



Welcome to the NJJEC Bulletin!

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *NJJEC Bulletin*! NJJEC is a project of the Justice Research and Statistics Association funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). NJJEC's purpose is to improve the evaluation capacity of states, localities, and tribes and facilitate the use of evidence-based programs and practices in juvenile justice. The *NJJEC Bulletin*, which will be disseminated directly to subscribers and posted on the NJJEC website, will provide information related to juvenile justice evaluation that is of interest to state, local, and tribal juvenile justice professionals. Specifically, future issues of the *Bulletin* will include:

- Updates on NJJEC **project activities**
- Upcoming **conferences, trainings, or other events** relevant to those working in the juvenile justice field
- Information about practitioner-friendly **resources** of interest
- A **State, Local, or Tribal spotlight** sharing information about performance measurement and evaluation activities occurring across the country
- **Articles** discussing evaluation-related concepts in recent juvenile justice evaluation research or recent presentations and projects that are of interest to the field.

We welcome your participation! If you would like to submit an article, suggest a news item for the Bulletin, or ask a question about evaluation, e-mail njjec@jrsa.org. For more information about the resources available through the National Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center, visit <http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/>.

What's Going On at NJJEC

Online tutorial: *Improving Juvenile Justice Programming: An Introduction to Evaluation and Evidence-Based Practices*

NJJEC is currently revising an online tutorial for state, local and tribal OJJDP grantees interested in learning about evaluation, performance measurement, and evidence-based practices. This tutorial will be an updated version of the Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center (JJEC) tutorial entitled, "Evaluation: A Tool for Program Improvement," which is currently available on the NJJEC site:

<http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/trainings-presentations.htm>.

NJJEC Webinars Begin in January 2012

In collaboration with OJJDP, NJJEC will be hosting a series of webinars called *Assessing Project Performance: Building Blocks of Evaluation and Performance Measurement* on evaluation, performance measurement, logic models, and data collection. *Webinar One: Basics of Performance Measurement and Evaluation* will be held on January 19, 2012 from 2:00-3:30 EST. Check the NJJEC website soon for additional information and to [register](#)!

NJJEC Needs Assessment Update

We have completed data collection for the 2011 NJJEC Needs Assessment and presented preliminary findings at the OJJDP 2011 National Conference poster session in National Harbor, MD. View the poster here: <http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/trainings-presentations.htm>. A report summarizing the findings of the survey will be posted to the website when it is completed. Thank you to all OJJDP grantees who responded to the NJJEC Needs Assessment!

Upcoming Events of Interest

Upcoming Conference on Mentoring- January 2012

The 2012 National Mentoring Summit will be held January 24-25, 2012 in Washington, DC. The conference is co-sponsored by OJJDP and includes sessions on mentoring research and evaluation as well as best practices in mentoring programs. For more information, see http://www.mentoring.org/program_resources/training_and_events/national_mentoring_summit.

Featured Resources

New Juvenile Justice Journal Launched

OJJDP has published the first issue of the *Journal of Juvenile Justice*. The peer-reviewed journal's Fall 2011 issue contains articles and commentary across a wide range of juvenile justice topics, including the results from a study of Utah youth participating in juvenile drug courts as well as an examination of the reliability of a juvenile justice risk assessment tool used in New Mexico. The journal can be accessed at <http://www.journalofjuvjustice.org/>.

New Disproportionate Minority Contact Resource Center

OJJDP has launched a new DMC Virtual Resource Center, which offers DMC-related materials and information and spotlights state and local efforts to reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact. Check out the Tennessee spotlight here: <https://www.nttac.org/index.cfm?event=dmc. efforts>.

EBP Resources, Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis

In the last several years there has been increasing interest in the identification and use of evidence-based practices (EBPs, although the "P" can also stand for "programs" or "policies") in juvenile justice. EBPs can be defined as those policies, practices and programs for which there is scientific evidence of their effectiveness.

There are a couple of different approaches that have been used to compile research and evaluation and draw conclusions about effectiveness. Examples include [CrimeSolutions.gov](http://www.crimesolutions.gov), a resource recently developed by the Office of Justice Programs to inform practitioners and policymakers about what works in criminal justice, juvenile justice,

and crime victim services, and [OJJDP's Model Programs Guide](#), which focuses on evidence-based programs in juvenile justice.

Another approach to examining research evidence is the use of **systematic reviews** of published (and sometimes unpublished) evaluation studies regarding particular areas of the justice system. **Systematic reviews** use objective, published criteria to find, assess, and synthesize the results of research and evaluation studies relevant to a particular area. A reviewer or group of reviewers reads each study and code it according to various components, such as the type and strength of the research design used, the number and nature of the individuals

included in the study, and the nature of the specific findings of the effort. These findings are then synthesized by the reviewer(s), who attempt to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the program or practice. The *Campbell Collaboration* is an international research network that provides systematic reviews of the effects of social networks.

A third approach to synthesizing the results of research and evaluation studies is known as **meta-analysis**. **Meta-analysis** employs a statistical method for combining the findings of similar studies to produce an overall assessment of the direction and magnitude of the findings when taken as a whole. This assessment of direction and magnitude, known as the effect size, indicates whether the program or initiative

under review has had a positive or negative impact on the observed outcomes, and how large that impact has been, across all of the studies being reviewed. Proponents of meta-analysis argue that they are more objective than systematic reviews and can represent findings in a more sophisticated way. Reviews by the *Campbell Collaboration* often include meta-analyses, and the *Journal of Experimental Criminology* often publishes meta-analyses of specific justice issues.

There are a number of resources available to juvenile justice practitioners and policymakers regarding EBPs. Look for discussions of these resources over the next several issues of the newsletter.

State Spotlight

Florida

The Florida Department of Juvenile Justice produces a Comprehensive Accountability Report (CAR) annually containing performance measurement data for nearly 1,000 programs and case management units in the state. Detailed descriptions of data sources and methods used during collection are included with each report. To access these reports, check the FDJJ website at <http://www.djj.state.fl.us/Research/PMIndex.html>.

Featured Evaluation

Implementation Outcomes of Multidimensional Family Therapy-Detention to Community: A Reintegration Program for Drug-Using Juvenile Detainees

Howard A. Liddle, Gayle A. Dakof, Craig Henderson and Cindy Rowe, 2011

International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology 55(4); pp. 587-604

Implementation analysis is a valuable tool for assessing program performance and making improvements to program function. Rather than focusing on program *outcomes*, implementation analysis examines the way program activities have been executed—for example, whether the desired amount of the intervention was administered in the correct way to the appropriate target population. The data used in an implementation analysis are called *process measures* (also called *output measures*). These measures focus on the day-to-

day activities of a program that are critical to achieving desired outcomes.

Implementation analysis is an important but frequently neglected component in program evaluation. If an evaluator examines outcomes without implementation analysis, he or she makes assumptions that have not yet been supported by data—specifically, that the program’s activities adhered to the plan. Implementation analysis may show ways the execution of a program can be improved, or lend support that program activities were responsible for the outcomes.

Liddle et al. conducted an implementation analysis of a Multidimensional Family Therapy-Detention to Community (MDFT-DC) program, a modified version of the traditional MDFT program, which has consistently been demonstrated to be effective. MDFT addresses juvenile delinquency through a comprehensive approach that includes active participation of the youth's family. Since substance abuse, delinquency, and HIV/STD infection are frequently co-occurring, MDFT-DC therapy adds an HIV/STD prevention component and seeks to address these elements simultaneously and through a more cohesive, continuous form of treatment both during detention and the post-release period.

Liddle et al.'s implementation analysis of MDFT-DC for drug-using juvenile detainees focuses on how well the important elements of the program were executed compared to elements of the enhanced services as usual (ESAU), the reentry program provided for juveniles not receiving MDFT-DC. Below are brief descriptions of the *process measures* collected on the components of the MDFT-DC program that are considered to be essential to its success:

- **enrollment**—the number and percent of youth assigned to each program who actually enrolled,
- **retention**—number and percent of youth who remained in their treatment program (MDFT-DC or ESAU) for 3 months or more, using treatment enrollment and discharge dates,

- **satisfaction with services**—total satisfaction scores from the Services Satisfaction Scale (SSS-16)
- **substance abuse treatment provider and juvenile probation collaboration**—a version of the Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration (ICC), adapted for treatment therapists and juvenile justice professionals, and
- **time in treatment**—percent of youth receiving at least the minimum number of hours of treatment required for the recommended treatment type

The MDFT-DC program was implemented more effectively than ESAU in a variety of ways. More youth recommended for treatment enrolled and remained in MDFT-DC compared to ESAU, and MDFT-DC youth and parents were more satisfied with the services received compared to those in ESAU. The authors also found a high level of collaboration among substance abuse treatment providers and juvenile justice professionals involved in administering the MDFT-DC program.

While Liddle et al.'s study does not examine the *outcomes* of youth involved in these programs, the authors provide valuable information about program performance for each type of treatment provided. By demonstrating high enrollment, retention, adequate dosage of treatment, and satisfaction with treatment services, the study shows that the MDFT-DC program has a solid foundation for producing its intended outcomes.

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To access NJJEC project information and resources: <http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/>

To subscribe: <http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/newsletter.htm>

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