Joint State Government Commission to Study Juvenile Act and Miller v. Alabama

Senate Resolution 304 (P.N.1827) was introduced by Senator Stewart Greenleaf on March 13, 2014, and was adopted by the Senate on April 8, 2014.

The resolution directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of the Juvenile Act to determine whether there are substantive and procedural issues that need to be addressed, and whether revisions are necessary in the Juvenile Act to make it consistent with the Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure. The resolution further requires that, in addition to considering revisions to the Juvenile Act, the study include a review of how Pennsylvania and other states have responded to Miller v. Alabama and whether changes should be made to Pennsylvania law.

The resolution establishes an advisory committee with approximately 30 members comprised of representatives from groups such as the judiciary, prosecution, defense, law enforcement, victim assistance and private and public organizations involved in juvenile justice issues. The advisory committee is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Senate no later than one year after the adoption of the resolution.

Former JCJC Executive Director James Anderson will serve as Chair of the advisory committee.

Save the Date!

November 5-7, 2014
Harrisburg Hilton and Towers, Harrisburg PA
On June 2-4, 2014, the Annie E. Casey Foundation hosted the 2014 Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) Inter-Site Conference at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown. More than 800 juvenile justice professionals, representing more than 250 jurisdictions in 39 states and the District of Columbia, participated in this year’s conference.

The conference began on the evening of Monday, June 2nd with a Welcome Reception and Dinner, which featured remarks by: the Honorable Kevin M. Dougherty, Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Family Court and Vice-Chairman of the JCJC; Anne Marie Ambrose, Commissioner of the City of Philadelphia’s Department of Human Services (DHS); and Bart Lubow, Director of the Casey Foundation’s Juvenile Justice Strategy Group.

On Tuesday morning, Bart Lubow delivered the “State of the Initiative” speech, in which he reviewed the impact that JDAI has had on reducing the utilization of secure detention in local jurisdictions throughout the nation over the two decades that he has led the initiative. Mr. Lubow announced earlier this year that he would be stepping down as the Director of the Juvenile Justice Strategy effective June 30, 2014. Nate Balis will become Director on July 1, 2014.

Mr. Lubow was followed by the morning plenary session, “A Report from Our Hosts”, which was facilitated by Robert Schwartz, Executive Director of the Juvenile Law Center. The plenary session featured a panel discussion of Pennsylvania juvenile justice stakeholders, including: the Honorable Kevin M. Dougherty; Stephen Bishop, Director of the CJJT&R and Pennsylvania’s Statewide JDAI Coordinator; Timene Farlow, Deputy Commissioner of Philadelphia’s DHS for Juvenile Justice Services; Carrie L. Maloney, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Shippensburg University; and David H. Mueller, Director of the Office of Juvenile Probation in Lancaster County and Chair of the Detention Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers (PCCJPO). The panelists discussed Pennsylvania’s unique history of strong collaboration amongst its stakeholders and how JDAI has been instrumental in helping to address detention reform efforts within the context of Pennsylvania’s Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) at both the local and statewide levels.

More than forty workshops on a variety of relevant topics were provided throughout the last two days of the conference. Other features of the conference included:

- author Nell Bernstein discussing her newly released book, *Burning Down the House*, for the Tuesday afternoon plenary;
- Van Jones, President of Rebuild the Dream Innovation Fund, former adviser to the White House and co-anchor of CNN’s *Crossfire*, provided the Wednesday morning plenary session in which he discussed the need to build alliances with the private business sector to help sustain criminal and juvenile justice reform efforts.

Pennsylvania began working with the Casey Foundation in 2012, when Allegheny, Lancaster, Lehigh and Philadelphia Counties became JDAI sites. A Statewide JDAI Team was formed at that time that has been working closely with the JCJC and the Detention Committee of the PCCJPO to align Pennsylvania’s JDAI work with the goals of the JJSES. A Pennsylvania Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (PaDRAI) is currently being piloted in nine counties, and the detention screens within the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS) have been enhanced as a result of this collaborative work.
Mercer County Communities That Care was named the 2014 Pennsylvania Prevention Coalition of the Year at the annual Commonwealth Prevention Alliance (CPA) Conference in State College earlier this month. Laura Leskovac, Community Mobilizer and Mark Benedetto, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for Mercer County, accepted the award on the coalition’s behalf.

The current county-wide coalition was initiated in 2007, but Communities That Care had been active in Mercer County at Shenango Valley and Greenville High School since 1994. These earlier efforts were focused on reducing the availability of drugs and alcohol. The coalition expanded to the county level after data from the Pennsylvania Youth Survey indicated the need to shift their focus to impacting the risk factors of reducing anti-social behavior among youth and reducing family management problems.

According to Sandy Hinkle, Communities that Care Consultant with the Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support Center (EPISCenter) at Penn State, Mercer County Communities That Care received the award in recognition of the coalition’s work implementing programs with strong evidence of effectiveness to address their county’s specific risk factors mentioned above.

Coalition Highlights

- The coalition has embraced data-driven decision-making, utilizing data from the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), statistics on foster placement, juvenile out-of-home placement rates, along with other data from the Mercer County Juvenile Probation Department and the Mercer County Office of Children and Youth Services (CYS).
- Through constant communication and continued assistance from the coalition prevention board members and partners, 11 of the 12 public school districts participated in the PAYS survey in 2013.
- Mercer County’s implementation of Strengthening Families Program: for Parents & Youth 10-14, has served 84 families (134 adults and 115 youth), resulting in enhanced parenting skills, increased parental support and improved family cooperation & problem-solving among participants.
- The coalition has partnered with the county’s single county authority, Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission, to support the evidence-based practice of Motivational Interviewing and to promote it to county service providers, bringing together the fields of criminal justice and health & human services.
- The coalition achieved sustainability as the county has provided future funding for the program and the Mobilizer position in the Needs-Based Budget.

Given annually at the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance Conference, the Pennsylvania Prevention Coalition of the Year Award is coordinated by EPISCenter on behalf of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. The award recognizes community prevention coalitions that have achieved measurable success in improving community-level outcomes related to positive behaviors, reducing high risk factors and/or increasing low protective factors.

Past Award Winners:

- 2013: Erie County Policy and Planning Council
- 2012: Unified Family Services Systems of Bedford County
- 2011: Delaware County Communities that Care

Three other coalitions were nominated this year and received honorable mentions. Those include: Cambria County Health & Welfare Council Prevention Coalition, Bedford County Drug and Alcohol Prevention Partnership, and York County Communities That Care.
Training of the Trainer (TTT) on the use of the “Quality Case Planning” curriculum has been scheduled for September 17 or 18, 2014 at the Days Inn, State College and will be provided by Mark Carey. Staff participating in this training will be expected to return to their home county and, in turn, train all probation staff by using the curriculum on developing skills to prepare solid case plans. While it is suggested that the staff who attend this training be current YLS Master Trainers, other staff as deemed appropriate may be sent to obtain the curriculum. Participants will receive a copy of the facilitator's guide, participant guide, and power point presentation of the curriculum. These items will also be provided electronically on thumb drives for those in attendance.

Registration for this training is now open online through JEMS. The training is for a single day and will be repeated over two days. Staff should register for either Wednesday, September 17 OR Thursday, September 18. There is no registration fee for these events, although counties will be responsible for their travel, lodging and subsistence costs.

Please be aware that there are no other scheduled training of this curriculum currently planned, so counties should be sure to have an appropriate number of trainers attend a session in order to meet their estimated needs for this topic.

Questions about this event should be directed to Rick Steele at ricsteele@pa.gov or to Beth Fritz at elizabethfritz@lehighcounty.org.
Examining Employment Based Peer Groups

Reprinted with Permission from: Colorado Division of Probation Services.  
(September 2012).  Employment, Peers, & Life-Course Transitions.  

The study analyzed data from the National Youth Survey (NYS), which was a longitudinal study of 1,725 people aged 11 to 17. The study was conducted in six stages with each stage representing a different age group. Stage 5 concluded when respondents were between the ages of 15 and 21 and stage 6 represented an age group of 18 to 24. Results analyzed for this study were primarily from stages five and six. The NYS measured a number of social factors including marriage, prior criminal behavior, college, age, race, gender, drug use, employment factors and neighborhood.

With controls for age, race, gender, marriage, college and neighborhood, the results concluded that the largest positive predictor of the cessation of criminal behavior and drug use was not job commitment or job stability but the presence of pro-social coworkers. Additionally the study concluded that the number of hours worked per week was not a determining factor on behavior change. Also noted, low paying entry level service jobs are often in settings with unstable work hours and a younger, less educated employment base. These environments often have a higher level of drug use and would contain higher incidence of antisocial behavior.

The study was unable to ascertain why individuals with pro-social coworkers leave their prior life of crime. Possible explanations include (1) the replacement of new peer groups in favor of old peer groups, (2) the reduced likelihood that individuals with pro-social coworkers are in compromising situations where he or she may commit criminal behavior, and (3) pro-social peers created an environment to dissuade individuals from committing new crimes.

Practical Applications

✓ With the juvenile, examine peer networks at home, school and employment; this will give a more accurate assessment of all peer influences in a juvenile’s life.

✓ Consider completing a social network map with the juvenile. A social network map will identify pro-social and antisocial peers as well as the frequency of contact with the client.

✓ Complete case plans integrating peer group considerations. This may serve as a roadmap...
for removing the juvenile from environments with negative peer influences by replacing those networks in favor of positive influences.

✓ Consider vocational and job training programs instead of encouraging juveniles to become employed at organizations with increased negative peer influences.

✓ Encourage and affirm juveniles engagement in ongoing pro-social support in the community.

✓ Use motivational interviewing to enhance a juvenile’s intrinsic motivation to change peer associations.

✓ Have clients contemplate working day shifts or at locations where an older, more mature workforce is employed.

**Limitations of Information**

The study is limited by its design, which was a retroactive analysis from 1976 to 1984. While the data is still relevant, it is unclear how culture and sociological changes would impact the results of the study. Initially the National Youth Survey was not designed to evaluate employment peer groups. Therefore, while the study found pro-social peers at an individual’s work contributed to positive behavior change, the study was not able to ascertain why individuals refrain from criminal behavior.

**Summary/Conclusions**

Previous research has found correlations between marital status (i.e., positive significant relationships), employment and criminal behavior. These factors have been shown to result in desistance from antisocial behavior. This study’s purpose was to evaluate data to determine if reductions in criminal behavior were due to employment or the peer network factors attributed to employment. Findings indicated that if coworkers were disapproving of crime, a reduction in criminal behavior was found to be significant.

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**JJSES Statement of Purpose**

To work in partnership to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative justice mission by: employing evidence-based practices, with fidelity, at every stage of the juvenile justice process; collecting and analyzing the data necessary to measure the results of these efforts; and, with this knowledge, striving to continuously improve the quality of our decisions, services and programs.

Readers are encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions related to the JJSES that they would like to have addressed. Ideas and suggestions may be submitted to: Leo J. Lutz at LjLutz@ship.edu.

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**Caveat:** The information presented here is intended to summarize and inform readers of research and information relevant to probation work. It can provide a framework for carrying out the business of probation as well as suggestions for practical application of the material. While it may, in some instances, lead to further exploration and result in future decisions, it is not intended to prescribe policy and is not necessarily conclusive in its findings. Some of its limitations are described above.
The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) have released three bulletins in the Justice Research series. The series reports on findings from joint NIJ and OJJDP research on youth in the juvenile justice system. These three bulletins address the juvenile’s transition from delinquency to adult crime:

“Criminal Career Patterns” describes criminal career patterns in adolescence and adulthood (NCJ 242545).

“Explanations for Offending” examines various developmental, biological, social, and psychological explanations for offending (NCJ 243975).

“Prediction and Risk/Needs Assessment” explores predictions of young adult crime from juvenile histories and assessments of risk, needs, and protective factors (NCJ 243976).

OJJDP has released the spring 2014 issue of the online “Journal of Juvenile Justice.” This issue features articles on a study that examines the extent to which system-involved youth had been exposed to trauma, studies that examine pathways to delinquency by gender, and a commentary on the state of mentoring programs.

OJJDP has launched a new Web site for the OJJDP Online University, a central source for the juvenile justice community to easily connect with training and technical assistance. The Online University is a one-stop shop for training courses, Webinars, training and technical assistance events, and materials that OJJDP’s training and technical assistance providers and partners have developed.

The key new features:

- A calendar consolidating all the upcoming training and technical assistance events in the juvenile justice field.
- “Quick links” to training and resources, including Webinars, online and classroom trainings, and publications.
- New browse capabilities.

OJJDP is one of several strategies in support of juvenile justice reform through the Models for Change initiative.
OJJDP Bulletin Examines Behavioral Health Problems, Treatment, and Outcomes in Youth Offenders

OJJDP has released “Behavioral Health Problems, Treatment, and Outcomes in Serious Youthful Offenders,” the latest bulletin in the Pathways to Desistance series. This bulletin assesses the overlap between behavioral health problems and the risk of offending behavior in a sample of serious youthful offenders, the delivery of mental health and substance abuse treatment in juvenile justice settings, and continuation of care in the community after release. The authors also discuss the implications for juvenile justice policy and practice and recommend ways to direct mental health and treatment services to reduce future offending.

The findings are the result of the OJJDP cosponsored Pathways to Desistance study, which investigates the factors that lead serious juvenile offenders to cease or continue offending.

Resources:
View and download this bulletin and others in the Pathways to Desistance series.

Administrator Listenbee Announces OJJDP’s Participation in My Brother’s Keeper Mentoring Campaign

OJJDP Administrator Robert L. Listenbee has announced the agency’s participation in the My Brother’s Keeper Mentoring Campaign. This is a collaboration of the Corporation for National and Community Service, U.S. Department of Justice, and the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The campaign supports the goals of the My Brother’s Keeper initiative, a national call to invest in collaborative, multi-disciplinary approaches to expand educational and economic opportunity for young men and boys of color. The goal of the campaign is to recruit individuals, particularly men of color, to serve as mentors for at least 1 year.

Resources:
To access a database of national and place-based mentoring programs, click here.
To add your organization to the list of youth mentoring programs, click here.
Learn more about My Brother’s Keeper.
Learn more about mentoring.

Funding Opportunity To Support School Justice Collaboration Program

OJJDP has announced the fiscal year 2014 School Justice Collaboration Program: Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court funding opportunity. OJJDP is coordinating with the Department of Education and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to implement a multidisciplinary initiative to improve school climates, support student mental health and behavioral needs, avoid referring students to law enforcement as a disciplinary response, and facilitate a proactive and supportive school reentry process in the rare instances in which a youth is referred. OJJDP's announcement has two components: One provides support to juvenile and family courts to partner with schools and law enforcement. The second will provide for technical assistance to the courts and other stakeholders working to reform discipline policy and practice. Applications are due by July 21, 2014.

Resources:
View FAQs about this funding opportunity.
Visit OJJDP’s funding page for other grant opportunities.

Administrator Listenbee Testifies at Senate Hearing on Reauthorization

On June 9, 2014, OJJDP Administrator Robert L. Listenbee testified before a field hearing of the Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (RI) in Pawtucket, RI, that focused on the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (Act). Listenbee emphasized the Department of Justice’s support for reauthorization of the Act and outlined OJJDP priorities to address juvenile justice reform that include:

Maintain public safety; adopt a developmental approach to juvenile justice reform.
Integrate evidence-based research in all programs, grants, and initiatives.
Reduce youth violence; address trauma and trauma-informed care.
Reduce disproportionate minority contact; eliminate racial/ethnic disparities.

Listenbee provided an overview of OJJDP’s activities fostering juvenile justice reform and public safety, including support for the Attorney General’s Defending Childhood initiative, the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, the Supportive School Discipline Initiative, the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program, and the Community-Based Violence Prevention Program.

Resources:
Learn more about the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.
Looking to advance in Juvenile Justice?

Applications are now being accepted for the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission-sponsored Graduate Education Program at Shippensburg University. Members of the class of 2017 will begin classes in the Summer of 2015. The deadline to apply is October 1, 2014.

The Shippensburg University program offers students a Master of Science degree in the Administration of Justice. This is a 36-credit hour program that includes courses in research methods, theory, administration, and policy analysis. Also featured is a practicum study which is conducted throughout the two-year program. This practicum study provides students the opportunity to evaluate an existing program or practice that serves juvenile offenders in their home county.

What are the benefits of the JCJC Graduate Education Program?

- Free tuition;
- Free lodging on class weekends;
- No weekday or evening classes;
- A Master’s curriculum specifically tailored to working juvenile justice professionals;
- Networking with other juvenile justice professionals from across the Commonwealth;
- Opportunity to learn how to evaluate juvenile justice programs in your county.

This program is available to county juvenile probation officers – and county juvenile detention staff – who will have at least two years of post-baccalaureate experience in the juvenile justice field prior to the start of classes. Other juvenile justice professionals – such as residential placement staff and victim services providers – may also apply and be accepted into the program on a “self-pay” basis as space is available.

Additional information about the program is available on the Graduate Education pages at www.jcjc.state.pa.us. If you have any questions regarding eligibility or the application process, please contact Leo J. Lutz at 717-477-1185.
Upcoming Staff Development Opportunities:

The JCJC/CJJT&R Staff Development schedule is being updated regularly with more workshops. Please be sure that you check the listing frequently.

- **Orientation For The New Juvenile Probation Professional Session I**  
  Park Inn Harrisburg West - Mechanicsburg  
  JCJC Staff and Adjunct Trainers  
  9/8-12/2014

- **Refusal Skills For Adolescents**  
  Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, Mechanicsburg  
  Bruce Schaffer  
  9/16-17/2014

- **Quality Case Planning Train the Trainer**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Mark Carey  
  9/17/2014

- **Quality Case Planning Train the Trainer**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Mark Carey  
  9/18/2014

- **Orientation For The New Juvenile Probation Professional Session II**  
  Park Inn Harrisburg West - Mechanicsburg  
  JCJC Staff and Adjunct Trainers  
  9/29 - 10/3/2014

- **The Supervision of the Cyber Sex Offender and Field Search Certification**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Nicholas Honyara and Rick Parsons  
  10/9-10/2014

- **Loss, Grief, Dying, Death and Childhood/Adolescence**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Bruce Schaffer  
  10/9-10/2014

- **Let’s Talk About Trauma! Or: “Fight The Fire Not The Smoke!”**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Harry Nelson, MA and Audrey Smith, MA  
  10/14-15/2014

- **Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Disorders, Violence and Treatment “Making Sense of It All”**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Dr. Paul Martin, D.O.  
  10/16-17/2014

- **Core Competencies for Supervisors**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Jay Leamy and Nicole Mattern  
  10/22-23/2014

- **Motivational Interviewing 101**  
  Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, Mechanicsburg  
  Barbara Ulmer  
  11/12-13/2014

- **JJSES - Carey Guides - Train The Trainers**  
  Days Inn State College, State College  
  Madeline Carter  
  12/11-12/2014

Please remember, all the details on these and other sponsored workshops may be reviewed at any time by visiting [www.jjcjcems.state.pa.us](http://www.jjcjcems.state.pa.us) for regular updates to the schedule.

Hosting a training you would like to see listed here? E-mail us the details and we’ll list it in our next issue.