



Juvenile Justice
Advisory Group

Annual Report 2015

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Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG)

2015 Membership

MEMBER	TITLE
Jack Carter	Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Chair
Euphemia Adams	Executive Director, Families on the Move
Thomas Beilein	Chair, state Commission of Correction
Jenny Besch	Director, Westchester and Rockland Mediation Centers
<i>Elmer Blanco</i>	<i>Quality Improvement Specialist, New York City Administration for Children's Services</i>
Gladys Carrión	Commissioner, New York City Administration for Children's Services
Hernan Carvente	New Leaders Council National Youth Chair, Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Joseph Cocozza	Director, National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice
<i>Shane Correia</i>	<i>Attorney, Planning and Analysis, Bronx County District Attorney's Office</i>
Edward Fergus	Deputy Director, Metropolitan Center for Urban Education
Michael C. Green	Executive Deputy Commissioner, state Division of Criminal Justice Services
<i>Nancy Hollander</i>	<i>Community Member</i>
Martha Walsh Hood	Family Court Judge, Onondaga County
Emily Tow Jackson	Executive Director, Tow Foundation
<i>Judy Harris Kluger</i>	<i>Chief of Policy and Planning, state Office of Court Administration</i>
Robert M. Maccarone	Deputy Commissioner, state Division of Criminal Justice Services and state Probation Director
Emanuel McCall	Program Specialist, YouthBuild Schenectady
Sheila Poole	Acting Commissioner, state Office of Children and Family Services
Karen Richmond	Executive Director, Children's Home of Jefferson County
Lester Young	Regent-At-Large, University of the State of New York

Members distinguished by italics left the board during 2015.

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I. Introduction and Background

New York State's Juvenile Justice Advisory Group is a federally required panel of criminal justice, human service, research and court professionals and community members tasked with improving the state's juvenile justice system and ensuring compliance with mandates outlined in the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. The panel is empowered by New York State Executive Order 80, and its members are appointed by the Governor.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the state's plan to comply with federal juvenile justice mandates; distributing nearly \$2 million in federal grants to fund delinquency prevention, effective interventions to justice-involved youth and juvenile justice systems reforms; and advising the governor and state Legislature on effective juvenile justice policies.

In addition, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group monitors the state's compliance with four core protections extended by the federal law: sight and sound separation of juvenile delinquents from adult offenders; deinstitutionalization of status offenders; removal of juvenile delinquents from adult jails and lock-ups; and reduction of disproportionate minority contact.

The federal law also requires each state to designate a state agency to develop and implement the state plan. In New York, the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) serves in that capacity. DCJS staff provides administrative support to the JJAG and oversees the implementation and monitoring of contracts on the advisory group's behalf. The agency also collaborates with the state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) on juvenile justice initiatives.

Congress requires the JJAG to report to the Governor and Legislature annually. This report fulfills that requirement for 2015.

II. Compliance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

States that receive federal Title II formula grant funding are required to comply with four core protections guaranteed by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Those mandates are the deinstitutionalization of status offenders, separation of juveniles from adult offenders, removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups and addressing the disproportionality of minority contact in the juvenile justice system.

DCJS contracts with the state Commission of Correction to assure monitoring and compliance with the first three requirements, which are related to permissible methods of confinement for youth. The first, *deinstitutionalization of status offenders*, prohibits the placement of youth found to be persons in need of supervision in secure detention or correctional facilities. The second, *separation of juveniles from adult offenders*, requires that juveniles who are alleged or found to have been delinquent and/or persons in need of supervision are kept away from any contact with adult inmates who are awaiting trial for or have been convicted of a crime. The third core protection, *removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups*, prohibits the use of adult jails and lock-ups for the confinement of juveniles for any length of time.

The Commission has statutory authority to perform monitoring of correctional facilities across the state. Existing state laws meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act regarding the custody and detention of status offenders and non-offenders; separation of juveniles from adult offenders; and removal of juveniles from adult jails and lock-ups. Because of this, facilities in New York State will meet or exceed the requirements of the federal law in almost every case that state law is strictly followed by its staff.

The Commission maintains a monitoring schedule that ensures all adult jails, lock-ups and secure facilities are subject to an onsite inspection no less than once every three years. In addition, the Commission monitors a secure online portal, which agencies are required to use to report any suspected violations of the act in real time. Two agencies are responsible for operation of the juvenile facilities in New York: the state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and New York City's Administration for Children's Services. Agreements between those two agencies and the Commission and DCJS permit onsite inspections and reviews of records in all juvenile facilities throughout the state to ensure they are in compliance.

New York's strategy for reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system includes a state-level compliance management effort; local reform and best practices that are expected to reduce disproportionate minority contact; and a technical assistance component. Title II funds support a full-time statewide race equity coordinator – formerly

known as the disproportionate minority contact coordinator – to monitor and improve race and ethnicity related data; identify and advise on implementing best practices and to provide technical assistance and training regarding racial and ethnic disparities for local and state-level stakeholders.

In 2015, the statewide race equity coordinator worked with selected localities to determine root causes of disproportionate minority contact where identified and assist in implementing strategies to reduce racial and ethnic disparities. This includes, for example, helping the Regional Youth Justice Teams identify consistent data collection practices and definitions, as well as data necessary to dig deeper into why disparities exist. The coordinator has also provided disproportionate minority contact/racial and ethnic disparities training and technical assistance to determine policies and practices that may contribute to disparate treatment of minority youth in the system. In addition, the state has committed funds to pilot reduction initiatives in select counties where disproportionate minority contact is present based upon Relative Rate Index and other supporting data.

III. Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Activities

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group met quarterly, alternating primary meeting sites between Albany and New York City. These meetings covered a range of topics, including summary presentations of select projects; reviews of federal funding commitments and balances; briefings on state and federal juvenile justice initiatives; and discussions of policy and funding priorities. The DCJS Office of Youth Justice supports the JJAG by managing meeting logistics, providing programmatic oversight for projects and developing funding solicitations based on the group's identified priorities, in addition to other administrative functions. The DCJS Office of Program Development and Funding oversees contracts and budgets to ensure compliance with federal funding requirements. The DCJS Office of Justice Research and Performance compiles data from juvenile arrest and case processing points, including detention, probation intake, family court decisions, probation supervision and placement admissions and releases. These data are used to generate county profiles and statewide and regional tables, in addition to a comprehensive juvenile justice data report that is updated annually.

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group set priorities to guide the state's 2015–2017 juvenile justice plan, continued to support previously approved projects and voted to support implementation of a slate of innovative strategies in 2016.

A. Three Year Plan for Juvenile Justice (2015 – 2017)

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention requires states to develop three-year plans outlining long-range strategies for use of Title II Formula funds. During interim years, states submit annual applications that update accomplishments, provide juvenile justice data and demonstrate compliance with the Act's core protections. The advisory group developed New York's three-year plan during a retreat in January 2015. Attendees discussed criteria and key principles to guide development of the plan, arriving at consensus on the following:

- Measuring effectiveness and value over time and identifying promising practices;
- Focus on well-being, including education;
- Use of developmental approaches across the juvenile justice continuum;
- Using evidence-based practices; and
- Sustainability.

The group finalized the following priorities to be incorporated in the 2015–2017 plan:

- Implement a best practice institute;
- Address the intersection of education and juvenile justice;
- Narrow the 'front door' at points of re-entry, community-based diversion, probation and successful probation completion and others;
- Include the voices of affected people;
- Engage in a facilitated planning process; and
- Incorporate disproportionate minority contact reduction strategies into all activities.

B. Support for Regional Youth Justice Teams

Nine Regional Youth Justice Teams established in 2013 have continued to meet regularly, with those meetings providing forums for local planning and coordination of multi-county approaches to juvenile justice program and policy work. Staff from the DCJS Office of Youth Justice serve as liaisons between the state and these teams, advising them of state-level trends and initiatives and communicating local concerns and accomplishment to state agencies and other state-level policy makers.

In line with its goal of supporting New York's juvenile justice transformation through the strategic use of limited federal resources, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group provided funding to these teams to foster capacity building, system improvement and coordination efforts at the regional level. Each region was eligible to apply for an award of up to \$100,000

to support priorities identified by local stakeholders. Strategies included training and technical assistance for professionals and community members; staff development; data improvement; and efforts to strengthen communication, collaboration and the dissemination of best practices for juvenile justice-involved youth and families across systems and stakeholders. With contract terms of 18 months, teams began implementing their initiatives in 2014–2015 and will complete activities in 2016.

Grant-funded activities of the Regional Youth Justice Teams included the following:

Capital Region:

Participating Counties: Albany, Columbia, Delaware, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties

Lead agency: Schenectady County Department of Probation

Goal: Develop a regional juvenile justice framework through a series of trainings and facilitated activities focused on factors that contribute to juvenile justice system involvement.

2015 accomplishments: Team members identified and prioritized eight areas of interest to study and strategize for recommendations: children of incarcerated parents; poverty and economic development; racial and ethnic disparities; reintegration after placement; restorative practices; school justice; trauma-informed care; and youth, family and community engagement. A series of workshops and trainings conducted by national and state experts was used to inform and guide these efforts.

Central New York:

Participating Counties: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego, Tioga and Tompkins counties

Lead agency: Onondaga County Probation Department

Goal: Use training and technical assistance to optimize funding and other opportunities.

2015 accomplishments: The team researched strategies to strengthen and unify cross-county collaboration. Settling on collaborative problem-solving as a promising approach, the team engaged in planning for a training series in 2016.

Finger Lakes:

Participating Counties: Chemung, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties

Lead agency: Monroe County Probation Department

Goal: Solidify cross-system juvenile justice reform efforts through staff training, data collection, technical assistance and administrative support. Increase collaboration across service sectors and enhance regional capacity for responding to persons affected by mental health issues and trauma.

2015 accomplishments: Trainings were held in multiple counties to enable participation by juvenile justice stakeholders from as many member agencies and community partners as possible; topics included Mental Health First Aid and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). Members participated in development of a web portal for information and idea sharing across the region.

Long Island:

Participating Counties: Nassau and Suffolk counties

Lead agency: Suffolk County Probation Department

Goal: Implement strategies to strengthen collaborative relationships among juvenile justice stakeholders on Long Island. These include support for team participation in regional and state meetings and training; planning and conducting activities designed to build trust between young people and local law enforcement; and developing a comprehensive database for analyzing regional juvenile justice data.

2015 accomplishments: The Youth-Police Initiative curriculum was implemented in two school districts in an effort to improve communication and trust among the police, community and youth. A community-wide training in youth, family and community engagement was presented to juvenile justice stakeholders: law enforcement, probation, social services and service providers. Probation departments in both counties worked with a consultant to examine data needs, sources and collection and analysis methods. Follow-up will include recommendations for maximum utilization of data and improvements in existing automated methods and standards for procedures across both counties.

Mid-Hudson:

Participating Counties: Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Westchester, Sullivan and Ulster counties

Lead agency: Westchester County Department of Probation

Goal: Through training, build regional capacity for using best practices to understand and respond to youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

2015 accomplishments: Training and workshops were presented on the following topics: trauma and secondary trauma, juvenile fire setting, juvenile sex offenders and gang affiliations and activities. Participants included key juvenile justice stakeholders from each county: community members, advocates and staff from member agencies and community partners.

Mohawk Valley:

Participating Counties: Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego and Schoharie counties

Lead agency: Oneida County Probation Department

Goal: Conduct regional needs assessments to outline the needs of youth, existing resources and gaps in the regional and local delivery systems so that the team and its partners can develop solutions reflecting the common goals and individual nuances of each county.

2015 accomplishments: A series of youth summits were conducted across the region as part of the needs assessment process. A draft report on the needs assessment was introduced at county-level meetings, followed by recommendations for training and technical assistance to address priority issues and service gaps.

New York City:

Participating Counties: Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens and Richmond counties

Lead agency: New York City Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

Goal: Increase capacity for a cross-systems approach to meeting the needs of youth and families involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

2015 accomplishments: Activities supported the expansion of the Crossover Youth Practice Model – initially piloted in the Bronx – to the other four boroughs. Cross-systems training and supporting materials were developed and provided to staff from Family Court, the Probation Department, the Administration for Children’s Services and the legal community.

North Country:

Participating Counties: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties

Lead agency: The Children’s Home of Jefferson County

Goal: Provide evidence-based, trauma-informed training and staff development opportunities to professionals in all seven counties.

2015 accomplishments: The team coordinated and hosted a summit showcasing several evidence-based, trauma-informed approaches. Team members selected the Neurosequential Model of Trauma Informed Clinical Practice as the most promising approach for meeting the needs of the region. Each county identified three clinicians to participate in face-to-face and web-based training.

Western New York:

Participating Counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties

Lead agency: Erie County Probation Department

Goal: Build regional capacity for addressing the service needs of young people with emotional and behavioral issues – particularly those affected by trauma – and increase regional collaboration by bringing together professionals for training, workshops and discussion.

2015 accomplishments: The team brought training in trauma-informed practices, aggression replacement therapy, and effective school-based restorative justice models to the region.

C. Summary of Ongoing Work

A number of initiatives funded by the JJAG prior to 2015 continued during that year under DCJS supervision. The projects were related to school arrests, restorative justice, diversion, detention alternatives, reentry and disproportionate minority contact.

1. School-Justice Partnerships

Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children: Focusing on the School-Justice Intersection

DCJS partnered with the Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children in 2013–2014, laying the foundation for comprehensive efforts focused on the school-justice intersection with a statewide forum, six regional forums and a school diversion workshop attended by multidisciplinary teams from 12 localities. The Commission continued this work in 2015, bringing specialized training and technical assistance to specific jurisdictions and populations.

Five teams returned for a follow-up to the school diversion workshop: a full day of technical assistance featuring national experts that have piloted similar diversion strategies in Clayton County, Ga. The meeting provided opportunities for teams to exchange ideas and experiences, while drafting policy and procedure materials geared toward facilitating diversion in their local jurisdictions.

More than 300 people attended *Restorative Practices in Action: A Conference for School and Justice Practitioners*, a presentation by the Center on Race, Crime and Justice of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York. Presenters included academics, advocates, counselors, criminal justice experts, educators, judicial leaders, juvenile justice experts, legal experts, policymakers, program managers, researchers, school leaders and social workers and explored practices and policies in education and justice systems that promote restorative justice.

The New York State Unified Court System partners with local non-profit organizations that serve as Community Dispute Resolution Centers, which provide a variety of services such as mediation, conciliation, group facilitation and arbitration. Many centers provide educational services in their communities, including teaching nonviolent conflict resolution to students, staff and parents. As a follow-up to *Restorative Practices in Action*, the Commission awarded scholarships to center staff to attend a four-day Basic Restorative Practices training offered by the International Institute for Restorative Practices. This strategy will expand or establish restorative services geared toward school-based or juvenile court matters.

Working with the New York City Department of Education's Office of Safety and Youth Development and the New York City Police Department's School Safety Division, the Commission sponsored four, half-day Restorative Justice Circle Immersion Workshops for city

schools support staff and one, four-day Intensive Peacemaking Circle Keeper training for city Department of Education and NYPD school safety staff in July 2015.

Georgetown School-Justice Partnerships Certificate Program

Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform offers a School-Justice Partnerships Certificate Program that is designed to provide school district staff, court professionals, law enforcement and other community leaders with knowledge and understanding necessary to address the immediate and long-term needs of students who are either known to, or at risk of entering, the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group provided grants to support travel and tuition for multidisciplinary teams from New York City and Albany to attend this certificate program in 2015. Capstone projects developed by each team are being implemented in their respective school districts.

2. Longer-running initiatives that continued through 2015

In 2015, an acting juvenile justice delinquency liaison was appointed permanently within the state Office of Court Administration's Division of Professional and Court Services and a second juvenile justice delinquency liaison was hired. These individuals participated and provided support to the state Youth Partnership, the Regional Youth Justice Teams, the School-Based Diversion project, and the Albany Juvenile Drug Treatment Grant; and coordinated and participated in the following: Attorneys for the Children training, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Inter-site Conference, Condition of Confinement training, and the planning of the Youth Empowerment Academy with DCJS.

Vera Institute of Justice continued its re-entry initiative, providing training and technical assistance designed to improve re-entry practices and support local system change with the goal of facilitating successful transitions for youth returning to their communities after delinquency placements. The training and technical assistance focused on planning that begins with placement decisions and involves families; enhancing housing stability for youth returning to the community; and improving educational transitions. Three local sites participate in the project: Dutchess and Westchester counties and a Capital Region consortium involving Albany, Columbia, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties. The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group approved a shift in the initiative's focus late in the year, adding activities that will contribute to the development of a statewide juvenile re-entry plan in 2016.

'Fast track accountability' strategies provided a timely response to juvenile crime by using behavioral health screening tools and restorative interventions to divert appropriate low- and moderate-risk youth cases from court processing. Contracts with the Madison County Department of Social Services, Ontario County Probation and Ulster County Probation piloted

a range of screening tools (MAYSI-2; GAIN-SS) and innovative strategies for holding youth accountable. These included case review by a multidisciplinary team, intensive case management, parent engagement, mentoring and review by a community accountability board.

Strategies to reduce detention of youth whose home situations present a barrier to release were implemented in Onondaga, Oswego and Queens counties. The projects used brief strategic family therapy and foster care-modeled respite to aid efforts in preventing or shortening detention stays.

Addressing disproportionate minority representation in the state's juvenile justice system remained a priority throughout 2015, overseen by a new full-time statewide race equity coordinator at DCJS. Two consultants – Spectrum Associates and the W. Haywood Burns Institute – also continued work on a statewide disproportionate minority representation assessment and provided trainings in racial and ethnic disparities to juvenile justice stakeholders in the Capital and Mid-Hudson regions.

D. Projects Approved for 2016 Implementation

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group members approved the following projects to be implemented in 2016:

PROJECT	AWARD
Addressing the Intersection of Education and Juvenile Justice	\$350,000
Juvenile Justice Liaison at the New York State Education Department	\$150,000
Parent Empowerment Training: Juvenile Justice Module	\$46,000
Georgetown University Certificate Program (Crossover Youth Practice Model)	\$30,000
The Pennsylvania DMC Youth-Law Enforcement Curriculum	\$30,000
Policing the Teen Brain	\$75,000
Partnership for Youth Justice Inter-site Conference	\$30,000
Collaborative Problem Solving for the Central New York Regional Youth Justice Team	\$50,000
Youth with Sexual Behavioral Problems Evidence-Based Intervention	\$210,000
Niagara Court Trauma Consultation	\$15,000
Technical Assistance: Aid to Rural Areas, Phase I	\$50,000
Training for Statewide Leadership in Action Academy	\$50,000
Youth Empowerment Academy	\$35,000
Georgetown University Certificate Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice ○ Multi-System Integration 	\$30,000
Establishment of the New York State Youth Justice Institute	\$1,100,000