



OCTOBER 2009

# OJJDP IN FOCUS

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## What is the Community Prevention Grants program?

OJJDP's Community Prevention Grants program funds collaborative, community-based delinquency prevention efforts. The program integrates six fundamental principles:

- Comprehensive and multidisciplinary approaches.
- Research- and evidence-based strategies.
- Community control and decisionmaking.
- Leveraging of existing resources and systems.
- Evaluation to monitor the program's progress and effectiveness.
- A long-term perspective.

Learn more at  
[ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/cpg](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/cpg).

## Community Prevention Grants Program

Since 1994, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Community Prevention Grants program has helped communities develop a comprehensive, research-based approach to delinquency prevention. The goal is to improve outcomes for youth by reducing risk factors and enhancing protective factors in schools, communities, and families.

Extensive research has shown that risk factors are associated with the likelihood that a youth will engage in delinquent behavior, and protective factors help prevent or reduce that likelihood. The Community Prevention Grants program provides funds that enable communities to address these factors in a locally suitable and sustainable manner.

The program encourages local leaders to initiate multidisciplinary needs assessments of the risks and resources in their communities and develop locally relevant prevention plans that simultaneously draw on community resources, address local gaps in services, and employ evidence-based or theory-driven strategies.

## Authorizing Legislation

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-273, 42 U.S.C. § 5601 *et seq.*) reauthorized OJJDP to administer the Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs, which include the Community Prevention Grants program.

## Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a grant, the Governor or other chief executive officer of each State must designate a single State agency (usually the agency that administers OJJDP's Formula Grants program) to receive, manage, and administer the funds.<sup>1</sup> The State must also have a properly constituted State Advisory Group (SAG), as specified in the JJDP Act of 2002.

<sup>1</sup>The term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the five U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands).



## Award Process

In most years, OJJDP allocates funds to qualifying States on the basis of their proportionate population younger than age 18. As a result of decreased congressional allocations for the Community Prevention Grants program over recent years, in lieu of the above formula, OJJDP has distributed an equal amount to all States (less for the territories).

States, in turn, award funds to qualified units of local government through a competitive process. States may fund each local program in 12-month increments for up to 3 years. Funds are granted in 19 program areas (see sidebar “Community Prevention Grants Program Areas”) to support local programs to keep at-risk youth and nonserious juvenile offenders from entering the juvenile justice system.

To be eligible to apply for a subgrant from the State, a unit of local government must receive SAG certification of compliance with the JJDP Act’s core requirements; convene or designate a local Prevention Policy Board,<sup>2</sup> submit a 3-year, comprehensive community delinquency prevention plan; and provide a 50-percent match (cash or in-kind) for the award, if the State does not provide the match.

<sup>2</sup>Prevention Policy Boards are community planning bodies that involve coalitions of youth-serving agencies and organizations, parents, youth, and faith-based institutions in the development and implementation of local prevention programs.

States give priority in funding to local applicants who demonstrate the ability to develop data-driven prevention plans and employ evidence-based strategies. OJJDP has developed the Model Programs Guide, a searchable Web site containing information on the full range of evidence-based juvenile justice programs.

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## Community Prevention Grants at Work

### Working Together To Combat Truancy (Kentucky)

With assistance from Community Prevention Grants program funding, community agencies, schools, and the family court in Fayette County, KY, are partnering to improve school attendance among middle and high school students. One community organization that has made a significant difference is the Truancy Assessment Center (TAC), established in 2006.

The center, which targets youth ages 12–17, has assessed and provided services to 118 youth and 112 families experiencing problems with school attendance. TAC completes a holistic, comprehensive assessment of the family’s strengths, needs, and issues affecting school attendance and refers the family to the most appropriate community partner for services.

## Community Prevention Grants Program Areas

Program Area	Description of Program Area
3. Child abuse and neglect	Programs that provide treatment to juvenile victims of child abuse or neglect and their families to reduce the likelihood that such at-risk youth will commit violations of law.
4. Children of incarcerated parents	Services to prevent delinquency or treat first-time and nonserious delinquent juveniles who are the children of incarcerated parents.
9. Delinquency prevention	Programs to prevent youth at risk of becoming delinquent from entering the juvenile justice system or to intervene with first-time and nonserious offenders to keep them out of the juvenile justice system. This program area excludes programs targeted at youth already adjudicated delinquent, on probation, in corrections, and programs undertaken as part of program areas 12 and 32 of the Formula Grants program that are designed specifically to prevent gang-related or substance abuse activities.
10. Disproportionate minority contact	Delinquency prevention programs primarily to address the disproportionate number of minority juveniles who come into contact with the juvenile justice system, pursuant to Section 223(a)(22) of the JJDP Act of 2002.
11. Diversion	Programs to divert juveniles from entering the juvenile justice system.
12. Gangs	Programs to address issues related to preventing juvenile gang activity.
13. Gender-specific services	Services to address the needs of male and female offenders in the juvenile justice system.
15. Gun programs	Programs to reduce the unlawful acquisition and illegal use of guns by juveniles (excluding programs to purchase guns from juveniles).
16. Hate crimes	Programs to prevent hate crimes committed by juveniles.
18. Job training	Projects to enhance the employability of at-risk juveniles and/or first-time and nonserious juvenile offenders or prepare them for future employment (e.g., job readiness training, apprenticeships, and job referrals).
19. Juvenile system improvement	Programs, research, and other initiatives to examine issues related to the juvenile justice system or to improve existing juvenile justice information-sharing systems.
20. Mental health services	Psychological and psychiatric evaluations and treatment, counseling services, and family support services for at-risk juveniles and first-time and nonserious juvenile offenders.
21. Mentoring	Programs to develop and sustain a one-to-one supportive relationship between a responsible adult age 18 or older (mentor) and an at-risk juvenile and/or first-time and nonserious juvenile offender (mentee).
22. American Indian programs	Programs to address delinquency prevention issues for American Indians and Alaska Natives.
25. Restitution/community service	Programs to hold first-time and nonserious juvenile offenders accountable for their offenses by requiring community service or repayment to the victim.
26. Rural area juvenile programs	Prevention services in an area located outside a metropolitan statistical area as designated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.
27. School programs	Educational programs and/or related services to prevent truancy, suspension, and expulsion. School safety programs may include support for school resource officers and law-related education.
32. Substance abuse	Programs to prevent and treat the use and abuse of illegal and other prescription and nonprescription drugs and the use and abuse of alcohol among at-risk juveniles and nonserious juvenile offenders.
34. Youth (or teen) courts	Juvenile justice programs in which peers play an active role in the disposition of first-time and nonserious juvenile offenders. Most communities use youth courts as a sentencing option for first-time offenders charged with misdemeanor or nonserious, nonviolent offenses who acknowledge their guilt. The youth court serves as an alternative to the traditional juvenile court.

*Note: Community Prevention Grants program areas are a subset of the 35 Formula Grant program areas. Their numbering reflects the numbers assigned to the Formula Grant program areas.*

Referrals come directly from the Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) and family court. Any youth who has accumulated three or more unexcused absences and is not receiving services from any other program is eligible for services.

In 2007, the Fayette County family court ordered FCPS to file a petition on every youth with 12 or more unexcused absences so they could come directly to court for supervision by the judge. That year, FCPS filed 855 petitions—an increase of more than 400 from the previous year—and the family court processed 629 cases.

Starting in 2007, staff from each of Fayette County's middle, high, and alternative schools are in court on certain days. Youth's cases are reviewed on the day staff from their school will be present. Having school staff present in court increases accountability for both the youth and the school. TAC staff and other community partners share information and resources available for each case.

In addition, TAC staff, the judge, and other community partners make a presentation at least once a year in all county middle and high schools to inform parents and youth about available resources, truancy laws, and the policies regarding and consequences of noncompliance. This new approach is an important tool in deterring truancy.

Data indicate that the family court's supervision of truant youth is highly effective. Partners reviewed all the youth who were seen by the family court judge on March 5 and 12, 2007, a total of 37 cases. The average number of unexcused absences the youth had before seeing the judge was 35; the average after seeing the judge was 9. The University of Kentucky College of Social Work evaluated this information and found these numbers to be statistically significant.



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Communities can use the database to identify evidence-based prevention programs that will fit their needs and enhance their likelihood for success. (To access the Model Programs Guide, go to [ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/mpg.html](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/mpg.html).)

truancy. This is just one example of the success of OJJDP's community prevention initiatives nationwide.

## Performance Measures

In 2004, OJJDP introduced a series of performance measures to better determine how well local prevention programs were meeting their goals. OJJDP disseminates a set of quantitative performance indicators to the States and directs them to collect data from their local subgrantees and to report annually on the outputs and outcomes of their prevention efforts. OJJDP expects grantees to use this feedback to adjust their administration of Federal funds and to improve program performance. Performance data also highlight programs that have been particularly effective. The sidebar "Community Prevention Grants at Work" describes one local program that has made significant progress in addressing the problem of

## Training and Technical Assistance

OJJDP offers a three-part training series to help grantees write successful 3-year delinquency prevention plans. The training includes: community team orientation, which brings together key local leaders and provides an overview of the Community Prevention Grants program; community data collection and analysis training; and community program development training, which shows participants how to use data to develop delinquency prevention plans and how to select appropriate strategies using the Model Programs Guide.

The Office also provides specialized training in performance measurement and evaluation, evidence-based practices, and sustainability.

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 Community Capacity Development Office; the National Institute of Justice; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).

## For More Information on the Community Prevention Grants Program

To learn more about OJJDP's Community Prevention Grants program, visit [ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/cpg](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/cpg).

For information about how to access Community Prevention Grants program funds that have been awarded to your State, or to request OJJDP-sponsored training and technical assistance, contact your State's Juvenile Justice Specialist or Community Prevention Grants Program Coordinator. Contact information is available on the OJJDP Web site.

- Visit [ojjdp.ncjrs.gov](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov).
- Click on "State Contacts" in the left navigation panel.
- Select the checkbox next to "Juvenile Justice Specialist" or "State Community Prevention Grants Program Coordinator."
- Click on your State in the map provided.

For information about other OJJDP programs, go to [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp).

