

## 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

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# Cynthia Smith

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## Cross System Needs of Youth

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- **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:
  - Agreeing to diversion services
  - Determining the need for more critical and intensive services
  - 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

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## What is Correct Course?

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- **An alternative to adjudication**
- **For first time offenders, low risk offenders**
- **Referred youth are rapidly assessed - JIFF**
- **Completion of the a YAP program involves:**
  - Good participation in YAP services
  - No re-offending
  - Pre and Post JIFF assessments completed
  - Negative alcohol and drug testing at exit assessment
- **Youth who are "completers" benefit from:**
  - JIFF assessment of functioning & needs
  - Timely, appropriate needs-based services
  - No juvenile record

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### 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%
    - Ordinance Tickets: 1.8%
- African American Representation
  - Adjudicated: 75%
  - Diverted: 62%

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### 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.

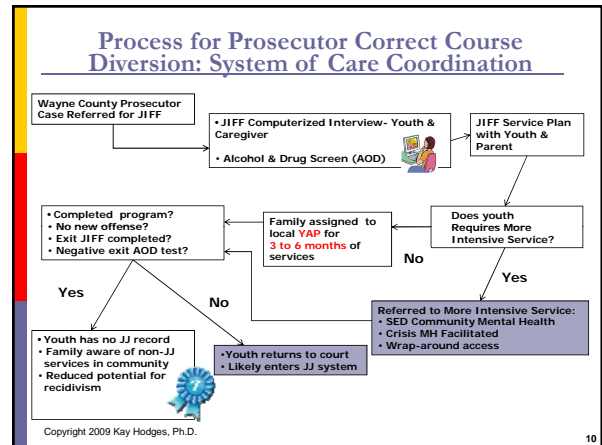
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### Prosecutor Perspective

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Robert Heimbuch

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### Family Court Chief Prosecutor

- It is working...here is how it works for us...
- Traditional Role of Assistant Prosecutor
  - Chief Law Enforcement Officer of County
  - Gatekeeper of JJ cases into system
- This Program is Unique
  - Non-traditional role of assistant prosecutor
  - Attorneys dedicated to program
    - Accurate screening is critical
    - What we look for
  - Types of cases referred to Correct Course Program
  - Partnership as the foundation

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### Value of the JIFF for Prosecutor

- JIFF mirrors what Prosecutor sees
- Faster processing from charge to service
- Establishes early "buy-in" from youth & family
- Provides standardized information & data
- Identifies youth exhibiting "gateway" behaviors
  - Substance use/abuse
  - Negative peer association
  - Emerging assaultive behavior
  - Non-compliance at home
  - Non-compliance at school
  - Other hidden underlying issues

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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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## The JIFF Assessment Process

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Mary Johnson

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### JIFF Interview: Areas Assessed

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

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\*For youth computer version, Family Life follows Home section. In caregiver version, it is the last section.


### The JIFF Interview

- ▣ Assesses youth's functioning & needs
- ▣ Self-administered
- ▣ Computer reads questions aloud
- ▣ Reading level: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- ▣ Allows free text to state own opinions
- ▣ Both Youth and Caregiver versions
- ▣ Generates graph of results across functioning areas
- ▣ Automates generation of Service Plan


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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)

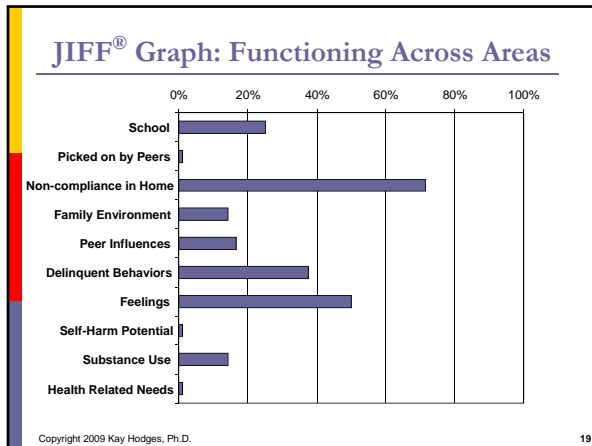
- Youth & parent simultaneously do JIFF interview
- Assessment specialist is available to assist, if needed

**QUICK!**

**NON-INTIMIDATING!**

**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!**

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### JIFF Service Plan For: Family, Provider, Prosecutor & Jurist

Priority	Goal	Services
Urgent	Reduce Possible Gang Associations	YAP Program
Urgent	In Home, Cease Aggression or Intimidation; Learn appropriate expression	YAP Services & Family Counseling at Westside MH
High	Evaluation to Assess Effects of Trauma	Westside Mental Health Services
High	Address Academic Needs	Central High School Tutoring

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### 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"

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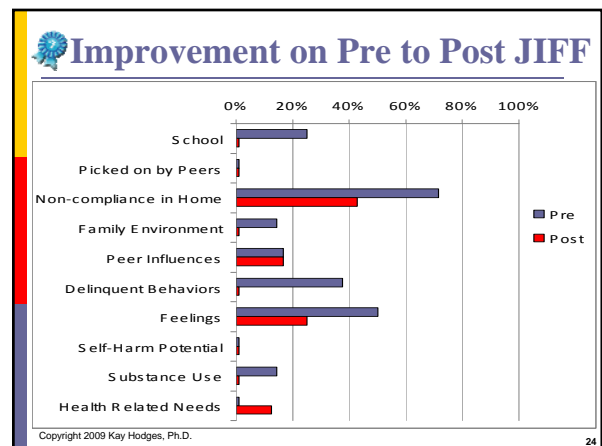
### Pre to Post Outcomes for Youth Served by a Juvenile Justice Diversion Program

**JIFF Pre to Post**

**Cost Savings**

**Reduced Recidivism**

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### 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: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade; dropped out
- Gender: 68% males
- Race:
  - African American: 70%
  - White: 27%
  - Hispanic: 2.3%
- Single parents: 80%

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### Acceptability/Feasibility of JIFF

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

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### 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)

Youth and Caregiver, similar reports

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### 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

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### Significant Pre to Post Results: JIFF Scales

D Statistic and Significance for T-tests

JIFF Scale	YOUTH	CAREGIVER
<b>TOTAL JIFF SCORE</b>	<b>0.79***</b>	<b>0.77***</b>
School	<b>0.77***</b>	<b>0.79***</b>
Noncompliance in Home	<b>0.56***</b>	<b>0.56***</b>
Picked on by Peers	0.23***	0.32***
Peer Influences	0.13*	0.29***
Unsafe Community Behavior	0.39***	0.37***
Feelings	0.34***	<b>0.43***</b>
Self Harmful Potential	0.27***	0.23***
Substance Use	0.39***	0.35***
Health Related Needs	0.27***	0.22***
Family Environment -Others	<b>0.44***</b>	0.28***
Burden of Care (Caregiver)		0.27***

\*\*\* p<.000, \* p<.05; D Statistic (.80=large effect, .50=moderate)

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### Significant Pre to Post Results: JIFF Items

Significance for Chi Square Tests

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

\*\*\* p<.000

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### Pre-Post Results: Caregiver Ratings

Significance for Chi Square Tests

**Caregivers rate "Need for Help" on a 6-point scale**

0 1 2 3 4 5  
No help Needed Help very Needed

Need for Help	% Sample	% Improved (1,2,3 at post)
<b>SCHOOL</b> (rating of 4 or 5) 8% Not rate- youth not in school	33%	58%***
<b>HOME</b> (rating of 4 or 5)	22%	72%***

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### Cost Savings

Cost Analysis	
Cost Per Youth in <b>Correct Course Diversion</b> Program 6 months	\$ 1,031
Cost Per Youth in Intensive Probation Services 6 months <sup>1</sup>	\$ 9,100
Cost Per Youth of Detention average 45 days before any services <sup>3</sup>	\$26,010
Cost Per Youth in Residential Juvenile Justice 6 months <sup>2</sup>	\$37,310
Cost Savings Per Youth that be diverted or released from detention with knowledge based decision making and useful resource assignment	\$9,000 and \$22,000 per youth

<sup>1</sup>average cost of 6 months community probation \$50 per day  
<sup>2</sup>average cost for 6 months residential care \$205 per day  
<sup>3</sup>cost of detainment average of 45 days

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### Reduced Recidivism

	N	% Recidivism
For youth who have completed diversion program (including youth who were referred to diversion but failed to complete the program), % Convicted of a new charge at any time after enrollment.	34/470	7.2%

- As a result of diversion and early detention release, two detention facilities with capacity of 58 beds were closed.
- 2008 juvenile probation adjudications were 32.6% less than 2007 numbers.
- Actual cost savings for probation were 53.1% below 2007 fiscal year for Wayne County Juvenile Justice.

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### Youth Assistance Program Prevents Progression Through the Juvenile Justice System

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**Cynthia Williams  
Kenyatta Stephens**

Black Family Development Inc (BFDI)  
Serving Detroit Eastside

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### BFDI Diversion Services

- 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

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### Passport Program

- 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



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### 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

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### 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**



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### 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!**

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

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**Dorindia Sheppard  
Shyanne DePriest**

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### Parent Perspective

- **Attitude**
- **Communication**
- **Pre JIFF® Assessment**

### Youth Perspective

- Educational & Cultural
- Entrepreneurialism & Career
- Communication

### Discussant

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