

# **Juvenile Justice Treatment Programs: A Review of the National Landscape and Local Programs in New Mexico**

**A Report Prepared by the  
New Mexico Criminal and Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council**

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## Innovative Programs in Juvenile Justice

### Introduction

There are numerous juvenile treatment programs around the country providing services similar to those found in New Mexico. The chapters in this review consider many of these programs and further address some of the similarities and differences between programs around the country and those in New Mexico. However, this review of innovative juvenile programs is not inclusive. Instead, it is intended to show the abundance of novel and original approaches to juvenile justice, and it emphasizes a shift towards more community-oriented approaches to dealing with delinquency. Punitive stances have softened since the nineties, although there continues to be an unfounded public perception that juvenile crimes are increasing in severity and frequency.

Most of the programs reviewed in this survey lack empirical evidence regarding program efficacy. Table 1 represents a general ranking of programs based on their effect and confidence in the evidence of

results that have been demonstrated. This table is a representation of programs and strategies that have been employed across the United States. More complete descriptions and examples of each program follow in this review. There is a need for on-going independent research into program processes and outcomes. This research must be guided by clear, objective, and “back-end” minded research designs. In other words, programs must collect data on the “front-end” that allows meaningful outcome analysis. Of the programs reviewed here, the most promising appear to be in mentoring and mediation curriculums. Boot camps and wilderness programs have consistently failed to obtain the desired results although there have been recent attempts to revive this genre of programming by integrating more educational components. Court-driven programming is also becoming extremely important including teen courts and juvenile drug courts. While preliminary results on these court programs are promising, additional research is needed. Finally, increasing treatment exposure time through aftercare has been shown to have a strong positive impact on improving outcome measures.

**Table 1: Effects of Intervention Strategies**

	<b>Positive Effects</b>	<b>Mixed Effects, but Generally Positive</b>	<b>Weak or No Effects</b>
<b>Consistent Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Counseling</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Behavioral Programs</li> <li>• Mentoring Programs</li> <li>• Victim Mediation Programs</li> <li>• Restitution</li> <li>• Multi-Systemic Therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential Treatment</li> <li>• Electronic Monitoring</li> <li>• Work Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilderness Programs</li> <li>• Boot Camps</li> <li>• Early Release</li> <li>• Deterrence Programs</li> <li>• Vocational Programs</li> <li>• D.A.R.E. Programs</li> </ul>
<b>Less Consistent Evidence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probation/Parole</li> <li>• Aftercare and Reintegration Programs</li> <li>• Truancy Programs</li> <li>• Multidimensional Family Therapy</li> <li>• Functional Family Therapy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gang-Related Programs</li> <li>• Family Counseling</li> <li>• Group Counseling</li> <li>• Mental Health Programs</li> </ul>	
<b>Lacking or Inconsistent Evidence, Additional Research Necessary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programming for Offenders Under 15</li> <li>• Gender Specific Programs</li> <li>• GLBT Programs</li> <li>• Teen Courts</li> <li>• Juvenile Drug Courts</li> <li>• Educational Intervention and After School Programs</li> <li>• Serious Offender Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Programs</li> <li>• Advocacy/Casework</li> <li>• Programs for Children of Incarcerated Parents</li> <li>• Sex Offender Programs</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced Caseloads</li> </ul>

Reaching children in school through educational programs that are cooperative with law enforcement personal safety and anti-crime programs, as well as utilizing teachers to help identify at-risk youth and provide programming before they get into trouble, are promising models of early prevention with potential juvenile delinquents. Truancy abatement programs and providing after-school activities with supervision to youth who would otherwise be left unsupervised during after-school hours are also proactive ways to reduce juvenile crime. These programs can be linked to provide a continuum of juvenile crime prevention methods and strategies.

Gender specific curriculums, programs for juvenile offenders under age 15, programming that considers sexual development, and sex offender specific treatment appear to have promise. These specialized programming tracts are underrepresented in New Mexico and probably deserve more attention from juvenile justice authorities.

Providing mental health care for youth who are part of New Mexico's juvenile justice system should also be a focus of concern for the state. It is estimated that between 50-75% of all youth incarcerated in the United States have diagnosable mental disorders, and a recent study by the Congressional Special Investigations Division for the Committee on Government Reform, prepared for New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman, found that nearly one in seven youth in New Mexico's juvenile detention centers is incarcerated because mental health care is not available.

Numerous programs reviewed in this survey deserve special attention. Mentoring, mediation, boot camps, teen and juvenile drug courts, sex offender programs and other program types already exist in New Mexico. Treatment providers in New Mexico have a vast array of innovative services available. However, juvenile justice officials throughout the state may not be aware of the resources. Moreover, current assessment tools may not correctly identify risk or may be administered in such a way that clients cannot be effectively routed to the appropriate program. There is a growing recognition of the inadequacies of many juvenile assessments and screening tools. Of course, ensuring clients receive appropriate need-based treatment is

dependent on first knowing what is available statewide. The recent development of a juvenile treatment program directory of providers in New Mexico, created by the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, has provided an important resource for communicating information about the treatment options that are available in the state.

## Aftercare and Reintegration Programs

### Overview

Two areas of programming often overlooked are reintegration and aftercare. Research has shown that among juvenile parolees, recidivism rates are high, from 55% to 75% (Wiebush et al 2000). Given that the recidivism and re-incarceration rates for juvenile offenders are so high, interest in aftercare programs has grown as juvenile justice systems try to reintegrate offenders back into their communities. This is often partially a result of juvenile facility overcrowding and the need for programs that will help prevent parolees from violating their parole conditions, as well as to ensure public safety in the community (Altschuler et al 1999).

One concept known as the **Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP)** model aims to reduce recidivism among high-risk parolees by integrating intensive supervision with social services after release from an institution. This is intended to bridge the gap between the incarceration and aftercare components of the offender's adjudication (Weibush et al. 2000). Research has shown that a specific sub group of juvenile offenders is most likely to recidivate after their release, primarily those with property offenses and who have long criminal histories. These individuals who are at the highest risk for re-offending are the target group for the IAP model (Altschuler and Armstrong 1994).

In the late 1980s, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded several IAP pilot projects. In Colorado, an IAP program for juvenile offenders from the **Denver** metro area served youth who were incarcerated at a secure detention facility near Denver. The program began within 60 days of their incarceration by building a plan that would guide their ultimate reintegration into the community. The program consisted of stages that incorporated a variety of treatment services, and included sanctions and incentives for completion of the program (OJJDP 1999).

Aftercare programs have been especially popular with drug court programs. Because one of the primary goals of drug court programs is to reduce recidivism, what occurs after the drug court experience is just as important to the continued success of the child as the drug court experience itself (Kimbrough 1998). Drug courts have generally provided ancillary services to assist participants in obtaining housing, transportation, and job training in order to support their progress in treatment and beyond drug court. Likewise, juvenile drug courts must also provide adolescents with a network of support once they are returned to the community. Research has shown that access to post-drug court counseling and to services that enable youth to obtain the skills needed to maintain ongoing abstinence once close supervision by the drug court program ends, is crucial to reducing the risk of relapse and recidivism among successful participants.

### Evidence

A **Virginia** program serving juvenile offenders from the Norfolk, VA, area was known as the **Intensive Integration Program (IIP)**. The program began with an initial assessment of the risk level of each individual offender, and then directed a life-skills curriculum plan. When juveniles neared the end of their incarceration, a reintegration plan that uses a series of half-way houses, aftercare planning, and integrated case management was put into place (OJJDP 1999). At the time of reporting, the participants in these IIP programs were just beginning to enter the reintegration phase of their sentences, so the effectiveness of these programs has not been measured. However, while the literature shows support for aftercare programs, there is no clear direction as to how long or what should be included in aftercare. Although the design and implementation of these IIPs has been questioned, the researchers conclude that aftercare programs have the potential to be very effective in reducing offender recidivism (Altschuler et al 1999).

### Aftercare and Reintegration Programs in New Mexico

The **Man-2-Man** program is for juveniles that are out of lock-up and living in **Albuquerque**. The overall mission of the program is to decrease the recidivism rate for juvenile offenders through mentoring relationships with positive role models. The

6-month program for re-integration consists of training for employment, including how to write a resume, how to fill out an employment application, how to conduct an interview, how to apply to college, and study skills.

**Associated Marine Institutes (AMI)** is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with youth agencies and state juvenile justice departments to provide youth development programs in the form of day treatment programs and residential treatment programs. AMI operates a total of 52 programs in 7 states (30 day and 23 residential programs). In New Mexico, AMI operates the **Camp Sierra Blanca** facility near **Capitan**, NM. The AMI programs boast recidivism rates that are far lower than the average for traditional juvenile justice programs, and the New Mexico program at Camp Sierra Blanca has rates even lower than the AMI average. This program seems to provide the right mix of treatment and skills building to provide students with the tools they need to lead productive lives.

AMI conducts its own evaluation and recidivism studies, and this current report represents a review of all of AMI's programs for 2001, measuring recidivism rates of students who were discharged from the programs in 1999. This evaluation included 2,741 students; the student demographic breakdown was: 89.4% male, 10.6% female, 48.0% Black, 41.6% White, and 8.7% Hispanic. The overall recidivism rate for all AMI programs was 28.5%. For the New Mexico program at Camp Sierra Blanca, 62 students were included in the study. The recidivism rate for Camp Sierra Blanca students was 4.8% - considerably lower than the AMI overall average rate of 28.5%. AMI's main goals are to improve the attitudes of 12 to 18 year olds, and help them develop employment skills, increase their self-confidence, and encourage further education. After attending a program, each student is placed in school or in a job, and the program includes an extensive aftercare component.

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## Boot Camps

### Overview

Boot camps hit a peak of implementation during the conservative "get tough" era of the 1980s. The use of boot camps for juveniles rose quickly in the 1990s, and by 2000, 70 juvenile boot camps had been opened in the United States (MacKenzie et al 2001). Traditionally, correctional boot camps are based on the military approach for basic training. Boot camps vary in their purpose, but even when they were instituted primarily to reduce overcrowding, the implicit assumption is that their programs are of equal or greater deterrent or rehabilitative value than a sentence to detention. Five common goals usually stated for juvenile boot camps include deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, punishment, and cost control, with rehabilitation and cost control most often cited by correctional and policymaking professionals (Peters et al 1997).

In several states, correctional boot camps have been used as an alternative to detention in order to deal with the problem of overcrowding and public demands for severe treatment. Boot camps have also been implemented as a tool to prevent recidivism. The offenders are usually non-violent offenders or first-time offenders. A general definition of a boot camp is difficult to establish because boot camps are so popular among legislators and other supporters that the term has been stretched to include a broad range of programs. Additionally the objectives of boot camps are numerous enough to satisfy treatment goals of several interest groups, such as legal and educational institutions. However, most research has identified one component as a prerequisite for a boot camp: the presence of a military-type structure, regimen and discipline (MacKenzie and Hebert 1996).

Critics of the boot camp systems question whether military-style training positively affects juveniles while they are participating in the program and after they are released, and that the focus on group activities does not address individual needs and issues. Boot camp proponents counter that boot camp structure gives staff more control over clients and provides a safer overall environment than traditional juvenile incarceration facilities. (MacKenzie et al 2001).

The **Military Teen Boot Camp** in **Baja, CA** embraces authentic military-type regimens and utilizes them to teach responsibility. The program operates on the assumption that many defiant teens are given more while having to do less to earn it. Participants experience a lifestyle that reflects what it would be like if they did not have what their parents or others had provided for them. They live in tents, cook their food over a campfire, etc. Personal responsibility for behaviors is fundamental to this program and clients are not dismissed until they have learned to act and think in a responsible manner as measured by program staff. Similarly, **Obsidian Trails** in rural **Oregon**, has no fixed program length and students graduate when the program staff deems appropriate. Obsidian Trails Outdoor School is a boot camp that is more "wilderness oriented" than the boot camp in Baja. Both camps expose participants to natural obstacles that require group cohesion and self-confidence to overcome (Obsidian Trails 2001).

### Evidence

In 1991 the OJJDP awarded boot camp grants to juvenile justice systems in **Cleveland, Ohio; Denver, Colorado; and Mobile, Alabama** as part of a juvenile boot camp program demonstration test. Each camp had three main components: 1.) Screening, selection, and intake; 2.) intensive military-style training in a three month program; and 3.) a six to nine month period of aftercare supervision when the juvenile returned to the community. All three programs specifically included activities such as camp maintenance performed by the residents, daily physical conditioning, educational instruction including life skills curriculum, and aftercare services (Felker and Bourque 1996). Program recidivism rates for juveniles who participated in the boot camp test programs versus those that did not were 72% and 50% respectively in the Cleveland program, 39% and 36 % in Denver, and 28% and 31% in the Mobile program (Peters et al 1997).

A recent general review of the effects on correctional boot camps on offending and recidivism rates found that in nine studies, boot camp participants had lower recidivism rates than the comparison group, and in eight studies the comparison group had lower recidivism rates than the boot camp groups. An overall meta-analysis found no

significant differences in recidivism rates between boot camp and comparison groups (MacKenzie et al 2001).

Financially, boot camps can be cost effective when used instead of traditional confinement, but not as an alternative to probation (*Juvenile Justice Reform* 1997). Based on estimated daily costs of the boot camp programs vs. traditional residential facilities vs. probation, the average cost per offender in the OJJDP boot camp test program was \$6,241 compared to \$11,616 for traditional state institutions and compared to \$516 for probation costs (Peters et al 1997).

### **Boot Camp Programs in New Mexico**

**TARS (Treatment and Rehabilitation of Students)** is a 12-hour day boot camp program that operates Monday – Saturday out of the **Hobbs’** Houston Junior High School. The program provides one-day, 10-day, and 16-week programs for juveniles that have been suspended from school, have been referred by the courts, or have continual behavior problems in school. The program is operated with the aim of keeping juveniles in school. TARS is also used to re-integrate juveniles that have recently been released from long-term lock up (and who must enter the 16-week program). The program is open to any juvenile in grades 5-12 in the Hobbs school district; juveniles in fourth grade on special occasions are allowed to observe the program. About 300 juveniles a year go through TARS.

The one-day program is on Tuesdays from 8:30am – 3:00pm and is usually for younger students that are on the verge of being suspended and for students that have continual problems in school. This program is like a “scared straight” program – they observe the program and have a counseling session with the drill sergeants.

The 10-day program is Monday – Saturday, 6:00am – 6:00pm and is for juveniles on short-term suspension from school. Juveniles are allowed to go through this program twice a year.

The 16-week program is Monday – Saturday, 6:00am – 6:00pm. The day starts when the juveniles arrive at school at 6:00am with two hours of exercise at TARS. They attend school for the school day, and then return to TARS after school. The program stresses education, and tutors are

available to work with the juveniles outside of school time. Program participants can also work to attain the opportunity of being allowed to do community service in the city of Hobbs.

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## Children of Incarcerated Parents

### Overview

In 1999, a majority of state (55%) and federal (63%) prisoners reported having a child under the age of eighteen (Mumola 2000), meaning that 2.1% of all children in the U.S. have a parent in federal or state prison. Research on children of incarcerated parents shows that the loss of a parental figure, particularly a mother, has an acute impact on children and adolescents. For adolescents, parental incarceration has been linked to poor academic achievement, involvement in delinquency, violence, gang-related activity, and eventually adult criminal behavior.

One study found that children of incarcerated parents are almost six times more likely than other youth to become criminally involved at some time in the future. Research has shown that children of incarcerated parents have multiple risk factors related to delinquency and criminal behavior. These factors include: high-risk behavior of the parent, harsh and erratic parenting, lack of limit setting, lack of attachment and positive nurturing (National Institute of Corrections 2002).

### Evidence

There are several examples of programs that work with children of incarcerated parents. **PACT – Parents and Children Together, Inc.** in **Ft. Worth, TX.** PACT, Inc. was founded as a non-profit organization in 1984 to preserve and strengthen families of incarcerated persons. According to PACT, more than 3.5 million children in the U.S. have a parent who is incarcerated. PACT services include bi-monthly support groups, a hospitality house for inmate families, parent education and life skills classes, and technical assistance to other correctional facilities (PACT 2002).

In **New York**, the **Center for Community Alternatives**, in collaboration with the **Syracuse City School District**, offers support services to children of incarcerated parents. Program officials estimate that two out of every one hundred kids in the US have a parent in jail or prison. The support groups meet once per week in groups of five to ten youth to work on issues of isolation, self-esteem and shame, making positive

choices, goal setting, self reliance, developing support systems, substance abuse, the corrections system (visitation, contact, parole, release), and legal issues. Youth also have the opportunity to participate in community service, job training and employment, peer education, and mentoring, as well as field trips and an annual banquet (Center for Community Alternatives 2002).

### Programs for Children of Incarcerated Parents in New Mexico

**Ayudantes, Inc.** offers counseling and psychiatric treatment to juveniles who have an incarcerated parent or parents. Ayudantes, Inc. serves only **Santa Fe County, San Miguel County**, and part of **Rio Arriba County**. The program includes an intake system – triage evaluation for appropriateness of treatment at their facility; assessment by a licensed counselor or a licensed social worker; and program and counseling set-up.

**PB&J's Impact** and **Kidpact** programs offer juveniles aged 0-18 that have an incarcerated parent therapeutic programs and offers the parent parenting classes. The program includes anger management classes, re-integration, teen groups, pre-teen groups (for ages 0-5 & 5-9), kid-to-kid peer meetings (to share what it is like to be a child of an incarcerated parent), and outings for the kids. To participate in the 2-year Impact program, the incarcerated parent should be within one year of release or have been on parole less than one year. The program works with the parents and children together and separately. Kidpact focuses on children with parents who are not interested in participating in Impact programs.

**La Entrada de Amistad** is offered at the **Los Lunas** corrections facility and is a 6-month program for re-unification between mothers and their children. The first month the parent is out of prison, she is alone in a housing facility and does not see the child. In the following 5 months, she works on any issues she may have (finding a job, finding housing, medical and mental help, etc.) while working on re-unification with the child.

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## Delinquent Offenders Under Age 15

### Overview

There is a common belief in the juvenile justice community that juvenile offenders are younger today compared to the past. A study, based on data collected from the Uniform Crime Reporting Program and the National Juvenile Court Data Archive, found that between 1985 and 1995, violent crime arrests for juveniles under fifteen increased by 94% compared to 47% for older youth (Butts and Snyder 1997). However, based on analysis of official data sources, today's serious and violent juvenile offenders are not significantly younger than those of the past two decades. In fact, since peaking in 1994, the violent crime arrest rate for youth under age fifteen has declined while the violent crime arrest rate for youth over age fifteen remained relatively stable (Cohn 1999). By 1996, children under the age of 15 represented 32% of all juvenile arrests, with theft and vandalism making up 30% of those arrests (Puzzanchera, 1998). There are several reasons for the continued misconception about the age of juvenile offenders including: the overall growth in the numbers of violent juvenile offenders; the nature of the delinquency cases involving younger juveniles; the increase in delinquency caseloads throughout the country; exceptional cases tend to be remembered longer; and finally, the news media tends to focus more on violent crimes by the very young (Butts and Snyder 1997).

However, younger offenders have an increased likelihood of delinquent recidivism and continued criminal involvement than older juvenile offenders. One researcher found many potential serious and violent juvenile offenders below the age of twelve are not routinely processed in juvenile court, and treatment services for such offenders are typically lacking (Foote 1997). This lack of programming has serious implications for community juvenile justice providers. However, when interventions are available, research has shown that younger offenders may also be more receptive to early intervention than older juveniles. Researchers have suggested that many known predictors of serious and violent juvenile offenders should be incorporated

into screening devices to assist in early detection of potential offenders (Butts and Snyder 1997; Foote 1997).

Research has shown that the number of young children that could be qualified as having **oppositional defiant disorder (ODD)** or **conduct disorder (CD)** has risen in recent years and could be between 7-25% of all preschool and early school-age children. High rates of behavior and conduct disorder are predictive of future adolescent juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and other forms of antisocial behavior. It has been shown that people who commit arson, rape, murder, robbery, and other crimes had histories of chronic childhood aggression and behavior problems (Webster-Stratton 2000).

### Evidence

A program called the “**Incredible Years Parents, Teachers, and Children Training Series**,” addresses childhood behavior problems using group therapies and other behavioral training techniques to help parents and care givers working with children aged 2-10. The training is designed to increase the pro-social behavior of children and reduce or prevent behavior problems. Initial evaluation studies of the program have produced positive results. Families that participated in treatment groups reported significantly fewer behavior problems with their children, and the positive results were maintained a year after the conclusion of the program (Webster-Stratton 2000).

### Programs for Delinquent Offenders Under Age 15 in New Mexico

The **Juvenile Early Intervention Program (JEIP)** in **Albuquerque** offers juveniles aged 10-12 that have been charged with a misdemeanor offense, a seven-week program designed to help juveniles understand what is going on around them and how to make decisions for themselves. The program consists of classes for both the juvenile and family on topics such as peer pressure, self-esteem, drugs, and gangs. The family must be willing to participate and allow the surveillance officer to watch them and come into their home to check on them. The program culminates with the juvenile doing a presentation on what he or she got out of the program.

The **San Juan County Family Preservation** program offers first offenders,

aged 8-18 that have been referred to the program by JPPO in **Farmington**, life skills classes that consist of one two-hour class a week for eight weeks. The classes include anger management, peer pressure, responsibility and choices, and drug and alcohol information. The program has a Saturday challenge activity that includes training on how to solve problems and encourages communication.

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The **Third Judicial District of New Mexico** offers two programs for offenders under age 15. The **drug court program** is for 14-17 year old juveniles and is a 9-month, court-centered, team supervised program. The program involves intensive home and school monitoring by surveillance officers, frequent random drug tests, activities with police officers, counseling three times a week, and a meeting with the judge every two weeks. The **at-risk program** is for middle school students that have been referred by the school as a student at risk for being permanently suspended from school. This program is similar to the drug court program in that the juveniles must see the judge every two weeks when the judge visits the school, and the juveniles are frequently and randomly tested drugs.

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# Diversion Programs

## Overview

Juvenile diversion projects emerged as a dominant movement in juvenile justice in the late 1960s and into the 1970s (Roberts 1989). The movement was given motivation by the 1967 recommendations of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and the influence of several agencies, including the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration and the Office of Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention. Alternatives included police-based diversion programs, probation diversions, voluntary youth services bureaus, and community outreach counseling. The objective of many of the early diversion programs was to provide a structured, community-based alternative to incarceration so that petty and status offenders would not be exposed to the corrupting influences of the more hardened juvenile offenders who populate juvenile institutions. Successful programs usually provide direct services, including family counseling, parenting education, and behavioral contracting. Additionally, studies have shown that half of all juvenile detention facilities operate above capacity, impacting the juvenile justice system's ability to use detention appropriately. Diversion programs can help alleviate juvenile corrections facility overcrowding and lessen the system caseload, allowing juvenile courts to focus on the most serious offenders (Shelden 1999).

Sociologists have argued that most diversion programs are a part of the juvenile justice system and that youth who are referred rather than released become stigmatized and labeled (Binder 1989). Critics also argue that diversion programs have resulted in net widening, with juveniles being referred who otherwise would have been released. Social workers and criminal justice professionals argue that diversion is necessary for system operation and may prevent both status offenders and delinquents from further offending, a contention supported by evaluation research. Because troubled youth often need such services as employment and family counseling, academic mediation, and substance abuse treatment, diversion programs are likely to continue to thrive.

## Evidence

A pioneering diversion program was developed in **San Francisco**, a city that had largely relied on its juvenile detention system with a detention rate of almost 77%, due in large part to the probation department's lack of consideration of alternative options. The major goal of the San Francisco program was to reduce the number of youth in court-ordered detention by providing culturally relevant, community-based services and supervision and monitoring. Evaluation of the San Francisco program found that the recidivism rate of the diversion program participants was 34% compared to 60% for a control group of juveniles who received regular juvenile system processing; 14% of the diversion group had two or more subsequent referrals compared to 50% of the control group; and 9% of the diversion group had a subsequent violent crime charge compared to 25% of the control group (Shelden 1999).

## Diversion Programs in New Mexico

The **Juvenile Diversion Program in Albuquerque** offers classes to juveniles aged 13-18 that address criminal violations including shoplifting, possession of alcohol, possession of marijuana/drug paraphernalia, criminal trespassing, assault, battery, and public affray. The juveniles who go to the classes normally are on their first or second referral and not on formal probation. The classes teach juveniles about the court process and the probation system in relation to the class topic. There is a test, including an essay component, at the end of the class that must be completed before the juvenile is given credit for attending the class. A parent, guardian, or a custodian must accompany the juvenile. A judge or special magistrate, a DA from children's court, a probation officer, and guest lecturers, conduct the classes. Parents who attend the classes are given a brochure with information for other available services. At the conclusion of the classes, the parent is asked to respond.

The **Man-2-Man Program in Albuquerque** provides services for at-risk youth who have excessive absences from school, low grades, are at-risk of dropping out of school, have been adjudicated, and have been referred by a school counselor. This program offers the juveniles a 6-month curriculum of one-week topics including gang violence, suicide, education, poetry,

and art. Mentors meet with the juveniles one to two times a week for 1-1½ hours for that week's topic.

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## Educational Programs

### Overview

There are many juveniles who do not attend school regularly due to a wide variety of problems – teen pregnancy, truancy, reintegration issues, fear of going to school, suspension and expulsion. By 1993, the number of individuals aged 16-24 years old who had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school reached 3.4 million, 11 percent of all people in that age group (Ingersoll and LeBoeuf 1997).

Truancy often indicates a family in crisis, and is of great concern in places like Los Angeles, CA, where two out of five students are chronically truant. There, the Weed & Seed and the Safe Haven Programs collaborated to develop a truancy prevention/intervention program, the Program to Eliminate and Remediate Truancy (PERT). PERT provides four hours of tutoring, two hours of counseling, and two hours of parenting sessions each week to at-risk youth who are referred by juvenile probation (Ingersoll and LeBoeuf 1997).

Alternative schools provide education services to a variety of ‘at-risk’ students such as pregnant, neglected, delinquent students and wards of the court. Usually, these services are designed to prevent students from dropping out of school. Not only do they provide standard academic curricula, alternative schools offer specialized instruction in topics such as risks in sexual behavior, social pressure and skills in assertiveness and resistance.

The **Tri-A** alternative program in **St. Louis, MO**, for students with serious behavioral problems encompasses assessment, assignment, and adjustment. Students are required to respect staff and fellow students and to maintain good attendance. Area businesses cooperate with the Tri-A Program to encourage study and work. The **Central Area Alternative Center in Baltimore, MD**, provides educational and therapeutic services to students who are unable to perform successfully in their home schools. The goal is to help students develop the skills necessary to return to their home schools and become successful. Another promising innovative approach to effective intervention with young offenders

has been the establishment of juvenile probation departments within schools. Partnerships between juvenile probation departments and school systems can help to successfully reintegrate juvenile offenders who are returning from incarceration to the mainstream school environment. The schools offer a structured environment and academic programs specifically for the juvenile individual. The school-based probation officers provide control, supervision and help in intervening with potential crisis situations with juvenile probation clients (“Making Successful Transitions” 2000).

A probation/parole program in **Humboldt County, CA, Probation Alternatives in a Community Environment (PACE)** is a multi-agency collaboration whose purpose is to meet the needs of court-ordered participants with substance abuse and mental health issues. PACE is a 9-12 month program that incorporates drug screening, community service, individual/group/ family counseling and 12-step programs in an attempt to make the participants live a ‘clean and sober lifestyle.’ What sets PACE apart from similar programming is that PACE utilizes its own community school, in which participants who have been suspended or expelled from their home district will be able to continue their education while they are in the program.

After school programs for juveniles are provided in a variety of formats, with the common goal of providing supervision as well as psychosocial development, educational, career awareness, and recreation program elements. Community organizations that offer after school alternative youth programs can help counter some of the hazards that affect juveniles including drug use, gang activity and other forms of juvenile delinquency. National youth-serving organizations such as the **Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Boy Scouts** and **Girl Scouts**, and the **4-H Club** also play an important role in providing services that provide supervision and social skills to young people (Youth Afterschool 1997).

### Evidence

The **Families and Schools Together (FAST)** program is a promising model of early intervention for potential juvenile delinquents that has several noteworthy components. The stated goal of FAST is to

identify at-risk youth before they get into trouble. An elementary school teacher can refer a family to participate in the FAST curriculum. Typically, ten to fifteen families meet for eight to ten weekly sessions with the primary goal of facilitating social support and mutual awareness. After graduation, families continue to participate in the FASTWORKS phase that meets monthly for two years after graduation. The program has proven to be effective in diverse populations and has been recognized as a culturally competent model in education (McDonald and Frey 1999).

The **Urban smARTS** program in **San Antonio, TX**, is an after school arts program targeted at at-risk youth who are referred by parents and school officials to prevent juveniles from engaging in risky behavior. The program consists of 16-week sessions with nine hours per week of activity, and includes a case management component. Evaluation of the Urban smARTS program showed that there was no juvenile court involvement during the program for the 112 participants, and that only two of the participants committed an offense during the 22 month follow up period (YouthARTS Development 2001).

#### **Educational Intervention, Alternative Schools, and After School Programs in New Mexico**

**Project Succeed** is an in-school education intervention program that operates in **Los Lunas High School** with students who are high-risk for not graduating high school. To be eligible for the program, students must be currently enrolled at Los Lunas High School, the student must be recognized as at-risk for not graduating from high school, and must be referred to the program by a teacher, counselor, or principal. The program offers a small classroom for teaching English and mathematics and a case manager supervises their work to make sure the student stays on track for graduation.

**Rio Grande Educational Collaborative** operates in the **South Valley of Albuquerque** and matches students in the **Rio Grande High School Cluster** that are at-risk for dropping out of school with a volunteer that stresses an education-to-field experience.

**Save the Children** has three programs of community service work in exchange for a living stipend for the duration of the

program. The two part-time programs require participants to complete 900 hours of work in either 6 months or 11 months, depending on the program. The full-time program requires completion of 1700 hours in 11 months. If the participant completes the required number of community service hours in the specified time frame, they receive up to \$4725.00 in an educational fund that can be used for college education.

**The House Schools' The Learning Center (TLC)** program in **House** is a diploma program that allows students to learn at their own pace and take the classes they want to within state guidelines and with academic counseling. The program allows students to continue with full-time or part-time employment while completing their high-school education, and focuses on providing students with the flexibility to proceed at their own pace. Students must complete all required assignments, tests and projects in order to receive credit for each subject, and teachers are available to offer aid. Students may also earn elective credits through work or volunteer hours.

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## Family Preservation/Family Intervention

### Overview

Many delinquency problems are rooted in social problems that may have originated or been caused by the family environment (Alvarado and Kumpfer 2000). Evidence has shown that punitive solutions to juvenile delinquency, such as incarceration, are in many cases ineffective and costly because removing juveniles from their families makes many of their problems more difficult to treat. Family-based prevention and intervention programs that engage multiple perspectives and approaches may be better suited to address juvenile delinquent behavior (Sexton and Alexander 2000). Family-focused treatment approaches attempt to reduce juvenile delinquency by improving family functioning (Roberts 1989). Family therapy may be used as a component of diversion programs, a means of avoiding out-of-home placement, an adjunct to residential treatment, or as a part of pre-release or aftercare programming. Treatment must work to overcome family resistance to treatment, recognize both parents' and youth's concerns and objectives, have highly competent staff and supervision, and be flexible. Most programs assign one therapist to work with a family for one hour per week, although a number of innovative staffing and scheduling patterns have been used. Treatment approaches may include short-term crisis intervention, family systems models, behavioral contracting, effective parenting education, or a combination of these.

### Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)

is a family-based form of substance abuse treatment that is delivered in an outpatient setting. (National Institute on Drug Abuse 2002). The underlying premise of MDFT is that peers, family members, and the surrounding community influence drug use in adolescents. MDFT is divided into several phases, with successful completion of one phase required before the adolescent may proceed to the next. The MDFT treatment format consists of individual and family sessions as well as sessions that involve other, non-family members in the adolescent's life. Sessions take place in the clinic, the home, the family court, school, or

other location within the community. Recent controlled trials to determine the effectiveness of MDFT revealed that this method of adolescent drug treatment brought about overall improvement in adolescents' behavior, including a reduction in drug use and other related behaviors, and improvement in academic performance.

**Multisystemic Therapy (MST)** is a home-based, family treatment program that is aimed at reducing antisocial behavior in children, reducing the number of out-of-home placements of children in juvenile facilities, and empowering families to resolve their own conflicts. MST treats various factors in the child's environment that contributes to his or her behavioral problems through goals that are developed with the family as a whole. Research has shown that MST can reduce long-term criminal activity and incarceration rates (Alvarado and Kumpfer 2000).

**Functional Family Therapy (FFT)** is a family-based approach that has been proven to be effective in addressing delinquency (Alexander et al. 1988). The FFT model integrates behavioral systems and cognitive intervention strategies. The five phases of intervention in the FFT model are introduction/impression, assessment/understanding, induction/therapy, behavior change education, and generalization/termination.

The introduction/impression phase concerns the clients' expectations prior to therapeutic interaction. The assessment phase involves an evaluation of the characteristics and needs of each family member as well as the fit between these individual characteristics in the family dynamics. The induction/therapy phase targets the motivational and attribution aspects of disturbed families, and the goal of the behavior change/education phase is to produce long-term behavioral change in the family. The goals of the generalization/termination phase are to maintain the changes previously achieved while producing independence from the therapist. Studies have shown that FFT can reduce recidivism or prevent the occurrence of juvenile delinquency 25 to 60 percent more effectively than other forms of treatment, and also reduces treatment costs compared to other types or programs (Sexton and Alexander 2000).

### Evidence

The **Family Project** in **Las Vegas, NV**, was an FFT research and practice site that worked with over 200 families in the Las Vegas area. The program demonstrated an 80% treatment completion rate. A comparison of recidivism rates between the FFT program and regular treatment groups showed a 19.8% recidivism rate for the FFT program participants compared to 36% for the control group. FFT costs were estimated at \$700 to \$1,000 per family, compared to \$6,000 per adolescent for detention and \$13,500 per adolescent for a county residential treatment program (Sexton and Alexander 2000).

### Family Preservation/Family Intervention Programs in New Mexico

The **SAFE 2000** plan targets the high-risk juveniles in **Bernalillo County** who are identified as being violent and involved with firearms. A Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) meets with a juvenile's family to determine the problem and what level service or counseling the youth needs to return to school and avoid any additional trouble. Specific programs under the SAFE 2000 plan include:

- **Operation Night Light** - night-time visits of probationers' homes as well as night-time surveillance, enforcing terms of juvenile probation.
- **Social Workers Helping Cops to Help Kids** - A police officer can simply supply the staff Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) with the name and phone number of a youth in need of service. The LCSW meets with the family and determines the problem and what level of community or individual services or counseling the youth needs to get back into school and avoid trouble. This program becomes centered on family interaction and preservation.
- **NMCC Outreach Minister** – An outreach minister will provide educational training for parish leaders and "network" staff in how to work with troubled youth.
- **Bernalillo County Juvenile Detention Center Central Intake Initiative** - These intake social workers will develop a range of

professional network contacts to divert appropriate kids to programs that meet the individual client needs.

- **Operation Cease Fire** - This federal and local law enforcement initiative aims to remove the predator gang leaders and "shooters" from the street.

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## Gang Programs

### Overview

Although many people consider youth gangs to be major problems, the proportion of delinquents in gangs, the scope, and implications of the issue are not completely understood. For example, we really do not know what proportion of all delinquent and criminal offenses gang members commit. A recent study by the Rochester Youth Development Study attempted to better understand these issues. Researchers found that gang members account for a disproportionate share of delinquent acts, especially more serious offenses (Thornberry and Burch 1997). Studies completed in Denver, Seattle, and Rochester show gang influences on violent offending are far greater than highly delinquent non-gang peers. While in a gang, members commit violent and serious offenses at a much higher rate than before or after being involved in a gang. Finally, the studies show that the effects of gang membership were long-lasting (Howell 1997).

Juveniles who join gangs usually start out as “wannabes” at around age 13, officially join the gang six months later, and have an arrest record by age 14. This emphasizes the need to promote gang resistance education to pre-teens (Huff 1998). Prevention programs can be aimed at youth during the year in between the “wannabe” stage and their first actual arrest for criminal behavior, as well as between the period between their first arrest, usually for property crime, and more serious offenses, a period of about one-and-a-half to two years (Huff 1998).

Research suggests that many gang members participated in delinquent activities before they formally joined a gang, and so gang prevention activities can be oriented towards primary prevention that focuses on an entire population at risk, and not just gang members. Secondary prevention efforts can then target the specific individuals who are identified as being a greater risk at becoming delinquent (or joining a gang), and a third level of prevention activity can target individuals who are already gang members (Esbensen 2000).

Much of the historical gang research has ignored female gangs, and female gangs receive little prevention/intervention program attention. Several nationwide law enforcement surveys found that almost 10% of all gang members were female, while surveys from a number of major cities across the U.S. showed that females surveyed who claimed gang membership was between 8 and 32% (Moore and Hagedon 2001), suggesting that gang prevention programming also needs to be oriented towards females and not just the young male population.

### Evidence

A good example of a broad primary program is the **Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.)** program that provides life skills that empower juveniles with the knowledge and ability to resist the social pressure to join gangs (Esbensen 2000). Preliminary evaluation research of the G.R.E.A.T. program was positive, showing that students who completed the program had lower rates of delinquency and gang affiliation, more positive attitudes towards police, more commitment to school, better relationships with parents, less association with peers involved in delinquent activity, and more negative attitudes towards gangs (Esbensen and Osgood 1997).

The **Montreal Preventative Treatment Program** is a secondary program that targeted youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds who displayed disruptive behavior in kindergarten, and offered parents discipline training sessions. Evaluations showed that significantly fewer juveniles in the treatment group had joined gangs by age 15 than those who did not receive treatment (Esbensen 2000).

Gang intervention programs overall face a difficult task of balancing prevention, intervention, and suppression. Programs should consider the individual, the family, the school, peer groups, and the community when addressing gang activity (Spergel 1995). One program that appears to have reduced gang violence and has succeeded in positively redirecting Hispanic youth in gangs is the **Gang Violence Reduction Project of the Chicago Police Department** developed by the **National Youth Gang Suppression and Intervention Program**. Positive results include: a reduction in serious gang violence among targeted populations; improved perceptions of gang

crime and police effectiveness; fewer arrests for serious gang crimes; and, a number of youth were referred for counseling, crisis intervention, job placement, and other programs and services (Thornberry and Burch 1997).

### **Gang Intervention, Reduction, and Prevention Programs in New Mexico**

#### **The Albuquerque Gang**

**Prevention/Intervention Project** was developed in response to increased gang violence and the number of gangs and gang members -- 218 gangs and 6700 gang members were identified as of July 1, 1996. Major program components were gang diversion; gang prevention; gang intervention; and formation of community linkage teams. Core services provided to individual clients included primary healthcare, personal and family counseling, educational assistance, employment and job training services, recreation opportunities, substance abuse counseling and treatment, and case management.

The **Youth Development Inc. Gang Intervention Program** serves juveniles aged 13-20 in **Albuquerque** that are involved in gangs, at-risk for joining a gang, or referred to the program. The program offers guest speakers on topics related to gangs and juveniles, emphasizes non-violence in neutral territory, teaches alternatives to negative choices, and teaches teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. Juveniles can be referred to the program by JPPO, by the court, parents, Albuquerque Public Schools, or self.

The **Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.)** program in **Bernalillo County** is a class taught by trained police and sheriff's officers to all 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Bernalillo County public schools. The classes teach juveniles about drugs, violence, and gangs as an intervention to these issues. The program offers summer camps when school is not in session.

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## Mediation Programs

### Overview

Restorative justice focuses on the personal responsibility of the offender by having offenders make an attempt to “repair or restore” the harm their actions have brought to individual victims and the society as a whole. Restorative justice is another approach being adopted by juvenile courts and probation/ parole agencies in a grassroots approach designed and implemented at the community level. (Tonry 1999). Restorative juvenile justice approaches seek to have offenders make restitution to their victims and learn about the harm they cause, which will hopefully prevent future offending.

One model of restorative justice that is particularly promising is victim-offender mediation, or victim-offender reconciliation. The main feature of most victim-offender mediation programs is a face-to-face meeting between the offender and the victim. A trained mediator makes initial personal contacts with the offender and the victim and schedules a joint meeting. In the mediator's presence the facts of the case are discussed, restitution is most often negotiated, and a contract is developed. Mediation programs offer juvenile court judges and probation officers a family-centered problem solving approach for dealing with juvenile offenders (Smith 1993).

Victim-offender mediation is designed to produce agreements that reflect the offender's accountability and responsibility for the victim's loss and suffering by making amends. Mediation in juvenile corrections facilities is intended to resolve conflicts through a problem solving strategy rather than through punitive disciplinary strategies. School mediation programs help to develop new norms for social interaction in the school environment, and school mediation programs that use peer mediators have become popular in middle schools and high schools. Students are recruited and trained by guidance counselors or other trained professionals. They hear both sides of arguments, offer unbiased impressions, and help students in conflict arrive at realistic solutions to their problems. Results for a school mediation program run by students in **North Carolina** where over 1,100 mediation hearings have been conducted showed that 742 days of in-school suspension and 1,220

days of out-of-school suspension were eliminated, as well as a report of reduced violence in the schools (“Resolve Dispute,” 2000).

### Evidence

Results from several evaluation studies indicate that mediation is an effective means of conflict management of delinquent acts (Umbreit and Coates 1999; Umbreit and Schug 1997). The first large cross-site evaluation of victim-offender mediation services collected data from crime victims and juvenile offenders from four cities in the U.S. The findings show that victim-offender mediation at these four sites resulted in high levels of client satisfaction and perceptions of fairness. Both victims and juvenile offenders believed the mediation process had a strong humanizing effect on the justice system response to crime. Mediation reduced fear of crime among victims. Juvenile offenders found mediation to be a significantly demanding response to their criminal behavior. Offenders who met with victims were more likely to successfully complete their restitution obligation. In addition, the programs were found to be effective in working with recidivists as well as more serious offenders. Finally, recidivism rates were lower among offenders who participated in mediation than offenders who did not participate (18% versus 27%); and subsequent offenses tended to be less serious for mediation participants (Umbreit 1994).

### Mediation Programs in New Mexico

The **New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution** has implemented a relatively new application of mediation in area schools to aid in the resolution of gang-related disputes. Conflicts between gangs and the school administration and between rival gangs have been resolved through mediation.

The New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department funds three separate programs managed by the New Mexico Center for Dispute Resolution. The first is a **Victim-Offender Mediation** program and is operative in **Bernalillo, Sandoval, Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, San Juan, and San Miguel Counties**. The **Violence Intervention Program (VIP)** deals with higher risk youth on probation and parole in **Bernalillo County**. Finally, the **Releasing Anger Positively (RAP)** program has a 24-hour curriculum for teens and parents focusing on

increasing anger management and communication skills. All three programs accept referrals directly from the juvenile probation office. The University of Denver is currently evaluating the VIP program.

The **Navajo Nation** operates a tribal court system that utilizes **Peacemaking** as part of the judicial system, which incorporates Native American ideals of community justice into western concepts of justice. District courts employ Peacemaking liaisons who arrange for Peacemakers to meet with individuals or families, record the results of the meetings, and monitor the implementation of any agreements that were made. Peacemaking is typically done without court involvement, and may also be used as a diversion from court or as directed by a judge at a judicial disposition. Between 1994 and 1996, the OJJDP funded a program in Chinle district called **Yaa Da' Ya**, which assisted at-risk youth and their families and incorporated Peacemaking into traditional plans of healing (Rubin 2001). A recent evaluation study of Navajo Peacemaking showed that participants in the Peacemaking process felt more comfortable and satisfied than with regular family court participants. Results also showed that the problem that initiated the Peacemaking process reoccurred in 29% of the Peacemaking participants, compared to a reoccurrence in 64% of family court participants (Gross 1999).

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## Mental Health Programs

### Overview

One in 10 adolescents suffers from some form of mental illness severely enough to have some degree of functional impairment. The World Health Organization estimates that by the year 2020, mental health disorders in children will rise by 50% and will be the leading cause of childhood morbidity, mortality, and disability (Blueprint for Change 2001). Children who have mental health disorders are likely to behave in ways that bring them into conflict with their families, peers, schools, and authority figures, which increases their chance of entering into the juvenile justice system. These youth bring special issues and needs to the juvenile justice system that most communities are unable to adequately address (Faenza and Siegfried 1998).

It is currently estimated that between 50-75% of incarcerated youth have diagnosable mental disorders. Specifically, 55% of youth in the juvenile justice system have symptoms of clinical depression and up to 19% may be suicidal. Half of the juveniles with mental disorders also have substance abuse problems and many have a dual diagnosis of more than one specific mental disability or problem (Hubner and Wolfson 2000). The main barriers to addressing the complex problems associated with serious mental health issues in juveniles includes confusion across multi-service and multi-agency entities, inadequate screening and overall mental health assessments at the time of intake, lack of necessary training and staffing as well as programming within juvenile justice systems, lack of funding, and an overall lack of research on the effectiveness of various programs for treating youth with mental health disorders (Cocozza and Skowyra 2000). The problem with short-term juvenile justice facilities is that they are not meant to be mental health centers, and when they do provide mental health services do so through public agencies that provide mass care from people who are inexperienced and lack the appropriate training to deal with complex mental health issues (Hubner and Wolfson 2000).

There are some promising models for mental health therapy. **Multisystemic**

**Therapy (MST)** addresses multiple factors of serious antisocial behavior in juveniles through family and community based treatment. Another therapy, **Functional Family Therapy (FFT)**, utilizes probation officers and mental health professionals for between eight and 26 hours of service, which is designed to prevent and intervene in delinquent behavior. And **Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC)** places adolescents with community families that have been trained and are supervised to provide treatment at home, in school and in the community (Hubner and Wolfson 2000).

Some specific components that effective treatment programs share include highly structured and intensive focus on specific behaviors, emphasis on the development of basic social skills, counseling that addresses behavior and attitude, sensitivity to gender/race/sexual orientation, coordinated care among various services and agencies, and the use of mental health professionals as opposed to corrections staff as treatment providers. The main factor in all successful mental health treatment models is providing treatment in the least restrictive and most appropriate environment in the community and with the family (Hubner and Wolfson 2000).

### Evidence

**Youth Villages in Memphis, TN** provides a wide-range of services to youth and families and has used the MST in most of its programs. Evaluations of the MST programs have shown 25-75% decreases in long-term re-arrests and reductions of 47- 64% in out-of-home placements. Created in 1994, the **Wraparound Milwaukee** program seeks to minimize out-of-home placements while providing treatment services across mental health, juvenile justice, child welfare, and educational systems in a family-focused and community-based environment.

Wraparound Milwaukee has served over 600 youth who are under court order in the Wisconsin juvenile justice system. Over 50% of those youth had been diagnosed with one or more co-existing mental disorders. The program utilizes care coordinators who work directly with the families to develop a plan for the youth based on the variety of services that Wraparound Milwaukee can coordinate. Since the development of the program, the use of residential treatment options has decreased by 60% and the use psychiatric

hospitalization has been reduced by 80%. The average cost of care has fallen from over \$5,000 to under \$3,300 per month per child. Studies of recidivism rates have also shown improvement, including drops in sex offenses by 10%, assaults, drug offenses and property offenses by 50% (Hubner and Wolfson 2000).

### **Mental Health Programs in New Mexico**

**Alliance Hospital in Santa Theresa** offers juveniles under the age of 18 that are Medicaid eligible and approved by Salud or the Children's Mental Health Panel, a behavior modification plan, anger management, and group and individual counseling. They accept developmentally disabled juveniles and treat sexually abused juveniles based on the medical/clinical model.

**Desert Hills in Albuquerque** offers many programs for juveniles aged 3-21 and a Residential Treatment Center and a Day Treatment Center for juveniles aged 11-17. Desert Hills provides treatment for depression, aggression, oppositional defiance, chemical dependency, sex offenders, hearing impaired, and treatment foster care. Weekly family participation is required and patients are accepted nationwide. Desert Hills offers the only Level 4 treatment facility in the state and lock-down is available if required. Medicaid, Lovelace, Presbyterian, Cimarron, Exemp, and some private insurance is accepted. One program is an Intensive Out-Patient Therapy that meets three times a week. Another program is Behavior Management, a one-on-one session that involves home and school treatments. The Day Treatment Program is Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 3:00pm and Friday 8:00am – 2:00pm, and is a combination of one-on-one, group, and recreational therapies. Albuquerque Public Schools is on-site for school credits and World of Work is on-site for school and vocational training. The Residential Treatment Program has 6 units with two levels of treatment. Level 3 is behavioral treatment for boys and girls aged 13 and older with minimum drug/alcohol dependency, and there is also a unit for children aged 11-12.

**Sequoyah in Albuquerque** offers a 6-month program for male juveniles aged 13-17 with a history of violence, a major mental disorder, and have been determined to be amenable to treatment that includes

individual, group, and family (if applicable) therapy, schooling, and medical evaluations. Sequoyah also has art, pet and recreational therapy, and speech and language programs.

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This CJJCC Program Review Sheet is part of a comprehensive literature review document that explores juvenile treatment programs around the country and addresses similar programs that are offered in New Mexico. For more information, visit the CJJCC web site at <http://www.cjjcc.org>.

## Mentoring Programs

### Overview

In the 1992 Reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, Congress added an additional component – mentoring. This legislative action acknowledged the potential of mentor programs as an effective tool for addressing two vital concerns regarding juvenile justice: poor academic performance and juvenile delinquency. The **Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)** is a federal program administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Mentoring, as defined by JUMP, is a one-on-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals, one adult and one juvenile, which takes place on a regular basis over an extended period of time. There are currently over 7,400 youth enrolled in the 166 JUMP programs that are funded by the OJJDP (Garringer 1999). JUMP is designed to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang participation, improve academic performance, and reduce school dropout rates. To achieve these objectives, JUMP matches responsible adults with at-risk juveniles.

A program called **Be-A-Friend** run by the Big Brothers Big Sisters of **Erie County, NY**, includes a one-on-one community-based program and a mentoring program. The community program is led by paid staff, while the group mentoring program utilizes adult volunteers. Many children who request a Big Brother or Big Sister begin participating in the group program until a specific mentoring volunteer match is found (Herrera et al 2000).

**Los Angeles Team Mentoring, Inc.** runs the **TEAMWORKS Program** that serves middle school youth in disadvantaged communities through an after-school group mentoring program. The program meets two to four times per month at school, and includes several Saturday activities, field trips, and community service projects. Children are assigned to groups with 10-12 youth to a group, which is led by a team of mentors including a teacher, a college student, and a community volunteer (Herrera et al 2000).

In the past 20 years, school-based mentoring programs have become one of the most popular ways to reach school-aged

children. School-based mentoring takes place on the school premises, and is aimed at building students' self-esteem, attitudes, school attendance and achievement (Weinberger 2000).

Most of the programs described in this section are partners of the **National Mentoring Partnership**. The National Mentoring Partnership is a national referral agency for mentoring services. This program does not provide direct mentoring services, but does provide the resources and tools mentoring organizations need to start, run and evaluate mentoring programs.

### Evidence

A report to Congress in 1998 outlined the initial stages of the OJJDP's ongoing evaluation of the ninety-three projects funded under JUMP (Novotney et al 2000). Although no concrete evidence of favorable outcomes is reported, initial data drawn from mentors and youth show mentoring as a positive experience (Bilchik 1998). Positive benefits that have been cited include improved academic performance, increased school attendance rates, higher college enrollment rates, enhanced self-esteem and social communication, and improved behavior at home and school (Brewster and Fager 1998).

The well established **Big Brothers and Big Sisters Mentoring Program** costs about \$1000 to support one matched relationship for one year. According to evaluation findings, mentored youth are 46% less likely than control youth to initiate drug use and 27% less likely to use alcohol. Younger children responded even more favorably than older ones. Additionally, treatment youth were around 30% less likely to be physically violent, did better in school, and had higher quality relationships with their parents and peers (Elliot 1997). What is interesting about Big Brothers/ Big Sisters is that the program has no specific goals or objectives other than to help youth in all aspects of their life.

### Mentoring Programs in New Mexico

In New Mexico, the **Big Brothers/Big Sisters** program offers school-based and community-based programs. The school-based program is offered in nine schools in Albuquerque, and one school in Rio Rancho. The school-based program consists of the mentoring volunteer making a one-hour visit to the child in the school to

talk about homework and school-related issues. The community-based program consists of the mentoring volunteer picking up the child at the home and spending time together twice a month, although the Big Brother/Big Sister can make more visits if they prefer. All volunteers must attend an orientation to explain the responsibilities of a Big Brother/Big Sister, and all volunteers report to a case manager every three months. The juvenile delinquent population is offered the same services as the non-delinquent population. The program has a six-month to one-year wait for male volunteers. The program has a fully staffed oversight committee and is funded through government funds and private grants. Visit [www.bbbs-cnm.org](http://www.bbbs-cnm.org) for more information.

The **Los Sabios** program in **Silver City** offers children K-5 an in-school visit for 30 minutes a week from a mentor aged 55+. The program offers uninterrupted time with the mentor to play games, teach special skills that the mentor possesses (i.e., knitting, drawing), or read with the students. No outside of school contact is allowed. The time spent with the mentors comes from 15 minutes of recess and 15 minutes of class time. The time can also be spent at the end of the school day, depending on the mentor's schedule.

**Mentoring New Mexico Incorporated** is an in-school mentoring program for elementary and middle school students in **Santa Fe, Pojaque, Monte Vista, Ojo Caliente, and Espanola**. Mentors visit the students in school once a week for 30 minutes. The mentors are not prohibited from seeing the student outside of school in addition to the in-school visits.

**Wise Men & Women (WM&W)** offers youth K-12 a mentor for 30-minute in-school visits once a week. WM&W programs are offered in **Bernalillo, Dona Ana, Grant, Sandoval, McKinley, Luna, Rio Arriba, Torrence, Lea, Valencia, and Santa Fe** counties, although not all schools in each county are included.

The Weed & Seed program offers a two-phase mentoring program in **Albuquerque** and **Las Cruces**. Phase one of the program consists of a one-week camp for mentors and youth. Phase two consists of ten months of once a month visits from mentors.

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## Residential Treatment Centers

### Overview

Residential treatment centers (RTCs) use in-patient services to treat substance abuse and dependency, sex offenses and other behavioral and mental conditions. Usually, inpatient services are reserved for clients with the highest levels of need. Several conclusions from the literature suggest mental health disorders may be under-diagnosed and under-treated. Otto (1992) found youth in the juvenile justice system experience substantially higher rates of mental health disorders than youth in the general population. The national rate of placement into out-of-home facilities, both public and private, for adjudicated delinquency cases was over 25% in 1996, and although one of the goals of juvenile justice is to reduce referrals for placement, residential treatment is sometimes clinically necessary (MacKenzie 1999).

**Nexus Treatment** is a non-profit organization located in **Minnesota** and **Illinois** that operates multiple facilities aimed at adolescents involved in sexual victimization and perpetration. These in-patient facilities operate on the assumption that in order for abuse to stop, there must be a break in the abuse cycle. By providing treatment services in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe, the clients develop constructive coping skills that can be applied to a functional family life. What is noteworthy about these facilities is that treatment is grounded in 'cognitive-behavioral theory,' so that thinking errors are corrected by educational approaches, which teach clients how to replace harmful behaviors with more socially acceptable behavior. The Joint Commission on Accreditation for Health Care Organizations has accredited Nexus Treatment (Nexus 1999).

**Boysville of Michigan** is a nonprofit family preservation agency that operates numerous residential and community-based programs in Michigan and Ohio. More specifically, Boysville operates the Chemical Dependency Treatment Unit that focuses on indigent and minority youths. It relies on a treatment delivery system consisting of reality therapy, structural family therapy, 12 step programs (NA, AA) and integrated

group therapy. This program has several applications to New Mexico. Boysville focuses on indigent and minority populations and operates on Catholic fundamental beliefs. Northern New Mexico is one of the most economically depressed regions in the country and also has a high concentration of Catholic Hispanics (Boysville of Michigan 1999).

The **Caritas House**, in **Pawtucket, RI**, is a public residential substance abuse facility specifically for female adolescents who are referred by the juvenile court or through the state youth services agency. The Caritas House approaches substance abuse treatment by addressing the underlying circumstances in a teenage girls life including her relationships, her family and her self-worth. Part of the therapy the girls receive is how to communicate their needs effectively, settle disputes, and develop healthy relationships. After the in-residence program has been completed, an aftercare component helps the girls transition back to life in the community (Peters 1999).

The **State Alliance for Recovery and General Education of Chemically Dependent Youth Offenders** (known as **SARGE**) is a cooperative effort between the **North Carolina Department of Corrections and the Division of Youth Services**. The goal of this program is to address the chemical dependency problems of youthful offenders as well as their cognitive, behavior and social problems. The program has developed and implemented an individualized, long-term, residential, 12-step chemical dependency treatment program for youthful offenders in the custody of both the local prisons and reform schools. The goal of SARGE is to increase the rate at which youthful offenders with substance abuse problem are able to be treated and avoid future involvement with the juvenile and criminal justice systems. SARGE provides residential substance abuse treatment to young offenders prior to release from custody, followed by community-based aftercare. Evaluations of this program continue and are expected to show that long-term chemical dependency treatment prior to release is the most effective method of treatment, but no results have been published at this time (North Carolina Department of Corrections 1998).

### **Evidence**

In Alaska, the **Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)** is a tribally operated treatment center that provides culturally relevant health treatment services to Alaska Natives. The SEARHC offers the Ravens Way Program to Alaska Native adolescents who have substance abuse problems. The program uses spiritual, traditional, and adventure-based therapy to help native youth find their own solutions to their drug or alcohol problems. The program includes wilderness camping and group home components to help youth develop the skills that they will need to take back to their lives in the community. Since 1989, 83% of the 638 youth who participated in the program completed it successfully, and 60% were able to maintain sobriety, along with significant numbers of participants who decreased their legal problems and improved their family relations and school attendance (Office of Justice Programs 2000).

### **Residential Treatment Center Programs in New Mexico**

**Desert Hills in Albuquerque** is a residential treatment center that provides 24-hour secure treatment programs, offering psychiatric and psychotherapeutic intervention for clients who have deficits in social psychiatric and psychological functioning. A psychiatrist works with a multi-disciplinary team to plan treatment, and medical evaluation as well as medication management is offered. The goal of the residential treatment is reunification with the family and/or return to the community with the help of supportive wraparound services. Desert Hills offers four programs: Medical Model, Deaf Program, Sex Offender Program, and Specialized Treatment Program. Length of stay is approximately 2-6 months.

The **Halvorson House Residential Treatment Center in Farmington** provides services for juveniles with substance abuse and dual diagnosis needs. The Halvorson House program is focused on family involvement and a return to the community, and is closely coordinated with community services for wrap-around treatment.

The **Hogares** facility in **Albuquerque** provides treatment to troubled adolescents aged 12 to 18 in a highly structured, home-like environment. Through solution-focused treatment, therapists and trained staff

address problems specific to the individual youth.

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## Restitution Programs

### Overview

Restitution programs have become an important component of the concept of balance and restorative justice, aimed at having the offender incur an obligation to repay the victim and/or community for his or her offenses (Frievalds 1996). Advocates of restitution programs claim accountability as the main goal, along with other important goals of offender treatment and rehabilitation, reparations to victims, and punishment for the offender (Schneider and Finklestein 1991). Major components of a restitution program include monetary payments to victims, community service work, victim-offender mediation, and job information services (Schneider and Warner 1989). Issues affecting the use and effectiveness of restitution include the ability of the juvenile to pay restitution and its effect on recidivism and whether it is effective for serious offenders. Concerns regarding restitution are that jurisdictions will use it as an *ad hoc* rather than in a programmatic manner. In other words, race or class bias may be built into the nature of the disposition, legal liability, and work employment issues for juveniles under the age of 16. When properly designed and implemented, restitution programs provide the juvenile justice system with an effective mechanism for holding youths accountable for their actions while responding to the needs of the victims. Studies have shown that restitution programs that are recognized as formal programs (as opposed to informal add-ons to other probation programs) are more successful with higher completion rates and lower recidivism than the informal programs. A national survey of restitution programs found that roughly 60% of them were defined as formal programs (Schneider and Finklestein 1991).

There has been a carry-over of judicially ordered restitution requirements into community correctional settings, including day treatment programs, public and private residential programs, drug and alcohol treatment programs, and secure pretrial detention facilities (Rubin 1988). Several approaches to restitution have been followed in such placements. In some cases, restitution requirements may be placed on hold until the youth has completed the

program. In other instances, financial and community service restitution are incorporated into the program through opportunities to earn money or to perform unpaid work. The latter approach has been found to better fit the accountability precept of restitution and is more beneficial for juveniles, the victim, and the community. It has been suggested that placement agencies incorporate the fulfillment of restitution requirements into their program objectives and that the courts collaborate with placement resources to maximize restitution compliance.

### Evidence

Program success can be described in terms of money recovered or community service hours performed and in recidivism rates. In 1990, it was estimated that total restitution figures were approximately \$44.5 million in restitution collected of \$72.3 million ordered, 17.1 million hours of community service work performed, and 44,000 hours of direct service to victims performed through restitution programs across the U.S. (Schneider and Finklestein 1991). To assess the impact of juvenile restitution on recidivism, five studies were conducted as part of the national evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention initiative (Schneider and Schneider 1985). Overall, youths in the restitution groups did not have higher recidivism rates than those on probation or detention conditions. Comparisons of restitution with traditional probation in **Georgia** showed clear and consistent effects favoring restitution. Similarly, in **Washington DC**, restitution cases had fewer subsequent offenses than probation cases. In **Wisconsin**, a formal restitution program was clearly superior to an informal program both in terms of successful completion and recidivism rates. In **Idaho**, results comparing restitution with detention were inconclusive and the **Oklahoma** evaluation did not find differences between sole sanction restitution, restitution and probation, or traditional probation groups. The evaluations concluded that restitution does in fact have a positive impact on the reduction of recidivism.

An evaluation of the **Vermont Juvenile Court Diversion Program** found positive results for the continuation of the program (Rowley 1990). The Vermont program requires juvenile offenders to make restitution to their victims and to the

community in the form of unpaid service. Only first time offenders are eligible, and participation is voluntary. An individualized, time-limited contract is negotiated for each offender. Contract conditions generally include apology to the victim, victim restitution, and/or community restitution via community service work. Comparisons of delinquents who were not diverted to the restitution program to the delinquents who completed the program showed significantly less subsequent offending for the diversion group in terms of both incidence and severity. In addition, the cost effectiveness of the diversion program (the mean cost per case at approximately \$216 compared to approximately \$750 for juvenile probation) also supports the continuation for the successful program.

An evaluation of a juvenile probationary project by Jacobs and Moore (1994) found the successful completion of restitution to be an effective predictor of juvenile recidivism. To facilitate compliance with restitution requirements, the juvenile court arranges for and supplies probationers with employment. The data revealed that recidivism was related to severity of the initial offense but more significantly to the youth's success in achieving, the restitution goal. The proportion of restitution paid was the most important predictor of recidivism. The data reinforced the dominant legislative position that an offender's ability to pay must be considered in ordering restitution.

### **Restitution Programs in New Mexico**

The **Juvenile Probation and Parole Office (JPPO)** is the only office in **Bernalillo County** that handles restitution payments. The victim must file a Victim Impact Statement and the court must order the juvenile to pay restitution before JPPO receives payments. JPPO sets up a payment schedule, receives payments from the adjudicated juvenile, and delivers the money to the victim.

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## Sex Offender Programs

### Overview

Research has shown that up to 20% of all child molestation offenses are committed by juveniles, usually aged 13 to 17 (Center for Sex Offender Management 1999).

Treatment programs for juvenile sex offenders have proliferated, and by 1994, the Safer Society Program had identified 684 such programs nationwide (Righthand and Welch 2001). Despite this growth in the number of programs, there are currently no scientifically validated classification schemes for juvenile sexual offenders. One basic sex offender categorization scheme includes two main categories, offenders who have specific victim and age preferences, and offenders who are considered “nuisances” such as exhibitionists and voyeurs (U.S. Department of Justice 1997).

A number of factors may contribute to and be predictors of juvenile sex offending, including exposure to aggressive or abusive role models, substance abuse, exposure to pornography, and developmental progressions. Also, juvenile sex offenders tend to share similar traits including learning disabilities, impulse control difficulties, and other behavioral problems (Center for Sex Offender Management 1999). Research on the treatment of young sex offenders shows the most effective programs use risk management techniques to address individual offender characteristics (Righthand and Welch 2001). Interventions should target specific factors that are empirically associated to the risk behavior (i.e., deviant arousal, and other factors identified by a psychological evaluation). Research has also shown that offender’s risk to others and their need for treatment may change once a disclosure has been made. Evaluation of sex offender treatments has largely been inconclusive. For a comprehensive review of these issues and others related to juvenile sex offending, see Righthand and Welch (2001).

### Evidence

Community based sex offender treatment programs are often utilized to provide effective treatment and ensure public safety while saving the state the expense of institutionalizing juvenile sex offenders (Guthmann 1986). For example, sex

offender sentencing in **Snohomish County, WA**, was found to be significantly different than sentencing for other juvenile sex offenders in the rest of the state. Other Washington state counties remained constant in the percentage of sex offenders institutionalized between 1982 and 1985. Snohomish County went from a higher than average percentage (34%) in 1982 to a lower than average percentage (19%) in 1984 and 1985, reflecting the impact of the project. This study compared recidivism rates among the **Snohomish County Sex Offender Project** clients with similar sex offenders institutionalized in other counties. An analysis of sexual re-offending indicates that the Snohomish County youths were no more likely to re-offend during or after supervision than the institutionalized sex offenders. Community supervision can be an alternative to institutionalization for selected lower risk sex offenders without increasing the risk of public safety. Moreover, treatment efforts are just as effective as intervention programs in institutions.

A juvenile sex offender supervision program in **Jefferson County, CO**, uses intensive screening and monitoring to supervise juvenile sex offenders who are released into the community. Upon being arrested for a sexual offense, an assessment center directs counseling and initial treatment even before sentencing begins. Probation officers have a high level of contact with offenders who are on probation for up to two years. Periodic screenings and polygraph or plethysmograph assessments are made at the discretion of the probation officer who monitors the juvenile’s treatment progress. An integrated case management team tracks clients and victims to make sure that appropriate treatment services are being provided (Center for Sex Offender Management 1999).

The four-year **California Pilot Juvenile Sex Offender Treatment Program** established a comprehensive model of court-ordered treatment in three California counties. Through sex offender specific treatment and consistent surveillance in the community, officials sought to prevent further sexual violence. The treatment program averaged twenty months in duration and included over two hours per week per offender in individual and group therapy. Offender behavior was monitored during program activities and through collaboration with probation officers, family members, and

others familiar with the offender. The treatment approach focused on personal accountability and "relapse prevention." The evaluation found that the program resulted in a low recidivism rate for offenders while in treatment (2.5% for new sex offenses). Those who re-offended with sexual crimes had a distinctive profile that differed significantly from those who re-offended with nonsexual offenses and those who did not re-offend. A cost-assessment determined that twenty-two juvenile sex offenders could be treated in the community for the same cost as one offender in institutional treatment with parole aftercare. The findings indicate that early, direct, and intensive intervention works with juvenile sex offenders and is cost effective.

### **Sex Offender Programs in New Mexico**

**Desert Hills** in **Albuquerque** has a sex offender unit for male juveniles only. All juveniles in need are eligible and bi-monthly family participation is mandatory. Medicaid, Lovelace, Presbyterian, Cimarron, Exemp, and some private insurance is accepted. There must be some acceptance of responsibility that an inappropriate sexual encounter has occurred. They do not accept low cognitive or high-risk (i.e., a sexual offender not amenable) adolescents.

The **Las Vegas Care Unit** offers services to male juveniles aged 13-18 that have a diagnosable mental illness and have committed a sexual offense. The Las Vegas Care Unit is a residential treatment center that is supervised 24 hours a day with a psychiatrist and a medical doctor on-call after hours. Program activities include a high ropes course and weeklong outdoor trips in the mountains as part of the treatment. Juveniles aged 15-17 are also allowed to have a job on hospital grounds.

**Insights** in **Albuquerque** serves male and female juveniles aged 11-18 and offers individual, group, family and multi-family therapy and case management. The program is designed for 1-2 years depending on the individual, and parent or foster care provider participation is required. Any referral (self, parental, juvenile justice) from anywhere in the state is accepted, though each individual must have a payer source.

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## Teen Courts

### Overview

Like mediation programs, teen courts seek to instill a sense of personal responsibility in delinquent juveniles. Teen court is a dispositional alternative in which a jury of peers sentences first-time juvenile offenders (White 1999). There are over 650 teen courts operating in the United States that share the common goal of holding youth offenders accountable for their actions and educating them about the legal system (Vickers 2000).

Sometimes called youth courts or peer courts, teen court is not designed to prove innocence or guilt; adjudications are handled by district court. Every participant in teen court is between the ages of 14-17, except for the judge. Teenage prosecuting and defense attorneys, clerks, bailiffs, jury forepersons and jurors carry out duties similar to their counterparts in adult courts.

The types of offenses that teen court programs report accepting most often include theft (91.2%), alcohol/drug (85.3%), vandalism (84.6%), and disorderly conduct (83.1%). The majority of teen courts serve a sentencing function only. Sentencing is designed to hold youth accountable according to the idea that peer pressure exerts a powerful influence over adolescent behavior. If peer pressure leads juveniles into law breaking, it can be re-directed to become a force leading juveniles into law-abiding behavior (Godwin 1998; Williamson and Chalk 1993). Many teen courts are moving towards incorporating more restorative justice practices and ideals, based on the overall principles of restorative justice: repair, involvement, and justice system facilitation (Godwin 2001).

### Evidence

The few teen court evaluation studies that have been conducted in the United States have demonstrated inconsistent results regarding recidivism rates. Studies have shown recidivism rates of anywhere from 8-30%, and several studies showed that control groups actually had lower recidivism rates than teen court participants did. Participation in teen court is voluntary, and many juveniles are referred to teen courts for minor offenses or merely risky behavior that may not have warranted involvement in the juvenile justice system. Reports have

indicated that there are some intangible results of teen court as well such as improved behavior, better understanding of the legal system, better communication with parents, and better grades (Butts and Buck 2000).

### Teen Court Programs in New Mexico

Teen courts in New Mexico vary on the age of juveniles accepted into teen court, the types of cases considered, and the sentencing guidelines. Teen court programs are currently operating throughout New Mexico including in **Alamogordo, Albuquerque, Artesia, Bloomfield, Clovis, Crownpoint, Deming, Espanola, Fort Wingate, Ft. Sumner, Gallup, Grants, Hobbs, Laguna, Lordsburg, Los Lunas, Mesilla, Moriarty, Portales, Santa Fe, Silver City, Socorro, Rio Rancho, Roswell, Taos, Truth or Consequences, and Tucumcari**. Many teen court programs in New Mexico are funded through DWI Planning funds.

The **Cibola County Teen Court** program is designed as a prevention /intervention and educational process. Offenders that come through teen court are exposed to the court system. Their peers try and hear them and pass their sentence, which includes community service hours, jury duty and counseling sessions. The counseling includes moral recognition, alcohol/substance abuse, driving safety/DWI, and a "Kick It" program through the women's correctional facility.

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# Wilderness Programs

## Overview

Wilderness, or **Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare** (OBH) programs, have been utilized for juvenile offenders as a community correctional alternative to institutionalization (Roberts 1989). Present day wilderness/OBH programs have evolved from the outward-bound model developed in Wales during World War II and the forestry camps of the 1930's, into intervention and treatment programs aimed at helping juveniles overcome emotional and behavioral problems.

There are over 100 wilderness/OBH programs operating in the U.S., serving 10,000 clients annually. These programs help adolescents by utilizing wilderness therapy with techniques such as immersion in an unfamiliar environment, group living with other peers, therapy sessions, and educational curricula. Wilderness/OBH programs are classified in two ways, adjudicated and private placement programs. Adjudicated programs are an extension of traditional social service programs that deal with juvenile delinquency and substance abuse. Private placement programs integrate therapeutic professionals and processes into wilderness experiences to address problem behaviors (Russell and Hendee 2000). In contrast to typical institutional programs, wilderness experiences usually have small staff-to-juvenile ratios and emphasize interrelationships between staff and youth. Overall, wilderness programs provide youth with rigorous physical activity and emotional challenges in which small, closely supervised groups learn to work cooperatively, to follow instructions, and to enhance self-esteem.

Private wilderness/OBH programs serve mostly white, adolescent males aged 13-17 years old who have a variety of emotional and behavioral disorders, and who have not been successfully treated by more traditional counseling programs. Adjudicated programs tend to serve more racially diverse clients. The cost of treatment between

private and adjudicated programs averages \$151 per day (Russell and Hendee 2000).

## Evidence

There have been few studies on the effects of wilderness/OBH programs on recidivism. A recent study that evaluated an "Outward Bound" type of program found that post-program arrests were reduced among program graduates for about one year after the program. After one year, the positive effects of the program were lessened to the point that they no longer existed. (Castellano and Soderstrom 1992)

## Wilderness Programs in New Mexico

**Mountain High in Ft. Wingate** offers a 1-3 day ropes course and canyon rappelling/rock-climbing activity for juveniles and adults. The program focuses on drug prevention and includes activities that work on problem solving, team building, and understanding the consequences of using drugs and alcohol. Any program that would like to bring a group through the course can contact Mountain High and make arrangements to attend.

**The Office of Dine Soaring Eagles Ropes Program** offers a 4-week, 6-week, or 8-week program for adjudicated and delinquent youth of **Eastern New Mexico Navajo Tribes**. The program consists of a ropes course, and low-element training and high-element training components. The low-element training focuses on teamwork and communication. The high-element training focuses on self-reliance and independence.

Juveniles aged 14-25 are referred by the Navajo Drug Court as an intervention for high-risk (in the court system) youth. As part of their probation, the juveniles are required to go through the program. They also work with the Youth Home (all girls) for admission into the program. The Youth Home serves delinquent girls and the girls can be admitted with a letter from the school.

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## Work Programs

### Overview

Many young people who become juvenile and then adult criminals share two of the main problems: lack of education and poor workforce preparation. Many youth that are removed from their homes and placed in juvenile corrections facilities never complete their education, exacerbating the problem of not being prepared for the working world (Mendel 2001). Work programs can provide youth with social, personal, and job skills and opportunities to help them avoid future delinquent or criminal activity (Hamilton and McKinney 1999). Research demonstrates that employability is crucial to the success of high-risk youth. Due to the importance of employment, the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention have recently created a **Task Force on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth** (Frey 1999). Court-involved youth are often disenfranchised by the educational system and frequently are no longer in school and usually lack any marketable skills. The purpose of the Task Force is to reduce recidivism, improve job skills training, and to improve referral processes between juvenile courts and the labor market.

Success in helping youth involved in the juvenile justice system prepare for productive lives requires program strategies that provide solid academic fundamentals, basic life skills, and workplace preparation. Programs that are comprehensive, sustained, and connected with continued education and career opportunities can be more successful in preparing youth for the workforce (O'Sullivan, Rose and Murphy 2001). Comprehensive community-based youth work experience programs have shown promise as treatment and supervision alternatives for juvenile offenders (Bazemore 1991). Specifically, evaluations of "designed" work interventions may provide a positive socialization experience for young offenders while they perform productive work in local communities. Designed work experience refers to interventions in which juvenile justice professionals, employers, and youth

service professionals develop theoretically grounded work experience models. Work experience programs emphasize reintegrating youth into the community rather than removing them, as well as providing treatment and support services. The programs use employment as a tool to accomplish the primary goals of intensive supervision and public protection. To avoid potentially harmful work experiences, practitioners are advised to be cautious in the selection of the nature of work chosen for young people, since certain types of jobs appear to be more associated with deviant behavior than others. Further, evaluations have shown that working more than twenty hours a week appears to be consistently associated with dysfunctional behavior and school problems.

The focus of juvenile work programs can be creative and span a variety of industries and vocations, and several award winning programs have included internships at small companies and nonprofit agencies, home building and renovation, boat building and repair, and business office training (O'Sullivan, Rose and Murphy 2001).

Successful work programs have been shown to have some common characteristics. The work program assignment is age-appropriate and promotes comprehensive youth development. Successful programs often have the involvement of an adult advocate as well as the offender's family. Additionally, academic development and work-based learning are important areas to consider. Finally, successful programs demonstrate close attention to career development and job placement coupled with long-term follow-up (Frey 1999).

### Evidence

Some programs have measured their success against local and national recidivism rates. For the **Gulf Coast Trades Center in Texas**, an academic and vocational work experience program, 15.7% of the youth who graduated from the program were incarcerated within one year of release compared to 37.6% of Texas youth released from moderate security residential corrections facilities during the same period (Mendel 2001). **Project**

**CRAFT (Community Restitution and Apprenticeship Focused Training)**, which offers pre-apprenticeship training and job placement in the homebuilding industry was evaluated to have a high rate of job placement for its graduates (94 of 140 graduates) and recidivism rate of 26% compared to a national rate of 70% (Hamilton and McKinney 1999).

### Work Programs in New Mexico

**Chavez County Youth Services** offers delinquent and adjudicated juveniles aged 12-18 that have been referred by their JPPO, counseling and monitoring of the court ordered treatment plan. All of the juveniles in the program must attend school, obtain a GED, or work full-time and do community service. Anger management classes, coping skills classes, and interview training sessions are also provided.

The **HELP** program, which serves **Hidalgo, Grant, Luna** and **Catron** counties, provides paid work and classroom training and support services for qualified low-income clients aged 14-21. The program trains and helps clients obtain a job in a field that they are interested in. Clients are offered paid work training, paid classroom training (outside of the regular classroom), life skills training, help with resume building, help with job applications, and other support services.

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