

Executive Summary: An Evaluation of the Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BHJJ) Initiative: 2013-2015

Wayne County Results

Fred Butcher, PhD | Krystel Tossone, PhD | Jeff M. Kretschmar, PhD



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

Begun Center for
Violence Prevention
Research and Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: AN EVALUATION OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/JUVENILE JUSTICE (BHJJ) INITIATIVE: 2013–2015 WAYNE COUNTY RESULTS

Fred Butcher, Ph.D., Krystel Tossone, Ph.D., & Jeff M. Kretschmar, Ph.D.

Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education
Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences
Case Western Reserve University

Juvenile justice-involved youth with serious behavioral health issues often have inadequate and limited access to care to address their complex and multiple needs. Ohio's Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BHJJ) initiative was intended to transform and expand the local systems' options to better serve these youth. Recent emphasis was placed on decreasing the population of ODYS facilities while providing alternatives to incarceration. Twelve counties participated in BHJJ in the newest biennium: Cuyahoga, Franklin, Cuyahoga, Hamilton, Lucas, Summit, Wayne, Holmes, Trumbull, Mahoning, Lorain, and Wood. BHJJ was funded by a partnership between the Ohio Departments of Youth Services (ODYS) and Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS). The Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education at Case Western Reserve University provided research and evaluation services for the program.

The BHJJ program diverts youth from local and state detention centers into more comprehensive, community-based mental and behavioral health treatment. The BHJJ program enrolled juvenile justice-involved youth between 10-18 years of age who met several of the following criteria: a DSM IV Axis I diagnosis, substantial mental status impairment, a co-occurring substance use/abuse problem, a pattern of violent or criminal behavior, and a history of multi-system involvement.

Demographics and Youth Characteristics

- ❖ 20 youth have been enrolled in BHJJ (65.0% males, 89.5% Caucasian). The average age at intake is about 15.5 years.
- ❖ Youth averaged 2.1 Axis I diagnoses. About 43% of females and 22% of males were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and about 86% of females and 89% of males were diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder.
- ❖ Over 44% of males and 14% of females were diagnosed with both a mental health and substance use diagnosis.
- ❖ Caregivers reported that 71.4% of the females had a history of sexual abuse, over 85.7% talked about suicide, and over 57% had attempted suicide. Over 33% of males and 66% of females had family members who were diagnosed with or showed signs of depression.
- ❖ According to the OYAS, 78.9% of the youth served in Wayne County were either moderate or high risk.
- ❖ Of the youth enrolled in Wayne County, 16% had a felony charge in the 12 months prior to enrollment.

Educational Information

- ❖ Nearly 63% of the youth were suspended or expelled from school in the year prior to their enrollment. At termination, 85.7% of youth were attending school.
- ❖ At termination, workers reported that 100% of youth were attending school more or about the same amount as they were before starting treatment.

Mental/Behavioral Health Outcomes

- ❖ BHJJ youth reported a decrease in Anger trauma symptoms from intake to termination.
- ❖ Results from the Ohio Scales indicated the caregiver, worker, and youth all reported increased youth functioning and decreased problem severity while in BHJJ treatment.
- ❖ Youth reported a decrease in six month alcohol and marijuana use from intake to termination.
- ❖ At intake, 42.9% of youth were at risk for out of home placement. Upon termination, 10% were at risk for out of home placement.
- ❖ 100% of caregivers agreed that they were satisfied with the services their child received through BHJJ and agreed that the services received were culturally and ethnically sensitive.

Termination and Recidivism Information

- ❖ Of the 13 youth who have terminated from the program, 76% were successful. The average length of stay in the program was approximately 5 months.
- ❖ Youth demonstrated decreased juvenile court involvement after termination from BHJJ compared to before enrollment.
- ❖ One year after termination, 9% of completers had a new felony charge.
- ❖ None of the 19 youth enrolled in BHJJ for whom we had recidivism data were sent to an ODYS facility at any time following their enrollment in BHJJ.