

New Jersey Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
 Innovation, Improvement, or Institutionalization of Policy/Practice:
 Model Activities

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Site:	ATLANTIC
Primary Core Strategy Area:	Detention Alternatives
Secondary Core Strategy Area:	Detention Admissions
Title/Name of Activity:	Reducing Returns to Detention from Alternatives - GPS Units, Family Crisis Cards, Back-Up Sponsors
Activity Start Date:	8/2006 and 1/2007
Problem or Need this Activity Addressed:	At times, youth were being removed from detention alternatives and returned to secure detention due to family crisis or home issues.
Description of Activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed "Family Crisis Information Cards" which are given to all families of youth on detention alternatives (and on probation). The cards provide a brief "how-to" on what to do in a family-crisis situation, providing phone numbers of the social service agencies to contact in lieu of calling the police and/or detention. • Began identifying a "back-up sponsor" for all youth on HEDS (EM alternative) so that if there is a family/crisis issue with the primary sponsor (who is often a family member), the youth can be placed with the back-up instead of being returned to detention. • Traditional EM equipment relied on a fully operational landline telephone in the youth's home. Atlantic added GPS units to the detention alternative continuum to avoid returning youth to detention based on problems with the home telephone.
Data/Info that Identified this Problem or Need:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atlantic's original detention snapshot indicated 9.5% of youth in detention had been returned from a detention alternative without new delinquency charges. • Ongoing monthly data indicated that during 2006, eleven (11) youth were returned to detention from an alternative due to an issue with the family or HEDS sponsor. • Over the 20-month period leading up to the GPS units (2005 through 8/2006), ten (10) youth were returned to detention due to a problem with the home telephone.
Impact/Results of this Activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2007, following full implementation of the Crisis Information Cards and back-up sponsor, five (5) youth were returned to detention from an alternative due to an issue/crisis with the family or sponsor (decrease of -54.5%), and so far during the first four months of 2008, no youth (0) has been returned for family/sponsor issues. • In the 20-month period following implementation of the GPS units (9/2006 through 4/2008), no youth (0) were returned to detention due to a problem with the home telephone.
Next Steps or Additional Comments:	Atlantic is working to continuously educate new personnel with regard to these policies and to track results on an ongoing basis to ensure the policies as set forth continue to be followed, and that positive results continue to be realized.
List Attachments (if any):	Family Crisis Information Card (photocopy, see reverse)
Contact(s) for More Info:	Jim Halfpenny - Shelter Supervisor (609) 645-7700 ext. 4322, halfpenny_jim@aclink.org

Original Date Prepared: 5/2008

ATLANTIC COUNTY
FAMILY CRISIS INFORMATION CARDS

FRONT

<p>YOUTH CRISIS RESPONSE DIRECTIONS Value Option/Mobile Response (877) 652-7624</p> <p>Provides emergency face to face in-house crisis response for a child's emotional or behavioral challenges. Can also provide additional services up to 8 weeks to stabilize behavior. Parents must consent to the services. Must request Mobile Response.</p>	<p>Atlantic County Family Crisis Intervention Program (609) 645-5861</p> <p>Call for parent teen conflict, running away, truancy, substance abuse services or other dangerous behaviors if not already linked with other agencies.</p> <p>For our Non-Emergency Help-Line: Dial 2-1-1</p>
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BACK

<p>Child Abuse or Neglect: NJ Division of Youth & Family Services (DYFS) Call for new abuse or neglect reports only: 1-877-652-2873 1-877 NJ ABUSE Call for open DYFS cases: Atlantic County DYFS Office: East: (609) 441-3164 West: (609) 625-3976 Children's Behavioral Health Call for open Cape Atlantic / I.N.K. (CMO) cases: (609) 390-4448 After hours: 1-800-550-6534 Call for Family Support Organization (F.S.O.): (609) 485-0575 Call for open Youth Case Management (YCM) cases: (609) 569-0239</p>	<p>YOUTH CRISIS RESPONSE DIRECTIONS Suicidal / Psychiatric Emergency: Contact Police or Call 911 if youth is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others. Psychiatric Intervention Program: PIP (609)344-1118 Call for suicide or psychiatric emergency screening to assess need for psychiatric hospitalization. Parent will need to accompany child to ACMC City Division.</p>
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The cards are laminated and perforated down the center, in order to fold easily to wallet/pocket-size.