



Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

FACT SHEET #43 July 1996

An Introduction to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

by Marilyn Silver

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) was established by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, Public Law 93-415. Located within the Office of Justice Programs of the U.S. Department of Justice, OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and child victimization. OJJDP accomplishes its mission by developing and implementing prevention programs and helping to build a juvenile justice system that ensures public safety, holds juvenile offenders accountable, and provides treatment and rehabilitative services based on the needs of each individual juvenile. OJJDP sponsors a broad array of research, program, and training initiatives to enhance the juvenile justice system.

OJJDP comprises seven organizational components, which conduct program activities as described below.

The Research and Program Development Division (RPDD) pursues a comprehensive research agenda, develops knowledge about specific problems, monitors trends, and analyzes the practices of the juvenile justice system. To accomplish these goals, RPDD:

- Conducts national quantitative research to assess the problem of delinquency and determine how the juvenile justice system can respond most effectively.
- Funds projects that explore topics such as the causes and correlates of delinquency, waivers of juveniles to criminal court, and prevention and treatment of delinquency.
- Develops programs to be tested and demonstrated at State and local levels.
- Implements evaluation programs and strategies.
- Maintains a statistics and systems development program to enhance information gathering and sharing among juvenile justice agencies.

The Training and Technical Assistance Division (TTAD) strengthens juvenile justice system components, including law enforcement, juvenile courts, corrections, youth service, and child advocacy organizations, by providing training, technical assistance, and state-of-the-art information. To carry out its mission, TTAD:

- Conducts training programs and delivers technical assistance to State and local governments, private agencies, court personnel, and volunteers who serve the juvenile justice system.
- Helps communities establish programs with court appointed special advocates to represent the best interests of children during judicial proceedings in abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.
- Supports the development of children's advocacy centers composed of multidisciplinary teams that coordinate the response to abuse and neglect cases to prevent revictimization.
- Provides needs assessments so communities can plan and develop effective programs concerning truancy, conditions of confinement, gangs, drugs, and firearms.

The Special Emphasis Division (SED) provides discretionary funds to public and private nonprofit agencies, professional organizations, and individuals to replicate tested approaches to delinquency prevention and control. To perform its functions, SED:

- Supports model programs to strengthen and preserve families.
- Implements prevention and treatment programs for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders.
- Establishes effective means to divert youth from the traditional juvenile justice and correctional systems and to provide community-based alternatives.
- Establishes programs to prevent hate crimes.
- Works to reduce the disproportionate representation of minority youth in secure facilities.
- Supports a program to test and evaluate an intensive aftercare model.
- Implements mentoring programs.
- Implements programs to establish a system of graduated sanctions for juvenile offenders that provides a range of interventions designed to interrupt the development of serious, violent, and chronic delinquency.

The State Relations and Assistance Division (SRAD) manages OJJDP's Formula Grants, Title V Local Prevention, and State Challenge Grant programs, which help States and territories prevent and treat delinquency and improve their juvenile justice systems. In pursuit of these objectives, SRAD works in partnership with each participating State's implementing agency to accomplish the following:

- Develop and implement comprehensive State juvenile justice plans that determine priorities for the expenditure of State Formula Grant funds.
- Assist State compliance with State Plan requirements, including the deinstitutionalization of status offenders and nonoffenders, separation of juveniles and adults in institutions, removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups, and efforts to address disproportionate minority confinement.
- Deliver training and technical assistance to States and local governments to assist in formulating and implementing State plans.
- Award Title V discretionary funds to States to enable local communities to implement risk-focused delinquency prevention plans.
- Award funds to States to conduct Challenge Grant activities under Part E of the JJDPA Act.

The Concentration of Federal Efforts Program promotes interagency cooperation and coordination among Federal agencies with responsibilities in the area of juvenile justice. The program seeks to eliminate duplication of effort and ensure that juvenile justice funds are used in a cost-effective, coordinated manner.

The Concentration of Federal Efforts Program carries out this responsibility through the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, an independent body within the executive branch whose membership includes both Federal Agency and citizen-practitioner members. In consultation with the Coordinating Council, the Concentration of Federal Efforts Program:

- Develops objectives and priorities for Federal juvenile delinquency programs and activities.
- Identifies Federal programs that promote a unified and cooperative approach to juvenile justice issues.
- Submits annual recommendations to the President and Congress concerning the coordination of Federal juvenile delinquency programs and activities.

The Missing and Exploited Children's Program coordinates activities under the Missing Children's Assistance Act that address missing and exploited children, including preventing abductions, investigating the exploitation of children, locating

missing children and reuniting them with their families, and reducing the psychological impact of abduction on the child and the family. To accomplish its mission, this OJJDP program:

- Supports the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a clearinghouse and resource center that collects and distributes data regarding missing and exploited children and operates a national toll-free hotline.
- Provides training and technical assistance to State clearinghouses, nonprofit organizations, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and attorneys.
- Assists jurisdictions in developing procedures to implement multiagency and interdisciplinary responses to missing and exploited children and their families.
- Conducts incidence studies on missing and exploited children, coordinates resources, and implements programs and projects to benefit missing and exploited children.

The Information Dissemination Unit (IDU) collects, publishes, and distributes information concerning OJJDP research and program initiatives. To accomplish its goals, IDU:

- Directs the writing, editing, design, and printing of OJJDP publications, including a juvenile justice journal.
- Disseminates publications and information through nonprint media, including electronic devices, such as the Internet and bulletin board systems.
- Coordinates the announcement of annual OJJDP funding opportunities.

For Further Information

The challenges presented by juveniles in crisis require coordination and information exchange among Federal agencies, State and local governments, professional organizations, researchers, and other juvenile justice professionals. Through OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC), information, publications, and resources are available via a variety of media, as shown below.

Phone: 800-638-8736 (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.–7:00 p.m. ET); FAX: 301-251-5212.

Mail: JJC, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000.

E-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org.

Bulletin Board: 301-738-8895 (set modem at 9600 baud and 8-N-1).

OJJDP homepage: <http://www.ncjrs.org/ojjhome.html>.

Telnet to bbs.ncjrs.org. Gopher to ncjrs.org: 71.

Marilyn Silver is a Management Analyst in OJJDP's Information Dissemination Unit.