceoverview.htm>. The conference will be held at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College, PA. For additional information, contact Harriet Bicksler at 717-232-3125, x15 or hsb5@psu.edu.

- May 9-10 *MacArthur Juvenile Court Training Curriculum: Understanding Adolescents*
This three-part training will provide participants with a working knowledge of adolescent development, explore strategies for effective communication and reveal the myths and truths about mental health evaluations.

The training is being conducted through the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research and will be held at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg West, in Mechanicsburg, PA. For a full listing of available courses, and to register, log onto: www.jcjc.state.pa.us and click on the *training* link on the left hand side.

Models for Change: National News

- *MacArthur Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice conducts study to assess public support for alternative responses to juvenile offending*
The 2006 study, conducted by Daniel Nagin (Carnegie Mellon University); Alex R. Piquero (University of Florida); Elizabeth S. Scott (Columbia University); and Laurence Steinberg (Temple University), is entitled: *Public Preferences for Rehabilitation Versus Incarceration of Juvenile Offenders: Evidence from a Contingent Valuation Survey*

The study abstract states in part: "Accurately gauging the public's support for alternative responses to juvenile offending is important, because policymakers often justify expenditures for punitive juvenile justice reforms on the basis of popular demand for tougher policies. In this study, we assess public support for both punitively and non-punitively oriented juvenile justice policies by measuring respondents' willingness to pay for various policy proposals."

For this research article, log onto:

<http://law.bepress.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1072&context=uvalwps>

Learn to Speak the Same Language!: Acronyms, Lingo, & Other System Unique References

- **CASSP** is an acronym for the *Child and Adolescent Service System Program*. CASSP is a comprehensive mental health system of care for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance and their families. The PA CASSP Training and Technical Assistance Institute is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and is part of the Child Study Center in the Department of Psychology at The Pennsylvania State University. For additional information about CASSP, log onto: <http://pacassp.psych.psu.edu/>
- **Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)**
BARJ is the model under which the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system has operated since 1996. In 2006, Pennsylvania celebrated 10 years since BARJ implementation.

The concept of Restorative Justice holds that when a crime is committed the offender incurs an obligation to restore the victim - and by extension the community - to the state of well-being that existed before the offense. The principle of balance in connection with restorative justice derives from the balanced approach concept, which suggests that the juvenile justice system should give equal weight to 1) holding offenders accountable to victims, 2) providing competency development for offenders in the system so they can pursue legitimate endeavors after release, and 3) ensuring community safety. (Definition is from PCCD's website. To view the full definition and for additional information about BARJ in Pennsylvania, log onto: <http://www.pccd.state.pa.us/pccd/cwp/view.asp?A=1387&Q=569712>)

The National Center for Juvenile Justice has authored White Papers that define and operationalize the concepts of accountability and competency development. These documents are accessible at:

Accountability: http://ncjj.servehttp.com/NCJJWebsite/pdf/whitepaper_victimrestoration.pdf
Competency Development: <http://ncjj.servehttp.com/NCJJWebsite/pdf/whitepaperfinal.pdf>