

a newsletter of the

Pennsylvania
Juvenile Court
Judges'
Commission

P E N N S Y L V A N I A J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Edward G. Rendell, Governor

Volume 11, Number 9

www.jcjc.state.pa.us

September 2003

Bullying Prevention is Crime Prevention

A report by **FIGHT CRIME: INVEST
IN KIDS**

The complete report is available free
of charge on the **FIGHT CRIME:
INVEST IN KIDS** web site:
www.fightcrime.org

Of children in sixth through tenth grade, more than 3.2 million—nearly one in six—are victims of bullying each year, while 3.7 million bully other children.

Preventing kids from becoming bullies and intervening to get bullies back on track can not only protect children from the pain that bullying inflicts immediately, but can protect all of us from crime later on. Fortunately, programs have been developed that can cut bullying by as much as 50 percent. They just need to be implemented in America's schools.

How miserable does bullying make its victims? Compared to their peers, kids who are bullied are five times more likely to be depressed. Bullied boys are four times more likely to be suicidal; bullied girls are eight times more likely to be suicidal.

A Cause of Crime—and a Crime Prevention Opportunity

Nearly 60 percent of boys who researchers classified as bullies in grades six through nine were convicted of at least one crime by the age of 24. Even more dramatic, 40 percent of them had three or more convictions by age 24.

Bullying is an early warning that bullies may be headed toward more serious antisocial behavior. Moreover, victims of repeated bullying can explode in ways that threaten not just the bullies but many others as well. For example, a Secret Service study of school shootings found that “almost three-quarters of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked or injured by others prior to the incident.”

Proven Programs Can Cut Bullying in Half—and Sharply Reduce Crime

Research clearly shows that half or more of all bullying can be prevented. The youngsters with the most serious behavior problems benefit most from effective programs. But bullying prevention efforts should be based on rigorous scientific research. Creating an untested program and calling it “bullying prevention” doesn't mean it will work. Thus far, three models that have been rigorously tested have been proven highly effective.

Bullying Prevention, page 2

Bullying Prevention, from page 1

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program—First developed in Norway after a number of bullying victims committed suicide, the program has now been implemented in several hundred schools in the United States and around the world. It produced a 50 percent reduction in bullying and other antisocial behavior in Norway and a 20 percent reduction in a South Carolina test.

Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers

(LIFT)—LIFT shows long-term results are possible from a ten-week anti-aggression program. Compared to LIFT participants, fifth graders whose schools did not receive the program were by eighth grade 59 percent more likely to drink alcohol regularly, and two times more likely to have been arrested during middle school than those who received the program.

The Incredible Years—Originally designed for children ages two to eight with high levels of aggressive behavior, this program trains parents and children in problem-solving and other non-aggressive social skills. It has been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds of the families receiving help.

Money Well Spent

Bullying prevention programs are relatively inexpensive for the results they deliver. The upfront training and supply cost for delivering both the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and LIFT programs throughout a school district are only a few thousand dollars. Part-time personnel costs for setting up and administering the program can often be covered by existing funding streams that pay for Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinators. Modest additional funds will typically be needed to implement LIFT and The

Incredible Years.

These investments will more than pay for themselves by reducing special education costs and future crime. For example, special education classes for 12 years for one child with emotional problems can cost \$100,000 more than regular schooling. Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University estimated that each high-risk juvenile prevented from adopting a life of crime could save the country \$1.7 million.

Bullying is not just sad, it's dangerous. Too many bullies and their victims will go on to commit crimes, including murder. Others will kill themselves.

Every school should be doing what works to prevent bullying. When relatively little investment is necessary to cut bullying by as much as half, it's penny-wise and pound-foolish not to invest in these proven crime prevention programs.

Bullying Prevention Is Crime Prevention

"...fifth graders whose schools did not receive the program were by eighth grade 59 percent more likely to drink alcohol regularly, and two times more likely to have been arrested during middle school than those who received the program. "

Junior Police Academy

School-based probation officer David Coleman along with Chief of School Police, Don Aubrecht, partnered with local and county law enforcement to conduct a Junior Police Academy at the Sto-Rox High School. Junior and senior high school students participated in an eight-week course designed to educate youth on police procedures and to stimulate interest in considering a career in law enforcement.

The program consisted of eight two-hour sessions held after school. During the first session students were given an overview of the Jr. Police Academy and designed a T-shirt which would be symbolic of the Academy.

The sessions themselves covered a broad spectrum of law enforcement and safety topics. The school-based probation officer presented information about the juvenile justice system and Balanced and Restor-

Junior Academy, continued on back page

This publication is produced monthly at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University.

Guest articles are always welcome; please submit them by email or on a disk. We particularly enjoy your photographs, but we ask that these be mailed - we will be happy to return them to you.

Greg Young is the editor. Our address is CJJT&R, Shippensburg University, 1871 Old Main Drive, Shippensburg, PA 17257-2299. (gyoung@state.pa.us)

Please send additions or changes to the mailing list to Julie Bozich at Signal Graphics Printing, 1010 Wesley Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (SigGraph60@aol.com)



Ship student completes internship with CJJT&R

Rachel Coldsmith, a senior in the criminal justice program of Shippensburg University recently completed a full-time internship with the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research.

Objectives for this internship were set forth through the University program. Ms. Coldsmith fulfilled the objectives of the internship through assignments that provided her opportunity for observation, practical experience, and participation in various functions through the Center. She accompanied Center staff in activities such as detention monitoring, court service visits, Communities That Care technical assistance, and the juvenile justice enhancement project. Coldsmith's fresh outlook and willingness to learn contributed to her success in this experience.

A graduate of Shippensburg Area Senior High School, she will graduate from Shippensburg University in May, 2004, with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. Coldsmith is planning for a career in the juvenile justice system, and is involved in many community activities.

The Center expresses gratitude to those agencies which provided Ms. Coldsmith the opportunity to learn the varied functions and responsibilities of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system.

Street Law: Juvenile justice re-entry program

The law-related-education partner of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Street Law, has announced a training and technical assistance opportunity for juvenile justice programs to help juveniles make successful transitions from incarceration to their communities. Street Law programs teach young people legal information they need to know to be successful adults and citizens. Topics including housing, employment, criminal law, family and consumer law, and many others are covered.

In addition to legal knowledge, Street Law programs use interactive teaching methods which build the skills that make youth successful and resilient. Street Law classes enhance conflict resolution, communication, cooperation, creative problem-solving, and core academic skills. Street Law programs are used throughout the country in juvenile justice as well as school and community settings.

Some programs in juvenile justice settings have been implemented as a daily or weekly 90-minute sessions as part of the regular school curriculum. Others have created separate afternoon or evening programs or intensive life-skills sessions. At the national training, site teams will create a tailored plan to create a Street Law program that fits the needs of their program.

In 2003-2004, Street Law will add five new sites to its national re-entry program. A team from each selected site will participate in a three-day training, February 3-6, 2004, to lay the groundwork for implementing Street Law as part of their re-entry programming. The three-person teams from each site will include representation from both institutional and community-based programming and should aim to represent the scope of those involved in each re-entry program.

Each of these teams will then be responsible for implementing the program at its site. Staff from Street Law will provide on-site training to the staff at each site and work with the leadership team to aid in successful implementation.

For more information or to download the application, go to www.streetlaw.org/reentry.

Screening youth within detention: A glance at the mental health issues experienced by Pennsylvania's youth

by: Melissa Moyer, Project Director, JDCAP Mental Health Grant

Since 2000, the Juvenile Detention Centers Association of Pennsylvania (JDCAP) has been implementing the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument Version 2 (MAYSI~2) in secure detention centers throughout Pennsylvania as part of the Mental Health Assessment of Youth in Detention Project. The MAYSI~2 is being used to alert detention staff of potential mental health and/or substance abuse issues that youth may be experiencing. Seventeen detention centers are currently using the MAYSI~2 (Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Blair, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Erie, Lancaster, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Tioga, Westmoreland, and York counties as well as Cornell Abraxas and Northwestern Academy).

The MAYSI~2, developed by Thomas Grisso Ph.D. and Richard Barnum, Ph.D., is designed to identify youth entering the juvenile justice system who may have potential mental health issues that may need prompt attention. The MAYSI~2 does not produce psychiatric diagnoses and is not intended to make long-term rehabilitative or placement decisions. The MAYSI~2 is a 52 question self-report that is administered via computer. The screen is fairly quick to administer (15 minutes or less) and can be administered by properly trained line staff. Youth answer "yes" or "no" to whether questions have been true for them "within the past few months." The answers contribute to seven scales for boys and six scales for girls (Alcohol/Drug Use, Angry-Irritable, Depressed-Anxious, Somatic Complaints, Suicide Ideation, Thought Disturbance - boys only, and Traumatic Experiences). The score for each scale equals the number of "yes" responses to the questions for that particular scale. Scores are compared to predetermined cut-offs.

A score above the Caution cut-off indicates that the youth has scored at a level that can be said to have "possible clinical significance." In other words, the youth scoring above the Caution cut-off would most likely score high enough on other similar tests of adolescent disturbances. A score above the Warning cut-off indicates that the youth has scored exceptionally high in comparison to other youth in the juvenile justice system since the Warning cut-off scores were set at the point that identifies approximately the top 10 percent of youths on a given MAYSI-2 scale.

Youth who score above the Warning cut-off are the most likely to be in need of attention for mental health problems.

The following results are based upon 14,328 cases as of May, 2003. The majority of youth screened were male (81.9 percent) an average age of 15.7 years. The youth were primarily African-American (42.3percent) and Caucasian (42.2 percent). Of the youth screened, 71.7 percent took the MAYSI~2 within the suggested 24 to 48 hour time frame, while 13 percent were administered within the first few hours of admission and 15 percent were administered two or more days after admission. Overall, females scored significantly higher on all subscales except Alcohol/Drug Use, which was fairly even between males and females (33.9 percent of males and 36.3 percent of females scoring in the Caution and Warning ranges). Girls scored particularly high on the Suicide Ideation (33.1 percent of females compared to 17.6 percent of males in the Caution and Warning ranges) and Somatic Complaints scales (60.7 percent of females compared to 43.4 percent of males in the Caution and Warning ranges).

The Mental Health Assessment of Youth in Detention Project, which is grant funded through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, recently received approval for a third phase of funding. The third phase started July 1, 2003, and will conclude December 31, 2004. One of the central goals of the project is to implement the MAYSI~2 within all 23 secure detention centers in the state. The project will continue to examine the mental health issues experienced by youth within detention by further examining the relationship, if any, between mental health issues and original/committing offenses, length of stay, behavioral incidents, and release locations.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



Governor's Office

PROCLAMATION

PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE WEEK

October 5-11, 2003

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system is charged with providing programs of supervision, care, and rehabilitation, and providing balanced attention to the protection of our communities, the imposition of accountability for offenses committed by juveniles, and the development of competencies to enable children within the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system to become responsible and productive members of their communities; and

WHEREAS, the mission of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system is based on the principles of restorative justice, which give priority to repairing the harm done to crime victims and communities, and which define offender accountability in terms of assuming responsibility and taking action to repair harm; and

WHEREAS, the mission is premised on the belief that crime victims, communities, and juvenile offenders must all be regarded as clients of the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, community protection refers to the fundamental right of all Pennsylvanians to be and feel safe from crime. Victim restoration emphasizes that crime can forever change its victims and that restoration programs should seek to restore crime victims, to the greatest extent possible, to their pre-crime status. Youth redemption embodies the belief that the vast majority of juvenile offenders are capable of change and have strength upon which treatment services can build; and

WHEREAS, all of the services designed and implemented to achieve this mission and all hearings and decisions under Pennsylvania's Juvenile Act must be provided in a fair and unbiased manner; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee has adopted the following mission statement for Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system: "Juvenile Justice: Community Protection; Victim Restoration; Youth Redemption."

THEREFORE, In special recognition of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system and their work with juvenile offenders, crime victims, and communities, I, Edward G. Rendell, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim October 5-11, 2003 as PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE WEEK in the Commonwealth.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, on this twenty-fourth day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand and three, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

Edward G. Rendell

EDWARD G. RENDELL
Governor



School-based youth complete a worthy task

Philadelphia youth committed to De La Salle In Towne have experienced restorative justice firsthand. On August 20, 2003, a group of youth helped to restore a basement in a local church. Six juveniles, accompanied by probation officer Gary Williams and two staff from De La Salle In Towne, renovated what had been the dreary basement of a church. They removed all the unwanted items and cleaned the room to make it suitable for storage.

The students from St. Gabriel's System's De La Salle Day Treatment Program completed the work as part of their required community service. The task appeared insurmountable at first. The basement was filled with items that had been in storage for quite some time. The juveniles spent hours diligently working to remove all of the items and clean the area. Officer Williams received a letter of thanks from the church's operations manager, who complimented the youth for their hard work and good manners.

Junior Police, from page 2

ative Justice. The Stowe Township Police and McKees Rocks Police educated the youth on several areas of police work from general police operations to the specialized areas of K-9 and bike police work. Allegheny County Police presented a session on financial crimes and identity theft. Safety topics included personal safety and CPR conducted by the Sto-Rox School Police. "Child Abuse" presented by the Allegheny County Police and "Drugs of Abuse" presented by the McKees Rocks Police.

Students responded enthusiastically to the presentations and expressed a desire to learn more about careers in law enforcement, particularly the field of crime scene investigation. They asked to visit the Allegheny County Police Academy and the morgue. Junior Police Academy ended with a graduation ceremony where each student was given a diploma and a tee-shirt.

