

What JDAI Stakeholders Should Know About Law Enforcement

Crippling lack of training and policies for officers' interactions with youth

Nationwide, law enforcement officers receive little or no training on adolescent brain development, effects on adolescent behavior of exposure to trauma, harmful impacts of incarceration, and other aspects of juvenile justice, and few departments have issued developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed policies to guide officers in their interactions with youth.



champions up and down the LEA chain of command, JDAI stakeholders must keep in mind the organizational culture of law enforcement, and strive to be strategic in how they approach LEA personnel and work with them over time.



Messaging for making (or restoring) the initial connection

Who to connect with and how to 'sell' JDAI's key to success.



Frequent frustration

Officers report frequent frustration in their dealings with youth and the juvenile justice system due to lost time and a widespread perception that the system often fails to provide meaningful consequences for misbehavior or responsive services for needy youth (and their families).



Building Consensus on the Detention Screening Process

The creation and use of an objective detention screening tool to guide detention decisions is the bedrock of JDAI, but—without effective outreach—objective screening may meet resistance from law enforcement personnel.



Tension and disparities in treatment of youth in low-income communities of color

Surveys regularly find that urban youth of color hold negative views of law enforcement and say that officers often treat youth in disrespectful or abusive ways. Youth today—especially black youth—are growing up in what has been described as an “era of distrust” of the police, and their perceptions have dropped in recent years to a decades-long low. Black and Latino youth become distrustful of police around ages 7 to 9.



Creating better options for low-risk, high need youth

From the very beginning of the initiative, JDAI sites have been partnering with service providers to devise new approaches for youth who come in contact with the justice system repeatedly due to serious personal or family challenges, but pose minimal risk to public safety.



Influence of local culture and history on interactions with youth

The history and characteristics of the community and the organizational culture of the law enforcement agency play an important role in determining law enforcement agencies' willingness and capacity to participate in JDAI.



Promoting more effective law enforcement practices for youth

Conversations and connections initiated by JDAI have enabled law enforcement agencies in numerous sites to initiate constructive changes in their practices toward youth.



Effective strategies for outreach to law enforcement by JDAI stakeholders

From the initial outreach to the ongoing recruitment of potential JDAI

Examples of effective JDAI-law enforcement partnership

Examples of effective partnerships are persuasive and help allay concerns of LEA leaders.





A Crippling Lack Of Training And Policies

Officers typically receive little or no training on critical youth issues

A survey of state law enforcement training academies published in 2013 found that:

- On average, state training academies devote just 1% of their curricula (six out of 600 hours) to youth issues, and most of that time is devoted to teaching the basics of the juvenile code and issues regarding processing youth after arrest.
- Only two states devoted any part of their curricula to adolescent development.
- Only 8 states included instruction about effective strategies for interacting with youth in their curriculum.
- Just 8 states provided any information on racial and ethnic disparities in juvenile justice.

A 2011 survey of law enforcement agencies nationwide found that training was also lacking for officers on the job:

- More than three fourths of states (76%) do not require any in-service training for officers on youth and juvenile justice issues.

“ Training for law enforcement on differences between youth and adults and appropriate strategies to respond to those differences is crucial to enable better understanding and more constructive interactions between police and youth... In some jurisdictions, officers still receive little or no training beyond juvenile code provisions and other legal considerations regarding the handling of youth. ”

— INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

Without training, officers treat youth like adults

In the absence of any training about the developmental differences between youth and adults:

- Officers frequently escalate conflicts without realizing that youth respond differently to authority than adults
- Officers make too many arrests of youth for minor misbehaviors related to their developmental stage, leading to lasting negative consequences both for the young people and public safety.
- Officers remain unaware that racial and ethnic disparities are higher at the arrest stage than at any other stage of the justice system, and therefore have no impetus to work toward improving equity.

Policies and standards typically don't offer much guidance either

The absence of training is often exacerbated by a lack of developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed, racially equitable policies and standards for officers to follow in their interactions with youth.

- According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, “well-defined policies and procedures that outline the specific responses leadership expects when officers encounter young people” are key to improving law enforcement practices toward youth.
- Yet, few law enforcement agencies have comprehensive or updated policy statements on how officers should approach interactions with youth. And officers and their supervisors are frequently unaware of written policies for policing youth even when they do exist.
- Likewise, it is rare for law enforcement leaders or high-level commanders to articulate clear expectations for how officers should deal with youth.

Sources: Many of the observations in this handout are based on interviews with law enforcement leaders in JDAI jurisdictions; and the first-hand observations of co-author Lisa Thureau, who has conducted interviews and training sessions with hundreds of law enforcement personnel across the country over the past dozen years. Other sources include: *If Not Now, When? A Survey of Juvenile Justice Training in America's Police Academies*, Strategies for Youth, 2013, available at http://strategiesforyouth.org/sfysite/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/SFYReport_02-2013_rev.pdf; *Juvenile Justice Training Needs Assessment: A Survey of Law Enforcement*, International Association of Chiefs of Police, July 2011, available at <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/2011JuvenileJusticeTrainingNeedsAssessmenttoLawEnforcement.pdf>; and *Law Enforcement's Leadership Role in the Advancement of Promising Practices in Juvenile Justice: Executive Officer Survey Findings*, International Association of Chiefs of Police, September 2013, available at https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-07/IACPJExecutiveOfficerSurveyFindings_0.pdf.

Law Enforcement Officials Report Frequent Frustration With Juvenile Justice



Officers cite three common complaints about their cases involving youth and their interactions with the juvenile justice system.

Lost time in service

Officers may be discouraged by juvenile court processes that require them to spend long stretches of time supervising youth while juvenile court or probation staff conduct intake, or while searching for parents or other adults to whom they can release youth they have taken into custody.

“Frequent Flyer” cases

- Officers frequently cite frustration and concern about troubled youth who pose minimal threat to public safety but generate repeated calls for service due to acute but unmet psychological, familial or human service needs.
- Incidents involving these youth can consume a disproportionate share of officers’ time on the job, and they can be especially exasperating for officers when the human services, education, and/or juvenile justice systems fail to connect these youth (or in some cases their parents and families) to needed mental health, substance abuse, emergency shelter and/or other services.

Perceived lack of consequences

Officers frequently voice frustration over situations in which they do not see youth they apprehend facing any meaningful consequences for their misbehavior. This perception can arise for several reasons:

- Officers may be justifiably disturbed at delays in court processing, resulting in no court response for weeks or months.
- They may be angry that detention is not imposed on youth they arrest in the belief that detention is the best or only meaningful response to delinquent behavior.
- They may not be informed (due to lack of any feedback loop) about the consequences and interventions provided to youth following police contact.

Tension and Disparities In Treatment Of Youth In Low-Income Communities Of Color



Youth of color in low-income urban neighborhoods often express negative views toward law enforcement. Youth of color generally experience higher rates of contact and more negative contact. Arrest remains the point of largest racial disparity in the juvenile justice system.

Negative views of law enforcement

Surveys regularly find that urban youth have negative views toward law enforcement and frequently report that officers treat youth in disrespectful or abusive ways

- In a Chicago survey, just one-sixth of public high school students agreed that, “The police care about what is good for my neighborhood.” Less than one-fifth agreed that, “The police treat most individuals fairly.”
- Similar perceptions have emerged from youth surveys in St. Louis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and New York.
- One recent survey of 1,000 children aged 7-14 in Southern California found that Black and Latino children’s positive perceptions of police begin to drop between the ages of 7-9, and that youth today are growing up in an “era of mistrust” of police, resulting in a “crisis of legitimacy.”

Informed by personal experiences

To a significant degree, these negative attitudes are informed by young people’s personal experiences with law enforcement. Consider the results of just these three studies:

- Nearly half of black and white teens surveyed in three distressed St. Louis neighborhoods said they had personally been harassed or mistreated by law enforcement officers, and 60% said they knew someone who had been mistreated.
- In Chicago, 40% of the youth reported that they had personally observed other youth stopped by police and treated disrespectfully.

Demographic and attitudinal divide

In part, mistrust is fueled by a continuing demographic and attitudinal divide between law enforcement personnel and residents of low-income neighborhoods.

- In 2013, *Governing Magazine* found that racial and ethnic minorities were underrepresented in nearly every law enforcement agency in the nation serving at least 100,000 residents. Blacks, Hispanics and other minority groups are underrepresented by a combined 24%.
- In a January 2017 nationwide survey of law enforcement personnel by the Pew Research Center, six in ten white officers, but only 29% of black officers, said that police have good relations with blacks in the communities they serve.

Improving community relations is critical

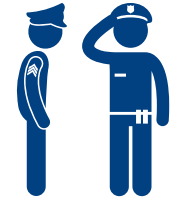
Increasingly, and especially in the wake of recent policing controversies involving use of force on people of color, law enforcement leaders are recognizing that improving community relations is critical to their effectiveness in combatting crime and protecting public safety.

Opportunities for JDAI leaders

This situation can create opportunities for JDAI leaders in their efforts to engage law enforcement, since JDAI steering committees can provide a forum for constructive dialogue between law enforcement and leaders in marginalized communities.

Source Note: Citations for all information and quotations in this handout can be found in the chapter of the practice guide entitled, “Getting Acquainted: What JDAI Leaders Should Know About Law Enforcement.”

Influence Of Local Culture and History On Interactions With Youth



JDAI stakeholders will achieve greater success in their efforts to forge partnerships with law enforcement if they keep in mind several common facets of law enforcement culture.

Hierarchy and Deference to Authority

- Because they are command and control organizations, like the military, the culture of law enforcement structure can discourage new ideas and initiatives.
- Law enforcement personnel tend to be deferential not only toward superiors, but also to high-ranking officials outside of law enforcement (such as judges, prosecutors, elected leaders of city/county government).

Organizational Change and Unpredictability

- Law enforcement agencies can be buffeted by frequent leadership changes, by senior officials within the agency changing posts, and by the cyclical nature of crime.
- In light of these realities, JDAI stakeholders should seek to build connections with many officials throughout the law enforcement agency.

Uneven Openness to Community Partnerships

- Some law enforcement agencies have strong and longstanding connections with neighborhood organizations and community advocates.
- But others do not, and may look upon these organizations and advocates with mistrust.

- In jurisdictions where law-enforcement connections to communities are weak and unstructured, JDAI stakeholders can play a valuable role in bridging this divide and opening the lines of communication.

Importance of Size and Other Community Characteristics

JDAI stakeholders should tailor their strategies to the characteristics of the law enforcement agencies and the demographics and politics of the communities they serve. For instance:

- **Agency Size:** smaller law enforcement agencies can often communicate more easily and rapidly as well as change practices more quickly. Larger agencies typically have more staff available to attend meetings, organize new training programs, perform data analyses, and develop funding proposals but require more time to obtain permission for any changes in policies and practice.
- **Internal resources:** Better funded law enforcement agencies may have more staff available to participate in and contribute to JDAI efforts.
- **External Resources:** The breadth and quality of local youth-serving organizations will also impact efforts to involve law enforcement in JDAI. Alternatives to arrest and detention often hinge on the availability of programs and opportunities in the community.

Effective Strategies For Outreach To Law Enforcement By JDAI Stakeholders



JDAI stakeholders must be strategic in how they reach out to law enforcement personnel and work with them over time.

Make the first contact count

THE RIGHT CONVENER

The initial outreach to law enforcement should come from the *presiding juvenile court judge or another leader of high standing* who has the respect of local law enforcement leaders and a clear commitment to optimizing the justice system for youth.

THE RIGHT MESSAGES

In the initial meeting, JDAI stakeholders should emphasize messages most likely to interest and persuade the local law enforcement leadership.

- The focus should be on demonstrating why partnering with JDAI (or deepening an existing partnership) is *good for youth, consistent with public safety, and beneficial for law enforcement*.
- Law enforcement leaders must understand that *youth are developmentally different than adults and require a different (and less punitive) form of justice*—and they must be made aware of the research showing that arresting and detaining youth is often wasteful and counterproductive.
- In addition, stakeholders should emphasize that *many law enforcement leaders across the country are deeply engaged in JDAI, supportive of its mission and committed to its success*.

Strategically broaden and deepen the JDAI-law enforcement partnership

INVOLVE THE LEA LEADER ON THE JDAI STEERING COMMITTEE

The top leader's continued involvement is important both to demonstrate his or her commitment to JDAI and to ensure that law enforcement is involved in pivotal discussions about key components of the local JDAI effort.

IDENTIFY A STRONG POINT PERSON AND OTHER POTENTIAL JDAI CHAMPIONS

- Law enforcement leaders uniformly recommended that JDAI stakeholders appoint a *commander in the patrol division*—**not** the juvenile division—as their JDAI point person.
- JDAI stakeholders should also seek to engage “lane-crossers”—*respected officers with a track record of working with other public agencies* and with community organizations—to become internal advocates for JDAI within their departments.

FIND OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLAIN JDAI TO PATROL OFFICERS

JDAI stakeholders should seek out opportunities to:

- organize formal in-service training sessions;
- deliver briefings during daily roll call sessions;
- distribute summary sheets with information on detention reform;
- invite officers to visit and tour alternative-to-detention programs.

PROVIDE RELEVANT INFORMATION IN CONCISE PRESENTATIONS

Because law enforcement supervisory and command staff face a time-pressured work environment, JDAI stakeholders should use the brief two-page, fact-filled, data-rich explanations available here to address key law enforcement concerns, including:

- The *research-informed rationale for JDAI* and the evidence that it is safe, effective, and good for public safety.
- Information regarding the *operational procedures, paperwork requirements, and other logistical details* that will be required of officers and command personnel as part of JDAI.

EMPHASIZE AND PROMOTE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES

Law enforcement personnel may resist JDAI based on an understandable but misplaced perception that detention offers the only

Effective Strategies For Outreach To Law Enforcement By JDAI Stakeholders



appropriate way to address youth lawbreaking. To shift this perception, JDAI stakeholders should showcase alternatives to detention programs and show officers that *youth placed in alternatives are closely supervised and are often engaged in rigorous programming and/or connected to needed services.*

MAKE TIMELY AND STRATEGIC USE OF DATA

While most law enforcement has become increasingly data-driven in recent years, few law enforcement agencies today routinely examine and analyze juvenile arrest data to identify racial and ethnic disparities, or geographic concentration of arrests in particular neighborhoods.

- In several JDAI sites, new data analyses conducted or inspired by JDAI have sparked *encouraging changes in law enforcement practices* toward youth.
- However, JDAI stakeholders should *be strategic in conducting new data analyses and discussing data trends* on sensitive issues, especially regarding racial and ethnic disparities.

Source Note: All of the tactics and strategies summarized above are described in detail in the chapter of the practice guide entitled, "STAGE ONE: Making (or Restoring) the Initial Connection."

Messaging For Making (Or Restoring) The Initial Connection



Interviews with law enforcement leaders and JDAI stakeholders around the nation suggest that successful engagement depends on: tactical outreach, effective messaging, and close attention to law enforcement concerns.

Tactical Outreach

JDAI stakeholders will be most effective in forging (or reinvigorating) connections with law enforcement if they employ a deliberate approach. Specifically, success will be more likely if stakeholders:

- **Make the first contact** count by having the presiding juvenile court judge or other leader of high standing who has the respect of his or her peers in law enforcement initiate the conversation
- **Involve the leader(s) of the major law enforcement agency (or agencies) on the JDAI steering committee**, and seek their input on:
 - The detention screening instrument;
 - The process to transfer custody of youth from officers to court officials following an arrest; and
 - The protocols for handling cases where youth are involved in domestic disputes or face serious social or human service needs.
- **Identify a capable and well-positioned point person**, preferably a respected leader in the patrol division, to represent law enforcement in JDAI work groups and interagency discussions.
- **Build relationships with other officers and commanders throughout the agency**, especially officers with a track record of working with other public and private agencies who might serve as champions for JDAI over the long haul.
- **Seek opportunities to meet with patrol officers** in roll-call meetings, training sessions and other gatherings both to explain JDAI and to listen to officers' feedback and concerns about its implementation.

Effective messages

Law enforcement agency leaders will not embrace JDAI unless they believe it is consistent with public safety, good for youth and the community and beneficial for their agencies. Patrol officers and commanders will support JDAI and participate constructively only if they understand JDAI and accept the underlying principles behind it.

Therefore, JDAI stakeholders should prepare and deliver organized, succinct fact-packed presentations that provide convincing evidence of the following:

- **Youth are different from adults and require a different approach to policing and court processing.** A wealth of research finds that arrest, prosecution and detention actually *increase* young people's odds of subsequent offending and impede their long-term success.
- **Absent JDAI, detention practices are frequently problematic.** Despite the dangers of detention to worsen youth outcomes and the high cost of confinement, detention is often used for youth who pose minimal risk to public safety. Also, detention decisions are often inconsistent, subjective and inequitable in terms of race and ethnicity.
- **JDAI is consistent with public safety.** JDAI sites have demonstrated that using objective risk screening, detention alternatives and limited secure detention has been consistent with detention's two functions: ensuring youth appear for their court dates and keeping the public safe while a youth is awaiting his or her court date.
- **JDAI works — and is good for the community's long-term health.**
 - Participating sites have reduced their average detention populations by more than 43 % since entering JDAI, resulting in more than one million fewer days of detention each year.

Messaging For Making (Or Restoring) The Initial Connection



- Fifty-six JDAI sites have closed detention units or whole facilities, realizing an estimated cumulative savings of roughly \$143.5 million per year.
- JDAI sites have also cut the number of youths committed to state custody by 57%, while keeping youth in school and connecting them to needed services and supports in the community.
- **JDAI offers a positive forum for law enforcement agencies to improve community relations and address racial and ethnic disparities.** Because JDAI steering committees typically include multiple community stakeholders, and most sites have active subcommittees dedicated to combating disparities, JDAI can offer a ready-made forum for law enforcement leaders seeking to reduce tensions with community residents and foster closer connections, respectful discussion and concerted action.
- **JDAI benefits law enforcement**
 - Partnerships with JDAI often help ease officers' frustration by reducing their time out of service in juvenile cases and decrease LEAs' need for and cost of overtime.
 - JDAI-law enforcement partnerships can also improve the handling of so-called "frequent flyer" youth who pose minimal threat to public safety but generate repeated calls for service due to unmet psychological or human service needs, or to problems in their families.

Attention to law enforcement concerns

While making the case for JDAI is important, stakeholders' ultimate success in *building strong and sustainable partnerships with law enforcement depend as much on listening as on delivering effective arguments.*

- Asking law enforcement personnel about their concerns with current juvenile justice procedures and soliciting input on issues that directly affect officers can provide a starting point for fruitful dialogue.
- Especially in existing sites where leaders of the largest local departments are not currently active on the JDAI steering committee, or where they never joined, JDAI stakeholders' best strategy may be to start discussions about a specific issue of interest to law enforcement.

Building Consensus On The Detention Screening Process



Top law enforcement leaders are almost always included in discussions to craft or revise the detention screening instrument. Too often, however, patrol officers and other law enforcement personnel receive little information about the screening process or detention reform generally. To address this need, JDAI stakeholders should:

Provide orientation and training for law enforcement personnel

Officers at all levels require training to understand the detention screening instrument and the processes for making and implementing the detention decision.

“ It’s important that everyone [in the law enforcement agency] knows that detention is bad, not good, for youth. It’s important for them to know that [JDAI] isn’t just rhetoric. It’s actually improving the numbers, bringing better outcomes [for youth and public safety]. ”

— KURT WOLF, CAPTAIN OF PATROL
LAFAYETTE INDIANA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Solicit and respond to input from patrol officers

Solicit and respond to input from patrol officers on detention screening implementation issues. Law enforcement officers will be more likely to accept and support the detention screening process if stakeholders listen to their views and make changes when appropriate.

“ I got some pushback from some officers initially. But I told them to try it, and then come back to me and tell me how it went... Once they see that it works, they buy in. ”

— TIM CHATTEN, JUVENILE PROSECUTOR
CAMDEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Give officers predictable and timely detention determinations and guidance

Officers will be far more supportive of the objective detention admissions process if the screening process is consistent and case processing expeditious.

“ Instead of us sitting here and babysitting someone for two or three hours trying to get hold of a parent or guardian, it gets our officers back on the road. ”

— DON DIXON, CHIEF OF POLICE
LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA

Describing the impact of a new Multi-Agency Resource Center that opened in 2011 to process the cases of youth arrested on status offenses and low-level misdemeanors.

Creating Better Options For Low-Risk, High Need Youth



Many adolescents who become involved in our nation’s juvenile justice systems pose minimal threat to public safety but come in contact with police due to their troubled backgrounds and life circumstances. Too often, these youth are placed under arrest—and sometimes detained—when a warning, citation, or referral to services would be more constructive.

While youth with serious mental health needs may come through the juvenile justice system door, it is well accepted that the juvenile justice system was not designed and is not well-equipped to meet these service needs. Instead of bringing youth to detention facilities to obtain such services, a key goal of JDAI is to:

- avoid justice system involvement; and
- connect needy youth and families to appropriate and responsive services.

Promising models to quickly divert low-risk youth

Promising models to quickly divert low-risk youth from the justice system and connect those with significant needs to relevant service providers. Working together law enforcement and other JDAI stakeholders can help address the frustrating gaps that often prevent youth with severe needs from connecting with community service providers following their interactions with law enforcement. The most promising efforts involve:

- **Reception centers** and other locations where lower-risk youth can be diverted from court (or even from arrest), assessed, and—when necessary—connected to nearby services providers; or
- **Well-crafted and service-rich diversion programs** that allow law enforcement officers to connect youth directly to needed support and assistance.

New strategies for youth involved in domestic disturbances

New strategies to avoid unnecessary arrest and detention of youth involved in domestic disturbances. Local justice systems frequently face a difficult challenge in working with youth who come in contact with law enforcement due to domestic disturbances in their homes. Through JDAI, jurisdictions such as Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), Ohio and Pima County (Tucson), Arizona have forged partnerships with law enforcement, the courts, and other agencies to minimize the use of detention (and even arrest) and instead steer youth and their families to local services providers.

Importance of keeping the process quick and user friendly for patrol officers

Regardless of the model employed—reception center, diversion program, domestic violence alternative—the process must remain simple and straightforward for law enforcement personnel

- **Clear guidelines** as to which youth are eligible and under which circumstances.
- **Minimal paperwork** and an expedited process for officers to connect youth and families to the alternative site or process, and to transfer custody of the youth.
- **Thorough in-service training and regular refresher sessions** for officers to review criteria and procedures for domestic violence cases.

Promoting More Effective Law Enforcement Practices For Youth



In a multitude of sites, conversations and connections initiated by JDAI have sparked changes to make law enforcement practices toward youth more equitable and effective. In some non-JDAI jurisdictions as well, law enforcement leaders have taken it upon themselves to craft innovative strategies to improve policing practices for youth.

Strategies to address these opportunities include:

Increasing pre-arrest diversion

Some jurisdictions, most notably Florida with its statewide civil citations program, have developed or expanded the use of pre-arrest diversion, allowing youth apprehended by police for minor lawbreaking to avoid the stain and collateral consequences of an arrest record. Through this approach, Florida has decreased the number of juvenile misdemeanor arrests, reduced racial and ethnic disparities, lowered recidivism and saved millions of dollars for taxpayers.

Reducing school arrests

Working closely with law enforcement, JDAI sites have taken steps to minimize the number of youths arrested at school for routine misbehavior. Indeed, the JDAI site in Clayton County, Georgia, has been a national leader on this issue for more than a decade—and has provided assistance to dozens of JDAI and non-JDAI jurisdictions nationwide in their efforts to reduce school arrests.

Combating racial and ethnic disparities at arrest

In several JDAI sites, local stakeholders have spurred constructive action to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in arrests by providing data to commanders and supporting the adoption of law enforcement strategies to address them.

- Analyze data by race and ethnicity (and neighborhood).
- Devise and test strategies to reduce disparities



Examples Of Effective Partnerships

Diversion and quick assessment for low-risk youth



MULTNOMAH COUNTY, (PORTLAND) OREGON

As one of JDAI's initial pilot sites in the 1990s, Multnomah County developed the nation's first juvenile reception center — a new venue designed to screen and assess lower-risk youth who are not candidates for detention. A forward-thinking law enforcement leader, Commander Bob Kauffman of the Portland Police Bureau, played an important role in this effort, providing free space for the center in the central police precinct during its first six months of operation and developing a training program to familiarize patrol officers with the new procedures. The reception center model has since been replicated in many JDAI sites across the nation.

Domestic violence alternatives



PIMA COUNTY, (TUCSON) ARIZONA

Soon after Pima County launched its JDAI effort in 2004, stakeholders discovered that more than 1,000 youth were being arrested each year on domestic violence charges and hundreds were being detained, most of them posing little risk to public safety. "A lot of kids were being dragged into the system unnecessarily," says Captain Paul Sayre of the Tucson Police Department. To address the problem, the county developed a Domestic Violence Alternative Center (DVAC) where officers could take lower-risk youth arrested on misdemeanor domestic assault charges for screening, assessment and referral to needed mental health and family support services. By 2011, the DVAC handled more than three-fourths of all misdemeanor domestic violence cases, and only 42 resulted in detention admissions — down from 415 in 2004. "Dropping youth at the DVAC is easier and faster than detention," says Sayre. "[My patrol officers] can drop a kid off...and get back out on the street."

Reducing school-based arrests for youth of color



RAMSEY COUNTY, (ST. PAUL) MINNESOTA

Until he took over as commander of the Youth Service Section of the St. Paul Police Department in 2008, Gene Polyak believed that his department was upholding the law in a race-neutral way. However, once he reviewed the data with the local JDAI steering committee, Polyak says, "I began to see unfairness." After noting that African-American youth

were frequently being arrested for disorderly conduct, St. Paul narrowed its definition of what kind of behavior warranted arrest, and worked with the public schools to reduce the role of police in addressing school discipline. Since then, arrests for disorderly conduct and related offenses have dropped by 50%.

Officer training to reduce unnecessary arrests



TIPPECANOE COUNTY, (LAFAYETTE) INDIANA

When local stakeholders examined arrest trends in 2013, they saw that youth of color were being arrested in disproportionate numbers for resisting law enforcement, disorderly conduct and battery against a public safety officer — all charges which involved significant discretion on the part of the arresting officer. "The data collected by JDAI made us realize we had to change how we responded to kids," recalls Kurt Wolf, captain of patrol in the Lafayette Police Department. Since then, the department has trained officers on adolescent development and implicit bias, and has designated arrests for the identified offenses as a standing topic in JDAI collaborative meetings. By 2015, arrests for these offenses had declined 32%, including a 39% drop among youth of color.

Diversion in lieu of arrests at school

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Under the leadership of then-Deputy Police Commissioner Kevin Bethel in 2014, the Philadelphia Police Department revised its school policing practices to prohibit arrests for an array of common misdemeanor offenses. Student arrests fell 54% in the program's first year. Bethel credits JDAI for helping the city connect youth to local social service providers for counseling and support in lieu of arrest.



“ The beauty of [the JDAI] collaborative is that we had all the right people in the room. Everyone was on the same page, and there was already an environment of trust. ”

— KEVIN BETHEL, FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF
PHILADELPHIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Promoting JDAI to Law Enforcement

What is Juvenile Detention Reform?

Using eight interconnected core strategies, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) seeks to help participating jurisdictions safely reduce reliance on secure detention for youth charged with delinquent offenses.



The Teen Brain

Explaining how youth are developmentally different than adults, how adolescents respond to authority and the effect of trauma on their behavior.



Why Detention Reform Is Necessary

Asking about and addressing law enforcement concerns and soliciting law enforcement input on issues that directly affect officers can provide a starting point for fruitful dialogue.



Objective Screening Tool for Detention Decisions: Its Impact on Law Enforcement

Describing the rationale and evidence behind the use of objective screening, the process used to develop detention screening instruments in JDAI sites, and the effect of risk screening for law enforcement officers.



Focus on Combatting Racial & Ethnic Disparities

Explaining the reasons for JDAI's intensive focus on pursuing racial and ethnic equity in juvenile justice decision-making, and describing the key strategies employed by JDAI sites to address disparities.



What is Juvenile Detention Reform?



Purpose of Juvenile Detention Reform

Using eight interconnected core strategies, Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) seeks to help participating jurisdictions safely reduce reliance on secure detention for youth charged with delinquent offenses.

Juvenile Detention Reform Objectives

1. Eliminate inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention.
2. Minimize delinquent behavior by youth in the period between arrest and adjudication, and ensure young people's appearance in court.
3. Redirect public finances saved through the reduced use of detention to support effective alternatives to detention and other proven strategies to minimize future offending and promote youth success.
4. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the use of detention.
5. Ensure safety and appropriate care for youth confined in secure detention facilities.



Right kid + right reason + right time

Eight Core Strategies

- **Collaboration**
Establish an inter-agency collaborative to plan and assess reform strategies.
- **Data-Driven Decisions**
Compile and make effective use of accurate, timely data to guide policy, program and practice decisions.
- **Objective Admissions**
Develop and utilize objective criteria and screening instruments to guide detention admission decisions.
- **Alternatives to Detention**
Expand the use of new or enhanced programs offering non-secure alternatives to detention.
- **Expedited Case Processing**
Introduce case processing changes to reduce length of stay and expedite the resolution of cases.
- **Special Detention Cases**
Develop strategies to minimize the use of detention in warrant, violation of probation and “awaiting placement” cases.
- **Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities**
Identify causes and develop solutions to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the use of secure detention.
- **Conditions of Confinement**
Monitor and improve conditions of confinement to ensure safety and enhance services for youth confined in detention facilities.

Juvenile Detention Reform 101: the Model and Core Strategies

Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) does not seek to eliminate the use of detention. Rather, JDAI seeks to **detain only the right kids for the right reasons for the right amount of time**. Explaining how youth are developmentally different than adults, how adolescents respond to authority and the effect of trauma on their behavior. Holding youth accountable for their actions while keeping them on track for long-term success.

Ensure high-risk youth are detained

The key to good detention practices is an objective decision-making process ensures that high-risk youth are indeed detained.

- The use of a rigorously tested, validated screening tool typically requires detention for any youth accused of a serious violent felony, and it uses a point system to detain any young person who—based on empirical evidence—poses a high likelihood to harm public safety or fail to appear in court.
- This screening instrument is developed through a collaborative process involving state and/or local judges, prosecutors, probation chiefs, public defenders, and other community stakeholders... **and law enforcement.**

Right kid + right reason + right time

Alternatives for moderate-risk youth

Alternative to detention programs for moderate-risk youth provide meaningful supervision and lead to better outcomes at lower cost.

- For instance, among the 18 New Jersey Counties participating in JDAI in 2014 and 2015, just 4% of youth placed in detention alternatives were arrested on new delinquency charges during the period they might have been detained.
- In 2019, aggregated data reported from Indiana’s 32 JDAI counties showed success in use of Alternative to Detention (ATD) programs. Of the almost 4,500 completed ATDs, 89% of the exits occurred without new referral for an offense or failure to appear for a court hearing.

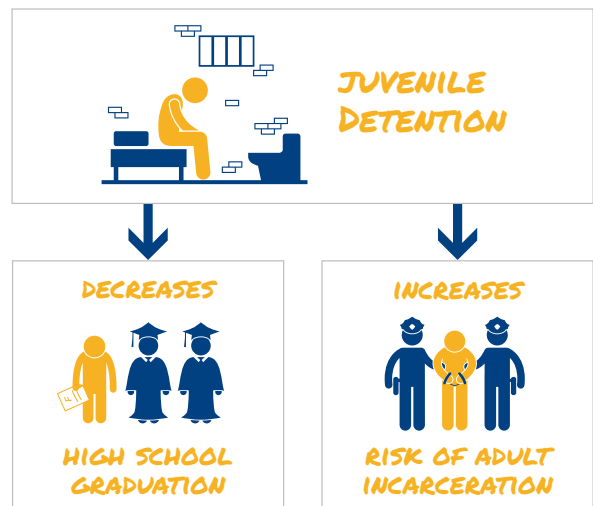
Protect Public Safety

JDAI sites report impressive results in protecting public safety. Compared to their levels prior to sites joining JDAI,

- total arrests are down 44% in sites that track them,
- total delinquency petitions are down 35%, and
- felony petitions are down 57%.

Detention and incarceration are especially damaging to young people’s odds of success.

- A recent study involving tens of thousands of youths in Chicago found that, controlling for offending history and a wide range of background variables, **being placed in detention during adolescence “results in large decreases in the likelihood of high school completion and large increases in the likelihood of adult incarceration.”**



Why Detention Reform Is Necessary



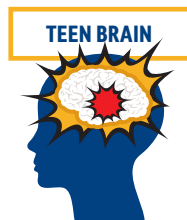
**YOUTH ARE DIFFERENT FROM ADULTS
(AND REQUIRE A DIFFERENT APPROACH).**



The human brain does not fully develop until the age of 25.

Adolescent brain development and behavior research shows that:

- **Adolescents lack adult capacity** for controlling impulses, weighing risks and consequences, regulating emotions, and resisting peer pressure.
- Meanwhile, adolescents' **affinities for thrill-seeking and risk-taking are heightened.**
- As a result, **law-breaking and other risky behaviors are common, even normal,** during adolescence.
- But **in the vast majority of cases, youth will grow out of their law-breaking** without any intervention from the justice or mental health systems.



Arresting low-risk youth for low-level offenses damages young people's futures and undermines public safety.

- Controlling for conduct and a wide-range of background factors, studies find that getting arrested during adolescence nearly **doubles the odds that the young person will drop out of school.**
- **Being formally processed in court tends to further harm young people's long-term success** (and increase their likelihood of future involvement in the justice system).
- Getting arrested and adjudicated as a juvenile can have lasting **collateral consequences** for young people's ability to pursue higher education, obtain employment or housing, or join the military.

In the absence of detention reform, detention practices are often problematic.

- **Excessive.** More youth are detained than necessary or beneficial for public safety or youth success.
- **Inconsistent.** Detention decisions are often based on subjective preferences or seat-of-the pants judgements, leading to very different treatment of youth with similar offending histories.
- **Inappropriate.** Youth may be detained following arrest (even before they've had their day in court) as a consequence for their behavior or to "teach them a lesson," contradicting the legal purposes of detention.
- **Counterproductive.** Placement in detention often traumatizes youth, disrupts their schooling, and damages their long-term success while increasing their odds of further involvement in the justice system.



TRAUMATIZING

“Detention is one of the most frequently studied decision points in the juvenile system. It is also the point at which race effects unexplained by offense-related variables are most often found. Studies that have included Native American and Hispanic youth report significant disadvantages to these groups as well.”

— DONNA M. BISHOP AND MICHAEL J. LIEBER

“RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCE IN DELINQUENCY AND JUSTICE SYSTEM RESPONSES,” CHAPTER IN OXFORD HANDBOOK OF JUVENILE CRIME AND JUVENILE JUSTICE, 2011.

Why Detention Reform Is Necessary

- **Inequitable.** Research overwhelmingly shows that youth of color, and especially African American youth, are far more likely to be detained than white youth, even when they have similar backgrounds and offending histories.
- **Wasteful.** Given the very high costs of secure confinement, the excessive use of detention squanders vast sums of money.
- Connects youth (and their families) to **needed services and supports.**
- **Streamlines the court process** to ensure that youth do not spend more time in pre-trial confinement than necessary to protect the public and ensure attendance in court;
- Mobilizes communities to **address racial and ethnic disparities**, which are as pervasive in juvenile justice as they are in the adult justice system.

JDAI offers a solid recipe for correcting these problems.

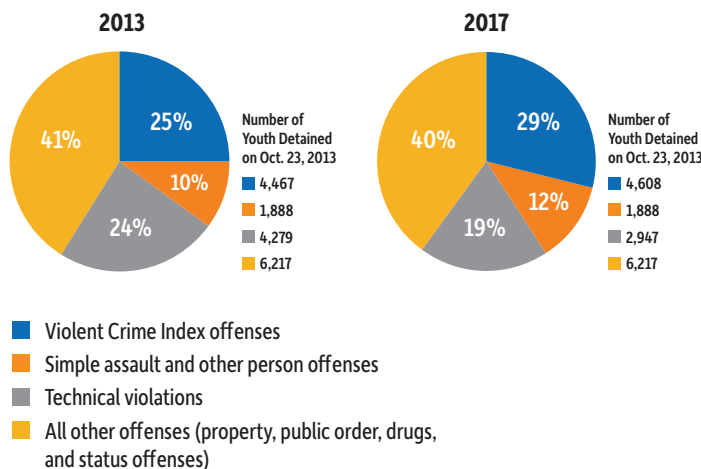
- The **objective screening process** ensures that detention decisions are consistent and informed by the best available evidence;
- Helps keep youth on track for success by expanding the availability of **effective alternatives to detention**;

Right kid + right reason + right time

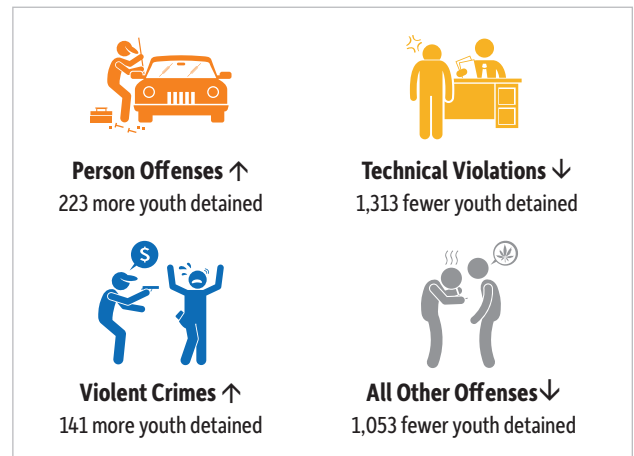
Charged Offenses for Youth in Detentions in 2013 and 2017

These numbers are one-day snapshots of the population under age 21 placed in residential facilities for youth with a legal status of “detained,” according to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement. Census dates were Oct 23, 2013 and Oct 25, 2017. A census was conducted in October 2019, but the data haven’t been published yet.

Percentage of U.S. Youth in Detention (by type of offense)



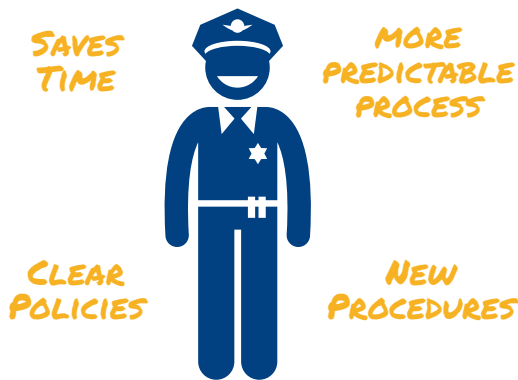
Change in Number of Youth Detentions, 2013- 2017



Source: Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzanchera, C. (2019). “Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement.” Downloaded on Nov 2, 2020 from <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp/>

Objective Screening Tool for Detention Decisions: Its Impact on Law Enforcement

How does it impact officers?



How does the objective screening process impact law enforcement officers when they apprehend youth for delinquent conduct?

The use of an objective screening process has **significant implications for patrol officers in their dealings with youth**. Some of the resulting changes make the process easier and more efficient for officers, but other changes will limit their discretion.

- **New procedures and protocols.** The objective screening process to guide detention decisions will require officers to learn and follow new procedures and protocols whenever they arrest a young person.
- **Altered relationship with youth.** Reliance on a detention screening tool may limit the discretion officers may have enjoyed previously to place youth in detention, or to threaten detention as a consequence for continued misconduct.
- **Reducing uncertainty and wasted time.** Objective screening can make the detention process more predictable for officers, and save officers time they would otherwise spend transporting youth who pose few risks to detention.

Lower detentions frees up public funds

Taken together, participating jurisdictions have reaped enormous benefits from their involvement with JDAI.

- Altogether, youth residing in **participating sites spent 1.4 million fewer nights in secure detention** in the 2015-16 fiscal year than in the baseline years before each site entered JDAI.
- By lowering detention populations, juvenile detention reform has **enabled at least 56 participating jurisdictions to close housing units** within their detention facilities or close facilities entirely. These jurisdictions reduced the capacity of their detention facilities by more than 2,000 beds.
- These bed reductions have **freed up more than \$100 million per year** in public funds that would otherwise have been spent on construction or operations of these jurisdictions' detention facilities.

“ When we rolled out the risk screening tool, we did a training for our officers, and it really brought the officers on board. They liked the clear policies and procedures, and they appreciated that law enforcement had a say in formulating the tool. ”

— JIM DOMVILLE, DEPUTY CHIEF
GRESSKILL POLICE DEPARTMENT, BERGEN COUNTY, NJ

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Focus on Combatting Racial & Ethnic Disparities

A hallmark of juvenile detention reform is the expanded use of alternative to detention programs that allow youth to remain in the community pending their adjudication hearings.

Reducing disparities is a top priority

Perhaps the most troubling feature of the juvenile justice system is the persistence of unequal treatment of youth from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. One of detention reform's core values is that juvenile justice stakeholders—including law enforcement—have an affirmative obligation to ensure that all youth, regardless of race or ethnicity, are treated similarly.

Disparities cannot be explained by youth behavior.

The vast racial and ethnic disparities plaguing juvenile justice cannot be explained by differences in offending rates. In the most comprehensive review of recent scientific research on the effects of race and ethnicity on juvenile case processing, the vast majority of studies identified (63 of 79) significant disparities in the treatment of youth at one or more of the decision points.



“ With few exceptions, data consistently show that youth of color have been overrepresented at every stage of the juvenile justice system, that race/ethnicity are associated with court outcomes, and that racial/ethnic differences increase and become more pronounced with further penetration into the system through the various decision points. ”

— NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE

Disparities in the juvenile system are most extreme at the point of arrest

And these disparities at arrest continue to widen over time. For instance, in 2003 black youth were 85% more likely to be arrested than white youth; by 2013, black youth were 129% more likely than whites to be arrested.

While juvenile arrests have fallen dramatically and are at their lowest level since arrest data was first collected nationwide in 1974, racial disparities have not similarly declined. Juvenile arrest data, for instance indicates that arrests of black youth in 2019 increased dramatically and represent 33% of all youth arrested. Similarly, the results of the 2015 Bureau of Justice Services survey on police contact found that the highest rates of police-initiated contact, was for black and Hispanic youth aged 16-18, up 68% since 2011.

Right kid + right reason + right time

Focus on Combatting Racial & Ethnic Disparities

Law enforcement practices can contribute disparities

Law enforcement practices sometimes perpetuate or exacerbate racial and ethnic disparities in juvenile arrests.

- Youth of color are more likely to attend schools where law enforcement officers are permanently stationed.
- Strategies such as hot spot policing, gang suppression, drug enforcement, and stop and frisk tend to be concentrated in communities populated overwhelmingly by people of color.
- As in other arms of the justice system, law enforcement officers may unknowingly treat youth (and adults) of color more severely than their white peers due to unconscious bias.

“ While disparities pervade the juvenile justice system, it is at the front of the system—arrests—where disparities are largest and the point at the system at which disparities grew between 2003 and 2013. ”

— THE SENTENCING PROJECT, 2016

Examples of innovative actions by law enforcement to reduce disparities

In several JDAI sites, and some non-JDAI jurisdictions, law enforcement leaders have taken innovative action to reduce disparities.

- **Minimizing school arrests:** Law enforcement leaders in JDAI jurisdictions like Philadelphia; Clayton County, GA; Ramsey County (St. Paul), MN; and Omaha, NE; have taken a leadership role in reducing the number of students of color arrested for low-level offenses at school.
- **Data analysis and strategic action to identify and address points of disparity.** Likewise, law enforcement leaders in JDAI sites like Pima County (Tucson), AZ and Tippecanoe County (Lafayette), IN have used data analyses to uncover enforcement practices that were unnecessarily exacerbating disparities in arrests, and have taken action to correct those practices and reduce disparities.



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Sources: National Research Council. (2013). Reforming Juvenile Justice: A Developmental Approach. Committee on Assessing Juvenile Justice Reform, Richard J. Bonnie, Robert L. Johnson, Betty M. Chemers, and Julie A. Schuck, Eds. Committee on Law and Justice, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, available at <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/14685/reforming-juvenile-justice-a-developmental-approach>; "Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Webinar Part 2: What the Data and Research Tell Us," OJJDP State Training and Technical Assistance Center, October 24, 2012; and Joshua Rovner, Racial Disparities in Youth Commitments and Arrests, April 1, 2016, available at <http://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/racial-disparities-in-youth-commitments-and-arrests>.
Statistical Briefing Book, OJJDP, Law Enforcement & Juvenile Crime, 1980-2019, https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/crime/ucr_trend.asp?table_in=2&selOffenses=1&rdoGroups=2&rdoDataType=1
U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report October 2018, Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2015, Elizabeth Davis and Anthony Whyde, BJS Statisticians Lynn Langton, Ph.D., former BJS Statistician, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpp15.pdf>



Overview: Keys To Effective Training For Law Enforcement

In developing and delivering training for law enforcement officers, juvenile detention reform stakeholders should heed the following lessons and guidelines:

Making the Case for Training

Sustainable advances in law enforcement practice toward youth will only be possible if (1) commanders and patrol officers appreciate the developmental differences between youth and adults and the importance of de-escalating incidents involving youth, and (2) they recognize the harm and unnecessary cost of arresting and detaining young people who pose minimal risk to public safety.

JDAI Examples of Successful Training

Fortunately, a substantial number of JDAI sites have made significant investments in training for local law enforcement personnel both on the details of and rationale for JDAI, and on the larger issues surrounding young people and the law.

Tips for Effective Training

- **What topics should be covered?**

Training should focus on:

1. Adolescent brain development and behavior.
2. Understanding the role of trauma in youth's behavior.
3. Consequences of arrest and detention, for youth, their families, and for public safety.
4. Strategies for effectively interacting with youth and for de-escalating situations before they erupt
5. The rationale for, and operational details of, detention reform.

- **Who Should Deliver the Training?**

The training provider(s) should be knowledgeable, personable, humble, and conversational. In addition, the training team should include stakeholders from each of the major institutions involved in the JDAI collaborative.

- **How Should It Be Delivered?**

Training should be practical and rely on visual aids and interactive exercises that make the lessons understandable to participating officers.

- **Timing and Frequency**

Officers should receive this instruction as part of their initial training in academies before they earn their badges. This information should be reinforced and updated regularly as part of the professional development provided to officers in the field.



Making The Case For Training

Why is it important to train law enforcement officers on adolescent brain development and detention reform? By removing detention as the “go-to” option for law enforcement, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) inevitably changes the nature of the relationship between youth and law enforcement.

Creating opportunities for more constructive interactions with youth

Though this shift, JDAI creates an opportunity for a more constructive and relationship-based dynamic between law enforcement officers and youth.

Progress relies on training

But such progress is unlikely if—lacking training—officers remain:

- uninformed about adolescent development,
- unfamiliar with community services available to support youth with serious mental health or social service needs,
- unaware of the impact of trauma on adolescents and the harmful effects of justice system involvement, and
- untrained in techniques for de-escalating tense situations with youth.

A more promising strategy

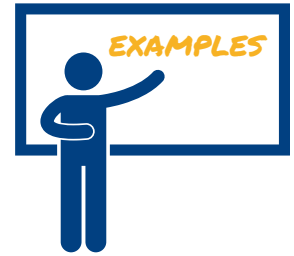
Training offers the most promising strategy available to promote long-term improvement in policing approaches toward youth.

“ Training for law enforcement on differences between youth and adults and appropriate strategies to respond to those differences is crucial to enable better understanding and more constructive interactions between police and youth... In some jurisdictions, officers still receive little or no training beyond juvenile code provisions and other legal considerations regarding the handling of youth. ”

— INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

“ My officers receive so much firearms training, and yet they rarely fire a shot. Meanwhile they have multiple contacts each day with juveniles. ”

—CHIEF WILLIAM WEITZEL
RIVERSIDE (IL) POLICE DEPARTMENT



JDAI Examples Of Successful Training

Indiana is leading JDAI training efforts



The most ambitious efforts currently underway in the JDAI network to train law enforcement officers are taking place in Indiana.

- Work began in 2012 when Strategies for Youth (SFY), a Massachusetts-based agency, received a grant to help the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) address a problem with racial and ethnic disparities in youth arrests.
- In 2013, leaders from nearby Tippecanoe County invited SFY to bring the *Policing the Teen Brain™* training to their county. Since then, more than 400 sworn law enforcement officers have received the training in Tippecanoe county.
- In 2014, the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute offered to underwrite the costs of SFY training in participating JDAI counties throughout the state.
- As of 2021, SFY is actively training or has trained law enforcement officers in more than 20 counties throughout Indiana, delivering its *Policing the Teen Brain™* curriculum.
- In the fall of 2016, trainees at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy received in-depth training on adolescent development and behavior. Previously, just four hours (half of one%) of the curriculum at the state's law enforcement academy concerned youth, and most of that focused on juvenile law.

Other JDAI site providing relevant training

Other JDAI sites are also providing relevant training for law enforcement officers.

Philadelphia, PA

- The "Pennsylvania DMC Youth/Law Enforcement Curriculum" has been delivered to every class of the local police academy since 2009, a total of more than 3,500 recruits.



- This youth/law enforcement curriculum is being replicated in five other Pennsylvania counties, and it will soon be adapted in three cities in Connecticut.
- In 2016, local leaders began developing a new in-service training curriculum for Philadelphia police officers to complement and advance the training provided to new police academy recruits.

Multnomah County, OR (an original JDAI model site)



- The Portland Police Bureau has long included a multi-day unit on adolescent development and juvenile justice as part of its training academy for new law enforcement officers.
- The training topics include: adolescent development, operations of the juvenile justice system, and information about the location and programming of community-based services.
- The training offers recruits direct exposure to juvenile court and probation staff and to service providers working with youth in the community.

“ We have to get past the belief that our sole responsibility is law enforcement when the vast majority of what we do is street-level social work. Good relationships, established individually, over time, garners the support you need at critical times. We have a complex role in this society. We need to recognize that we do many things. We have a responsibility to do them well. ”

— WILLIAM DEAN, DEPUTY CHIEF
VIRGINIA BEACH (VA) POLICE DEPARTMENT

JDAI Examples Of Successful Training

Clayton County, GA

As part of its efforts to reduce school arrests, Clayton County has fundamentally reoriented the role of its School Resource Officers. To support the new approach, Clayton County offers extensive and ongoing training to inform SROs about adolescent development and positive approaches for engaging youth and promoting school safety, rather than punishing misbehavior.



Virginia Beach, VA

Strategies for Youth provided the local police department with a train-the-trainer training, inviting the local juvenile department to present on JDAI. This is now the two-day “Juvenile Perspectives” training emphasizing the message that, in the words of Deputy Chief William Dean, “Arrest is the beginning of a cycle that will limit opportunities in life.” This initiative led to the development of a detailed set of policies for officer and agency interactions with youth.



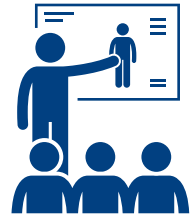
Ramsey County, MN

JDAI stakeholders in Ramsey County, Minnesota have provided JDAI 101 training for St. Paul Police Department commanders, as well as attending roll calls in local police stations to discuss JDAI with patrol officers and local commanders.



“ Expand officers’ capacity to effectively respond to youth by offering cohesive training programs that enable officers to understand adolescent development; cultural differences among youth; mental health and trauma issues; and effective strategies for youth engagement, intervention and crisis response. ”

— RECOMMENDATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE SUMMIT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT’S LEADERSHIP ROLE IN JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM, SEPTEMBER 2013.



Tips for Effective Training

The primary goal of training law enforcement about adolescent development should be to help officers understand the critical differences between adolescents and adults, and to equip them with skills needed to approach situations involving youth in a constructive and age-appropriate way. The officers must leave with a greater appreciation of how to apply developmentally-appropriate, trauma-informed, racially equitable practices. Additionally, a good training will help officers appreciate how they are perceived by youth, and how that perception affects interactions and outcomes.

What topics should be covered?



Training should focus on:

- **Adolescent brain development** and the gaps that remain in adolescents' capacity to control impulses, regulate emotions, resist peer pressure, and weigh risks and consequences.
- **Trauma's impacts on behaviors**, and how that compounds some youth's reactivity, and often leads to fight/flight/free and re-enactment behaviors;
- Awareness of the **most prevalent mental health issues youth are facing** and how to avoid exacerbating them during interactions with youth;
- The often **negative consequences of arrest and detention**, both for youth and for public safety.
- Honing **officers' skills in interacting effectively with youth**, especially in de-escalating conflicts that can lead to unnecessary arrests.
- The **operational details of detention reform**, and the rationale behind them.
- **Orientation to youth-serving organizations** in the community that can address youth needs in lieu of arrest or system involvement.

Who should deliver the training?

The training team should be led by:

- **Experts in adolescent behavior and brain development** who can convincingly communicate to officers the critical differences between adults and adolescents.

Trainers should be:

- **Personable**—able to establish rapport with officers and involve them in sharing stories from their own experiences.
- **Humble**—careful never to tell officers how to do their job, and willing to locate answers or resources when officers ask questions they are unable to answer on the spot.
- **Conversational**—using examples from their own experience, including mistakes they've made or problematic practices they've had to abandon as they have learned what works.
- To improve interagency collaboration, **the training team should also include representatives from all of the major stakeholder institutions in the JDAI collaborative.**
- Whenever possible, training sessions for law enforcement personnel should include **direct interactions with young people.**



How should it be delivered?

The training curriculum should focus on expanding officers' "tool belt" in ways that help them de-escalate interactions with young people, and provide young people with positive options. Effective teaching approaches include:

- **Focus on practical applications** of the information, and avoid getting stuck on abstract concepts or academic ideas.
- **Use visual aids** (photos, videos) and other media to convey information in an engaging way, rather than relying primarily on lecture format.



Tips for Effective Training

- **Incorporate interactive exercises** that allow officers to interact and share experiences.
- **Avoid hyper-technical jargon** about the brain.
- **Use mnemonic devices** that can be remembered quickly and applied easily.
- **Distribute written materials** that succinctly reinforce and/or enhance the main point(s) of the presentation.

Timing and frequency

Officers should receive training both in academies before they earn their badges, and as part of their ongoing professional development.

- **Law enforcement training academies.**
 - Training academies should include **an intensive component on adolescent brain development, adolescent behavior, impact of trauma, and implicit bias**, as well as information on juvenile law, the juvenile justice system, and the federal requirement that state and local justice systems monitor and address racial and ethnic disparities.



- The training should include **role-playing and skill-building exercises** to help recruits learn skills in communicating effectively with youth and de-escalating tense situations in which youth are involved.
- **In-Service Training for Already-Sworn Officers.**
 - Law enforcement agencies should regularly provide in-service trainings to reinforce and update the academy training on adolescent development and juvenile justice, covering all of the key issues described above, and including opportunities for skill building (role playing) and for meaningful interactions with youth and with youth-serving community organizations.
 - In addition to formal in-service training, **JDAI stakeholders should seek to visit local police stations whenever possible to take part in roll call sessions.** These sessions provide an excellent opportunity to refresh officers' knowledge about JDAI, answer questions, expand officers' understanding of adolescent development, boost their skills in interacting with youth, and strengthen relationships.




Where To Go For Assistance In Developing And Delivering Training

Law Enforcement leaders interested in creating new and improved training for officers on adolescent development and juvenile justice need not reinvent the wheel or go it alone. Rather, several organizations across the country provide training for law enforcement personnel in at least some aspects of adolescent development and/or juvenile justice. And four organizations offer training that include components addressing many or most of the critical training needs identified in the practice guide.

Policing the Teen Brain™

Led by a psychologist, this two-day training presents information on adolescent development and describes practical approaches for responding to youth with mental health issues and/or exposed to chronic trauma. Also, specially-trained local officers provide information on environmental and legal factors that affect youth. The training has been delivered in dozens of jurisdictions nationwide, including more than 20 JDAI sites.

Sponsored by: Strategies for Youth 
Contact Person: David Walker
Phone: 617-714-3789
Email: info@strategiesforyouth.org
Website: strategiesforyouth.org

Pennsylvania DMC Youth-Law Enforcement Curriculum

This eight-hour curriculum for law enforcement academy cadets provides instruction on adolescent development and juvenile justice, implicit bias, and effective communications with youth—with a strong focus on combatting racial and ethnic disparities. The training includes extensive interaction between police academy cadets and area youth. It has been mandatory for Philadelphia police academy cadets since 2009, and it has recently been adopted in other jurisdictions.

Sponsored by: Pennsylvania DMC Youth/Law Enforcement Corporation
Contact Person: Rhonda McKitten
Phone: 619-547-6117
Email: PennDMC@gmail.com
Website: www.penndmc.org



Crisis Intervention Teams for Youth (CIT-Y)

This comprehensive eight-hour training curriculum developed by the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice teaches officers about adolescent development, adolescent mental health and substance abuse, crisis intervention techniques for youth, and community alternatives to arrest for youth. *Note: CIT-Y is only available to officers who have already completed a 40-hour curriculum on crisis intervention for adults.*

Sponsored by: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice
Contact Person: Karli Keator
Phone: 1-866-962-6455 ext. 5266
Email: kkeator@prainc.com
Website: <https://ncyoj.policyresearchinc.org/trainings/crisis-intervention-teams-for-youth/>

