

# Executive Summary: An Evaluation of the Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice (BHJJ) Initiative: 2006-2015

## Franklin County Results

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April 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: AN EVALUATION OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/JUVENILE JUSTICE (BHJJ) INITIATIVE: 2006 – 2015 FRANKLIN COUNTY RESULTS

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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**

- ❖ In Franklin County, 470 youth have been enrolled in BHJJ Services (80.7% males, 54% African American). In the past two years, more Non-White youth (67.0%) than White youth (33.0%) and males (72.7%) than females (27.3%) have been enrolled.
- ❖ Youth averaged 2.2 Axis I diagnoses. Females were significantly more likely to be diagnosed with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Males were significantly more likely to be diagnosed with Cannabis-related Disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Conduct Disorder.
- ❖ Over 50% of males and 19% of females were diagnosed with both a mental health and substance use diagnosis.
- ❖ Caregivers reported that 16.7% of the females had a history of sexual abuse, nearly 41% talked about suicide, and nearly 19% had attempted suicide. Over 47% of males and 51% of females had family members who were diagnosed with or showed signs of depression.
- ❖ According to the OYAS, 85.0% of the youth served in BHJJ were moderate or high risk.
- ❖ In the Franklin County, 70.8% of youth had felony charges in the 12 months prior to enrollment.

## **Educational Information**

- ❖ A little over 77% of the youth were suspended or expelled from school in the year prior to their enrollment. At termination, 82% of youth were attending school. At intake, 7.2% of youth received mostly A's and B's, while at termination 16.8% were receiving mostly A's and B's.
- ❖ At termination, workers reported that 85% 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 significant decrease in 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.
- ❖ Both males and females reported a decrease in past six month alcohol and marijuana use.
- ❖ Youth demonstrated a 75.8% reduction in the risk for out of home placement at the time of termination. About 2% of successful completers and 60% of unsuccessful completers were at risk for out of home placement at termination.
- ❖ Over 88% of caregivers agreed that they were satisfied with the services their child received through BHJJ and 91.6% agreed that the services received were culturally and ethnically sensitive.

## **Termination and Recidivism Information**

- ❖ Over 68% of the youth terminated from the BHJJ program were identified locally as successful treatment completers. Sixty-three percent of youth enrolled in the past biennium were identified as successful treatment completers. The average length of stay in the program was approximately 8 months (8 months for youth enrolled during previous biennium).
- ❖ Successful treatment completion in BHJJ produced lower percentages of subsequent juvenile court charges, felonies, and delinquent adjudications than unsuccessful completion, although both groups demonstrated decreased juvenile court involvement after termination from BHJJ compared to before enrollment.
- ❖ One year after termination, 13.8% of successful treatment completers and 23.1% of unsuccessful treatment completers had a new felony charge. Of the youth entering BHJJ with at least one felony charge, 14.5% were charged with a new felony in the 12 months after their termination from BHJJ.
- ❖ Twenty-nine of the 445 youth (6.5%) enrolled in BHJJ for whom we had recidivism data were sent to an ODYS facility at any time following their enrollment in BHJJ.