Family-Focused Practice: A Critical Examination of Functional Family Probation Services (FFPS)

**Facilitator:**
*Nel Andrews*, Program Associate, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD

**Faculty:**
*Grace Bauer*, Co-Director, Justice for Families, Baltimore, MD  
*Deena Corso*, Community Justice Manager, Dept of Community Justice Multnomah County, Portland, OR  
*Gina Womack*, Director, Family & Friends of Louisiana’s Incarcerated Children, New Orleans, LA
Workshop Objectives

- Learn about the process for how Multnomah County selected Functional Family Probation (FFP) as its evidence-based case management model
- Gain a deeper understanding of what FFP is
- Provide an opportunity for family members to lead and participate in the discussion around the core values and key elements of family focused juvenile justice practice
- Provide a space for authentic, open, and honest dialogue around the importance of family engagement & involvement, in an effort to increase sensitivity and awareness of the issue
- Walk away with a sense of whether or not FFP is a model that families can support… if not, an understanding of the elements that would increase confidence in the model
Selecting an Evidence-Based Case Management Model

MULTNOMAH COUNTY (OREGON)

Deena Corso, MS, LPC
Community Justice Manager
Department of Community Justice
Juvenile Services Division
Multnomah County (Portland), OR
Rationale for the Process

Gap analysis in 2009 revealed:

- Most DCJ staff could articulate knowledge of EBP and demonstrated relationship based interventions.
- Many staff were not addressing criminogenic needs properly.
- Greater emphasis needed to be placed on the mastery of behavioral practice skills and motivational interviewing.
Rationale for the Process

In Juvenile Services Division:

- We assessed RISK levels appropriately and applied contact standards based on risk levels. This standard focused on **QUANTITY**.

- We had not clearly articulated WHAT a PO should be doing with youth when he/she meets with them. There had been little attention paid to **QUALITY** of interactions.

- Lack of consistency about family/parent/caregiver participation in probation services.
The Process

- Project presented to agency leadership – support, input and guidance solicited.
- Thorough search of research on evidence-based case management practices in juvenile probation conducted in coordination with the Research and Evaluation Unit.
- Probation staff and managers educated about the initiative and encouraged to participate in the process of researching and selecting a case management model to recommend.
The Process

- Multi-disciplinary work group met weekly to review research, discuss pros and cons of various models, assist in gathering information, and ultimately reach consensus on what model to recommend for implementation.

- Web page was created for sharing information (research articles, meeting minutes, presentations, announcements, etc.) related to the project.
The Process

- Site Visit: Team of 5 staff attended a 3-day site visit to Salt Lake City, Utah to learn about their statewide system’s implementation of evidence-based case management practices.

- Site Visit: Team of 6 staff attended a one-day site visit to Olympia, Washington to learn about their statewide juvenile parole system’s implementation of EBP and experience with the Functional Family Parole (FFP) model.

- Presentations to various partners and stakeholders to keep them informed of the initiative and garner their support.
The Process

- Conference Calls: Two sites in California (Yolo County and Los Angeles County) participated in conference calls to assist our staff in learning about their implementation efforts and their experience with FFP.

- Research and information obtained from various sites was summarized for the work group and a discussion led to consensus that the team would recommend to the Executive Team that Juvenile adopt FFP as its case management model.
At the request of our Department Director, the work group researched the Effective Practices of Community Supervision (EPICS) model, as well.

Conference Calls were conducted between our staff and staff in numerous sites in Ohio.

Our staff re-committed to FFPS as the model of choice, largely because of the importance of including families in services.
The Process

- The Executive Team accepted the work group’s recommendation and implemented FFPS in February of 2011.
- Supervisors were trained first; then staff.
- Training includes initial overview, booster trainings at 4, 7 and 10 months, and weekly phone consultation.
Functional Family Probation Services (FFPS)

FFPS is:

an integrative supervision and case management model for engaging, motivating, assessing and working successfully with high risk youth and families.
Summary of the Model

- A philosophy/belief system about people which includes a core attitude of respectfulness of individual difference, culture, ethnicity, family form, etc.
- A family-focused intervention involving alliance and involvement with all family members (balanced alliance) with case managers who do not take sides and who avoid being judgmental.
- A change model that is focused on risk and (especially) protective factors – strength-based
Summary of the Model

- Utilizes interventions that are specific and individualized for the unique challenges, diverse qualities, and strengths (cultural, personal, experiential, family forms) of all families and family members.

- Has an overriding relational (vs. individual problem) focus.
The Culture of FFPS

- **Family and relationally focused** *(vs. focusing just on the youth)*
- **Alliance-based** *(vs. fear-based)*
- **Strength-focused** *(vs. problem focused)*
- **Proactive** *(vs. crisis focused)*
- **Doing the right thing at the right time** *(vs. static case management - in the absence of a plan and understanding of where to focus, then crisis rules the day)*
Characteristics of a FFP Worker

- See the whole person (the sum total)
- Recognize “noble intent” behind all behavior
- Respectful
- Work “with” (empower) rather than working “on” (manage)
Probation Officers:

- Meet with families (vs. working with the youth alone)
- Work relentlessly to understand and to respect youth and families on their own terms, to both understand (assess) and to create a working relationship
- Work hard to uncover hopes/strengths and family challenges (vs. finding problems)
Probation Officers:

- Use skill set to create motivation based on alliance \textit{(vs. fear)}
- Work hard to create a balanced alliance with everyone in the family \textit{(vs. supporting one party over another)}
- Strive to create credibility \textit{(vs. exercising authority)}
Matching

- A philosophy as much as a “technique”
- A fundamental requisite for effectively engaging and changing families
- A guide for probation supervision activities:
  - Match to clients (do what it takes for them to feel you are working hard to respect/understand them)
  - Match to phase of your responsibility (do the right thing at the right time)
  - Match “outcome” goals to them: tailor goals for each youth & family culturally, contextually, and individually.

MISMATCH results in “resistance” – current process is not perceived as beneficial to one or more family members.
Goals

- Engage them
- Reduce early risk factors
- Set expectations
- Develop balanced alliance
- Establish trust and credibility
- Decrease hopelessness
- Understand family challenges
- Apply information from intake/referral/assessments
- Maximize family initial expectation of positive change; get family to attend initial session
- Create a motivational context, first to undertake change process, then to maintain change long-term
Phase 1: Engage & Motivate

**Skills**

- **Structuring Skills**: provide direction/focus during family meetings
- **Interpersonal Skills**: validate, positive interpretation, reattribution, reframing, sequencing
- **Relationship Skills**: trust, warmth, humor, non-blaming, respect
Phase 2: Support & Monitor

**Goals**
- Facilitate individual and interactive/relational change
- Develop support/intervention plan
- Know community resources
- Maintain/use community contacts
- Locate resources that fit risk/needs
- Link family to programs that fit
- Eliminate barriers to services
- Support providers and family through monitoring and understanding
- Fine tune family change

**Skills**
Relational, structuring and organizing skills to identify, maintain, and help families use community contacts and resources
Phase 3: Generalization

Goals
- Maintain individual and family change to continue once case is closed
- Additional skill building that is consistent with “treatment”
- Generalize changes as new situations come up
- Incorporate relevant community resources as support
- Help maintain changes

Skills
- Identify resources needed to maintain positive change
- Structure activities that maintain changes
- Relapse prevention around successful changes
## FFPS vs. Probation Supervision As Usual (PSAU)

### FFPS
- Research-based – clear what the PO is supposed to do and when
- Proactive and planful
- Involves entire family
- Home-based
- Family-focused
- Strength-based
- Alliance-based
- PO is responsible for engaging youth and families, motivating them to participate in services, and linking to resources
- Focus on Generalization of skills
- Quality Assurance built in (outcomes and adherence)

### PSAU
- Varies from PO to PO
- Supervise to conditions
- Reactive – “crisis du jour”
- Meet primarily with youth
- Office-based
- Individual-focused
- Problem-focused
- Fear-based
- Youth responsible for complying with expectations
- Lack of future planning to avoid further system involvement
- Lack of oversight and difficult to evaluate impact of supervision provided
What Parents Say

- “I am very pleased with the JCC and really like her.”
- “Wish you could clone more people like my son’s JCC.”
- “Keep doing what he/they are doing. Great job!! Thank you.”
- “This is my first experience with a JCC. It has been very helpful.”
- “Things are moving in a positive direction. We are extremely grateful to our JCC for staying with us through a difficult season. We feel he is the perfect JCC for our family.”
What Parents Say

- “I think it is a very good program nowadays.”
- “Working with a JCC helps me get through and creates my strong belief that he can and will succeed. Thanks!”
- “I believe our JCC is very helpful, is open and listens to help what is best for me and my family, even when we don’t agree all the time. She does a very good job.”
- “She is a very nice person and does her job very well! My son and I really respect her as a person and as a JCC.”
- “She’s great. Very calm and objective.”
What Youth Say

- “I like my JCC. She is nice and helpful.”
- “She is very respectful and helps me with a lot of personal stuff to help me succeed in life.”
- “I really like my JCC. I’m glad they appointed her to me. She is a wonderful and helpful JCC.”
- “My JCC is great!!!!”
- “He is doing a good job with me.”
- “I think the JCC system is great and it does not need to be changed.”