

BALANCED AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS

2016 Highlights

- **Over 9631 publications/documents were distributed throughout 2016.**

Distribution included but was not limited to:

*Denotes publications produced through the BARJ grant

1126 copies of - *"Pennsylvania's Crime Victims' Rights and Corresponding Rules of Juvenile Court Procedures"* *

3485 copies of - *"A Family Guide to Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System"* *

8 copies of the JJSES Monograph entitled, *"Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy Achieving Our Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission Through Evidence-based Policy and Practice"*, April 2012"
(Monograph 1)

62 copies of the JJSES Monograph entitled, *"Achieving Balanced and Restorative Justice Through Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy"*, November 2015 (Monograph 2). *

1237 copies of the *"Crossing Bridges A Sequel to Building Bridges Between Your Court and Your Community: A Handbook for Community Involvement in Juvenile Justice Through Restorative Practices"* *

- **Over 146 technical assistance requests were completed in 2016.**
- **21 balanced and restorative justice related training sessions were provided to 497 participants.** The overwhelming majority of those trained were juvenile justice professionals and stakeholders and VOJO Advocates.

Each of the above reported outcomes were higher than the previous year.

- A sequel to the Building Bridges Community handbooks, entitled, Building Bridges II: A Handbook for Community Involvement in Juvenile Justice through Restorative Practices is a document which includes Pennsylvania specific definitions and best practices for juvenile justice practitioners and communities in developing restorative programs. This publication was released at the November 2016 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Conference.

- A 1 ½ day training on Crossing Bridges: An overview of restorative practices was provided through the CJJT&R on the standard CJJT&R training roster. Trainers included Project Director, Susan Blackburn and Consultant Dawn Lehman, Restorative Justice Consultant from the Pittsburgh Center for Victims. The eight (8) training participants represented Blair, Franklin and Chester counties.
- A 3-day training on Facilitating Restorative Group Conferences was provided through the CJJT&R. Three counties expressed interest in developing such programs on the standard CJJT&R training roster. Trainers included Project Director, Susan Blackburn and Consultant Dawn Lehman, Restorative Justice Consultant from the Pittsburgh Center for Victims. The eleven (11) training participants represented Chester, Blair, Franklin, Lehigh and Dauphin Counties. 3 participants attended from Abraxas Leadership Program.
- Training on the nexus of BARJ and JJSES was presented to the participants of the Victims Caucus at the annual juvenile justice conference. Project Director Susan Blackburn provided this training session.
- A compilation of the results of the 2012 BARJ Survey was compiled and forwarded to PCCD via the Diversion Subcommittee of the JJDPC. Thanks!
- Technical assistance requested from the JJSES/CQI Committee resulted in the recommendation to develop policies, procedures and best practices for counties regarding services to victims of juvenile offenders. Attention to the development of this document will require an advisory group of juvenile justice and victims' services professionals. It is anticipated that this publication may be a deliverable in an upcoming year.
- The initial meeting of the Delinquency Benchbook Revisions Committee was convened. A plan for addressing this work was developed and initial revisions were compiled.
- The coordination of related meetings of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Committee, Court and Community Collaboration Committee, Victims Services Committee, the Family Involvement Committee and other committee/workgroup meetings, outlined in Goal 2 and associated with the strategic plan development has been a focus of the Project.

The Project Assistant was responsible for the coordination of all committee meetings, advisory groups and training associated with the implementation of balanced and restorative justice. She worked closely with the Project Director and the CJJT&R Director of Training to achieve timeliness, efficiency and overall positive outcomes.

Focus Areas for the 2016 Project

Goal One:

To advance the implementation of balanced and restorative justice principles and practices and to continue to promote the integration of balanced and restorative practices into the daily operations of county juvenile probation departments. Includes supporting activities related to:

Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES)

Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) Advancing the Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission Statement. The JJSES/BARJ monograph, "Advancing Balanced and Restorative Justice through Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy", published in November 2015, highlighted the interrelationship between JJSES and BARJ. To more fully represent this interrelationship a review of the document led to the development of a Power Point presentation which reflects a basic understanding of some of the "how to's" in this nexus. This PPT was presented to 36 VOJO advocates in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, and for enhancing the Orientation for New Juvenile Probation Officers Balanced and Restorative Justice training session. Addressing additional linkages which would include such areas as restitution collections and the use of motivational interviewing skills and restorative group conferencing and the collection of data on Impact of Crime Programs in Pennsylvania, most importantly the Victim/Community Awareness Curriculum, will be an ongoing process.

Monitoring best practices in counties by collecting county specific information to identify gaps in BARJ related practices and processes

A survey of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers on BARJ related practices and programs was conducted in 2012. The survey results were reviewed for gaps in programming across the Commonwealth. A compilation and drill down of the results was completed, revealing that many of Pennsylvania's juvenile courts have implemented some phase of BARJ Practice within their county. However, services remain fragmented and inconsistent. Community Service was reported as the most frequently used practice followed by Family Group Decision Making. Additionally, the survey was limited as JJSES had just begun and was not considered in this study. Also, the information from this survey was used on numerous occasions to reference what is occurring in the field.

Another survey of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers was conducted in 2015 on VOJO to obtain information on county specific juvenile justice processes to further understand the provision of rights, rules and services for victims of juvenile crime. The survey was sent to all 67 Chief Juvenile Probation Officers and included 65 questions with numerous opportunities to enter comments. There was a 100% completion rate – 67/67 counties responded to the survey. Of the 65 questions, all the main questions were answered, however, many of the open-ended questions (additional information) were skipped and many counties reflected "not sure" responses to several areas.

Other outcomes of this survey included;

- An email distribution list of the designated "county specific" primary VOJO contacts was compiled (the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission has included these VOJO points of contact in the annual directory of county services);
- County specific differences in the provision of services to victims of juvenile offenders revealed much more inconsistency than anticipated and the needs, gaps, barriers to services to crime victims and training needs for juvenile probation officers have been identified and;
- Problems with the survey data became apparent.

This initial review indicates a need for further analysis of the individual county responses and the embedded comments. An onsite meeting occurred with Philadelphia. The next steps will be to choose several other counties randomly to clarify if the information provided in the survey reflects the actual structure of these services to crime victims.

Provide written documents on BARJ

As noted in the 2016 highlights section, a sequel to the Building Bridges Community handbooks entitled, "Building Bridges II: A Handbook for Community Involvement in Juvenile Justice through Restorative Practices" a document which includes Pennsylvania specific definitions and best practices for juvenile justice practitioners and communities in developing restorative programs was released at the November 2016 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice Conference.

Coordinate BARJ related meetings as needed to support activities

The following Committees have been supported through the project with each committee focusing on the different deliverables required through this project.

Balanced and Restorative Justice Committee

Over the years, the Balanced and Restorative Justice Committee has provided a broad based, inclusive forum for the implementation efforts of the values and principles of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission, and subsequently the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy. The composition of the Committee was representative of the many stakeholders in the PA Juvenile Justice System. The Committee was responsible for the guidance, direction and oversight of the implementation of balanced and restorative justice.

A meeting was held in May 2106 and another was scheduled for August 2016. However, the August meeting was cancelled for administrative reasons and the committee is undergoing an assessment of need.

Victims Services Committee

The goal of the Victims' Services Committee is "To promote policies and procedures within the juvenile justice system that align with crime victims' rights, are victim sensitive and increase opportunities for victim participation in restorative practices." The Committee focuses on the crime victim as a client of the juvenile justice system and explores how to build the capacity of the system to better serve crime victims and achieve the vision of victim restoration.

Both the Impact of Crime Project and the Restitution Workgroup are areas of focus for this committee as well as many other related publications for crime victims.

RESTITUTION ENHANCEMENT WORKGROUP

The Restitution Enhancement Workgroup of the Victim Services Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers (PCCJPO) continues to examine the restitution laws, rules, policy and processes to enhance restitution within the context of restorative justice for victims, the community, and juvenile offenders. A recent workgroup meeting held December 14, 2016 resulted in several key decisions regarding the project and its deliverables.

The group heard from Amelia Smulkis, the restitution consultant for the PA District Attorney's Association, who provided an array of background information, along with numerous documents and tools compiled for the Criminal Justice System. Andrew DeAngelo, a consultant for the project, reviewed a draft outline for the anticipated Handbook on Restitution for Juvenile Justice Practitioners. Content, based on the literature and research uncovered by the group will be infused into the handbook as it becomes available

The Survey Development team determined that prior to proliferating a statewide survey for the field, additional information was necessary to provide a legal backdrop for the issues being considered for inclusion in the survey. The Data/ outcomes team continues to drill down on the performance measures and desired outcomes for the ordering, collection and disbursement of juvenile restitution. The Best Practices Compilation team continues to compile best practices presently operational in Pennsylvania as well as national practices that hold promise for Pennsylvania.

The working teams will continue to convene/communicate over the next several months in coordination with Susan Blackburn, to further study their specific areas of focus and will report back to the larger workgroup at an in-person meeting to be held in the first quarter of 2017. This workgroup will continue to focus attention on this project during the 2017 Project year.

IMPACT OF CRIME WORKGROUP

The Impact of Crime Workgroup of the Victim Services Committee of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers (PCCJPO) convened on December 7, 2016.

Workgroup participants heard from the Research Review team who expressed frustration at the lack of applicable research on impact of crime programs for juveniles. However, it was determined that the applicable evidence shall be used to inform the workgroup's direction and to determine the next steps for enhancing the Pennsylvania Victim/Community Awareness Curriculum.

During the review and discussion on the impact of crime programs being utilized in Pennsylvania the members of the workgroup determined that to enhance and effectively provide impact of crime programs we must specifically assess the targeted population, the risk levels of the youth being referred, the outcomes desired and the overall service delivery process/methodology. This workgroup will continue to focus attention on this project during the 2017 Project year.

Court and Community Collaboration Committee

The goal of the Court and Community Collaboration Committee is, "To engage, participate in and support activities directed toward establishing restorative communities."

The Court and Community Collaboration Committee prepared the handbook entitled, *Crossing Bridges: A Handbook for Community Involvement in Juvenile Justice Through Restorative Practices* under the direction of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers to fulfill the vision that communities and juvenile courts throughout the Commonwealth will work together to achieve the goals of Balanced and Restorative Justice.

This publication was initially distributed to all attendees at Pennsylvania's Annual Juvenile Justice Conference. Numerous requests for additional hard copies have been fulfilled and interest in restorative practices has been generated.

It is projected that the information and research compiled and published in this document will lead to the education of the system stakeholders on basic principles of restorative justice, and help in developing "best practices" for broader implementation of restorative practices throughout the Commonwealth. The Committee will strategize on the next steps for the roll out of the publication along with associated training through the CJJT&R.

A 3-day training on Facilitating Restorative Group Conferences was provided through the CJJT&R. Three counties expressed interest in developing such programs.

The 2017 Balanced and Restorative Justice Training Project, includes provisions for the establishment of an Advisory Group to develop policies and practices for local

jurisdictions seeking to develop Victim/Offender Dialogue and Restorative Group Conferencing Programs.

Family Involvement Committee

The Goal of the Family Involvement Committee is, "To sustain a focus on family involvement within the balanced and restorative justice model." The Project Director participates on the Family Involvement Committee, the JJSES Family Involvement Parent Guide development, and has begun the update/revision of the Family Involvement for Juvenile Probation Officers training curriculum.

Goal Two:

Insure the sustainability of comprehensive balanced and restorative justice training and technical assistance for Pennsylvania juvenile justice system stakeholders, including the victims' services community in this planning process. Supporting activities include completion and training on the Victim/Community Awareness Curriculum for Juveniles, on-going training needs and data collection.

The Impact of Crime Project

The Victims Services Committee convened a workgroup to research best practices and the latest available research to guide the juvenile justice system in the enhancement of victim restoration and the accountability goal. The review of the relevant research on evidence based practices as they interface with Victim Impact classes was completed. The workgroup is addressing the ongoing refinement of the Victim/Community Awareness curriculum with attention to curriculum revisions, augmentations to existing training materials, enhanced data collection and evidence based issues such as, youth risk level, appropriate dosage and application within the SPEP process.

The workgroup is additionally charged with locating other successful evidence based Impact of Crime programs that will meet the needs of moderate to high risk youth, particularly those in residential facilities.

A survey reflecting the provision of the rights and rules applicable to the victims of juvenile offenders was completed. This information initially provides the field with the first contact list for the VOJO advocates and preliminary information on the gaps in services for crime victims. Further analysis of this survey continued through the year via random site visits for additional clarifications.

Training on the nexus of BARJ and JJSES was presented to the participants of the Victims Caucus at the Annual juvenile justice conference.

Technical assistance requested from the JJSES CQI Committee resulted in a request for the development of policies and best practices for services to victims of juvenile offenders.

As noted in the 2016 highlights section:

- Over 9631 publications/documents were distributed throughout 2016,
- Over 146 technical assistance requests were completed in 2016 and,
- 21 balanced and restorative justice related training sessions were provided to 497 participants.

Goal Three:

To institutionalize a process of data collection and information on best practices and programs in Pennsylvania and to support those activities that would track the use of restorative practices, juvenile justice system enhancement projects, youth courts, family involvement, diversion, and services to victims, etc. in counties.

The most recent Balanced and Restorative Justice Survey was conducted 2011 and early 2012. This survey identified how Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) programs and practices have been implemented in the sixty-seven juvenile probation departments throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The vital need for sustained attention to Victim Restoration and the Accountability Goal has been determined to be an area in need of ongoing attention.

A recommendation was made to add questions which focus on victim restoration and the accountability goal onto the annual JJSES survey completed by all counties prior to the development of their JJSES plan development. The Project Director will submit a request to the JJSES Leadership Team for inclusion of said questions in the 2017 survey.