

# **SUMMIT COUNTY JUVENILE COURT**

## **DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Prepared by

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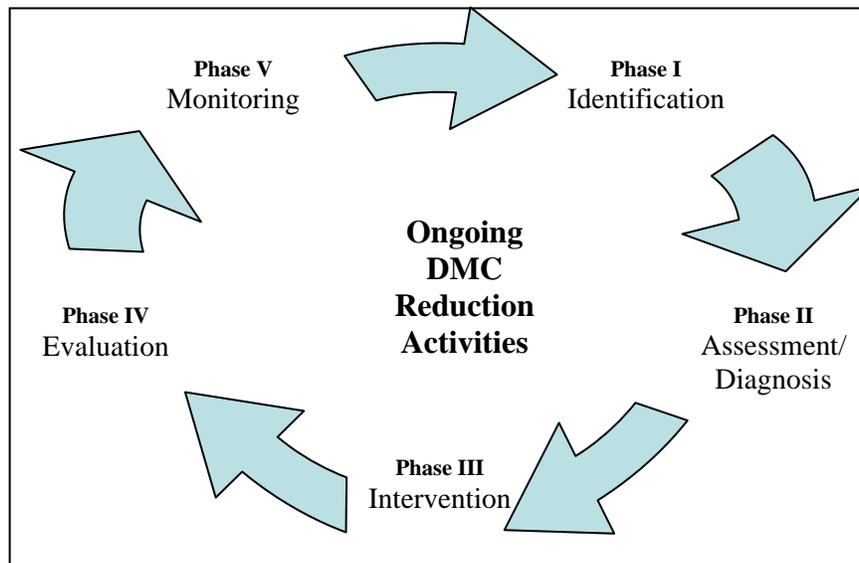
## **I. Introduction**

This report, Summit County Juvenile Court Disproportionate Minority Contact Assessment Report, focuses on disproportionate minority contact (DMC) using the relative rate index at the county level. It has been prepared on behalf of the Honorable Linda Tucci Teodosio, Judge of the Summit County Juvenile Court in northeast Ohio. The report has been prepared by an independent consultant, Dr. RaJade M. Berry-James. Any opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Summit County Juvenile Court or members of the DMC Planning Group.

## II. Overview

This DMC assessment report was prepared on behalf of Summit County Juvenile Court for the purpose of examining the extent to which disproportionate minority contact (DMC) exists in the juvenile justice system Summit County, Ohio.<sup>1</sup> The assessment of DMC in Summit County extends from the core requirement of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2002 which requires all States participating in the Formula Grants Program to address “juvenile delinquency prevention efforts and system improvement efforts designed to reduce, without establishing or requiring numerical standards or quotas, the disproportionate number of juvenile members of minority groups who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.”<sup>2</sup> Federal, state and local efforts to ensure that every youth receives equal and fair treatment in the juvenile justice system relies on the DMC Reduction Cycle illustrated in Figure 1, which utilizes five activities to examine the extent to which minority youth are overrepresented at decision points within the juvenile justice system.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 1: The DMC Reduction Cycle**



<sup>1</sup> This document was supported by an external contract awarded by Summit County Juvenile Court. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of Summit County Juvenile Court.

<sup>2</sup> Disproportionate Minority Contact Technical Assistance Manual. (Aug 2006). Third Edition. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, p. Intro-1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. Intro-4

Summit County Juvenile Court has begun to identify where disproportionate minority contact may exist by examining data collected for the calendar year 2006. In order to examine DMC in the first phase of the cycle, *Identification*, standardized data was collected at all major decision points (e.g., juvenile arrests, referred to juvenile court, cases diverted, cases involving secure detention, cases petitioned/charges filed, cases resulting in delinquent findings, cases resulting in probation placement, cases resulting in confinement in secure juvenile correctional facilities, and cases transferred to adult court). During the *identification phase*, Summit County court data collection and analysis activities relied upon the following questions which helped to guide the *Identification Phase*:

- *Are there differences in the rates of contact based on race/ethnicity? If so, at what stages of the justice system are these differences more pronounced?*
- *Are there differences in the processing of juveniles within the justice system based on race/ethnicity? If so, at what stages of the justice system are these differences more pronounced?*
- *Are the racial/ethnic differences in contact and processing similar across jurisdictions within a state/county? If not, in which jurisdictions are these differences more pronounced?*
- *Are the differences in contact and processing similar across all racial and ethnic groups? If not, which groups seem to show the greatest differences?*
- *Are racial/ethnic differences in contact and processing changing over time?*<sup>4</sup>

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) promotes the use of a relative rate index (RRI) during the *identification phase*. The RRI compares “the relative volume (rate) of activity for each major state [decision point] of the juvenile justice system for minority youth with the volume of that activity for white (majority) youth [and] provides a single index number that indicates the extent to which the volume of that form of contact or activity differs for minority youth and white youth.”<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of identification of overrepresentation, a RRI greater than “1” in any of the nine decision points among the minority racial/ethnic categories warranted further examination.

As we began the *assessment phase* to assess DMC in Summit County, a review of the RRI for Summit County over four years (2003 thru 2006) revealed that, for the most part, contact with minority youth significantly differed from that of white youth at several important decision points (juvenile arrests, referrals to juvenile court, cases involving secure detention, cases resulting in probation placement, cases resulting in confinement in secure juvenile correctional facilities, and cases transferred to adult court). In Table 1, *Summit County DMC Relative Rate Index Comparison*, the RRI in more than half of the decision points illustrates the extent to which contact with minority youth are overrepresented in Summit County. Specifically, African American youth make up the

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<sup>4</sup> Feyerherm, W., Snyder, H. N., and Villarruel, F. (Aug 2006). DMC Technical Assistance Manual, Chapter 1: Identification and Monitoring. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, p. Intro-1.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 1-2.

largest proportion of minority at-risk youth in Summit County – RRI comparisons for African American youth illustrate that DMC affects this group more so than any other minority group. In the past few years, reporting from law enforcement agencies has improved from 67% of agencies reporting in 2003 to 93% of agencies reporting in 2006, thereby strengthening the use of the RRI to determine overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

**Table 1  
Summit County (Ohio) DMC Relative Rate Index Comparison**

Decision Point	African American Youth					All Minorities				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	Stat. Sig.	2003	2004	2005	2006	Stat. Sig.
Juvenile Arrests	4.69	4.26	4.07	2.54	Yes	3.54	3.33	3.15	2.20	Yes
<b>Referred to Juvenile Court</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>2.37</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>3.31</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Cases Diverted	0.49	1.00	0.79	0.70	Yes	0.48	1.07	0.86	0.64	Yes
Cases Involving Secure Detention	1.59	1.52	1.74	1.51	Yes	1.58	1.52	1.54	1.40	Yes
Cases Petitioned (Charge Filed)	1.05	1.04	1.02	1.02	Yes	1.03	1.05	1.01	1.01	No
Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	0.95	1.00	0.97	0.95	Yes	0.98	1.00	0.94	0.93	Yes
Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	1.33	1.35	1.02	1.14	Yes	1.43	1.31	0.97	1.11	No
<b>Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities</b>	<b>1.78</b>	<b>1.84</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.88</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Cases Transferred to Adult Court	3.46	2.17	1.90	5.35	Yes	3.45	2.07	1.64	5.25	Yes
Law Enforcement Agencies Reporting (#)	14/21	15/21	19/21	27/29						
Law Enforcement Agencies Reporting (%)	67%	71%	91%	93%						
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court										

In Summit County, a DMC planning group was formed to investigate plausible reasons why DMC exists and to help guide the *assessment* phase – as a collective body; members of the planning group provide expertise on the academic, social and emotional challenges experienced by youth living in northeast Ohio. The DMC planning group uniquely consists of a diverse contingent of community professionals who represent the Summit County Juvenile Court, neighboring school districts like Akron Public Schools and Nardon Hills Schools, law enforcement from Akron, Barberton, and the Summit County Sheriff Department as well as community leaders such as local pastors representing area churches, members of city council, Child Guidance and Family

Solutions and the Akron Urban League, as well as public administrators of local agencies. To assess DMC in Summit County, we have relied on RRI data from the calendar year 2006 to specifically identify differences in juvenile rates of contact based on race/ethnicity. The DMC planning group identified two of the highest RRI indexes (*referred to juvenile court* and *cases resulting in confinement in secure juvenile correction facilities*) for the assessment of DMC in Summit County.

## II. Assessment Method

In order to assess DMC within Summit County, members of the DMC planning group examined additional data sources including population data for youth at risk (age 10 through 17), as well as the RRI data by community, race/ethnicity, gender, race/ethnicity and gender, and zip code during the identification phase. In the *identification phase*, members of the DMC Planning Group were very interested in pursuing reasons why overrepresentation exists at all of the nine decision points. In all areas where the relative rate index for 2006 was above 1.0, additional data was collected and analyzed to provide the most feasible explanation for differences by race/ethnicity. Community mapping was also used to identify areas to target intervention programming.

To guide the *assessment* phase of the DMC initiative, each decision point of interest is discussed and additional data by racial/ethnic group and community are explored.

### Population Data

Table 2a, *Summit County Youth Population*, describes the at-risk youth population by race/ethnicity in 2006. According to this snapshot, 61,565 youth between the ages of 10 through 17 lived in Summit County, Ohio. Of the more than 60,000 youth in the area, 77% were white, 20% were black or African-American, 1% were Hispanic or Latino, 2% were Asian and less than 1% were American Indian or Alaskan Native. Of all the racial/ethnic groups of youth living in Summit County, 23% were minority. In order to assure that the RRI is a valid indicator of disproportionate minority contact among racial/ethnic groups, the proportion of specific minority youth living in Summit County must represent at least 1% of the total number of at-risk youth (ages 10 to 17) living in Summit County. As such, we rely on the RRI as a valid indicator only for black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian racial/ethnic minority youth groups (see Table 2a).

<b>Table 2a– Summit County Youth Population At Risk (Ages 10 to 17)</b>		
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	47,240	76.7%
Black or African-American	12,171	19.8%
Hispanic or Latino	851	1.4%
Asian	1,158	1.9%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	145	0.2%
Other/Mixed	*	*
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>61,565</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Note: Percentages due to rounding; * – data not available		
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)		

Table 2b, *White and African American At Risk Youth Population Among Five Major Communities in Summit County*, represents a subset of youth population for five of the major communities in Summit County. These data are used for descriptive purposes – most notably to distinguish the proportion of African Americans youth living in each of the communities listed within the data. Subsequent tables depict a subset of Summit County, focusing in on the “top 5 police departments” which account for the greatest proportion of juvenile arrests and number of referrals to juvenile court, respectively. In our assessment of DMC, we found community-level analysis helpful since some of the larger communities have significantly more African Americans than others. As is indicated in Table 2b, more African American youth live in the City of Akron when compared to Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, and Tallmadge.

**Table 2b – White and African American At Risk Youth Population  
Among Five Major Communities in Summit County**

Race/Ethnicity	Akron		Barberton		Cuyahoga Falls		Stow		Tallmadge	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	12,795	59.1%	2590	92.5%	4,557	97.4%	3,686	98.5%	1,856	97.6%
Black or African-American	8,847	40.9%	209	7.5%	122	2.6%	58	1.5%	45	2.4%
Total Youth	21,642	100.0%	2,799	100.0%	4,679	100.0%	3,744	100.0%	1,901	100.0%

Note: Percentages due to rounding; \* – data not available

Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Areas Reported for Racial/Ethnic Groups Meeting 1% Rule; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)

### Relative Rate Index

Table 3a, *Summit County Relative Rate Index (RRI) for Minority Juvenile Compared with White Juveniles*, shows the relative rate index for juveniles living in Summit County during the reporting period, January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006. These data were developed to help identify whether overrepresentation exists and help to explain the stages of the justice system where the differences are more pronounced. When comparing racial/ethnic groups using the relative rate index, nearly all of the decision points indicate that black/African American youth are more likely to be engaged with the juvenile justice system when compared to whites. Specifically, African American juveniles were 2.5 times more likely to be arrested; 3.6 times more likely to be referred to juvenile court; 1.5 times more likely to have their case involve secure detention; 1.1 times more likely to be placed on probation; 3.4 times more likely to be placed in confinement in a secure juvenile correctional facility; and 5.4 times more likely to have their case transferred to adult court. Hispanic/Latino youth were 1.5 times more likely to have their case involve secure detention; 1.1 times more likely to have cases petitioned; 2.4 times more likely to be placed on probation; and 3.2 times more likely to be placed in confinement involving a secure juvenile correctional facility when compared to white youth. Asian juveniles were 1.9 times more likely to have their cases diverted; 1.2 times more likely to be placed on probation when compared to white youth. Based on these

data, African American juveniles are overrepresented in all of the decision points except cases diverted, cases petitioned, and cases which resulted in delinquent findings. Regarding the cases diverted, the relative rate index shows that African Americans are less likely to participate in diversion programs and Asians are more likely to participate in diversion programs when compared to white juveniles. These data led the DMC planning committee to consider whether sufficient diversion opportunities were available for African American youth.

**Table 3a – Summit County Relative Rate Index (RRI) for Minority Juvenile Compared with White Juveniles, 2006**

Decision Points	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	All Minorities
Population at risk (age 10 thru 17)	12,171	851	1,158	14,325
Juvenile Arrests	2.54	0.15	0.13	2.20
Referred to Juvenile Court	3.55	0.58	0.11	3.31
Cases Diverted	0.70	---	1.88	0.64
Cases Involving Secure Detention	1.51	1.54	0.58	1.40
Cases Petitioned	1.02	1.07	0.94	1.01
Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	0.95	0.94	0.80	0.93
Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	1.14	2.41	1.21	1.11
Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	3.38	3.20	---	3.33
Cases Transferred to Adult Court	5.35	---	---	5.25

Notes: RRI reported for racial/ethnic groups which comprise 1% of total youth population.

Table 3b, *Relative Rate Index for African American Youth in 5 Top Communities*, represents the relative rate index for African American youth in each of the “top five” referring communities. While other racial/ethnic minority groups such as Hispanic/Latino and Asian youth met the 1% threshold for analysis at the county level, at the community level, the number of Hispanic/Latino youth in these racial/ethnic groups is too small for further analysis at the city level. With respect to RRI rates for African American youth in the five largest communities, many of the members of the DMC Planning Group shared anecdotal information about the diversion opportunities available for youth in Summit County. As a matter of concern, diversion opportunities exist in most of the communities in Summit County. However, in one of the urban areas with the largest number of African American youth, fewer diversion opportunities exist. For example, in the suburban community, youth may have multiple opportunities to participate in the diversion program but in the Akron community, youth only get one opportunity to participate in the diversion program, largely due to the size of the population at risk or the large numbers of youth served by the diversion unit. As depicted in Table 3b, African American youth are more likely to have their cases diverted in Akron, Cuyahoga Falls and Stow communities. The lack of diversion opportunities in the Akron community is of particular concern since more African American youth in Summit County live in the city of Akron when compared to any other city.

**Table 3b – Relative Rate Index (RRI) for African American Youth Compared with White Youth In Top 5 Communities**

Decision Points	Akron	Barberton	Cuyahoga Falls	Stow	Tallmadge
Juvenile Arrests	3.78	4.83	6.92	4.65	2.52
Refer to Juvenile Court	4.26	4.78	10.04	5.71	2.53
Cases Diverted	0.25	1.87	0.31	0.51	--
Cases Involving Secure Detention					
Cases Petitioned					
Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings					
Cases Resulting in Probation Placement					
Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities					
Cases Transferred to Adult Court					

Notes: RRI reported for racial/ethnic groups which comprise 1% of total youth population.

Juvenile Arrests

Table 4a, *Summit County Juvenile Arrests by Race/Ethnicity*, depicts juvenile arrests by race/ethnicity for the calendar year 2006. Of the 5,542 juveniles arrested in Summit County, 60% were white and 40% were minority. Interestingly enough, African American youth make up 39% of all youth arrested - despite the fact that they only make up 20% of youth population in Summit County.

**Table 4a – Summit County Juvenile Arrests by Race/Ethnicity**

Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
White	3,324	60.0%
Black or African-American	2,175	39.2%
Hispanic or Latino	9	0.2%
Asian	11	0.2%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	0.0%
Other/Mixed	21	0.4%
Total Youth	5,542	100.0%

Note: Percentages due to rounding; \* – data not available

Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)

Further analysis of the number of juveniles arrested indicated that five police departments account for 80% of the reported juvenile arrests. Table 4b, *Summit County Juvenile Arrests for Top 5 Arresting Police Departments*, reflects the top five reporting police departments (e.g., Akron, Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, and Tallmadge Police Departments). In Akron, more than 70% of all youth arrested are African American; compared to 28% in Barberton, 15% in Cuyahoga Falls, 7% in Stow and 6% in

Tallmadge. In Akron, African American youth make up 72% of all arrests, even though black youth only make up 40% of the at-risk youth population in Akron. In Barberton, African American youth make up 28% of all juvenile arrests even though they only make up 8% of the population at-risk. In Cuyahoga Falls, African American youth make up 15% of all youth arrested, even though they only make up 3% of the population at-risk. In Stow, African American youth make up 7% of all youth arrested even though they only make up 2% of the population at-risk. In Tallmadge, African American youth make up 6% of juvenile arrests even though they only make up 2% of the population at-risk. While the number of juveniles arrested does not necessarily reflect an unduplicated headcount, the proportion of arrests when compared to the racial/ethnic proportion in specific communities warrants further exploration as these data represent an overrepresentation of African American youth at this decision point.

**Table 4b – Summit County Juvenile Arrests for Top 5 Arresting Police Departments**

Race/Ethnicity	Akron		Barberton		Cuyahoga Falls		Stow		Tallmadge	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
White	645	27.6	331	71.7	653	83.3	465	91.9	295	93.1
Black or African-American	1688	72.2	129	27.9	121	15.4	34	6.7	18	5.7
Hispanic or Latino	2	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.4	2	0.6
Asian	1	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other/Mixed	3	0.1	0	0.0	8	1.0	5	1.0	2	0.6
Total Youth	2339	100.9	462	100.0	784	99.9	506	100.0	317	100.0

Note: Percentages due to rounding; \* – data not available

Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)

Table 4c, *Law Enforcement Statistics in Top 5 Communities*, displays a limited view of policing information for the cities of interest. Among the top five communities, the number of full-time law enforcement employees varies somewhat as does the number of police officers for each of the communities identified. In comparison to all of the other communities highlighted, the City of Akron has more police per 1,000 residents. However, we could not identify whether there was a policing strategy that would lead to more juvenile arrests in one community when compared to another.

**Table 4c– Law Enforcement Statistics in Top 5 Communities**

	Akron	Barberton	Cuyahoga Falls	Stow	Tallmadge
Full-time Law Enforcement Employees	496	52	116	48	38
Full-time Police Officers	453	40	93	38	27
Officers per 1,000 residents	2.15	1.47	1.85	1.10	1.55

Source: 2006 Law Enforcement Statistics available from [www.city-data.com](http://www.city-data.com), last accessed on 2/5/08.

Referred to Juvenile Court

Table 5a, *Summit County Referrals to Juvenile Court*, reflects the number of referrals to juvenile court by racial/ethnic group. Of the 5,793 referrals to juvenile court, African American youth represent 46% of the referrals in Summit County - even though they only represent 20% of the youth population in Summit County. Overall, police referrals account for 54% of youth referrals to juvenile court (3,140 of the 5,793 referrals) – other referrals are due to school filings primarily for truancy.

<b>Table 5a – Summit County Referrals to Juvenile Court</b>		
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	2893	49.9%
Black or African-American	2645	45.7%
Hispanic or Latino	30	0.5%
Asian	8	0.1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0.0%
Other/Mixed	216	3.7%
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>5793</b>	<b>99.9%</b>
Note: Percentages due to rounding; * – data not available		
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)		

We also examined the racial/ethnic distribution of referrals to juvenile court for the top 5 police departments as depicted in Table 5b. The preliminary analysis shows that most of the referrals come from the City of Akron. Of the 2,185 Akron referrals, 75% are of African American youth – even though they only make up 41% of the youth population in Akron. Of all referrals to juvenile court, the City of Akron refers more black youth than any other city among the “Top 5.” These data reflect the cumulative effect of overrepresentation among black youth, stemming from the proportion of juveniles arrested in Summit County and in the City of Akron.

<b>Table 5b – Summit County Referrals to Juvenile Court for “Top 5” Police Departments</b>										
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Akron</b>		<b>Barberton</b>		<b>Cuyahoga Falls</b>		<b>Stow</b>		<b>Tallmadge</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
White	554	25.4	280	72.2	212	78.8	178	91.7	98	94.2
Black or African-American	1631	74.6	108	27.8	57	21.2	16	8.3	6	5.8
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>2185</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Note: Percentages due to rounding; * – data not available										
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)										

Cases Diverted

When examining cases diverted among the five communities of interest, Table 6a shows that for both cities, Akron and Barberton, more than 40% of the cases diverted were for African American youth.

<b>Table 6a – Summit County Cases Diverted Before Adjudication Among “Top 5” Referring Communities</b>										
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Akron</b>		<b>Barberton</b>		<b>Cuyahoga Falls</b>		<b>Stow</b>		<b>Tallmadge</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
White	241	57.7	18	58.1	166	92.2	173	95.6	46	100.0
Black or African-American	177	42.3	13	41.9	14	7.8	8	4.4	0	0.0
Hispanic or Latino	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other/Mixed	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Percentages due to rounding; \* – data not available  
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)

### Juvenile Confinement

In 2006, 119 Summit County youth were committed to the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS). Table 7a reflects the racial/ethnic distribution of juveniles committed to DYS. Of the 119 youth committed to DYS, 30% were white, 68% were African American and 2% were bi-racial. More than two-thirds of the youth committed to DYS were members of a minority group.

<b>Table 7a – Summit County Cases Resulting in Confinement Frequency Distribution of DYS Commitments by Race/Ethnicity</b>		
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	36	30.3%
Black or African-American	81	68.1%
Bi-Racial	2	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 7b reflects the frequency distribution of the number of youth committed to DYS by race/ethnicity and gender. Of the 119 youth committed, 91% were males and 9% were females. Among the white youth committed, 14% were females and 86% were males.

Among African American youth committed, 7% were females and 93% were males. Among bi-racial youth committed, 100% were males. These data suggest that in all racial/ethnic groups, more males are committed than females from Summit County.

<b>Table 7b – Summit County Cases Resulting in Confinement DYS Commitments by Race/Ethnicity and Gender</b>								
	<b>White</b>		<b>Black or African American</b>		<b>Bi-Racial</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Females	5	13.9%	6	7.4%	0	0.0%	11	9.2%
Males	31	86.1%	75	92.6%	2	100.0%	108	90.8%
Total	36	100.0%	81	100.0%	2	100.0%	119	100.0%

Table 7c reflects comparison data between original commitments and revocations for the same group of committed youth. Of the 77 juveniles who were committed to DYS based on an original disposition, more males than females were committed – regarding race, more black males are committed when compared to white males. Of the 42 juveniles who were committed(revoked) to DYS because of a parole violation, more males than females were committed (revoked) – regarding race, more black males than white males are committed (revoked) because of parole violations.

<b>Table 7c – Summit County Cases Resulting in Confinement By Type of DYS Commitments, Race/Ethnicity and Gender</b>								
	<b>White</b>		<b>Black or African American</b>		<b>Bi-Racial</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Original</b>								
Females	4	15.4%	4	8.0%	0	0.0%	8	10.4%
Males	22	84.6%	46	92.0%	1	100.0%	69	89.6%
Total	26	100.0%	50	100.0%	1	100.0%	77	100.0%
<b>Revocations</b>								
Females	1	10.0%	2	6.5%	0	0.0%	3	7.1%
Males	9	90.0%	29	93.5%	1	100.0%	39	92.9%
Total	10	100.0%	31	100.0%	1	100.0%	42	100.0%

Note: Percentages due to rounding. Revocations include parole violations.

Commitments by Felony Adjudications

Table 8a depicts the frequency distribution of youth committed to DYS by their history of felony adjudications. Of the 119 youth committed to DYS in 2006, more than two-thirds had multiple felony adjudications. Among white youth, 25% were committed to DYS on their first felony and 75% were committed to DYS after a history of prior felony adjudications. Among African American youth, 17% were committed to DYS on their first felony and 83% were committed to DYS after a history of multiple prior felony adjudications. These data suggest no disparate treatment in cases that result in DYS confinement since most African American youth are committed to DYS with multiple prior felony adjudications.

<b>Table 8a – Summit County Cases Resulting in DYS Confinement Juveniles Committed by Race/Ethnicity and Number of Felony Adjudications</b>								
	White		Black or African American		Bi-Racial		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
First Felony Adjudication	9	25.0%	14	17.3%	1	50.0%	24	20.2%
Multiple Prior Felony Adj.	27	75.0%	67	82.7%	1	50.0%	95	79.8%
Total	36	100.0%	81	100.0%	2	100.0%	119	100.0%

Note: Percentages due to rounding.

We further examined F1 felony adjudications, the most serious cases adjudicated in Summit County, by race/ethnicity for those youth confined to DYS in 2006. Table 8b, *Summit County Cases Resulting in DYS Confinement F1 Felony Adjudications by Race/Ethnicity*, shows that almost two-thirds of all F1 adjudications involved African American youth.

<b>Table 8b – Summit County Cases Resulting in DYS Confinement F1 Felony Adjudications by Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
White	6	27.3%
Black or African-American	14	63.6%
Hispanic or Latino	0	0.0%
Asian	0	0.0%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders	0	0.0%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0.0%
Other/Mixed	2	9.1%
Total Youth	22	100.0%

Note: Percentages due to rounding; \* – data not available;  
Source: Summit County Juvenile Court, Data Entry Section (Area Reported: Summit County, Ohio; Reporting Period: 01-Jan-2006 through 31-Dec-2006)

In Table 8c, an analysis by race/ethnicity based on the history of felony adjudications and gender shows that females are more likely to be committed to DYS for one felony when compared to males. (This fact is further explained when examining F1 adjudications by commitments for females. Six of the 7 single felony commitments were cases that involved F1 adjudications). Among females, more white females are committed for one felony and more African American females are committed for multiple felonies (although these observations are small in comparison to the total number of commitments). Among males, African Americans are as likely to be committed for a single felony when compared to whites. (All fourteen of the F1 adjudications in Table 7b were committed by African American males and resulted in DYC commitments).

**Table 8c – Summit County Cases Resulting in DYS Confinement  
Juveniles Committed by Race/Ethnicity, Felony Adjudications and Gender**

<b>Females</b>								
	<b>White</b>		<b>Black or African American</b>		<b>Bi-Racial</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
One Felony	4	80.0%	3	50.0%	0	0.0%	7	63.6%
Multiple Prior Felony Adj.	1	20.0%	3	50.0%	0	0.0%	4	36.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Males</b>								
	<b>White</b>		<b>Black or African American</b>		<b>Bi-Racial</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
One Felony	5	16.1%	11	14.7%	1	50.0%	17	15.7%
Multiple Prior Felony Adj.	26	83.9%	64	85.3%	1	50.0%	91	84.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Note: Percentages due to rounding.								

#### IV. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Between January 2008 and May 2008, the DMC planning group continued to discuss factors to help measure the extent of disproportionate minority contact (DMC) in the Summit County juvenile justice system. For all of the decision points, we collected data that would help us identify overrepresentation, disparate treatment and the relative rate index for at-risk youth in the county. In addition, we reviewed assessment instruments that were used to make decisions about youth whose cases involved detention. Realizing that DMC likely has a cumulative effect on the juvenile justice system, the DMC planning group selected two decision points with the highest RRI to address during the intervention phase. Specifically, the planning committee identified two decision points which include *referrals to juvenile court* and *cases resulting in confinement in secure juvenile correctional facilities* as the recommended areas for the two which interventions were developed.

Regarding *referrals to juvenile court*, it became apparent after examining data by community that most of the referrals are driven by the City of Akron. Almost 40% of the referrals to juvenile court come from Akron. Of the Akron referrals, about two-thirds involve African American youth. The diversion policy in Akron permits youth to participate in the diversion program only once before their case is referred to juvenile court which compounds DMC in the system since suburban youth in Summit County receive multiple diversion opportunities. Table 9, *Akron Juvenile Referrals by Zip Code*, was used to identify areas where the bulk of juvenile referrals came from. In planning the intervention to address referrals to juvenile court, high referral areas will be given first priority.

<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>Number</b>
44306	686
44320	541
44203	368
44305	367
44310	343
44301	324

Regarding *cases resulting in secure confinement*, we examined commitments by race, gender, adjudications and revocations. These data showed no evidence of disparate treatment although the relative rate index shows that African Americans are more than 3 times likely to be committed to DYS. One explanation of this disproportion is that more African Americans were adjudicated on F1 charges and more were committed because of revocations. When we looked at the cases that were transferred to adult court, we also found that these cases were done so because of the mandatory bind over laws – indicating the severity of the charges.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Between January 2008 and May 2008, the DMC planning group discussed the following recommendations for interventions that could address overrepresentation at all of the nine decision points. These DMC reduction initiatives include, but are not limited, to the following areas:

- Assessment studies
  - Survey parents to identify any cultural, linguistic, or social barriers that prevent them from fully engaging with juvenile court; and
  - Support the development of a juvenile court parent/juvenile training video which helps families maneuver through the system and increases their understanding of the policies, procedures and processes in juvenile court.
- Alternatives to detention
  - Revise the Summit County Juvenile Court Detention Risk Assessment to ensure that it is a risk-neutral instrument;
  - Include a race-neutral criteria such as “youth engagement in productive activities like school or work” when assessment at-risk behaviors resulting in detention; and
  - Review the risk assessment tool with other tools in the field to ensure that weights do not unintentionally lead to bias among certain racial/ethnic groups.<sup>6</sup>
- Diversion programs
  - Examine administrative procedures for diversion programs with juvenile court and within each community; and
  - Create an in-house diversion program to ‘level the field’ for youth referred from urban communities. Judge Teodosio discussed the development of a diversion initiative at juvenile court for youth referred – the diversion initiative will likely include a completed contract for youth who participate, identify activities that youth must complete and allow for youth to have their case treated unofficially as long as they comply with the court’s directive in a timely manner.
- Nonsecure and emergency shelters
  - Identify programs like Safe Landing which are accessible to youth and are gender specific and provide shelter for youth who cannot return home.
- Reentry/Community Justice programs
  - Link into formal aftercare programs designed for juveniles being released (reentry) from custody and/or juveniles on parole. Some of the program activities include helping youth find jobs, securing appointments for youth

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<sup>6</sup> See E. R. Cabaniss et al., (2007). Reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system: Promising practices. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, pp. 393-401.

who need follow-up, conducting a home assessment on behalf of youth scheduled for release and well as identifying a mentoring program for youth.

- Develop programs like *Police Working Together*, *Victim Impact Panels*, *Youth Ministries* supported by community churches to help bring greater awareness in the community about the factors that are affecting DMC and the need to create solutions that reduce juvenile contact with the courts.

Subsequent meetings with the DMC Planning Committee produced meaningful progress in the pursuit of reducing minority contact within Summit County Juvenile Court. Two very different recommendations emerged regarding DMC. In Summit County, we are committed to “turning lives around, one child at a time” through the ongoing assessment of disproportionate minority contact, the development of effective prevention and intervention programming and the enhancement of community collaboration through informed decision making. This vision and mission of the DMC initiative is addressed in the DMC planning group’s overwhelming support of an administrative change proposed in juvenile court to affect cases involving secure commitment. To ensure uniformity in decision making, Judge Teodosio began reviewing all adjudicated cases which could lead to a commitment to DYS. To address referrals to juvenile court, Judge Teodosio has proposed an internal diversion program as an intervention for youth living within urban areas with a “one strike” diversion policy. In addition, members of the DMC planning committee helped to develop a program called *Takin’ It to the Streets* as a prevention strategy to reduce the number of youth referred to juvenile court. The objective of the program is to educate and inform the community of youth at-risk behaviors and community resources available to families. In addition, this program involves religious leaders from churches in the local area. It is tailored to be implemented in a community setting in the high referral areas of the city of Akron.

As developed by the members of the DMC planning committee, *Takin’ It to the Streets* will be a seven week program over the summer which partners with religious groups, schools, and community-based organizations. The program is based on an existing collaboration between Akron Urban League Gov Strickland’s Project Achieve Initiative, Akron Public Schools, Keepers of the Art Inc., and H.E.L.P. The program will include the following topics:

- *You and the Law* breaks down the wall of misunderstanding between youth and law enforcement. Youth learn how to deal with law enforcement officers and learn how the justice system directly affects their generation.
- *The System* helps youth and parents understand how a youth moves through the juvenile justice system from the time of initial police contact through court case disposition.
- *Negative & Positive Images in Hip Hop & Media* discusses the negative and positive images of urban culture to help youth improve decision making.

- *Your Court, Your Community* provides an opportunity for parents and youth to discuss with Judge Teodosio alternatives to sentencing and innovative ideas for the Summit County Juvenile Court.
- *A Focus on Parents* allows parents and youth an opportunity to hear the voice of parents who can share with them words of wisdom and milestones toward success.
- *Truancy & Youth* informs parents and youth about the State of Ohio mandates concerning truancy laws.
- *An Affair to Remember* provides an opportunity to “meet and greet” individuals who provide specialized services for parents and youth.

In order to implement this intervention, we have relied on community churches on the east side and west side of Akron to host the program. In addition, speakers include staff from juvenile court, local police officers as well as paid facilitators for a few of the sessions. A Facility-use fee is given to the church facility to help with clean up costs and pizza is served. Incentives are used each night as a reward for participation. In addition, evaluation instruments were developed for each session to ensure that participants can have an opportunity to give the program feedback on each session and have an opportunity to suggest additional topics. As initially designed, we hope that this program will be replicated among community churches or within neighborhoods where referrals are extremely high.

In summary, the intervention strategy to address referrals to juvenile court and commitments to DYS is reflected by the logic model developed during the *assessment* phase of this initiative (see Appendix A). In addition to reducing disproportionate minority contact at these key decision points, the logic model also reflects the proposed development of an internal diversion program for youth referred to juvenile court.

# Appendix A

## Summit County Juvenile Court DMC Logic Model

