



SERIES

7 ARTICLES WITH
7 EASY STEPS
TO IMPROVING YOUR
JUVENILE DRUG COURT

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The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges® (NCJFCJ), headquartered on the University of Nevada campus in Reno since 1969, provides cutting-edge training, wide-ranging technical assistance, and research to help the nation's courts, judges, and staff in their important work. Since its founding in 1937 by a group of judges dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile courts, the NCJFCJ has pursued a mission to improve courts and systems practice and raise awareness of the core issues that touch the lives of many of our nation's children and families.

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7 (Easy) Steps to Collaborative Planning

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It is no secret that collaboration between professionals (and their agencies) in the juvenile and family justice field can lead to better outcomes for youth and families. But it can sometimes be hard to move beyond the buzz words and phrases – stakes in the ground! synergy! paradigm shifting! – to achieve real collaborative advantage. Collaborative advantage, capitalizing on the individual skills of a diverse group of leaders while creating interpersonal links to achieve an outcome, is incredibly rare. It is rare because it takes a lot of work and requires shared leadership and vision. Stakeholders are exactly that – individuals who have an invested interest in the welfare of their community. Harnessing the power of stakeholders’ interest is paramount to successful collaboration.

If you are thinking about gathering a group of leaders together to further serve the youth and families involved in the juvenile and family justice system in your area and don’t know where to start, below are some suggested easy first steps to get started.



USE THE POWER OF JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP

Judges play a key role in projects

designed to improve or enhance juvenile and family justice systems, and judicial buy-in is critical to whether or not an initiative will succeed. Judges set the tone in their courtrooms and they are often a primary referral source for ancillary programs. If you are a judge, congratulations! You are likely the natural leader and convener in your community – the first step of collaborative planning. If you are not a judge, find a judge in your community who shares your passion and vision for reform. One of the most important roles a judge can play on a collaborative team is that of convener. When a judge calls a meeting, people show up!



RECRUIT YOUR TEAM

Determine who you want on your team based on what your goals are. Remember, for the planning process you’ll want to work with agency heads and others in leadership positions who can “say yes” on behalf of their agencies. In many cases, those you recruit to serve on the collaborative planning team will be professionals that you work with on a regular basis and who are also part of the juvenile and family justice system (e.g., probation department, state attorney office, public defender office). However, consider including agencies that you don’t work with on a regular basis. For example, consider including

representation from the larger community; a representative from your school district or business association can broaden your view. As you begin your recruitment process remember to start with “what’s in it for them” rather than “what you want from them.” People are much more willing to join an effort if they understand how it will be beneficial to them and the issues they care about.



SHARE LEADERSHIP

The most effective collaborative teams share leadership within the team to leverage each member’s talents and resources. Sharing leadership requires both aspirational elements – a common vision, and practical elements – a concrete plan for working together. At the first few meetings as a team, spend time creating a vision for the initiative. Consider having the team participate in a visioning activity where the team creates a perfect world – if the team had its druthers, what improvements would be made. Ask a broad-based question related to the initiative: “What would our juvenile and family justice system look like in a perfect world?” Each member of the team would brainstorm ideas about what the “perfect world” would look like and then share those ideas with the group (e.g., youth in need would receive access to treatment services quickly). This is a great way to determine what the team, as a unit, is working toward.

Once the team has developed the vision, it is just as important to set practical ground rules for how the team will work together. At the outset decide: how often the team will meet, who will track progress via project mapping tools, who will serve as the historian (this role may rotate) – ideally you’ll create a team charter. Visit [mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_95.htm) for examples of team charters at: http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_95.htm.

Make sure each team member has a specific role on the team and a task (or series of tasks) to complete toward shared goals. There is nothing worse than a team member who is underutilized. Remember you’ve brought together a team of highly skilled dedicated individuals who are used to making things happen. This is your greatest asset – use it!



PLAN WITH PURPOSE

Any collaborative planning effort must begin with the end in mind. Once the team has completed visioning and

determined how the team will operate, spend time talking about goals and objectives. As a team ask: What does your team want to achieve? How will we know if we’ve achieved it? The goals should be things that the collaborative planning team can control and change. While the ultimate goal may be to eradicate substance abuse in your community, that is not a goal that can be achieved by your planning team. Instead set measurable and time bound goals like “increase the number of youth who receive a drug or alcohol screen at intake by 25% in the next 6 months.”

At each collaborative planning meeting have a set agenda and timeframe. Make a commitment, as a team, to not get bogged down in cyclical discussions (i.e., going over the same issue or challenge at every meeting without coming to a resolution). At the end of every meeting have two things set in place: 1) at least one action item to be completed before the next meeting and 2) a set date, time, and topic for the next meeting. Being regimented in how the meetings are conducted will help the team gain momentum toward meeting the goals the team has committed to achieving.



COMMUNICATE FREQUENTLY

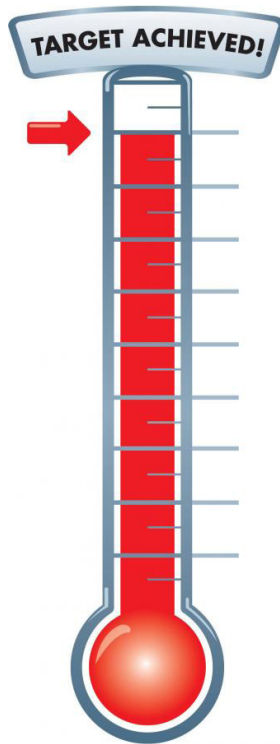
Effective teams all have one thing in common – communication. This communication extends not only to collaborative planning meetings, but also to between meetings. Establish a mechanism for communicating between meetings. Most teams find that a mixture of teleconferences and e-mail works well. As with meetings, have a plan for how often you want to communicate and what you want to share via e-mail or telephone. Consider having a member of the team, on a rotating basis, send out reminders about due dates and upcoming events.

A note of caution about communicating between meetings, for the most part it is important for the entire team to communicate, avoid sidebar calls or e-mails that can make members of the team feel out-of-the-loop. Also be prepared for conversations to take on a life of their own via e-mail or telephone calls. If it seems as if the conversation on a topic is getting out of hand (e.g., an e-mail chain with what seems like a hundred back-and-forth responses), suggest to the group that the conversation be tabled until the next in-person meeting.



CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Strategic planning takes a long time – usually 12 to 18 months. So it is important for the team to celebrate successes along the way. Build milestones into the strategic plan and each time a milestone is reached take time as a team to reflect on the process to reach that milestone and progress made toward the ultimate goal. The team may want to update others about the team’s progress, as well. As the team reaches each milestone, send out a press release or hold a town hall meeting to keep the public apprised of any progress made. Create a visual that the team can look to for a tangible reminder of successes already achieved.



joins the collaborative planning team, don’t simply inform them of the team’s vision and goals – invite new members to participate in a modified version of the visioning activity. Revisiting the vision and goals when a new team member starts is a great way for the new team member to buy-in to the project and a way for the existing team to renew its commitment to the project.

Collaborative planning is a long process and it requires the dedication and commitment of leaders. Capitalizing on the knowledge and expertise of your planning team can lead to improved outcomes for youth and families in your community. But there is no secret to achieving collaborative advantage – it’s nothing more than the right people, for the right task, at the right time who come together with a shared vision and a concrete plan for achieving that vision.



PLAN FOR TRANSITION

All great planning initiatives must come to end. The collaborative planning team should start to prepare for the transition from planning team to operational team from the very beginning. As a team, ask several questions:

- Who will implement the program that the team planned and developed?
- How will the program fit within the larger juvenile and family justice system?
- How will the program be sustained?
- How will the team create buy-in?
- How will the operational team be trained?
- Will the original collaborative planning team have a role in operations, and if so, what will it be?

The team will plan for this transition but will also need to plan for any turnover among the primary collaborative planning team. Because the planning process will take nearly a year, the likelihood of losing a team member is high. When someone new



7 (Easy) Steps to Measuring Performance of Juvenile Drug Courts

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INTRODUCTION

This brief is predicated on the simple belief that juvenile drug courts (JDC) like all good organizations, are designed to accomplish things and that it is both possible and desirable to measure the degree to which they do or do not accomplish those things. In this brief we will provide a basic understanding of performance measurement and a seven step procedure for establishing performance measures for juvenile drug courts.

For some people, the idea of measuring performance can be daunting. At a glance, the performance measurement appears to consist of a dizzying array of ideas and expectations. But, fear not, measuring organizational performance is not as difficult or as complex we are often led to believe. If one takes a little time to consider the simple logic and time honored relationships between mission, goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes (both short- and long-term), it soon becomes apparent that we measure performance in our own lives every day—each time you weigh yourself, or check on your children's grades, or monitor your retirement portfolio, you are measuring performance. Our purpose is to offer seven basic steps designed to simplify and

demystify the process of measuring performance of Juvenile Drug Courts.

JUVENILE DRUG COURTS

But first, we need to be clear about our definition of juvenile drug courts. Generally, juvenile drug courts fall within the family of problem-solving courts which emerged in the 1990s to accommodate offenders with specific needs and problems that did not appear to be addressed adequately in traditional courts. Juvenile drug courts (JDC's) are designed to address delinquent, and in some cases status, offenders who also exhibit issues with substance abuse issues. Typically, juvenile drug courts include supervision and specialized drug treatment programs services for eligible drug-involved youth and their families. JDC's emphasize the participation of the entire family and an expanded the continuum of care to include more comprehensive services (BJA 2003). Typically, JDCs are designed to provide immediate interventions and treatment, improve juveniles' level of functioning in their environment, provide juveniles with pro-social skills; strengthen families of drug-involved youths; and promote individual accountability of both juvenile offenders and those who provide services to them.

JUVENILE DRUG COURTS: STRATEGIES IN PRACTICE (16 STRATEGIES)

A review of the research and practice literature has revealed 16 strategies for effective juvenile drug courts. These 16 strategies can be grouped into program development and operational categories. In terms of program development, JDC's should engage all stakeholders, develop and maintain an interdisciplinary working team, clearly define a target population, include frequent judicial reviews, and establish a system for program monitoring and evaluation. JDC's must also establish policies and procedures designed to guard the privacy of youth

In terms of day-to-day operations, JDC's should establish community-based partnerships, tailor interventions to the individual characteristics of JDC participants (i.e., the varied needs of youth and their families, the developmental needs of adolescents, cultural differences, and strengths of youths and families), recognize and engage the family, and coordinate with schools and school systems. Further, JDC's design and implement effective drug screening and testing strategies as well as a system of incentives and sanctions designed to encourage and facilitate active participation in treatment and interventions.¹

So, in theory, if a JDC designer does his or her homework and aligns the JDC with the known “best practices” and the 16 strategies described above, it should be effective. But the question begs to be asked—“How do we know?” Or, put another way, “How does one measure performance of JDC's against expected standards?”

WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE MEASURES?

The Center for Public Accountability has defined performance measurement as the practice of gauging progress of a public program or activity in achieving the results or outcomes that clients, customers, or stakeholders expect. Essentially, performance measures tell people how well public programs are working² (Center for Public Accountability). There are three primary reasons for measuring performance—normative, pragmatic, and empirical.³

By normative, we mean that measuring performance is simply the right thing to do. Juvenile drug court professionals have a civic responsibility to provide transparency regarding juvenile drug court processes and outcomes.

Performance measures are pragmatic in the sense that are essential to assessing program fidelity and effectiveness, quality improvement, and planning. It has been said by many that “you get what you measure” and that aphorism holds up nicely over time and across disciplines. Reliable performance measures help juvenile drug courts monitor goal achievement, track individual and programmatic progress, demonstrate efficacy, identify resource needs, and chart a course for the future.

Finally, performance measures have high value to empirical, theoretical, and evaluative research. They provide valuable data regarding activities and short-term outcomes that may impact long-term outcomes.

SEVEN STEPS

To help determine if your juvenile drug court is operating as it has been designed and if it is producing the expected outcomes, we offer the following seven steps to measuring juvenile drug court performance.



CONVENE A PERFORMANCE MEASURES TEAM

Your JDC performance measures should be a product of your entire organization and not just one or two people. As such, your first task is to identify and convene a team to consider, conceptualize, create, and develop JDC performance measures. The performance measures team should be small to moderate in size (5 – 10 members). It should be representative of the JDC and include judicial officers, administrators, supervisors, and staff. As this is a multi-stage and sometimes lengthy process, it is important to identify and assign a team leader responsible for coordinating efforts, scheduling meetings, assigning tasks, and monitoring completion of those tasks. If you already have a JDC team in place, you may want to consider using the already existing team. If possible, it is often useful to include a researcher or evaluator on the team as researchers are typically experienced at developing logic-based performance measures.

The team should plan on meeting several times over

1 Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2003, *Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

2 Cite—Center for Public Accountability.

3 Cite—Center for Public Accountability.

JDC Performance Measures Team

- JDC Judicial Officer
- JDC Coordinator
- Juvenile Probation Supervisor
- Juvenile Probation Officer
- Treatment Caseworker
- Public Defender
- Assistant District Attorney
- Researcher/Evaluator

an extended period of time (three to six months) to develop or confirm the JDC mission, articulate goals, objectives, and performance measures, develop data collection and processing strategies, and establish standard and ad hoc reporting practices. It may be necessary to form sub-groups from the main team to work on and complete some of the tasks described herein.



PLAN STRATEGICALLY

When developing JDC performance measures, it is important to take the long view of your operations—to plan strategically. Many organizations, including JDC’s, get caught up in the here and now of operational planning and focus almost exclusively on making sure that the day-to-day activities are accomplished. Unfortunately, focusing exclusively on the day-to-day makes it is easy to lose sight of the original purpose and expected outcomes of the organization.

Strategic planning is a process by which an organization systematically encounters the changing environment in which it operates. Strategic planning provides an interactive forum for thinking through and creating the best possible future for an organization. During Step 2, you will want to convene your Performance Measures Team (or your re-purposed JDC team) develop a long-term strategic plan if one does not exist. If your JDC already has a strong strategic plan in place, the Performance Measures Team should re-visit that plan with an eye toward developing or re-affirming performance measures. Specifically, strategic planning efforts should be dedicated to: 1) expressing common values, purpose, and expectations; 2) establishing and maintaining standards of quality; 3) ensuring effective distribution of resources; and 4) guaranteeing

optimal return on investments.⁴



ARTICULATE A CLEAR MISSION

Valid and reliable performance measures begin—and end—with a clear organizational mission. Juvenile drug courts that have carefully considered and constructed missions also have greater clarity regarding their purpose, function, clients, and roles. Strong missions point the JDCs toward their desired future, expectations, and outcomes.

A good mission evokes organizational goals and objectives—the formal expressions of the specific results which the organization intends to achieve. Mission-driven goals and objectives are the harbingers of performance measures—the empirical indicators that the organization is operating as designed and achieving expected outcomes

Many JDC’s already have carefully developed mission statements and that can be a great advantage. However, before moving on to Step 4, it is important to re-visit the mission and re-affirm that it reflects the vision, the values, and the purpose of your juvenile drug court. If a mission statement is crafted without an eye toward measuring performance, it may not support eventual outcome measures.

There are several steps to articulating a new JDC mission or re-affirming an existing mission. First, convene the Performance Measures Team to confirm by consensus vote, the bedrock values of your JDC. Second, develop an initial draft of the JDC mission (or revisions to the existing mission against the consensus values described in the previous step). Third, review and amend the draft (or revised) mission until you have achieve consensus agreement on the language. Once satisfied with the new or revised mission, circulate the mission among staff as well as system partners for comment. Finally, publish, and disseminate the new or revised JDC mission.

If your JDC already has a mission statement that has all of the qualities described above, this step may take very little time and will represent a simple re-affirmation of the JDC mission prior to creating performance measures. However, it is critical that you take the time to upgrade your mission if it does

⁴ Thomas, Douglas (2002) “Juvenile Probation Administrator’s Desktop Guide.” Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice.

Characteristics of Effective Mission Statements

Effective mission statements are short, memorable, and meaningful and share a number of other common characteristics, they:

1. Emphasize the organization's core values;
2. Recognize the major spheres of interest in which the organization operates;
3. Provide long term or strategic point of view;
4. Focus on just a limited number of goals;
5. Point to desirable organizational outcomes.

not meet all of the above described characteristics. The mission is both your point of departure and your destination.



BUILD A LOGIC MODEL

The program logic model is basically a picture of how your organization does its work – the theory and assumptions underlying the program as well as goals, objectives, activities, expected outcomes, and both long and short-term outcome measures. The mission statement articulated in Step 3 should provide a solid foundation for building a cohesive organizational logic model that describes your JDC's goals, activities, objectives, outcomes, and performance measures.⁵ A well-developed logic model is a versatile tool that can support a broad range of activities, including:

- **Program Planning.** The logic model structure helps you think through your program strategy—to help clarify where you are and where you want to be.
- **Program Management.** A logic model can be the basis for developing a more detailed management plan. The logic model may also help track and monitor operations to better manage results. It can serve as the foundation for creating budgets and work plans.
- **Communication.** A well-built logic model provides stakeholders with a snapshot view of what a program is doing (activities) and what it is achieving (outcomes), emphasizing the link between the two.
- **Consensus-Building.** Developing a logic model builds common understanding and promotes buy-in among both internal and external

⁵ W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2004) "Using Logic Models to Bring Together Planning, Evaluation, and Action: Logic Model Development Guide." W.K. Kellogg Foundation: Battle Creek, Michigan

stakeholders about what a program is, how it works, and what it is trying to achieve.

- **Fundraising.** A sound logic model demonstrates to funders that you have purposefully identified what your program will do, what it hopes to achieve, and what resources you will need to accomplish your work.⁶

Logic models can be very basic or very complex depending on the program and how the model is intended to be used. The simplest way to view logic models is as a roadmap for the juvenile drug court. Logic models clearly describe where you want to take the organization, how to get there, and how you will know if you have arrived.

You may assign one or more persons from your working group to draft the logic model. However, to create a logic model requires the capacity to think logically which is, by definition, "a particular way of thinking about something"⁷ and not everyone has the skill, temperament, or discipline to work within the unyielding parameters of logic. It is sometimes necessary to go outside the JDC inner circle and enlist assistance from researchers, evaluators, or faculty from local colleges or universities. See an example of logic model and the characteristics of a logic model below.



COLLECT AND PROCESS JDC PERFORMANCE DATA

Once you have identified your performance measures, it is essential that you establish and implement a reliable data collection and processing plan. The question is, particularly for smaller organizations without dedicated research and development staff, "who

⁶ Logic Model Workbook. Innovation Network, Inc. www.innonet.org • info@innonet.org

⁷ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/logic>

Logic Model Components

A basic logic model is comprised of the following components:

1. A concise statement of the juvenile drug court's mission or purpose;
2. **Mission-driven goals** are broad statements of what is hoped to be accomplished. Goals are usually not very measurable, but create the setting for activities;
3. **Measurable objectives**—objectives are more focused statements regarding the specific intended accomplishments. They are the “operational” versions of goal statements and must be empirically measurable. Objectives create the target(s) for activities and are bounded by time;
4. **Activities / Processes** are linked explicitly to JDC objectives; they describe what will be done, by whom, when, and what is the expected outcome.
5. **Resources (inputs)** required to implement activities; resources may include the human, financial, organizational, and community resources required to design and implement juvenile drug courts;
6. **Program outputs and outcomes** (short-term and long-term).
 - a. *Outputs* are the direct products of program activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by juvenile drug courts.
 - b. *Outcomes* are the specific measures of goal accomplishment. Performance measures are the intermediate outcomes of juvenile drug court activities, empirical measures of achieving objectives.
 - c. *Measures of program impact* are the longer-term indicators that juvenile drug courts have resulted in in program participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status and level of functioning.

collects and who analyzes the data?” Unfortunately, in the absence of research and development personnel, those tasks invariably fall to program staff. The good news is that much of the hard work has been completed with the completion of the JDC logic model. If that has been done correctly, JDC's have already identified their desired outcomes and measures of performance. All that is left is to develop a data collection protocol and a strategy (hopefully an automated strategy) for processing data.

The data collection form can be hard copy (pen and paper) or automated. If your JDC is small and you have just a few cases the non-automated option is a viable, albeit, labor intensive alternative. However, most jurisdictions have access to some form of computer technology and automated data collection and processing is suggested. This may be as simple as a basic spreadsheet or as complex as a relational database, but should consist of the following components:

- Identification Data—name, date of birth, case number, hearing officer, probation officer or caseworker
- Case processing data—date of referral, reason for referral, source of referral, date of hearing, hearing officer
- Risk / needs assessment data—risk score, needs scores (by domain)
- Outcome measures organized by JDC goals, including, for example:
 - Community Protection—# / % of violations of JDC conditions, #/% of new offenses
 - Participation in substance abuse treatment—# / % of referred youth successfully completing treatment
 - Drug/Alcohol Testing—# / % of youth testing positive or negative for drugs or alcohol (by type).
 - Intervention / Treatment—# / % of youth successfully completing interventions of treatment activities (by type of intervention or treatment).
 - School Participation—# / % of youth attending school, employed, complete GED's

Juvenile Drug Court Mission: Worcester County, MD⁸ To reduce crime and eliminate substance use among youth participating in the program, to improve juvenile and family functioning, and to increase community safety, through a caring integrated, and strength-based approach that includes comprehensive service delivery, intensive court supervision, and enhanced accountability.		
Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures
Broad statements of what is hoped to be accomplished	Measurable statements of specific intended accomplishments	The empirical indicators of the degree to which an intermediate outcome has been achieved
Reduce substance abuse among JDC participants	All JDC participants will receive drug and alcohol assessments. 75% of individual treatment plans for JDC participants will be completed within eight days of adjudication 50% of the youth referred to substance abuse treatment will be enrolled within one week of receiving the plan 50% of the youth enrolled in substance abuse treatment will successfully complete treatment within 11 months of enrollment	# of drug and alcohol assessments completed # of individual treatment plans completed # / % of youth assessed for substance abuse # / % of Referrals of JDS youth to substance abuse treatment # / % of refereed youth successfully completing treatment # / % of youth receiving incentives / sanctions
Reduce delinquent behavior among JDC participants	75% of JDC participants will be assigned a dedicated juvenile probation officer within eight working days of the completed assessment. No more than half of JDC participants will commit new offenses while participating in the program	# of JDC participants assigned to dedicated juvenile probation officers within timelines # of JDC participants committing new offenses while participating in the program.
Expedite Formal Processing of juvenile alcohol and drug offenders for JDC eligibility	Decrease the time from juvenile court intake to adjudication by 50%.	# of days from intake to adjudication for JDC participants
Enhance JDC capacity for program quality assurance	Create baseline descriptive data of JDC participants Conduct program evaluations every six months	# of participants entered into SMART database and Judiciary UCS system Completion of bi-annual report on JDC outcomes and evaluation findings # of bi-annual reports disseminated / presented to stakeholders # of program improvements



REPORT DATA

Data that is not used does not need to be collected in the first place. It is highly recommended that your JDC apply performance measures data early, often, and in multiple ways. Fortunately, there is a wide range of uses of performance measures. The data may be used to produce a regular report card on JDC progress. It may be used in management reports or for short-term and long-term planning. Performance data is perfect for quality assurance purposes. And performance measures provide the foundation for JDC evaluation.

If we recall the three reasons for measuring performance—normative, pragmatic, and theoretical/empirical—several uses become immediately apparent. First, JDC performance measures can assist Juvenile Drug Court

professionals to demonstrate the value of JDC programming to funders and constituents by answering a number of questions designed to demonstrate related to program efficacy, including the number of youth referred to JDC’s and the number processed by JDC’s, the number and percent of JDC cases that are resolved with no new offenses, and the number and percent of JDC cases that are referred to services (by type) and the number and percent competing services.⁸

Second, performance measures data are the raw material of quality assurance and may be used to systematically assure and improve program quality. JDC program administrators can measure actual performance against anticipated outcomes to determine if goals are being met and what

⁸ This simplified logic model is extracted from the Worcester County, MD Circuit Court “Juvenile Drug Court Program: Policy and Procedure Manual (2013).

Reporting JDC Performance Measures

- JDC Report Card
- Management Reports
- Planning Reports
- Quality Assurance
- Evaluation JDC Report Card
- Management Reports
- Planning Reports
- Quality Assurance
- Evaluation

resources are required to assure program implementation integrity and enhance program quality.

In this capacity, JDC performance measures may also be used to plan for new programs and improve existing programs. For example, if substance abuse screening and assessment indicates high numbers of JDC youth who are abusing a particular kind of drug, but services are

not available to address those needs, planners can begin to fill that particular gap in services. Or, similarly, if the screening and assessments indicate a need for a particular type of existing service, but it is being underutilized, program administrators can redirect resources in that direction.

Finally, JDC performance measures data is also very useful for empirical research and evaluation. The focus of program evaluation is on the long-term impact of specific programs and interventions. The intermediate outcomes that comprise performance measures are invaluable to interpreting long-term impact. For example, an evaluation of a JDC may indicate that the overall recidivism rate is higher than expected. However, if the evaluator has access to reliable program performance measures, it may be possible to shine a more nuanced light on the overall recidivism numbers by demonstrating that youth who successfully achieved program expectations performed in the long-term better than those who did not.



RE-VISIT YOUR MISSION

You may recall that in Step 2 we said that effective performance measures begin—and end—with a strong mission statement. That is because effective performance measures are both mission-driven and are designed to provide empirical evidence that an organization is doing what it is designed to do and achieving the desired outcomes. If the performance measures demonstrate that JDC’s are operating as designed, they provide confirmation of the JDC model. However, if the performance measures are

disappointing, then there may be evidence that the JDC is not being implemented as designed or that the mission is somehow flawed.

If your JDC’s mission and outcomes are not aligned, it may be necessary to review JDC resources, policies, procedures, and activities to assure fidelity of implementation. In some cases, you may need to re-visit your logic model to assure that the links between mission and goals remain valid and strong. The good news is that because you developed an excellent logic model in Step 4, you have a guide for pin pointing where the problem(s) lay. So, for example your outcomes indicate that substance abuse treatment outcomes are disappointing or less than expected, you may use your logic model to review a variety of possible reasons, including initial assessment, referral to treatment, individual and family support while in treatment, and quality of treatment providers.

And now, with Step 7, we have traveled full-circle, back to convening your JDC Performance Measures Team to re-affirm that your JDC is, in fact, doing what it has been designed to do. Recall our initial assumption that organizations are designed to accomplish things. However, organizations exist in dynamic and constantly changing environments. Really effective, sustainable organizations have the built-in capacity to measure their performance within the context of a turbulent and ever-changing world and make the adjustments necessary to remain effective and relevant over time.

Strategic Review Agenda

- Review Mission, Goals, and Objectives
- Review Outcome Reports
- Celebrate Successes
- Address Shortcomings
- Affirm or Revise Mission
- Develop Action Plan to Facilitate Success and Ameliorate Shortcomings



7 (Easy) Steps to Confidentiality and Information-Sharing in Juvenile Drug Courts

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One of the most frequently cited barriers to delivering comprehensive, integrated services to youth in the juvenile justice system, is lack of information-sharing among agencies. This is especially true in juvenile drug courts (JDC) which are foundationally dependent on collaboration between agencies. Many substance abusing youth have difficulties and risk factors that cause multiple histories to exist in multiple systems. They may have medical problems that shed light on their behaviors, school related issues, prior brushes with the law, or may have been picked up for truancy or curfew violations. In addition, it is more probable than not that these young people have been in more than one school. For these reasons, it is not unusual for youth participating in JDC to be served by multiple agencies working with the youth and family simultaneously.

Courts, agencies, and families will benefit significantly from greater cross-system information-sharing and collaboration. Delivery of comprehensive services is not possible without accurate information regarding youth and families; therefore, information exchanges among JDC team members and agencies should be the norm and not the exception.

Recognizing that confidentiality rules and differing philosophies about information-sharing is a potential barrier to the success of JDCs, the following seven

easy steps to confidentiality and information-sharing are listed below to assist the court and all partnering agencies in delivering services to young people participating in juvenile drug court.



CREATE A JUVENILE INFORMATION-SHARING STAKEHOLDER GROUP.

The stakeholder group should be comprised of representatives from participating agencies, youth and families, and/or a family advocate. Judges, as leaders and conveners in local jurisdictions, often drive the process of setting up a permanent stakeholder group for purposes of system change/enhancement. The individuals sitting on the stakeholder group should have authority to make decisions on behalf of their agency or organization. Families and youth are important to the stakeholder group as they are usually moving in-and-out of multiple systems, each of which collects information as part of their intake and processing. Youth and families can advise decision makers about effective information-sharing practices and duplicative efforts and processes. On a system-wide level, the stakeholder group should collaborate to make formal, long-term commitments and policy regarding the sharing of information to accomplish the delivery of comprehensive, integrated services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system. This

process should also include designating a liaison to work with the JDC(s) to resolve any confidentiality issues or conflicts specific to working with youth and families involved in a juvenile drug court program.



DETERMINE WHAT INFORMATION IS CURRENTLY COLLECTED AND THE LAWS GOVERNING ITS RELEASE.

Courts, schools, treatment providers, and other agencies providing services to youth and families create and manage an enormous amount of information about their clients. The information can come directly from the youth and family, from outside the agency or from personal observation. It is critical that the team know what information is being collected by participating agencies and the laws governing release of this information. The JDC team should conduct an inventory of all types of information collected by participating agencies. The inventory will reveal redundancies and gaps in information collected. Consider the following in responding to and making requests for information:

- Is disclosure of the requested information regulated by a federal or state statute?
- Does the statute target a specific situation or type of information?
- Is the requested information public record under state or federal law?
- What is the agencies policy on release of the information?
- Has consent been given to release the information being requested?



IDENTIFY SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE SHARED AND WHO NEEDS TO KNOW WHAT.

Once the JDC team decides to share specific information in order to serve youth and their families more effectively; a series of questions should be raised immediately to determine common information and how the information will be shared. The team should have a shared vision, mission, goal, and objective for juvenile information-sharing. These questions will help analyze any confidentiality provisions and exceptions that should be in place.

- What information do you need? For what purpose?
- What information is deemed confidential?

- What information is not confidential?
- Are there any exceptions to the confidentiality restriction?
- Under what conditions should the information should be shared?
- What are the requirements for release?
- Can information be shared with or without the consent of the youth or parent?
- Who can give consent for information pertaining to minors?

The proper mechanism for exchanging information about juveniles and their families is by informed consent. Consent is generally demonstrated by a written release signed by the individual who is the subject of the information and in the case of juveniles, a parent or guardian. The youth and families, who are the subject of these consent forms must (1) understand the purpose and extent of the consent being requested and (2) be given the opportunity to review and acknowledge any memorandum of understanding entered into by the juvenile drug court partners regarding exchanges of their information. Requesting consent forms from youth and their parents demonstrates a respect for their privacy.



ENTER INTO A MOU THAT IS SIGNED AND ENDORSED BY EACH PARTICIPATING JUVENILE DRUG COURT TEAM MEMBER.

JDC team members need access to information about youth across systems to achieve the stated goals of the court. One way to gain access is through an interagency information agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU can create a clear legal and ethical path to exchanging information about the youth and families served. Developing an information-sharing approach grounded in “informed consent” can help the team in exchanging information and coordinating services for the youth and their families. The MOU formalizes agency-to-agency connections. The MOU should specify:

- What information will be shared?
- How the information will be shared?
- Who will have access to the information?
- The purpose for information-sharing?
- Assurances by the participating agencies that they will not disclose the information further,

except as directed by the agreement.

- Any requirements mandated by applicable statutory confidentiality provisions.
- Agreement that participating agencies will use only the information necessary to achieve the juvenile drug court’s purposes and to support defined activities.
- Agreement on ways the youth and/or the youth’s parent(s) and/or legal guardian can revoke their consent.

Interagency agreements and/or MOUs make it possible for agencies to share information, without violating the privacy of youth and their families.



BE AWARE OF INFORMAL VERBAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES.

The most common method of information-sharing among the JDC team is informal exchange, usually verbal and often over the telephone. This method is generally used for very limited types of information exchanges, such as confirming that a particular agency is working with a certain youth or checking to see whether a child is attending school. Individuals in different agencies who have known each other for some period of time and who have established a relationship of trust often use informal verbal exchanges. Be aware that informal information-sharing may not comply with statutory requirements since it is often done without consent or other statutory authorization. Although this practice may be routine and common, it may be a trap – informal verbal conversations are temporary; there is usually no written document and no record. The fact that this is common practice does not make it legal or ethical.



CROSS-TRAIN MEMBERS OF THE JUVENILE DRUG COURT TEAM AND THEIR RESPECTIVE AGENCIES ON AGENCY-SPECIFIC LEGAL MANDATES, POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND RESOURCES

Successful information-sharing occurs when team members are trained in all aspects of the information-sharing processes – including purpose, benefits, and expected outcomes. Most importantly every participating member of the JDC team, with access to the youths’ information, should understand the privacy policies and practices of each agency, including informed consent processes. Training should address:

- Rules that govern the JDC team members and the provisions made for sharing information.
- Specifics about the information needed by the judge, legal staff, treatment providers, probation officers, social/human service agencies, mental health, education, community based organizations, pro-social agencies, parents, and all who will be participating in the JDC.
- The reasons why the party needs the information.
- What information cannot be shared?
- The importance of informed consent.



REVIEW POLICIES REGULARLY

As with any process, things change over time and the team will learn as they go. Periodic assessments of the juvenile drug court teams’ information-sharing policy and MOU should be conducted to ensure that the policies and procedures are working well. As policies and procedures are introduced or modified, the new requirements need to be shared with the stakeholder group and all team members informed of the new requirements. In many cases it is policies and practices, and not laws that stop the sharing of information. In either case, there may be instances where both law and policy need to be changed to increase access to information.

A high level of trust among partnering agencies paves the way for full team member participation, cooperation, and collaboration. And, although, protections have been established to prevent information disclosure for illegitimate reasons, confidentiality laws are not a blanket prohibition against service providers, schools, and court personnel communicating with each other. It is simply a protection against sharing information over a person’s objection or sharing information that does not serve a specific purpose in the youth or family’s best interest. JDC teams are encouraged to keep in mind that protection of personal privacy and the delivery of services through collaborative information-sharing are not mutually exclusive goals.



7 (Easy) Steps to Community Engagement and Resource Development

Jessica M. Pearce, Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Engaging the local community to build resources has become imperative for most juvenile and family courts. With local, state, and federal resources disappearing many courts are hoping to find help for children, youth, and families in other areas of their communities. But, “community engagement” is an elusive and potentially unattainable goal. If you want to be successful in your efforts to engage your community you need to determine who you want to engage and why; then create a concrete plan with measurable goals. Here are some common-sense tips to get you started.



MAKE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT A PRIORITY

Community engagement and resource development is not something that can happen overnight. You’ll be working to build on existing relationships and creating new ones which will take time. If you’ve decided you’d like to undertake this challenge, make it a priority, and plan to spend twelve to eighteen months on the project. Conduct regular monthly meetings where the only thing on the agenda is community engagement and resource development.



CREATE A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

A team approach can be helpful in identifying and cultivating new community resources. With that in mind, create a community engagement and resource development team. Your team may be an off-shoot of an already existing steering committee or development group, but make sure that your team works exclusively on the task of community outreach and resource development. Be sure to include court staff who are interested in community engagement – they are usually the people that are already involved in engaging the community as individuals (i.e., belong to a civic organization, volunteer at the local animal shelter, etc).



ESTABLISH MEASURABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Once you’ve put together your team, spend time during first meeting or two to decide on a group vision and determine goals. Many courts have been successful using the SMART method (link to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria). SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely.

Below are some samples:

- Invite at least one new community contact to each of our community outreach and resource development meetings in the months of October, November, and December.
- Over the next three months, develop an incentive program for staff at the juvenile court and social services for either identifying or outreaching to a new community linkage.



INVENTORY YOUR NEEDS

There is nothing more frustrating in community engagement and resource development than creating a new linkage and finding that you're not ready to use their services. This can damage the newly developed relationship and can make your new linkage wary of working with the court. So, first take an inventory of needs. Survey staff and the children, youth, and families who are coming to court to find out what services they need. Ask your veteran staff about programs that existed in the past, but may have been eliminated due to budget cuts. Use the Community Map to create a wish list for programs under each of the different domains. For example under the domain of education, you may want to find tutoring services and GED programs.



INVENTORY YOUR COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Your community is not one single entity but rather a collection of different domains, each with their own resources, goals, and concerns. The Community Map is a great visual tool to help your team identify all of the different domains in the community and begin to create a list of specific programs within each domain that may be helpful to children, youth, and families involved in the court system. As you explore the resources in your community, try to find not only natural allies, but also seek out community groups and members that have share the court's concerns; they can become excellent allies in systems change.

Here's a tip: use the local yellow pages—it is a compendium of community resources!

Once you've created a list of the local programs within each domain, match up your wishes/needs with the different groups that could be approached about partnering with the team.



DEVELOP MARKETING TOOLS

It will be helpful to first identify existing services, organizations, groups, and individuals who have an investment in the same outcomes you are seeking to achieve. Determine who wants to reach out to the population of children, youth, and families you are planning to serve. Build on areas of common interest to create marketing materials.

Marketing materials should include the team's vision; an overview of the children, youth, and families; and a brief overview of some of the things these court users need (i.e., housing, tutoring, transportation assistance, etc).



ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY

Once the team is formed, measurable goals have been developed, needs and wishes have been inventoried, and marketing materials have been crafted, you and your team are ready to engage the community. Continue working with your team to determine the best path to collaboration, to making existing connections work better, and to finding new partnerships.

Here are some strategies that have been successful for other courts:

- exploring existing partnerships to see if there are new ways for you to collaborate
- look to your "sister" systems (social services, probation, etc) to find ways to share resources
- host a roundtable meeting with community leaders to discuss your areas of mutual interest
- reach out to universities, United Ways and other entities whose businesses is to gather information about resources, create directories, conduct research

It is no coincidence that a synonym for community is kinship. In the end successful community engagement is based on relationships. Work to form a cooperative spirit among those with whom you wish to collaborate.



7 (Easy) Steps to Creating a Transition Policy for Juvenile Drug Court Team Members

Wendy L. Schiller, Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Juvenile Drug Court (JDC) professionals are innovated, dedicated professionals who often get promoted, are appointed to work in other areas of the court, or find new career paths. For this reason there is a substantial amount of turnover among JDC team members. In some cases, there may just be burn-out, as working on a JDC team is extremely demanding. Because this issue permeates most jurisdictions that have a JDC, it is important to implement a process to “transition” new team members onto the existing drug court team. Keep the transition plans simple; focus on 1) what do new team members need to know and 2) what is the best way for new team members to learn about their role on the JDC.

Below are some tips or strategies that will assist teams in creating a well-thought out transition policy for new JDC team members, as well as for the youth and families they serve:



CREATE “LEARNING PACKETS”

A JDC should have several “Learning Packets” on hand to give to new and incoming team members. These

packets can serve as training materials because it is extremely important for team members who have not worked with adolescents or in the juvenile drug

court field to engage in some “pre-work” before joining the team and working with the youth and families. This packet should include a current list of contact information for stakeholders and team members, an updated community partnership map, a current participant guide, and a current policy and procedure manual. In addition, there are several publications which will help new team members better understand the philosophy behind juvenile drug courts, as well as adolescent development, and ways to further comprehend this population. Below is a list of resources that will be helpful to add to the Learning Packet:

- *The Juvenile Drug Court Strategies in Practice*
- *Managing and Sustaining Your Juvenile Drug Court*
- *Ensuring Fidelity to the 16 Strategies in Practice*
- *Using “Sober Support” Groups in Your Juvenile Court*
- *Exploring the Evidence: The Value of Juvenile Drug Courts*
- *Seven Things Juvenile Courts Should Know About Learning Disabilities*

- *Ten Things Every Juvenile Court Judge Should Know About Trauma and Delinquency*

All of these publications are housed and can be downloaded from the Juvenile Drug Court Information Center, located on the NCJFCJ’s website at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/our-work/juvenile-drug-courts>.



SHADOW EXISTING TEAM MEMBERS

Teams should make a concerted effort to give incoming members an opportunity to work with the outgoing member to get a good “feel” for the position and what their role will be on the team. Consider drafting a checklist (these should be role-dependent) of duties or information that should be conveyed during the day so nothing is forgotten or accidentally skipped.

JDC Coordinator Checklist

- Review incentives and sanction tracking procedure
- Review file sharing procedure
- Review pre-court staffing structure



GIVE NEW TEAM MEMBERS A WAY TO GAIN OWNERSHIP IN THE JDC.

Transitioning to working on a JDC can be difficult for new team members. The JDC philosophy often feels

foreign and is generally very different from the more traditional adversarial court process. Creating a way for new team members to have input on JDC policies is a great way to get them up to speed on the fundamental concepts underlying the program and provides a way for them to have input and gain ownership in the program. For example, many JDCs revisit and update their Community Map on a yearly basis. Assigning new team members to be part of the workgroup responsible for updating the team’s community map allows them to have input and buy-in to the program.

Frequently new team members may challenge the status quo of the JDC. This can be an opportunity for the JDC team to revisit the reasons why the drug court exists, address policy issues, and analyze the need for changes in structure and practice.



WHEN NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE JDC TEAM, FACILITATE A TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

Teams are encouraged to work in a

simple activity or exercise when new members join the team. The activity described below (This I Believe activity) may prove to be very helpful as a team building exercise, as well as a great opportunity for team members (new and old) to reflect on their individual role on the team. The activity generally takes around 20 minutes. Consider doing this during the first pre-court staffing or get together as a team for a brown-bag lunch. See below for full instructions:

On National Public Radio there is a series called This I Believe. Please visit: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=90368555> to listen to a particular news piece in the series (If you have access to the internet). This segment describes the background of the series, why it is important to get diverse opinions, and why these opinions can create a web or connection between diverse populations. Because each team member comes from different agencies or backgrounds professionally, it is important to hear the individual beliefs connected to working within a juvenile drug court and the program itself.

Activity: Choose a team member to lead or facilitate. If possible share the following essay with the team - Frederic Reamer’s essay, *The Real Consequences of Justice* can be found at: <http://thisibelieve.org/essay/22/>. This essay in particular, applies to the justice system.

Direct team members to create their own “This I Believe” statement centered on their views, vision, or expectations for working as a team member in a juvenile drug court program. For example:

- I believe the juvenile drug court in my community will give access to valuable resources to youth struggling with substance abuse.
- I believe I will be a valuable team member on our JDC team because I am a court appointed defense attorney, and I protect the rights of the youth that are involved in the system.
- I believe a JDC will reduce recidivism rates among youth that abuse alcohol and other drugs.

Guide team members through this process. Feel free to use one of the examples above or create your own “This I Believe” statements regarding your JDC. Have each team member read their statement aloud to the other team members and then discuss

the commonalities in each of the statements. It may surprise everyone how many there are.



DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE YOUTH AND FAMILIES!

It may seem confusing for participants and family members to walk into court one week and find that the JDC coordinator who they have been working with, and come to trust and even like, has left and been replaced by someone they have never seen before. To alleviate this type of confusion, design an orientation group session for youth and families to meet new team members. This will provide a seamless transition for the participants. Below are a few tips the team should consider:

- Have the orientation correspond with bi-weekly or weekly court sessions that are already in place
- Have the outgoing and incoming team members make a few comments to the group
- A short question and answer segment will give participants and families an opportunity to ask any questions that are weighing on their minds
- Suggest that the new team member provide a treat or snacks for the orientation (or the team – make it a celebration)
- Give families updated program materials (i.e., contact information sheets/brochures)

In addition, when a new team member joins the JDC team it is important to take the time to update all program materials as soon as possible. Because JDC participants rely so heavily on JDC team members, updates or additions need to be made, so youth and families will know who to call and how to contact them. Participants are required to do many, many things while they are in the program, and making this an easy process will help decrease any confusion and mishaps that may make a situation worse than it has to be.



INTRODUCE THE NEW TEAM MEMBERS TO THE STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

It is important to keep current stakeholders engaged in the JDC “happenings” (i.e., program outcomes, upcoming events, *and new team members*). Organize a meeting to introduce new team members to the current stakeholder committee members. This can coincide with a quarterly meeting schedule or

you can organize a meeting just to introduce the incoming member (i.e., brown-bag lunch or a pizza night). Much like an orientation for the youth and families, try to make this transition very strength-based and celebratory.



CODIFY THE TRANSITION POLICY IN THE JDC PROCEDURE MANUAL

Consider having a designated team member role compile transition packets, update contact information and program guides, coordinate shadowing efforts, and orientate current youth and families. Designating a specific “role” on the JDC team instead of an actual person will alleviate having to find another person on the team to complete the task, if that particular person is to leave for one reason or another. Within the procedure manual, have a detailed checklist to assist the incoming team member who will take over this responsibility.



7 (Easy) Steps to Building a Nonprofit Group to Support Your Juvenile Court

Jessica M. Pearce, Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Juvenile courts have a unique mission within the justice system, tasked with providing a balanced and measured response to a young person's delinquent behavior. This requires a holistic approach with a wide array of services that not only holds the youth accountable but also addresses any underlying concerns which may have led to the delinquency, including trauma and mental health issues. In addition, most professionals in juvenile justice recognize that there are a number of ancillary services a young person and his or her family may need including transportation, housing assistance, educational supports, and basic health services. These professionals also see a need for pro-social activities, which are a crucial component in case planning, in order to help youth create lasting changes within their own lives. But how can a court afford to create dynamic programs which are responsive to the underlying causes of delinquency, incorporate ancillary services, and develop pro-social activities? For some courts the answer has been simple: start a 501C(3) nonprofit group, to work in concert with the court, to create wrap-around services to meet the needs of youth and their families. A 501C(3) is the most common type of nonprofit organization and is exempt from federal income tax. These types of organizations or groups may receive grants from foundations

and donations made to them are tax deductible for individual donors and may be very beneficial for juvenile courts seeking to create more sustainable program components.

If you are thinking about starting a nonprofit to further serve the youth and families involved the juvenile justice system in your area and don't know where to start, below are some suggested easy first steps to get started.



CREATE A NONPROFIT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Creating a nonprofit organization is a lengthy process - expect to spend six to eight months on the project. A team approach can be helpful in navigating the nonprofit development world, consider forming a small group that can tackle the task. Be sure to include any court staff who have experience in creating a nonprofit organization or who have close ties to other nonprofits in the community. You'll also want to include someone on your team with an interest in finance because the team will need to start thinking about the budget for the nonprofit from the very beginning. Consider using a GANTT chart (a type of bar chart which illustrates the start & finish dates of singular project elements) to help the development

team stay on track and assign specific duties and tasks. For sample charts visit, <http://www.ganttchart.com/examples.html> - GANTT CHARTS, sponsored by KIDASA Software



DETERMINE THE NEED FOR A NONPROFIT

Once a development team in place, spend some time determining where (and if) there are gaps in services. Survey court staff and the children, youth, and families who are coming to court to find out what services they need. Ask veteran staff about programs that existed in the past, but may have been eliminated due to budget cuts. Conduct a brainstorming session and create a list of all goods and services court users might need or want. Once a “wish list” of services is developed, take an inventory of what nonprofits already exist in the community which may be serving these needs. In some cases you may not need to create your own nonprofit and instead linkages may be created with existing youth and family service organizations. This may be accomplished by completing a “community mapping” exercise (visit NCJFCJ’s website at to download a free copy of the Community Mapping Exercise at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Community%20Partnership%20Map.pdf>) with the development team, which will highlight any gaps in services, as well as highlight services the team may not have known about. As the development team explores resources in the community, try to find natural allies, community groups, and/or members that have not historically worked with the court system (like the faith-based community organizations) and invite them to sit on the board or other stakeholder committees involved in the justice system.



CHOOSE A NAME AND DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT

Your nonprofit will need to have its own unique name which will be used when applying for nonprofit status. Each state has its own rules which need to be followed when selecting a name and requirements can generally be found on a state’s business filing website. An easy way to locate a state’s business filing website is simply by Googling the state’s name and filing (i.e., “Nevada business filing”).

The team will also want to create a mission statement for the new organization. The Mission Statement will serve as the foundation for planning

efforts and will establish a common vision and expectations. The Mission Statement should incorporate the purpose of the nonprofit, the targeted population, a description of program goals, and the reason why the court is developing a nonprofit.

Sample Mission Statement: “The mission of Lending the Juvenile Justice System a Helping Hand is to provide wraparound services to all youthful offenders and their families to reduce substance use and criminal behavior, strengthen family and community ties, and improve educational opportunities by offering structured, strength-based services that will result in responsible citizenship and public safety.”



FILE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AND OBTAIN A FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

At this stage in the development of the nonprofit organization, the development team should think about hiring/recruiting an attorney to assist with filing Articles of Incorporation and obtaining a federal employer identification number. Consider using the local state’s Bar Association to find an attorney who specializes in nonprofit law. It may be possible to find an attorney who shares in the mission and will be willing to work pro-bono to assist with the filing process.

Articles of Incorporation are official statements, stating the creation of a particular organization and are important legal protection for individuals associated with the organization, as well as place responsibility for debts and liabilities on the organization rather than organization members or staff. Articles of Incorporation will need to be filed with the local state’s corporation’s office. The State’s Attorney General’s Office or Secretary of State’s office will have all the details about what needs to be included in the Articles of Incorporation.

Once Articles of Incorporation have been filed, the team will be able to obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number which is the corporate equivalent of a social security number. Visit the IRS’ website at: [http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-\(EIN\)-Online](http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Apply-for-an-Employer-Identification-Number-(EIN)-Online), to file any necessary forms with the IRS.



DEVELOP A BUDGET, RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM, AND ACCOUNTING PROTOCOL

The next step in creating a nonprofit organization is to develop a budget and business plan. This is a crucial step and can have long-term ramifications for the success of the organization. With that in mind, consider hiring a CPA who has experience with 501C(3)s.

Well maintained records are also vital to the success of a nonprofit. Determine who will maintain, both electronic and hard copies, of important corporate documents, including board meeting minutes, bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, financial reports and other official records. Contact the appropriate agency in your state to determine what records they require nonprofit organizations to keep and the length of time for which they are to be retained.

Nonprofit organizations, particularly those developed in conjunction with the justice system are under scrutiny regarding the expenditure of funds. The nonprofit board members need to be able to answer questions about accounting practices from the public, investors, and the government. The CPA or finance expert can help set up a system that will be appropriate for both immediate and future needs; they can also help open a bank account for the nonprofit organization.

of Directors also be aware of any minimum size requirements imposed by your state.

Bylaws serve as a roadmap for the governance of nonprofits and should be well thought out and developed; work closely with the development team, the attorney and the selected Board to flesh out clear and comprehensive bylaws.

Creating a nonprofit, which serves the needs of youth and families involved in the juvenile justice system, can be a daunting task. But once an effective nonprofit group is established, the Board can begin to develop resources and provide services. A nonprofit can be a useful tool for the court and can interact with the community in a way that court personnel cannot (i.e., advocate for the program; find funding sources; collaborate with allied organizations), which is a considerable asset to the court. In this article, the author wishes to convey the importance and magnitude of setting up a 501C(3), but also illustrate ways that this CAN be accomplished by using a collaborative approach.



FILE FOR NONPROFIT STATUS

The last step to complete for your nonprofit organization is to file for nonprofit status. The IRS website has forms and instructions for completing this last crucial step - <http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&Non-Profits/Application-for-Recognition-of-Exemption>. Applying for state tax exempt status may be done by contacting your state Department of Revenue, county or municipal Department of Revenue, local Departments of Revenue, and/or county or municipal clerk's offices.



ELECT A BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CREATE BYLAWS

Your nonprofit organization will need a Board of Directors and bylaws to operate at its most efficient level. Use the community inventory completed in Step 2 to find members of other nonprofit organizations, service clubs, and youth groups who may be willing to serve on your Board of Directors. When selecting a Board



7 (Easy) Steps to Individualizing Your Juvenile Drug Court

Wendy L. Schiller, Site Manager, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Since proliferating broadly in the late 1990s, Juvenile Drug Courts (JDC) have struggled to implement practices and procedures that focus on the individual youth *and* provide consistent and fair treatment of participating youth and families. Practitioners and researchers alike have noted that many JDC teams took their cue from their adult counterparts and developed programs, policies, and procedures based on the adult model – the *10 Key Components*. Although the *10 Key Components* offer many recommendations and strategies JDC teams can utilize to build a strong collaborative team, many adolescent-focused strategies are absent. An individualized approach, emphasizing evidence-based practice for adolescents, is recommended by the *Juvenile Drug Court Strategies in Practice (16 Strategies)*. Several key strategies are recommended, including:

- Comprehensive Treatment Planning
- Developmentally Appropriate Services
- Gender-Appropriate Services
- Cultural Competence
- Focus on Strengths
- Educational Linkages

- Family Engagement
- Goal-Oriented Incentives and Sanctions

These strategies may be rolled into comprehensive case planning for each youth participating in a JDC to help the team assess risk and need; coordinate appropriate services; and create individualized responses. Below are seven easy steps to creating individualized, strength-based, comprehensive case plans for the youth involved in juvenile drug courts.



UTILIZE AN EVIDENCE-BASED SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT (NORMED ON ADOLESCENTS) TO DETERMINE LEVEL OF RISK, NEED, AND RESPONSIVITY.

Screening and assessment can be defined as:

Screening

“The goal of screening is to accurately identify youth who will benefit from a full and complete assessment. Screening determines the need for a comprehensive assessment; it does not establish definitive information about diagnosis and possible treatment needs. The process should take no

longer than 30 minutes and ideally will be shorter.”¹

Assessment

“The comprehensive assessment confirms the presence of a problem and helps illuminate other problems connected with the adolescent’s substance use disorder. Comprehensive information can be used to develop an appropriate set of interventions.”²

Many jurisdictions utilize a state-wide screening and assessment process (e.g., Positive Achievement Change Tool Assessment in Florida, or Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment), and the JDC team is encouraged to review and become familiar with the screening and assessment processes in their

own jurisdictions.

It is not always practical or cost-efficient to perform a full assessment on every youth who comes in contact with the juvenile justice system or every youth who could potentially be a candidate for a JDC. JDC teams are encouraged to use a graduated, gated matrix to determine the screening and assessment process, where the team would determine “1) when to implement the procedure; 2) where to implement the procedure; 3) who is responsible for implementing the procedure; 4) who is screened or tested; 5) optimum case flow at each gate; 6) what screening or assessment instrument is to be used; and 7) what is the outcome, or action for ‘positive’ results.”³

1 Screening and Assessing Adolescents for Substance Use, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (1999). Retrieved from the National Center for Biotechnology Information (March 17, 2014) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64370/#A55152>.
2 Supra note 1.

3 Thomas, D. W. (1990). *Manual for Developing a Substance Abuse Screening Protocol for the Juvenile Court and Implementing the Client Substance Index- Short Form (CSI-SF)*. Pittsburgh: National Center for Juvenile Justice.

Substance Abuse Screening and Assessment: Gate Development Matrix					
	First Gate	Second Gate	Third Gate	Fourth Gate	Fifth Gate
When to initiate activities	Intake	Intake	Intake	After a Moderate-High or High Risk Level Assignment from PACT Pre-Screen	After questions 8c & 8d are selected
What instrument will be used?	Intake forms	Intake forms	PACT Pre-Screen	PACT Pre-Screen	Validated Assessment Tool
Who will implement activities?	Intake officer	Intake officer	Intake officer	Intake officer	Treatment Provider
Other agencies/actors to be involved	Public defender & state attorneys	Public defender & state attorneys	Public defender & state attorneys	Public defender & state attorneys	Health and Human Services
Anticipated case flow (# of youth affected)	2,524	2,408 (95%) 13-16+	414 (16%)	132 (31%)	80
Capacity of gate (how many youth can be easily processed?)					Able to serve 50 youth (based on available resources)
Next gate trigger	Youth between 14-17 years old	Youth meets legal status requirement	Moderate-High or High Risk Level from PACT Pre-Screen	Questions 8c & 8d Selected on PACT Pre-Screen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently using alcohol • Alcohol contributes to criminal behavior • Currently using drugs • Drugs contributes to criminal behavior 	Meet a moderate/high level of criminogenic risk and substance abuse/ use treatment need.
Facilitating factors	Parent & Youth Cooperation	Parent & Youth Cooperation	Parent & Youth Cooperation	Parent & Youth Cooperation	Parent & Youth Cooperation
Obstacles	Lack of parental support and youth interest	Lack of parental support and youth interest	Lack of parental support and youth interest	Parent & Youth Denial	Parent & Youth Refusal to Cooperate
Issues	Denial	Denial	Denial	Family Participation	Family Participation



USE THE RESULTS FROM COMPLETED ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM A COMPREHENSIVE CASE PLAN FOR THE YOUTH AND FAMILY.

Developmental considerations, gender, and cultural experiences will be revealed during the assessment process and will allow the team to understand the unique circumstances for each youth. A validated assessment will contain many of the answers JDC teams are looking for when the team attempts to engage, promote behavior change, and deliver appropriate services to youth and families. For example, the *Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators- Risk Assessment* covers twelve domains – criminal history, school, use of free time, employment, relationships, environment in which the youth was primarily raised, current living arrangements, alcohol and drugs, mental health, attitudes/behaviors, skills, and progress on supervision.⁴ This is a wealth of information which can and should inform individual case plans for youth (e.g., understanding current living arrangements will help the team direct the youth and family to housing subsidies, if needed).

A tip for case managers (or court staff completing assessments on youth) – print copies of the manual and assessment questions and provide cross-training for JDC team members regarding the assessments used in your jurisdiction. This training will allow all JDC team members to become aware of the type of information collected regarding each youth.



EMPHASIZE INDIVIDUALIZED ASSESSMENT AND CASE PLANNING OVER GENERIC, PRE-DETERMINED REQUIREMENTS.

Many JDC policy and procedure manuals, phase structures, and incentives and sanctions grids are predetermined sets of requirements for each youth and family to accomplish while they are participating in the program. In addition, many of these frameworks were and are based on adult drug court frameworks. In the example below of a typical Phase One within a JDC, the total number of requirements (e.g., treatment sessions, court, sober support, drug tests) per week is twelve. It is not uncommon to see JDC teams build in even more difficult requirements during this Phase – upwards of 17 requirements. This rigorous structure, which is not individualized, often leads to failures and setbacks that the team has constructed because the youth and families have not yet been given the tools to succeed.

JDC teams are encouraged to revisit the current phase structure within their program and determine if the process is individualized in nature – is it a mechanism to help youth and families succeed or fail? Work together as a team to develop goals for each phase and build in requirements which help the youth and families achieve those goals. Below are things to consider which will help the JDC team construct an individualized system of providing services, as well as accountability.

⁴ *Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment Manual*
Version 2.0, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, January 1999.

Example of a Predetermined Phase One (i.e., not individualized)			
	Court Appearance	Requirements	Expected Duration
Phase 1	1 per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Individual sessions per week (one of which will be substituted for a family session – one per month) • 2 Group sessions per week • 3 AA meetings per week • Random urinalysis, 2-3 per week • Attend school daily / no referrals / active participation • Abide by court-ordered curfew • Start a Journal <p><i>For advancement to Phase II – completion of all Phase I assignments and 60 days of consecutive, CLEAN urinalysis testing.</i></p>	2 months

Ideally JDCs want the youth to get oriented to the program and come out of the fog of using/abusing drugs (perhaps everyday), and give them time to adjust without bogging them down with too many appointments, meetings, or requirements. Ease youth and families into the program during Phase I by starting “where the youth is at” and giving opportunities for success, rather than setting them up for failure.

Things to consider are:

- Consider keeping Phase I to 30 days, which is an alluring carrot for youth and families. JDC teams will want to consider keeping requirements low in Phase I, gradually increasing in Phase II and III and then tapering off again.
- It may not be therapeutic for the youth to automatically go to treatment sessions three times a week. Treatment plans should be individualized, as well as follow a manualized evidence-based practice. Keep in mind that treatment should be driving the treatment goals and case plan, with the backing of the court.
- Make family engagement a priority in this phase – Ask “what can the JDC do for the family, not what does the family need to do for the court.”
- Rather than the usual paradigm of attend school / no referrals / active participation, set a requirement that a school action-plan has to be set in place before movement to the next phase. This action plan may simply consist of getting enrolled in school if the youth is not enrolled or working with the school to put an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) in place.
- Perhaps consider a reduction in substance use/abuse, rather than 60 days of consecutive clean UAs. If progress is being made in treatment, that may be enough success to move to Phase II after a reassessment in 30 days.
- Traditional AA meetings are generally not adolescent focused and may cause more harm than good.
- Make moving from phase to phase very tangible – a checklist where the youth, families, and case managers check off and/or initial completed tasks with an application

or request process to move up a phase. This will decrease the ambiguity for the youth and families.

4 WORK WITH FAMILIES/CAREGIVERS TO INFORM THE ASSESSMENT AND CASE PLANNING PROCESS.

This is a process that the treatment provider or case manager (i.e., probation officer) does with the youth and family – not to the youth and family. The use of motivational interviewing strategies during the assessment and case planning process will lead to open communication between the family and the case manager. It is important to assess your own values before working with the youth and families and view them with a strength-based lens – keep in mind that these are not your families or your children. During any conversations to gather information on the youth and families, allow them to identify unmet needs and priorities, goals or aspirations, coping strategies, resources, and strengths.

The JDC team is encouraged to receive training on motivational interviewing techniques, as well as assessing strengths and needs (i.e., using a strength-based approach).

5 INCORPORATE POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THAT FOCUS ON STRENGTHS TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PRO-SOCIAL PARTICIPATION.

Positive youth development (PYD) is an “...approach [that] supports youth in making [a] successful transition from adolescence to early adulthood by encouraging young people to develop useful skills and competencies, and to build stronger connections with pro-social peers, families, and communities.”⁵ The approach focuses on the strengths of youth and families and uses a workable, concrete model to further the goals of individualized case planning, which will ultimately connect youth firmly in their communities. The method defines “Core Assets” and divides the assets into two components – learning/doing (developing and using new skills) and attaching/belonging (membership and belonging to pro-social groups).⁶ The “Practice Domains” (i.e.,

5 Butts, Jeffrey A., Gordon Bazemore, & Aundra Saa Meroe (2010). *Positive Youth Justice – Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*. Washington, DC: Coalition for Juvenile Justice, p. 16.

6 *Supra* note 5, p. 16-18.

work education, relationships, community, health, and creativity) align with the JDC philosophy and will allow JDC case managers to enhance case management strategies by helping youth identify measurable goals and activities based on the individual strengths and resources available to them.⁷

JDC teams are encouraged to download a copy of *Positive Youth Justice – Framing Justice Interventions Using the Concepts of Positive Youth Development*, and discuss opportunities for case management enhancement or implementation of PYD strategies. The resource is located on the Coalition for Juvenile Justice’s website at: <http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Positive%20Youth%20Justice.pdf>.



CREATE EDUCATIONAL LINKAGES WITH SCHOOLS OR OTHER VOCATIONAL SYSTEMS WHICH WILL LAST AFTER THE YOUTH LEAVE THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM.

School liaisons are a core role on a JDC team and provide an invaluable link to educational systems. Many school liaisons serve as data collectors (as it relates to school activities) and provide the JDC team with objective data on school related activities – attendance, grades, or tardies. This information is valuable to the team in the sense that it allows the team to gauge compliance as it relates to mandates to attend school and keep grades up. However, it may be prudent for case managers and/or treatment providers to work more closely with school liaisons to build in school related goals within the case plan and phase structure. For example, the team may find that a youth has a credit deficit and has not taken any of the required proficiency exams needed to graduate, so while attending school on a daily basis now is a huge success (and should be rewarded), it may not get the youth to the finish line (i.e., graduation). Informed case planning will allow the youth to identify strategies to make up credits (e.g., summer school – the team may be able to pay for this as an incentive) and/or receive tutoring to sit for proficiency exams.



DEVELOP INDIVIDUALIZED INCENTIVES AND SANCTIONS THAT MOTIVATE YOUTH AND FOCUS ON POSITIVE BEHAVIOR CHANGE.

This is by far the most difficult concept for JDC

⁷ *Supra* note 5, p. 19-30

teams to implement – dispensing individualized incentives and sanctions, which are perceived as consistent and fair, may seem like an impossible task. JDC teams are encouraged to develop a three-prong approach to develop individual and broad-based responses to promote positive change and increase engagement:

1. Utilize contingency management theories to gain compliance over positive or negative urine analysis tests, using the same, consistent response every single time.⁸
 - ▶ This can be thought of as privilege-reduction, rather than a sanction.
 - ▶ Work with the youth and family to determine what a Most Valued Privilege (MVP)⁹ would be, preferably a family-based reward (e.g., video games, cell phone use, and time w/ friends).
 - ▶ The MVP is a privilege that the youth values and will work hard to earn.
 - ▶ The MVP is given or taken away with each positive or negative drug screen.
2. Utilize individualized behavior contracts to reward and motivate positive behavior change in other areas (school attendance; family connectedness; community involvement).
 - ▶ Behavior contracts will “reward for responsible behavior in other domains.”¹⁰ And will:
 - target specific behaviors (e.g., school attendance);
 - provide a step-by-step process for the youth to follow;
 - get youth working towards things they are interested in;
 - engage families/guardians in the process; and
 - increase communication between the youth and judge.

⁸ Theories based on *Contingency Management for Adolescent Substance Abuse: A Practitioner’s Guide* by Scott W. Henggeler, Phillippe B. Cunningham, Melisa D. Rowland, Sonja K. Schoenwald, and Associates.

⁹ *Supra* note 8, p. 107-108.

¹⁰ *Supra* note 8, p. 131.

3. Utilize program-wide incentives to motivate families to engage in the program, upward phase movement, and promote a strength-based atmosphere. For example:

► **Rocket Docket** – motivate youth and families on a weekly or bi-weekly basis with the opportunity to have their case go first and leave early. This is based on individual performance between court appearances.

► **3 for 3 Program** – motivate youth and families to complete three concrete tasks per week. Every time the participant has accomplished all three tasks, they are able to put a card with their name on it in a bowl. A drawing is then held once per month (e.g., the first Wednesday of each month); depending on what day of the week court is held. If their name is drawn, they win the prize for that month. For example:

1. Did you pass all of your UA tests since your last appearance in court?
2. Did you bring your JDC folder with planner and JDC participant handbook (the planner would be an excellent place to keep weekly behavior contracts)?
3. Did you make the minimum number of face-to-face contacts since your last court appearance (or were you excused by your case worker)?

► **Token Economy** – reward progress with points or tokens to create a tangible and tactile experience. Points or tokens can be awarded (but is not limited to) for attending court and treatment, participating in pro-social activities, or school attendance. Many JDCs incorporate a point system which is attached to phase movement (e.g., phase one = 200 points and the youth has to earn 200 points to move up to phase two).

► **Fish Bowl** – work in a raffle-type give away, which stretches resources. This is a great way to incorporate a 3 for 3 Program or to encourage family members to attend court.

The three-prong approach allows for more opportunities to add tangible, individualized incentives. Case managers and treatment providers are encouraged to use information from the assessment, youth inventories or surveys, and motivational interview techniques to drive this

portion of the youth's case plan.

The seven easy steps listed above work best if youth and family inform the process at every level, and keeping the *16 Strategies* in mind during the case planning process will allow JDC teams to closely adhere to recommended practice. Including youth and families in this process is multifaceted and complex; however, allowing assessments to drive the process will illicit stronger, individualized, and goal-oriented case plans which will likely produce better outcomes – increased school, family, and community connections, positive behavior change, and clean and healthy lifestyle changes. In effect, JDC teams are encouraged to incorporate the Strategies listed in the introductory paragraph into a single strategy – comprehensive case planning, which is driven by using information collected via ongoing validated assessments.

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