

2012 Annual DMC Report Update

Ohio's Efforts to Reduce Disparity in the Juvenile Justice System

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES

Ohio's Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Initiative

Background

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the Department of Youth Services' (DYS) facilitation of a statewide initiative to reduce the disproportionate number of minority youth who have contact with the justice system. Since August 2007, DHS has worked with juvenile courts in Ohio's 14 counties with the largest minority populations to develop strategies to reduce the number of minority youth who have contact with the system. The counties participating in the DMC Initiative include Allen, Butler, Clark, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Montgomery, Richland, Stark, Summit and Trumbull. Officials from each juvenile court committed to be a part of the process and have continued to partner in the initiative.

In the first two years of the DMC Initiative, DHS contracted with The Ohio State University, Center for Learning Excellence (CLEX) to provide training and technical assistance to county participants. Additionally, DHS provided state funding to these partners to conduct local assessments to help identify causes of disparity. On January 1, 2009, programs were funded to address the needs identified in the assessments as part of a statewide strategy to reduce DMC. Initially, 21 programs were selected to provide services and programming for African-American youth. In 2010, three additional programs received discretionary funding for one time programs. The total number of programs fluctuates as new discretionary programs are added and other discretionary programs end.

DMC Reduction Strategies and Program Implementation

Since 2003, DHS has used the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP) Relative Rate Index (RRI) method to determine the level of disparity between white youth and minority youth in the amount of contact with law enforcement and the juvenile justice system. Data has consistently shown the greatest disparity to be at the arrest, commitment and transferred to adult court decision points. It should also be noted that a previous version of OJJDP's DMC data collection tool showed much higher rates of referral to juvenile courts. Recent revisions to the tool, made by OJJDP, produced RRI referral numbers that were much lower than the original calculations. As a result, DHS recalculated the referral rates for each of the 14 counties back through the beginning of calendar year 2006.

Using the local DMC assessments as a guide, community programs were selected to help address disparity within their respective communities. Juvenile courts and community programs targeted, and have continued to target, African-American youth in prevention and early intervention programs. Following are brief summaries of the programs implemented during the 2011 calendar year.

**Allen County Big Brothers Big Sisters
DMC 45804 Initiative**

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) has been operating in the local schools for more than two full academic years. Of the 71 students served during calendar year 2011, 49 were matched in one-on-one mentoring relationships. During the year, students showed significant improvements towards achieving program outcomes in areas such as school preparedness, classroom participation, and appropriate classroom behavior. Program staff provided enhanced match support to these students by building relationships with their parents, intervening directly when necessary, and meeting with school teams to address their needs and their families.

**Allen County Juvenile Court
2nd Chance Intervention**

The juvenile court's DMC Committee continued to support a safe neighborhood coordinator position to oversee the OLWEUS bullying prevention programs implemented in area middle schools. The goal was to reduce school bullying, and thereby reduce the number of school referrals to juvenile court. The OLWEUS curriculum provided youth with alternatives to bullying and violent behaviors by teaching skills to avoid conflicts and to resolve disagreements. Focus groups and other program-related activities brought community-wide attention to the issue of DMC, and school-related charges against minority youth were reduced.

**Butler County Big Brothers Big Sisters
One-to-One Mentoring**

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) operates under the belief that every child has the ability to succeed and thrive in life. The BBBS DMC program served children referred by the local juvenile court by placing them in one-to-one mentoring relationships with adult volunteer mentors who underwent extensive screening and training. BBBS supported the volunteer, child, and parent/guardian throughout the mentoring relationship by assigning them to a professional staff member on the team. In 2011, BBBS placed 31 children in mentoring relationships.

**Butler County Alcohol and Chemical Abuse Council
Community Mediation Program**

The *Community Mediation Program* served 39 youth between October and December 2011 and 43 youth between January and March 2012. The program provided mediations and problem solving sessions to minority youth and their families at the Butler County Juvenile Court and several local schools. In school, a mediator/facilitator assisted youth in schools, and youth and parents were also provided services at the juvenile court to address family or other issues contributing to bad behavior and school-related problems. During the sessions, youth and parents were empowered to develop solutions and create an agreement that documents how the issues will be resolved.

Clark State Community College STARS

The *STARS* program targeted minority 5th grade students at Perrin Woods Elementary School who were identified as at-risk due to economic and community factors. The program has two components, the first of which provided students with real-world engineering challenges such as designing and building robots, math and science challenges, and team building. The second component of the program included college and career awareness, activities to improve relationships, and college student mentoring. During 2011, the programs served 36 minority youth.

Cuyahoga County Golden Ciphers DMC Program

Youth were referred to the DMC Program by either the juvenile court during intake or by law enforcement after contact. The program provided weekly gender specific cognitive behavioral sessions that included life skills, problem solving, critical thinking, anger management, and conflict resolution in a group setting, as well as monthly one-on-one sessions with youth. The purpose of the one-on-one sessions was to determine whether a youth had issues that required additional services. Parents/guardians were required to be a part of the intake process and to participate in the program. Program staff had contact with parents/guardians via phone or in person at least monthly.

Cuyahoga County Bellefaire JCB School Based Services

The *School Based Services* program served minority youth who were referred by the juvenile court or through parent referrals. The program had two components, the Intensive Adolescent Substance Abuse Program and In Home Services. The Substance Abuse Program provided mental health and chemical dependency counseling. The In Home Services program provided skill building and individual and family therapy for the youth and parents/guardians.

Cuyahoga County Godsson Finish First

Finish First is a school-based program that provided extensive curriculum about the legal system and the types of crimes that most frequently affect minorities. In 2011, new components were added to the curriculum to address national issues such as bullying and image targeting, and one additional staff member was hired to facilitate group sessions at Shaw High School and Glenville High School. Programming at Shaw High School was provided weekly to youth who had in-school suspensions, and services at Glenville High School were held weekly in two classrooms. Youth were also taught decision making skills that should ultimately result in less contact with the juvenile court.

YMCA of Greater Cleveland Teen Court and Leadership Program

The YMCA of Greater Cleveland's *Teen Court and Leadership Program* provided school based programming aimed at reducing minority contact through youth volunteer training, exposure to justice-related activities, and teen court trials. Additional program components included anger management, counseling, black heritage awareness, entrepreneurship and volunteerism, tutoring, and weekly group sessions. In 2011, the program expanded services to two additional high schools which are both located on the eastside of Cleveland.

Franklin County, Directions for Youth and Families Anger Management Options

The *Anger Management Options* program provided 2,494 hours of anger management services to 146 minority youth. Referrals were received from schools, parents/guardians, protective services, Net-Care, Franklin County Juvenile Court, and other mental health agencies. Services included comprehensive psycho-social mental health assessments and individual, family and group interventions. Of the 146 youth who participated in 2011, 99 exited the program with 74 completing program requirements. In addition, 67 of the 99 youth who exited the program showed improved skills and the ability to better manage their behaviors and anger. For all youth, 85.6 percent did not incur a juvenile court case filing after entering the program.

Hamilton County Crossroads Center Strengthening Families

During 2011, the *Strengthening Families* program provided services to 21 adolescents in 17 families with 14 siblings. The program provided youth with the skills required to respond to conflict with discipline and emotional intelligence. It also taught respect for authority within the family through weekly family groups that drew upon the experiences of parents with similar family challenges. Additionally, program staff provided 109.73 hours of case management services in 84 individual occurrences. Services included screening and scheduling new participants, providing updates to referral sources, and referral to emergency services such as transportation, utility assistance, and housing referrals.

Hamilton County Big Brother Big Sisters Mentoring Impact

The *Mentoring Impact* program matched minority youth from the most at-risk, inner city neighborhoods of Cincinnati with positive mentors. In the Community-Based Mentoring program, volunteers went to the youth's home to pick him or her up to engage in activities in the community. In the School-Based Mentoring program, volunteers met with youth at their school once a week during the school year, and were given the option to stay in the relationship over the summer months by exchanging letters and participating in a group summer picnic. The participating schools included St. Francis Seraph in Over the Rhine and St. Boniface in the north side.

In 2011, there were 78 new DMC matches. The agency tracked court involvement on a quarterly basis with the consent of parents and found that less than five percent of the youth served had been arrested or became court involved.

Hamilton County Juvenile Court Community Control as an Alternative to Secure Detention

The *Community Control as an Alternative to Secure Detention* program targeted urban minority youth and utilized community monitoring and programming as an alternative to secure detention. The program was implemented in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati and in partnership with the community and Hamilton County Juvenile Court. Other services included notification and reminders for upcoming court appearances and resource referrals for families. During the 2011 calendar year, the alternative to secure detention program served a total of 194 minority youth.

Lucas County Paraclete Social Outreach Rise Up Program

The *Rise Up Program* provided pre-arrest diversion programming to eight minority 5th and 6th grade students attending Walbridge Elementary School. Youth were referred by a teacher or school principal due to disciplinary problems that violated local safe school ordinances. The program consisted of two after school sessions per week that addressed student behavior that included poor attitudes, lack of social skills, character building, and relationship building. The sessions incorporated age appropriate topics and activities, group discussions, role playing and mentoring. Youth who participated in the program from January to June demonstrated a 66 percent improvement in behavior, and youth who participated from July to December demonstrated a 40 percent improvement based on a 23 item Behavior Frequency Scale.

Lucas County Family Services of Northwest Ohio Police Probation Team

The *Police Probation Team* (PPT) provided a pre-arrest diversion program to 131 minority youth attending Woodward High School, Scott High School and Jones Junior High School. The program is staffed jointly by Family Services of Northwest Ohio and the Toledo Police Department. All youth who participated in the program admitted to committing a safe school ordinance violation and were required to sign a contract with the program. Youth were monitored under the contract for 6 to 12 months and participated in referred services as deemed appropriate. During 2011, 28 youth exhibited changes in targeted behaviors and 53 youth completed program requirements.

Montgomery County Juvenile Court DMC Diversion Program

The *Disproportionate Minority Contact/Diversion Program* diverted minority youth, ages 11-17, away from the juvenile justice system. Unruly youth and youth with little or no prior contact were assessed and linked with appropriate services. Thus far, 323 youth have been successfully

diverted and 180 youth successfully completed all program requirements. In cases where there was a victim, a mediator met with both parties to help resolve issues.

Richland County Family Life Counseling DMC Reduction Program

Family Life Counseling has continued to experience success with its restorative practices program as a means of addressing behaviors that may cause DMC. The program operated in seven local junior and senior high schools, and also accepted referrals from the juvenile court and Mansfield Police Department. During 2011, 101 youth participated in the program with 91 successfully completing all program requirements. The mentoring component of the program has served 11 males and 16 females with mentees displaying improvements in social interactions, leadership abilities, and community volunteerism.

Stark County Family Court Community Support and Diversion

The *Community Support and Diversion* program continued to use established criteria for selecting appropriate cases for diversion and completing the referral process. The program employed a full time wraparound coordinator/mentor/case manager to ensure that youth were administered a risk assessment, and received services using a high fidelity wraparound model. Outcomes included increased school attendance, meaningful relationships established between school and parents, abstinence from substance abuse, and increased vocational opportunities.

Summit County East Akron Community House Youth Outreach Center

East Akron Community House addressed disparity by developing and implementing a minority youth work program for youth ages 14-17. This program served youth on probation and parole predominately from the eastside of Akron. In 2011, 18 youth were employed. Their job duties included but were not limited to landscaping, building maintenance and revitalizing green spaces for the community. Youth attended classes on work readiness, work ethics, life skills, banking and personal hygiene. Positive outcomes for youth included clean drug screens, improved school attendance, and no further involvement with the juvenile court. Youth who maintained employment had the opportunity to go on various educational and recreational trips. Several youth completed the program and continued to be successfully employed outside the agency.

Summit County Juvenile Court Juvenile Court Diversion

In 2011, the *Juvenile Court Diversion* program served 193 minority youth. An intake officer worked with the youth and parents to develop a diversion plan developed from growing list of more than 25 options. The intake officer then accompanied the family to an unofficial hearing to discuss the diversion plan before a hearing officer. Youth who completed all the criteria within the specified limit had their charges sealed without ever becoming official.

Trumbull County United Methodist Community Center Truancy Intervention Program

The *Truancy Intervention Program* conducted visits to the homes, schools, communities and the juvenile court to assess the needs of youth participating in the program. Staff conducted needs assessments, developed individual success plans and linked youth and families to additional services. School visits involved attendance monitoring and school board hearings. Visits to the juvenile court included court hearings and case reviews. Community visits provided an opportunity to build relationships with students and families outside of the normal program environment. During the year, the program served 50 African-American youth between the ages of 15-17 with an emphasis on targeting specific high-risk zip code areas. Families enrolled in the program received monthly food baskets that included fresh fruits and vegetables.

Systems Improvement Activities

DYS' DMC Institutes

DYS continued to provide county DMC teams and programs with support and technical assistance through funding and DMC Institutes. Community and juvenile court programs provided services to minority youth to reduce the contact and divert youth away from the juvenile justice system. DYS also contracted with the University of Toledo (UT) to facilitate five DMC Institutes around topics that may contribute to disparity. The Institutes were well attended and evaluated favorably by the participants. The Institutes are summarized as follows:

DMC Institute # 1 - Families, Communities, and DMC

(Discussing how families and communities can contribute to reducing disproportionality)

Date: 10/5/2011

Attendance: 64 participants

Location: ODYS Training Academy, Delaware, Ohio

Presenters: Marcus Goodwin, Co-Founder, House of Emmanuel
Richard Montgomery, Co-Founder, CultureLoveFamily

Sessions: *DMC, Grassroots and Community Based Services*
The Black Family and the Justice System

DMC Institute # 2 – DMC Through the JDAI Lens

(Learning the relationship between DMC and the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative)

Date: 2/29/2012

Attendance: 68 participants

Location: ODYS Training Academy, Delaware, Ohio

Presenters: Beth Oprisch, State JDAI Coordinator, Ohio Department of Youth Services
Angela Chang, Staff Attorney, Children's Law Center
Kendra Kec, Asst. Court Administrator/JDAI Coordinator, Lucas Co. Juv. Court

Sessions: *JDAI 101*
JDAI in Ohio
Reducing Racial Disparities

DMC Institute # 3 – Effective Police Interactions with Youth

(Improving communication between law enforcement and youth)

Date: 5/2/2012

Attendance: 78 participants

Location: Summit County Juvenile Court, Akron, Ohio

Presenters: Wendi Faulkner, OJDDP Compliance Monitor, Ohio Dept. of Youth Services
Michael Murray, Detective, Norwalk, Connecticut Police Department
Andre Parker, Sergeant, Waterford, Connecticut Police Department

Sessions: *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Compliance*
Why We Are Here
Equal Treatment of Diverse Youth
Why Youth Do What They Do
Police/Youth Relations
Putting It All Together

DMC Institute # 4 – Effective Police Interactions with Youth

(Improving communication between law enforcement and youth)

Date: 5/3/2012

Attendance: 50 participants

Location: Sinclair Community College, Dayton, Ohio

Presenters: Wendi Faulkner, OJDDP Compliance Monitor, Ohio Dept. of Youth Services
Michael Murray, Detective, Norwalk, Connecticut Police Department
Andre Parker, Sergeant, Waterford, Connecticut Police Department

Sessions: *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Compliance*
Why We Are Here
Equal Treatment of Diverse Youth
Why Youth Do What They Do
Police/Youth Relations
Putting It All Together

DMC Institute # 5 – Bridges Out of Poverty

(Understanding the impact of poverty)

Date: 6/6/2012

Attendance: 67 participants

Location: ODYS Training Academy, Delaware, Ohio

Presenters: Kathy McPherson, aha! Process, Inc.

Sessions: *Creating a Mental Model of Generational Poverty*
Reviewing Research Realities
Hidden Rules
Language, Story, and Cognitions
Program Design

Local DMC Conferences

Lucas County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Addressing Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) with Evidence Based Programs - Event Overview

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC), in collaboration with Lucas County Juvenile Court and on behalf of the Lucas County DMC Initiative, hosted a community forum on January 11, 2011 at the McMaster Center (Toledo-Lucas County Main Library). The community forum, Addressing Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) with Evidence Based Programs, focused on addressing disparity in the local juvenile justice system. Judge Denise Navarre Cubbon provided introductions and the training was provided by Dr. Thomas Harig. The forum consisted of two sessions. The Community Guide session provided strategies for local funders and community partners to support effective DMC reduction programming. Forty-two community members were in attendance at this session. The Grant Applicant session provided strategies for juvenile serving agencies to incorporate evidence based DMC reduction programming into effective grant proposals for future implementation.

Montgomery County Juvenile Court DMC Conference

To generate awareness of the DMC issue, the Montgomery County DMC Initiative sponsored a one day conference on June 6, 2011. The conference was titled, Disproportionate Minority Contact: We Are All a Part of The Solution, with keynote speaker Dr. Michael Lindsey. The Conference was open to local and statewide community agencies, resulting in an attendance of just over 100 participants. This conference served as a catalyst to re-engage the community and gave each agency the opportunity to create their own action plans for change.

The attendees included representatives from local organizations, including the following: Dayton Police Department, Trotwood Police Department, Huber Heights Police Department, Dayton Public Schools, Centerville Schools, Northmont Schools, Trotwood City Schools, Montgomery County Schools (Educational Service Center), Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Montgomery County Citizen Review Board, Public Defenders Office, City and County Prosecutors, the Children Services Division of the Department of Job and Family Services, Samaritan Behavioral Health, South Community Inc., The Victory Project, Dayton Boys and Girls Club, Dayton Mediation Center, Wesley Community Center, West Carrolton Civic Center, Family Services Association, local library branches and several faith based organizations.

DMC Data Collection

In January 2012, DYS began collecting calendar year 2011 data from each of the 14 county juvenile courts and law enforcement agencies. The data has been compiled and inputted into the federal system to generate Relative Rate Index statistics. The focus of data collection was limited to the 14 participating counties due to the planned statewide DMC assessment. As with previous years' data, the relative rates show the highest disparity at the points of Arrest, Confinement, and Transfer to the adult system. Data is available upon request.

Statewide DMC Assessment Study

DYS has contracted with the University of Cincinnati (UC) to conduct an assessment of the county juvenile courts and law enforcement agencies within the 14 counties. UC will conduct a full scale investigation to determine the causes of disparity and make recommendations for long term interventions. African-American youth will be the primary target but other minorities will be included where there is disparity. Each of the 14 juvenile courts has agreed to participate in the assessment process and make youth records available to UC. Assessors will also collect data from police departments as well.

Next Steps

During 2012 through 2014, the primary focus of Ohio's DMC Initiative will be on system improvement activities, which also includes the Statewide DMC Assessment. Funding for programmatic activities will be limited to select pilot programs targeted at reduction strategies specific to decision points and/or evidence based activities. Additionally, the state will target law enforcement agencies, to reduce the high numbers of arrests, by providing additional training and increasing their capacity to accurately capture data. Agencies that do not report DMC data or report not collecting data by race will be targeted for systems improvement activities.

Also during the coming period, DYS will work to align DMC to JDAI activities to foster greater reductions in the number of minority youth held in detention. Of the 14 counties participating in DMC, five are also participating in the Anne E. Casey JDAI Initiative.