

CT Juvenile Justice Alliance

STRATEGIC PLAN



The Strategic Plan was completed over a period of six months, with the input and hard work of a team of dedicated individuals. Special thanks to Rea Carey, organizational consultant, who guided us through this process; without her, this Strategic Plan would not be what it is today. Other Alliance members who deserve recognition:

Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan

Amy Blankson, CT Juvenile Justice Alliance
Nora Duncan, CT Association of Nonprofits
Robert Francis, RYASAP
Janice Gruendel, CT Voices for Children
Laura McCargar, Youth Rights Media
Maureen Price, Community Partners in Action
Diane Sierpina, The Tow Foundation
Martha Stone, Center for Children's Advocacy
Beresford Wilson, African Caribbean American Parents of
Children with Disabilities, Inc.

The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance would also like to thank the following organizations and individuals for their time and contributions to the development of this strategic plan:

Sheila Amdur, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
Scott Bane, The JEHT Foundation
Fernando Betancourt, Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission
Shelley Geballe, CT Voices for Children
Dawn Hatchett, Family Services Woodfield
Emily Jackson, The Tow Foundation
Jeanne Milstein, The Child Advocate
Ellen Scalettar, Advocates for Connecticut's Children and Youth
Norma Schatz, Juvenile Justice Advisory Council
Charisa Smith, Yale Law Student
Tammy Sneed, North American Family Institute
Janet Williams, CT Center for Effective Practices

The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance

The mission of the Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance is to promote a safe, effective, and equitable service continuum for children and adolescents in, or at risk of involvement in, the juvenile justice system.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance accomplishes its mission by serving as a catalyst for systems reform.

The Alliance employs the following supporting strategies in serving as a catalyst for systems reform:

- policy research,
- public education,
- strategic communications,
- partnership development, and
- community engagement

STATEMENT OF VALUES

1. We believe that young people who commit low-level crimes and/or violate court orders should be addressed in the community and not in secure confinement or detention.
2. We believe that young people with mental health and substance abuse issues should receive adequate and timely treatment, ideally before they end up in the juvenile justice system.
3. We believe the disproportionate minority representation in the juvenile justice system is wrong, and should be eliminated.
4. We believe that young people in, or at risk of involvement in, the juvenile justice system should have a preventative and responsive continuum of community supports and services available to ensure their healthy development.
5. We believe that juvenile offenders have the rehabilitative potential to reenter society and become contributing members of the community.
6. We believe that all youth have assets that can be tapped to make the world a better place, and that it is the community's responsibility to seek out and encourage the development of these assets.
7. We believe that collaborative partnerships with communities, juvenile justice agencies, providers, educators, advocates, parents and youth can raise public awareness and create productive dialogue that will ensure a comprehensive juvenile justice system that serves the real needs of the community.
8. We believe that the development of a continuum of community-based prevention, intervention, treatment, and aftercare programs will promote better youth outcomes at demonstrably lower costs over time than more punitive approaches.
9. We believe that a comprehensive statewide juvenile justice plan is both important and necessary for system-wide, cost-effective, and sustainable change to take place in Connecticut.
10. We believe that authentic youth voice is an integral component to creating meaningful and appropriate improvements to the juvenile justice system.

CRITERIA

The following criteria are used by the Alliance to determine whether or not, and to what degree, the Alliance will take up a new activity and what priority it will be given. High priority activities would have met all criteria and the Alliance would direct significant resources toward their accomplishment. Low priority activities would have met the mandatory criteria and, for example, only one of the additional criteria and the Alliance would direct minimal resources toward their accomplishment.

Mandatory Criteria

The activity substantially and significantly advances the Alliance's mission.

Additional Criteria

- The majority of organizations in the Alliance support the activity and it does not harm a segment of organizations participating in the Alliance.
- The activity advances the Alliance as a powerful and effective catalyst for systems change.
- The activity advances the Alliance's desire to be part of the solution and a concrete, realistic, alternative solution can be identified and articulated.
- The Alliance has determined that there is no other organization or coalition that is better equipped or positioned to take the lead.

GOAL SUMMARY

Goal I: Developing a Sustainable Alliance

By December 2006, the Alliance will have established itself as a respected, powerful and sustainable juvenile justice advocacy force in the State of Connecticut.

Goal II: Promoting a Continuum of Effective Community-Based Services

By July 2007, the Alliance will have successfully advocated for a continuum of effective community-based supports and services for youth ages 8-18 years old that assures appropriate prevention, intervention and treatment services and eliminates inappropriate placement in secure detention or confinement.

Goal III. Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Overrepresentation in the CT Juvenile Justice System

By July 2008, the Alliance will have successfully advocated for policy, hiring, training and service improvements resulting in the elimination of the overrepresentation and/or inappropriate treatment of youth by race or ethnicity in the Connecticut juvenile justice system.



GOAL I: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE ALLIANCE

By December 2006, the Alliance will have established itself as a respected, powerful and sustainable juvenile justice advocacy force in the State of Connecticut.

Background: *The Alliance recognizes that it must attend to its own organizational development at the same time as it works to support improvements in Connecticut's juvenile justice sector. To accomplish this goal of effectiveness and sustainability, we have established two mid-range objectives to guide action over the period July 1, 2003 through January 1, 2005. The first objective will assure the effective operation and sustainability of the Alliance; the second will increase the presence of the Alliance as a respected source of information about juvenile justice services and reform.*

Goal I. Mid-Range Objective 1

By January 2005, the Alliance will have (a) strategically expanded its membership base, (b) solidified its operating structure, (c) mobilized action among its membership, (d) secured funding and staffing appropriate to its strategic plan, and (e) surveyed Alliance participants and other community partners for resources and assets they can contribute to the Alliance.

Goal I. Mid-Range Objective 2

By January 2005, the Alliance will have increased its public presence and become the respected source of information among target constituencies in Connecticut through a strategic communications and public engagement strategy.

Measures of Success:

- 1) *All key constituencies have meaningful participation in the work of the Alliance*
- 2) *Funding and appropriate staffing are secured and sustainable*
- 3) *The Alliance's communication strategy is developed and implemented with a quantifiable outreach goal defined.*

GOAL II: PROMOTING A CONTINUUM OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

By July 2007, the Alliance will have successfully advocated for a continuum of effective community-based services for youth ages 8-18 years old that assures appropriate prevention, intervention and treatment services and supports and eliminates inappropriate placement in secure detention or confinement.

***Background.** The CT Juvenile Justice Alliance believes that development of a continuum of community-based prevention, intervention and treatment programs will promote better youth outcomes at demonstrably lower costs over time. The Alliance will take its guidance on these issues from several Connecticut initiatives, including the Governor's Mental Health Policy Council, the Center for Effective Practice, the CETC Youth Committee, and the Spectrum Report on minority overrepresentation. Because of the cost and complexity of developing, operating and implementing a properly resourced community system, the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance will continue to act as catalyst for creation of a cross-agency, state-local, public-private regional juvenile justice pilot project in at least one area to test policy, practice, program and funding reforms designed to better serve youth at risk of or involved with the Connecticut juvenile justice sector.*

To assist the State of Connecticut in a comprehensive planning and systems reform initiative, the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance has established three mid-range objectives to guide action over the period July 2003 through January 2007. The first involves the creation and adoption of a comprehensive juvenile justice plan for the State of Connecticut. The second involves support for the development and evaluation of at least one regional pilot community-based system of service. The third is development of a set of policy, practice and program recommendations to guide the development and operation of gender-specific services for girls involved in the juvenile justice sector.

Goal II Mid-Range Objective 1

By January 2005, the State of Connecticut will have access to a comprehensive juvenile justice plan, produced by state agencies and/or the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance, incorporating a continuum of prevention, community-based early intervention and institutional-treatment services for youth at risk of involvement with or currently engaged in the juvenile justice system.

Goal II Mid-Range Objective 2

By January 2007, the Alliance will participate in development and evaluation of at least one pilot, beginning with and including re-entry community program elements, to serve youth being returned from residential or institutional services. Using the community mapping process (Goal 2), the redesigned system will include services and supports in a cohesive wrap-around context, an integrated case management system, and a plan for reallocating funding for youth served by the pilot. This objective will be consistent with the state plan (Goal II, Mid-Range Objective 1).

Goal II Mid-Range Objective 3

By January 2005, the Alliance will have produced, disseminated and publicized a set of recommendations, including a review of national best practices, a summary of current Connecticut programs, and a status report on implementation of state agency proposals for gender-specific girls programs.

Goal II Mid-Range Objective 4

By January 2006, the Alliance will have produced, disseminated and publicized a set of recommendations, including a review of national best practices, a summary of current Connecticut programs, and a status report on implementation of agency proposals for gender-specific boys' programs.

Goal II. Measures of Success

- 1) A Connecticut juvenile justice plan is developed, issued, adopted and implemented, with regular public progress reports*
- 2) A comprehensive, family focused community system of preventive, intervention and treatment services is developed, properly resourced and evaluated.*
- 3) The learning acquired from creation of the pilot is adapted as needed and implemented across Connecticut*
- 4) No- or low-cost policy, practice and program changes to promote gender-specific girls' and boys' services are implemented.*

GOAL III. ELIMINATING RACIAL and ETHNIC OVERREPRESENTATION IN THE CONNECTICUT JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

By July 2008, the Alliance will have successfully advocated for policy, hiring, training and service improvements resulting in the elimination of the overrepresentation and/or inappropriate treatment of youth by race or ethnicity in the Connecticut juvenile justice system.

Background: There is a considerable national literature documenting the overrepresentation and disparate treatment of minority youth. This literature also shows that overrepresentation cannot be explained by differences in delinquent behavior across youth groups and that disparities “in system processing of minority youth occur...even when controlling for social and legal background variables.” (Spectrum Report, 2001) To acquire data on elements of this problem, the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management funded two studies, one in 1991-92 and a reassessment of minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system in 1998-99. While some progress in reducing overrepresentation was found, significant problems remain.

The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance recognizes that any substantive change in overrepresentation and inappropriate treatment must be addressed at multiple levels: (a) within the context of a continuum of community-based prevention, intervention and treatment services to provide for developmentally and culturally-appropriate services for Connecticut’s young people; (b) within the context of practice at each point of contact between a young person and the juvenile justice system; and (c) at the point of return to the community following engagement with the juvenile justice system. Goal II of this plan seeks to address the community service aspects of this problem. Goal III seeks to address the policy, practice and program issues resulting in overrepresentation and/or inappropriate treatment at each point of contact between minority young people and the juvenile justice system.

Goal III Mid-Range Objective 1

By July 2004, the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance will have analyzed successful and effective practices, nationally, for eliminating racial/ethnic overrepresentation.

Goal III Mid-Range Objective 2

By January 2006, the CT Juvenile Justice Alliance will have successfully advocated for the implementation of successful and effective practices for eliminating racial/ethnic overrepresentation in Connecticut. This objective will be consistent with and tied into the state plan.

Goal III Measures of Success:

- (1) By January 2006, the Alliance will have successfully advocated with public and private funders to require implementation of no- or low-cost policy, practice and service adjustments to address racial/ethnic overrepresentation.*
- (2) Racial and ethnic overrepresentation in the Juvenile Justice system will be eliminated, according to the Alliance's definition of "eliminated."*

CT Juvenile Justice Alliance

2470 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

