

# JUVENILE SANCTIONS CENTER

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BULLETIN

VOL. 2 NO. 4, 2004

## Resource Reallocation: The Clark County Experience

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

*This technical assistance bulletin from the Juvenile Sanctions Center (JSC) deals with the concept of resource reallocation which is sometimes referred to as "doing more with less." Of course it is not that simple nor is it as negative as that slogan implies. The JSC has asked its Demonstration Sites to use the innovative concept of resource reallocation to utilize available training and technical assistance to create models that may be workable in other jurisdictions.*

*One of our Sites, Las Vegas, (Clark County) Nevada has taken this concept to heart and this bulletin describes their experience and shares their "lessons learned" in the process of planning and implementing their own graduated sanctions efforts. The bulletin's author, Catherine S. Lowe, is the JSC Training Director and has a wealth of practical experience as juvenile probation officer, agency administrator and juvenile justice and judicial educator. In this bulletin Ms. Lowe describes her work with Kirby L. Burgess, Director, Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services (CCDJJS) and the Family Division Judge, William O. Voy. Judge Voy and Mr. Burgess employed team effort concepts learned from the JSC to effect change in the community that resulted in resource reallocation. It is our hope that this practical account will assist courts to reallocate resources better so that the youth and families of this country can be treated in the fairest most efficient manner possible. We thank Ms. Lowe for her work. The JSC Staff is pleased to bring this bulletin to you with the assistance of the United States Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).*

JSC

### FUNDAMENTAL PROJECT PRINCIPLES

The Juvenile Sanctions Center is committed to the fundamental principles of self-definition and self-help when it comes to defining and resolving Graduated Sanctions issues at its thirteen Demonstration Sites across the country.<sup>1</sup> The partnerships now in place are working creatively to design locally appropriate action plans to meet the needs of their most difficult juvenile offenders and families. In the process, the Sites are called on by the Center to reallocate existing resources,<sup>2</sup> and to utilize available training and technical assistance to create models that may be workable in similar jurisdictions. Further, the Demonstration Sites are asked to engage in technology transfer... to share with others the lessons learned in the process of planning and implementing their own Graduated Sanctions efforts.

### UNIQUE APPROACH

There are elements of independence and generosity that may be unique to this multi-year federal effort by OJJDP. Each Site has been supported in defining its own strengths and deficiencies with respect to Graduated Sanctions,<sup>3</sup> and each has been trained in cross-disciplinary and cross-Site collaboration strategies.<sup>4</sup> No predetermined model has been forced, and as a result, each Site looks different from every other. The common denominator among all Sites is the need to scrutinize their decision-making processes with a view toward achieving more successful results in the handling of special needs offenders.<sup>5</sup> With respect to improved decision-making, Sites have been encouraged to initiate or revamp existing risk and needs assessments at all key decision points in case

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processing, in order to better match serious, chronic and violent offenders with programs and services appropriate to their offense patterns and individual needs.<sup>6</sup>

## **MAJOR IMPLEMENTATION ISSUE**

The knotty problems confronting the thirteen Demonstration Sites seem not to have been focused on team-building and multi-agency collaboration as much as on resource reallocation to put local Action Plans in motion. It is safe to say that all Sites have literally been asked to do more with less.

This fourth and final Technical Assistance Bulletin of Phase III of the Graduated Sanctions initiative acknowledges the groundbreaking efforts of one of the ten original Demonstration Sites, Las Vegas, Nevada, and offers direct cross-site assistance to other jurisdictions in developing Resource Reallocation Strategies that Work.<sup>7</sup>

## **BACKGROUND**

The Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services (CCDJJS) has long realized that it takes effective community partnerships to address the needs of youth and families involved in the Juvenile Justice System. This philosophy is not only appropriate but is the right thing to do in terms of working together, sharing resources and jointly addressing community issues. The philosophy is entirely compatible with that of the Juvenile Sanctions Center of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Accordingly, the Department of Juvenile Justice Services has formed new fiscal and programmatic partnerships with other related systems professionals and providers in Clark County, including such diverse interests as the faith community and the Nevada Army National Guard.

As noted, CCDJJS is one of the ten original

Demonstration Sites competitively selected to participate in the Juvenile Sanctions Center's Graduated Sanctions Project. The agency, located in Las Vegas, Nevada, one of the fastest growing communities in the country, was chosen for its progressive attitude; and its history of developing leading edge programs and innovative approaches to juvenile crime and delinquency. Some community based programs at the "front end" of the graduated sanctions continuum include: substance abuse assessments at the intake level, day reporting, house arrest, electronic monitoring, wilderness experiences (with equal access for male and female offenders), special needs counseling and gender specific residential programming, multi-agency anti-gang initiatives, school based probation services, as well as specialty courts, including: Drug Court, Truancy Court and the recently-established Reentry Court. With respect to the latter, Clark County's Juvenile Reentry Court is designed to serve as a model for the balance of the state, and for other participating states. Nevada Revised Statutes provide one of the few clearly defined legislative frameworks in the country to support the establishment of this type of "problem solving court."

## **LOCAL RESOURCE REALLOCATION**

Additionally, CCDJJS has made good use of both regular budget allocations and federal grants to fund these and other community programs that serve as an alternative to incarceration. Through such efforts, CCDJJS has begun re-allocating its staff to address even the more complex juvenile issues at the front end of the juvenile justice system. Such staff and resource reallocation lays the groundwork for diverting a larger number of youths into community resources. Challenge grants offered to local service providers through a Request for Proposals (RFP) support this effort for a number of special needs offenders. To date, half a dozen contracts have been let. Each requires substantial applicant matching funds. Potential service providers compete for contracts and must meet agency specifications, as

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in any other competitive bidding process.

Despite unprecedented population growth, the number of juveniles in the CCDJJS detention center is beginning to decline. While the facility historically ran well beyond capacity, the Graduated Sanctions diversion effort has started to pay off, reflecting the change in programming at the Immediate Sanctioning level. The 235-bed facility average population for the month of May was 239. The numbers are expected to decrease further as other Graduated Sanctions measures are implemented.

## TEAM ROLE

The CCDJJS Graduated Sanctions Committee, comprised of a diverse array of staff and community providers, has met regularly over the past year to help develop many of the programs mentioned. The group has been instrumental in shaping the vision of CCDJJS to become a national model to address its own unique local issues and provide assistance and mentoring to other sites. To date, the agency has collaborated with several jurisdictions on programming that would benefit their communities.

## ADDITIONAL PROJECT BENEFITS

CCDJJS has also been working to strengthen its structured decision making process to insure fairness and equity to all delinquent youth having contact with the juvenile justice system in Clark County.

A Detention Criteria tool and a Risk and Needs Assessment Instrument have been developed through the assistance of the Graduated Sanctions Center. Center staff and consultants provided comprehensive training on instrument design and use. Both tools have been electronically implemented in the CCDJJS FamilyTRACS automation system. This management information system, which is a case management and information resource, allows the agency to track youths from the

point of entry into the juvenile justice system and along the entire service continuum. It is directly accessible by all probation officers and clerical staff and has largely eliminated the agency's reliance on a paper driven process and filing system. Additionally, it provides data on disproportionate minority contact, gender issues and other pertinent areas in CCDJJS' jurisdiction.

## CHALLENGE OF CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

Although CCDJJS has been highly successful in launching its innovative Graduated Sanctions programs, there is still much work to be done. In addition to the huge population growth in Clark County, there are many challenges relating to the changing youth and family dynamics, youthful offense patterns, and escalating female offender and gang activities.

In terms of changing demographics, there are nearly 300,000 school-aged children in Clark County which drives a tremendous need for programs at all levels of the community, both inside and outside of juvenile justice system. Slightly more than 15,000 youths are referred to the agency annually. These youth commit over 25,000 offenses per year. Female offenders account for almost one third of the youths arrested. While these numbers are daunting, the agency has received great support from the judiciary, the community and the county government through community participation and funding. The Clark County Board of Commissioners has identified CCDJJS services as one of its top priorities. This relationship offers great hope and advocacy for the needed response to address juvenile crime and delinquency in Las Vegas and the greater Clark County area.

## NEXT STEPS

CCDJJS is excited about the Graduated Sanctions tasks ahead during the coming months (Phase IV of the project). These objectives include the

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completion of a comprehensive resource directory of all the sanctions, interventions and services the agency provides. The agency is also near completion of an ongoing, cumulative five-year data book that will provide the framework for outcome studies, process evaluation and research. These projects will establish the foundation needed to continuously improve Clark County's Graduated Sanctions programming, and will allow CCDJJS to accomplish its strategic mission of appropriate diversion, targeted services to juvenile offenders at the lowest and least costly levels and finally, incarceration and reentry services for those serious, chronic and violent juvenile offenders not amenable to immediate or intermediate sanctions.

## CROSS-SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

CCDJJS, through its innovative service approach, has become a national model for proactive graduated sanctions programs and resource reallocation to support them. The agency is available to share its successes with other sites, and is already engaging in cross-site technical assistance. Interested jurisdictions may contact the Juvenile Sanctions Center at the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, or contact Kirby Burgess, Director of Juvenile Justice Services, at 702-455-4211 for assistance. He can also be reached by e-mail at [klb@co.clark.nv.us](mailto:klb@co.clark.nv.us).

## ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE JUVENILE SANCTIONS CENTER

The Juvenile Sanctions Center encourages the use of cross-site technical assistance. Peer leadership is at the heart of meaningful systems change. With diminishing external resources, local Action Planning and resource reallocation are critical to the development and maintenance of a continuum of services to delinquent youth and their families. Additional examples of cross-site technical

assistance will be offered in the Juvenile Sanctions Center's Monograph II,<sup>8</sup> to be published at the conclusion of the current grant year. The document will be available on line or in hard copy at no cost to Demonstration Sites. It will highlight model mental health assessments, model programs for female offenders, the latest approach to risk/needs assessment, and, of course, resource reallocation.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 The thirteen Demonstration Sites are: Las Vegas, Nevada, St. Joseph, Missouri, Omaha, Nebraska, La Grange, Georgia, Missoula, Montana, San Jose, California, Nashville, Tennessee, Newport News, Virginia, Dayton, Ohio, Indianapolis, Indiana, Toledo, Ohio, Ft. Meyers, Florida, and Hartford, Connecticut.
- 2 Two Sites are available to provide cross-site training and technical assistance in this regard: Las Vegas, Nevada, and Toledo, Ohio.
- 3 See Modules II (Leadership and Team-Building) and VI (Leadership and Action Planning) in *A Training and Curriculum Guide, Volume I, 2003*, NCJFCJ.
- 4 *op.cit.* Module III (Juvenile Justice System/Community Partnerships).
- 5 *op.cit.* Module IV (Special Needs Offenders).
- 6 *Graduated Sanctions for Juvenile Offenders: A Program Model and Planning Guide: Part 2, Section 5: A Model Structured Decision Making System for Graduated Sanctions*, NCJFCJ, p.76.
- 7 For additional information on resource reallocation at the local level, contact Judge James Ray (419-213-6717) and CPO Dan Pompa (419-213-6700) regarding "cluster" funding.
- 8 See also Juvenile Sanctions Center's Monograph I, 2003.

# Juvenile Sanctions Center Publications

## TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BULLETINS:

- “Introducing the New Juvenile Sanctions Center”  
Vol. 1 No. 1, 2002
- “Structured Decision Making For Graduated Sanctions”  
Vol. 1 No. 2, 2002
- “School-Based Probation: An Approach Worth Considering”  
Vol. 1 No. 3, 2003
- “Promising Sanctioning Programs in a Graduated System”  
Vol. 1 No. 4, 2003
- “A Practical Approach to Linking Graduated Sanctions with a  
Continuum of Effective Programs”  
Vol. 2 No. 1, 2004
  - “Using Federal Title IV-E Money to Expand  
Sanctions and Services for Juvenile Offenders”  
Vol. 2 No. 2, 2004
  - “Three Innovative Court-Involved Reentry Programs”  
Vol. 2 No. 3, 2004
  - “Resource Reallocation: The Clark County Experience”  
Vol. 2 No. 4, 2004



# Juvenile Sanctions Center Publications

## TRAINING MANUALS:

- **Graduated Sanctions for Juvenile Offenders:  
A Training Curriculum Guide 2003**
- **Graduated Sanctions for Juvenile Offenders:  
A Program Model and Planning Guide 2003**

## NEWSLETTER:

- **FIRST MONDAY**  
(A Monthly Newsletter Dealing with Sanctions and Services)

## MONOGRAPH:

- **Monograph I: Program Development and Future Initiatives**

**To obtain copies, call or write:**

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### Development Services Group, Inc.

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# NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

Mary V. Mentaberry  
Executive Director

## *About the National Council*

*More than 65 years ago, an effort to improve the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile courts began in earnest with the founding of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges — an organization that sought to focus attention on the importance of a separate tribunal for children and to encourage the development of treatment programs for children with special needs.*

*Today the National Council stands as the nation's oldest and largest judicial nonprofit membership organization solely devoted to improving the courts of juvenile and family jurisdictions. Our purpose — to serve the nation's children and families by improving the justice system through education and applied research. Our mission — to refine the standards, practices, and effectiveness of juvenile and family courts. And our means — information, research, training, and technical assistance necessary for this task.*

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