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OJJDP NEWS @ a Glance

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September Is First National Youth Court Month

Youth courts are one of the fastest growing crime intervention and prevention programs in the Nation. In 1994, the United States had 78 youth courts. Today—just 8 years later—more than 900 youth courts operate in 46 States and the District of Columbia. In recognition of these unique courts and the dedicated youth and adult volunteers who participate in them, OJJDP and the National Youth Court Center (NYCC) have designated September 2002 as National Youth Court Month. Toby Steinmetz, a member of the Pottstown Area Teen Court in Stowe, PA, developed the theme for National Youth Court Month—“Youth Court: Positive Peer Pressure, Teens Helping Teens.”



Also known as teen courts and peer courts, youth courts offer an adjudicatory venue in which nonviolent juvenile offenders are sentenced by peers. By involving the community and family members of offenders and victims, youth courts influence the lives of juveniles in a unique and positive way.

Recently, OJJDP's Youth Court program was the only program from the United States featured at the United Nations' Special Session on Children, and the OJJDP-funded Youth Court Training Package received a prestigious national award from the Association of Educational Publishers. These achievements are highlighted below.

United Nations Recognizes OJJDP's Youth Court Program

In May 2002, youth courts were recognized at the United Nations' Special Session on Children. Every 10 years, UN member countries meet to establish a global blueprint for the next decade. This year's landmark meeting offered an unprecedented opportunity to change how the world views and treats children. During the special session, which was modeled as a youth court hearing, J. Robert Flores, OJJDP Administrator, and two young volunteers from youth courts in New York and Maryland shared the positive effects that youth courts are having on juveniles in the United States with hundreds of participants from around the world.

“Youth courts give young people an arena to take on increased responsibility in the community while developing prosocial attitudes and an increased understanding and respect for the rule of law,” Mr. Flores said. Noting the success of youth courts in

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National Youth Gang Symposium Draws 1,200 Participants

The third OJJDP National Youth Gang Symposium—Together We Can: Comprehensive Approaches to Youth Gangs—was held June 11–13, 2002, in Orlando, FL. The event offered an array of activities and information focusing on innovative and viable gang-related programs and strategies.

Designed for anyone involved in addressing the Nation's youth gang and violence problem, the symposium drew a diverse crowd of more than 1,200. Attendees included law enforcement and corrections professionals who work with gang members on a daily basis, community-based youth outreach workers, social service and education professionals, and representatives from the faith-based community. The keynote speaker was Father Greg Boyle, Executive Director of Homeboy Industries, Los Angeles,



Father Greg Boyle, Executive Director of Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, CA, addresses Youth Gang Symposium participants.

CA, which provides job opportunities and support for young gang members.

At the opening ceremony, OJJDP Administrator J. Robert Flores welcomed symposium participants and reported that “the Bush Administration is very serious about working with State, local, and tribal authorities . . . to address youth gangs in this Nation.” Mr. Flores described a number of OJJDP gang prevention programs and shared two success stories of youth who have benefited from Project Bridge, Riverside, CA, which was one of the first five sites funded to implement OJJDP's Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression (the Comprehensive Gang Model).

Drawing on the symposium's theme of “Together We Can,” Mr. Flores challenged each symposium participant to meet with three individuals, agencies, or organizations; explain why they should be concerned about youth gangs; and suggest ways to bring positive change to the gang problem in their communities. Mr. Flores encouraged participants to share information gathered at the symposium with their communities. “You may find out,” Mr. Flores added, “that these partners can lend assistance in ways that you never thought of.”

Following Mr. Flores's remarks, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft welcomed attendees via video message. Mr. Ashcroft commended symposium participants for their “commitment to combating the destructive culture of youth gangs.”



OJJDP Administrator J. Robert Flores conducts an interview in Spanish with a reporter covering the Youth Gang Symposium for Univision, a Spanish-language television network.

During the symposium, attendees participated in plenary sessions led by national experts and attended workshops that highlighted recent gang trends and offered information on programs to combat gang problems. Workshop topics ranged from “Prison Gangs and Their Influence on the Street” to “Faith-Based Approaches to Gangs.”

Between workshops and plenary sessions, attendees gathered additional information from more than 20 exhibition booths representing a variety of organizations. Exhibitors included the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T), the National Drug Intelligence Center, the National Youth Gang Center, and the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center.

For Further Information

To learn more about youth gangs and gang prevention, visit the National Youth Gang Center Web site at www.iir.com/nygc. ■

New Publications

All OJJDP publications may be viewed and downloaded at OJJDP's Web site by visiting the "Publications" page at ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/jipubs.html. Through this page you can access alphabetical and topical listings of titles, with links to content summaries and full-text files. Publications may also be ordered from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 800-638-8736, 410-792-4358 (fax), and online at puborder.ncjrs.org. Be sure to check the Web site's "New Releases" page at ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/new.html for the latest OJJDP publications.

Juvenile Gun Courts: Promoting Accountability and Providing Treatment.

Draws on the experiences of policymakers and practitioners involved with juvenile gun courts to describe the development of these courts.

Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG) Best Practices Series Bulletin. June 2002. 12 pp. NCJ 187078.

Tribal Court CASA: A Guide to Program Development.

Summarizes key points from *Tribal Court CASA: A Guide to Program Development*, which was published by the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association and the Tribal Law and Policy Institute in 2000.

Fact Sheet. June 2002. 2 pp. FS 200209.

Also Available Through OJJDP . . .

New Statistical Report on America's Children

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics has released *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2002*, the group's sixth annual compendium of statistics about children's economic security, health, behavior, social environment, and education. OJJDP is one of 20 Federal agencies collaborating to produce the report each year. Drawn from



the most recent, most reliable official statistics, *America's Children* offers a comprehensive portrait of the Nation's children in a nontechnical, user-friendly format.

America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2002 is available online through OJJDP's Web site at ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/general.html#195647. A limited number of printed copies are available free of charge from OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse; call 800-638-8736 or visit puborder.ncjrs.org (ask for NCJ 195647). To learn more about the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, and to view and download any edition of *America's Children*, visit childstats.gov

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other parts of the world, including Canada, Germany, and Japan, Mr. Flores challenged delegates to build youth court programs in their communities.

A transcript of Mr. Flores's remarks is available on OJJDP's Web site at ojjdp.ncjrs.org/about/floresspeeches.html. Additional information about the UN's Special Session on Children is available at www.unicef.org/specialsession.

Youth Court Training Package Receives Top Award

On June 5, 2002, the Youth Court Training Package—funded by OJJDP and developed in cooperation with the American Bar Association and NYCC—received the Distinguished Achievement Award for Multimedia Instructional Materials, Young Adult Category, at the Association of Educational Publishers annual gala. The ceremony was hosted at the National Press Club, and

award winners in six categories were chosen from more than 1,000 entries and 299 finalists.

The Youth Court Training Package contains student training manuals for different youth court models, an instructor's guide, a promotional video, and a CD-ROM. To order a copy (cost \$45), call 800-285-2221.

For Further Information

To learn more about youth courts, contact the National Youth Court Center at 859-244-8193 or visit the Center's Web site at www.youthcourt.net. At the Web site, click on the National Youth Court Month 2002 Action Kit icon for publicity and promotional materials, artwork, suggested activities, instructions for submitting nominations to NYCC's Volunteer Hall of Fame, and many other resources designed to help local youth courts involve community partners in the celebration of National Youth Court Month. ■

National Youth Summit Promotes Positive Youth Development

The first National Youth Summit was held June 26–28, 2002, in Washington, DC. The summit brought together a diverse audience of young people and adults to promote positive youth development, a policy perspective that emphasizes opportunities and services that help youth succeed. For 3 days, summit participants examined, discussed, and celebrated youth's journey toward becoming healthy and responsible adults.

The National Youth Summit was exceptional in two respects:

- Multiple Federal agencies collaborated to sponsor the event, and many top-level Federal officials attended. The sponsoring agencies—the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in cooperation with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Labor, and Transportation and the Corporation for National and Community Service—all showcased programs that focus on supporting young people and promoting positive youth development.
- Hundreds of youth interacted with adults representing youth-serving agencies and organizations at the national, State, and local levels. These youth were given an opportunity to influence the policies and programs

that will shape their lives and the lives of children in the future.

The summit's objectives were to develop and encourage interagency collaboration, share information and resources about programs that support positive youth development, explore opportunities to apply the positive youth development approach to other programs that address risk behaviors, and emphasize and encourage the use of research-based practices. Participants attended workshops on supportive families and communities, safe and healthy lives, economic self-sufficiency and success, and settings and opportunities for development and service. At the summit's plenary sessions, participants heard nationally prominent speakers from the public and private sectors.

During the main plenary, U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft emphasized the importance of transferring values, knowledge, and respect from one generation to the next. Observing that today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders, the Attorney General said, "Children may make up 25 percent of society, but they make up 100 percent of the future." Mr. Ashcroft stressed the vital role that mentoring plays in shaping children's lives and improving their futures, noting "Nothing is more important in life than relationships and friendships that involve teaching."

During the closing plenary, OJJDP Administrator J. Robert Flores

shared accounts of how OJJDP programs have improved the lives of youth. Urging the summit's young participants to continue their peer-related activities, he stated, "Youth need to experience what it means to make a difference in each other's lives." Mr. Flores challenged young participants to think of two people—youth or adults—who might help them implement youth programs, and he challenged adult participants to bring youth programs to their communities. ■

News @ a Glance is OJJDP's bi-monthly newsletter, bringing you up-to-date notices of agency activities, recent publications, funding opportunities, and upcoming events—with an emphasis on providing quick access to online sources for publications and other resources. Let us know what types of features would be most useful to you (e-mail askjj@ncjrs.org).

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

Funding Update

This section of the newsletter highlights OJJDP's current and upcoming solicitations, recent grant awards, and other funding-related developments. Be sure to check the OJJDP Web site regularly for the latest news on OJJDP funding opportunities.

Recent Solicitations

In July, OJJDP announced FY 2002 funding opportunities under the following programs:

Multisystem Decisionmaking Training and Technical Assistance Project. The purpose of this project is to build capacity in communities to implement a comprehensive, collaborative, data-driven decisionmaking model for improving services to children exposed to violence, either as victims of maltreatment or as witnesses of adult violence in the home. This collaborative approach involves law enforcement and child protective services agencies, courts, providers of domestic violence services and mental health services, and medical service systems. OJJDP will select one organization to provide

training and technical assistance to as many as 14 sites (primarily communities participating in the Safe Start initiative). Up to \$1,472,000 will be available for the 24-month budget period.

National Training and Technical Assistance Program for Tribal Youth Program Grantees, American Indian Tribes, and Alaska Native Communities. The recipient of this award will provide training and technical assistance to Tribal Youth Program grantees and American Indian and Alaska Native communities to help them develop programs that prevent and control juvenile delinquency, reduce violent crime, and improve tribal juvenile justice systems. OJJDP will fund the program for three 1-year budget periods. Up to \$800,000 will be available for the first year.

For application information, materials, and deadlines: Visit OJJDP's Web site at ojjdp.ncjrs.org and click on the "Grants & Funding" icon, or contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 800-638-8736. ■

Antidrug Coalition Uses Online Conferencing

Every community antidrug coalition needs to communicate with its members. Listservs, e-mails, and newsletters can all be effective ways of disseminating information, but one coalition wanted to do more. Seeds of Change: Partners for a Drug-Free Community—a Washington State Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantee—wanted to encourage an ongoing dialog among its members.

Using BigMind Catalyst, a Web-based community conferencing software tool provided by a local Internet communications company, Seeds of Change established an interactive online forum

for its coalition members. "Conversations, concerns, innovative ideas, and resources have an organized and systematic place to be shared and discussed," notes Holly Adams, Coalition Director for Seeds of Change. "This is invaluable, given the collaborative style in which many prevention coalitions work," she emphasizes.

For more information about how your coalition might implement such online communications, contact Holly Adams (holly@swyouth.com). For more information about the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, visit ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/index.html. ■

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