
NOTE: The New Jersey Governor's Advisory Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP Committee, NJ's SAG) set aside \$300,000 for innovative programming developed through the JDAI. Monmouth County is the first NJ JDAI site to apply for these funds, and has been awarded funding for its proposed detention alternative reporting center. Monmouth is currently in the process of issuing a Request for Proposal for the alternative program. The format/content for the funding application was adapted from NJ's Core Strategy Framework, further described in a document under NJ's multi-site/state-level initiatives.

NEW JERSEY JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE (JDAI) Monmouth County Detention Alternatives Subcommittee JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION FUNDING REQUEST

PURPOSE

- *Provide a brief overview of the purpose of the funding request.*

Background

In late 2003, New Jersey and Monmouth County were honored by being selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as a replication site for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The JDAI was developed in response to national trends reflecting a drastic increase in the use of secure detention for juveniles despite large decreases in juvenile arrests, and the resulting overcrowding of youth detention centers nationwide. The goal of this nationally recognized systems-change initiative is to create more effective and efficient processes surrounding the use of detention. To that end, the JDAI works to reduce the number of youth unnecessarily or inappropriately held in secure detention while maintaining public safety and ensuring youth appear for scheduled court dates (the two statutory purposes of secure detention), and to improve conditions in secure detention for youth who require that level of supervision.

To help jurisdictions accomplish these goals, the JDAI provides a framework for conducting a thorough, data-driven examination of the use of secure detention, and for using that information to develop and implement strategies for system improvement. This systems-change effort has demonstrated across multiple jurisdictions that reliance on secure detention can be safely reduced. The JDAI's eight core strategies include:

1. Recognizing the importance of collaboration and leadership in effective detention systems
2. Reliance on data to inform policy and program development
3. Implementing effective, objective admissions policies and practices
4. Establishing an effective continuum of detention alternatives with various degrees and types of supervision for youth whose cases are pending disposition
5. Reducing delays in case processing and corresponding length of stay in detention
6. Focusing on challenges presented by "special populations," including youth admitted for violations of probation and youth awaiting dispositional placement
7. Establishing a process for detention facility self-inspection to address conditions of confinement
8. Identifying strategies to reduce racial disparities in the use of secure detention

Purpose of Funding Request

The Monmouth County JDAI Local Steering Committee (“Steering Committee”) established a Detention Alternatives Subcommittee (“Subcommittee”) to explore the use of existing alternatives in order to determine whether the current continuum sufficiently meets the needs of the local juvenile justice system and the youth it serves. After carefully examining the data, the Subcommittee determined the existing continuum could greatly benefit from an additional community-based detention alternative. While the Monmouth County Youth Services Commission has already committed \$50,000 towards the development of a new or enhanced community-based detention alternative, the development of an effective program requires additional funding. Via this proposal, the Monmouth County JDAI Steering Committee seeks to procure the balance of funds needed to successfully implement this important JDAI core strategy.

IDENTIFICATION

- *Briefly describe the problem in general terms within the context of those JDAI core strategies most relevant to the proposed use of funds. Briefly describe in general terms how this problem affects detention utilization (Admissions, LOS, ADP, etc.).*

Most Relevant Core Strategy

Detention Alternatives. The primary focus of this application is the fourth core strategy above – expanding the continuum of detention alternatives available in Monmouth County. Note, however, that because the eight core strategies are highly interrelated, the Steering Committee anticipates the present proposal will indirectly address other core strategies. For example, through the statewide JDAI effort, a Detention Screening Tool is currently in development (third core strategy above). Its anticipated implementation next year requires a sufficient and effective detention alternatives continuum. Additionally, Monmouth County anticipates that expanding its current detention alternatives continuum will have an impact on disproportionate minority confinement (eighth core strategy above) and on the number of youth in detention for violations of probation and warrants (sixth core strategy), as further described below.

Summary of Problem and Impact on Detention Utilization

Effective detention systems include a continuum of detention alternatives with varying degrees of supervision, thereby allowing local systems to operate on the principle of using the least restrictive alternative necessary to maintain public safety and ensure youth appear in court. An effective continuum is one with not only a sufficient *number* of alternative slots, but also an appropriate array of *types* of alternative slots available. In the absence of either, youth who could otherwise be supervised in a less restrictive setting are often admitted to and/or remain in detention while awaiting case disposition. These additional admissions to and increased lengths-of-stay in secure detention lead to increased average daily population in detention. Additionally, when the detention alternative continuum is not sufficient to meet the needs of the local detention system, other programs not designed to specifically serve this population are sometimes relied upon to do so.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

- *Identify the factors contributing to the problem in this site. Briefly describe these factors, how the factors affect detention utilization, and the data used to assess each factor’s presence in the site.*

Contributing Factor

- ***An overall lack of detention alternatives can result in increased detention admissions.***

Description & Data

Currently in Monmouth County there is only one detention alternative program. The Home Detention Program (HDP) relies upon electronic monitoring equipment to increase the supervision of youth conditionally released from detention while awaiting the disposition of their case. Note that while

many youth are released to house arrest (which imposes restrictions on the youth's activity and whereabouts), there are no programmatic resources tied to house arrest – it is incumbent upon the parent/caregiver to ensure the rules of house arrest are being followed.

The data originally used to identify New Jersey and Monmouth County as sites that might benefit from embracing the JDAI core strategies indicated that between 1993 and 2002 detention admissions increased while juvenile arrests were steadily decreasing. Over this 10-year period total juvenile arrests decreased –27.2%. Moreover, juvenile arrests for serious offenses (index arrests) decreased –38.0%. At the same time admissions to detention increased +21.7%. Since the delinquent behavior of youth, as measured by arrests, was not increasing, it is reasonable to assume that some proportion of the increasing population admitted to detention might have been effectively supervised in community-based alternatives, were such alternatives available.

Contributing Factor

- ***A lack of variety in the alternatives continuum can lead to increased LOS in detention.***

Description & Data

Because of the 24-hour surveillance afforded by electronic monitoring (EM), this type of alternative generally falls on the more restrictive end of effective detention alternative continuums. For example, in Cook County – a JDAI model site – EM is one of the most restrictive alternatives available, with residential shelter placement representing the only alternative on the continuum with a greater level of supervision.

In Monmouth County, however, the electronic monitoring Home Detention Program (HDP) is the only alternative available. Various analyses completed through Monmouth's JDAI effort have indicated that youth ultimately released to HDP first remain in detention for some time. For example, the One-Day Detention Alternative snapshot demonstrated youth remain in secure detention for an average of 22 days prior to release to HDP, more than three times as long as youth released to house arrest, who averaged 6 days in detention prior to release. The longer stay in detention for youth ultimately released to HDP often stems from the steps needed to set-up the EM equipment, and is sometimes lengthened due to additional, technical difficulties with setting-up EM. For the higher-risk youth for whom EM is intended, this stay in detention might be appropriate or necessary. However, because the high-surveillance HDP is the only option available, there are undoubtedly some lower-risk youth served by this program who could be served by a non-EM, community-based alternative were it available. In the absence of such a middle-level alternative, these lower-risk youth remain in detention awaiting the EM equipment arrangements needed for HDP. The length of stay in detention for this population could be reduced if a middle-level alternative were available.

One potential population to be served by a mid-range alternative includes youth currently admitted to detention for violations of probation or warrants, i.e., youth admitted not for new delinquency charges, but for breaking the rules and conditions of a court order and/or failing to appear (FTA) for a scheduled court hearing. The One-Day Detention and Alternative Snapshot indicated youth admitted to detention for violation of probation or warrant and ultimately released to HDP remained in detention an average of 13.3 days.

Contributing Factor

- ***A lack of variety in the alternatives continuum can lead to increased detention ADP because for some youth the only existing alternative is not a feasible option.***

Description & Data

The Home Detention Program has certain limitations in that it can only serve youth whose home has a land-telephone line. The land-telephone line cannot include basic features such as voicemail, call waiting, caller ID, and internet use. This results in youth being automatically ineligible for release

from detention if their household does not have a landline. Furthermore, the HDP program-design precludes youth who are not currently attending school and/or youth who are not employed. The requirements that a youth be either attending school on a regular basis or be employed at the time of placement in HDP exist primarily due to the fact that there is no additional supervision/oversight of youth aside from that imposed by the EM equipment.

For example, the One-Day Detention Snapshot indicates that there were eight youth released upon disposition to either a community-based program or outright to a parent/caregiver. The average length of stay in detention for these eight youth was 55 days. Furthermore, of the youth admitted to detention for a VOP or FTA (8) as indicated in the One-Day Snapshot, 50% (4) of the youth were released back to the community. The average LOS for these youth was 16.5 days. If ultimately these youth are being released back to the community following disposition, then it is reasonable to assume that they could be supervised in a less restrictive setting other than secure detention if there was additional supervision than that of only EM.

Increased ADP as a result of a lack of a variety of detention alternatives occurs if youth can only be placed in an alternative after first having been admitted to detention. The special population of youth referred to above, i.e. youth with a pending VOP or active BW for a FTA, can be diverted at the front gate if there was an alternative available that did not require that certain equipment be in place prior. Reducing the number of youth admitted to detention in conjunction with LOS will in turn reduce ADP. For example, the referral to intake sample indicates that 14 youth were admitted to detention for a FTA. 57.1% (8) of the youth were released conditionally from detention and the average LOS was 3 days (ranging from 13 to 0).

Contributing Factor

- ***The impact of a lack of variety in the alternatives continuum can differentially affect youth of color.***

Description & Data

As described above, a lack of variety in the Alternatives Continuum contributes to increased LOS and ADP in secure detention specifically for youth of color. The problems with land-telephone lines, school, and work stated above tend to be more concentrated in communities with fewer socio-economic resources. Because of the correlation between socio-economic status and race/ethnicity, these problems are therefore more prevalent in communities with larger minority populations. By extension, HDP's reliance on landlines and requirements regarding school/work has a differential impact on youth of color. For example, the One-Day Alternative Snapshot indicates that African American youth remained in detention more than 3x as long as Caucasian youth before being released to HDP (30.4 days vs. 7.8 days). More specifically, once ordered to HDP it took almost 3 days longer for youth of color than for Caucasian youth to be admitted to the program. Additionally, the Referral to Intake Analysis indicates that LOS in detention for youth ultimately released to HDP is longer for youth of color than for Caucasian youth (24.4 days vs. 15.7 days).

Providing a community-based alternative that a) does not require a land-telephone line, and that b) has as a primary component a "place-to-go" and therefore can function without the school/work requirement, would help to reduce the overrepresentation of youth of color in secure detention.

Contributing Factor

- ***A lack of variety in the alternatives continuum can lead to reliance on programs not designed for use as detention alternatives.***

Description & Data

Avoiding the detention of youth in secure facilities who do not necessarily require secure lock-up while their cases are pending disposition is a primary goal of the JDAI. In the face of a lack of

appropriate resources, to achieve this goal the court in Monmouth County has not infrequently removed youth from detention and ordered participation in programs currently designed as dispositional options. For example, in 2004 there were 17 youth released to HDP as well as ordered to attend the dispositional program, Monmouth Day and at least one youth released to House Arrest who was ordered to attend Monmouth Day. As of October 2005, there have been 7 youth released to HDP and Monmouth Day and at least one youth released to House Arrest and Monmouth Day.

While a worthy effort to avoid the unnecessary detention of youth, this places a burden on other parts of the system, and can have the unintended consequence of additional admissions to secure detention. Because youth in alternatives are on detention status, i.e., they have not been disposed to a term of probation or commitment, they need not be charged with a new offense or a violation of probation to be locked-up once again. They can be returned to detention at any time, at the request of the program. So, youth on detention status in dispositional programs are being required to comply with the same terms and services as youth found delinquent and sentenced, and yet the threshold for “violating” youth, returning the youth to detention, is lower for those on detention status than for those disposed to probation.

However, reliance on day-reporting programs also points to the court’s desire to have this or a similar type of additional, medium-level supervision program as a detention alternative. Again, while the court’s intention is laudable, the better approach would be to in fact implement a program designed to specifically meet this need. Detention alternatives should therefore be short-term, and have as their primary goal – if not their only goal – supervision. Consistent with the principle of “the least restrictive alternative,” their purpose is to provide the appropriate level of supervision to safely maintain youth in the community while awaiting subsequent court hearings.

SOLUTION TO IDENTIFIED PROBLEM

- *Describe the solution to the identified problem and how the requested funds will be used to implement this solution. List the specific objectives this solution seeks to achieve (in terms of the JDAI core strategies where possible/appropriate). Describe the specific elements/components of the solution.*

Proposed Solution

As stated, the Monmouth County Steering Committee and Detention Alternatives Subcommittee has determined that the local Alternatives Continuum is lacking in the number, and more importantly, the variety, of detention alternatives available. The solution to this problem is to expand the number and variety of alternative slots available by adding a detention alternative that provides community-based supervision, social and recreational activities, and learning opportunities to youth whose cases are pending disposition in court. The Monmouth County Youth Services Commission has already committed \$50,000 towards the development of such a community-based alternative. The funds requested via this proposal will provide the balance needed to successfully implement this solution.

Specific Objectives

- ***Create a Community-Based Detention Alternative.***
Through a community-based agency, create a 10-slot detention alternative that provides supervision, structured social and recreational activities, and learning opportunities to youth whose cases are pending disposition in court. Through a competitive contract process, a Request for Proposal will be issued by the Youth Services Commission to identify a provider to operate the desired detention alternative program.
- ***Ensure the Appropriate Target Population is Served.***
Consistent with JDAI principles and core strategies, the proposed alternative will serve youth whose cases are pending disposition in juvenile court, and who without the existence of the proposed alternative, would otherwise remain in detention while awaiting the outcome of their case. An intentional focus will be placed on the “special populations” of the sixth core strategy by serving

youth charged with violations of probation and/or failure-to-appear in court, but again, only if these youth would have otherwise been admitted to/remained in secure detention.

- ***Place an Intentional Focus on Addressing Minority Overrepresentation in Detention***
Consistent with JDAI principles and core strategies to ensure that the likelihood that an arrested youth will be detained is similar for all youth regardless of race/ethnicity, the detention alternative program will be monitored/examined so that there are no barriers to access by youth of color and that all policies/practices and program utilization are race-neutral as well as culturally relevant.
- ***Ensure Length-of-Stay in the Alternative is Time-Limited.***
Consistent with JDAI principles, the proposed alternative length of stay in the program will be 30 days. There may be rare times, however, that circumstances require a slightly longer program stay. The proposed alternative will have a “base LOS” of 30 days, and it is therefore estimated that the majority of youth will stay 30 days. Some youth will be “stepped-down” at 30 days, and other will be discharged to their parent(s)/guardian(s). A smaller proportion of participants will be extended to 45 days, and an even smaller proportion might require extension to 60 days.
- ***Serve An Estimated 90 To 100 Youth Annually.***
With 10 slots, it is estimated that 6 out of 10 youth will stay up to 30 days, 2 out of 10 will stay up to 45 days, and 1 out of 10 might stay up to 60 days. This means the average LOS is projected to be 37.5 days, allowing for 9.7 “program cycles” in a year (365 divided by 37.5 = 9.7), and therefore an annual level of service of approximately 97 youth (9.7 cycles X 10 slots).
- ***Ensure Youth Are Arrest Free and Appear at Required Court Hearings while in the Program***
The anticipated detention alternative program will provide more supervision to youth than what currently is provided. The creation of the expanded detention alternative automatically builds in more supervision through frequent, random and unannounced phone contacts and additional face-to-face contacts/site visits as deemed necessary by detention alternative supervisors. The detention alternative supervisors and support staff will help to identify barriers that exist in getting youth to court, i.e. lack of transportation, and work to minimize the likelihood that youth will commit new offenses.
- ***Ensure the Detention Alternative’s Focus is to Help Youth Succeed***
Since the purpose of secure detention and of detention alternatives is to keep youth from committing new offenses or from failing to appear, success is defined as no new offense/getting to court. The alternative shall do all possible to help youth succeed in these terms. Thus, in conjunction with the creation of a detention alternative continuum a Sanctions/Incentives Grid has to be developed to improve the likelihood of youth successfully completing the detention alternative. Because the goal of the alternative is to not catch the youth doing something wrong, the primary purpose of the sanctions/incentives grid is to seek to maximize youth’s success while in non-secure alternatives by developing a range of responses to minor disciplinary problems (i.e. missing curfew or appointment, late to school).

Detention Alternative Components

The proposed Detention Alternative is expected to operate Monday through Friday from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm. There is a possibility that the program will operate for additional hours on alternate Saturdays in order to provide time for community service hours that might be imposed as a graduated sanction in response to problematic behavior (i.e., a sanction in lieu of return to detention). Daily services and activities are anticipated to include:

1. Transportation to and from the Alternative Program
2. Schoolwork Support
3. Recreation Activities and Table Games.
4. Facilitation of activities between youth and parents.

5. Group Activities with the following as Possible Broad Topic Areas:
 (Note that each broad area might rotate weekly through different, more specific areas. Example: a. The Impact of Crime and Delinquency might focus on Violence one week, and Theft/Property Damage another week.)
 - a. The Impact of Crime and Delinquency
 - b. The Legal System and Navigating through It
 - c. Improving Attitudes
 - d. Conflict Resolution/Anger Management/Decision-Making Skills
 - e. Substance Abuse Education
 - f. Health and Hygiene Education
 - g. Teenage Pregnancy/Parenting Skills
 - h. HIV/AIDS and Other STD Education and Prevention
 - i. Civics: Government and the Political System
 - j. Current Events
 - k. Handling Family Problems
 - l. Employment/Job Skills (Job readiness, how to get a job and keep a job)
 - m. Life Skills (money management, household responsibilities, etc.)
 - n. The Importance of Education & Employment/Consequences of Dropping-Out
 - o. Other Culturally Relevant Activities

/MEASURING IMPLEMENTATION OF SOLUTION

- *Briefly describe how the implementation of the solution and each of its objectives will be tracked and the measures that will be used to identify whether objectives are being met.*

Tracking Implementation

A Microsoft ACCESS database will be utilized to track the implementation of the detention alternative program. The database is currently being created through the collaborative efforts of the Monmouth County HDP Supervisors and the JJC/Monmouth County JDAI Detention Specialist. Ultimately, the Detention Alternative Supervisors will solely be responsible for maintaining and updating the database on a regular basis. The database will record program related information for all youth admitted to an alternative program such as intake, discharge, program movement history, number of random face-to-face visits/phone contacts and the outcome of any contacts, any responses to minor program violations, as well as overall program outcomes.

Measuring Objectives

Measures that will be used to identify whether objectives are being met include case level data related to socio-demographics, current offense history, intake and discharge dates, re-offense and FTA rates, and program compliance rates. Aggregate data include program outcomes, LOS in the alternative, and overall return to detention rates.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED SOLUTION(S)

- *Briefly state the anticipated impact of the proposed solution(s) in terms of the contributing factors and their affect on detention utilization as described above, under "Specific Nature of the Problem." Describe in general terms (i.e., "reduce" or "increase;" percentages not necessary). Also describe in terms of the unintended consequences, if any (i.e., "avoid" or "do not increase" or "ensure").*
- **Reduce Admissions to Detention**
 By implementing a new community-based detention alternative that will enable youth to be placed in the program without first being admitted to detention it is intended that overall admissions to detention will be reduced. For example, special target populations such as youth where a bench warrant is active for either a VOP or FTA will not have to first be admitted to detention prior to admission to a detention alternative. Furthermore, admissions to detention will also be reduced if

the number of youth placed back into detention for violating a detention alternative program for reasons associated with program non-compliance is reduced.

- **Reduce Pre-Alternative LOS in Detention**
The design and structure of the detention alternative program is intended to reduce the length of time a youth spends in detention prior to release to the alternative by eliminating the obstacles and barriers traditionally associated with HDP. Youth will not have to wait for either a landline to be installed and/or existing phone features to be removed in order to be released to an alternative program.
- **Reduce Average Daily Population (ADP) of Detention**
By nature of reducing LOS in detention for youth ultimately released to a detention alternative and admissions to detention because youth are being diverted at the front gate, as a consequence the overall ADP of detention will also be reduced.
- **Ensure that Minority Youth have Equal Access to Detention Alternative Programs**
Focus efforts to ensure that all youth regardless of race/ethnicity have ample opportunity to access detention alternative programs in a timely and efficient manner. It is expected that pre-alternative LOS will be reduced for youth of color by minimizing the barriers and lengthy wait time for admission to an alternative with the creation of a new detention alternative program.
- **Reduce Reliance on non-Detention Alternative Programs**
Work with local stakeholders to ensure that existing dispositional programs are not used as means for releasing youth from detention pre-dispositionally thereby increasing the likelihood of violating conditions of releases and subsequently being placed back into detention.

MEASURING IMPACT OF PROPOSED SOLUTION(S)

- *Briefly state how the impact of the solution will be measured. Describe in terms of the expected impact above, briefly stating the measures to be used, how that data/information will be collected.*

The measures that will be used to determine whether or not the proposed solution is having the expected impacts include detention alternative utilization rates, overall admissions to detention, LOS in detention for youth released to a detention alternative as well as overall LOS, and ADP. Additionally, all data will be disaggregated by race/ethnicity to determine if there has been an impact on minority overrepresentation in detention.

Monthly admission and departure detention data is currently and will continue to be recorded by the staff at the Monmouth County Youth Detention Center using Microsoft Access. The data collected will enable the distribution of monthly, quarterly and annual reports depicting trends in admissions, LOS, and ADP. The database will also capture the circumstances of arrest resulting in detention in addition to detention release data. In otherwords, where are youth be placed upon release from detention (e.g. home – charges dismissed, detention alternative, residential placement, probation).

Management/Participating Agencies

There will be program management/oversight from the County YSC, the Monmouth County JDAI Local Steering Committee and the JJDP Committee. The County level program management will consist of on site program monitoring as well as fiscal monitoring. The JDAI Local Steering Committee, specifically the Detention Alternative Subcommittee, will be involved in the program evaluation component to determine whether or not the program is meeting the intended impact/outcomes. The actual Implementing agency will be required to describe their method of program management in the request for proposal that is submitted to the County. Additionally there will be to some extent State

Level Program Management for it is required that all fiscal reports and program narratives be submitted to the Juvenile Justice Commission for review.

of Costs

The County of Monmouth and Youth Services Commission in conjunction with State funding will seek to incur a higher percentage of the operating costs of the detention alternative program incrementally over the next three years. The intention is that the County will be fully funding the detention alternative program by the fourth year when the JJDP grant period is set to expire. The incremental shifts in the ratio of Federal JJDP funding to County/State Funding is anticipated to occur over the next four years as follows:

Year	JJDP Funding	County/State Funding	Total
2006	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$125,000
2007	\$50,000	\$75,000	\$125,000
2008	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$125,000
2009	\$0.00	\$125,000	\$125,000

Currently, the Youth Services Commission has made an annual commitment of \$50,000.00 per year for three years. However, the County will seek to redirect additional savings from other youth activities and the Youth Detention Center to the funding of the detention alternative program.

Budget/Purchase of Services

The combined total of the budget for which an RFP will be sent out by the County of Monmouth in 2006 will be \$125,000, \$75,000 from Federal JJDP funding and \$50,000 from County/State Funding. The provider will be identified through competitive contract bidding. The services to be purchased through a provider will include but not limited to: 1) Transportation to and from the Alternative Program, 2) Education Support, 2) Recreational Activities (group/individual), and 4) Facilitation of activities between youth and parents. Prior to obtaining the services of any provider, a copy of the proposed contract will first be submitted to the JJDP for review and approval.