

PENNSYLVANIA

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
Tom Wolf, Governor



Juvenile Justice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE COURT JUDGES' COMMISSION

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2015 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice

The 2015 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice, sponsored by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and the Juvenile Court Section of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges, was held November 4-6, 2015 at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers. This year, more than 850 individuals registered for the conference. The theme for this year's plenary sessions was "Celebrating 20 Years of Balanced and Restorative Justice in Pennsylvania".

Juvenile Recidivism: What Judges and Masters Need to Know About Youthful Re-Offending in Pennsylvania

On Wednesday, November 4, 2015, approximately fifty judges and hearing officers from across the Commonwealth participated in the Judges and Masters Training at the 2015 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice. This training, titled: "Juvenile Recidivism: What Judges and Masters Need to Know About Youthful Re-Offending in Pennsylvania" was conducted by Justine Fowler, Program Analyst with the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC), and Dr. Ed Mulvey and Carol Schubert, researchers from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.



Justine Fowler began the training by reviewing recidivism outcome data for juveniles with cases closed between 2007 and 2011. She discussed a history of the recidivism project in Pennsylvania, including its relationship to the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES), as well as general recidivism findings and outcomes by demographic variables, offense-specific and disposition variables, and out-of-home service variables. This portion of the training concluded with a series of conversations on serious, violent, chronic child offenders, as well as race and the juvenile justice system.

Following a short break, Dr. Ed Mulvey and Carol Schubert presented. They shared with the participants the results of a collaborative research effort between the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and the JCJC to further

INSIDE:

[Nicole Mattern Joins JCJC Staff](#)

[2015 Award Winners](#)

[Research In Brief: Proper Dosage Decreases Recidivism](#)

[National Juvenile Justice Announcements](#)

[Family Group Decision Making Statewide Conference Save the Date](#)

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explore Pennsylvania's juvenile justice recidivism data. Their work aimed to put "meaning" behind the recidivism figures calculated by JCJC by determining if the profile of youth coming into the juvenile justice system changed between 2007 and 2011, and if so, did those changes produce shifts in expected recidivism rates. More specifically, they sought to determine if the juvenile justice system serviced more "serious" types of offenders, given the diversionary efforts to remove low risk youth from the system, and if so, should Pennsylvania have expected to see higher recidivism rates as a result.

Dr. Mulvey and Carol Schubert shared with the participants the "expected" statewide recidivism rates for 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, given the profiles of youth who had actually been under juvenile court supervision, and they then compared those figures to the actual "observed" recidivism rates. Of note, the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system performed better in the year 2011 than expected given the profile of juveniles serviced. This is especially significant given that JJSES was first starting to take hold in the state in that year.

Following this, Dr. Mulvey and Carol Schubert shared the results of analysis they did concerning youth in placement, including length of stay, in the years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011. Finally, they concluded with a discussion on the utility of the YLS in Pennsylvania. The researchers concluded that the YLS, thus far, has been able to effectively predict juveniles' likely risk of re-offense, given juveniles who were assessed in 2010 and 2011. To view the full report of findings from Dr. Mulvey and Carol Schubert's work with JCJC, please [click here](#).

Following the training, a question and answer session occurred. Judges and masters had the opportunity to ask questions about the presentation and data and to make recommendations for further analysis that they would find valuable.

Professional Caucuses

On November 4, 2015, participants of the 2015 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice had an opportunity to join with colleagues from their area of specialty within Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. A summary of the professional caucus discussion follows.

Chief and Deputy Chief Juvenile Probation Officers discussed a variety of topics during their session. Caucus facilitator Beth Fritz, from Lehigh County, began the session by sharing updates on plans to develop a variety of training videos, as well as the introduction of best practice documents to be developed under the direction of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) for distribution to County Administrative Judges and Chief Juvenile Probation Officers. The dialogue during the caucus began with the group discussing their current efforts and needs around the implementation of the case plan. There appeared to be consensus among the group that the current focus on developing the skills probation officers need to develop effective case plans has resulted in progress in this area. Still, the group noted that much work needs to be done to properly fit case planning into the larger context of risk reduction efforts. The discussion of the group quickly broadened to include other elements of the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES), including quality assurance activities, responsibility issues, stakeholder engagement (especially with respect to District Attorneys), structured probation appointments and support for middle management. Additional topics discussed with the chiefs and deputy chiefs included the utilization of JCJC Juvenile Probation Services Grant funds, challenges with CPCMS and PACFile, increasing our focus on the identification and treatment of trauma, training needs, and the challenges of the current State budget impasse.

The **Juvenile Probation Officer Supervisor** session began with participants individually introducing themselves and their respective county. The plan was to allow the participants to lead the discussion areas which they felt were currently relevant. The following topics were discussed during the session.

A county using a training program created specifically for juvenile probation supervisors, explained how the curriculum is effective with incorporating the goals of the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy while encouraging participation and collaboration of those participating. Additionally, it was indicated that the curriculum encourages the use of personal development plans for line staff. Attendees discussed ways counties could work together to provide these types of trainings.

Attendees then discussed the need for standardized firearm safety training throughout the state while also agreeing that attention should be given to the use of verbal de-escalation over the use of force in a potential

training. The need for additional trainings around these topics was also discussed.

Participants also discussed concerns regarding the protection of juvenile probation officers in regards to mandated reporting to the Department of Human Services for possible injuries sustained to a juvenile during the apprehension process during case supervision.

The Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) was the topic of additional discussion. Included was discussion regarding JJSES practices and the practice of law enforcement, and finding the right balance between effective supervision practices and community protection; whether CJJT&R training programs are structured to follow the design of the JJSES; policy development around the use of Cognitive Behavioral interventions and other supervision supports; and, what, if any, types of communication are taking place between colleges and universities regarding the JJSES.

The session ended following a discussion on the information technology utilized within the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system. Comments of redundancy were prevalent. Many questions were asked about the data sharing process currently under way between the Administrative Offices of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) and the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC). It was explained that the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers' website <http://www.pachief-probationofficers.org/> has a CPCMS Q&A link that allows for users to ask questions regarding CPCMS data collection efforts. A conversation was held regarding the use of digital dashboards, released by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission's Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R). Comments included the positive attributes of the visual display of real time data as well as explaining how the use of the dashboard is an effective way to begin to analyze quality assurance of data related to the everyday operation of juvenile probation departments.

The **Juvenile Probation Officer** caucus opened with participants introducing themselves and mentioning something their department has started since last year's conference. Common themes were: Case plan development and training; MI (identifying new coaches, enhancing training); training on new curricula (NCTI, Carey guides/BITS, etc.); and adding YLS Master Trainers and fine-tuning YLS policies.

After introductions, a discussion regarding YLS policies and procedures took place. Questions regarding when to conduct the initial YLS assessment and how to enhance

quality assurance (accuracy of initial assessment and inter-rater reliability) were discussed.

Some individuals expressed a concern about the challenge of capturing the most accurate score/risk level at intake, when the probation officer is still working on gaining a comprehensive picture of the juvenile (and the family). This led to a discussion regarding various county policies. Most of the counties represented in the caucus complete the initial YLS pre-adjudication, while only 1 or 2 complete it between adjudication and disposition. One county explained they only do the YLS after the adjudication hearing. Disposition hearings are always held as a separate hearing in that county, and the probation officer collects all information and completes the initial YLS before disposition.

The importance of how you conduct an interview was also mentioned. Having a good strategy and proper interviewing skills to glean relevant and important information, rather than just going through 14 pages of straight questioning, will enhance the officer's ability to get a more accurate score/risk level. Additionally, officers explained that they handle inter-rater reliability by requiring supervisor approval to change the score, they conduct bi-monthly boosters, and when necessary individual boosters with a YLS Master Trainer.

Following the YLS discussion, the balance between having probation officers facilitating programs/groups and "outsourcing" to treatment providers was raised. One outlined concern was that kids may have a better working relationship with the JPO, but the kids may be more open and honest with a provider. Also, it takes a lot more time now for JPOs – all of the programming sounds great, but the time toll is significant. However, the flipside mentioned is that not all providers are using MI and at times that can undermine service delivery. The group expressed the need to identify the middle ground and happy medium between outsourcing everything and doing everything.

Lastly, the group expressed a desire to see more training and focus on probation officer safety. As a system we have focused so heavily on programming for juveniles, and it seems that the safety of the officers has taken a lower priority. We have focused on being proactive with the juveniles with whom we work, but end up being reactionary with our officers. The possibility of outlining minimum safety training standards was posed.

Once again, the **Victim Service Providers** caucus had a rich and engaging discussion. This year's caucus was facilitated by Kathleen McGrath, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for Franklin County Juvenile Probation

and Teresa Wilcox, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for McKean County and Chair of the Victims' Services Committee of the Chief's Council.

At the top of the list of concerns expressed by those in attendance was the impact of the budget impasse on the victims' services programs across the Commonwealth. Most Victims of Juvenile Offenders (VOJO) advocates have been unable to travel due to the lack of funds and were therefore unable to attend the conference. Participants reported that a number of advocates have been temporarily laid off until there is resolution to the state budget.

Subsequently, the role of the juvenile probation officers and their responsibilities to crime victims, in the event VOJO services are not available, was and continues to be of concern. Juvenile probation officers must be prepared to provide crime victims with these rights and assist victims by providing, at a minimum, notifications, information, accompaniment and have the ability to discuss with these victims the harm they have experienced due to the youth's delinquent activity. Participants provided several examples of how their jurisdictions are providing for the cross training of probation officers and advocates and suggested that a statewide strategy for cross training be developed.

A number of additional topics of concern were discussed, including:

- A rise in referrals for sexting and cyberbullying cases and the need for communication and collaboration between the juvenile courts and the victim advocates;
- The needs of juvenile offenders who themselves have experienced victimization, the ensuing trauma they experience, and specific interventions that address these needs of the youth served by the juvenile justice practitioners;
- A means to enhance the process of assigning appropriate and meaningful community service for youth. One participant relayed that too often community service is ordered by the court, yet there are numerous ways of offsetting the actual hours the youth work in the community, subsequently "misleading" the victim and;
- Occasional slow processing of delinquency cases through the courts.

Finally, it was noted that VOJO advocates are interested in training and networking specific topics such as; the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy, evidence-based probation practices, a thorough explanation of the Youth Level of Service assessment and other

relevant practices that impact crime victims' involved in the juvenile justice system. Victim advocates must have the most recent knowledge of juvenile justice so they in turn can assist crime victims to understand certain decisions made by the Court. An example is the research on low risk youth and the need to divert them from further penetration in the juvenile justice system.

At the caucus for **Service Providers**, Matt Jones, Bureau Director, Bureau of Human Services Licensing (BHSL), was invited to speak to over 50 service provider representatives regarding matters of mutual interest, concerns and responsibilities. During this session, Mr. Jones explained the background of the Bureau and described how it was initially created as a response to criticism regarding the regulation of the personal care home industry. He followed by stating in 2012, based largely on the success in personal care home licensing, the Bureau was asked to restructure as a consolidated licensing office with responsibility for nine chapters of licensing regulations with the goal of establishing a highly effective, robust licensing program, with consistency across the state, from rep to rep, and chapter to chapter. Mr. Jones then provided detailed information regarding the structure, philosophy, initial and ongoing training, procedures, scope of authority, and coordination of investigations by the Bureau. During and following this presentation, participants were provided the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments regarding the Bureau and the impact it has had on service providers.

A detailed summary of the information collected in all caucuses will be reviewed by JCJC staff and the Executive Committee of the PA Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers. The effort of the various caucus facilitators was instrumental in the success of each forum, and gratitude is extended to Bernadette Bianchi, Samuel Miller, Jon Frank, Angela Work, Kathleen McGrath and Teresa Wilcox for their work, and to the activity recorders Susan Blackburn, Leo Lutz, Kelly Waltman-Spreha, Timothy Wright and Robert Tomassini. It is anticipated that the caucuses will again be part of the next Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice.

Juvenile Defender Training

Over fifty juvenile defenders from across Pennsylvania attended the 2015 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice, and participated in a separate training track developed exclusively for them on Wednesday, November 4th. Presentations for juvenile defenders included: The Ethical Obligation to Advise your Client about the Collateral Consequences of a Ju-

venile Disposition, 4th Amendment Search and Seizure, Case Law Update and Act 21. A “Judges Roundtable” was also held on Thursday, November 5th, at which time juvenile court judges joined the defenders for lunch and discussion.

Youth Awards Program

The 2015 Youth Awards Program was held on Wednesday evening, November 4th, and attended by nearly 500 people. Young people were recognized for being selected as winners in Creative Expression and Outstanding Achievement award categories. Additionally, the Juvenile Court Section of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges presented two deserving youth with James E. Anderson Juvenile Justice Youth Scholarship Awards, each in the amount of \$1,500.

This year’s Youth Awards Speaker was Joe Webb, the Director of Student Support Services at Penn State – Berks Campus. Mr. Webb shared a message of inspiration and encouragement for youth to find their passion, to develop and execute a personal plan, and make decisions that will enhance and enrich their lives. Joe shared his experiences as a young person, experiencing frequent foster home moves and often walking on the wrong side of the street in search of friendship and attention. Joe spoke about the importance of conflict resolution, leadership, diversity, education, communication, values, and integrity, and encouraged all youths to take advantage of every opportunity presented to them. He credited a mentor for believing in him, inspiring him, and helping him take steps toward higher education and a football scholarship.

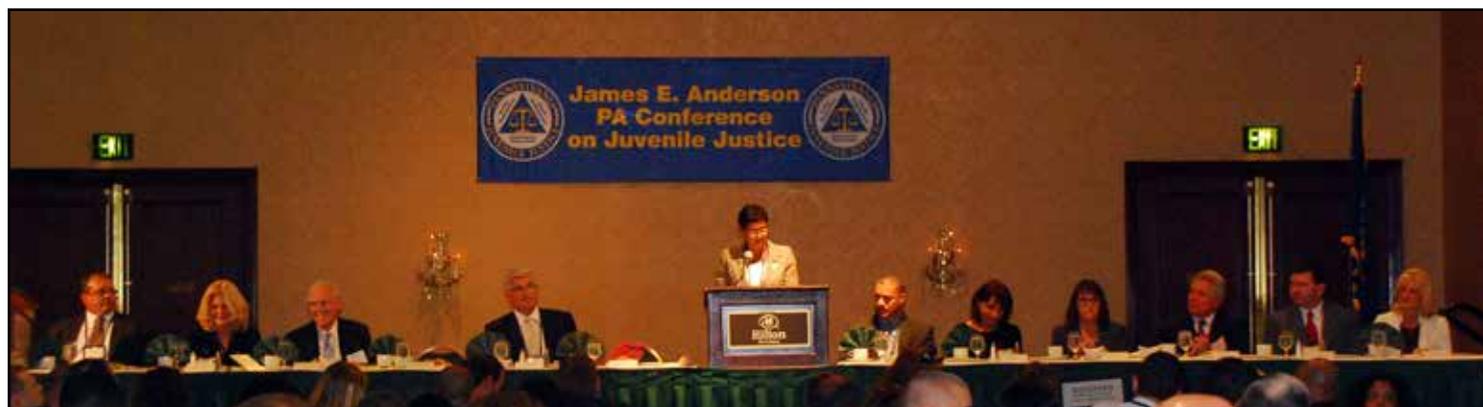
Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Max Baer closed the evening with congratulatory remarks to the award winners and their families, while also providing words of encouragement and appreciation to all involved with Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system.

Conference Welcome and Morning Plenary

On Thursday morning, November 5th, Judge Kim Clark, Chairman of the Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission, gave the “Conference Welcome”, and noted that with its combination of quality training, awards programs, and the opportunity to exchange information and ideas about the critical issues facing our system, this annual gathering is truly unique, and is a reflection of the progressive nature of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system.

The Keynote Presentation, “[Bolstering Balanced and Restorative Justice: Celebrating Our History, Continuing Our Growth](#)”, was provided by Mr. Mark Carey. Twenty years ago, in 1995, newly elected Governor Tom Ridge called Pennsylvania’s General Assembly into a Special Session on Crime. By the end of the Special Session, 37 separated Bills were signed into law – 15 of which affected the juvenile justice system. Arguably, the most significant of the new laws was Act 33 of Special Session No. 1 of 1995, which included the redefinition of the very mission of our juvenile justice system, to require “balanced attention to the protection of the community, the imposition of accountability for offenses committed, and the development of competencies to enable children to become responsible and productive members of the community,” which became known as Balanced and Restorative Justice.

After Act 33 was signed into law, Pennsylvania called upon the most knowledgeable experts in the country to assist us with implementing our new mission, including individuals such as Dennis Maloney, Gordon Basemore, and Mark Carey. In Mr. Carey’s presentation, he highlighted how Balanced and Restorative Justice and the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy have combined to result in the most significant reform in the history of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system, by



celebrating the accomplishments of Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice by recognizing the results of activities over the past twenty years; examining how the BARJ Mission is being advanced through the JJSES; and, taking a glimpse into the future by examining what the next three years may entail. Mr. Carey's presentation is available at www.jcjc.pa.gov.

Workshops

Almost 600 people registered to attend fifteen different workshops on Thursday, November 6th. In an effort to allow participants to maximize exposure to the selected topics, the morning workshops were repeated in the afternoon session. The workshops included:

- Putting Research Into Practice – JCJC Graduate Education Program Practicum Projects
- Autism Spectrum Disorder: What is it? How Should We Respond?
- NeuroResource Facilitation for Youth with Brain Injury
- Crossover Youth: Partnering for Better Outcomes
- Understanding the Impact of Trauma
- The Protection of Victims of Sexual Violence or Intimidation Act
- Enhancing Services to Victims of Juvenile Offenders
- Youth Level of Service (YLS) Data Analysis: 2010 - 2014
- Enhancing Your Probation Officers' Knowledge About Safety
- Detention Risk Assessment & Graduated Responses
- Developing Motivational Interviewing Skills Across Systems
- SPEP Performance Improvement Plans: Increasing Program Effectiveness
- PACTT Affiliates: Implementing Program Improvements to Enhance Academic and Career Technical Training
- Respecting Differences: The Disproportionate Minority Youth (DMC) Youth/Law Enforcement Curriculum
- The Role of Delinquency Prevention in Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy

Thursday Afternoon Plenary Session

The afternoon plenary session entitled **Balanced and Restorative Justice: The Story Behind the Redefinition of**

Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice Mission, featured many of the individuals who played significant roles in negotiating the language that was ultimately contained in Act 33, as well as others who were involved in early efforts to implement Balanced and Restorative Justice in Pennsylvania, and who continue to do so today.

Commemorating the past 20 years of Balanced and Restorative Justice pointed to several milestones that have clarified our mission, and focused our efforts. After years of steady progress, Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system was uniquely positioned to embrace Evidence-Based Practices, especially after witnessing the successful impact of evidence-based programs within the field of prevention science.

Mark Carey, along with our leadership team, helped to develop a Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES), designed to enhance the capacity of our juvenile justice system, and to achieve its balanced and restorative justice mission by:

- Employing evidenced-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, continuously strive to improve the quality of our decisions, services and programs.

Since that time, juvenile probation departments – small and large, rural and urban, as well as service providers and other key system stakeholders, have been retooling their operations to improve outcomes under the rubric of the JJSES.

There is no doubt that the JJSES has produced a seismic shift in how we conduct business in Pennsylvania. Our sights remain firmly fixed on our goals of balanced and restorative justice, but our path forward has been forever altered by our JJSES.

The JJSES leadership team and Mark Carey developed the monograph *["Advancing Balanced and Restorative Justice through Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy"](#)* that each registered participant received, that highlights the interrelationship between the JJSES and our Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission.

"The JJSES is a means to an end – a means to achieving our statutory mission of Balanced and Restorative Justice," moderator and Executive Director of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, Keith Snyder, stated in his opening remarks. "We have done good work, but we need to challenge ourselves to do more."

Annual Awards Program and Dinner

Thursday's activities concluded with the 35th Annual Awards Program and Dinner. The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers honored both individuals and programs for their outstanding work in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system. (See page 6-7 for this year's award winners)



Resource Day

The 2015 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice concluded with Resource Day on November 6th. Conference participants had the opportunity to learn about new, innovative, and creative approaches to working with juveniles. Representatives from private and public residential programs, informational services, technology services, and other vendors were available to present information and discuss products and services. Attendees of Resource Day, which totaled more than 500 people, were eligible to participate in a raffle sponsored by the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.

Nicole Mattern Joins JCJC Staff

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission is pleased to announce that Nicole Mattern has joined the staff on November 16, 2015 as Director of Administration and Grant Programs. In this role, she will be responsible for the administration of the annual JCJC Probation Services Grant Program and the agency's operating budget, will provide technical assistance and advice to juvenile court judges and chief juvenile probation officers, and will also represent the agency on various committees and activities both local and statewide.

Ms. Mattern has been employed over the past eight years with Dauphin County Probation Services, most recently in the position of Quality Assurance Administrator for both the juvenile and adult probation offices. She is certified to provide training in a variety of key areas including: YLS Master Trainer, Motivational Interviewing Supercoach, Case Plan and 4 Core Competency trainer. Additionally, Ms. Mattern is one of only a few individuals certified as a Level 2 Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) trainer. Her work with the development of quality assurance practices and procedures, in line with the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy implementation, has been groundbreaking. In 2009, Ms. Mattern received the Dauphin County Probation Officer of the Year Award.

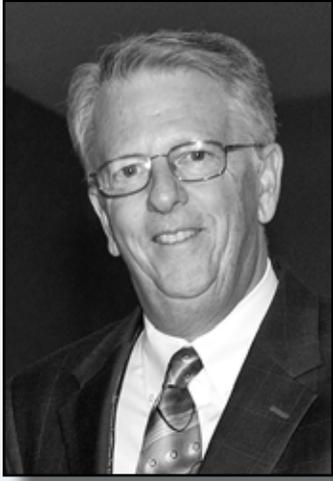
Ms. Mattern has provided leadership to Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system on a statewide basis. She has served on the Executive Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers and most recently chaired the Research Committee in addition to serving on a variety of other statewide committees and workgroups.

Ms. Mattern holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Shippensburg University, where she received the JCJC's Juvenile Justice Scholarship Undergraduate Award in 2006. She also holds a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Millersville University. She and her husband, Dave, have been married for the past eight years and have two children, Jackson (three) and Brooklynne (nine months). She can be reached at 717-705-6596 or at jnmattern@pa.gov.



The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission congratulates all of the

2015 Award Winners



JUDGE FRED P. ANTHONY AWARD
Hon. Arthur E. Grim

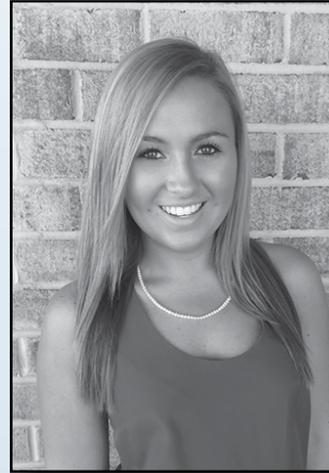


OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD
Hon. Dwayne D. Woodruff



OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD
Robert G. Schwartz

DR. ANTHONY F. CEDDIA
AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING
SCHOLARSHIP IN
JUVENILE JUSTICE
Carrie Orndorff
Dauphin County



DR. THOMAS L. AUSTIN
UNDERGRADUATE
SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
Michaella I. Mowers
Shippensburg University



COMMUNITY- BASED PROGRAM OF THE YEAR
Auberle Employment Institute
John P. Lydon, Chief Executive Officer

COURT OPERATED PROGRAM OF THE YEAR
Northumberland County Juvenile Court PACTT Program
Noel Jones, Day Treatment Probation Officer



Congratulations!

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission congratulates all of the

2015 Award Winners



VICTIM ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR
Andrea R. Hibbs
Fayette County



RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM OF THE YEAR
Adelphoi Village
Middle Creek Secure Sexual Offender Program
Jennifer Anderson



JUVENILE COURT
SUPPORT SERVICE AWARD
Rebecca L. Martin
Fayette County

MERITORIOUS
SERVICE AWARD
Otis DiCerbo
Westmoreland County



JUVENILE PROBATION
OFFICER OF THE YEAR
Angela T. Work
McKean County



JUVENILE PROBATION SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR
Marvin L. Randall
Allegheny
County



CHIEF JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR
David H. Mueller
Lancaster County



Congratulations!

RESEARCH IN BRIEF

Part 21 in a series

Source Document: Sperber, K., Latessa, E., et al. (2013). "Establishing a Risk-Dosage Research Agenda: Implications for Policy and Practice." *Justice Research and Policy* 15(1): 123-141

The body of scientific knowledge related to the field of juvenile justice is growing at an exponential rate. With this knowledge, new processes leading to improved outcomes are routinely generated. Clearly, the need to have access to, and understand scientific information is critical. Unfortunately, practitioners often do not have the time to sort through the literature. With this issue in mind, in 2006, *the Colorado Division of Probation Services* began to publish **Research in Briefs (RIB's)**. These documents are intended to summarize potentially helpful research related to effective practices, as well as provide ideas for practical applications of the information. More information on **RIB's** can be found here: http://www.courts.state.co.us/userfiles/file/Administration/Probation/ResearchInBriefs/RIB_Summary1213.pdf

Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) rests on two interlinked foundations: the best empirical research available in the field of juvenile justice and a set of core beliefs about how to integrate this research into practice. With this in mind, as an ongoing feature of *Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice*, "**Research In Brief (RIBs)**" will provide summaries of published research related to various aspects of the JJSES. The **RIBs** will convey how various scientific studies support the JJSES Statement of Purpose.

Proper Dosage Decreases Recidivism

Reprinted with Permission from: Colorado Division of Probation Services. (February, 2014).

Establishing a Risk-Dosage Research Agenda.

Retrieved from: https://www.courts.state.co.us/userfiles/file/Court_Probation/01st_Judicial_District/RIB_DosageFeb14.pdf

The current article seeks to consolidate and summarize research on the amount of treatment required to lower recidivism. Researchers are currently studying the dosage of treatment and intervention effects on recidivism. Using a series of studies, researchers discovered a correlation between increased dosage for high risk offenders and decreased recidivism. One study discovered a 24 percentage point drop in high risk offenders when they received over 200 hours of treatment. Researchers caution against a one size fits all dosage model. Instead professionals should use dosage as a guide for decision making and continually assess offenders' progress in treatment.

The risk principle is one of the most studied topics in corrections. The risk level of individuals should determine the level and intensity of interventions. Utilizing results from five studies, researchers summarized the results of the studies for policy makers and practitioners.

All five studies confirmed that increased dosages of treatment to higher risk individuals lowered recidivism rates. One meta-analysis found that providing multiple sessions per week for moderate and high risk offenders results in greater successful effect sizes. Another study of 200 serious juvenile programs found that the threshold to decrease recidivism was programs at least six months in length that contained approximately 100 hours of programming.

Two of the studies defined dosage in the number of treatment hours. A study on an adult prison population determined that 100 hours of treatment was required for offenders with moderate risk and 200 hours was needed for individuals that were high risk. The final study, conducted in 2013, consisted of 689 community based correction facility offenders. Individuals were classified according to an actuarial risk assessment tool. High risk offenders placed in high dosage (200 hours or more) services had a 24 percentage point reduction in recidivism.

Finally researchers warned against adhering to set dosage requirements. They cautioned that there are many variables such as fidelity of treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy techniques utilized by officers, and offender characteristics that should be accounted for to determine appropriate treatment levels.

Practical Applications

- ✓ Adhere to scoring guidelines of actuarial risk assessment tools to determine the risk of youth and supervise accordingly.
- ✓ Review reassessments for decreasing criminogenic needs and risk before considering modifying dosage.
- ✓ Consider the suggested guideline of 100 hours of treatment for moderate risk youth and 200 or more hours of treatment for high risk youth.
- ✓ Continually engage youth in conversations about treatment. From such conversations dosage can be modified based on progress of the youth.
- ✓ Avoid a one size fits all approach to treatment. Instead focus on the risks, needs, and responsivity of the youth. Individuals may respond to treatment differently.
- ✓ Ask treatment providers questions related to the criminogenic needs and responsivity factors of the youth in programs.

- ✓ Court report writers may consider recommending treatment according to suggested dosages for moderate and high risk youth.
- ✓ Acquire training and utilize CBT and Motivational Interviewing.

Limitations of Information

The summary does not account for any of the specific variables contained within the summarized studies. Studies consisted of behavioral health programs, prison programs, and community correction programs. It is unclear how closely these populations compare with the Colorado probation population. The summary does not explain how each study defined recidivism.

***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.*

JJSES Statement of Purpose

We dedicate ourselves to working 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 they would like to have addressed. Ideas and suggestions may be submitted to: Leo J. Lutz at LeLutz@pa.gov.



National Juvenile Justice Announcements

The following announcements are reprinted from JUVJUST, an OJJDP news service:

Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice Releases 2015 Report

The [Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice](#) (FACJJ) has issued its [2015 Report](#).

This report makes recommendations to the President, Congress, and OJJDP on three areas of major concern to the juvenile justice community:

Issues related to the confidentiality, sealing, and expungement of juvenile records.

Priorities for research and education supported by OJJDP.

Reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

FACJJ is a consultative body established by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 and is supported by OJJDP.

Resources:

Learn more about the [Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act](#).



National Resource Center on School-Justice Partnership Launched

The [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#), in

partnership with OJJDP, has launched the [National Resource Center on School-Justice Partnerships](#). This website serves as a “one-stop-shop” of resources, training, and technical assistance to help school-justice partnerships implement positive school discipline reforms and reduce the school-to-juvenile justice pathway. The resource center will provide information on evidence-based practices, alternatives to arrest and formal court processing, and applications of current research.

Resources:

Read [here](#) for guidance and resources to improve school discipline practices and school climate.



Law Enforcement Training Video on Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Released

The [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#) (IACP) and the [Bureau of Justice Assistance](#) (BJA) have released a [new training video](#) providing an introduction to law enforcement agencies on safeguarding children of arrested parents. The video outlines strategies to help law enforcement agencies implement a trauma-informed approach to safeguard children before, during, and after the arrest of a parent. The video aligns with the IACP/BJA [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Model Policy](#), which identifies policies and procedures that law enforcement can develop to minimize trauma to children during a parental arrest.

Resources:

Access resources on safeguarding children of arrested parents from [BJA](#) and [IACP](#).

Learn more about the [Defending Childhood initiative](#).

Access OJJDP [publications](#) on children’s exposure to violence.

Registration Open for National Conference on Juvenile Justice

On March 20–23, 2016, the [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges](#) will hold its

National Conference on Juvenile Justice in Las Vegas, NV.

This conference is open to professionals interested in improving the juvenile justice system. Topics will include alternatives to detention, trauma-informed justice, cross-over youth, dating violence, solitary confinement, recidivism, disproportionate minority contact, LGBTQ issues, sex trafficking of minors, drug courts, and more.

Resources:

Resources:

[Register](#) online to attend the conference.

[Learn more](#) about tuition scholarships to be awarded to NCJFCJ members for participation in conference.



National Institute of Justice Releases Findings of Defending Childhood Evaluation

The [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ) has released “[An Outcome Evaluation of the Defending Childhood Demonstration Program.](#)”



This report highlights process evaluation findings from six of the eight sites participating in the Defending Childhood Demonstration Program, a national initiative of the Department of Justice and OJJDP to address children’s exposure to violence. The report presents findings from surveys and data that researchers collected regarding the impact of training and community awareness campaigns on children’s exposure to violence within each site.

Resources:

Learn more about the [Defending Childhood initiative](#).

Access OJJDP [publications](#) on children’s exposure to violence.

OJJDP Announces Family Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Funding Opportunity

OJJDP has announced the following fiscal year 2016 funding opportunity:

[Family Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program.](#)

This program will support training and technical assistance to help states, state courts, local courts, units of local government, and tribal governments develop, maintain, and enhance drug courts for substance-abusing adults who are involved with the family court due to child abuse and/or neglect issues. Applications are due by January 19, 2016.

Resources:

Visit [OJJDP’s funding](#) page for more information about this funding opportunity.



A large graphic with a background of diverse people's faces. The text "SAVE THE DATE" is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a blue outline at the top. Below it, the text "Pennsylvania Family Group Decision Making Statewide Conference" is written in blue. The dates "April 26-27, 2016" are written in large, bold, blue letters. The location "Hershey Lodge, Hershey PA" is written in blue. At the bottom, there is a section titled "Sponsored by:" with logos and names for the FGDM State Leadership Team, Pennsylvania State Roundtable, Office of Children & Families in the Courts, Juvenile Court Judges Commission, Office of Children, Youth and Families, and Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center.

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 e-mail to rtomassini@pa.gov.

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