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OJJDP IN FOCUS

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What is the JABG program?

OJJDP's JABG program helps States and communities develop and implement programs that:

- Hold youth accountable for delinquent behavior through the imposition of graduated sanctions that are consistent with the severity of the offense.
- Strengthen the juvenile justice system's capacity to process cases efficiently and work with community partners to keep youth from reoffending.

Learn more at
ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/jabg.

Juvenile Accountability Block Grants Program

Holding youth accountable for their delinquent behavior is a cornerstone of the national response to juvenile delinquency. By consistently applying sanctions that are appropriate to the developmental stage of the offender and the severity of the offense, juvenile justice systems strive to foster individual responsibility while protecting public safety and enhancing the quality of life.

Since 1998, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has helped States and communities implement accountability-based programs through the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG) program. The JABG program awards Federal block grants to the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the 5 U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands). OJJDP also provides training and technical assistance to help States and communities develop, operate, and measure the effectiveness of their accountability programs.

As Congress envisioned it, the goal of the JABG program is to reduce juvenile offending through accountability-based programs that are targeted to both offenders and the juvenile justice system. Accountability means holding a juvenile who has violated the law responsible for this behavior by imposing consequences commensurate with the seriousness of the offense and the youth's prior criminal history. These sanctions can include restitution, community service, victim-offender mediation, intensive supervision, house arrest, or confinement. At the same time, JABG funds, training, and technical assistance enhance the ability of State and local juvenile justice systems to establish and maintain intervention and treatment programs, track offenders in the juvenile justice system, and process cases in a timely manner.

The JABG program is based on research studies on youth and juvenile offenders that have demonstrated that applying consequences or sanctions swiftly, consistently, and in a graduated manner works best in preventing, controlling, and reducing the likelihood of subsequent violations (Griffin, 1999).



Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention



Authorizing Legislation

The House of Representatives passed the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants (JAIBG) Act in 1997 under Title III of H.R. 3, the Juvenile Crime Control Act of 1997. Congress first funded the program through an appropriations act in fiscal year (FY) 1998 (Public Law 105–119, 111 Stat. 2440). OJJDP is the administering agency. Section 12102 of the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–273, 116 Stat. 1758), codified at 42 U.S.C. 3796ee, included provisions to change the name of the JAIBG program to the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants program, expand the number and scope of the purpose areas, refine the program's reporting and monitoring requirements, and include funding of the program as part of Title I (Part R, Chapter 46, Subchapter XII–F) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act.

Eligibility

The Governor or other chief executive officer of each State designates a single State agency to receive, manage, and administer JABG funds.¹ To be eligible for JABG funds, the State must annually submit to the OJJDP Administrator an application that describes the proposed activities and the criteria by which the effectiveness of the activities in achieving the stated goals will be assessed. Units of local government, including American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal entities, are eligible to receive an allocation as subgrants by States.

In addition to being eligible for JABG funds as units of local government, AI/AN tribes, as defined by Section 102 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 479a), or a consortium of such tribes, are eligible for JABG funding through OJJDP's Tribal Juvenile Accountability Discretionary Grants program. OJJDP awards these grants on a competitive basis.

States and subgrantees can spend their JABG funds on programs in 17 distinct purpose areas defined by Congress (see sidebar "Juvenile Accountability Block Grants Program Purpose Areas"). The purpose areas encompass four types of activities: hiring staff, training staff, building infrastructure (expanding or

¹The term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the five territories.

continued on p. 4

JABG Funds at Work

Alternatives to Detention (Maine)

The Alternatives to Detention (ATD) program in Portland, ME, was created to address overcrowding in the detention unit at Long Creek Youth Development Center. ATD provides supervision for youth in the community so they can be released from detention while awaiting their appearance in court. Services include an afternoon-evening reporting center and intensive case management. A system of graduated sanctions and rewards provides incentives and fosters support in the community that will remain in place after youth are discharged from the program. The program's impact is illustrated by the following data covering the period April 2007–March 2008:

- Ninety percent of youth leaving the program successfully completed program requirements.

- Only 12.5 percent of participating youth reoffended while in the program.
- Ninety percent of participating youth who had a goal of finding employment were placed in jobs.
- All of the participating youth appeared in court as scheduled and did not interfere with the court process.
- Participating youth completed 175 hours of service to the community.

Juvenile Accountability Conferences (North Dakota)

Juvenile accountability conferences provide the opportunity for an offender, victim, and key supporters of both to come together with a trained facilitator to discuss the

Juvenile Accountability Block Grants Program Purpose Areas

Purpose Area	Description of Purpose Area
1. Graduated sanctions	Developing, implementing, and administering graduated sanctions for juvenile offenders.
2. Corrections/detention facilities	Building, expanding, renovating, or operating temporary or permanent juvenile corrections or detention facilities, including training of personnel.
3. Court staffing and pretrial services	Hiring juvenile court judges, probation officers, and court-appointed defenders and special advocates, and funding pretrial services (including mental health screening and assessment) for juvenile offenders, to promote the effective and expeditious administration of the juvenile justice system.
4. Prosecutors (staffing)	Hiring additional prosecutors to prosecute more cases involving violent juvenile offenders and thereby reduce backlogs.
5. Prosecutors (funding)	Providing funding to enable prosecutors to address drug, gang, and youth violence problems more effectively and for technology, equipment, and training to help prosecutors identify and expedite the prosecution of violent juvenile offenders.
6. Training for law enforcement and court personnel	Establishing and maintaining training programs to help law enforcement and other court personnel prevent and control juvenile crime.
7. Juvenile gun courts	Establishing juvenile gun courts for the prosecution and adjudication of juvenile firearms offenders.
8. Juvenile drug courts	Establishing drug court programs to provide continuing judicial supervision of juvenile offenders with substance abuse problems and to integrate the administration of other sanctions and services for such offenders.
9. Juvenile records systems	Establishing and maintaining a system of juvenile records designed to promote public safety.
10. Information sharing	Establishing and maintaining interagency information-sharing programs that enable the juvenile and criminal justice systems, schools, and social service agencies to make more informed decisions regarding the early identification, control, supervision, and treatment of juveniles who repeatedly commit serious delinquent or criminal acts.
11. Accountability	Establishing and maintaining accountability-based programs designed to reduce recidivism among juveniles who are referred by law enforcement personnel or agencies.
12. Risk and needs assessment	Establishing and maintaining programs to conduct risk and needs assessments of juvenile offenders that facilitate effective early interventions and the provision of comprehensive services, including mental health screening and treatment and substance abuse testing and treatment.
13. School safety	Establishing and maintaining accountability-based programs designed to make schools safe.
14. Restorative justice	Establishing and maintaining restorative justice programs.
15. Juvenile courts and probation	Establishing and maintaining programs to enable juvenile courts and juvenile probation officers to more effectively and efficiently hold juvenile offenders accountable and reduce recidivism.
16. Corrections/detention personnel	Hiring detention and corrections personnel and establishing and maintaining training programs for them to improve facility practices and programming.
17. Reentry	Establishing, improving, and coordinating prerelease and postrelease systems and programs to facilitate the successful reentry of juvenile offenders from State or local custody in the community.

impact of the crime and how to repair the harm caused. As part of its restorative justice program, North Dakota's Juvenile Court has used juvenile accountability conferences statewide as an intervention for misdemeanor offenders and property offenders at all levels.

The conferences have had a significant impact on the individuals involved and increased system responsiveness by addressing reparation and accountability for the offenders while addressing concerns of the victims and communities. The most recent performance measurement data for the court attest to the program's success; 90 percent of juveniles who took part in a juvenile accountability conference did not reoffend in the 6-month period following completion of the program.



continued from p. 2

renovating the physical plant or developing information-sharing mechanisms such as partnerships), and implementing direct service programs (e.g., specialty courts, restorative justice programs, programs that use graduated sanctions, and assessment services).

Award Process

Of its total allocation, a State may retain up to 25 percent at the State level absent a waiver. A State may request a waiver if it can demonstrate that it bears the primary financial burden (more than 25 percent) for the administration of juvenile justice within that State. Unless a State receives a waiver from the OJJDP Administrator, it must distribute not less than 75 percent of its allocation among units of local government. A unit of local government must qualify for a minimum of \$10,000 under the substate allocation formula to receive a subgrant award. This calculation is based on a formula that combines local law enforcement expenditures and the number of juvenile violent crime arrests for each jurisdiction.

Federal funds may not exceed 90 percent of total program costs, including any funds that a State or unit of local government sets aside for program administration. However, when a State uses JABG funds to construct a permanent juvenile facility, it must provide a cash match of at least 50 percent of total program costs.

Performance Measures

Since FY 2004, OJJDP has required all grantees to submit annual performance data. OJJDP provides a menu of approximately 300 performance indicators from which grantees can select, depending on the type of program they operate. In addition, OJJDP has developed a list of core measures that it applies to all juvenile justice programs.

OJJDP expects recipients/grantees to use these data to inform their administration of JABG funds and to improve program performance. Performance data also highlight programs that have been particularly effective, providing a valuable model for other accountability initiatives. The sidebar “JABG Funds at Work” describes two JABG-funded programs that are holding youth accountable in ways that reduce the risk of reoffending, strengthen the juvenile justice system, and improve the quality of life for communities. These programs are just two examples of the success of JABG-funded initiatives nationwide.

Reference

Griffin, P. 1999. *Developing and Administering Accountability-Based Sanctions for Juveniles*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

Serving Children, Families, and Communities



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 Community Capacity Development Office; the National Institute of Justice; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART).

For More Information on the JABG Program

To learn more about OJJDP's JABG program, visit ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/jabg. For information about how to access JABG funds that have been awarded to your State, or to request OJJDP-sponsored training and technical assistance, contact your State's Juvenile Justice Specialist or JABG Coordinator. Contact information is available on the OJJDP Web site.

- Visit ojjdp.ncjrs.gov.
- Click on “State Contacts” in the left navigation panel.
- Select the checkbox next to “Juvenile Justice Specialist” or “JABG Coordinator.”
- Click on your State in the map provided.

Also available on OJJDP's Web site is the Juvenile Accountability Block Grants Program Guidance Manual, which is designed to help States apply for, receive, obligate, and expend funds provided under the JABG program. The manual can be accessed at ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/jabg/files/2007_jabg_guidance_manual.pdf.

For information about other OJJDP programs, go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp.

