

# Juvenile Justice Grants Technical Assistance

Regional Workshops  
May 2013

## Evidence-Based Practices



Governor's Office for  
Children and Families



Criminal Justice  
Coordinating Council

Juvenile Justice Grants Technical Assistance

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# Objectives

- Understand what Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) means and the implications of EBPs when working in the juvenile justice system
- Understand how the organization and the community are crucial in supporting successful EBP implementation
- Review tools and resources available to assist teams in selecting an EBP which is most suited to the population and the organization



# What Does Evidence-Based Practice Mean

A program having the positive result of reducing recidivism in multiple settings with diverse populations:

- In two or more studies with a rigorous research design;
- Which compare the outcomes for a group of youth who received the program; to the outcomes for a group of similar youth who did not receive the program



# Evidence-Based Practice is Based On:

- An approach, framework, collection of ideas or concepts, adopted principles and strategies supported by research

(Fixsen 2005)



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# Evidence-Based Practice Is:

- Not based on tradition, convention, belief or anecdotal evidence
- Not rooted in common sense
- Not guaranteed and not a magic bullet
- Not intended to do everything for everyone



# Traditional Policy and Practice

- **Nothing works!** ..... Therefore EVERYTHING Works. (1970s, 80, 90's 10's – present)
- **If it sounds Good and Feels Good “Lets Try it”** – Fad of The Day Club (1970's)
- Crack cocaine epidemic -**Get tough policies** (1980's)
- **Super predator, Columbine** – “Adult Crime – Adult Time, Zero Tolerance (1990's)



# Advances in Knowledge and Policy

- Over the past 25 years, controlled studies have identified both ineffective and effective prevention and intervention programs and policies impacting youth, families and community



# BUT

- Policies or approaches that do not work or have not been evaluated have been adopted and utilized more widely than those shown to be effective
- Estimates are only 5% - 10% of top tier, gold standard evidence based programs are available to youth, families, communities and systems who would benefit the most from them



# Applying Decades of Hindsight on What We Know About What We Do:

- Residential, Out-of-Home Placements are Expensive
- When Released, They Almost Always Come Home
- Repeat Offending, Recidivism Rates are High (50%- 70%)
- Programs for Juveniles Have the Biggest Impact on Future Crime
- We Need to Get Smart About What to do – Invest in Programs That Work: Divest in Those That Don't



# Why an Evidence Based Approach?

- **Traditional Approaches**

  - Focus on problem behavior- not risk factors:

  - Work only with identified youth

  - Rely on placement as a last resort

- **Evidence Based Programs**

  - Focus on Strengths as solutions

  - Work with youth, family, school in the community

  - Empower youth and family to take control



# How Evidence-Based Practice Impacts the Juvenile Justice System

- Improves outcomes for youth
- Reduces new crime and new victims
- Demonstrates that what we are doing works (provides assurance of a return on public investment)
- Reduces costs
- Promotes accountability of both staff and youth
- Does not equate to going “soft on crime”



# Key Factors to Consider When Selecting an Intervention

- Risk – who should we target?
  - High Risk – More likely to recidivate
  - Low Risk – Not likely to recidivate
- Need – what do we target?
  - Antisocial Attitudes
  - Antisocial Peer
  - Antisocial Personality
  - History of Antisocial Behavior
- Responsivity- How to target identified youth issues such as culture, readiness to change, population type?



# Other Considerations

- Where has the intervention been implemented (in what settings, with what population, contacts)?
- Is the program adaptable?
- Are program costs feasible?
- Are staff qualifications feasible?
- Are there providers available in your community?
- Is required staff training and support available and feasible?



# Programs That Have Met Top Standards on Multiple Lists for Juvenile Offenders

- **Multisystemic Therapy (MST)** – Intensive family and community based treatment – addresses multiple causes of antisocial behavior by using strengths family, peers, schools and community
- **Functional Family Therapy (FFT)** – Short term (30) hours family based intervention designed to improve family communication, parenting skill, youth compliance.



# Others Have Met Differing Standards of Effectiveness

- **Strengthening Families**
  - Lower rates of alcohol initiation at both 10 and 14 years of age (compared to controls)
  - 30-60% reductions in alcohol use, and being drunk
- **Brief Strategic Family Therapy** – Typically delivered in 12-16 family sessions designed to prevent or reduce adolescent problem behaviors including delinquency and violence and improve pro-social behavior such as school attendance



# Other Evidence Based Programs:

- **Aggression Replacement Training** – 10 weeks of groups sessions led by a facilitator on social skills training, anger control training and moral reasoning
- **Thinking for A Change** – An integrated, cognitive behavioral change program for delinquent youth. Includes cognitive restructuring, social skill development and problem solving skills development



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**Seven Challenges** – A program designed for youth with substance abuse problems, to motivate a decision and commitment to change and to support success in implementing the desired changes. The program helps young people address their drug problems as well as their co-occurring life skill deficits, situation problems and psychological problems.



# Tools



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# CrimeSolutions.gov

- Is a central, reliable resource to help practitioners understand what works in justice related programs
- Rates the quality of evaluation research supporting program outcomes by classifying them as effective, promising or no effect
- Allows review of the EBP record to understand the target population, demographics, settings, and the research results
- Not intended to be an exhaustive list of Justice Programs since CrimeSolutions has not reviewed all programs in existence
- Each description includes summary information and additional external resources (for example, points of contact and published materials) that may help in replication



# Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development

- Housed at the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado Boulder
- Identifies, recommends and disseminates programs for youth that have strong evidence of effectiveness
- Classifies programs as promising and model
- Not intended to be an exhaustive list
- Provides a matrix of programs and ratings across organizations



# Evidence-Based Program Information

- Matrix of eleven programs compiled by staff of the Georgia Juvenile Justice System
- Includes a list of programs which have been or are being used in Georgia
- Provides program description, target population cost, staff qualifications and outcomes
- Provides contact information for current Georgia providers



# Moving Forward - Program Design

As you begin to analyze your data and determine which Evidence-Based Practice is appropriate for your community, consider the broader context that the practice or program will develop within.

## What is required to support success?



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# Integrated Model for Implementation of Evidence-Based Practice



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# Organizational Questions to Ask

- What is our mission and values related to the program/practice?
- Is our organization prepared to improve our knowledge and skills?
- Do we have or are we able to develop the infrastructure to support a new way of doing business?
- Are we prepared to change our organizational culture?



# Collaboration Questions to Ask

- What are our community strengths and weaknesses?
- What resources are available to support our efforts?
- What are the gaps in services/resources and how can the gaps be managed?
- How can we enhance communication and collaboration among partners?



# When Developing Your Proposal

## Clearly Describe the:

- Type
- Time (during school hours, after school or other)
- Program frequency (number of times the program is implemented or cycles)
- Program duration (length of time in days weeks, months)
- Program hours (minimum number of hours per youth)

Section 4.d. 1.a.b.c.d.e, p 12 of GOCF RFP ; Sec. 4.a, p 11 of the CJCC RFP



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# When Developing Your Proposal Clearly Describe the:

- Intake process and assessments\*
- How parental consent will be obtained†
- Any agreements with providers (attach MOUs)◇
- Evidence-Based Practice and how fidelity to the model will be ensured\*\*

\*Section 4. p.13 of GOCF RFP; Sec 4.d p. 11 of CJCC RFP

†Section 5. p. 13 of GOCF RFP; Sec. 4.e. p. 12 of CJCC RFP

◇Section 3. p. 13 of GOCF RFP; Sec. 4.c. p. 11 of CJCC RFP

\*\*Section 6.a. p. 13 of GOCF RFP; Sec. 4.f. p. 12 of CJCC RFP



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# It's a Process

## “Progress, Not Perfection”

- Develop a collaborative team and identify leadership to ensure sustainability\*
- Begin a process of education, communication and engagement
- Assess your community to determine priority areas to target and change
- Regularly track progress and make mid-course adjustments

\*Section 4.f.1.4 p. 15 of GOCF RFP; Sec. 6.a.d. p. 13 of CJCC RFP

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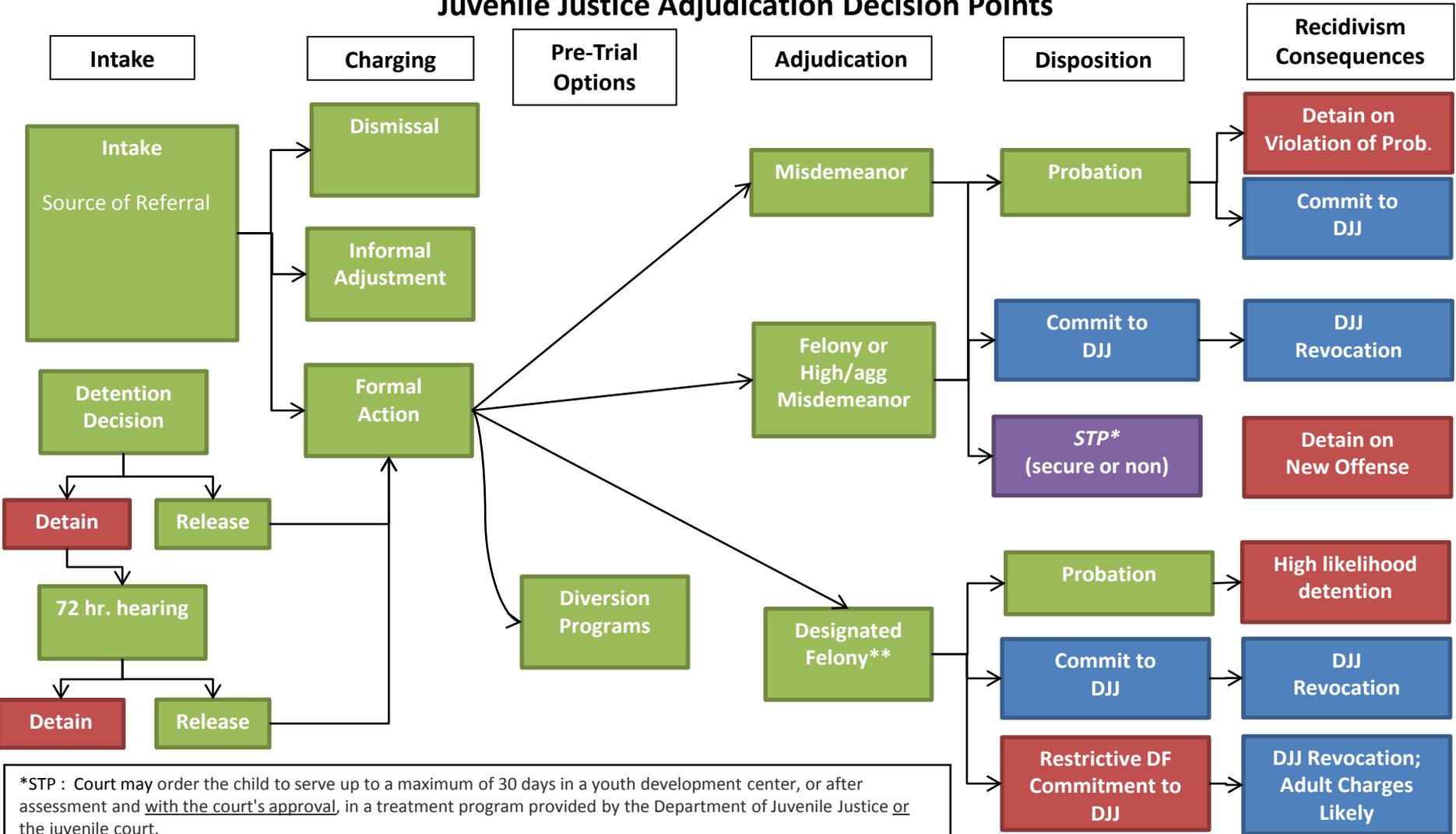


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# Juvenile Justice Adjudication Decision Points



\*STP : Court may order the child to serve up to a maximum of 30 days in a youth development center, or after assessment and with the court's approval, in a treatment program provided by the Department of Juvenile Justice or the juvenile court.

\*\*Designated felony: If the court finds that restrictive custody under this Code section is not required, the order of disposition shall be as otherwise provided in this article. If the court finds that restrictive custody is required, it shall continue the proceeding and enter an order of disposition for restrictive custody.