



News from the RFK National Resource Center

February 2022

On the Ground

Arkansas Juvenile Justice Racial and Ethnic Disparities Reform Initiative

We are proud to announce a new partnership with the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), made possible by a grant award from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. We congratulate the AOC for their competitive selection and their leadership to achieve statewide juvenile justice system reform that will result from this three-year grant.

Through the grant award, AOC will partner with the RFK National Resource Center, National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ), and the Impact Center at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (Impact Center), to improve outcomes for system-involved youth in Arkansas by decreasing racial and ethnic disparities (RED) at all points of contact with the judicial system through use of validated screenings and assessments. AOC and their project partners will perform a comprehensive RED review at different points of contact in the juvenile system in five Arkansas counties. The AOC will work with these partners to analyze the juvenile system; identify strengths and opportunities for improvement; develop and implement evidence-based responses to address RED; measure response outcomes; and use those outcomes to inform policy changes.

Dual Status Youth & CSEC Initiatives

Last month, Delaware implemented their Dual Status Youth Protocols with an emphasis on screening for commercial sexual exploitation of children. Over the past two years, Delaware's child welfare, juvenile probation, and system stakeholders met to agree on a set of protocols that would address the immediate needs of dual status youth to prevent further penetration into the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Through the collaborative process, they identified a target population, the timeframe for conducting a multidisciplinary dual status youth meeting, and a template for the planning guide. In addition, the stakeholders facilitated training for the multidisciplinary team members, and selected and implemented a CSEC assessment tool. The launch of this new process will equip Delaware to serve this vulnerable population and address their risk for sexual exploitation. This data will allow Delaware to conduct a resource review to develop more services to address this population. Delaware has demonstrated the positive difference that is made when stakeholders believe in a cause and come together to do something about it.

Clark County, Nevada is following the same path and developing protocols to support their dual status youth with a special emphasis on advocating for youth at risk for sexual exploitation. Their commitment towards multi-stakeholder collaboration and developing solutions for these youth is intended to preserve a youth's placement, identify resources at the earliest possible intervention point, and provide for the best outcomes.

To learn more about CSEC-focused work, please visit our website: rfknrcjj.org/our-work/csec.

Our Return to the Northern Mariana Islands

We are pleased to announce a new partnership with the Territory of Guam's Department of Youth Affairs (DYA). Over the next fifteen months, we will examine, assess, and analyze three operational areas of practice in the Department:

1. **Facilities** – Featuring the Youth Correction Center, Cottage Shelter, and three Community Resource Centers;
2. **Administrative Oversight and Management** - Including documented standards, staffing, policies, procedures, and practices; and
3. **Resources** - Including programming, service availability and effectiveness, and coordination with probation, child welfare, and the Judiciary.

We look forward to working closely with the DYA Director and the Lieutenant Governor, whose leadership presented this important opportunity on behalf of the multi-cultural youth and families of the territory.

Virtual Training Continues in Michigan

RFK National Resource Center will once again be collaborating with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (Division of Health Services to Children and Families) and Community Mental Health Association of Michigan to deliver two virtual training events:

- ***The Role of the Probation Officer*** - Balancing sanctions and supports in case planning; and
- ***Alternative Response in Juvenile Justice*** - Exploring opportunities within juvenile justice decision making aligned with accountability, positive youth development, victim's rights and community safety.

The training events will be delivered virtually to statewide participants during May and June. The sessions will feature dynamic and interactive learning and highlight the best research and tools to guide the content and the curriculum.

From the Field

New Resource Helps Translate Late Adolescent Brain Science into Practice

The Center for Law, Brain and Behavior at Massachusetts General Hospital has released a new white paper, *Science of Late Adolescence: A Guide for Judges, Attorneys, and Policy Makers*. Given the RFK National Resource Center's focus and emphasis on translating research and science into practice, we wanted to make you aware of this resource. The guide provides the legal system and policy makers a better understanding of the late adolescent brain and behavioral development as they seek to transform how the system responds to late adolescents who offend. The information provided will help to support the important work that many jurisdictions have developed to adopt research-based policies, training, and practices.

Free Webinar - Raising the Bar on Juvenile Reentry: Ways Probation Officers Use Data

Presented by Performance-based Standards (Hosted by NTTAC)

Date: Thursday, February 24, 2022 | Time: 3:00 –4:15 p.m. ET

Juvenile court judges play a key role in giving young people the best odds for successful reentry. In this webinar, a panel of probation leaders will discuss their experiences, what reentry success looks like, what information they find most

useful to determine placements, and more. This panel will be moderated by Kim Godfrey Lovett, Executive Director of PbS, and Melissa Sickmund, Director of the National Center for Juvenile Justice. Attendees will gain an understanding of reentry and data from the perspective of juvenile court judges, discover what reentry data research says are effective indicators of a young person's reentry success or failure, and learn what is important to probation officers when determining appropriate placements for young people. [Click here](#) to learn more about the webinar and register online.

Listen to Our New Podcast!

On January 31, we released our new podcast series, [Youth Justice Transformation in Action](#). The inaugural episode, [Leadership in Times of Change](#) features Adolphus Graves, Administrator for the Cobb County Juvenile Court (Georgia) and member of our Probation System Reform Practice Network. Through his interview with Executive Director John Tuell, Adolphus shares his perspective on how to successfully lead a youth justice system transformation effort and gives tips on staying motivated throughout the change process. John and Adolphus also discuss leading change, building collaboration, and identifying priorities.

Join us for new episodes on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), and our website: rfknrcjj.org/podcast.



Visit Our Online Resource Library!

All of our publications and tools are made available on our website to support jurisdictions undertaking reform. Our Online Resource Library is designed to provide a user-friendly experience for accessing our practical and informative resources, as well as presentations and materials from our events.

rfknrcjj.org/resources



Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice uses proven models, frameworks, tools, resources, and the best available research to serve local, state, and national leaders, practitioners, and youth-serving agencies to improve system performance and outcomes for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. RFK National Resource Center focuses primarily on youth with prior or current involvement in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (dual status youth), the review and improvement of juvenile probation systems, and the use of a model framework to address the state and national laws and policies governing the exchange and sharing of data, information, and records for youth and families. To learn more about us and how we can serve your jurisdiction, please visit www.rfknrcjj.org.