

Strategies and Models to Effectively Serve Teens and JD/PINS

December 4, 2019

Family First Readiness
Strategy Sessions

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Desired Results from Meeting

- Discuss strategies and models that effectively serve teens
- Learn about how fellow New York counties have effectively implemented strategies to support teens
- Identify specific next steps you can take to improve service to teens in your county

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The Challenge

“Many teens simply did not belong in child welfare or juvenile justice placements. They ended up there because their communities had insufficient alternatives to help families resolve conflicts or address teens’ behavioral health issues.”

**-Too Many Teens report
Annie E. Casey, 2015**

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Too Many Teens: Preventing Unnecessary Out-of-Home Placements

Common Practice Elements of Successful Agencies

- **A wide front door**
 - Systems should be open to families and youth in crisis, with “crisis” defined by the family and carrying no eligibility criteria other than the youth’s age.
- **Timely access to initial screening and assessment**
 - Families need quick access to services before a crisis becomes too severe.
- **High-quality screening and assessment**
 - Agencies need experienced staff trained in family engagement who can match youth and families with appropriate services.
- **A range of services**
 - Most issues that teens are facing can be resolved with low-intensity, low-cost services, such as case management, conflict resolution and referral to community resources. A few teens may require evidence-based practices with a demonstrated ability to reduce or prevent family disruption

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Too Many Teens: Preventing Unnecessary Out-of-Home Placements

Common Systemic Elements of Successful Agencies

- **Strong, change-focused leaders**
 - Agency leaders must be able to establish clear goals, gain buy-in from influencers and emphasize continual improvement
- **Flexible, sustainable funding**
 - Redirect state or local savings from reducing out-of-home placements to help fund community-based prevention services
 - Pool resources from the various child-serving agencies
- **A requirement that families exhaust services before petitioning the court to remove a child**
 - State laws and courts should discourage parents from seeking out-of-home placements for a child with behavioral issues.

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Too Many Teens: Preventing Unnecessary Out-of-Home Placements

Common Systemic Elements of Successful Agencies

- **Data collection and analysis**
 - Electronic records systems that enable seamless sharing across service providers and agencies.
 - Leaders must be able to monitor progress and outcomes, manage use of services and emphasize continual quality improvement.
- **Community outreach**
 - Effective interventions include community outreach to families and potential referral sources such as schools and police so everyone knows their options and understands where and how to get help.
- **Multisystem collaboration**
 - Strong collaboration across various child-serving systems enables systems to coordinate, and even pool, their resources to more efficiently and effectively serve families involved with multiple agencies.

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Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative

- Comprehensive model rooted in eight core strategies
- Proven effective in creating alternative programs for juvenile offenders and safely reducing their detention populations
 - Reduced average daily population in juvenile detention by 44%
 - Reduced the number of youth of color in juvenile detention by 40 percent

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JDAI Eight Core Strategies

1. Collaboration between juvenile court officials, probation agencies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, schools, community organizations and advocates
2. Rigorous data collection and analysis to guide decision making
3. Objective admissions criteria and risk-assessment instruments
4. New or expanded alternatives to juvenile detention programs

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JDAI Eight Core Strategies, Cont.

5. Case processing reforms to expedite the flow of cases through system
6. Reducing the number of youth detained for probation rule violations or failing to appear in court, and the number held in detention awaiting transfer to a residential facility
7. Examining data to identify policies and practices that may disadvantage youth of color and pursuing strategies to ensure a more level playing field for youth regardless of race or ethnicity
8. Monitoring and improving conditions of confinement in detention facilities

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Youth Advocates Program

- Offers:
 - Child welfare prevention and reunification support
 - Detention and state incarceration alternatives, post-adjudication supports, and reintegration support
- Utilizes:
 - A **Wraparound Process** that is intensive and individualized, and provides holistic care planning and case management
 - **Advocates** that help implement the individual service plan that is developed with each family
 - **Evidence-based interventions**, such as Peaceful Alternatives to Tough Situations

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Evidence-Based Interventions

- Functional Family Therapy (FFT) – Family intervention program for youth with disruptive, externalizing behaviors
- Multisystemic Therapy (MST) – Intensive family and community-based treatment for serious juvenile offenders with possible substance abuse issues and their families.
- Wraparound -- Team-based planning process designed to meet the complex needs of children who are involved with several child and family-serving systems.

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Discussion

- What resonated most with you and why?
- What was missing?
- What remaining questions do you have?

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Small Group Discussion

- When thinking about these elements, are there areas where your county is particularly strong in their work with JD/PINS cases?
- Are there areas in which there are opportunities to improve?
 - What resources would it take?
- What are barriers to making improvements?

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Small Groups - Action Planning

- Priorities
- Action steps – big or small!
- Related strengths and barriers
- Partners/people
- Timeline
- Information or support needed

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Wrap Up and Closing

- What actions are you committed to take when you return to your county?
- What additional information or support do you need to take your next steps?