



Juvenile Justice Institute

Fall/Winter 2014

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Message from the Executive Director

As you are aware, JJI continues to be involved with various juvenile justice issues through its newsletters, workshops, seminars, conferences, committees and council work. The Institute often serves as consultant, advisor and sometimes provides technical assistance. Its targeted audience continues to be students, faculty, legislators, juvenile justice practitioners, and the community at large. The major juvenile issue in which JJI continues to be involved is: School to Prison Pipeline, Restorative Justice, Youth Violence, Disproportionate Minority Contact, Raising the Juvenile Age of Jurisdiction in NC, and Prevention of Substance Abuse and spread of HIV Virus. Through our newsletters, we will keep you updated on these subjects and our involvement with them.

One issue that continues to be a problem for North Carolina is the (raising of the juvenile age of jurisdiction). Currently, North Carolina youth who are at least 16 years old automatically are prosecuted in the criminal justice system if they commit a minor offense. Last year a long awaited piece of legislation was produced on this subject. Unfortunately, the bill, H725 only passed in the House of the NC General Assembly. Hopefully, there will be other attempts to introduce another bill on this subject in the next session. Youth advocates in Durham, wary of the long wait for legislation in this area, recently developed a Juvenile Diversion Program for Durham. The program was conceived by Chief Judge Marcia Morey and managed by Kelly Andrews. The program basically receives referrals from law enforcement of first time misdemeanor offenders between the ages of 16-18. A number of Durham agencies have agreed to provide services to these referred offenders. If the offender successfully completes the program, the charges are dropped by law enforcement. Durham is the only county in North Carolina at this time with such a program. From all indications, this program is a successful partnership between the courts and law enforcement and second chance for many youth of Durham.

In this issue you will also find a brief description of an evaluation program being used by the Division of Corrections and Juvenile Justice to evaluate the community based programs that it funds. The name of the evaluation tool is the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP). Also included in this newsletter for your information are highlights on JJI programs and about juvenile justice subjects across the state of North Carolina.

As is traditional for JJI, most of its programs are done in partnership with university or community groups or organizations. We believe that juvenile problems can be most effectively addressed by diverse groups working cooperatively together. See the highlights in this issue on the Family Resource Center in Raleigh that we partnered on with a workshop.

We ask again for your support as we continue to address the many challenges that occur in juvenile justice in North Carolina.



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"We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future."

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt ~



Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP)

Mark Lipsey, James C. Howell and John J. Wilson recently released (June 2014) a book, *A Handbook for Evidence-Based Juvenile Justice Systems*. Drawing from research conducted over the past few decades and their efforts to implement the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP), the book provides an evidence-based comprehensive strategy to enhance current juvenile justice systems. Recognizing that a relatively small proportion of the juveniles who enter the juvenile justice system will become serious, violent, or chronic offenders, the juvenile justice system must identify these offenders and focus attention and resources on that group. The comprehensive strategy also recognizes that serious, violent, or chronic delinquency progresses from less to more serious offending. The juvenile justice system must intervene to interrupt the progression of offending behaviors. Finally, the strategy identifies the importance of effective intervention programs capable of reducing the recidivism.

North Carolina has adopted the use of the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) for the evaluation of community programs to assess characteristics of effective programming. The use of SPEP will allow for a fuller picture of the risk and needs of juveniles in North Carolina and will ensure funds are used to support evidence-based programming.

JJI Project Updates

Campus Community Coalition: As the first year of our 3 years SAMSHA grant to address substance abuse and high risk sexual behaviors among minority (ages 18 to 24) came to a close, the implementation of evidence base substance use and HIV prevention activities began. The program is currently implementing an array of environmental and social norms strategies.

DMC in Durham County: JJI has begun a project to reduce DMC in Durham County. JJI is working with Durham Public Schools, Durham Police Department, and the Durham Sheriff's Office to facilitate DMC reduction strategies. This project is funded by NC the Governors Crime Commission in the Dept. of Public Safety.

Youth Violence: JJI is coordinating an interdisciplinary project at NCCU aimed at reducing youth violence in Durham. The project will begin with a series of listening sessions to identify youth perceptions of violence in the community and youth recommendations to help reduce the current level of youth violence.

Partnering with the Community

The Juvenile Justice Institute has partnered with various organizations and agencies in the past in order to better serve the community.

Recently, the Institute partnered with an organization called the Family Resource Center of Raleigh on efforts to reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact in Wake County. The Disproportionate Mentoring Collaborative, funded by the Governor's Crime Commission and coordinated by the Family Resource Center of Raleigh strives to reduce the level of disproportionate contact between youth of color referred to the juvenile justice system. The Collaborative is designed to encourage collaboration among local organizations to increase support and services to divert youth from juvenile justice.



North Carolina Updates

In the 2014 legislative session, a bill to raise the age for misdemeanor offenses but didn't come up for a Senate vote before the session ended. As a response to charging 16 and 17 year olds in criminal court, Durham's Misdemeanor Diversion Program was established. First time misdemeanor offenders aged 16 and 17 are referred by law enforcement to the Misdemeanor Diversion Program. The program coordinator reviews incident reports, meets with the youth, and refers them to appropriate 90-day community-based services. Those who successfully complete the program receive no further action. However, the teenagers who do not participate and complete the program are referred to law enforcement who have the discretion to file charges.

A campaign to reduce underage drinking was launched this fall that includes TV ads, a website and school assemblies led by Lt. Governor Dan Forest. The campaign ads refer families to TalkItOutNC.org, which provides parents with tips for talking to their children about alcohol. According to the website, nearly two-thirds of youth in middle and high school know people around their age who have tried alcohol. More than 4 out of 5 students (84%) feel parents talking more with them would help stop underage drinking.

North Carolina was host to the 20th National Symposium of Juvenile Services October 19-23 in Greensboro. The symposium brought together the leadership and direct care professionals from juvenile services and human services from across the United States for training and the opportunity to network and share innovative program service approaches.

NC Child released its 2015 Legislative agenda which included: increase access to high-quality health care; promote economic security for working parents; ensure developmentally appropriate services and protections; promote early literacy; and end the outdated practice of corporal punishment in public schools.

About Us

The Juvenile Justice Institute conducts research on juvenile justice issues and uses the findings to help North Carolina policy makers and practitioners make well-informed policy and program decisions to reduce juvenile crime and improve the juvenile justice system.

In addition, the Institute focuses on assisting public agencies to incorporate evidence-based knowledge and practices into new and existing programs in order to improve performance and outcomes. Our approach stresses the relevance of linking theory to practice, and consequently bridging the gap between science and service.

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