Successful Juvenile Justice Diversion: Impact on the Youth's Functioning, Recidivism, and System Costs

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Diversion and Family Based Services Reduce Cost and Entry into Adjudicated Juvenile Justice

Cynthia Smith

Cross System Needs of Youth
• Juvenile Access and Assessment Center (JAC) is the point of access for services for at-risk and adjudicated juveniles in Detroit-Wayne County.
• Correct Course (diversion program) receives prosecutors’ referrals for enrollment as an alternative to prosecution.
• The Juvenile Inventory For Functioning (JIFF) tool provides the basis for:
  o Agreeing to diversion services
  o Determining the need for more critical and intensive services
  o Selecting specific services to meet youth’s & family’s needs
• Youths are then assigned to a Youth Assistance Program (YAP) and other Mental Health Services -- 11 YAPs

What is Correct Course?
• An alternative to adjudication
• For first time offenders, low risk offenders
• Referred youth are rapidly assessed - JIFF
• Completion of the a YAP program involves:
  o Good participation in YAP services
  o No re-offending
  o Pre and Post JIFF assessments completed
  o Negative alcohol and drug testing at exit assessment
• Youths who are “completers” benefit from:
  o JIFF assessment of functioning & needs
  o Timely, appropriate needs-based services
  o No juvenile record
Correct Course Sample for 18 months

- Youths: N=732
  - Age: Range=9 to 19 yrs; mean=14.6 years
  - Gender: 62% males
  - Race: African American (62%), White (43%), Hispanic: 2%
  - Charged Offenses:
    1. Life Offense: 0.4%
    2. Serious Person Offense: 0.8%
    3. Other Felonies: 18.8%
    4. Misdemeanors: 44.1%
    5. Juvenile Status Offenses: 34.0%
    6. Ordinance Tickets: 1.8%
- African American Representation
  - Adjudicated: 75%
  - Diverted: 62%

Preview of our Findings

- Low recidivism
- High caregiver satisfaction
- Extensive cost savings
- Rapid assessment of youth
- Immediate youth and family-guided plan
- This initiative has dramatically impacted the way in which the juvenile system and community partners work with the needs of these youths and their families.

Prosecutor Perspective

Robert Heimbuch

Process for Prosecutor Correct Course Diversion: System of Care Coordination

Value of the JIFF for Prosecutor
**The JIFF Assessment Process**

**Mary Johnson**

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**JIFF Application Producing Results**

- Targeted service needs established
- Access to Mental Health – Substance Abuse Treatment
- Access to Wrap-around and Parent Management Training (PMT-Oregon)
- Reduces unnecessary detainment & improves system efficiency
- Initial Outcomes Good - Low recidivism thus far

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**JIFF Interview: Areas Assessed**

- At School/ Your Job
- At Home
- Family Life*
- You & Your Friends
- You & Your Neighborhood
- Your Feelings
- Dealing with Bad Feelings
- Alcohol & Drugs
- Thinking
- Your Health

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**Start to Finish: One Hour**

Leave court room -- Explain procedure -- Drug test “on the way”

- JIFF Interview (up to 30 minutes)
- JIFF Service Plan (within 30 minutes)
- JIFF Goes Home & to Provider

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**Start to Finish: JIFF Interview**

- JIFF Interview (up to 30 minutes)
- Youth & parent simultaneously do JIFF interview
- Assessment specialist is available to assist, if needed

**QUICK!**

**NON-INIMIDATING!**

**GENERATES A GRAPH SHOWING RESULTS!**

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Start to Finish: Design Service Plan

**JIFF Service Plan** (within 30 minutes)

JIFF program "nominates" goals based on answers

Specialist...
- Reviews nominated goals & corresponding answers
- Clarifies any answers with youth or caregiver
- With youth/caregiver, selects goals
- For each goal, assigns services & priority level

Can add customized goals to a youth’s plan.
List of services & priority levels are customized to your community.

SERVICE PLAN IS:
QUICKLY GENERATED!
CONCISE!
FITS ON ONE PAGE!

Start to Finish: JIFF Goes Home

**JIFF Goes Home & to Provider**
- Give parent the Service Plan & fax it to YAP
- Parent told that YAP will be calling them

Parent goes home...
INFORMED – knows more about their child’s needs
ENGAGED – feels family is involved, not just youth
EMPOWERED – has their own plan
HOPEFUL – this is a "new experience"

Pre to Post Outcomes for Youth Served by a Juvenile Justice Diversion Program

**JIFF Pre to Post**
Cost Savings
Reduced Recidivism

Improvement on Pre to Post JIFF
Diversion Outcomes Sample

- Outcome sample to-date: Similar to total diversion sample
- Youths (N=308) and their Caregivers (N=278)
- Age: Range=9 to 19 yrs, Average=14 yrs
- Grade level: 2nd to 12th grade; dropped out
- Gender: 68% males
- Race:
  - African American: 70%
  - White: 27%
  - Hispanic: 2.3%
- Single parents: 80%

Acceptability/Feasibility of JIFF

- "Would rather talk to a person"
  - Youth: 4.2%
  - Caregiver: 9.4%

Youths Have Needs!! (Pre)

- School
  - 50% skip school
  - 80% have a D or F grade (average grade for 26%)
  - 44% are angry at school
  - 52% suspended in last 3 months
  - 28% expelled
- Home
  - 30% to 35% out of parental control (e.g., curfew)
  - 10% to 19% of caregivers not sure they can keep youth at home
- Youth and Caregivers want help!
  - Ratings by caregivers
  - Answers to individual items (e.g., 25% to 30% want help with schoolwork)

Overview of Outcome Results

- Total JIFF score
- JIFF Subscale Scores
- Individual Items of Concern
  - Feelings/Moods
  - Self-Harm
  - Substance Use
  - Family environment (other than youth)
- Caregiver Ratings of Need for Help

Significant Pre to Post Results: JIFF Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JIFF Scale</th>
<th>YOUTH</th>
<th>Caregiver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL JIFF SCORE</td>
<td>0.79***</td>
<td>0.77***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>0.77***</td>
<td>0.76***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncompliance in Home</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
<td>0.56***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picked on by Peers</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Influences</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td>0.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe Community Behavior</td>
<td>0.39***</td>
<td>0.35***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>0.34***</td>
<td>0.41***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Harmful Potential</td>
<td>0.27***</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Use</td>
<td>0.39***</td>
<td>0.35***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Related Needs</td>
<td>0.27***</td>
<td>0.22***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Environment - Others</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burden of Care (Caregiver)</td>
<td>0.27***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant Pre to Post Results: JIFF Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JIFF ITEM</th>
<th>% Sample</th>
<th>% Improved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANXIOUS (almost all time, a lot)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>74%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPRESSED (almost all time, a lot)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>67%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUICIDAL THOUGHTS</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>78%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of these youth, % Ideas for Plan</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of these youths, % Wish Dead</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USE ALCOHOL</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>72%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USE OTHER DRUGS</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>68%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others: ARGUE A LOT</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>62%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIT, SHOVE, THREATEN</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>72%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GET DRUNK/USE DRUGS</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>69%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TREAT YOUTH MEAN</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>72%***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Pre-Post Results: Caregiver Ratings
Significance for Chi Square Tests

Caregivers rate “Need for Help” on a 6-point scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need for Help</th>
<th>% Sample</th>
<th>% Improved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL (rating of 4 or 5)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>58%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOME (rating of 4 or 5)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>72%***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost Savings
Cost Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Cost (6 months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correct Course Diversion Program</td>
<td>$1,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Treatment Services</td>
<td>$9,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detention Services</td>
<td>$26,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Juvenile Justice Services</td>
<td>$37,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Savings for Diverted or Released</td>
<td>$9,000 and $22,000 per youth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reduced Recidivism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>% Recidivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34/470</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose: To prevent diverted and at-risk youth from entering juvenile justice system.

Intervention is “Passport” program

- Goal: To build resiliency and protective factors
- Program consists of 4 tracks or “Ports of Call,” which are:
  - Individual and Family Support (required)
  - Education and Culture
  - Entrepreneurialism
  - Structured Recreation
- Each enrollee must complete the required “Port” and 1 of the remaining 3 “Ports” for their Passport Itinerary
- Parents participate
- Operates 5 days/week

Youth Assistance Program
Prevents Progression Through the Juvenile Justice System

Cynthia Williams
Kenyatta Stephens
Black Family Development Inc (BFDI)
Serving Detroit Eastside

Two programs, which are rated as “effective” by Blueprints (OJJDP), are embedded in the program:
- Lions Quest: Skills for Adolescence
- Aggression Replacement Training

Groups are offered to address the types of situations and risk factors these youth often encounter, including:
- Anger Management
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Domestic Violence
- Violence Prevention
- Conflict Resolution
- Relationships

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Program Activities

- Structured Recreational activities
- Entrepreneurialism
- Career Development
- Aggressive Replacement Therapy
- Substance Abuse Education
- Homework Assistance/Tutoring
- Computer Training
- Arts/Drama
- Cultural Awareness Activities
- Mentoring

Sample for Results

Total Sample = 88 youths
- Race: 100% African American
- Gender: 56.8% Male
- Age for Males
  - Range: 9 to 17
  - Mode: 15 years old
- Age for Females
  - Range: 12 to 16
  - Mode: 14 years old

Results: Success Rate of 94%

- Total Sample = 88 youths
- 94% (n=83) completed the Program successfully, which requires:
  - Good attendance
  - Completing two “Ports”
  - No re-offenses
  - Completing exit JIFF
  - Negative alcohol and drug test (AOD) at exit JIFF
- 5 unsuccessful discharges were because of:
  - 3 re-offended
  - 2 had positive AOD tests at exit JIFF
  - 96.4% of youth expressed satisfaction with the services provided

Summary: The Passport Program

- Structured program which is community-based
- Empowering our youth to maintain delinquency free activities
- Ensuring that youth gain the skills and access to resources that they need
- Embracing parents and taking a family perspective
- It is a successful intervention, which incorporates evidence-based programs
- Reduces penetration into the juvenile justice system (96.6%)
- Addresses substance use (at exit, only 2.3% using)
- WE ARE PROUD OF OUR GRADUATES!

Beacon of Light: Parent and Youth Perspectives on the Impact of Diversion

Dorinda Sheppard
Shyanne DePriest

Parent Perspective

- Attitude
- Communication
- Pre JIFF® Assessment

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Youth Perspective

- Educational & Cultural
- Entrepreneurialism & Career
- Communication

Discussant

Robert P. Franks, Ph.D.
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Caregiver JIFF®: Pre and Post

- School
- Picked on by Peers
- Non-compliance in Home
- Family Environment
- Peer Influences
- Delinquent Behaviors
- Feelings
- Self-Harm Potential
- Substance Use
- Health Related Needs
- Burden of Care

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