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J. Robert Flores
OJJDP Administrator

Combating Youth Substance Abuse: Evidence-Based, Collaborative Strategies

One of the worst decisions our children can make is to gamble their lives and futures on drugs.

—President George W. Bush
State of the Union Address
January 20, 2004

Substance abuse is one of the most troubling problems facing the nation's youth. Although recent surveys document some encouraging trends, far too many young people still take the dangerous gamble of using drugs. The 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that almost 31 percent of youth ages 12–17 had used an illicit drug at some point in their lives, 22 percent in the last year, and more than 11 percent in the last month. The survey also found that 37 percent of youth had used tobacco (24 percent last year, 15 percent last month). Alcohol use was even more common: 43 percent (35 percent last year, 18 percent last month).

Usage surveys tell only part of the story. Researchers have found associations between substance use and more serious delinquency, more numerous risk behaviors, and poor academic performance. Many youth in the justice system have substance use disorders, and 186,600 of the approximately 2.3 million juvenile arrests in 2002 were for drug charges. In short, substance abuse disrupts young lives and limits potential.

OJJDP sponsors a number of programs that support the efforts of states and communities nationwide to prevent and reduce youth substance abuse. This article focuses on the cornerstones of these programs: evidence-based strategies—finding approaches that work and making them available to communities—and collaboration with other federal agencies. The article also describes a program that supports state efforts to enforce underage drinking laws.

Evidence-Based Strategies

The Promising Programs for Substance Abuse Prevention: Replication and Evaluation Initiative will implement two school-based prevention program models—Project ALERT and Project SUCCESS—in 28 and 14 schools, respectively, to determine whether positive outcomes can be achieved and sustained over time. Project ALERT targets middle school students, and Project SUCCESS targets students in alternative high school settings. The Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation will oversee

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Combating Substance Abuse (continued from page 1)

implementation and evaluate outcomes. Findings will enhance knowledge about effective prevention strategies, providing communities with solid information for deciding how to spend the limited resources available for prevention activities.

The Blueprints for Violence Prevention Initiative has developed rigorous criteria for identifying model programs on the basis of research design, deterrent effect, sustainability, and replicability. The **Blueprints for Violence Prevention: Drug Prevention Initiative** supports more than 100 sites that have implemented the school-based Life Skills Training (LST) program, a Blueprints model designed to reduce tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use among junior high and middle school students. Operating in more than 400 schools, this program has been shown to dramatically reduce use of these "gateway" substances. It is effective with a diverse range of adolescents, produces long-lasting results, and can be taught by teachers, peer leaders, or health professionals.

Collaboration

A collaborative effort of OJJDP and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), the **Drug-Free Communities Support Program** strives to reduce substance abuse among youth through the work of community coalitions. Strategies include strengthening local collaboration; enhancing intergovernmental cooperation and coordination; enabling communities to conduct data-driven, research-based prevention planning; and providing communities with technical assistance, guidance, and financial support. In fiscal year (FY) 2004, OJJDP and ONDCP will award approximately 180 new grants of up to \$100,000. In addition, about 480 current grantees will be eligible for continuation funding.

The Tribal Youth Program (TYP) Mental Health Initiative is part of the Mental Health and Community Safety Initiative for American Indian/Alaska Native Children, Youth, and Families—a coordinated federal program developed by the U.S. Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, Education, and the Interior. Research has shown that alcohol consumption and its negative consequences (including alcohol-related arrests) are especially prevalent among tribal youth. The TYP Mental Health Initiative promotes both alcohol- and drug-related services for tribal youth and supports juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention efforts that emphasize culturally sensitive approaches.

Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws

Through block grants to all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the **Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) Program** supports efforts to enforce state laws prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors and to prevent minors from purchasing or consuming alcohol. In FY 2004, each state will receive \$356,211 to fund activities such as law enforcement/prosecutorial task forces to target establishments suspected of violating laws that prohibit sales to minors, public advertising campaigns to educate establishments about the law, and innovative programs to address underage drinking.

OJJDP also sponsors two EUDL discretionary programs:

- The EUDL Community Trials Program supports systematic implementation of promising programs in local communities. Using a randomized community trial design, Wake Forest University's School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, NC, will evaluate programs

and assess EUDL's impact on communities.

- The EUDL Rural Communities Initiative will fund implementation of EUDL programs in rural settings in up to four states. To promote understanding of issues related to underage drinking in rural communities, OJJDP is partnering with the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, which will conduct process and outcome evaluations of this initiative.

The Center for Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws provides training and technical assistance for EUDL programs. The center offers states and communities a number of practical, research-based tools and a wide range of services.

Online Resources

- White House Office of National Drug Control Policy: www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov. Includes a "Drug Facts" section that provides access to drug-related research and statistics.
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp. Under "topics," click on "Drugs" for access to relevant publications, programs, funding opportunities, events, and other resources.
- Blueprints for Violence Prevention: www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints.
- Center for Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws: www.udetc.org.
- Drug-Free Communities Support Program: ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs.
- Tribal Youth Program Mental Health Initiative: ojjdp.ncjrs.org/typ. ■

New Publications

Publications may be viewed and downloaded at OJJDP's Web site (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp). Print publications may also be ordered from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (call 800-851-3420 or order online at puborder.ncjrs.org).

When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide (3rd ed.).

Provides parents with insights into what families should do when a child is missing. This revised third edition contains expanded information on the AMBER Alert Plan, describes NCMEC's Family Advocacy Division and Team Adam, and includes updated recommended readings and additional resources.

OJJDP Report. May 2004. NCJ 204958.

Youth Gangs in Indian Country.

Describes the nature of youth gangs in Indian country, based on findings from a survey conducted by the National Youth Gang Center.

Youth Gang Series Bulletin. March 2004.
NCJ 202714.

Upcoming Online Publications . . .

Access to Counsel. As part of OJJDP's Juvenile Justice Practices online series, this Bulletin will examine access to legal counsel in the juvenile justice system, including factors that hinder access, elements of effective counsel, and approaches to improving access.

Blueprints for Violence Prevention.

This online report will describe the Blueprints for Violence Prevention Initiative, which developed and implemented research-based criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of programs that prevent violence and drug use and treat youth with problem behaviors.

Coming Soon . . .

OJJDP Annual Report 2002

A report describing OJJDP's activities and accomplishments during fiscal year (FY) 2002 will soon be available. The report also summarizes the latest information available on juveniles taken into custody and lists OJJDP publications released during FY 2002.



National Youth Gang Survey

The National Youth Gang Center (NYGC) has surveyed law enforcement agencies about youth gang activity annually since 1995. OJJDP soon will publish a new Fact Sheet, *Highlights of the 2002 National Youth Gang Survey*, which reports that approximately 21,500 gangs with 731,500 members were active in more than 2,300 cities in 2002. The Fact Sheet notes preliminary evidence that the number of jurisdictions experiencing gang problems has stabilized.

A report presenting detailed findings from National Youth Gang Surveys for 1999–2001 is currently under review at OJJDP. Fact Sheets highlighting findings for each survey year are available on the OJJDP Web site, as are detailed reports for 1998 and previous years. NYGC is currently compiling 2003 survey data.

For more information, visit the NYGC Web site at www.iir.com/nygc. ■

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Funding Update

Be sure to check the OJJDP Web site (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp) for the latest news on OJJDP funding opportunities, including grant application information, deadlines, and links to the Office of Justice Programs' online Grants Management System (GMS). To receive e-mail notification of new funding opportunities, subscribe to JUVJUST via the OJJDP Web site.

Current Solicitations

OJJDP is soliciting applications for the following grant programs:

- **The Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) Discretionary Program: Rural Communities Initiative** seeks to curb underage drinking in rural communities by implementing research-based practices that reduce alcoholic beverage availability to and consumption by youth. OJJDP will award grants of up to \$1,050,000 to as many as four state agencies for a 3-year period. Agencies that administer EUDL block grants (including those with active EUDL discretionary programs) may apply; see www.udetc.org for a list of eligible state agencies. Applicants must designate three to five rural communities to participate.
- **The Tribal Youth Program (TYP)** supports tribal efforts to prevent and control delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system for tribal youth.

OJJDP anticipates that \$10 million will be available for TYP funding. Of that amount, \$8 million will be allocated for discretionary grants, including \$1 million for the TYP Mental Health Initiative (see below). Remaining funds will be used to support research, evaluation, and statistics; provide training and technical assistance; and enhance other tribal efforts and programs. Only federally recognized tribes or partnerships of tribes are eligible to apply.

- The **TYP Mental Health Initiative** promotes mental health and substance abuse (alcohol and drug) services for tribal youth and supports juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention efforts that feature culturally sensitive approaches. Funding helps tribes provide a range of services in various community settings (e.g., schools, violence prevention education programs, healthcare programs, and the juvenile justice system). Only federally recognized tribes or partnerships of tribes are eligible to apply. ■



**Update Your
Rolodex**

**The toll-free number for the
Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
has changed to 800-851-3420.**

New Advisory Committee Holds First Meeting

OJDP convened the first meeting of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) on January 12, 2004, in Point Clear, AL. JJAC was established under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2002 to advise the OJJDP Administrator on the work of the Office, evaluate the progress and accomplishments of juvenile justice activities and projects, and report to the President and Congress on juvenile justice matters. Committee members—representatives from the 50 states, 4 territories, and the District of Columbia—were appointed by governors and the D.C. mayor.

The 3-day January meeting was primarily an administrative and organizational gathering. Committee members elected David

Schmidt of New Mexico as chairperson and Hasan Davis of Kentucky as vice chairperson. Three subcommittees met to define the scope of their work and chart the next steps:

- **The Annual Report Committee** will research and prepare JJAC's annual report.
- **The Legal Affairs Committee** will review JJAC's bylaws, recommend amendments if needed, and prepare rules and procedures for subcommittees.
- **The Planning Committee** will survey JJAC and State Advisory Group members to determine JJAC needs (staff, resources, funds, additional meetings).

During his welcoming remarks, OJJDP Administrator J. Robert Flores asked committee members for recommendations on how to allocate Title V funds for fiscal year 2004—by the traditional formula, competitive bids, or some other method. A fourth subcommittee—the **Grants Committee**—considered the Administrator's request and recommended that OJJDP continue the current formula-based distribution of Title V funds. The full JJAC unanimously approved the recommendation.

For additional information on JJAC, including a list of members and minutes of the meeting, visit the JJAC page of OJJDP's Web site (go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp; under "About OJJDP," select "Councils and Committees"). ■

News Briefs

May 25, 2004, is **National Missing Children's Day**. Related events include the annual Congressional Breakfast and National Missing and Exploited Children's Awards Ceremony, scheduled to take place May 19 in Washington, D.C. In addition, OJJDP and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) will hold a ceremony on May 19 in the Justice Department's Hall of Justice. For additional information, visit the NCMEC Web site at www.missingkids.com.

Big Brothers Big Sisters, the oldest and largest youth mentoring organization in the United States, will celebrate its 100th anniversary

on June 15–16, 2004, by reuniting former Big and Little Brothers and Sisters and championing its vision of serving one million at-risk children by 2010. OJJDP, which has long supported Big Brothers Big Sisters, is planning a satellite teleconference to coincide with the celebration. Information about the teleconference will be available on the Juvenile Justice Teleconference Web site (www.trc.eku.edu/jj).

OJJDP was among the sponsors of **National Youth Service Day** (NYSD), which was observed on April 14–16, 2004. The largest service event in the world, the annual NYSD mobilizes millions of youth to address community needs through

volunteer service. For more information, visit the Youth Service America Web site at www.ysa.org.

February 2004 was the first-ever **National Parent Leadership Month**. OJJDP joined other public and private organizations to sponsor this Parents Anonymous® Inc. initiative, which sought to raise public awareness about the important roles parents play, expand leadership opportunities for parents, recognize individual parent leaders, and highlight parent leadership as a child abuse prevention strategy. For more information, visit www.parentsanonymous.org. ■

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News @ a Glance is OJJDP's bimonthly 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 (visit askjj.ncjrs.org).

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