JDAI Inter-Site Conference 2009

“Real Practices for Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Detention”

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An Overview of Pima County/Tucson, Arizona

- Approximately one million citizens in Pima County.
- 850,000 people live in the greater Tucson area.
- The sunshine capital of the continental United States!
- 110 miles from Phoenix.
- A very diverse population – of our youth ages 8 to 17 years - 46.2 % are Latino; 42.4 % are Anglo; 3.6% are African American; and 3.4 % are Native American.
- Pima County has a common border with Mexico and Tucson is 60 miles from the border.
The Pima County Juvenile Court

- 14 Judges and Commissioners.
- Nearly 600 employees.
- 306 bed detention facility (reduced to 265).
- 150 Probation Officers.
- 32.7 million annual budget.
- 141,000 youth between ages 8 – 17.
- 152 average # of youth on Juvenile Intensive Probation in 2008.
DMC and JDAI Initiatives

- May 2004 the juvenile court hosted a “Call to Action”.
- June 2004 the DMC executive committee was established.
- October 2004 we joined the Annie E. Casey Foundation in their JDAI.
- October 2004 we engaged the W. Haywood Burns Institute to help guide our DMC efforts.
- 2006 the PCJCC was designated a Model Delinquency Court (MDC) by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ).
- 2008 we blended the DMC, JDAI and MDC initiatives into one strategic plan.
2008 Average Daily Population by Quarter

**2008**
- Q1 = 114
- Q2 = 109
- Q3 = 93
- Q4 = 73
- 2008 = 95 ADP

**2009**
- Q1 = 90 ADP
- Q2 = 79 ADP

Override rate = 18%*

*Acceptable rate is 15-20%.

Detention Admissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Admissions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,808</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,695</td>
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<td>2006</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>2,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2,101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2nd Q 2007
Total youth detained: 424=100%
RAI High Risk: 61=14%
RAI Med Risk: 211=49%
RAI Low Risk: 152=36%

VOP detained: 166 or 25% of all special detention cases

2nd Q 2008
Total youth detained: 160=100%
RAI High Risk: 66=41%
RAI Med Risk: 58=36%
RAI Low Risk: 36=23%

VOP detained: 134 or 25% of all special detention cases

2nd Q 2009
Total youth detained: 147=100%
RAI High Risk: 56=38%
RAI Med Risk: 59=40%
RAI Low Risk: 32=22%

VOP detained: 93 or 21% of all special detention cases
Key Elements to an Effective Approach to Reduction

- Acknowledgment
- Commitment
- Collaboration
- Data-driven
- Policy and Practice Reform
- Persistence
- Management Reports
- Informing Stakeholders and the Public
- DMC versus Issues of Disparity
- Training
- The Political World
- No Mystery to the Concept
- Responding to Challenges
Acknowledgment

- The justice continuum partners must agree DMC is a problem they must mitigate.
- They must recognize each point in the continuum contributed to the problem.
- Understand each partner must contribute to the solutions.
- Each must be willing to examine policies and practices.
- They must avoid the trap of the “blame game.”
- They must discard the myth that they have no control over the disposition of the case.
Commitment

- Ensure administrative continuity first.
- Develop a written work plan.
- Initiate written Letters of Commitment.
- Determine whether you are willing to move beyond studying the problem.
Collaboration

- Develop a Collaborative Strategic Plan that is driven by the initial work plan.
- Assemble an Executive Committee.
- Identify one or two starting points – This is pivotal in the collaborative relationship.
- Utilize technical assistance – the AECF and W. Hayward Burns Institute have been key resources in Pima County.
- Take advantage of site visits and peer to peer information-sharing.
Become Data-Driven

- Develop a clear understanding of the youth in your system.
- Encourage data collection and analysis at each decision point in the juvenile justice continuum.
- Develop/utilize a validated Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) for detention admissions.
- Learn over time how to keep the “correct” data.
Policy and Practice Reform

- Purpose of Detention definition.
- Presumption of Release at Intake.
- Validated Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI).
- Definitions for mitigating and aggravating factors.
- Detention Override Authority.
- Expedited Case Processing.
- Impacting the Culture.
- DMC “Train the Trainer” curriculum.
- Low-Risk Youth Study.
Policy and Practice Reform — cont.

- Alternatives to Detention (ATD).
- Detention Resource Shifting.
- Statewide Collaboration.
- Presiding Judge Transition Planning.
Persistence

- Recognize this is not a time-limited effort. It is a new way of conducting business.
- Expect initial successes and challenges.
- Grab some easily attainable successes.
- Be prepared to make adjustments from the onset, but allow time for analysis before rushing to change.
Management Reports

- Develop weekly, monthly and annual measurements.
- Create a detention “snapshot” that is distributed to key stakeholders.
- Eliminate reports that become obsolete or don’t inform the process – avoid “losing” yourself in data.
- Trust your data, especially when you don’t anticipate the results.
- Data, not “best judgment”, must drive your efforts.
Informing Stakeholders and the Public

- Understand the realities of your community.
- Dispel myths – “Do the time if you do the crime” doesn’t hold up to inspection.
- Recognize the community needs to assume ownership of the initiative.
- Provide a data-based analysis of the community to help inform.
- Anticipate skepticism and challenges.
DMC Versus Disparity

- Inform, educate, recognize the difference.
- Success should not be exclusively about numbers.
- Evaluate each point in the justice continuum to assess practices.
- Equal justice for all youth is the key value – improved numbers may not be a reflection of an equitable system.
Training

- Again, utilize technical assistance from the experts.
- Train at all levels in the justice continuum as well as system partners.
- Culturally competent services must be present.
- Recognize sustainability isn’t leadership based, it is system based.
The Political World

- Understand and utilize the local, state and national politics.
- Share credit, seek support and shift resources.
- Disarm cost-cutting descriptions and focus on long-term outcomes for the community.
- Be prepared for “bottom-line” analysis by funding sources.
- Anticipate budget reduction responses.
No Mystery to the Concept

- This is not a complicated concept.
- It is about equity in the justice continuum.
- Move beyond studying the issue of DMC.
- If the commitment is lacking, the excuses are available to deflect legitimate action.
- There is no one "right" approach.
DMC reduction is contingent upon:

- Philosophical commitment
- Development of sound policy and process
- Organizational prioritization
- Adequate resource identification and allocation

Substantive interventions require adequate resources, but this should not be the justification for delay.
Responding to the Challenges

- Mental strength is required.
- Purpose must remain in focus.
- Direction must be consistent.
- Informed decision-making will improve results.
- Commitment to improved outcomes for all youth must be relentless.
Average Length of Stay in Detention by Ethnicity
2004-2008
Work to be Done

- Increase stakeholders participation
- Stakeholders self-assessment
- EC structure
- EC meeting process
- Low Risk youth
- Special Detention Cases
- Casey site-visit assessment
Resource Materials

- Sample Work Plan.
- Representative Management Reports:
  - Daily Detention Report
  - Weekly Override Report
  - Monthly Delinquency Report
- Pima County Data.
- Contact Information.