

## Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative: A Promising Progress Report

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Prior to data reported in the past two years reflecting an upward trend in some categories of delinquency, national data reflected a continuing decline in violent juvenile crime and overall juvenile delinquent activity while also capturing significant areas of concern. From 1994 through 2004, we saw encouraging declines with respect to juvenile violence and victimization while still acknowledging unacceptable rates of occurrence (Snyder, 2006). The data also confirm shameful numbers of children who continue to be abused and neglected. Of the nearly 2.8 million referrals for child maltreatment in 2004, close to 30% resulted in a disposition of substantiated child maltreatment, resulting in just fewer than 900,000 victims of child maltreatment nationwide (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006). The statistics on juvenile delinquency and childhood maltreatment continue to be both encouraging and discouraging. The research increasingly reaffirms a connection between child abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency (Garbarino & Plantz, 1986). It also confirms the broad range of associated negative outcomes in education, employment, mental health, and substance abuse for maltreated youth.

CWLA has consistently reported in the past seven years that child maltreatment researchers and practitioners, as well as those in the field of criminal justice, have been increasingly concerned

about the long-term negative consequences of child abuse and neglect and the increased likelihood of abused and neglected youth to become involved in the juvenile justice system (Gray, 1986; Widom & Maxfield, 2001). Although the evidence does not suggest that any single factor accounts for the development of criminal behavior, the importance of childhood victimization as a risk factor for subsequent delinquency and violence is increasingly recognized.

The research presented in CWLA's *Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: From Research to Effective Program, Practice, and Systemic Solutions* provides undeniable evidence that victims of childhood maltreatment often enter the juvenile justice system and become tomorrow's serious and violent offenders (Wiig, Widom, & Tuell, 2003). Children who are abused and neglected are not only more likely than other children to commit delinquent acts as adolescents and crimes as adults, but they are also more likely to experience a range of

mental health, substance abuse, occupational, and educational deficiencies during adolescence and adulthood.

Four prospective investigations in different parts of the United States documented a relationship between childhood victimization and some form of delinquent behavior (Wiig et al., 2003). In addition, recent research



has established a relationship between placement into foster care, placement stability, and risk of delinquency among maltreated children. A 2004 study examined a sample of substantiated victims of maltreatment in Cook County, Illinois (Morris, 2004). Study results

Since the creation of the CWLA Juvenile Justice Division in July 2000, through the generous and ongoing support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, CWLA has focused on the connections between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and established the goal of developing an integrated, multisystem approach to program development and service delivery. Utilizing proven effective models, resources, and a planning framework to guide recommended actions, the CWLA Juvenile Justice Division has developed a four phase framework and methodology to assist state and local jurisdictions to achieve this goal. The framework outlines the process necessary to develop an action strategy that state and local jurisdictions must consider to implement a more coordinated, integrated child welfare and juvenile justice system. This bulletin provides an update to the 2003 CWLA publication "Promoting a Coordinated and Integrated Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice System: An Action Strategy for Improved Outcomes." It provides a report on the work and progress in numerous state and local jurisdictions around the country that have partnered with CWLA in utilizing the framework to develop statutes, guiding principles, protocols, procedures, legal analyses, new multisystem collaborations, and other reform measures to effectively intervene and interrupt the costly trajectory of maltreated youth deeper into the delinquency and criminal justice systems. CWLA has worked diligently to improve the tools, resources, and publications available to state and local jurisdictions around the country and within the sites participating in the critically important work of the MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change: Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice Initiative to improve outcomes for maltreated and traumatized children and youth entering our nation's delinquency systems. Due to extraordinary commitment and leadership of the many youth serving professionals devoted to this area of reform, we believe there is reason to be encouraged about many of the developments highlighted in this bulletin.

revealed that approximately 16% of the children placed into foster care experienced at least one delinquency petition compared to 9% of all maltreatment victims who were not removed from their families. Critical within this research is the conclusion that the relationships between maltreatment and delinquency on the one hand, and foster care and delinquency on the other, are neither inevitable nor deterministic. The fact that maltreatment is not inevitably associated with delinquency legitimizes the necessity for child welfare and juvenile justice systems to work in a coordinated and integrated manner. There is also increasing evidence that childhood victimization has the potential to affect multiple domains of functioning (Widom, 1989).

In a series of articles, Widom and colleagues reported on other outcomes for which abused and neglected children are at increased risk, including mental health problems, such as posttraumatic stress disorder (Widom, 1999), suicide attempts (Widom, 1998), and alcohol problems in women (Widom, Ireland, & Glynn, 1995); social and behavioral problems, including running away (Kaufman & Widom, 1999), prostitution (Widom & Kuhns, 1996), and lower rates of employment (Widom, 1998); and cognitive and intellectual functioning, including lower reading ability and IQ scores in young adulthood (Perez & Widom, 1994). These troubling findings further emphasize the need for multisystem collaborations to identify and address the barriers and obstacles that preclude effective coordination of resources and services. In a 2003 study, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Complex Trauma Task Force reported that more than 2% of all children are victims of maltreatment, 13% are victims of neglect, and 11% are victims of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse (NCTSN, 2003).

Youth exposed to traumatic events exhibit a wide range of symptoms, presenting with not just internalizing problems, such as depression or anxiety, but also externalizing problems like aggression, conduct problems, and oppositional or defiant behavior (Caporino, Murray, & Jensen, 2003). Although trauma does not necessarily cause these problems, traumatic stress can interfere with a child's ability to think and learn, and can disrupt the course of healthy physical, emotional, and intellectual development (Ford, 2002). Further, traumatic stress among children and youth is associated with increased utilization of health and mental health services and increased risk of involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (Ford, 2005; NCTSN, 2006). The overwhelming conclusion from this body of research is that to improve the well-being of our nation's most disadvantaged and traumatized children and youth and see sustained reductions in child maltreatment and delinquency, we must



improve the coordination and integration of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Despite general agreement that improved communication and coordination among child welfare and juvenile justice is desired and beneficial, the actual implementation of collaborative efforts has proven problematic. These systems confront numerous critical barriers to collaboration, which most often include data collection, data management, information sharing, fiscal mandates, resources (funding and workforce), legal and regulatory strictures (state and federal), existing policies and procedures, and culture and philosophy. Historically, by their very nature, the child welfare and juvenile justice systems are not structured in ways that readily promote collaboration and coordination. The benefits of coordinating efforts across systems, despite all of these real and perceived barriers, are well documented.

One such publication, a National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) Special Project Bulletin, *When Systems Collide: Improving Court Practices and Programs in Dual Jurisdiction Cases*, makes a compelling case for coordinated multi-system screening and assessment, case assignment, case flow management, case planning and supervision, and interagency collaboration on behalf of dual jurisdiction youth (Siegel & Lord, 2004). In the bulletin, Siegel and Lord outline five areas in which child welfare and juvenile justice agencies can work to coordinate and improve their services for dual jurisdiction youth. These include:

- **Screening and assessment:** Routine screening by the child welfare and juvenile

justice systems for dual involvement on intake, which could take place through sharing automated databases or establishing interagency liaisons. “This screening then needs to be followed up with the notification of the other agency when dual involvement is confirmed” (Petro, 2006, p.14). Siegel and Lord suggest that both agencies embrace a method of assessing risk and need and that courts receive reports from both child protection and probation that summarize their respective assessments.

- **Case assignment:** The authors highlight “one family/one judge” calendaring. According to the bulletin, “In dual jurisdiction cases, a single judge [who hears all matters related to a single family] will be much more likely to have a complete understanding of the family’s court history” (Siegel & Lord, 2004, p. 6). A similar strategy could be taken with dual jurisdiction

youth, in which a judge is specially trained to handle dual jurisdiction youth. Siegel and Lord recommend the implementation of dedicated dockets. If a court reserves a block of

time on their court calendar specifically for dual jurisdiction cases it would enhance the ability of all parties across agencies to attend and participate.

- **Case flow management:** Effective case flow management practices should help to avoid delays in dual jurisdiction matters. Such

practices include joint prehearing conferences in which all parties involved in a case meet in advance of court proceedings to solidify their efforts and plans. Additionally, Siegel and Lord suggest that courts combine dependency and delinquency hearings to ensure that different agencies are coordinating their efforts, sharing information, and complying with court orders.

- **Case planning and supervision:** Improvements to case planning and supervision may come in the form of interagency liaisons. For example, Wraparound Milwaukee employs care coordinators who perform strength-based assessments, assemble child and family teams, conduct plan-of-care meetings, help determine needs and resources with youth and families, identify services, arrange for community agencies to provide specific services, and monitor the implementation of case plans. Wraparound Milwaukee also utilizes a child and family team that is actively involved in case planning and is composed of family members, relatives, church members, and friends, as well as systems people, such as probation or child welfare workers.
- **Interagency collaboration:** Interagency collaboration includes ways in which agencies can pool, blend, or decategorize funding; implement cross-training; improve information sharing; and establish interagency agreements and protocols for dual jurisdiction cases.

A methodical review of the relevant issues that impact cross-systems communication and coordination in different communities is essential to facilitate the achievement of these goals. The capacity—of both public and private agencies and organizations—to support this facilitated study and analysis can clarify the plethora of issues that impact systems collaboration



and offer practical recommendations to facilitate collaboration between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The goal of this process is to provide more comprehensive and effective services for youth.

Importantly, the study and analysis can offer constructive solutions to the actual obstacles that preclude system integration and can dismantle perceived barriers. This rigorous analysis can be combined with community-specific strategic planning and action processes designed to identify and address the overarching needs of youth and families served both by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Such an analysis can contribute to a jurisdiction's ability to:

- utilize limited financial resources efficiently; and
- reduce reliance on costly and ineffective placement and incarceration.

When these factors are in place, improved outcomes for the children, youth, and families served by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems can be achieved.

## Federal Law Bolsters The Focus

In November 2002 President Bush signed into law legislation reauthorizing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA), the major federal law governing the juvenile justice system, originally enacted in 1974. Of

critical importance, the law recognizes the research confirming the link between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency and articulates specific requirements regarding the connection between juvenile justice and child welfare systems. JJJPA articulates two overarching requirements that provide further impetus for the coordination of these systems more closely than previously required:

- States, to the maximum extent possible, must establish policies and systems to incorporate relevant child protective services records into juvenile justice records for purposes of establishing and implementing treatment plans for juvenile offenders.
- States must ensure that juvenile offenders whose placements are funded by Title IV-E Foster Care receive all the protections included in the foster care system, including case plans and case plan reviews.

These provisions currently are incorporated into the requirements that states must satisfy in order to receive funds authorized by the Formula Grants section of the JJJPA.

Additionally, in June 2003 President Bush signed into law amendments on the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA). The amendments establish an additional purpose area for abuse and neglect program grants. The language specifically included in Section 106(a)(13) cites supporting and enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment. The language also establishes an additional data collection requirement that includes the number of children/youth under the care of the state child protection system who are transferred into the custody of the state juvenile justice system. These provisions currently are incorporated into the requirements that states must satisfy in order to receive funds authorized by Section 106(d) of CAPTA as amended in 2003.

Because CWLA made a commitment to work in the area of child welfare and juvenile justice system coordination and integration, we clearly see the foundation and impetus these two statutes have provided to this area of focus. As a result, combined with the increasing body of credible research, these federal statutes provide a strong motivation for state and local jurisdictions to engage in coordinated multisystem efforts to improve outcomes for delinquent youth with dependency court involvement.

## Framework for Systems Coordination and Integration

Since the creation of the CWLA Juvenile Justice Division in July 2000, through the generous and ongoing support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, CWLA focused on the connections between the child welfare and



- improve data collection and information sharing across youth serving systems
- enhance commitment to use of evidenced-based, multisystems services;
- develop effective protocols and procedures for these interventions;

juvenile justice systems and established the goal of developing an integrated, multisystem approach to program development and service delivery. The CWLA Juvenile Justice Division developed a four phase framework and methodology to assist state and local jurisdictions to achieve this goal that incorporates proven effective models, resources, and a planning framework to guide recommended actions. The framework outlines the process necessary to develop an action strategy that state and local jurisdictions must consider to implement a more coordinated, integrated child welfare and juvenile justice system. The four phases, with additional details included about CWLA technical assistance provided to various state and local jurisdictions within phase 1 and 2, are outlined below under mobilization and advocacy, study and analysis, action strategy development, and implementation.

**PHASE 1, Mobilization and Advocacy** includes:

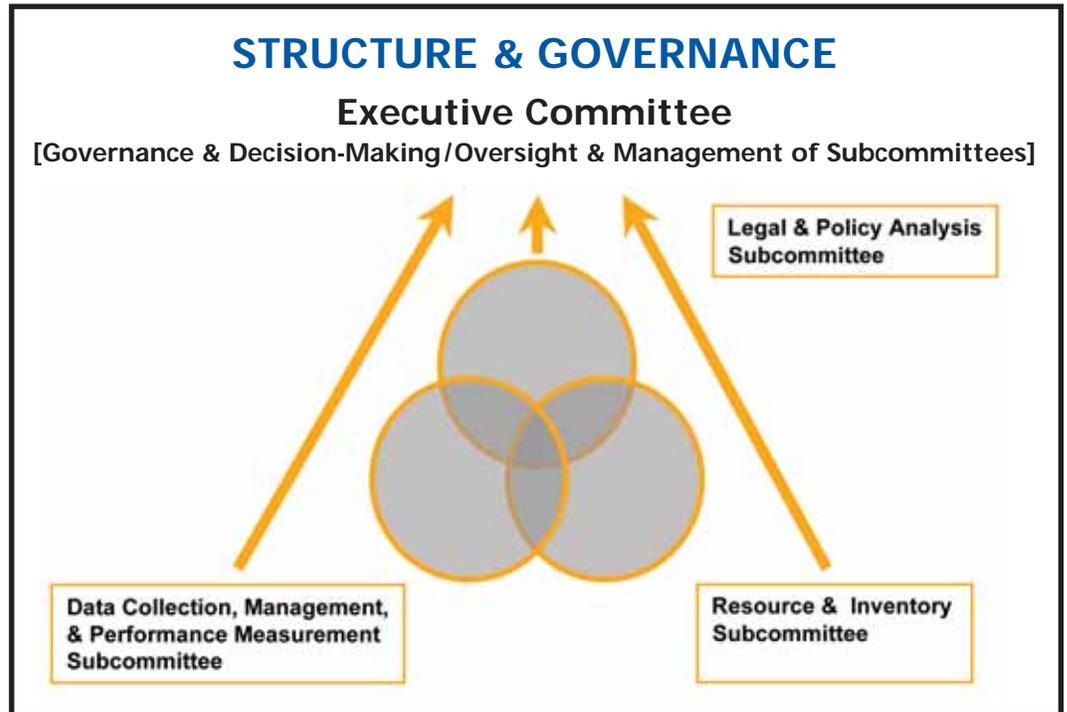
- assessment of political and environmental readiness for systems reform,
- development of organizational and governance structure which provides ongoing decision-making and oversight for reform initiative tasks,
- identification and commitment to strategic goals and objectives of the newly formed or pre-existing collaboration, and
- identification of and address sticking points which act as barriers to teamwork.

It is critical to effectively convene the appropriate and empowered personnel from multiple disciplines as the process of reform is engaged.

CWLA technical assistance focused on facilitation services to both systems during the implementation of this phase.

**PHASE 2, Study and Analysis** includes three parts:

integration and coordination planning. CWLA facilitated jurisdictional determination of decisions regarding management of the data collection, including confidentiality issues and



- Data collection, management and performance measurement: establishment of governance for data collection, identification of necessary aggregate data reports, development of procedures for use of reports, and consideration of development of an integrated information sharing system.

The collection of data and subsequent analysis present some critical challenges to the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. A starting point is for all involved personnel to acknowledge the importance of data as a foundation for integration and coordination efforts. This work involves the identification of questions to be answered (such as, At what points and under what circumstances do children transfer from one system to the other? What children and families simultaneously touch the child welfare and juvenile justice systems?) and a determination of the data elements for collection to support

legal requirements for information sharing. This technical assistance examination primarily included a review of the two systems' existing information systems and consideration of integrated information systems.

- Inventory and assessment: inventory of program and fiscal resources, common screening and assessment instruments; identification of key decision points and decision-makers; review "best practices" or "evidence-based strategies"; and identify potential for blending funds.

The challenges to address in inventory and assessment include duplication of services, contradictory case plans, costly repeat interventions, and lost opportunities to plan for a continuum of service delivery across multiple youth serving systems—particularly within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems—focused on success with long-term outcomes. The focus within this phase of examination involves

assistance in compiling an inventory of programs and services; a comparative analysis of missions, mandates, and policies; identification of best practices nationally and locally; determination of the use of assessment instruments from multiple systems; review and analysis of the funding to support the services and programs; and creation of training for personnel in both systems.

- Legal and policy analysis: analyze statutory, regulatory, formal and informal policies, procedures, and protocols; clarify laws, regulations, and policies that impact systems collaboration and information sharing; and identify data sharing impediments and determine capacity to share information.

This phase of the study includes an examination of how laws, regulations, and formal and informal policies impact the ability of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to collaborate on behalf of youth and families served by these systems. CWLA assistance provided a template to guide work that identifies legal, regulatory, and policy mandates that support or hinder integrated system responses on behalf of young people and families who rely on the two systems. The research focuses on laws, regulations, and policies in a number of areas, including information sharing and financial responsibility and results in a report specific to the participating jurisdiction that contains an analysis of strengths and challenges. In addition to providing an analysis of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems with regard to collaboration, the examination served as a guide for future research that might address the coordination of other youth-serving systems (education, mental health, substance abuse). The legal analysis results in a site-specific report reflecting that community's strengths and challenges with regard to systems collaboration and recommendations for change.

**PHASE 3, Action Strategy Development** includes:

- identification of priorities for all program, service, and administrative components;
- development of priorities for an action agenda; and
- development of funding mechanisms necessary to support integrated approaches.

**PHASE 4, Implementation** includes:

- agreement on timelines, phasing, milestones, and task assignment; and
- outcome evaluation with incremental measurement.

Community engagement in this multisystem work inevitably identifies a wide range of issues that agencies or organizations must address to overcome the barriers to more integrated service delivery and program development. The CWLA site-based work, implemented through subcommittees of local or state level stakeholders answerable to an authorized Executive Committee, produces findings that address the following process goals and objectives:

- assessing readiness and development of mobilization strategy;
- identifying desired goals and outcomes for the system reform initiative;
- creating a data profile (collection and trend analysis, with particular focus on dual jurisdiction youth);
- assessing management information system (MIS);
- assessing existing multiagency memoranda of understanding or agreement;
- performing resource inventory and assessment;
- gathering best practice/model programs information;
- assessing a blended or decategorized funding strategy; and

- developing and implementing of draft legislation, protocols, policies, reformed practice, multisystem training, resource guides, and information sharing agreements.

Core to all of the facets of examination is the legal, regulatory, policy, and procedural governance that permits—or precludes—systems integration and coordination. The system improvements resulting from this comprehensive study and analysis can enhance the ability of the child welfare and juvenile justice, and related systems of care, to coordinate and integrate efforts on behalf of children, youth, and families and improve screening and assessment, case management, case planning, resource allocation, service delivery—and ultimately child and family outcomes. The work can also contribute to potential reforms in the operation of the juvenile justice and child welfare systems' handling of abuse and neglect cases. These critical reforms can propel the nation's youth serving systems, led by child welfare and juvenile justice, to actions that interrupt the costly trajectory—both in human and financial terms—of youth moving deeper into juvenile and adult criminal justice systems.

## Publications, Tools, and Resources

CWLA developed a range of publications, tools and resources that support the work of coordination and integration as a result of efforts to consolidate the research, examine the federal and state statutes, and compile experiences from partnerships in the field. The following list of CWLA publications, all of which are available in PDF downloadable format, includes brief abstracts and web links.

*Guidebook for Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System Coordination and Integration: Framework for Improved Outcomes*, by Janet K. Wiig with John A. Tuell. ([www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjguidebook.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjguidebook.htm))

Built from years of CWLA collaborations and partnerships, cosponsorship of state and local symposia, regional training, technical assistance, consultation experiences, and examination and use of the most credible research, program and practice evidence, the Guidebook will help state and local jurisdictions achieve greater system coordination and integration.

*Promoting a Coordinated and Integrated Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice System*, by John A. Tuell. ([www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjintercord.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjintercord.htm))

CWLA believes that system integration and reform is best accomplished through a comprehensive strategic planning process that includes youth and families, and a broad-based representation of youth-serving organizations. This approach uses the best information, research, and practices to guide the process. The framework detailed in this bulletin outlines the components of this process and action strategy that states and local jurisdictions must consider to implement a more coordinated, integrated child welfare and juvenile justice system.

*Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: From Research to Effective Program, Practice, and Systemic Solutions*, by Janet K. Wiig, C. A. Widom, with John A. Tuell. ([www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/ucmjd.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/ucmjd.htm))

This monograph aids agency and organizational leaders, policymakers, administrators, judges, attorneys, and practitioners in the field of juvenile justice and child welfare in understanding the relationship between abuse and neglect and juvenile delinquency and advance the effort in developing practical program, practice, and system responses to this important issue. It describes the best research on the connection between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency. Also included is a description of a wide array of promising responses for improving outcomes for dual jurisdiction youth.

*A Guide to Legal and Policy Analysis for Systems Integration*, by Jessica

Heldman. ([www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjguide.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjguide.htm))

Experience gained from work in several jurisdictions provides the background for this valuable guide. The publication details the examination process of the legal, policy, and procedural mandates unique to each agency/organization in order to make recommendations for changes that will contribute to improved coordination of initial decision-making, case management, and service delivery.

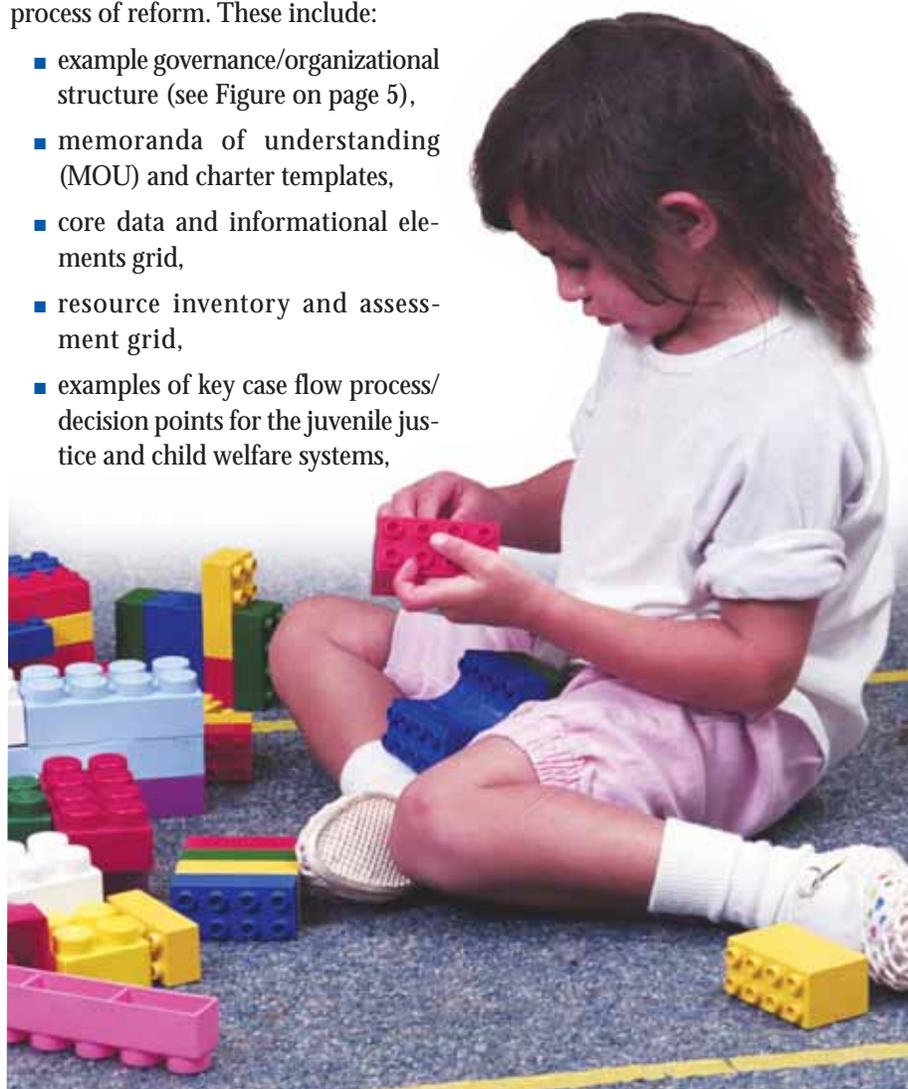
In addition to these publications, CWLA developed an array of tools and resources—with and through the considerable dedication, commitment, and expertise from partners in state and local jurisdictions—that provide additional support to state and local jurisdictions as they engage this formidable process of reform. These include:

- example governance/organizational structure (see Figure on page 5),
- memoranda of understanding (MOU) and charter templates,
- core data and informational elements grid,
- resource inventory and assessment grid,
- examples of key case flow process/decision points for the juvenile justice and child welfare systems,

- set of questions necessary to answer when examining information sharing issues,
- legal analysis template (including quantitative and qualitative research), and
- guiding principles and protocols for dual jurisdiction youth and families.

## Jurisdictional Examples

CWLA employed an interactive consultation process designed to engage community leaders in the tasks of analysis, design, planning and implementation while working with numerous jurisdictions across the country. Our job as facilitators is to assist and support, not to supplant the authority, talents, work



or actions of leaders within each particular jurisdiction. The partnership initiative was accomplished with the guidance, active involvement, and support of two core groups—Systems Integration Executive Committee and Systems Integration Stakeholder/Oversight Committee.

- The **Systems Integration Executive Committee**, which should include leadership personnel from a broad-based representation of youth serving agencies and organizations, would provide oversight, direction, and be responsible for decision making throughout the course of the initiative/project.

The executive committee meets at regular intervals with CWLA consultants to develop and finalize the collaborative work plan, to determine the composition and tasks of the various subcommittees serving the work of the initiative, to discuss relevant expectations and parameters, and to set any other necessary directions for the joint work. The executive committee reviews progress and project deliverables, organizes and assigns participants to issue specific subcommittees that support the capacity for study and analysis, and plan and organize activities of a Stakeholder/Oversight Committee. The executive committee maintains final decision-making authority regarding the work of the collaboration

- A much larger group, the **Systems Integration Stakeholder/Oversight Committee**, is a leadership group inclusive of the major agencies, governmental units, and community entities who work in support of children and youth who are served by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Members are individuals with decision-making responsibility for their organizations, with authority to enter into agreements and commit resources. The committee provides a forum for learning, consensus

building, conflict resolution, and mutual accountability. CWLA consultants assist in setting the agenda for the stakeholder/oversight committee and facilitate its work sessions.

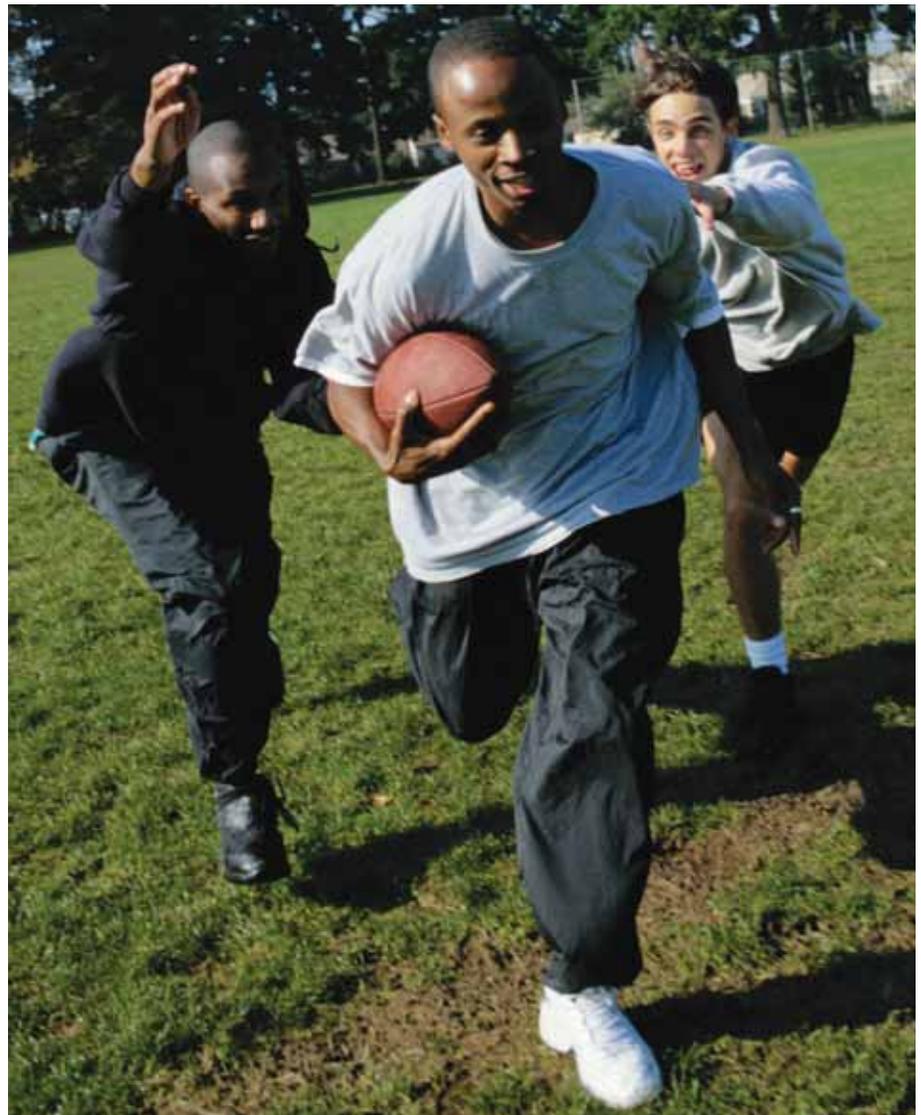
It is expected that the stakeholder/oversight committee, with its executive leadership, will form a permanent Systems Integration collaboration into the future. CWLA consultants facilitate monthly work sessions. Members and other personnel as identified and designated by executive committee members carry out subcommittee work between the monthly meetings. The participating agencies provide staff support to the work of each of the working committees. CWLA consultants assist the executive committee, stakeholder/

oversight committee, and subcommittees in moving through the four phases of activity of the previously articulated framework. What follows is a brief description of the excellent work completed in jurisdictions around the country.

## King County, Washington



Since the spring of 2004, a leadership group in King County, Washington, representing juvenile justice and child welfare systems has met on a regular basis to examine and improve the way they work together on behalf of King



County children and youth. The King County Systems Integration Initiative (KC-SII) has been established as a permanent planning and service coordination body. The goal is to disrupt the path from child maltreatment to delinquency and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families through greater multisystem integration and service coordination at both the individual case and system levels. Its successes have included:

- a multiagency charter agreement defining the goals and objectives and a set of guiding principles for the collaboration as the group developed a new dual jurisdiction protocol;
- an interagency policy and protocol that details joint policy and procedures regarding how juvenile court probation and the state child protection agency work together in support of dual status youth and their families;
- the development of a Resource Guide for Information Sharing, a critical document that provides information for legal, policy, and practice matters regarding the exchange of case-related information necessary for joint case assessment, planning, and integrated service delivery; and
- development and implementation of multiagency training for personnel to increase familiarity and develop relationships that support shared responsibility and services.

This work also created additional focus on the mental health needs of youth in the juvenile justice system and resulted in a comprehensive examination and report that prioritizes recommendations for reform in this arena. It resulted in a new collaboration with the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ) that will provide technical assistance and guidance as King County moves these

recommendations to action. Additionally, due to the ongoing participation and leadership from education in this collaboration (Puget Sound Education Services District), the KC-SII focused on the dropout prevalence among its juvenile delinquency population. This effort resulted in the conceptual development of a PathNet initiative that is designed as a *path of networked* organizations that will focus on a systems-wide, community-based approach to decrease the number of youth who drop out of school.

The members of the KC-SII Executive Committee also believe that this work brought attention to King County and the state of Washington from the MacArthur Foundation's **Models for Change: Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice** initiative and contributed to the state's selection for participation. This resulted in an infusion of a tremendous level of resources both in dollars and technical assistance that will further accelerate many of the ongoing reform advances.

## Los Angeles County, California



In 2005, Los Angeles County, California, embraced a level of effort and organizational construct to impact their jurisdictions' dually involved youth. CWLA used the framework and an extraordinary group of youth serving professionals to improve the process of information exchange, case planning and supervision, and case management across the multiple youth serving systems. Building on a statute mandating a joint protocol enacted in the 1990s (California Welfare and Institutions Code section 241.1), Los Angeles County adopted a revised cross-system

protocol, currently being piloted in the Pasadena court within Los Angeles County, to improve the outcomes for dual jurisdiction youth. The Los Angeles County protocol was redesigned to:

- include a new multisystem assessment process which takes into consideration strengths, treatment needs, and risks;
- create a multidisciplinary team (MDT) to conduct assessments, develop case plans, and participate in case management; and
- implement California Assembly Bill 129 which provides California counties the option of creating a dual status jurisdiction for dependents and delinquency wards of the court.

Through this new protocol, stakeholders in the Los Angeles juvenile justice system believe that they have taken steps to enhance public safety by providing better services to youth and their families, reduce the number of dependent youths who become wards of the Delinquency Court, better serve those who do and limit their time as wards of the Delinquency Court by maintaining Dependency Court jurisdiction when appropriate. The chief probation officer, director of the social services agency, and the presiding judge of the juvenile court have endorsed the adopted protocol. The amount of information and relevant detail included in the joint assessment report, the methodology for consideration of the available assessments and information by the MDT in formulating a recommendation to the court, the development of a data base to track individual case characteristics and treatment needs, the training of court staff (judges, prosecuting attorney, public defender, CASA staff), and the evaluation design (process and outcome) are all outstanding developments emanating from this work.



## South Dakota

In South Dakota, a group of leaders convened a Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Records Committee to conduct a legal and policy analysis that would support the construct of draft legislation to improve the

legislative session. The reform statute was unanimously adopted and enacted into law at the conclusion of the 2007 session (enacted as South Dakota Children’s Law [SDCL] §26-8A-13.1).

Throughout the series of on-site meetings and conference calls of the Records Committee, a guiding document entitled *South Dakota Codified Laws Regarding Confidentiality and Information*

procedures for release of child protection services information that comply with SDCL §26-8A-13.1. These procedures, outlined in a memorandum to the South Dakota Council on Juvenile Services, Child Welfare Records Committee, detail the processes, protocols, reasonable time frames, and specific information to be shared by the Department of Social Services and the Department of Corrections in South Dakota.



## The U.S. Virgin Islands

In St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, a broad group of community entities concerned about success for children and youth came together in support of a more integrated system of services and responses for dependent children and youthful offenders. Work began with the Law Enforcement Planning Commission (LEPC) funded U.S. Virgin Islands Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Symposium held in June 2006, which initiated a dialogue on systems integration through the keynote address provided by CWLA. A follow-up meeting was hosted on September 20, 2006 by the Chief Family Court Judge, attended by key stakeholders and facilitated by the current Assistant Commissioner for the United States Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (USVI DHS). The participants agreed to form a coalition and an initial meeting of the leadership coalition for this initiative was convened on March 29, 2007.

The St. Croix Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative is a collaboration of public and private agencies and organizations that have come together to examine and make improvements in coordinated and

manner in which records were shared across these systems (including mental health and substance use histories) at key decision points in the juvenile justice system. This effort was formulated to include child protective services and juvenile justice systems and enhance compliance with the provisions of the reauthorized JJDP.

Specifically, the effort focused on the incorporation of child protective services records into the juvenile justice system at key points in delinquency proceedings and for the purpose of improving case planning and case management. CWLA facilitated this effort and draft legislation was constructed. Subsequent to approval by the South Dakota Juvenile Justice Council, the measure was submitted as HB 1059 for consideration at the 2007 South Dakota

*Sharing* was utilized. This document was completed prior to the initial committee meetings using the CWLA legal analysis template and informed the discussions through-out the process. The examination and analysis of state and federal statute (i.e., South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 42, and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)) combined with the knowledge and expertise regarding interpretation and practice of relevant laws within South Dakota provided by committee members led to extraordinary discussions and resolution, resulting in the new state statute.

Shortly after passage and enactment of the new statute, the Division of Child Protective Services promulgated

integrated program and policy development and service delivery for children, youth, and families served by juvenile justice and child welfare systems and critical affiliated youth serving institutions such as education, mental health, and substance abuse. The initiative is supported by the USVI DHS vision to provide a seamless system of a continuum of quality care for our children and families. It is important to note the USVI DHS has oversight and direct responsibility for juvenile services, child protective services, and foster care services and existing units and service divisions to handle these mandated responsibilities.

CWLA was contracted to assist in the facilitation and utilization of the four phase framework detailed previously in this bulletin. At this writing—barely 6 months into the process—the committees formed to examine data, information management and sharing, and legal and policy issues have produced remarkable results. Of particular note is the commitment that the collaboration has made to develop a remarkable data profile of the dual jurisdiction youth population. Using a core data and information elements grid developed by CWLA, the USVI data subcommittee selected a point in time approach to collection of the data and information. To date, this approach has yielded the following:

- DHS had 347 unduplicated youth that were reported to have open cases as of 6/29/07.
- Of the 347 open cases, 123 cases had youth who had entered the juvenile justice system, representing 35.7% of all open DHS cases.
- A total of 66 of these 123 cases were found to have a history of maltreatment, representing 53.7% of all juvenile justice system cases.
- 25 youth had both a history of maltreatment and were *simultaneously* involved in the juvenile justice system, representing 20.3% of all juvenile justice system cases.

- Additional findings included mental health (~50%) and educational (over 90%) deficiencies within the dual jurisdiction population.

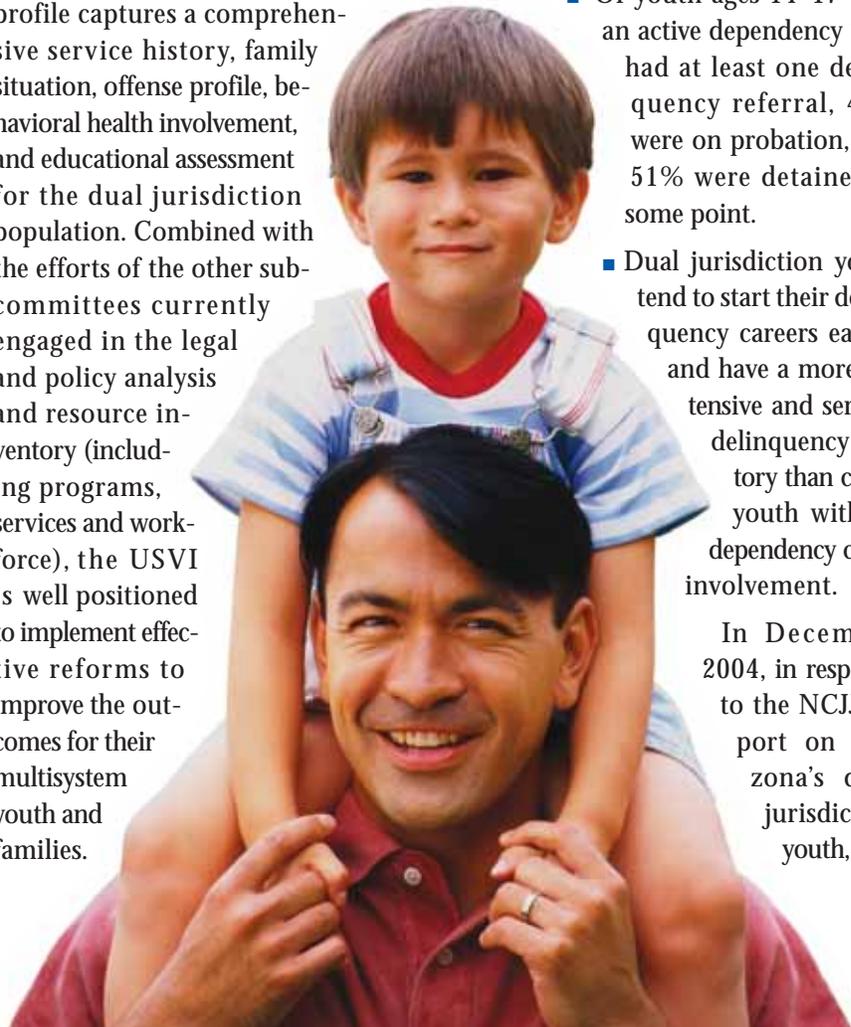
As a result of this work, committee members were able to identify specific issues needing resolution to ensure that future data and information scans were more reliable and credible in the information yield. One such example involved development of a method to understand which of these youth that while not simultaneously involved in juvenile and protective services, nonetheless have a history of involvement in both systems. Additionally, using the specific data and information elements component of the grid, which provides an inventory of necessary information points from multiple systems (juvenile, child protective, education, etc.), the committee has collected information on all 347 unduplicated youth and completed a comprehensive strengths and needs profile. This profile captures a comprehensive service history, family situation, offense profile, behavioral health involvement, and educational assessment for the dual jurisdiction population. Combined with the efforts of the other subcommittees currently engaged in the legal and policy analysis and resource inventory (including programs, services and workforce), the USVI is well positioned to implement effective reforms to improve the outcomes for their multisystem youth and families.



## Arizona

Arizona has made extraordinary efforts to address the link between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems since the publication of its *Dual Jurisdiction Study*, a work of the National Center on Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) (Halemba, Siegel, Lord, & Zawacki, 2004). This study showed that:

- Youth with histories of court involvement on dependency matters are twice as likely to recidivate if referred on a delinquency offense as juveniles with no history of dependency court involvement (62% vs. 30%).
  - In contrast to general population juveniles where girls are less likely to recidivate than males, girls with dependency court involvement are as likely as their male counterparts to reoffend.
  - Of youth ages 14–17 with an active dependency 73% had at least one delinquency referral, 49% were on probation, and 51% were detained at some point.
  - Dual jurisdiction youth tend to start their delinquency careers earlier and have a more extensive and serious delinquency history than court youth without dependency court involvement.
- In December 2004, in response to the NCJJ report on Arizona's dual jurisdiction youth, the





Governor's Division for Children took the lead in organizing an interagency taskforce to develop an agreement and framework for working together to provide coordinated, integrated services to youth and families involved in multiple systems. This signed agreement and framework helps to direct how the system improvement will occur.

Another major effort to better integrate and coordinate Arizona's child serving system was launched in May 2006 when the Arizona State Advisory Group (SAG) and the Governor's

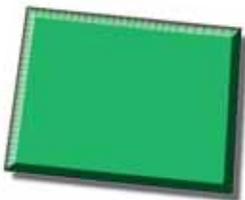
Division for Children jointly held a Child Welfare Juvenile Justice Summit. Multidisciplinary teams from each Arizona county and a state-level team—totaling nearly 250 attendees—gathered to participate in the learning and planning summit to promote greater integration in the provision of services to children and families in their communities. CWLA provided the summit with planning support and training from its publications on systems integration and coordination.

CWLA continues to provide technical assistance to support Arizona's Interagency Coordination and Integration Initiative (ICII), which is working to identify youth and families at-risk for multiple systems involvement earlier, provide more comprehensive and effective services, and cultivate improved outcomes for children and youth who are at-risk for or who have experienced maltreatment. A set of outcomes and strategies has been developed by the ICII from which a blueprint for action is being completed. Parallel to the completion of the blueprint, multiple committees are moving forward to take action on some of the priority items including:

- To disseminate the Letter of Agreement and promoted discussion across the state to staff at all levels and to develop a corresponding training curriculum combining in-person and web-based approaches.
- To develop an information-sharing guide to clarify the guidelines for sharing information between systems that both protects confidentiality and dispels common myths that restrict the flow of important information.
- To develop methods to find and organize data across systems so that direct service workers have the information necessary to appropriately serve youth and families and gather information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of efforts on behalf of these youth and families.
- To examine ways to prevent penetration of youth deeper into the child welfare, mental health and juvenile justice systems including:
  - identifying and supporting younger siblings of the highest risk youth to prevent the trajectory of these younger siblings into the system;
  - joint training of agency and community provider staff on adolescent development and principles of positive youth development; and
  - updating of licensing and contract regulations to reflect current best practice approaches including strength-based service and positive youth development approaches.

While the state team has gone about identifying and addressing barriers to integration, the state recognizes that the actual activities of integration and coordination happen at the local service level. Therefore, it is most encouraging that in many areas of the state, local teams are moving forward with specific changes in policy, procedure, and practice to better serve youth involved in multiple systems.

Ten of Arizona's 15 counties have inter-agency teams that continue to meet to address issues and develop processes to work together for better outcomes for youth and families.



## Colorado

In Colorado, HB 1451 was passed into law in 2004 calling for the develop-

ment of collaborative management policies and procedures on behalf of multisystem youth and families. With the enactment of Colorado House Bill 1451 (Section 1, Title 24, Article 1.9 (3)(a)) of the Colorado Revised Statutes) concerning the collaborative management of multiagency services provided to children and their families providing an impetus, the Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) and counties throughout the state are charged with the implementation of a collaborative management program (CMP) that includes the input, expertise, and active participation of parent or family advocacy organizations. The CMPs, with support and guidance from a state implementation team/ steering committee, are charged to:

- reduce duplication of resources and eliminate fragmentation of services,
- increase the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of services provided
- encourage cost-sharing among service providers,
- produce improved outcomes for the service population, and
- provide the means by which there is ultimately a cost-reduction for the services provided to Colorado's children and families.

The initial implementation of the CMP resulted in the development of county and state steering committees.

Counties who opted to participate in the CMP and comply with provisions articulated in the statute would be eligible to receive state funds to implement programs and services for their identified target populations. A first step in that process required the formation of a multisystem collaboration to develop and adopt a MOU. CWLA is privileged to provide initial facilitation, consultation, and guidance to participating counties in the development of their local level MOUs (Section 24, Article 1.9-102), utilizing the strategic planning framework. The specific provisions required in the county level MOU are:

- identification of services and funding sources,
- definition of the population to be served,
- creation of an oversight group,
- establishment of collaborative management processes,
- authorization to create individualized service and support teams,
- authorization to contribute resources and funding,
- reinvestment of moneys saved,
- creation of performance-based measures, and
- adherence to confidentiality compliance.

CWLA has been on-site in the following Colorado counties to assist in this process: Chaffee, Elbert, El Paso, Jefferson, Mesa, Pueblo, Teller, and Weld. Primarily, CWLA assisted counties in the task of organizing leadership, identifying governance, and developing components of the initial MOU that identify specific target populations impacted by these new procedures as required by the CMP statute. As a direct result of some of the early successes experienced by some of the aforementioned counties, the Executive Director of the

Colorado DHS has taken a leadership role in promoting opportunities to expand the implementation of the CMP statute to all counties.

The results of the state and local efforts in Arizona; Colorado; King County, Washington; Los Angeles County, California; South Dakota; and the U. S. Virgin Islands documented in this bulletin can be examined in greater detail by linking to [www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjwork.htm](http://www.cwla.org/programs/juvenilejustice/jjwork.htm).

## Conclusion

All of the research, state and federal statutes, data, troubling outcomes, and jurisdictional experiences presented in this bulletin unequivocally reinforce the need for multisystem collaborations to study and analyze the barriers that preclude effective coordination of preventive and intervention/treatment services on behalf of maltreated youth who have entered the juvenile justice system. Many among our partners in the jurisdictions documented in this bulletin will attest to the difficulty in the actual implementation of multisystem coordination and integration.

The struggles that state and local jurisdictions most often encountered are in relation to data collection and management; confidentiality and information sharing; joint assessment methodologies and the lack thereof; independent, inconsistent, and limited funding streams; differences in workforce culture; statutory, legal and regulatory provisions; long standing policies and procedures; and the lack of a strong action-oriented methodology and governance structure providing leadership and commitment for meaningful reform.

Many of those same CWLA partners, however, will just as readily attest to the well-documented benefits of overcoming these challenges and coordinating efforts across systems to interrupt the trajectory of these youth toward youth and adult correctional

institutional placement. These advances have come in the arenas articulated so clearly in the NCJJ Bulletin *When Systems Collide* (Siegel & Lord, 2004) and include: improved case decision-making through enhanced multi-system assessment methodologies; improved multisystem case management; improved court process; improved resource allocation (both in terms of services and workforce); and improved interagency collaboration.

In fact, when one examines the most successful prevention and intervention approaches dealing with issues of abuse and neglect and delinquency, the commonality between them is the successful development and operation of their programs and services across multiple systems of care. These same examples include development of strong



community and family engagement models of programming that have more successfully engaged clients in community and home-based settings that produce successful long-term outcomes. Additionally, these jurisdictions have advocated for reinvestment strategies to strengthen the prevention and early intervention programs and services available to the target population and their families.

The level of multisystem activity (including juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, education, and substance abuse) designed to overcome these barriers in state and local jurisdictions across the country is increasing and can best be described as

encouraging. Given the human and financial toll on this population of youth and their communities, however, there is much progress still to be made.

In each of the state and local jurisdictions in which CWLA has had the privilege of partnering with professionals and their unique expertise, invaluable lessons are being learned from which others can benefit. The various efforts described in this bulletin demonstrate the importance of having

a unified vision for the increased use of multisystems approaches that provide the potential for immediate benefit to children and youth known to the dependency and delinquency systems. These institutional reforms can subsequently impact broader and more long-term goals of this coordination and integration endeavor. These goals include:

- greater use of a balanced approach in addressing juvenile delinquency, including a heavier emphasis and investment in front end/prevention programs and practices that intersect with other systems of care providing child welfare, family strengthening, education, health, behavioral health, housing, and social and youth development services;
- improved quality in the needs assessment being conducted for youth coming into different systems of care, thereby ensuring earlier identification of risk factors and more appropriate case dispositions and delivery of services;

- reductions in the disproportionate number of children and youth of color in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems; and
- development of reinvestment strategies that move resources to the “front-end” of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (Bilchik, 2007).

This critical area of work has the potential to dramatically improve the outcomes for the significant number of dual jurisdiction youth and their families—easily among our most disadvantaged population in need of effective services and programs. We invite your jurisdiction to accept the challenge to engage this process—as our nation’s most valuable resource deserves no less than our most prolific efforts, permitting these youth a chance to realize their dreams of success and productive lives.

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