



PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE TASK FORCE CONTINUES TO HOLD STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS

Leaders from all three branches of state government established the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force at the end of 2019 for the purpose of using data, research, and input from juvenile justice stakeholders to develop a report with consensus recommendations for legislative, administrative, and budgetary improvements to the state’s juvenile justice system. The goal of the Task Force is to issue recommendations that will: protect public safety; ensure accountability; contain costs; and improve outcomes for youth, families, and communities in Pennsylvania.

Consistent with the above stated purpose and goal, the Task Force started hosting virtual roundtable discussions in August 2020 to collect input from a wide range of stakeholders across the state. General themes from these meetings will be reported back to the Task Force. The information that is collected from these roundtables will then be used by the Task Force for consideration in the policy development process.

To date, virtual roundtable meetings have been held with the following groups (Note: there have been several roundtables with several groups):

- Juvenile Court Judges
- Service Providers
- Dually Adjudicated Youth
- Defense Attorneys
- Crime Victim/Survivors
- Advocates
- Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers
- Juvenile Probation Officers
- BJJS Facility Staff
- Education Stakeholders
- County Commissioners
- JJSES Leadership Team
- Restorative Justice Practitioners
- District Attorneys
- Law Enforcement
- BJJS Youth
- Juvenile Justice Involved Youth
- Family Members
- Stakeholders in Northeast PA

Roundtable meetings will continue until the Task Force’s final report is complete and if there are stakeholder groups that desire to meet. Summaries from many of the roundtable events can be found on the Task Force’s website at <http://www.pacourts.us/pa-juvenile-justice-task-force>. All juvenile justice stakeholders are encouraged to visit the website to obtain additional information regarding the Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Task Force and are invited to attend future online meetings of the Task Force. Upcoming meeting dates are listed on the Task Force’s website.

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PLEASE NOTE:

The dates for the 2021 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice are **November 3-5, 2021**. The dates included in last month’s newsletter were incorrect.

JCJC TO RELEASE THE PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE RECIDIVISM REPORT: JUVENILES WITH CASES CLOSED 2007-2016

In January of 2021, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) will release *The Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Recidivism Report: Juveniles with Cases Closed 2007-2016*. The current study updates the analysis of recidivism trends and comparison of recidivists and non-recidivists to include juveniles with a case closure in 2015 and 2016. This report is part of Pennsylvania's longstanding effort to measure the impact of the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) on recidivism and other youth outcomes. In November 2010, the JCJC unanimously endorsed JJSES to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system to achieve its mission of balanced and restorative justice. Key stakeholders concluded that one of the most appropriate ways to evaluate the effectiveness of the JJSES was to examine the recidivism rates of juveniles who have been involved in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system. At the initiation of the JJSES, however, there was no systematic mechanism available to track the statewide recidivism rates of juvenile offenders in Pennsylvania within both the criminal and juvenile justice systems once their case closed. Consequently, the JCJC undertook the project and developed the methodology and capacity to monitor the statewide recidivism rates of juvenile offenders.

The JCJC worked closely with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), which collects court data at both the criminal and magisterial district justice levels, for the project. The task was to integrate AOPC's criminal court data and PaJCMS delinquency data maintained by JCJC's Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R) into a useful, continuing measure of recidivism. The following definition of recidivism was adopted: A subsequent delinquency adjudication in juvenile court or conviction in criminal court for either a misdemeanor or felony offense within two years of case closure. The two-year tracking period was selected because there was a consensus that recidivism beyond two years from case closure would be less likely to be related to the services and interventions provided during the period of juvenile court supervision.

Initial recidivism studies had two overarching goals. First, since the core premise of the JJSES is that recidivism rates can be reduced through the implementation of evidence-based practices, the main goal was to establish an ongoing, consistent recidivism benchmark. The second goal was to examine differences between recidivists and non-recidivists in terms of demographics and other key variables to identify factors associated with recidivism in the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system. This year's report continues to analyze data with these two goals in mind.

This study is the first to take advantage of Pennsylvania's use of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS) to analyze the relationship between juveniles' assigned risk level in regular practice and recidivism. Analysis of the relationship between YLS risk levels and recidivism is important because it provides validation for the tool's ability to distinguish juveniles who are at greater risk of recidivating from those who are at a lower risk. While prior research has validated the YLS as being a useful predictor of recidivism, it is nonetheless important to confirm that it is working as intended in Pennsylvania, as well as to examine whether the YLS is more predictive for certain demographic groups than others (e.g., males versus females). Just as importantly, the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS) provides information that can be used in future reports to examine whether trends in recidivism are a product of improvements in the juvenile justice system or changes in the characteristics of juveniles with cases closed.

The Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Recidivism Report: Juveniles with Cases Closed 2007-2016 will soon be available on JCJC's website: <https://www.jcjc.pa.gov>. We hope that this report will contribute to ongoing discussions on how Pennsylvania can evaluate the impact of JJSES on youth outcomes.

COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

KATI MCGRATH RETIRES FROM FRANKLIN COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION



On December 2, 2020, Kathleen (Kati) McGrath retired from Franklin County Juvenile Probation after 34 years of dedicated service to Franklin County and the commonwealth's juvenile justice system.

Kati graduated from Shippensburg University with a Bachelor of Arts degree and began her career in juvenile justice as a youth care worker in a local residential program. In 1986, she began working at Franklin County Juvenile Probation as a juvenile probation officer. Kati received her Master of Science in Administration of Justice from Shippensburg University in 1994 through the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) Graduate Education Program.

In 2007, Kati was promoted to the position of Deputy Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, and in 2013 was appointed as Chief Juvenile Probation Officer. Throughout her career, Kati has been instrumental in implementing new ideas and programs to assist in the treatment, rehabilitation, and engagement of juveniles. Under her leadership, the department implemented the YLS, Case Plan, MAYSI 2, PaDRAI, and trauma screen. Data collection related to recidivism reduction has also been a focus for the department beginning in 2012 with the creation of the Data Collection Tool. In addition, several committees were created to advance JJSES activities, including a graduated response committee, case plan committee, and a quality assurance team. Kati also chaired the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Franklin County Criminal Justice Advisory Board and Children's Round Table.

Kati served as chair of the Victim Service Committee of the PA Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers as well as the facilitator of Pennsylvania's South Central West Region planning committee. She also served on the JCJC's Delinquency Bench Book Committee and was a significant contributor to the 2018 revision of this resource.

In 2019, Kati was recognized as Chief Juvenile Probation Officer of the Year during the James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice.

Kati and her husband, Greg, are in the process of building a new home and look forward to living in the country once the house is completed. She also plans to spend time with her three children, two stepchildren, one granddaughter, and a grandson who was born in October 2020.

Congratulations on your retirement, Kati, and thank you for your service to Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system!

2021 JCJC AWARDS COMMITTEE

In January 2021, the JCJC Awards Committee will convene in preparation for the 2021 James E. Anderson Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice. With the start of the new year, the committee will undergo changes both in membership and in leadership. After serving on the committee since 2019, John Boeckman will be stepping down as a member to enjoy his retirement from Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in Crawford County. Additionally, Teresa Wilcox, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer of McKean County, has served as a member of the committee since 2012 and as the Chairperson since 2018. Teresa will be stepping down from her service to the committee to focus her attention on other endeavors. Although they will be missed, the committee is thankful for the service and contributions of both John and Teresa.

The committee is excited to welcome new members: Abigail Wilson of the Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth, and Family Services; Jon Frank, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in Blair County; and Mary Jo Battle, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in Erie County. During the upcoming meeting, the JCJC Awards Committee will be tasked with selecting a new Chairperson, reviewing the award nomination forms, and selecting the Creative Expression Contest theme for the Youth Awards Program.

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

2020
YEAR
in
REVIEW

It is December already and the holidays are upon us. This is often a good time to reflect over the year, the accomplishments made, and begin planning goals for the upcoming year. This year has been challenging, to say the least, but we still managed to accomplish quite a bit while working from home.

IDashboards was upgraded to a fully HTML version. The seamless transition drastically changed the look and feel of our dashboards. In addition to the upgrade, the Annual Report dashboard was released. This is our first publicly accessible dashboard, available on our website at <http://jcjc.pa.gov>. This dashboard highlights allegation, detention, disposition, and placement charts, tables, and maps as found in the published Annual Report. Also released was the Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan dashboard, which is also publicly accessible. This dashboard displays the objectives, activities, and measures of the various committees and workgroups currently assembled and illustrates how their work contributes to the mission and goals of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system.

The PaJCMS application has seen some changes as well. The MAYSI evaluation module, originally installed separately in each county, is now integrated into PaJCMS. This allows data collected through the MAYSI screens to be shared. Other changes made to PaJCMS fulfill requests from enhancement committees who have targeted areas of the application on which to focus. The JOTN number has been expanded to meet the new standards. Some additional changes that are under development and scheduled to be completed in the upcoming year are: upgrades to the Keystone Login to meet new standards, updates to the outcome measures, technical violations, and gender identity enhancements. Changes for an improved service module are being designed as well. Another project currently under analysis and design is shared case juvenile information for dual status youth. Additionally, the method by which juveniles are tracked when transitioning from formal probation to administrative supervision will be enhanced. Finally, the most intensive of the projects is the modernization of the PaJCMS application, which entails a rewrite of the entire PaJCMS application into a new technology.

Due to working from home and not being permitted to visit the counties for trainings, our help desk staff have authored several PaJCMS training manuals. In the near future, these manuals will be offered through virtual training sessions. We will identify the needs of each county and tailor courses accordingly. The first class covers the entry of juvenile information and demographics such as address, relations, school, etc. The next offering is on court-related material. This includes cases, hearings, dispositions, and disposal of charges. Following that is probation management, which focuses on the use of calendar entries, documents, drug screening, and community service. Finally, the last course was written for PaJCMS administrators who need to manage the selections found in drop-down lists, adding new users, and adjusting permissions and other settings within the application. Currently, all of these courses are under evaluation and testing. We are hoping to offer these trainings virtually in 2021 to help train new county staff. We are also hopeful that when travel restrictions are lifted, we can provide the trainings in person.

Many of these upgrades and improvements are made possible by the insightful feedback and suggestions made by users across the state. We would like to thank you for your continued commitment to making these processes better. May you all have a wonderful holiday season. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

POSITION VACANCY - SPEP™ PROJECT MANAGER

Penn State Evidence-based Prevention & Intervention Support (EPIS) will be hiring a new SPEP™ Project Manager to oversee the implementation of the SPEP™ as part of Stage 3 activities within JJSES.

Twenty-three juvenile probation departments have implemented SPEP™ with over 300 SPEP™ scores completed to date. Approximately 200 juvenile justice stakeholders have been trained as SPEP™ Informed to interpret and apply SPEP™ Scores.

JOB DESCRIPTION AND POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

The position of SPEP™ Project Manager is part of Evidence-based Prevention and Intervention Support (EPIS) in the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center (PRC) at The Pennsylvania State University. This position is responsible for the statewide implementation of the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP™), an initiative to improve programs and services for juvenile offenders in Pennsylvania. The job responsibility for the SPEP™ Project Manager involves direct supervision of EPIS SPEP™ Implementation Specialists as they provide technical assistance to probation departments to implement the SPEP™ with service providers. Specifically, this involves: Provide strategic direction and manage one SPEP™ Data Manager, six (regional) SPEP™ Implementation Specialists, and ensure quality assurance and consistency to SPEP™ model, ensure all SPEP™ assessments move through the process in a timely fashion and with consistent quality and provide guidance to overcome barriers.

The SPEP™ Project Manager is also responsible for engaging state and local stakeholders to increase the implementation of the SPEP™ by probation departments statewide and for the training of all juvenile justice stakeholders on how to apply SPEP™ findings to inform decision making. Additional responsibilities include the oversight of juvenile probation staff that are certified as Level 2 SPEP™ Trainers and Level 1 SPEP™ Specialists as they implement the SPEP™ to assess services within Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system. The SPEP™ Project Manager reports to the SPEP™ Advisory Group on the project's outcomes, ensures quality assurance and consistency to SPEP™ model, provides performance feedback and coaching based on observations of implementation of SPEP™, oversees the continued refinement of the existing quality assurance model for SPEP™ and the enhancement of existing manuals for how to deliver technical assistance for SPEP™, serves as the program intermediary in the discovery of issues in county engagement, buy-in, and progress to formulate a collective resolution to ensure adoption and sustainment of the SPEP™, ensures that the project progresses according to performance metrics and targets at statewide, regional, and personnel level, facilitates and networks with other states involved with the SPEP™ and juvenile justice system improvement efforts.

The SPEP™ Project Manager champions the relationships, partnerships, and collaboration of SPEP™ model with:

- The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission
- The PA Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers
- The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- Juvenile Probation Departments trained to implement and interpret the SPEP™
- Service providers
- The SPEP™ Advisory Group which is comprised of members from state and county levels as well as local juvenile justice service providers, including JJSES Leadership Team members and Chiefs of specific counties that have staff trained to implement the SPEP™

Main tasks include:

- Develop methods to scale up SPEP™ in additional probation departments
- Demonstrate awareness of current activities and procedures to proactively address and resolve issues

- Review current staff assignments/activities for conformity to policy, and effectiveness of approach
- Develop and manage project budget and regularly review and monitor expenses
- Manage daily and long-term strategic aspects of the project using effective project management
- Deliver on time and accountable for project deliverables
- Organize and facilitate meetings, participate in the SPEP™ Learning Community, phone calls, and interviews
- Meet regularly with the EPIS Principal Investigator to review project status, identify emerging issues or project needs, and ensure high-quality execution of statewide project expansion

Requirements: a Bachelor's degree or higher in social sciences, education, criminal or juvenile justice, public health, or other related fields is strongly preferred, along with three years or more of experience in the field of juvenile justice. Preferred skillset/experiences include: Strong level of comfort with evidence base for juvenile justice reform and best practices for implementing reform; Experience working in the environment of a state-level intermediary organization and/or a top-tier research institution; Additional years of experience in juvenile justice, including experience in overseeing/managing the implementation of system reform in juvenile justice, child welfare or the like (or equivalent combination of education and experience).

Additional required competencies include:

- Experience with the SPEP™ Project either as juvenile probation provider, service provider, or other juvenile justice stakeholder
- Champion for evidence-based practices, and/or juvenile justice system reform
- Ability to develop others into champions/foster a culture of champions
- Interest and willingness to navigate ambiguity of supporting the development of an emerging statewide reform effort
- Solution-focused, problem-solving skills, and can-do attitude
- Strong diplomacy, relationship building, and collaboration skills
- Experience in working closely with and collaborating with state and county-level policymakers
- Ability to create change through a strengths-based approach
- Ability to build effective teams and provide clear, prioritized direction for staff
- Must be comfortable presenting in front of small and large audiences about complex content; Proficient in Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, web-conference software (Adobe Connect, Zoom, others)

Salary is competitive, commensurate with background and experience. An attractive benefits package is available. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. EPIS is a nationally recognized model for prevention of youth violence, delinquency, and substance use through support of effective practice and inter-system collaboration. Established in 2008, EPIS is the result of a long-standing partnership between the PRC and PCCD to achieve PA's violence prevention mission. EPIS focuses on the translation of prevention science to policy and practice, and is essential to the dissemination, sustainability, and quality implementation of evidence-based programs and practice across the Commonwealth. EPIS is a project within the Prevention Research Center (PRC), funded by the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the PA Department of Human Services, Office of Children, Youth, and Families, and the PA Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP). This position requires the following clearances: PA State Police Criminal Background Check, PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form, and Federal (FBI) Fingerprint Criminal Background Check. This is a fixed-term position funded for one year from the date of hire, with excellent potential for renewal.

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply at [arhttps://hr.psu.edu/ceers](https://hr.psu.edu/ceers). When navigating the website, click on STAFF & TECHNICAL SERVICE, and search for SPEP Project Manager (REQ_0000009347).

The deadline for applications is January 31st.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

ORIENTATION FOR THE NEW JUVENILE PROBATION PROFESSIONAL

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC) will be offering the **Orientation for the New Juvenile Probation Professional virtually**. The orientation will be delivered with a combination of online curriculum delivery and virtual delivery presentations. The curriculum will be facilitated by several presenters, including JCJC staff, veteran system professionals and specialized consultants. This program will provide new juvenile probation officers with a strong foundation and a solid working knowledge of the current system in operation.

The Orientation for the New Juvenile Probation Professional will be held on January 26, 27, 28, February 2 and 3, 2021, using the Zoom platform. Registration will open in [JEMS](#) on January 5, 2021. Please contact Sonya Stokes, Director of Professional Development, at systokes@ship.edu if you have any questions.

Due to high demand for this program, **Orientation for the New Juvenile Probation Professional** will also be offered in the Spring of 2021. Additional details will be provided as they become available.

January

21 Adolescent Brain Development
Virtual Training

26-28, February 2-3
Orientation for the New Juvenile
Probation Professional
Virtual Training

Registration will open on
January 5, 2021 at
www.jcjcems.state.pa.us



Key Program Features:

- Nationally recognized program, taught by highly qualified and experienced faculty.
- Free tuition and lodging provided by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.
- A hybrid 33-credit program.
- Summer coursework fully online and 3 face-to-face weekend sessions during the fall and spring semesters.
- A cohort-based program designed to enhance professional networking across the Commonwealth.
- Practical courses designed for juvenile justice professionals with an emphasis on evidence-based practices.

Program Contact: Sonya Stokes at systokes@ship.edu



For program information, visit:
www.jcjc.pa.gov/Program-Areas/Graduate-Education



NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements are reprinted from JUVJUST, an OJJDP news service:

OJJDP HAS ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING FISCAL YEAR 2021 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

- [OJJDP FY 2021 Child Abuse Training for Judicial and Court Personnel](#). Grants.gov deadline: January 19, 2021. JustGrants applications are due by February 1, 2021. View related [FAQs](#).
- [OJJDP FY 2021 Enhancing Juvenile Indigent Defense](#). Grants.gov deadline: January 19, 2021. JustGrants applications are due by February 1, 2021. View related [FAQs](#).

NOTE: Applicants will submit the SF-424 and the SF-LLL in Grants.gov and the FULL application including attachments in JustGrants at <https://justgrants.usdoj.gov/>.

RESOURCES:

- Visit the [funding page](#) for details about these and other OJJDP funding opportunities.
- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

OJJDP AWARDS MORE THAN \$221 MILLION TO SUPPORT JUVENILE JUSTICE

On November 24, 2020, OJJDP [announced](#) awards of more than \$221 million to support juvenile justice. OJJDP awarded more than 225 grants to state, local, and tribal jurisdictions, research and academic institutions, and public and private organizations. The awards will enhance state and local juvenile justice systems; provide gang prevention and intervention services; support mentoring and reentry services for youth and families; and help states comply with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Grant funding will also support programs for American Indian and Alaska Native youth.

"We serve our young people best when we hold them accountable for their behavior and when we give them the tools to overcome both the setbacks they have already encountered and the challenges that lie before them," said OJJDP Administrator Caren Harp.

The grants include:

- \$84.9 million to fund mentoring programs and services for youth.
- \$57.9 million to provide assistance to states' juvenile justice systems and staffs.
- \$33.5 million to fund juvenile and family drug courts and provide services to youth impacted by the opioid crisis.
- \$11.2 million to supplement reentry services for juveniles and parents of minors.
- \$11.1 million to support gang prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts.
- \$7.2 million to support American Indian and Alaska Native youth programs and services.

- \$4.9 million to fund services for justice-involved youth with mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders.

\$1.8 million to support juvenile indigent defense.

For additional information about these awards, see the OJP [fact sheet](#).

RESOURCES:

- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

OJJDP NEWS @ A GLANCE, NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) announces the availability of [OJJDP News @ a Glance](#), November/December 2020. This issue's Message of From the Administrator reviews OJJDP's major accomplishments from the past year. The top story provides highlights of the Office's nearly \$370 million in fiscal year 2020 grants. The Youth Voices section describes the efforts of a member of Oklahoma's state advisory group to improve the experience of youth in the state's juvenile justice system.

Other features in this issue—

- [National Training Conference for States Goes Virtual](#)
- [OJJDP Participates in Juvenile Justice Conference](#)
- [Stakeholder's Corner: Technical Assistance Creates Path to Establish New Court for Bishop Paiute Youth](#)
- [Research Central: Measuring What Works in Juvenile Reentry](#)
- [News from the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice](#)
- [News in Brief](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [New Publications](#)

RESOURCES:

- [OJJDP News @ a Glance](#), November/December 2020 (NCJ 255615) is available [online](#).
- Follow OJJDP on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

OJJDP ANNOUNCES UPCOMING WEBINARS

Register for upcoming juvenile justice-related webinars on funding, programs, and initiatives.

- January 12 – 13, 2021 - [Community Response to High Risk Missing and Sex Trafficking Victims](#)
[Register](#)
- January 20, 2021 - [Initial Response Strategies and Tactics When Responding to Missing Children Incidents](#)
[Register](#)

This publication is produced monthly by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission. Guest articles are welcome; please submit by e-mail to ra-oajcjnews@pa.gov.

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