

# ***Restructuring the Juvenile Justice System: A Work in Progress***



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF SEATTLE EDUCATION FUND**

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# ***Restructuring the Juvenile Justice System— A Work in Progress***



## **Introduction**

In a presentation to the 2001 Washington State Legislature, Norm Maleng, King County Prosecuting Attorney said:

“Twenty years ago Washington State moved from a criminal justice system based on rehabilitation to one based on punishment. Now many organizations from community health to law enforcement are questioning the success of this policy. They are suggesting that funds for incarceration should be reallocated to community support programs including treatment, counseling, literacy, education and job training in order to assist people in participating in our society rather than making it more difficult.”

“Every year for the last seven years, juvenile crime in King County has decreased! We have avoided the cost of building and operating a new juvenile detention center, and our young people, families, and communities are safer. Yet, our approach to preventing and reducing juvenile crime remains flawed.

“We are spending astronomical amounts when troubled young people are deeply involved in the juvenile justice system, often too late to do much good. Meanwhile, we fail to invest sufficiently in early intervention and other measures that could help keep some young people out of trouble.”<sup>1</sup>

This League of Women Voters of Seattle study will first give some background of the current law. Then it will examine documents that form the basis of the current efforts to restructure the juvenile justice system, as well as other findings. The major documents are:

1. **Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study** which includes a review of the recent research, and points to prevention and early intervention. This study provides suggestions for moving ahead with restructuring.
2. **Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan** which is King County’s detailed plan for administering juvenile justice currently and in the future.
3. **King County Human Services Recommendations 2001-2003**. Many of the proposed suggestions for reform are contained in this document.
4. **Seattle Family and Youth Division and Education**

**Division Programs** coordinate goals with King County juvenile justice and human services planning.

## **Background:**

### **Washington State Law**

Under state law, all delinquent and dependent children (up to age 18) are under the jurisdiction of the county Superior Court, which operates the Juvenile Court. King County operates Juvenile Court at two sites – one at the Youth Services Center in Seattle and the second at the Regional Justice Center in Kent. The Kent center does not handle juvenile criminal cases. Children and youth up to age 18 may come before the court because of criminal behavior or because their needs are not being met.

One category of children referred to the court is At-Risk Youth (ARY). An ARY is an individual under the age of 18 who is absent from home for more than 72 hours without parental consent; is beyond the control of the parents such that the child’s behavior substantially endangers the health, safety or welfare of the child or another person; or has a substance abuse problem for which there are no pending criminal charges. The second category is Child in Need of Services (CHINS). In this case, the family is no longer able to care for a child. State law provisions specify that the child, the parent, or Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) can petition for out of home placement (care in a foster home or in a residential treatment center). Judges may order that chronic truants from families in conflict be considered At-Risk-Youth. As such these children can receive special help. Judges may also order that chemically dependent or substance abusing youth will be examined by a special counselor and may be required to participate in recommended treatment. ARY, CHINS, and truancy cases are known as status offenses.

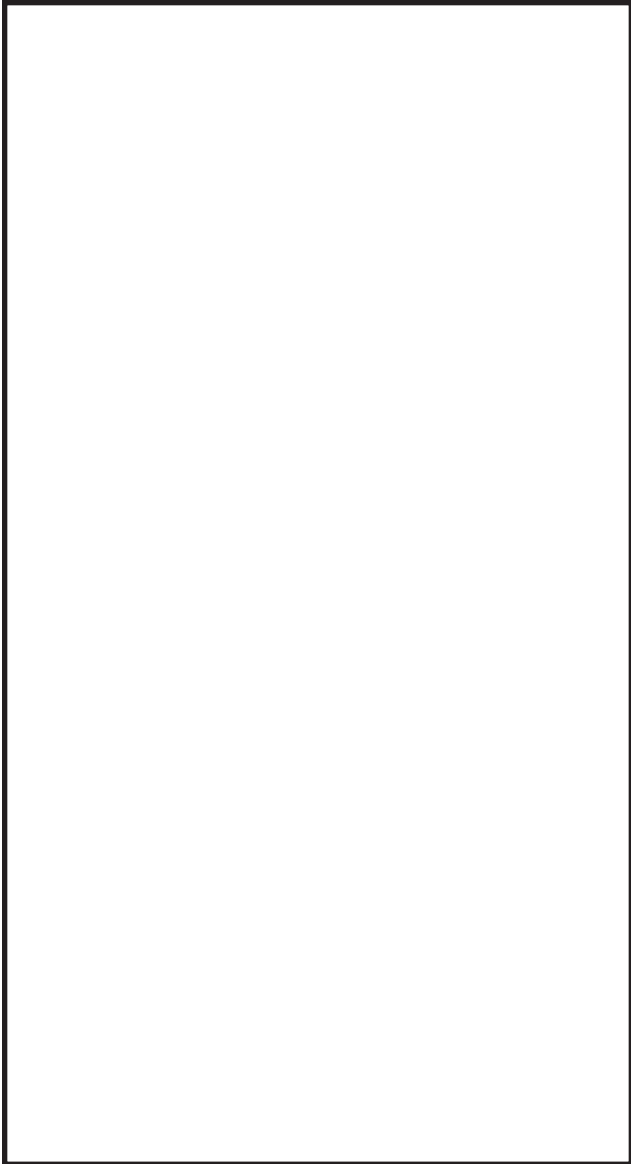
The Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention is responsible for the care and custody of youth who are detained in the juvenile detention facility. A youth may be detained following an arrest for allegedly committing an offense or on a warrant, pending trial, as part of a sentence, or as part of an order sanctioning the youth for violating the terms of probation. Non-offenders (truants, at-risk youth, children in need of services, or dependents) who violate a court order or are arrested on a warrant may also be detained.

**The Becca Bill** (See Appendix A)

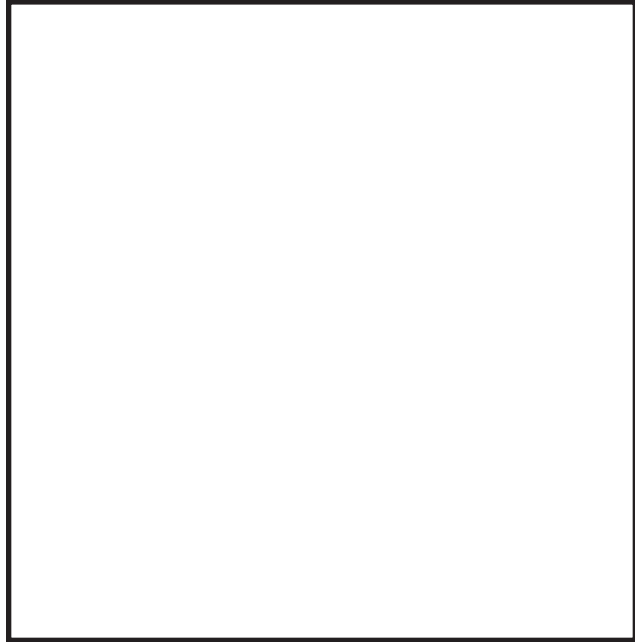
In 1995, the state Legislature, because of the increased number of troubled teens who were not attending school, passed the "Becca Bill," named for a 13-year old Tacoma runaway who was murdered on the streets of Spokane. The bill outlines an escalating series of consequences for repeated unexcused absences from school by juveniles.

The bill mandates that all children between the ages of eight and 18 will attend school and that it is the parents' responsibility to see that this is done. Exceptions are made for children 16 and older who are regularly employed, if approved by the parent; if the child is "emancipated," as defined by law; or if the child has by age 16 completed her high school education and graduated. (RCW 28A.225.010)

According to Ruth McFadden, Manager of Special Programs Office for the Seattle Public Schools, it cost



that district \$2 million to administer the truancy laws during the past school year. Of this amount, \$298,000 is spent on paper, supplies, messenger services, contracts with other agencies, and extra staff time.



**The Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA)**

In 1997 the Washington State Legislature significantly altered its juvenile offender sentencing laws and intervention policies. The primary purpose of this legislation, called the Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA), is to provide research and community-based programs that emphasize youth accountability and the development of the skills for youth to function in a manner consistent with public safety.<sup>3</sup> Under this act, King County and other communities across the state moved to reform their juvenile justice practices.

**How many youth are involved?**

In 1999 it was estimated that 13,783 youth from ages 10 to 21 (counting each youngster once, no matter how many times a youth was brought before the court) had some involvement as offenders with the King County juvenile justice system. Year 2000 population projections for King County show a total of 254,720 youth ages 10-21. Thus, 5.4% of youth had contact with the juvenile court as offenders.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1998 and 2001, referrals to the prosecutor, court filings, and use of detention—all measures of juvenile crime—dropped by 20% to 30%.<sup>5</sup> At the same time truancy petitions (because of Becca Bill requirements) increased the case load in Juvenile Court.

In 2001, 30% of Juvenile Court cases in King County were for truancy.<sup>6</sup> King County truancy filings for the last few years are: 1995—766, 1996—3,895, 1997—4,506, 1998—3,917, 1999—3,652, 2000—4,301.

Statewide, contempt motions, used when a child does not show up for a court date, on at-risk youth and truancy filings, have increased notably. There was an 80% increase in ARY contempts from 1996 to 1997 and a 111% increase in truancy contempts in that year.<sup>7</sup>

### **Disproportionality**

In 1950, whites made up 65% of all state and federal inmates, while minorities made up 35%. Today the opposite is true, with 35% of the prison population made up of whites and 65% composed of minorities.<sup>8</sup>

This fact in particular is more startling when the situation of black males is considered. Black adult males constitute more than half of those incarcerated nationally.<sup>9</sup> This disparity in incarceration rate is called **disproportionality**.

In King County, the picture mirrors the national direction. More than one-third of inmates in the adult county correctional facility are racial minorities. In the youth correctional facility, racial minorities represent about 37% of incarcerated youth. African Americans comprise less than 6% of King County's population.<sup>10</sup>

The major reason for the skewed numbers is the incarceration of young African American males on drug-related offenses. African Americans are arrested more often, convicted more often, and receive longer sentences than white drug offenders. Another major factor is poverty. African Americans still find many in their community living below the poverty line.

Current research is showing that there is sometimes a disparity in the way minorities are treated in the juvenile justice system.<sup>11</sup> This study will show that the court is facing up to this problem and that many of the changes taking place are designed as remedies.

What can be done to reverse this situation? We must move the focus from jail to treatment and other alternatives to jail. We must increase support for education and job training to combat poverty and present real alternatives to drugs and crime. We face the age-old challenge once again; we have to provide the opportunity for all people to have a stake in our society.

## **Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study<sup>12</sup>**

In May 1999 King County Executive Ron Sims and Seattle Mayor Paul Schell endorsed a feasibility study based on the growing awareness of the self-perpetuating cycle of building more and more correctional facilities, leaving fewer resources to invest in preventive and early interventions for young people and/or for other important community purposes. These circumstances became the driving force in commissioning the *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*. The study was funded by the federal SafeFutures Initiative, the Casey Foundation and other foundation money. The conclusion of the study was that the juvenile justice and youth services systems were too heavily weighted toward expensive restrictive detention, the success of which is questionable. The hope was to develop systems building on "current research and a public view that values preventive and early approaches to avoiding costly outcomes. They (elected officials and funders) wanted to look for smarter, more effective ways to use public resources, while continuing to protect public safety."

The Reinvesting in Youth study asked the following questions:

- Is it feasible to create and maintain a community-wide system of services that protects public safety, supports the positive development of youth, responds early and appropriately to youth misbehavior, and uses the community's resources well?
- What would it take, in terms of time, resources and actions to make these changes?
- What examples are there of comparable efforts elsewhere, and what can be learned from those efforts?

The study was seen as an opportunity to make deep and lasting changes that would result in the system becoming proactive rather than reactive and punitive, with more emphasis on assisting young people and their families before the youth got in trouble.

There is substantial research supporting the idea that preventive approaches have better results and reduced community costs. Other communities comparable to Seattle/King County have successfully created inter-governmental and public-private partnerships to guide ambitious community change efforts targeted to children, youth and families.\*

A telephone survey of King County voters indicated that they support prevention efforts and believe these ~~investments will avoid greater expenditures later on.~~

\* *Examples of proven strategies:* Multi-systemic (Family) Therapy, Memphis, TN. Early Intervention for Young High-Risk Offenders, Orange County, CA.

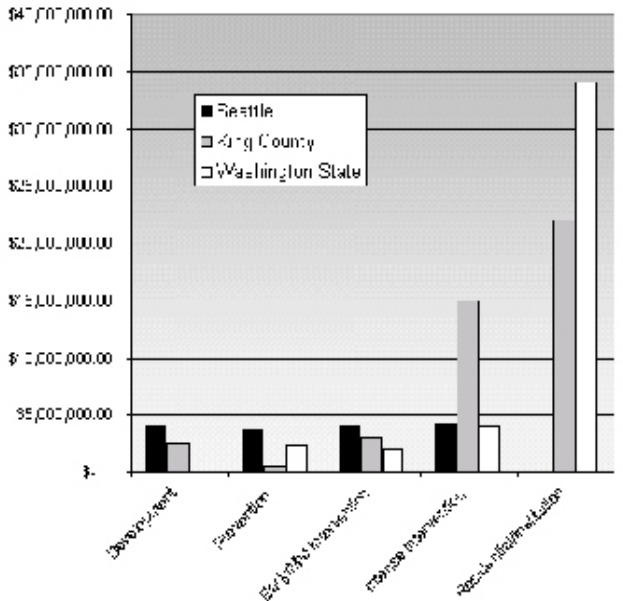
However, there will be a need for significant transitional funds to underwrite the costs of transforming the juvenile justice and youth systems.

**Findings of the Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study**

Rates of violent crime, property crime, and overall index crimes in the U.S. have decreased every year since 1991. Rates of youth crime have declined every year since 1993. Causes are hotly debated: San Francisco with a drop of 33% since 1995, focused crime control efforts on community involvement and diversion, while New York City, with a reduction of 26% over the same time period, attributes its drop to great law enforcement and a “no tolerance” message on petty crimes.

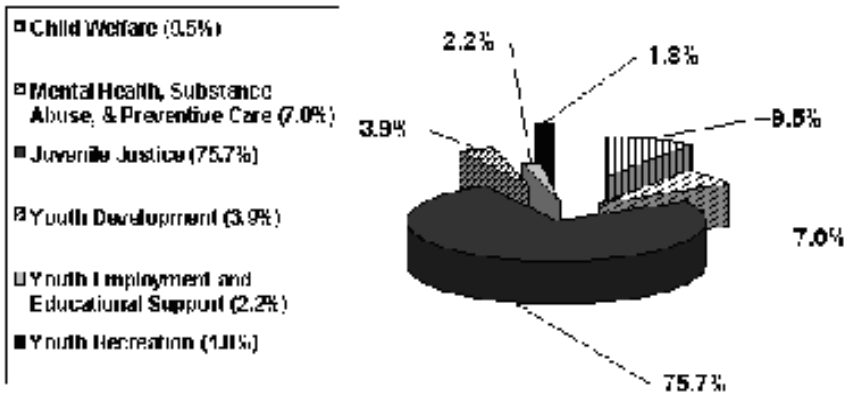
Most funds were spent on the few youths involved in the juvenile justice system, often without success. In 1998 youth services expenditures for the State of Washington by function, excluding welfare (TANF), public education, general Medicaid services and general health care, showed that of \$98.4 million, 58.2% went to juvenile justice, while 24.1% went to youth support services. These services include mental health, substance abuse and preventive care, youth development, employment and educational support and recreation. For King County 75.7% of youth service expenditures supports court costs

**1998 Youth Services Expenditures by Investment Level (Total for Seattle, King County, State)**



Ashley and Cutler, January 2001.

**1998 Youth Services Expenditures in King County by Function (County Funds Only)**



Ashley and Cutler, January 2001.

because of family conflicts, truancy or because they need services.

A study by Donna Bishop and Charles Frazier (Juvenile Policy Institute, January 2000) showed that youths tried as adults were rearrested twice as quickly and a third more frequently after serving their sentences than youths with similar backgrounds who were retained in the juvenile justice system. Of those who committed new crimes, youths previously tried as adults committed serious crimes at double the rate of those sent to juvenile court.

plus residential treatment for roughly 5% of youths in the county. For Seattle, the figures do not include residential services, which are a county function. In Seattle, juvenile justice commands 25.9% of the total \$16.3 million spent on youth services.

The study also found that detention is overused. Youth who are not dangerous may be sent to detention while awaiting trial or after conviction. Some have not even committed offenses. These youth are sent to detention

**Reducing Disproportionality**

A disproportionate number of minority youth are held in secure detention nationwide. King County is attempting to reduce disproportionality in the following ways:

- **Building Blocks for Youth:** King County was selected by the Youth Law Center in San Francisco to develop an in-depth understanding of factors influencing decisions to arrest or intervene initially with youth. (See page S-9.)

- **Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan:** (JJOMP) Places a high priority on addressing disproportionality in King County juvenile justice policies and programs. (See page S-9.)
- **Youth Disproportionality Subcommittee of Regional Law, Justice and Safety Committee:** A study to determine how to improve the county's data collection on racial statistics to allow monitoring performance.
- **Objective Detention Screening Standards:** In March 1999 the King County Superior Court approved amended juvenile detention screening standards based on objective criteria. (Pages S-8 and S-15.)
- **Outreach to and Services for Specific Ethnic Communities and for those with English as a Second Language:** A variety of programs and approaches have been implemented to support youth and families from diverse cultures. (See boxes, pages S-13 and S-14.)

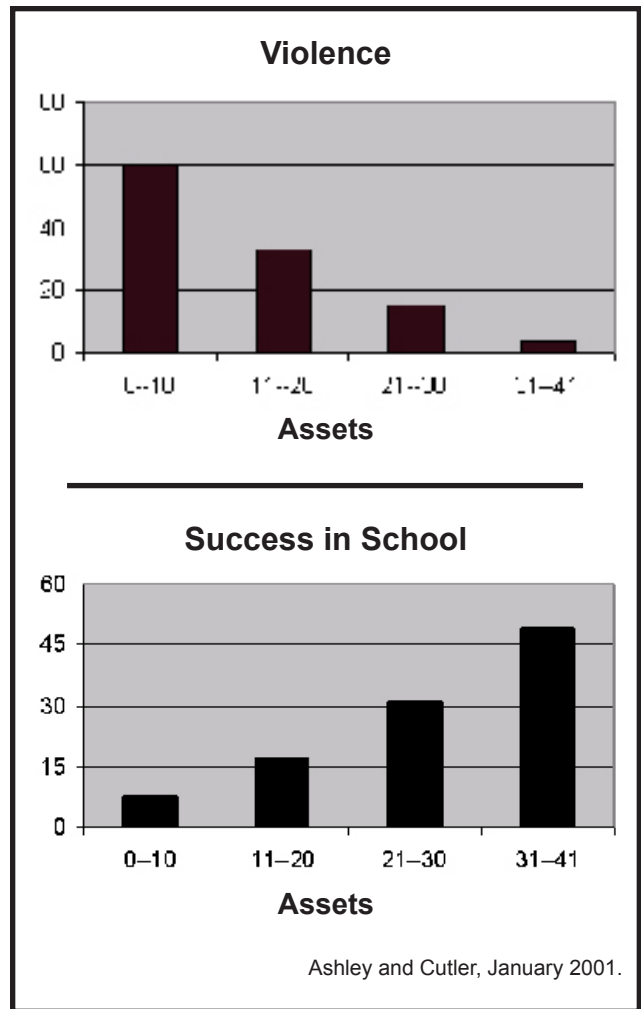
**A Different Approach**

The question of public safety is more than catching criminals and locking them up. It is also about reducing crime and victimization through increasing pro-social behavior. This means that recreation, education and work opportunities are all part of assuring public safety. It involves many people and systems in addition to law enforcement.

In the last five to ten years we have learned a great deal about what works and why in reducing youth crime and violence. We also have more understanding of the underlying causes of crime and the developmental pathways leading to delinquency and crime. We have also field tested and validated several strategies that improve success both in lowering recidivism (re-offending) rates and in preventing youth from engaging in delinquent behavior. These are known as proven strategies.

The new approach means using a more effective combination of support, treatment and sanctions when young people do get into trouble, with prompt and strict long-term accountability in the community. It requires going beyond the traditional way of fixing problems once they arise. It aims to build strengths as well as to reduce weaknesses.

Formal prevention and intervention, asset/strength building, and informal mentoring are all approaches needed to help kids succeed. Search Institute of Minneapolis has developed a list of forty essential human development building blocks (assets) that youth need to succeed. (See Appendix B.) The graphs in the next column show the relationship of numbers of assets to violence and to success in school.



Reinvesting in Youth's 5-year proposal looks like this:

- Implement new coordination between agencies and budgets;
- Set goals and measure outcomes to determine whether goals are being met;
- Reduce spending on incarceration, projected to be down nearly one-quarter from 1998;
- Increase spending on preventive measures by one-half to 33% of total;
- Tap new sources of funding - philanthropy, federal/state grants and savings from reduced incarceration expenses;
- Achieve better results - lower crime, happier, more stable kids - for same or even lower spending;
- Reduce criminality by using programs that have been shown to be effective.

There is a strong relationship between the number of assets and success in school. The graphs show that as the number of assets increases, the rate of violence decreases and the success in school increases. This relationship is a key component of the reform. Measures to increase public safety are needed to accomplish these goals.

1. **Policy** changes must be taken seriously so that they will continue in force over time and through succeeding terms of administrators and elected officials. These changes need to be fully supported by all partners in Reinvesting in Youth.

- Limit costly incarceration to serious and dangerous offenders.
- Eliminate or limit the length of detention as a response to truancy and contempt of court for at-risk youth and children in need of services.
- Establish adequate alternatives so that courts are not faced with having to choose between either detention or simply ignoring significant youth misbehavior.
- Enact administrative changes to ensure that youth are promptly brought to court, and that cases are handled expeditiously.
- Promote and expand coordinated community-based involvement and support efforts, built on proven programming, to reduce long-term demands on the juvenile justice system.
- Budgets should focus on both current demand and also on longer term investments in the well-being of children, youth and families.
- Initiate review of policies and programs for children and youth to determine if bias about race or ethnicity exists, and eliminate it if identified.
- Consider the adoption of policies that would tie together resources of the state and local level.

2. **Coordination** of direction, management, decision-making and accountability mechanisms is needed to guide successful reform. Top elected officials and/or leaders of organizations that commit to fund Reinvesting in Youth need to form a steering committee, identified as *Investors*. The second tier of the coordinating structure would be *Community Advisors*. They should be people from judiciary and law enforcement, local school districts, family, youth and citizen representatives from neighborhoods, and representatives of community organizations. The third tier of the coordinating structure would be the *Implementers*, an operations group that can make recommendations to and carry out the directives of the *Investors*.

3. **Financing** is the third consideration. Two issues are important. First, the need to identify and raise sufficient funding to jump start and maintain reform enthusiasm, and the need to formulate a plan to fund continuing services. There must be financing flexibility to share resources between and among levels of government, and the public and private sectors. Resources need to cover a multi-year period, and have means to capture and reinvest savings that the program makes possible from the costly present justice system. The study lists the following financing options:

- Philanthropy

- Retargeting existing resources
- Internal resources
- Allocation of growth
- Federal and/or state grants
- Maximizing government support
- Capturing cost savings
- Redirecting revenue streams

4. **Programming** is the fourth element. The *Investors*, in conjunction with major funders providing transitional support, would select the specific program needs for new resources. Partners on the Steering Committee will likely need or want to realign their existing approaches in order to achieve the desired reforms and to attract private and public financial support.

5. **Evaluation** is the fifth pillar of reform. There is great need and value in reporting results publicly. Investors and the community will be best served by an independent evaluation performed by those who have no vested interest in the results. For purposes of research, a tool must be developed to assess the risks of each individual. The same tool should be used by all programs so that they are able to be compared fairly. Strategies must be standardized so that results can be calculated for proof of effectiveness.

Evaluation needs to track many different levels of change. At the *system level*, are resource allocations altered as needs change? At the *organization/administrative level*, do the players cooperate or collaborate in ways that make sense for youth? At the *program level*, do the funded programs make a difference? And do they produce outcomes for the target group that were intended? One program level strategy might be to focus on specific neighborhoods from which a significant proportion of incarcerated youth come. Evaluation would need to include indicators of neighborhood change.

## A Risk/Asset Assessment Tool

(See Appendix B, page S-20)

Risk factors have been identified which predict problem behaviors. These problem behaviors are: substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, dropping out of school, and violence. Risk factors facing adolescents in the **community** include: availability of drugs, transitions and mobility, and extreme economic deprivation. **Family** risk factors include: family history of the problem behaviors, and family conflict. **School** risk factors include: early and persistent antisocial behavior and academic failure beginning in late elementary school. **Individual/peer** risk factors include: friends who engage in the problem behavior, early initiation of the problem behavior, individual/physiological traits such as learning

disabilities, and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). A risk assessment tool has been developed and is required to be applied to at-risk youth before entry into treatment programs. Assets and protective factors include strong and encouraging support from family, school, other caring adults, and positive examples by neighborhood/community leaders.

### Proven Strategies

Across the United States communities are engaged in projects which intervene with medium- and high-risk youth using the latest research techniques now called "proven strategies." All of these projects depend on the use of a risk assessment tool for all participants. In addition the projects set meaningful goals that indicate behavioral change, not just the numbers of youth served or the number of contacts made with youth. Examples of behavioral changes are reduction in recidivism rates, time in detention, and community gang activity, and increased numbers of individuals who reach the goals that they have set for themselves.

Reinvesting in Youth recommends these prioritized program goals for the first five years:

- Stop the flow of youth into the juvenile justice system by directing *interventions* to youth with high social risk factors, but who have not yet entered the juvenile justice system.
- Prevent *recidivism* of youth in the juvenile justice system if and when youth are identified as being at high risk to become serious and chronic offenders.
- Produce *cost savings* and expense avoidance through development of acceptable alternatives and interventions.
- Help *medium-risk* middle school youth through difficult transitions.
- Focus on *elementary* school years to screen high risk children and provide them and their parents with support and help.
- Invest in very *early preventive services* for infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers that also work with families with high levels of risk factors.
- Look at means of enhancing the level of support for pro-social behavior among all kids to give them a solid foundation.

### Building Blocks for Youth<sup>13</sup>

Under the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, the state and county are required to identify the extent to which disproportionate minority confinement exists, to assess the reasons for this, and to develop intervention strategies. Building Blocks for Youth is part of a national effort that

includes the Youth Law Center and the American Bar Association, among other organizations. It is an alliance of children's advocates, researchers, law enforcement, and community organizers and is funded by federal and private foundation grants. The King County committee is chaired by Washington State Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge and King County Councilman Larry Gossett. King County was selected by the Youth Law Center in San Francisco to develop an in-depth understanding of the factors influencing decisions to arrest or intervene initially with youth. The King County committee has compared detention admission practices to a national model; and members have visited the program at Santa Cruz, California, to study that program. The committee is developing recommendations for revising practices in the court procedures for youth.

### King County Juvenile Justice Master Plan (JJOMP)<sup>14</sup>

Several factors came together in May 1999. They were:

- Momentum for system reform created by several national juvenile justice initiatives, including the SafeFutures Project Grant;
- The new state law, the Community Juvenile Accountability Act;
- The dramatic increase in cases in the juvenile court system;
- The fact that juvenile crime has been decreasing (the juvenile crime rate in 1999 was the lowest in a decade), but the detention center population had nearly doubled.
- The county was facing the cost of building an additional youth detention facility.

These factors led King County Executive Ron Sims, Superior Court Judge Laura Inveen, and Seattle Mayor Paul Schell to call together representatives of law enforcement, public and private social agencies, schools, city and county officers, budget directors, and policy makers to find new ways to meet the challenge. The King County Department of Social and Human Services was included. The collaborative effort of all these agencies is needed to coordinate the services to the troubled youth.

In the Executive Summary, Phase II, of the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan, March 2000, the challenge is expressed as follows:

"We are at a crossroads regarding the future of juvenile justice in King County. The choice is clear. We can continue to do what we did throughout most of the 1990's and face the need

to construct and operate a major new juvenile detention facility, or we may rethink how we do business and find other ways to promote justice, protect the public, and help youth in trouble make responsible choices.”

King County Prosecuting Attorney Norm Maleng, Seattle Chief of Police Gil Kerlikowske and Chris Vance, Chair of the Washington State Republican Party, among others, are likewise supporting this effort.<sup>15</sup>

The Oversight Committee explored three areas (See Appendix C on page S-21 for list of Oversight Committee members):

- The need to stop the increase in average length of stay in detention by having probation officers use a consistent, graduated approach in recommending sanctions;
- Expansion of alternatives to secure detention so there are more meaningful options for lower risk juveniles; and
- Expansion of treatment programs that have been proven to reduce future criminal behavior.

The Oversight Committee, based on the input of nearly 100 youth-serving professionals, developed Phase II of the JJOMP Plan. The plan was brought to the King County Council and adopted in August 2000. By doing this the King County Council made a formal commitment to transform its approach to juvenile crime. It agreed to redesign the system.

Goals of the new system include:

- Reduce the over representation of youth of color in the system;
- Provide effective sanctions and services for juvenile offenders;
- Improve prevention/ community systems;
- Improve intervention strategies for truants, at-risk youth, and children in need of services;
- Redesign the system processes;
- Promote community partnerships. The collaboration of many local governmental youth-serving agencies is part of the planning effort; and
- Save the cost of building another youth detention facility. The savings thus accrued should go back into the juvenile justice system to provide for treatment.

For youth who have been sentenced, some alternatives to detention already in place are: a day reporting center, a new evening reporting center in Kent, work crews, and electronic monitoring.

Now in Phase III, the JJOMP system is gradually

implementing specific recommendations which were made by the Oversight Committee. Some of the new developments are:

- Three new case managers—two for ARY/CHINS and one for truancy, all hired in January 2001.
- Consistent criteria for screening youth for detention has been established. New objective criteria, including suggestions from law enforcement personnel, are in place. Staff training is proceeding. The goal is to make sure that consistent, evenhanded treatment is maintained and disproportionality is addressed.
- Warrant Reduction Project. Warrants for arrest are issued if a youth fails to appear at the court hearing. The new procedure is to have a worker telephone the youth and parents to allay fears, to stress the importance of attending the hearing, and to help work out details such as the need for a translator. The worker documents contact with the family and youth and reports this to the court.
- Juvenile Drug Court. Eligible offenders who are chemically addicted may opt for treatment in lieu of adjudication. Treatment lasts 9-24 months. Components of the program include assessment, case coordination, counseling, random urinalysis, and referrals to community-based services. This program is being evaluated by the University of Washington Drug and Alcohol Abuse Clinic. As of summer 2001, 16 youths have graduated from the program and 37 were participating. This pilot program is funded by various federal grants, some of which extend through 2003.
- The Stay in School Project. The state grants the courts funds for school districts to set up truancy classes or use other approaches to help the child/family with truancy problems, before the Becca Law consequences begin. Projects must encourage collaboration between school, community members and local nonprofit social service agencies and may consist of truancy classes, truancy accountability board, and translation services. One example is currently in place at Denny School with staff from Consego Counseling and Referral Services. Future funding is in jeopardy.
- A prevention, service-linkage model. High-risk youth are identified and served in the community by specially trained case workers with multiple skills who have had cross-cultural training. This model is being implemented at a new program in White Center called New Start. By July 2001, 158 youths were enrolled at New Start, and 121 were actively working with case managers. 45 youths participated in community projects—graffiti removal, mural painting, and clean-up. Services offered are risk assessment; school, court, and probation intervention and advocacy; English as a Second Language; GED preparation and testing; academic

and school reentry assistance; pre-employment training and job finding. This is a pilot project, and evaluation tools are being studied. The project is being closely watched by the court. New Start is a national Youth Offender Demonstration Model program and is partially funded by the U.S. Department of Labor for two years ending May 30, 2002. New Start is an extension of an existing project in West Seattle called SafeFutures. (See box page S-14.) SafeFutures has demonstrated its effectiveness in the reduction of gang activity by 50% in the last few years.<sup>16</sup>

- Proven Interventions. Research has shown that some programs or methods of treatment can effectively reduce future crimes by juveniles. Funded by the Washington State Community Justice Accountability Act (CJAA), a three-year pilot project is underway providing in-depth therapy and a study of outcomes. Three different specific methods are offered— *Aggression Replacement Training (ART)*, *Functional Family Therapy (FFT)*, and *Multisystemic Therapy*. The court has workers who have been trained in the in-depth treatment models. The method used in all of these programs is to help clients improve social skills and focus on future goals. *Aggression Replacement Therapy* consists of ten sessions of a class for three to ten youth, including anger management, social skills, decision making and moral reasoning. The classes are arranged as needed in a community setting. *Functional Family Therapy* is used for youth who are in conflict with their families. Truants and youth who are in conflict with their families are at a greater risk of engaging in criminal behavior. The case worker goes into the home to meet with the family over a period of several weeks to help with family relationships. *Multisystemic Therapy* is used when the family has multiple problems. It is offered in the home by skilled workers over a period of several weeks. The programs are being evaluated by Washington Institute for Public Policy. Funding is through the state.
- Secure Crisis Residential Center. This is a secure placement option for runaway youth with no warrants and who are in dangerous circumstances. Pioneer Human Services is the contracting agency. This center provides a place for youth who do not meet the criteria for detention. Future funding for this program is doubtful.
- Community Accountability Boards. The truant or minor defendant is diverted from the juvenile justice system to a community board. Board members are community volunteers active in leadership roles with a community agency. Several minor systems changes have been put into effect. One is that notification to appear before a community accountability board is now written in the language of the family, rather than assuming that a letter in English will be understood. The object of the

program is to divert youth with minor offenses from court to a community-based solution.

## JJOMP Challenges and Opportunities

Currently, several problems are of concern.

1. Racial disproportionality. Measures of juvenile crime—referrals to the prosecutor, filings and use of detention—are all down. However, the trend of overrepresentation of minorities, particularly of African American youth, continues. African American youth make up 7-8% of the general population, but represent 25% of the referrals to the prosecutor and 40% of the detention population. JJOMP is working closely with the Building Blocks Committee. They have identified several points in the judicial process at which minority youth frequently lose out on the road to detention. The committee is coordinating with the JJOMP staff to reform the intake and placement process for detention alternatives. The Building Blocks Committee has nearly completed a community-mapping process. The Regional Law Safety and Justice Committee Disproportionality Subcommittee is reviewing national research for best practices. Santa Cruz, California, has a model program; and the committee recently visited there to study their procedures.
2. There have been recent Superior Court rulings in much publicized cases which are changing supervision and liability standards. This has caused staff to review program designs to protect the judicial system from liability.
3. Concerns and needs of victims. Superior Court's Victim Inclusion Project has surveyed victims regarding their needs and concerns. This provides valuable information on ways to improve victim orientation and support.
4. The results of the victim inclusion project gives important information in helping identify constructive opportunities for offender youth to be held accountable to communities.
5. At least three of the proposed changes in procedures are not yet in operation.
  - Parent orientation and court lobby support. A survey has been completed to identify parents' needs and concerns before court appearances. Funding will be sought in 2002 to implement indicated improvements.
  - Assessment Center. Phase II report recommended creating a coordinated process for assessing and placing youth. Due to lack of resources, planning has not begun. Note: Improvements have been made with diagnostic screening.

- Sentencing guidelines for locally sanctioned youth. Consistent sanctions need to be developed. A schedule for holding discussions with the court, with probation officers, prosecutors, and defense attorneys has been set up. Training of staff and evaluation procedures is scheduled later this year.
6. The current budget shortfall on the national, state, and local level is having a dire effect upon the planning process and new projects. Many of the new procedures and programs are funded by federal grants which have not yet expired. Others, funded locally, will be looking for replacement sources of funds. Agencies are waiting for the State Legislature to finalize its budget. Finally, the economic situation may put additional stress upon families and communities while constricting resources for support services.
  7. Public awareness of the availability of the programs. While coordination exists on the planning level, understanding by the general public of how to use the programs is lacking in some cases, particularly among new arrivals, racial/ethnic minorities, and those with low incomes.

8. Coordination within and among the various planning and service agencies.

The county and fourteen cities formed the King County Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition to meet the funding requirements of the federal Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG). The coalition includes representation from law enforcement, prosecutors' offices, juvenile court, schools, business, and community organizations involved in crime prevention. Chaired by Superior Court Judge Laura Inveen, the coalition annually develops a coordinated county-wide plan on reducing delinquency, improving the juvenile justice system and increasing accountability for the offenders. Eleven specific projects and accompanying evaluations are currently being conducted. Among them are:

Juvenile Justice Information Access Project, Information Sharing for Community-based Organizations, Reporting Centers, Seattle Team for Youth/Project RIDE, Juvenile Drug Court, Crime-Free Futures, Teen Dating Violence, and Multi-Systemic Therapy. Some of these programs

additional jails and detention facilities. A high priority for the county's investments in human services is to prevent involvement in the criminal justice system.

The King County Human Services Recommendations for 2001-2003 expresses the County's intended direction for the next two years. This report is an interdepartmental effort, and includes input from community and various external stakeholders.

The majority (nearly 80%) of county funds for human services are acquired through state, federal, and other revenue sources to provide mental health, drug and alcohol, homeless, and other services. Nearly 50% of the county's human services funds falls in two service categories—Family Support and Early Childhood programs and Youth Services. Both of these services contribute to positive child development. While we focus upon the youth services in this study, it is important to point out that new research suggests "in early childhood there exists a critical, time limited window of opportunity for the reception of enriching and strengthening, and for the infiltration of dysfunctional behavior. Once this developmental window closes, the mind has been wired or mapped to respond in a way that will affect the child throughout his or her life. Once mapped, a mind's ability to change or rehabilitate is both difficult and costly. Our community can maximize the window of opportunity for enriching input among high risk families by promoting healthy child development through home visits, parent training, and preschool programs. In short, the first five years of life may provide the most powerful opportunity for preventing delinquency." (See page 27, King County Human Services Recommendations Report for 2001-2003.) Thus, family support and early childhood education are among the delinquency prevention strategies. Negative behaviors in teen years can be changed. Youth can learn positive social skills, but expensive intervention is necessary.

King County works with the subregions (i.e. cities and towns) on the goal of reducing youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. The county's new Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan initiative recommends strengthening the community-based system of services for high-risk youth. The plan intersects with the work of the Community and Human Services Department with a focus on areas that help reduce the impacts on the criminal justice system.

The hub of the county services for youth is a set of community based agencies that work together to provide coverage for youth and families. There are 16 agencies called Youth and Family Service Agencies (YFSA), with organized catchment areas by school districts. These agencies provide a wide array of prevention, early intervention and treatment services

## King County Human Services Recommendations for 2001-2003<sup>18</sup>

There is a close connection between community-based human services and the juvenile justice system. Driving the county's interest is the expressed desire not to build

for youth and families. Some house interagency schools. Many also sub-contract with King County for mental health and chemical dependency services. Five are in Seattle. They are Northeast Youth and Family Service Agency; Northwest Youth and Family Service Agency, which is part of Pioneer Services, Southeast Youth and Family Service Agency, Central Youth and Family Service Agency and Southwest Youth and Family Service.

In addition to the Youth and Family Service Agencies, other key infrastructures in youth and family support include:

- schools
- public health sites and services
- parks and recreation programs (Seattle and suburban cities, King County for unincorporated areas)
- juvenile justice services
- state Division of Child and Family Services (responsible for runaway youth and dependent youth)
- King County Mental Health and drug/alcohol services for youth and interagency staffing teams (IST's)
- others: a variety of programs that work with specific geographic areas or serve a culturally specific population, for example the New Start project in White Center.

There are four recommendations regarding Youth Services:

- King County will track and evaluate the various community-based "service linkage models" now being piloted for at-risk youth and identify the most successful. These will be considered for possible continuation/expansion/replication.
- King County will continue participation in subregional partnerships to promote better responses for at-risk youth and their families. This will be a priority for the county's discretionary funds.
- King County will encourage a regional perspective to address youth recreation issues, and continue to support youth recreation and education programs for youth in unincorporated areas of the county.
- King County will strengthen coordination of youth services: Private recreational and service agencies have an important place in this overall planning. United Way of King County is included in coordinating these efforts. The county role in the cooperative planning process also includes work cross-departmentally.

## **City of Seattle Delinquency Prevention/Child and Youth**

### **SafeFutures**

In 1996 the City of Seattle received a five-year federal grant to develop a new approach to helping at-risk youth and to study the feasibility of systems change for working with these youth. This grant, together with the Casey Foundation and other foundation money, funded the Reinvesting In Youth Feasibility Study. The grant also supported several programs including a model program which is recommended by nationwide research and has been proven to be effective. The SafeFutures Youth Center is now operating in West Seattle at High Point. The federal grant is over now, and the program is searching for other funding. The City of Seattle will provide half of the requested funding for

### **Development Programs<sup>19</sup>**

Reinvesting in Youth continues as a planning, coordination and development office with former Superior Court Judge Jim Street as executive director. This office is developing detailed implementation and financing strategies. Major foundation funding is being sought. The good news is that a major grant has been received from the R.W. Johnson Foundation. The foundation recently awarded \$250,000 to fund substance-abuse programs for young offenders.

Seattle is one of the cities that is cooperating with King County to provide the kinds of programs recommended and is part of the joint evaluation procedures. The total City of Seattle budget for K-12 partnership programs is approximately \$30 million from all sources. The Family and Education Levy provides \$10 million, minus the amount which is budgeted for pre-school programs, which are not included here. The philosophy of partnership plays out in the joint programs of the Family and Youth Services Division with the Departments of Health, Parks and Recreation, School District No. 1, Police Department, and others.

There are 28 Educational Assistance Programs and 21 Out-of-School-Time Activities (before or after school) partnership programs. The largest of these is for middle school students. \$500,000 is targeted for a K-12 literacy project implementing research-based methods for teaching reading. Other examples of the programs are: The Center School at the Seattle Center, Upward Bound, New Holly Youth Tutoring, SafeHaven at the Urban League, Orion Center, U District Youth Center. I-Wa-Sil is a program for Native American youth at El Centro de la Raza. Arts in Education and Challenge Math at Garfield High School are examples of some of the smaller programs.

## A Visit to the SafeFutures Youth Center

SafeFutures Youth Center is a low white building located across the street from High Point in West Seattle, at 6337 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue Southwest. Inside, a group of young people is sitting around a long table or lounging on two sofas, waiting for a group meeting to begin. Most of the youth appear to be Southeast Asian. The visitor is given a friendly greeting and directed to the office of Executive Director Sorya Sve. Mr. Sve was a mental health counselor who worked several years ago with newly arrived immigrants who were traumatized by war. He was struck by hearing them say that their greatest stress was concern about their kids. He has "taken on" those kids who have been referred to the center because of gang involvement, negative family dynamics or other at-risk behavior. The referrals come from the courts, the juvenile justice Gang Unit, schools, friends or family members. If the referred youth does not show up for appointments, the staff goes into the community to find him.

Once enrolled, the youth work with a counselor in a supportive setting to learn positive social skills and create their own individual action plan. Staff members represent the ethnic and language groups among their clientele. Parents are encouraged and expected to participate in programs. More than 200 youth plus their families are seen each year.

The Center is open seven days a week—five days for teens. It is a place to drop in, feel a sense of belonging, get help with homework, even get a referral to other services, such as health, mental health, alcohol and drug services. Home visits by staff and parent workshops are part of the Center's services. A GED reentry program is on the site, mornings to 2:30 p.m. University of Washington volunteers come to help with tutoring, and run math and science groups.

Gang activity in the southwest area has dropped significantly. A gang intervention success is the Boys Group and the Girls Group for potential and former gang members. The most successful and enterprising youth are part of the Asset Team whose members do community projects. Some Asset Team grads come back during their college years or five years into their work life to be on Sorya Sve's staff.

In cooperation with the Health Department, there are 13 Teen Health Centers at ten high schools and three middle schools which serve 3,750 students. An alcohol and other drug prevention program serves about 1,422 students and parents annually.

Parent Education and Family support is an important category of programs. There are Family Support Workers in 58 Seattle elementary schools. Eleven Family Support Centers throughout the city offer a wide variety of family support activities. These programs are especially helpful to those who speak English as a second language, as well as low income or single parent families.

School Safety and Crime and Violence Prevention is another category of programs. Included are Safe Schools Coalition, Harassment/Violence Prevention Initiatives, as well as programs with the Fire Department, and the Police Department such as Gang Unit, and School Traffic Safety Program.

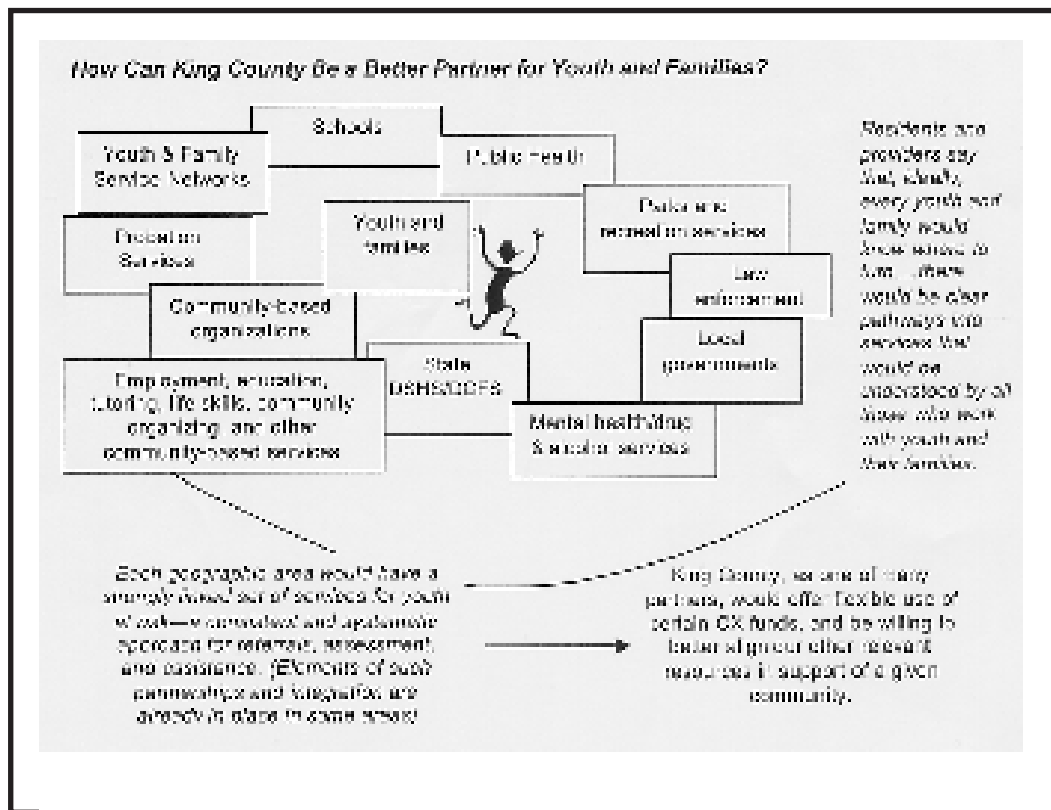
There are programs in Youth Development. Some of these programs are enrichment; others are directed to at-risk youth, such as referrals from the Police Department's Gang Unit to community programs.

Altogether, including those programs listed above, there are 122 separate programs funded through the City of Seattle.

## Coordination of Many County and City Services

One of the main recommendations of the *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*, the JJOMP design, and the King County Human Services Recommendations Report is the need for the many interested stakeholders to coordinate their efforts, so that all concerned groups have a unified approach, and unnecessary duplication can be eliminated. Coordination is accomplished through careful planning and by assigning to the various agencies the role they are best equipped to handle. In working with funding sources this united approach is imperative. From the beginning of the planning, Reinvesting in Youth has been a totally coordinated project. A look at the Oversight Committee and Working Groups of each project will give a broad view of the governmental departments and public/private agencies that are involved. Since these groups are involved in the planning, their cooperation in the future should be assured.

When project planners are working together, there is more assurance that unified services will be available to families, covering all of their needs, and with a case manager supervising the coordination. Recent



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**Example:** How can King County The King County family services and make their services known to the general public? The chart above has some answers. Currently developing a database which will document outcomes, outputs and indicators. The City of Seattle is coordinating with the county, the state, and with the Washington State Institute of Public Policy to develop a tracking system that will include both public and private agencies' reporting progress on reaching their stated goals. Agencies with common goals are asked to report findings in a similar manner. In addition to tracking, outside evaluations are conducted on selected programs. This has resulted in positive improvements in program design.

An example of a program which changed because of the evaluation process is Reaching-Back-Giving-Back, (now called ROYAL Project).<sup>20</sup> This program's objective is to reduce the disproportional involvement of African American youth in the King County justice system. The program was redesigned two year ago when the previous evaluation indicated the program was not effective in changing behaviors. Under the new agency, the Society for Council Representing Accused Persons (SCRAP), the program has shown positive results. The most significant findings were that the

Three agencies are working together to help youth facing hearings in Juvenile Court. Youth are accepted into the program through Central Youth and Family Services, which assigns a case manager who works intensely with the youth. SCRAP, Society of Counsel Representing Accused Persons, provides legal assistance and appears in court with the youth. Youth Care, a local non-profit agency, maintains a shelter for homeless youth, and provides residence for the youth when the family cannot do so. SCRAP is working with a local church which is providing mentors for the ROYAL Project youth.

This is a locally developed program and is receiving a grant from King County. A flow chart for court decisions which are made regarding the youth has been developed, and the attorney intervenes for the youth at the points in the process where youth might be detained, so that the youth may

### Promoting Culturally Competent and Relevant Service Delivery

King County is committed to promoting cultural competence and relevance in the delivery of human services. Internally, the county works with its own employees, offering a variety of training and educational opportunities. Within the Department of Community and Human Services, for example, many employees have participated in Undoing Racism Training and regularly have discussions seeking ways to promote the undoing of institutional racism. The Juvenile Justice Operation Master Plan Oversight Committee supports a comprehensive set of principles that promote culturally relevant training tools and community involvement, in the design and implementation of options, and in developing performance measures specific to disproportionality. King County partners on occasion with other funders such as United Way to provide cultural competence training opportunities.

### Problems With System Reform<sup>21</sup>

There are many problems with attempting to implement systems reforms.

- It is very difficult to understand how various jurisdictions are spending money on youth and families. But without this information policy makers are unable to identify gaps or redundancies in services or to set priorities. Agencies need to work together to agree on goals and spending plans. Budgets should be organized programmatically. A countywide steering committee to set goals, identify desired outcomes and do fundraising has been formed by Reinvesting in Youth to address this problem.
- Prospects for new public money for youth services are extremely limited. Since so many agencies and governments are involved in parts of the treatments, no one funding organization has the financial incentive to make the investments in prevention when that agency may have no way to capture the savings that will accrue. Savings should be reinvested in the programs that produced the savings. This may mean that some jurisdictions must transfer savings to other agencies in order to sustain parts of the program that are efficient and working well.
- Many existing programs are not using best practices, are not effective, or are not well coordinated with other programs. Services need to be targeted to populations with more high risk factors and fewer assets and to include more proven strategies.
- Under current policies it saves the county money to transfer a child to a state facility rather than keep her in local detention. Money saved by the state because counties are treating youth locally is kept

### Funding Youth Programs

Here is an example of the complexity of funding a program such as SafeFutures. For 2002 the SafeFutures Youth Center has a total proposed budget of \$658,406 of which \$543,264 is allocated for services to City of Seattle youth. Specific fund sources and projected amounts for 2002 are as

City of Seattle General Fund	\$295,000 (Amount reduced to \$177,000 by the Seattle City Council)
Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (King County Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition)	\$50,412
Public Safety Access Program	\$25,000
King County New Start	\$89,757 (Serves County youth only)

by the state. There should be an incentive plan to reward counties that reduce costs. When counties save money due to efficiencies, they should be able to keep the savings.

- Rigorous assessment of results is needed to prove that programs are effective (or ineffective). Often prevention programs are effective but, if there are no measurement tools in place, effective programs may be cut and ineffective ones retained. There must be funding to provide independent evaluation. One of the assignments to the Washington State Institute for Public Policy from the State Legislature is to evaluate the costs and benefits of certain juvenile offender programs run by the juvenile courts.

### Conclusions

In 2002 King County and the City of Seattle have overall plans in place which can prevent delinquency and provide help for individual positive growth from infancy through teenage. Programs exist to provide nurse visits to new mothers, family centers where immigrant or poverty stricken parents can learn healthy parenting skills and where children showing signs of problems will be identified and receive special help. In middle school and high school there are programs providing healthy before- and after-school activities and special help for those who are failing academically. For those families unable to provide enriching recreational /cultural activities, there are Park Department opportunities. There are in-depth treatment strategies of proven effectiveness for youth at risk. These programs exist—the funding level dictates how many eligible people will be served.

Essential to the strategies are the cooperation and integration of public and private entities and their willingness to enter into research and funding. We are working toward a new way of doing business. Available financing will dictate how well we can succeed.

Old Way	New Way
County, cities, state and private planning alone	Integrated/joint planning
Funding pots are separate	Employ all resources to address common goals
Deep end costs escalating	Balanced expenditures
Funding based on crisis response	Funding for early help

From *Reinvesting in Youth*, page 31.

*Do we have the political will to keep the course?*

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> "Joining Together for Safer Communities and Successful Youth," Newsletter comments by King County Executive Ron Sims, Seattle Mayor Paul Schell and Superior Court Judge Laura Inveen, August 2001.
- <sup>2</sup> Comments made at the Criminal Justice Reform Summit, November 10, 2001.
- <sup>3</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy website, [www.wa.gov/wsipp/crime/cjaa](http://www.wa.gov/wsipp/crime/cjaa), "CJAA Legislative Direction."
- <sup>4</sup> *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*, Executive Summary, page v.
- <sup>5</sup> Judge Laura Inveen, Letter to the King County Council, August 15, 2001.
- <sup>6</sup> King County Superior Court Website, [www.metrokc.gov/kcsc/juv/truancy.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/kcsc/juv/truancy.htm).
- <sup>7</sup> Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, "1998 Juvenile Justice Report," page 102.
- <sup>8</sup> Louise D. Palmer, Reporter, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, March 8, 1999.
- <sup>9</sup> Larry Gossett, "Crime, Disproportionality, and the African-American Community," a paper dated June 24, 1999.
- <sup>10</sup> Gossett, page 2 and Building Blocks for Youth website, [www.buildingblocksforyouth.org](http://www.buildingblocksforyouth.org), "Washington Disproportionate Minority Confinement."
- <sup>11</sup> *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*, page 24.
- <sup>12</sup> Nancy R. Ashley and Ira M. Cutler, *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*, Heliotrope and Cornerstone Consulting Group, Inc., 2001.
- <sup>13</sup> "Building Blocks for Youth" website.
- <sup>14</sup> Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan Reports.
- <sup>15</sup> *Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study*, page 14.
- <sup>16</sup> Harla Tumbleson, Manager, Planning & Resource Development, Human Services Department, from a conversation, January 29, 2002.
- <sup>17</sup> King County Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition Newsletter, page 26.
- <sup>18</sup> Human Services Recommendations Report for 2001-2003, King County, Washington.
- <sup>19</sup> Inventory of City of Seattle and Seattle Public Schools Partnerships (DRAFT), February 22, 2002.
- <sup>20</sup> "Raising Our Youth As Leaders (ROYAL)Project Summary," undated. Received April 2001.
- <sup>21</sup> "Reinvesting in Youth Systems Reform Background," report to Steering Committee, December 10, 2001.
- <sup>22</sup> Questions and Answer paper distributed by SafeFutures, undated.

## Glossary and Abbreviations

- (ART) Aggression Replacement Training:** A ten-week educational program conducted with groups of eight to ten juvenile offenders meeting for 60 to 90 minutes three times a week. The program includes three components taught each week: anger management, moral reasoning, and problem-solving skills. King County has chosen to implement this as one of three strategies that has been proven effective.
- (ARY) At Risk Youth:** An individual under the age of 18 who is absent from home for more than 72 hours without parental consent; is beyond the control of the parents such that the child's behavior substantially endangers the health, safety or welfare of the child or another person; or has a substance abuse problem for which there are no pending criminal charges.
- (ASD):** Alternatives to Detention
- Back On Track:** The Day Reporting Center at the Alder Street Youth Center location. An alternative to detention.
- Becca Bill:** Codified in RCW 28A.225, these laws provide procedures for dealing with truants.
- Building Blocks for Youth:** This is a national program funded by a federal grant (Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act), the program focuses on disproportionality in confinement.
- Block Grant:** A federal program which gives an amount of money to a community. The community then decides how the funds are distributed within the program guidelines.
- (CHINS) Children in Need of Services:** A legal term used when the family can no longer care for a child. The child, the parent, or DSHS can petition for out of home placement.
- (CJAA) Community Juvenile Accountability Act:** Engrossed Third Substitute House Bill 3900, Chapter 338, Laws of 1997. The purpose of the act is "to provide a continuum of community-based programs that emphasize the juvenile offender's accountability for his or her actions while assisting him or her in the development of skills necessary to function effectively and positively in the community in a manner consistent with public safety."
- Cultural Competence:** "A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals, and enable that system, agency or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations."
- (DAJD):** Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
- (DCHS) Department of Community and Human Services:** The King County department.
- (DSHS) Department of Social and Health Services:** The state agency.
- (ESL):** English as a second language instruction.
- (FFT) Functional Family Therapy:** Family therapy typically provided in the home and focused on improving family functioning, family problem solving, parenting skills, and family cohesion. King County has chosen to implement this as one of three strategies that has been proven effective.
- (GED):** General Education Diploma
- (HSRR):** Human Services Recommendation Report
- Interagency School:** A small school serving middle- and high school students who have had troubled school histories and multiple trancies. Schools are sponsored jointly by the school district and a youth-serving agency.
- (JAIBG):** Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant
- (JJOMP) Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan:** The King County Superior Court plan.
- (JPC):** Juvenile Probation Counselor
- (MST) Multisystemic Family Therapy:** Specific in-depth intervention techniques of proven effectiveness. King County has chosen to implement this as one of three strategies that has been proven effective.
- Project Lift Off:** City of Seattle Park Department recreation and child services program designed for fun, protection, and delinquency prevention.
- Recidivism:** Any offense committed after release to the community that results in a Washington State court legal action.
- (RFP):** Request for Proposals
- Risk Assessment:** A process to identify and monitor risk and protective factors shown in the research literature to be related to continued juvenile offending.
- Risk Factor:** A factor that increases a youth's risk for juvenile crime and delinquency.
- (RLSJC) Regional Law, Safety, and Justice Committee:** A state committee.
- (WSIPP) Washington State Institute for Public Policy:** The Institute conducts research, at legislative

## Appendix A: The Becca Bill

RCW 28A.225.010 mandates that all children between the ages of eight and 18 will attend school and that it is the parents' responsibility to see that this is done. Exceptions are made for children 16 and older who are regularly employed, if approved by the parent; if the child is "emancipated," as defined by law; or if the child has by age 16 completed his/her high school education and graduated. (RCW 28A.225.010)

If a child required to attend school fails to do so, the school district will:

- inform the parents by telephone or in writing after the first unexcused absence within a month,
- schedule a conference with the parent and child after the second unexcused absence within a month,
- take steps to eliminate or reduce the child's absences. These steps may include adjusting the child's school program, providing more individualized or remedial instruction, providing appropriate vocational courses or work experience, referring the child to a community truancy board, requiring the child to attend an alternative school, assisting the parent or child to obtain supplementary services that might eliminate or improve the causes for the absence from school. If the parent fails to attend the conference, the school representative and the child will meet. The parent will be notified of what steps will be taken to eliminate or reduce the child's absence. (RCW 28A.225.020)

If the actions described above are unsuccessful in reducing unexcused absences and if the child accumulates seven unexcused absences in one month or ten unexcused absences during the school year, the district is required to file a petition for a civil action, with the juvenile court alleging a violation of RCW 28A.225.010 by the parent, by the child, or by both parent and child.

After five unexcused absences in a month, the district will

- enter into an agreement with the student and parent that establishes attendance requirements,
- refer the student to a community truancy board, if one is available. This board will enter into an agreement with the student and parent that establishes attendance requirements or will take other appropriate actions to reduce the child's absences.
- file the petition mentioned in the preceding paragraph. (RCW 28A.225.030)

The petition for a civil action will allege that court intervention and supervision are necessary to assist in reducing the child's absences from school and set forth the facts of the case and the interventions already attempted. The juvenile court will schedule a hearing to consider the petition or refer the case to an available community truancy board, which would attempt to reach an agreement among the child, parents, and school district regarding expectations for attendance.

If the truancy board fails to reach such an agreement, the case is returned to the court for a hearing at which the court may require the attendance of the child, parents, and school district representative. If the allegations are established by a preponderance of the evidence, the court shall grant the petition and assume jurisdiction to intervene for the period of time determined by the court, usually the remainder of the school year. The school district then has the responsibility to report unexcused absences of the child to the court. (RCW 28A.225.035)

The court may require that the child attend his/her current school, another public school, an alternative education program, a dropout prevention program, or other public or private nonsectarian school or program. If the court orders placement in a private school or program, the school district will contract with the private school to provide services for the child, up to the dollar amount that the school district would receive for educating the child. The contract with the private school will not be longer than the remainder of the current school year.

The court may also demand that the child be tested for use of controlled substances or alcohol, based on the circumstances and behavior of the child. If the tests are positive for use of these substances, the court can order the minor to abstain from unlawful consumption of these substances and adhere to the recommendations of the drug assessment at no expense to the school.

If the child fails to comply with the court order, the court may order the child to be placed in confinement for contempt or may impose meaningful community service. Parents violating the provisions of these laws may be fined \$25 for each day of unexcused absence from school. The court may order the parent to provide community service in lieu of paying a fine. The fine may be suspended on condition that the parent participate with the

## Appendix B: A Risk/Asset Assessment Tool

The Search Institute has devised a framework of 40 developmental assets, which are positive experiences, relationships, opportunities and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.\* Surveys of over 1 million 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders across the United States indicate that as more of these assets are found in youths' lives, the more likely it is that young people will make healthy choices and avoid high-risk behaviors.

Assets are divided into two types: external and internal. External assets include:

- Support—family support, positive family communication, support from three or more non-parent adults, caring neighborhood, caring school climate, and parent involvement in schooling.
- Empowerment—young person perceives that adults in the community value youth, youth are given useful roles in the community, young person gives service to the community on a regular basis, and feels safe in the community.
- Boundaries and expectations—families, schools, and neighborhoods have all established boundaries and expectations for youth, there are positive adult role models, and positive peer influences.
- Constructive Use of Time—creative activities such as practice or lessons in the arts, or participation in youth programs occupy at least three hours a week; young person spends one hour or more per week at a religious institution, young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

Internal assets include a young person's commitment to:

- Achievement in school and learning, homework of at least one hour each school day, bonding to school, reading for pleasure three or more hours per week.
- Positive values of caring, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and restraint (belief that it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs).
- Social competencies—planning and decision making; empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills; knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds; resistance skills (being able to resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations); peaceful conflict resolution.
- Positive identity—young person feels in control over “things that happen to me,” self esteem, sense of purpose, and a positive view of personal future.

## Appendix C: JJOMP Oversight Committee

- The Honorable Laura Inveen, Chair, Chief Juvenile Judge, Superior Court
- The Honorable Bobbe Bridge, State Supreme Court Justice
- The Honorable Norm Maleng, King County Prosecutor
- The Honorable Ed Sterner, Councilmember, Lake Forest Park
- Joe Bell, Regional Administrator, Department of Social & Health Services
- Bob Boruchowitz, Director, The Defender Association
- Fabienne Brooks, Chief, King County Sheriff's Office (for Sheriff Dave Reichert)
- Steve Thompson, Director, Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
- Tissia Kemp-Brown, Interim Juvenile Detention Division Manager, DAJD
- Ed Crawford, Chief, Kent Police Department
- Chief Gil Kerlikowske, Seattle Police Department
- Anita Geving, Chief Operating Officer, Seattle/KC Department of Public Health
- Venerria Knox, Director, Seattle Human Services Department
- Bruce Knutson, Director, Juvenile Court Services, Superior Court
- Virginia Malmquist, Commissioner, King County Children & Family Commission
- Terry Mark, Assistant Director, Department of Community & Human Services
- Steven Nolen, Criminal Justice Policy Advisor, King County Executive's Office
- Steve Call, Director, Office of Budget (Ad Hoc Member)
- Clifton Curry, Senior Legislative Analyst, Metropolitan King County Council (Ad Hoc Member)

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## References

### Speakers at Committee Meetings

- Jonte Aufler, student.
- Paul Campello, Case worker, Central Youth and Family Services.
- Robert Flennaugh, II, Attorney, Society of Council Representing Accused Persons.
- Michael Gideon, Project Director, King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan.
- Don Merkle, Attorney.
- Jim Street, former Judge, King County Superior Court; Director, Reinvesting In Youth.

### Visits to Agencies and Offices

- Sharon Chew, Associate Director, Reinvesting in Youth.
- Steve Daschle, Director of Development, SouthWest Youth and Family Center.
- Teddi Eddington, Program Analyst, JJOMP Administrative Office.
- Sorya Sve, Director, SafeFutures Youth Center.
- Harla Tumbleson, Manager, Planning and Resources, City of Seattle Human and Youth Services.
- Eric Watness, Juvenile Court Commissioner, King County Superior Court.

### Telephone Interviews

- Eric Anderson, Director of Youth Services, Seattle
- Leesa A. Barrow, Deputy Chief of Staff, King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
- Dana Boals, lawyer at Society of Counsel Representing Accused Persons (SCRAP)
- Sharon Chew, Associate Director, Reinvesting in Youth.
- Cindy Domingo, Legislative Aide to Larry Gossett, King County Council
- Gene Dupuis, Probation Supervisor, King County Juvenile Court
- Teddi Eddington, JJOMP Administrative Office, Program Analyst
- Donald Felder, Principal of Interagency Academy
- Michael Gideon, Project Director, King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan.
- Ruth McFadden, Manager of Special Programs Office (Re-entry, Discipline, Block Grants, Safe Schools).
- Rebecca Solinas, City of Seattle /School Relation. Family and School Levy Funding.
- Jim Street, Director, Reinvesting In Youth.
- Mamie Walsh, Financial Planning Section, Seattle Police Department.
- Alice Woldt, Acting Director, Church Council of Greater Seattle.
- Chris Zawisza, JJOMP Project Team Participant, King County Superior Court.

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