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 is disseminated directly to subscribers and posted on the NJJEC website, and provides information related to juvenile justice evaluation that is of interest to state, local, and tribal juvenile justice professionals.

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 the NJJEC website.

What’s Going On at NJJEC?

NJJEC is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Jaime Michel to our staff. Jaime has worked on issues related to the juvenile justice system for the past decade. Her work in juvenile justice has cut across the direct service, research and policy arenas. She earned her MSW from San Francisco State University, with a focus on social work and the law as it pertains to the juvenile justice system. After working as a social worker in the San Francisco Public Defender’s office, Jaime decided to pursue a research-focused degree and in 2013 earned her doctorate in Community Psychology from the University of Virginia. Jaime’s research at UVA centered on adolescents and the juvenile justice system. While finishing her doctorate she worked for almost three years with the National Juvenile Defender Center to strengthen their capacity to utilize developmental science in training and policy advocacy efforts to improve the legal representation of youth in the juvenile justice system.

We’re excited to have Jaime working on the NJJEC project!

We’d also like to thank Rebecca Stabile, a part-time Research Analyst with JRSA, for stepping in and doing a great job producing this month’s newsletter. Thanks Becca!

Do you have a suggestion for a new webinar topic or resource? Email njjec@jrsa.org!

Upcoming Events of Interest

2014 Safe Schools Conference
October 8–9, 2014
The Center for Safe Schools will hold its 2014 conference in Grantville, Pennsylvania on October 8th and 9th. The conference is designed to provide quality professional development opportunities for school administrators and personnel, school resource officers, local law enforcement, and other community partners. More information is available online.
Victim Advocacy Training
November 4–6, 2014
This training, sponsored by National Children’s Advocacy Center, will be held in Huntsville, AL from November 4 through 6. It is designed for victim advocates who are working with children and families in a Child Advocacy Center setting. The training will include sessions on understanding the CJS, dynamics of child abuse, crisis development and resolution, intervention strategies, and other related topics. More information on session topics and registration information can be found online.

National Youth-At-Risk Conference
November 6–8, 2014
The National Youth At-Risk Conference, held by the National Youth-At-Risk Center of Georgia Southern University, will be in Las Vegas, NV from November 6 through 8. This conference will train adults who serve youth to create safe, healthy, caring, and intellectually empowering educational environments. Registration information is available online.

10th Annual Global Youth Justice Training Institute
December 2–4, 2014
Global Youth Justice will host its 10th Global Youth Justice Training Institute in Las Vegas, NV from December 2 through 4. Participants will learn strategies to establish or enhance local youth justice diversion programs through teen, student, youth, and peer courts and peer juries. Registration information is available online.

Featured Resources: Webinars
Presented by the National Reentry Resource Center, “What Works to Promote Success for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System” is a two-part webinar series detailing strategies that have shown success for individuals in the juvenile justice system. Part One is designed to teach participants the major principles that guide the juvenile justice system, and how to implement these principles effectively. Part Two takes a more analytic approach, summarizing the problems faced when trying to measure juvenile justice recidivism, and offering recommendations for improving data collection and measurement.

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice and the National Juvenile Justice Network presented a webinar on the implementation of evidence-based services. The Webinar presenters discussed various evidence-based strategies that have been proven effective for use in juvenile justice systems, such as methods to create agency, strategies to address funding challenges, and lessons learned from other states.

The National League of Cities presented the “Municipal Leadership for Juvenile Justice Reform Webinar Series,” intended to ‘highlight locally-led community-based alternatives to arrest, prosecution and detention for youth, provide concrete tools and guidelines for collecting and using data to drive city reforms, and support cross-city sharing of policies, practices and ideas on these and other innovations.’

The Defending Childhood initiative, in conjunction with OJJDP and Futures Without Violence, presented “From
Associates to Allies: Forging Public Sector Partnerships that Prevent Violence.” This webinar was designed to demonstrate how governments and communities can work in tandem to prevent violence that affects and that is committed by youth.

Featured Evaluation: OJJDP’s Model Programs Guide

OJJDP’s Model Programs Guide is an online resource of evidence-based juvenile justice and youth prevention/intervention programs. Recently, three new literature reviews were added to the guide:

- Commercial sexual exploitation of children/sex trafficking
- LGBTQ youths in the juvenile justice system
- Alternatives to detention and confinement

These literature reviews detail relevant research and evaluations and offer program profiles, information on implementation, and resource links. More information and the full guide can be found on OJJDP’s website.

Featured Programs: School-Based Behavior Programs

**The Good Behavior Game**
The Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a team-based behavior management strategy that helps teach young students to cope with the demands of a classroom such as sitting still, paying attention, and completing schoolwork.

In GBG classrooms, teachers divide the students into teams, keeping gender and behavior levels evenly dispersed. Teams receive a reward if members do not break classroom rules more than four times throughout the game. Initially, players are rewarded immediately, but as the game progresses they must wait longer to receive their reward. Every team is able to win, and the game forces students to work together to monitor their own and their teammates’ behavior, thus creating a positive learning environment.

GBG has been proven to “reduce aggressive, disruptive behavior and increase on-task behavior for students by the end of first grade, and lower the age of first-time smoking for students by middle school. Additionally, it has also been proven to reduce students’ use of mental health and behavioral services from 1st grade through young adulthood.” These results come from classroom implementation in school districts across the country, including in Baltimore, MD, Colorado, Washington, DC and Nebraska.

More information about the Good Behavior Game can be found on their website.

Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers

Developed by the Oregon Social Learning Center, the Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers program (LIFT) is an intervention program, designed for elementary school students living in at-risk neighborhoods, that addresses two primary issues: aggressive and other problem behaviors of students towards peers and teachers; and poor parenting practices, including inconsistent discipline and lax supervision.

LIFT is composed of three main elements: classroom social skills training through biweekly one-hour sessions, Good Behavior Game during play time, and parent management training through weekly 2½
hour sessions. Additionally, it facilitates communication between parents and teachers through the use of a special phone line in each classroom called the LIFT line, which parents can use to relay any questions or concerns they have for the teacher, and teachers can use to relay messages to parents about classroom activities.

LIFT has been shown to reduce child physical aggression and long-term substance use, improve mother behavior, and improve teacher ratings of child social behavior. These results come from evaluations of the LIFT program in Oregon.

For more information about the Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers program, please visit their website at http://www.oslc.org/about/bestpractice.html.

**Positive Action**

The Positive Action (PA) program is designed to improve academic performance, behavior and character in youths. PA relies on children's innate motivation toward positive behavior patterns, and teaches skills to achieve and maintain positive behaviors. It emphasizes a cyclical thought process in which “positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings about oneself, and positive feelings lead to more positive thoughts,” referred to as the ‘thought-actions-feelings’ circle.

PA addresses a wide variety of problems, including but not limited to: substance use, violent and disruptive behavior, bullying, and academic problems. Schools, families and communities that participate in the PA program receive a portfolio which includes scripted lessons that incorporate the program’s philosophy and emphasis on the ‘thoughts-actions-feelings’ circle into various topics including problem solving, self-control, honesty, and decision making.

Compared to a control group of students who did not participate in PA, students who did participate reported lower lifetime substance use, lifetime violent behavior, and problem behaviors. PA has also been shown to reduce bullying and disruptive behaviors. These results come from evaluations of PA conducted in schools in Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, and Nevada.

For more information about the Positive Action program, visit their website at http://www.positiveaction.net.

The NJJEC Bulletin is the newsletter of the National Juvenile Justice Evaluation Center. It provides information on NJJEC project activities, evaluation-related activities of OJJDP grantees, and upcoming trainings and conferences of interest.

To access NJJEC project information and resources: http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/
To subscribe: http://www.jrsa.org/njjec/newsletter.htm
To unsubscribe: e-mail njjec@jrsa.org

NJJEC is a Project of the Justice Research and Statistics Association.

**Notice of Federal Funding and Federal Disclaimer:** This document was prepared under Grant Number 2010-JF-FX-0063 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.