



# Safeguarding the Future: Strategic Investments to Secure the Safety of America's Youth, Families and Communities

## Defining the Issue

The federal government plays a limited yet essential role in preventing juvenile delinquency and improving the effectiveness of juvenile justice systems at the state, local and tribal levels nationwide. When coupled with state, local and private dollars, modest federal investments seed and support the development, implementation, and sustainability of optimal juvenile justice and delinquency prevention systems and practices in all 56 U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia, as well as in local jurisdictions.

## What's at Stake

Since FY 2002, federal investments in programs that prevent and reduce delinquency have decreased by 50%. Over that same period, federal spending on policing, prosecution and incarceration has increased by more than 60%. These opposing trends are not only bad budgeting: they place the future of America's youth, families and communities at risk. On average, it costs \$241 a day – around \$88,000 a year – to incarcerate a youth;<sup>1</sup> the return on this investment is an average recidivism rate of 55%.<sup>2</sup> Conversely, evidence-based alternatives to incarceration for court-involved youth cost as little as \$11 a day and reduce recidivism by an average of 22% when compared to incarceration.<sup>3</sup>

The FY 2011 budget bill cut federal juvenile justice programs by an additional 17%; yet, in real terms more than half of the states are suffering reductions as high as 32%. Worse, cuts come at a time when state and local jurisdictions cannot make up the difference. When surveyed by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ), 89% of 35 states reported that due to federal cuts, fewer youth and families will have access to critical services designed to keep youth from offending, re-offending and penetrating deeper into America's juvenile and criminal justice systems.

*"In Rhode Island, our many services, programs, and projects are tightly interwoven collaborations currently operating on the slimmest of margins. The gains made over the past 15 years in many areas of juvenile justice will reverse, and quickly I'm afraid if [federal funds] continue to decline." - Elizabeth Gilheeny, Juvenile Justice Specialist, Rhode Island*

## The Path to Public Safety and Youth and Family Success

To achieve a future where young people lead safe and productive lives, it is critical that we invest in it – even in times of belt-tightening. For every \$1 invested in prevention and family and community based interventions, taxpayers save up to \$8 in immediate and future juvenile and criminal justice costs. Therefore, the best federal role and wisest use of taxpayer resources is to invest in those things that prevent delinquency and effectively deal with youth in age- and developmentally-appropriate ways if and when they engage in unlawful conduct.

The Title II State Formula Grants, Title V Local Delinquency Prevention and Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Programs are Congress' opportunities to partner with the states to chart a course for the safety and success of our nation's youth, families and communities. States are proving in small and big ways that these programs work to reduce juvenile offending, help youth transition safely to adulthood and save taxpayers money. Restoring and strengthening our investments in these programs will help secure America's future.

<sup>1</sup> Justice Policy Institute. (May 2009). *The Costs of Confinement: Why Good Juvenile Justice Policies Make Good Fiscal Sense*.

<sup>2</sup> Snyder, Howard N. and Melissa Sickmund. 2006. *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

<sup>3</sup> Supra note 1.

# The Title II State Formula Grants Program

Authorized by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA), Title II supports innovative state efforts to adhere to standards that reduce the risk of harm to court-involved youth, ensure fair treatment of minority youth and improve the way systems address delinquent behavior.

## Current Appropriation:

\$62.3 million, down 17% since FY 2010 and 30% since FY 2002

## Investment Needed to Secure Our Future:

At least \$80 million for the 56 U.S. states and territories

**Hawaii** – to decrease the unnecessary and costly use of locked detention, partnered with the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. As a result, they have reduced annual admissions to secure detention by 18.6%, decreased admissions to secure detention for youth of color by 10%, and decreased commitments to Hawaii’s youth prison by 11% from 2009 to 2010.

**Maryland** – to decrease the use of locked detention, and reduce the number of minority youth who are locked up, funded two Evening Reporting Centers (ERCs) in Baltimore City and Prince George’s County, at a costs-savings of \$360 a day. Of the 381 youth served in FY 2010, only 10% were re-referred to court.

**Michigan** – to reduce the number of minority youth who penetrate the juvenile justice system, funded two county-based court diversion programs. Of the 91 youth and families who enrolled in Kent County’s “School-To-Progressions” program, 87% did not re-offend. Of the 302 youth and families who enrolled in Wayne County’s “Correct Course” program, 84% did not have a new conviction within one year following completion.

**Pennsylvania** – to ensure that youth are not unlawfully being held in secure facilities, including adult jails and lockups, utilizes 20% of their Title II funds to support the Police Liaison Project, which funds three part-time Police Liaisons (former police Chiefs) who audit and provide technical assistance

*“Currently, NC is only able to support programs in 3-4 areas of the state due to [reduced] funding allocations. We have seen a drop in service delivery as well as in the amount of youth served. The need for services is not decreasing; however, the amount of resources available for services has taken a tremendous hit. We will undoubtedly begin to see an increase in youth going into the juvenile justice system for services, an adverse outcome our state is trying to avoid.” - Kimberly Williams, Juvenile Justice Specialist, North Carolina*

to the 1,217 police lock-ups across the state; and the Secure Detention Monitor project, which audits and provides technical assistance to Pennsylvania’s 18 juvenile detention centers, 18 youth training schools and 65 court holding facilities.

**Tennessee** – to reduce the number of youth referred to the courts for school-based misconduct and nonviolent offenses, funded the School House Adjustment Program Enterprise (SHAPE), which has reduced the number of youth transferred to juvenile court by 39% in two years.

**Utah** – to provide police with an alternative to detention when they encounter a youth who has committed a minor offense, funds the Uintah Basin Youth Services Center, which also immediately connects youth and families to supportive services. Of the 642 youth served during the grant period, only 3% re-offended, and 84% of youth surveyed showed an increase in positive behavior.

**Washington State** – to reduce the number of status offenders detained in violation of the JJDPA, funds the Spokane DSO Project, which works primarily with truant youth in the West Valley School District. During the first two years, only 9% of youth were detained (compared to 19% in the prior two years). For the Benton-Franklin Counties Truancy Contempt Prevention Project, only 5% of youth were placed in secure detention.

# The Title V Local Delinquency Prevention Program

Authorized by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA), Title V is the original, and still one of the only, federal programs specifically designed to prevent delinquency at the local level. To ensure a solid return on our investment, the Title V program prioritizes the use of evidence-informed approaches, requires coordination with a statewide plan to ensure strategic use of resources and leverages the commitment and resources of state and local jurisdictions by requiring that the state and local applicant provide a 50% match.

## Current Appropriation:

\$54 million, down 17% since FY 2010 and 43% since FY 2002

## Investment Needed to Secure Our Future:

At least \$65 million *with no earmarks or set-asides*

**Iowa** – using Title V funds to support JDAI sites in three local jurisdictions. From 2007 through 2010, these sites have reduced the detention rate for Caucasian youth by 30% and for African American youth by 46% - the most significant and sustained reduction in juvenile minority overrepresentation rates in Iowa in 20 years.

**Kansas** – used its Title V allocation to serve 182 youth through girls' empowerment, teen court and conflict resolution programs. Programs were successfully completed by 82% of youth, with 87% demonstrating short-term positive changes in behavior and 79% demonstrating positive long-term changes in behavior.

**North Dakota** – funded two subgrantees to provide professional assessment, mental health screening, counseling, anger management training and parent support to families of youth suspended or expelled from school: 95% of youth returned to school following the suspension; 80% reported significant improvement in managing anger and behavior; each program helped increase school attendance and success by 93% and 70% respectively; and 97% of youth had no subsequent contact with the juvenile justice system for one year.

**Pennsylvania** – used Title V funds to serve 195 youth through Functional Family Therapy (FFT); 140 youth successfully completed the program, 75%

*Since FY 2004, between 53% and 97% of Title V funds have been carved out for non-JJDPA programs, leaving only \$5 million or less to be allocated among 56 states and territories for delinquency prevention. That means that in real terms, for the FY 2011 cycle each state and territory will only receive \$50,000 – as opposed to more than \$500,000 if there were no carve-outs.*

improved their attendance and 64% improved their academic performance.

**South Carolina** – funded the Dream a Dream program in Conway to target at-risk youth aged 5 to 12 in two neighborhoods. Youth were exposed to a 90-120 minute after-school mentoring program that offers homework assistance, development in social and physical skills and field trips/extracurricular activities. In one year, one neighborhood experienced a 35% decrease in juvenile arrests and service calls; the other experienced a 31% decrease.

**Tennessee** – Title V funds were allocated to two programs serving 59 school-aged youth. Ninety percent of youth in the afterschool program had no school offenses and 97% of children in the kindergarten program were more prepared for school.

**Utah** – created a youth services/receiving center in Tooele County (a growing rural/suburban county with few youth serving organizations). Referrals came from law enforcement (20%), self-referral or walk-in (35%) and counseling (32%). The program provided crisis intervention counseling and on-site teacher and law-enforcement drop-off services for 361 youth, with only 12% offending or re-offending during the grant period.

# The Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program

Authorized by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program (JABG) reduces juvenile offending by providing judges, probation officers, case managers and other juvenile justice professionals a range of graduated sanctions – including restitution, community service, victim-offender mediation and other restorative justice methods – that effectively hold youth accountable for their behavior in age- and developmentally-appropriate ways.

## Current Appropriation:

\$45.7 million, down 17% since FY 2010 and 82% since FY 2002

## Investment Needed to Secure Our Future:

At least \$55 million for the 56 U.S. states and territories

*“Graduated sanctions enable juvenile probation and the courts in New Mexico to decrease the amount of youth in the juvenile justice system. [The] system will be severely taxed by an increase of youth who encounter and penetrate further into the juvenile justice system, due to lack of graduated sanctions tools available if funding is cut.” - Gerri Dupree, Juvenile Justice Specialist, New Mexico*

**California** – funded the Solano Project, which provides graduated sanctions to juvenile offenders as an alternative to incarceration. Youth and their parents/guardians sign contracts agreeing to certain conditions, including school attendance, curfews, restriction of activities, drug testing and counseling. An assigned officer follows up at least once a week. Of the 182 youth served during the grant period, only 14 had a new offense.

**Georgia** – made funds available to the state’s 159 county juvenile courts to fund community-based services provided as alternatives to detention, including community service/restitution, educational assistance, counseling, psychological evaluations, drug screenings and therapeutic treatment. Of the 5,493 youth who benefitted from these services in one year, only 1,167 re-offended – a recidivism rate of only 21%.

**Hawaii** – funded three programs in three counties to divert 2,280 youth charged with status offenses and first time law violations away from locked detention and to the Honolulu Juvenile Justice Center. There, youth received intake services that included follow ups after 30 to 60 days, and were also referred to counseling services.

**Idaho** – used funds to serve 2,662 juveniles on probation (about half of Idaho’s one-day juvenile probationer count). Only 255 of these youth committed a new offense (9.5%).

**Maine** – funded the Diversion to Assets program, which targets youth ages 9 to 17 who have been charged with a nonviolent first offense. Of the 43 youth served in five local jurisdictions over the grant period, not one youth recidivated.

**Michigan** – funded the Keys to Success diversion program which focuses on first-time offenders and their parents. Between April 2009 and March 2011, the program successfully served and diverted 168 offenders from further court involvement, with estimated savings to the court of \$3,931,200.

**New York** – in FY 2009, funded two new school-based arrest diversion projects in Syracuse and Utica, to divert from arrest youth who have committed non-serious, illegal acts at school. During the grant period, 70 youth were successfully served and diverted from a potential arrest.

**Wisconsin** – funded a county to help them pursue evidence-based system reforms. Over the course of the grant period, this county learned how to develop and/or use effective assessment tools, trained staff in motivational interviewing and case planning, implemented aggression replacement training and made many policy and practice changes. As a result, the county has reduced its youth incarceration rate by 85%, significantly reducing costs and reserving its secure detention beds for youth who are a risk to community safety.