



JAIBG

Juvenile Accountability Incentive
Block Grants Program

BULLETIN

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August 1999

From the Administrator

If we are to hold juvenile offenders accountable for their delinquent acts, accountability must be integrated into every aspect of the juvenile court and probation processes. *Focus on Accountability: Best Practices for Juvenile Court and Probation* provides helpful information on how to do just that. The Bulletin sets forth what is entailed in holding offenders accountable, details the roles of the juvenile court and probation department, identifies key elements of programs that promote accountability, and describes effective community-based initiatives.

We are excited that the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants Program affords juvenile courts and probation departments new opportunities to strengthen our Nation's juvenile justice system and renew public confidence in its administration of justice by holding offenders accountable. It is my hope that this Bulletin will assist your efforts to promote accountability.

Shay Bilchik
Administrator



Focus on Accountability: Best Practices for Juvenile Court and Probation

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This Bulletin is part of OJJDP's Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG) Best Practices Series. The basic premise underlying the JAIBG program, initially funded in fiscal year 1998, is that young people who violate the law need to be held accountable for their offenses if society is to improve the quality of life in the Nation's communities. Holding a juvenile offender "accountable" in the juvenile justice system means that once the juvenile is determined to have committed law-violating behavior, by admission or adjudication, he or she is held responsible for the act through consequences or sanctions, imposed pursuant to law, that are proportionate to the offense. Consequences or sanctions that are applied swiftly, surely, and consistently, and are graduated to provide appropriate and effective responses to varying levels of offense seriousness and offender chronicity, work best in preventing, controlling, and reducing further law violations.

In an effort to help States and units of local government develop programs in the 12 purpose areas established for JAIBG funding, Bulletins in this series are designed to present the most up-to-date knowledge to juvenile justice policymakers, researchers, and practitioners about programs and approaches that

hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior. An indepth description of the JAIBG program and a list of the 12 program purpose areas appear in the overview Bulletin for this series.

Overview

Juvenile courts and probation departments play a central role in the administration of juvenile justice in the United States. Thus, the policies and programs advanced by these entities greatly define the Nation's response to juvenile crime.

The extensive and critical roles played by the juvenile court and the probation department clearly reflect the importance of ensuring that accountability is a central factor in court and probation case processing, decisionmaking, program planning, and service delivery.

In the following sections, this Bulletin further details the roles of the juvenile court and probation systems in the administration of juvenile justice; identifies key elements of successful programs, including consistent implementation and evaluation efforts and consideration of the impact of incorporating accountability principles into the juvenile justice system; and

describes effective accountability-based community initiatives, including mediation, early intervention, probation, and intensive aftercare programs.

Juvenile Court

The person most directly responsible for the function of the juvenile courts and the administration of juvenile justice is the juvenile court judge (Edwards, 1992). In addition to the traditional judicial capacity, the juvenile court judge has the authority to affect case processing long before and after a formal adjudication hearing. In many jurisdictions, the juvenile court judge is the direct administrator of the juvenile probation department and/or court staff. When operating in this capacity, the juvenile court judge can assure coordination of services between the court and the probation department and may also take on the burden of fiscal management.

The actions and attitudes of the juvenile court judge can also have an indirect impact on the policies and procedures by which other related agencies operate. The juvenile court (i.e., a judge, master, or appointed designee) must ensure that all processes and decisionmaking are carried out in a fair and unbiased manner, that all decisions balance the best interests of the juvenile with the best interests of the victim and community, and that the constitutional rights of all parties are upheld.

The juvenile court judge can further influence the early stages of case processing and information collection by advocating for sufficient staff capacity and staff training programs. These early stages of case processing are of significant concern to a juvenile court judge because the quality of judicial decisionmaking at the adjudication and disposition stages depends upon the quality of preparatory work completed by probation and court staff.

The judiciary also bears the burden and has the privilege of providing

leadership to promote the development of resources that will realize society's goals for the juvenile court (Szymanski, Homisak, and Hurst, 1993). The dispositions/sentences ordered by the juvenile court set a precedent for the types of services to be developed and implemented. Also, the judge can serve as a voice to influence local policy decisions, educate the public on the juvenile justice system's process and purpose, and initiate collaborative efforts with other service agencies, private businesses, and community organizations.

Juvenile Probation

Juvenile probation is often called the cornerstone of the juvenile justice system, with 1.76 million delinquency cases handled in 1996 by U.S. courts with juvenile jurisdiction (Stahl et al., 1999). Juvenile probation officers had contact with virtually every one of those cases. The responsibilities of probation officers include:

- Screening most cases to determine if informal or formal processing is warranted (although prosecutors are increasingly making intake/petition decisions).
- Making detention decisions (approximately 20 percent of juveniles are detained pending adjudication).
- Preparing presentence investigation reports for juvenile court judges to use in disposition decisions.
- Supervising more than half a million cases.
- Delivering aftercare services to juveniles released from secure institutions.

Other responsibilities of probation officers include supervising specialized and intensive caseloads in school settings and community offices and, in some instances, brokering services and monitoring the progress and delivery of services to juveniles assigned to residential and nonresidential community-based

programs operated by private providers.

Although juvenile probation is the cornerstone of the juvenile justice system, it is also its "catch basin." Ever since the first juvenile court statistics were compiled (in 1929, using 1927 data), probation supervision has been the overwhelming dispositional choice of juvenile court judges (Torbet, 1996). Probation is the most frequent disposition for all juvenile arrests because:

- It is limitless: unlike training schools or private providers, probation departments cannot limit or control their intake.
- It is inexpensive and cost efficient, relative to other sanctions.
- It is reasonably satisfactory: most juvenile offenders never recidivate (Snyder, 1988).

Through its popularity and the broad array of duties and services it performs, juvenile probation has the power to affect decisionmaking and service delivery at every stage of juvenile justice processing and thereby holds the potential to ensure that accountability is stressed at all points from initial entry through final discharge.

Focus on Accountability

The above descriptions of the fundamental roles of the juvenile court and the probation department illustrate how these agencies hold the key to accessing services within the juvenile justice system. Historically, these services have been focused on the juvenile and the development of rehabilitation plans to help young offenders become productive, law-abiding members of society. However, in maintaining this strict focus on rehabilitation, the system has been criticized for neglecting to impose accountability for the acts already committed.

The system, especially juvenile probation, is often accused of providing only a “slap on the wrist” to offenders rather than truly administering justice. The juvenile courts are portrayed by critics as a revolving door, with youth often rearrested for new crimes while still under court-ordered supervision or in treatment programs.

One reason for this perception of leniency can be traced to juvenile probation officers' high caseloads, which prohibit them from providing anything more than superficial instructions and infrequent contacts. For example, several national standard-setting groups recommend a caseload of 25 clients per probation officer for traditional probation services (National Advisory Committee for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1980; National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1976). Yet, a 1992 national survey of probation officers found the median caseload to be 41, with an overall range stretching from 2 to 200 clients (Thomas, 1993).

Evaluations of regular probation supervision have not been very encouraging. Peter Greenwood (1996) concluded that “an overworked probation officer who sees a client only once a month has little ability either to monitor the client’s behavior or to exert much of an influence over his life.” Lipsey (1992) found that for youth with multiple risk factors (e.g., several prior arrests, arrests at an early age, drug or gang involvement, parental problems), “probation as usual” was not an effective option.

These findings, coupled with Martinson’s now infamous pronouncement that “nothing works” (1974:25) have caused legislators and Governors to target violent juvenile crime by backloading the system with more secure beds in both the juvenile and adult correctional systems and by beginning to target at-risk youth by frontloading the system with prevention programs. Other recent

legislative action has focused on removing violent and chronic offenders from juvenile court jurisdiction, relaxing confidentiality requirements regarding cases of serious and violent offenders handled within the juvenile court, allowing for experimentation with disposition/sentencing options, including blended sentencing between the juvenile and adult justice systems, and/or calling for more active participation of victims in the juvenile justice process (Torbet et al., 1996). However, the majority of youth in the juvenile justice system remain in the community, on probation, where few new resources have been dedicated.

In 1996, 634,100 delinquency cases (or 36 percent of all referrals) were placed on formal or informal probation. Probation was the most severe disposition in 54 percent of all adjudicated cases, representing a 58-percent increase in the number of cases placed on formal probation between 1987 and 1996 (Stahl et al., 1999). Some States have taken recent action to improve the capabilities of the juvenile justice system to effectively handle these youth by incorporating the principles of the “balanced approach” (Klein, 1997). This philosophy requires the system to provide balanced attention to the need for competency development, accountability, and community safety and requires efforts to restore, to the greatest extent possible, the victim and community to their precrime status (Thomas and Torbet, 1997).

Juvenile courts and probation departments, especially those in urban areas, should benefit from JAIBG funding. To do so, they must assume a leadership role in ensuring that accountability principles are fully incorporated into all levels of case processing, decisionmaking, and program development. Effective initiatives must be expanded and new programs implemented to ensure that the court has at its disposal an effective array of graduated sanctions

that will allow juveniles to have individualized dispositions that require them to face the consequences of their actions and take measures to rectify the harm they have inflicted.

Key Elements of Effective Programs

To implement effective intervention programs for delinquents, it is necessary to first understand how delinquency develops. Much has been written about the causes and correlates of delinquency, the risk factors that predispose young people to commit crimes, the protective factors that protect them from a criminogenic lifestyle, and the developmental pathways to disruptive behavior that persist from childhood through adolescence.

Research Findings as a Guide to Program Development

Social science research has demonstrated that there is no single cause of delinquency. Any number of factors are related to it, and delinquent behavior is likely to coexist with other problem behaviors. Moreover, no single event affects the developmental trajectory of delinquent behavior. Researchers now agree that there are factors that put young people at risk of becoming delinquent and factors that protect or buffer them from the consequences of exposure to risks.

Risk factors associated with delinquency exist in four areas or domains within which youth interact: peer group, family, school, and community. Protective factors (which either reduce the impact of a risk or change the way a person responds to it) fall into three basic categories: an individual’s innate characteristics, bonding (e.g., attachment and integration), and healthy beliefs and clear standards of behavior (Hawkins and Catalano, 1992).

OJJDP's Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency, conducted in three cities (Denver, CO; Pittsburgh, PA; and Rochester, NY), has found that delinquency often develops according to an orderly progression from less to more serious behavior (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994). Findings from this research also point to the co-occurrence of problem behaviors. Delinquent behavior does not exist in isolation from other problem behaviors. Delinquents are likely to use drugs, engage in sex, have reading problems, exhibit acting-out behaviors, and join gangs. Furthermore, if left unchecked, delinquency weakens protective factors (e.g., attachment to parents, commitment to school).

The bottom line from the research is that there is no single cause of delinquency and, therefore, no "magic bullet" to cure it. However, there is consensus that research on how delinquency develops can be used to identify several elements of effective programs.

A meta-analysis of mostly community-based private provider programs found that effective programs: (1) concentrate on changing behavior and improving prosocial skills, (2) focus on problem solving with both juveniles and their families, (3) have multiple modes of intervention, and (4) are highly structured and intensive (Lipsey, 1992). Such programs are likely to be 10- to 20-percent more effective in reducing subsequent delinquency than less structured programs that emphasize individual counseling or general education. Lipsey also found that augmented forms of probation (e.g., intensive supervision and restitution) have positive effects.

In addition, research has reached numerous conclusions regarding court practices and probation interventions. Court intervention should start early in an attempt to interrupt developmental pathways before serious,

violent, and chronic delinquency emerges (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994). A juvenile's risks and needs must be identified and matched to the intervention. In considering the most appropriate disposition, public safety must not be confused with appropriate treatment. While a youth's instant offense may be a useful indicator of his or her potential risk to the community, it is not a good indicator of what kind of programming is required to change the individual's behavior (Greenwood, 1996). Programs must incorporate a comprehensive array of interventions and services of sufficient duration to address entrenched problem behavior patterns (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994).

In particular, interventions should:

- Concentrate on changing negative behaviors by requiring juveniles to recognize and understand thought processes that rationalize negative behaviors (Greenwood and Zimring, 1985).
- Promote healthy bonds with, and respect for, prosocial members within the juvenile's family, peer, school, and community network (Hawkins and Catalano, 1992).
- Have a comprehensible and predictable path for client progression and movement. Each program level should be directed toward and directly related to the next step (Altschuler and Armstrong, 1984).
- Have consistent, clear, and graduated consequences for misbehavior and recognition for positive behavior (Altschuler and Armstrong, 1984).
- Recognize that a reasonable degree of attrition must be expected with a delinquent population (Community Research Associates, 1987).
- Provide an assortment of highly structured programming activities, including education and/or

hands-on vocational training and skill development (Altschuler and Armstrong, 1984).

- Facilitate discussions that promote family problem solving.
- Integrate delinquent and at-risk youth into generally prosocial groups to prevent the development of delinquent peer groups (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994). Bringing together only at-risk or delinquent youth to engage in school or community activities is likely to be counterproductive.

Research has also shown that community groups must be engaged to create and support prosocial community activities in which youth can succeed (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994). Schools, the public agency to which parents first turn for help with their children's problem behavior, should be prepared to provide help to families (Huizinga, Loeber, and Thornberry, 1994). The most effective systems will be flexible and continuously experimental, provide a wide range of treatment and placement options, and be accountable for their results. All things being equal, community-based alternatives are likely to be more effective than similar programs in institutions (Greenwood, 1996).

Effective Implementation and Evaluation

Juvenile courts and probation departments seeking to hold juveniles accountable and expand their sanctioning capacity should complete the following tasks:

- Identify the problem to be addressed or the gaps in sanctions or services.
- Identify possible approaches to address the need.
- Review existing research to determine which approaches are effective.

- Adapt programs known to be successful in other communities (i.e., adapt a model to fit local need).
- Commit to quality implementation of key components (i.e., incorporate those key elements that led to the program's success and remain true to its theoretical foundation).
- Conduct a process evaluation or monitor the program to ensure that the model has been followed.
- Compare recidivism data with those for graduates of other programs handling similar offenders.

Evaluations provide important information on program performance and client outcomes that can be used to justify the need and expenditure for the program. They can also determine which programs are most effective for which clients, thereby ensuring better matches between client need and intervention.

An example of an effective monitoring and evaluation technique is the ProDES (Program Development and Evaluation System) model developed through the collaboration of the Philadelphia Department of Human Services and the local juvenile court. Since January 1994, ProDES has collected information at disposition, at intake to and discharge from a program, and at 6 months after discharge for 16,000 juvenile cases. ProDES provides continuous feedback on performance to facilitate system planning, program development and improvement, and rational matching of client needs to appropriate services.

Consideration of the Impact on the System and Its Clients

The implementation of accountability principles and practices across the full spectrum of juvenile justice interventions, including services to the victims and communities affected by juvenile crime, will require systemwide transformation. Change

must begin with a shift in attitudes and beliefs about the system; accountability must be accepted as a desired outcome, and victims and communities must be viewed as clients of the system. This shift in attitude must then be embodied in all system policies, programs, and services.

First, the juvenile court judge must lead by example by stressing accountability in all dispositions ordered by the court. Second, the court can lead by direction—internally directing court procedures and resources to be consistent with the goal of accountability and externally directing the development and implementation of desired service programs. Finally, the juvenile court judge can lead coordination and education efforts by reaching out to the community and advocating for the development of collaborations to better serve the juvenile justice system's clients.

Because the victim and community have been elevated to the level of system clients, the role of juvenile probation will change significantly. Decisions from intake and diversion through aftercare must incorporate measures to ensure accountability and must equally consider the needs of the juvenile, the victim(s), and the community. In this new capacity, the juvenile probation department must be open to, and even initiate, collaborative efforts with other public, private, and community-based agencies.

In addition, probation departments will be responsible for developing and implementing specialized supervision programs, increasing efforts to collect restitution, and monitoring community service projects. Such initiatives require smaller caseloads than traditional probation supervision. With probation officers already carrying higher than recommended caseloads, this new effort will produce an immediate need for increased staff

resources, specialized training and education programs, and review of policies and procedures that promote accountability.¹

As collaborations are developed and services provided through private and community programs, the juvenile probation officer's role may expand to include monitoring. Just as the system must hold offenders accountable for their actions, it must hold programs accountable for providing the promised services to youth and for achieving the desired outcomes. Also, with the assimilation of new roles and duties, juvenile courts and probation departments might benefit from collaborating with universities or other research entities to assist in meeting the demand for staff training and education and for monitoring and evaluating programs.

The benefits reaped by juvenile courts and probation departments are simple, yet quite significant. The system will be providing more effective services to all its clients, including offenders, victims, and local communities. For example:

- A juvenile offender who receives services through the juvenile justice system should leave with a sufficient understanding of the harm caused by his or her delinquent behaviors and a sense of responsibility for the consequences of future actions. An offender should also leave more capable of being a law-abiding, productive member of society.
- Victims of juvenile crime will benefit from opportunities to participate in the justice process

¹ For a description of the basic principles of juvenile probation and practical advice on implementing those principles, probation professionals should refer to OJJDP's *Desktop Guide to Good Juvenile Probation Practice* (NCJ 128218), a copy of which is available at no charge from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse, referenced in the "For Further Information" section.

and from programs that meet some of their financial and emotional needs.

- The community also has much to gain as a client of the juvenile justice system. Community service programs bring needed volunteer resources to communities; hold the potential to increase the public's knowledge of, and involvement with, the juvenile justice system; and can build strong bonds between youth and community that will enhance public safety.

Exemplary Programs

This section provides examples of programs that have incorporated one or more of the key elements described above and whose formal evaluations attest to their effectiveness (e.g., cost savings, successfully negotiated restitution agreements, increased restitution collection, improved school attendance and performance, and increased client satisfaction). These programs represent a variety of approaches, from diversion to intensive supervision, illustrating how accountability can be built into a graduated continuum of services and how it involves collaboration with other system components, the community, and private organizations. These are by no means the only programs that work; however, their sound theoretical bases and evaluations set them apart from their many counterparts. Contact information for these programs is provided later in this Bulletin, under "For Further Information."

Diversion Programs

Although the public may perceive juvenile delinquents as chronic offenders who enter and reenter the system, statistics show that this is not the case. A 1988 study of the court careers of juvenile offenders in Arizona and Utah found that 71 percent of females and 54 percent of males who had contact with the juvenile

court had only one referral (Snyder, 1988). Moreover, researchers have discovered that a small proportion of youth commit the majority of crimes (Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin, 1972).

Diversion to community-based services is and should remain a viable and desired alternative to court. Effective diversion programs hold offenders accountable for the offenses committed, take steps to repair the damage caused by their actions, and provide swift and certain consequences.

The Thurston County, WA, Prosecuting Attorney's Office implemented a "fast track" diversion program in 1995. This program diverts first- and second-time offenders charged with misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors to a Community Accountability Board (CAB). To be eligible for the program, offenders must be between the ages of 8 and 17 and must admit to the charges (Community Youth Services, 1998). Also, the Deputy Prosecuting Attorney has the discretion to decide whether to divert youth charged with more serious offenses.

A hearing is held within 12 days before a CAB composed of at least three volunteers who are experienced in dealing with youth and interested in the community. The CAB meets with the youth and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) for approximately 1 hour to discuss the diversion process, the reasons the offender committed the offense, and the impact of the offense. The CAB then formulates a diversion agreement that may include community service, restitution to the victim, or counseling. A juvenile diversion case manager monitors the juvenile's completion of the agreement (Community Youth Services, 1998).

To determine the effectiveness of this program, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy examined the reoffending rates of youth before

and after being placed on diversion. In particular, it compared the rate at which youth reoffended 6 months before the program with the rate at which they reoffended 6 months after the program was implemented. Preliminary analysis indicates that 24.7 percent of the "before" group reoffended with either a felony or misdemeanor while 19.1 percent reoffended "after" participating in the diversion program (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1997). In addition to reducing recidivism, the diversion program is estimated to save Washington taxpayers about \$2,775 of future justice system costs per participant, and it costs taxpayers only about \$140 per youth (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 1997).

Mediation and Restitution Programs

It is imperative that all juvenile offenders, regardless of the seriousness of their offenses, leave the system understanding that actions have consequences and that they are responsible for their own actions. No single program can achieve this result for every offender, but there are processes and program components that emphasize personal responsibility for the harm inflicted by delinquent acts. Incorporating these components into court dispositions and probation decisions will require sensitivity to the wishes of victims and the community, the offender's mental and emotional capacities, and the extent of harm inflicted.

In 1990, the Travis County, TX, Juvenile Probation Department and the Travis County Dispute Resolution Center established a Victim Offender Mediation program in Austin, TX. The Travis County Juvenile Probation Department operates according to the "balanced approach" (Maloney, Romig, and Armstrong, 1988) philosophy that requires the system to pay equal attention to the needs of the offender, the victim, and the

community. The Victim Offender Mediation program was designed to stress the offender's personal accountability to the victim.

The juvenile court refers offenders to the program. Cases eligible for referral include property offenses, misdemeanor assaults, and in some instances, when the victim is a family member, cases are scheduled for prerelease detention hearings. Participation is voluntary for both the offender and the victim.

Once both parties agree to participate in the program, a mediation session is scheduled and the probation officer and victim service officer brief the mediator. The mediator may be a trained volunteer from the Dispute Resolution Center or 1 of 10 staff mediators trained through the Center. During the first part of the meeting, the victim can express his or her feelings directly to the person responsible for inflicting the harm, and the offender can explain his or her actions and motives. The second phase of the meeting involves reviewing the victim's losses and developing a plan for repaying/restoring the victim, to the greatest extent possible.

This program was one of four evaluated by Umbreit during 1990 and 1991 (Umbreit, Coates, and Kalanj, 1994). The evaluation found that 29 percent of all referrals in 1991 (246 of 853) resulted in successful mediation agreements (Umbreit, Coates, and Kalanj, 1994). In many of the cases, the victim requested that the mediation not be held because the situation was already resolved or because he or she was too angry and hurt. Recent statistics show that the successful mediation rate has risen to approximately 77 percent (Travis County Dispute Resolution Center, personal communication, 1999).

The evaluation also found that 98 percent of those cases mediated in 1991 resulted in successfully negotiated restitution agreements.

Fifty-three percent involved financial restitution, 40 percent involved community service, and 7 percent involved personal service restitution. The evaluation also revealed that 85 percent of victims and 92 percent of participating offenders reported satisfaction with the mediation process and its outcomes (Umbreit, Coates, and Kalanj, 1994).

It should be noted that this particular program does not include premediation sessions between either the mediator and the offender or the mediator and the victim. Although the strategy used by this program is typical of neighborhood-based mediation, the evaluator recommends that victim offender mediation programs incorporate premediation sessions. These sessions allow clients to develop a rapport with the mediator and ensure that mediation can be performed without inflicting further harm on the victim.

The Utah Juvenile Court operates a juvenile restitution program that holds offenders accountable while making restoration for some of the harm done to both the victim and community. Offenders traditionally pay restitution money directly to their victims. However, some offenders were unable to pay because of family circumstances, age, or inability to find employment. In response, the court created a restitution workfund in 1979 that allows juveniles to earn money by participating in community service projects. Victims then receive restitution payments directly from the fund (Butts and Snyder, 1992).

Under the program, communities can arrange service projects that match their individual needs to projects sponsored by both the public and private sectors. For example, youth have earned restitution money by cleaning buses for a private company in Utah County, while other communities have had juveniles remove graffiti, clean up parks, work in libraries, or complete small construction projects

(Administrative Office of the Courts, 1993).

The National Center for Juvenile Justice reviewed data from the National Juvenile Court Data Archive to examine recidivism in informal and formal robbery, assault, burglary, theft, auto theft, and vandalism cases in Utah (Butts and Snyder, 1992). For the offenders in nondismissed, informally handled cases in which the offenders agreed to restitution, the recidivism rate was 11 percent, compared with 18 percent for juveniles who received other dispositions. For formal probation cases, 32 percent of the probationers ordered to pay restitution recidivated, compared with 38 percent of those not paying restitution (Butts and Snyder, 1992).

Specialized Probation Supervision Programs

When the court determines that a juvenile offender may remain in the community, the most frequently ordered disposition is probation supervision. Unfortunately, probation becomes meaningless when juveniles are assigned to overburdened probation officers who at best can have brief and infrequent contacts with them in sterile office settings. However, probation supervision that remains true to its theoretical purpose and incorporates critical elements such as small caseloads, opportunistic supervision, and community involvement can effectively hold youth accountable for their behavior.

School-based probation

School-based probation is a supervision model in which the juvenile probation officer works directly in the school rather than the traditional courthouse environment. This model allows the probation officer to contact clients more frequently, observe client interactions with peers and behavior in a social setting, and actively enforce conditions of probation such as school attendance.

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission have provided funding support for school-based probation programs in 50 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Through the work of some 150 school-based probation officers, the program has served more than 16,000 juveniles (Griffin, 1999).

One primary difference among school-based probation programs occurs in the case management approach. In the single case-management approach, the school-based probation officer is responsible for all aspects of a juvenile's case, including intake and court appearances. In the dual case-management approach, the school-based probation officer is responsible only for youth supervision and related paperwork, and other probation personnel handle the remaining administrative duties.

A recent evaluation of Pennsylvania's school-based initiative found that school-based probation officers had an average caseload of 27 clients (the range was from 6 to 78) and spent a median of 70 percent of their time (ranging from 25 to 95 percent) in the school. The study also found a significant positive association between the amount of time spent in the school and the amount of direct case contact. The case management approach directly affected the amount of time spent in the school, with an average of 66 percent for officers working in a single case-management model and 81 percent for those in a dual case-management model (Metzger, 1997).

This study concluded that the average school-based probation client was similar in demographic and offense characteristics to regular probation clients; however, youth placed on school-based probation spent significantly more time in the community without charges and/or placements. When charges were filed, they were more likely to be status offenses and probation violations (an outcome

consistent with increased supervision) rather than serious crimes. Placement cost savings per school-based probation client were projected at \$6,665 (Metzger, 1997).

Orange County's Early Intervention Program

In Orange County, CA, the Juvenile Systems Task Force developed the 8% Early Intervention Program to target young, high-risk juvenile offenders and their families. This small percentage of chronic offenders had been found to account for more than half of all juvenile arrests in Orange County. These chronic juvenile offenders can easily be identified because they are usually age 15 or younger at the time of their first system referral and have at least two of the following characteristics: poor school behavior or performance problems, family problems, substance abuse problems, and delinquency patterns (Kurz and Moore, 1994).

The 8% Program employs experienced probation officers, with caseloads of no more than 15 clients, to work intensively with young offenders and their families. First, staff try to control the offender's behavior, ensure that he or she complies with the probation terms and conditions, and stabilize the youth's home environment through counseling, parent aides, and respite care. Then, the probation officer helps the youth develop the necessary skills to avoid a life of crime and trains parents on how to supervise and support their children (Orange County Probation Department, 1998).

The Probation Community Action Association helps the Orange County Probation Department's intervention efforts. Volunteer members of the association mentor young people, raise money, and develop jobs and literacy programs for teenagers.

The Probation Department has compared the case outcomes of

offenders in the program with the outcomes of offenders in the study that originally identified the characteristics of the "8%" of chronic offenders. Only 49 percent of the field test early intervention group had subsequent petitions filed, compared with 93 percent of the original study group. Forty-three percent of the early intervention group were subsequently committed versus 86 percent of the original 8% study group (Orange County Probation Department, 1998).

Operation Night Light

Boston, MA, has gained recognition for its success in reducing youth violence. Boston's approach is a comprehensive strategy of prevention, intervention, and enforcement that involves both the public and private sectors (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). Important components of these community-based initiatives are research, community policing, aggressive prosecution of gun- and gang-related crimes, and inter-agency cooperation and coordination (Clark, 1997).

Operation Night Light exemplifies interagency coordination. It is a cooperative, enforcement-oriented effort of the Youth Violence Strike Force and the Massachusetts Department of Probation. Police and probation officers patrol the streets together at night to ensure that offenders are complying with the terms of probation. Police and probation officers also visit offenders' schools and worksites to increase the probation officers' presence and dissuade offenders from violating the conditions of probation (Clark, 1997). Besides strengthening the relationships between offenders and probation and police officers, the probation and police officers forge relationships with each other, which in turn encourages information sharing and further collaborative efforts (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996).

Since Operation Night Light's inception, compliance with probation

orders has dramatically increased. One probation officer reported that murders of his clients decreased from a total of 68 from 1990 to 1994 to only 3 since 1995 (U.S. Department of Justice, 1996). Other States are attempting to replicate Boston's success. Maryland officials launched a community probation program in September 1997 that has 3 or more probation agents teaming with police officers in 35 "hot spots."

Community Reintegration: Aftercare Programs

One of the most critical moments for juveniles placed in residential facilities occurs once they return from placement and attempt to reintegrate into their homes and communities. Often, juveniles who benefit from a controlled, structured environment have difficulties applying their newly acquired skills and conflict resolution techniques to real-life situations. Aftercare programs provide an extended period of supervision, surveillance, and service delivery to assist youth during this transitional period with the goal of preventing and reducing recidivism.

OJJDP has committed extensive resources to the area of aftercare services. Since 1987, OJJDP has supported a long-term program research and development model founded by Drs. David Altschuler of Johns Hopkins University and Troy Armstrong of California State University, Sacramento (see Altschuler and Armstrong, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1996). This initiative prepares, transitions, and reintegrates the chronic, serious juvenile offender from secure confinement into the community in a gradual and highly structured manner. This initiative focuses on three distinct, yet overlapping components:

- Prerelease and preparatory planning during secure confinement.

- Structured transition that requires the participation of institutional and aftercare staff prior to and following community reintegration.
- Long-term, reintegrative activities that ensure adequate service delivery and the necessary level of social control.

In a recently released OJJDP Bulletin, *Reintegration, Supervised Release, and Intensive Aftercare*, OJJDP's intensive aftercare program (IAP) model is distinguished from other traditional aftercare models, and initial findings of the efficacy of these programs are discussed (Altschuler, Armstrong, and MacKenzie, 1999). This Bulletin also describes the implementation of the IAP model in three jurisdictions. Their programs are briefly summarized below.

The Colorado IAP, operated by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections (DYC), serves the most delinquent youth from the greater metropolitan Denver counties of Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson. The program serves only committed youth from the Lookout Mountain Youth Service Center (LMYSC), a secure facility located in Golden, CO. All IAP participants are housed in a single cottage. Youth benefit from individualized care based on specialized assessment techniques. Project staff include three IAP client managers who provide intensive case management from institutional referral through community reentry and beyond. Within 60 days of a youth's confinement, a comprehensive plan is developed that establishes goals for successful community reintegration. Program components include a range of services provided at each stage of the reintegration process (i.e., institution phase, institution transition, community transition, and aftercare), including educational, special educational, and vocational services; counseling/

mental health counseling; drug/alcohol prevention services; life skills; community service work; and transportation. A system of graduated sanctions and incentives is an integral component of this program.

Nevada's IAP, known as Fresh Start, is operated by the Nevada Youth Corrections Services Youth Parole Bureau. It serves high-risk youth from Clark County (Las Vegas), NV. All youth participating in Fresh Start are housed at the Caliente Youth Center, one of Nevada's two secure facilities for juvenile offenders, about 150 miles northeast of Las Vegas. All IAP participants are placed in Beowawe Cottage ("B" Cottage). The program relies on a team approach to handle case management. However, because of the long distance between the secure facility and the community, this program incorporates both structural and philosophical tenets that foster a case management system that extends beyond the transitional phase through the completion of the aftercare phase. Youth take courses in a prerelease curriculum devoted to social skills training. The program has implemented a system of positive incentives and graduated sanctions to emphasize accountability. Sanctions range from community service for minor misconduct to curfews, house arrest, and brief confinement for more serious offenses. Two community outreach trackers and other outreach workers support the youth center staff by providing additional monitoring.

Virginia's IAP project is referred to as the Intensive Parole Program (IPP). It is operated by the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and serves high-risk youth from the City of Norfolk, VA, who have been committed to the Department and placed at one of two central Virginia facilities—the Beaumont and Hanover Juvenile Correctional Centers. The initial phase of treatment, including the implementation of a life skills curriculum, begins at the Reception and Diagnostic Center,

where juveniles are assessed to determine if they are high-risk offenders, based on a locally developed and validated risk assessment instrument. The IPP Management Team, composed of nine DJJ staff, is responsible for the development and implementation of each youth's treatment plan. Virginia has developed a coordinated transition to aftercare process that involves (1) the use of local group homes as "half-way back" residential facilities and a continuum of graduated parole supervision levels; (2) provision of services immediately upon the youth's return to the community; (3) an aftercare planning process that begins shortly after commitment and involves institutional, aftercare, and community agency staff; and (4) communication mechanisms that facilitate an integrated case management process across both the institutional and the aftercare transition stages.

Conclusion

The JAIBG program provides both new challenges and new opportunities for juvenile courts and probation departments. They are challenged to rethink their mission, develop and implement new programs, and coordinate and collaborate with others. Success will require strong leadership from judges, additional staff resources and training for probation departments, and an increased focus on monitoring services and evaluating outcomes.

JAIBG also offers the opportunity for juvenile courts and probation departments to help direct resources toward the development of needed and effective programs; to benefit from the knowledge and dedication of other public, private, and community-based agencies; to provide better services to all clients; and ultimately, to restore the public's faith in the juvenile justice system.

This Bulletin provides initial guidance to courts and probation departments

in understanding and incorporating the goal of accountability. The key elements and exemplary programs described here serve as a foundation on which courts and probation departments can build a comprehensive range of services capable of holding all juvenile offenders accountable for their actions.

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

Acknowledgments

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