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Ending Detention of Non-Delinquent Youth in Rural Communities

STTAC

OJJDP State Training and
Technical Assistance Center

Presenters

The Honorable George Timberlake (Ret.),
Illinois 2nd Judicial Circuit

The Honorable Lisa M. Mantz, Associate
Judge, Newton County Juvenile Court,
Georgia

Rural Communities

Rural communities make up 72 percent of the nation's land area.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 46.2 million people – roughly 15% of the U.S. population – reside in rural counties.



Special Challenges

Rural communities face many unique challenges:

- Transportation
- Limited program availability



Tackling Truancy

Truancy was a significant problem in Illinois' 2nd Judicial Circuit:

- Often sign of a larger underlying issue
- Adequately addressing the issue requires multi-pronged approach



Coming Together

Step #1: Coming together with a unified solution

- Rural jurisdictions can span across large areas and numerous counties
- School policies, meanwhile, may vary by county
- A unified set of rules assists in solving the problem

Early Interventions

Step #2: Early intervention

- School districts often had limited or no response when students initially started accumulating absences and as a result many children ended up in court
- A unified school policy was established throughout the 2nd Judicial Circuit which required incremental responses to students' absences
- Under the new system, letters were sent home, parents were called and meetings were held before court intervention became possible.

Engaging the Community

Step #3: Engaging the community

- Communities established Truancy Review Boards
- Students meet with these boards prior to any court case commencing in the matter
- The boards are comprised of an array of local officials, including individuals from the sheriff's department and health department.

Getting Families Involved

Step #4: Ensure family involvement

- Early interventions are focused on ensuring parents know about the problem as soon as possible
- Parents are served with notice of Truancy Review Board hearings
- Though no sanctions result if parents are not present at the hearing, notice reinforces the importance the school places on school attendance.

Using Technology

- In some communities limited programs are available to help address young people's needs.
- Programs might be far from a young person's home, or their community might lack the population needed to sustain a program.
- Use of technologies such as video conferencing and the internet can help communities overcome this.





MacArthur Foundation and Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps Models for Change:
Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice Initiative **Dually Involved – Crossover Youth: Implementing Reform to Improve Outcomes** and Georgia' Local Interagency Planning Team Meeting

Agency Heads

- Commitment to the process
- Value of the work
- Value of working collaboratively to serve families and youth
- Collective Outcomes
- Healthy and productive youth and families:
Our common denominator
- Serving the collective community as well as our own agencies

Crossover Youth / Dually Involved

Key Definitions

- **Crossover Youth** = Youth who have experienced maltreatment and engaged in delinquency
- **Dually-Involved Youth** = A subgroup of crossover youth who are simultaneously receiving services, at any level, from both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
- **Dually-Adjudicated Youth** = A subgroup of dually involved youth, encompassing only those youth who are concurrently adjudicated by both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems*



Retrieved from the Crossover Youth Practice Model Guide, available at: <http://cjjr.georgetown.edu/pdfs/cypm/cypm.pdf>

Data Review Nov. 2012 - Mar. 2013

- Youth with a Juvenile Court referral, including delinquent & status offenses, but not traffic and who have/had an open DFCS case within 5 years of Court referral, including cases that were unsubstantiated *Note: Only have access to DFCS data back to June, 2008*
- 114 youth fell into our identified population
 - 56% of all court referrals had DFCS involvement or history
 - Majority are African American
 - 45% are Female/55% Male
 - Majority are 13 to 15 years of age; average age is 14.3
 - Severity of Offense: 39% Status, 34% Misdemeanor , 23% Felony
- The most common status offense charges are truancy and ungovernable
- The average length of DFCS involvement is 13 months

LIPT as a Targeted Intervention

- The LIPT meeting is a solution-focused targeted intervention to ensure that the youth receives individualized, family-driven, strength-based, culturally competent collaborative community-based care, resources and supports at the earliest possible opportunity.
- ***This targeted intervention is designed to reduce out-of-home placements and further involvement in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.***

Who Participates

- Family members or foster parents
- Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
- Newton County Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS)
- Juvenile Court
- Newton County Board of Education (BOE)
- Dept. of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)
- Local behavioral health providers
- Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF)
- Attorney for Child
- Plan Manager for Child
- Health Department
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Others

Why has the LIPT Meeting Been Chosen for This Initiative?

Guiding principles for the **coordinated system of care**:

- Services are child and family-centered and give priority to keeping children with their families.
- Families are involved in all aspects of planning and delivery of services; however, no family is required to accept services to any family member.
- Services are community-based, with decision-making responsibility and management at a community level.
- Services are comprehensive, addressing the child's physical, educational, social and emotional needs.
- Agency resources and services are shared and coordinated with written interagency agreements detailing linkage.

Guiding Principles for Coordinated System of Care

- Services are provided in the least restrictive setting consistent with effective services and as close to the child's home as appropriate.
- Services address the unique needs and potential of each child and shall be sufficiently flexible to meet the individual needs of the child and family.
- Services promote early identification and intervention.
- Services are culturally and ethnically sensitive.
- All legal rights of these children are protected.
- The parent or guardian is involved in the development of the individualized plan and the delivery of services as defined by the individualized plan.

How Has this Work Refined our Practice?

- Standard note taking form with focus on outcome measures, strengths, risks and treatment needs
- Specific data collection focused on intended community and youth outcomes.
- Mapping of juvenile court process for full understanding of the court process by child serving partners.
- Development of assessment and resource matrices to determine best practices for youth.
- Development of a statewide data and information sharing agreement.
- Starting point for development and refinement of appropriate interventions and diversion for the newly created CHINS population in Georgia Juvenile Code

Questions?



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