

Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Justice Involved Youth with Mental Health Disorders

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National Council of State Legislatures
Charleston, SC
June 15, 2015

National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice

Established in 2001 at Policy Research Associates, Inc.

Mission: To promote awareness of the mental health needs of youth in the juvenile justice system and to assist the field in developing improved policies and programs based on the best available research and practice

Key Functions:

- Serve as national focal point
- Provide training and technical assistance
- Conduct research
- Foster policy and systems change

Overview

- I. Needs and Trends
- II. Development of Innovative Approaches
- III. Disseminating the Innovations
- IV. Remaining Challenges

Juvenile Justice Population

- Just over 1.4 million youth arrested a year
- Over 250,000 youth a year are in juvenile detention
- Approximately 50,000 youth reside in secure correctional settings

Prevalence of Mental Health Issues Among Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

- Close to 70% have a diagnosable mental health disorder
- Over 60% experience a co-occurring substance abuse disorder
- Almost 30% have disorders severe enough to require immediate and significant treatment
- At least 75% of youth in the juvenile justice system have experienced traumatic victimization
- Youth in juvenile placement have nearly three times the risk for suicide as youth in the general population

Trends

- Drastic reduction in placements in juvenile facilities
- Recognition that these youth are often inappropriately involved in and poorly served by the juvenile justice system
- The development of scientifically sound behavioral health screening and assessment instruments
- The development of evidence-based treatments and interventions
- New advancements in adolescent brain research

The Development of Innovative Approaches

- Models for Change states identified mental health as a significant challenge in their juvenile justice reform efforts
- Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network created in response to shared concerns
- Involved eight states: CT, CO, IL, LA, OH, PA, TX, WA
- 3 critical priorities for action were identified: diversion, workforce development, family involvement

Resulting Innovations: Diversion

Diversion: Creating more opportunities for youth with mental health needs to be safely and appropriately diverted to community-based treatment at critical points of contact:

- Probation-Intake Based Diversion Model (*Front End Diversion Initiative*)
- School-Based Diversion Model (*School Responder Programs*)
- Law Enforcement Based Diversion (*Crisis Intervention Teams for Youth- CIT-Y Training*)
- Juvenile Diversion Guidebook (*general guidance on pre-adjudicatory diversion*)

Resulting Innovations

Family Involvement: Providing more guidance and direction to support family involvement in the juvenile justice system

- Training for juvenile justice staff and families
- Resources to help youth and families better understand the jj system

Workforce Development: Improving the staff response to youth with mental health needs

- Mental Health Training Curriculum for Juvenile Justice (*MHTC-JJ*)
- Adolescent Mental Health Training for School Resource Officers(*AMHT-SRO's*)

Disseminating the Innovations

- Range of new resources developed to help the field better identify and respond to youth with mental health needs
- Goal was always to create innovations that could be shared with and adopted by other sites struggling with similar issues
- In 2011, MacArthur entered into partnerships with OJJDP and SAMHSA to disseminate the innovations coming from MfC and the AN's

Disseminating the Innovations

- Joint partnership between MacArthur and federal agencies:
 - OJJDP: MHTC-JJ Training
 - 10 sites selected in 2012
 - 6 sites selected in 2014
 - SAMHSA: Policy Academy/Action Network Initiative on early diversion models
 - Worked with 12 states and 8 tribal nations
 - Current group working on adopting school-based models (NY, WV, NV, WI)

The MH JJ Collaborative for Change: A Training, Technical Assistance and Education Center

- Part of MacArthur Foundation's new Models for Change Resource Center Partnership
- Designed to further disseminate the mental health innovations from MfC and the AN to new states/sites
- Provides technical assistance, training, tools and resources to advance juvenile justice reform
- Partners include over 25 national, state and local experts

Areas of Focus

- Mental health screening in juvenile justice settings
- Diversion strategies and models
- Guidance on the implementation of EBP's
- Training and resources on family involvement
- Training for juvenile staff and law enforcement
- Juveniles' Competence to Stand Trial
- Juvenile Suicide Prevention
- Co-occurring Disorders
- Trauma

What We Offer

- Web-based resource center with access to critical resources, documents and information
- Phone consultation, via a Help Desk, provided by NCMHJJ staff or by an expert consultant
- On-site consultation by content experts
- Training delivered by experienced expert trainers
- TA Publications and webinars

Remaining Challenges

- All youth should be properly *screened and assessed* for mental health problems at their earliest point of contact with the juvenile justice system
- More *diversion programs* for youth with mental health and substance use disorders need are needed
- Mental health and substance abuse *providers must partner with juvenile justice* to create more community-based treatment, with an emphasis on *Evidence-Based Practices*

Remaining Challenges

- Need to make sure that youth who remain in the juvenile justice system have ***access to effective treatments and interventions*** and ***staff are properly trained to respond***
- ***All systems need to collaborate***- this can no longer be viewed as a “justice” problem, including:
 - Child Protection system (Dual-Committed Youth)
 - Education and Special Education
 - Health and Behavioral Health providers
 - Law Enforcement
 - Potential Employers and Vocational Readiness Programs
 - Faith Communities

For Further Information/Assistance

- Website: <http://cfc.ncmhjj.com>
- Help Desk: 866-962-6455
- Twitter: 
- Facebook: 