

Utah Board of Juvenile Justice

2007

ANNUAL REPORT

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PRIORITY PROGRAM AREAS PROGRESS REPORT

The Utah Board of Juvenile Justice (UBJJ) serves as the federally designated State Advisory Group under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) of 2002. Under the Act, the Board must prepare a comprehensive plan advancing the goals of the Act in Utah, leveraging both federal and state resources.

After careful review of statewide data, the Board established funding priorities and provided grants to address identified issues. Under this plan, the Board provided funding for nineteen different projects last year. Fourteen of those projects provided direct services to children. The others focused on system improvements (e.g. JJDP compliance monitoring, truancy mediation to rural Utah, developing a female risk assessment, and project evaluation). Eleven projects qualified for in-depth risk/protective factors assessment conducted by the University of Utah Criminal Justice Center (CJC). What follows is a summary report of progress made within the priority areas identified by the Board. This report is based on data gathered by the CJC and performance measures data from quarterly reporting.

General Overview

In most cases, UBJJ funded programs target youth who are at greater risk and have less protection than their peers for delinquent behavior. The eleven projects evaluated served 312 youth: 43% male, 57% female. Seventy-one percent of the youth served were youth of color.

Youth in UBJJ funded programs most commonly have difficulties with school environments. They reported higher rates of school suspensions, low commitment to school, and academic failure. Findings indicate that UBJJ funded programs are successfully targeting youth with these problems.

Findings also indicate that 55% of program goals showed positive changes. While this is five percent below the targeted performance level of 60%, it also indicates the evaluation tool is effective in early identification of problems with several new start-up programs. Ultimately, these programs have the opportunity to improve service delivery early on.

Most UBJJ programs have a component targeting school based risk or protective factors. Eighty percent of UBJJ programs that target this area obtained significant decreases in risk factors and increases in protective factors related to school problems.

The next most common targets for UBJJ programs are factors related to the family. Just under half of the programs targeting this area show decreases in family conflict, poor family management, or increases in prosocial involvement, all factors affecting a youth's likelihood of participating in delinquent behavior.

The third most common area targeted is social skills. Results show that 75% of UBJJ programs that target this area obtained significant increases in this protective factor.

Priority Areas

1. Substance Abuse Prevention

Many of the programs funded show an ability to prevent the use of drugs and alcohol by minors. However, the Board funded two projects specifically designed to prevent substance abuse by youth. These projects served 102 youth with 65 completing program requirements. Families completing program requirements report 100% satisfaction.

Family and Youth Connections provides SAMSHA approved prevention curriculum to children of parents recovering from drug or alcohol abuse. Youth who successfully completed Family & Youth Connections demonstrated a 32% increased understanding drug addiction, their own "recovery" process, and the

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important role of the family in the recovery process. The pre/post test that participants took for each section of the

curriculum demonstrated a 67% reduction in risk factors and 67% enhancement of protective factors.

Grandfamilies provides support to children in kinship placement and their guardians. This grant funds the expansion of the program to Tooele. The parents of the majority of the children involved in this project have substance abuse issues. Grandfamilies staff provided clients with approximately 60 hours of additional outreach and advocacy services in addition to the support received through attending regular Grandfamilies groups. None of the children receiving services reported engaging in drug or alcohol use.

2. Delinquency Prevention

Both Title V and Title II grants fund programs targeting delinquency prevention. Six programs were funded under this program area. They include five after-school programs and expansion Big Brothers Big Sisters to southern Utah. These projects served 1,172 youth with 67% completing program requirements during the reporting period. Self-report data indicate: 74% of participants showed improvement in antisocial behavior; 91% improved school attendance and 69% improved family relationships.

Several of the projects in this program area were identified as needing to better target appropriate candidates for services and to adjust services to better meet the goals identified at the projects initiation. These adjustments should improve the programs' abilities to provide targeted services.

3. Disproportionate Minority Contact

UBJJ supported five programs aimed at improving competencies of minority offenders. Ochos Pasos provides prevention and intervention services to Hispanic youth with gang affiliation. The Vietnamese Youth Delinquency Prevention program seeks to prevent refugee and immigrant children from gang involvement, substance abuse, and assist in bridging cultures. The Dream Team serves female youth in Ogden who live in low income, high crime neighborhoods. These girls are at high risk on most factors. Child and Family Empowerment provides culturally sensitive intervention services to Polynesian females designed to increase self-esteem and attachment to their cultural community while reducing propensity for delinquency. (These last two projects are also classified as gender specific programming.) These four projects served 162 youth. Those participating in these programs reported

reduced antisocial behavior and improved family relationships with only a 13% reoffense rate.

Legal Equity for Minority Youth (LEMY) provided legal representation for minority youth in Utah County. This program differs from other programs UBJJ funds as it is intended to reduce differential treatment of minority offenders in the juvenile court. The premise of the LEMY program is that minority offenders will be treated more fairly by the court when provided competent representation and legal education.

Outcomes of LEMY youth show this program to be particularly promising for reducing disparities between minority and Caucasian youth during court proceedings. Youth receiving LEMY representation were 25% less likely to be convicted of all charges than minorities without representation and 3% more likely to have all charges dismissed. Ninety-one percent of all youth received either the sanction recommended by the guidelines or a less severe sanction. Importantly, all youth with representation, whether Caucasian or minority, showed better outcomes than youth who did not have representation. These results are preliminary, but given their promising nature, deserve further examination.

4. Gender Specific Services for Girls - Priority for Minority Girls

Four projects are supported by UBJJ in this area. Three of the four projects provide direct services to girls either at risk of entering the juvenile justice system or who are already on probation. Child and Family Empowerment Services and the Dream Team were mentioned previously. Discovering Possibilities, sponsored by Salt Lake County Youth Services, provides services for female youth referred by the Juvenile Court and related agencies. The program serves females from 13 to 17 years of age. These three projects served 164 girls with 93% completing program requirements. Participating girls reported significant improvement in self-esteem, body image, family relationships and perception of social support with a reoffense rate of only 3%.

Another project is developing a risk assessment tool for girls entering the juvenile justice system to improve the

ability of the juvenile justice system to provide services better suited for girls.

5. Improve Mental Health Services

Due to cuts in the federal grant program, no new awards have been made for two years. No programs have been funded in this program area.

6. Juvenile Delinquency Guidelines – Model Court

This program area has been funded through the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant, which UBJJ does not manage

FY08 Grants

Title II First & Second Year Projects \$0

Due to cuts in the federal grant program, no new grants were awarded this year and there are no second year projects.

Title II Third Year Projects \$160,250

Salt Lake Co. \$29,000 - *Polynesian Young Women's Life Skills Group*
 Child & Family Empowerment
 Tooele Co. \$30,000 – *Grandfamilies*
 Children's Service Society
 Salt Lake Co. \$27,500 - *Discovering Possibilities*
 Salt Lake County Youth Services
 Weber Co. \$56,250 – *The Dream Team*
 Colors of Success
 Statewide \$17,500 – *Protective/Risk Assessment Enhancement for Females*
 Juvenile Justice Services

Title II Fourth Year Projects \$80,793

Salt Lake Co. \$20,125 – *Family & Youth Connections, Colors of Success*
 Salt Lake Co. \$8,250 – *Ocho Pasos*
 Poder Para La Familia Hispana
 Box Elder Co. \$24,418 – *Youth & Families Technology Literacy*
 Boys & Girls Clubs of Brigham City
 Summit Co. \$28,000 – *South Summit Mentoring & Tutoring, South Summit Healthy Community Coalition*

Title II On-Going Projects \$154,480

Statewide \$84,300 – *JJDP Act Compliance Monitoring, Juvenile Justice Services*
 Statewide \$19,500 – *Juvenile Jail Removal, Juvenile Justice Services*
 Statewide \$50,680 – *Outcome Evaluation Survey, U of U Criminal Justice Center*

Title V Delinquency Prevention \$56,250

Salt Lake Co. \$53,438 – *Granite Park Youth Development, South Salt Lake City*

State Gang Mini Grants \$80,000

Salt Lake Co. \$20,000 – *Education First Juvenile Justice Services*
 Salt Lake Co. \$20,000 – *Youth Works Camp Anytown*
 NeighborWorks, Salt Lake City
 Weber Co. \$20,000 – *Teens Mentoring Youth*
 Boys & Girls clubs of Weber-Davis
 [Wasatch Co. \$20,000 – *Rural Mentoring*
 Weber Co. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah
 Washington Co.]