



Juvenile Review Board Pilot Project
First Check-In Report
September – December 2012

Presented to
Court Support Services Division
Court Support Services Division
Department of Education
Chief State's Attorney Office

In the late winter of 2012, five of Connecticut's Youth Service Bureaus were selected to participate in a pilot project as part of an effort to divert youth from Connecticut's Juvenile Court system. The protocol for this pilot project is based on the diversion of court referrals to the five local Juvenile Review Boards.

The five sites selected each had an existing Juvenile Review Board. Each of the five JRBs is geographically situated within either Windham or Hartford counties and represents a cross section of diverse communities. Those five JRBs are located within the jurisdiction of the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters at Hartford, Willimantic and New Britain. The five sites included:

*AHM Youth and Family Services, (serving Andover, Columbia, Hebron, Marlborough)
East Hartford Youth Services, (serving East Hartford)
New Britain Youth Services, (serving New Britain)
Rocky Hill Youth Services, (serving Rocky Hill)
Southington Youth Services, (serving Southington)*

The purpose of the pilot project is to divert youth from the juvenile justice system to more appropriate community based JRB programs that utilize the restorative justice method rather than the traditional punitive method. The pilot project officially began in September of 2012. The following is a brief four month report, (September 2012 – December 2012).

Report Prepared by J. Rosenberg

AHM Youth and Family Services:

Reported by: Peggy Tunick, M.S., Director of Programs

AHM Youth and Family Services

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Has your Juvenile Review Board to date accessed any Family Support Center slots?

To date 2 cases have been referred to the FSC. Having someone on our Board from the FSC has been very helpful in providing resources that they offer. FSC provides “the next step” in community based services.

What local outreach efforts have taken place with your local police department(s) in terms of awareness of the pilot JRB project?

We are in a unique position as our middle and high school are located in Hebron where the Resident State Troopers are VERY supportive of JRB and typically, whenever appropriate refer to JRB rather than court. We have appeared at roll call for the various shifts at Troop K that covers the towns within our region and provided information about the existence and purpose of the JRB, as well as how to make a referral.

What opportunities if any have grown out of the JRB pilot project so far in your community?

The pilot project has given us the opportunity to expand an already positive relationship with our Juvenile Court and has resulted in cases being diverted from the court to the JRB that would have otherwise been required to be handled by the court.

What has been the disposition of cases so far referred to your JRB from your Juvenile Court?

During the four months that the pilot project has existed, we have had five cases referred by the court. Two of these involved larceny charges, one involved criminal mischief, one involved possession of alcohol and threatening and one involved creating a public disturbance. One of these cases resulted in a referral back to court when the child was rearrested. Three of the cases are still pending and one case was very successfully discharged. In that case we were able to address the young man’s drug issues and school performance. He is now very cooperative in taking ADD medication, has raised his grades and has a new group of friends. He has clear goals in mind for after his graduation. The relationship between the mother and son was greatly strengthened - as the result of the improvements made by the young man. He and his mother were very appreciative of JRB intervention.

Final comments? With only four months experience with the pilot, it is too soon to show several successful results. As expected, these cases require a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of the children, families and a great deal of case management time. It is this individual attention and intensive monitoring however that make the community based JRB process a successful alternative to court. As cases become much more complex and the number of referrals increase, it is clearly becoming more difficult for our YSB school social workers to devote the necessary time to these cases. Our JRB program could definitely benefit from funding specific to JRB case management.

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Has your Juvenile Review Board to date accessed any Family Support Center slots?

No we have not accessed the FSC's.

What local outreach efforts have taken place with your local police department(s) in terms of awareness of the pilot JRB project?

Police are part of the JRB so they have been aware of the pilot. It appears in some ways that they are looking a little more carefully at what goes to court and what will go to JRB.

What opportunities if any have grown out of the JRB pilot project so far in your community?

Not Sure.

What has been the disposition of cases so far referred to your JRB from your Juvenile Court?

East Hartford has had three cases referred to the JRB under the Pilot Program

Case #1 = Threatening, BOP (anger management) - ongoing

Case #2 = Assault 3rd, BOP (anger management) - ongoing

Case #3 = Assault 3rd (counseling) – ongoing. . .

Final comments?

It is surprising that at this time we have not received one referral back to the JRB from the court of an East Hartford youth having been arrested at the Buckland Mall by Manchester PD. We had predicted that there would be over the course of a year between 30-60 minor incidents with East Hartford youth from the malls (West Farms & Buckland Hills). "

NOTE: East Hartford Youth Services recently purchased the MAYSIWARE 4.0 program. The software has been installed on one stand-alone laptop and two desktop computers. As we get more comfortable with the software we maybe using this tool for all JRB referrals

New Britain Youth Services

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Has your Juvenile Review Board to date accessed any Family Support Center slots?

We have not accessed any FSC slots as of yet. However, I did get a JRB referral for a kid that was already involved with FSC. She had gotten arrested for something minor. (Simple Trespass) The client hadn't been participating with the FSC. JRB was used to reconnect the client with her FSC worker who is now on the JRB.

What local outreach efforts have taken place with your local police department(s) in terms of awareness of the pilot JRB project?

The sergeant of the Youth Bureau in the New Britain Police Department is a regular participant on our JRB. She was informed, as were all of the JRB members, on the JRB pilot project.

What opportunities if any have grown out of the JRB pilot project so far in your community?

Since the pilot started, the relationship and collaboration between NBYFS and the FSC has improved markedly. We have been on a tour of our FSC which proved to be very informative and enlightening. Conversely, three FSC workers now sit on our JRB.

What has been the disposition of cases so far referred to your JRB from your Juvenile Court?

This is our breakdown of client offenses:

2 - Criminal Trespass 2nd

1 - Criminal Trespass 3rd

3 - Disorderly Conduct

1 - Larceny 6th

1 - Breach of Peace

1 - Disorderly Conduct / Assault 3rd

Outcomes have included community service, family counseling, job searching, reflection papers, a referral to System of Care, and school monitoring.

Final comments?

We're finding that the MAYSI tool has been helpful in guiding our decisions on some of our JRB cases. We are now administering the questionnaire to all JRB referrals and not just the ones in the pilot program.

Rocky Hill Youth Services

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Has your Juvenile Review Board to date accessed any Family Support Center slots?

Rocky Hill has had one case diverted from the court so far, and the disposition was to the Family Support Center, the family is responding positively to the services they are providing! I was very happy to have the help of the family center staff when a crisis occurred with this family and I was not in the office, they were very responsive. I am optimistic about their ability to make a difference for this family.

What local outreach efforts have taken place with your local police department(s) in terms of awareness of the pilot JRB project?

I met with the officer who does afternoon role call and discussed pilot project, he planned to remind officers of JRB option for juveniles, and I also gave him some more ticket booklets and addressed any questions/concerns he had. Our most recent referral was from one of our officers.

What opportunities if any have grown out of the JRB pilot project so far in your community?

I am hopeful that there will be more.

What has been the disposition of cases so far referred to your JRB from your Juvenile Court?

Rocky Hill has had one case diverted from the court so far.

Southington Youth Services

Reported by: Susan Saucier
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Has your Juvenile Review Board to date accessed any Family Support Center slots?

We have not accessed the Family Support Center yet.

What local outreach efforts have taken place with your local police department(s) in terms of awareness of the pilot JRB project?

I talked to my police Chief early on about Southington being in the pilot, and I think someone from the Juvenile Court has spoken with someone from the administration because we have also received 12 cases from the police since the beginning of the pilot. We haven't had 12 cases in a year referred to us in **many** years.

What opportunities if any have grown out of the JRB pilot project so far in your community?

It has been great having Tina Marino, the Educational specialist at the Family Support Center and Melissa Garden from DCF at meetings. Their expertise has been invaluable over these past 5 months. I think that these cases coming to us puts us in touch with at-risk kids we might not have met until they were older and also allows us to intervene with their parents as well.

What has been the disposition of cases so far referred to your JRB from your Juvenile Court?

Dispositions have been community service, letters of apology, self-assessment essays, monitoring school work, attendance and behavior. . Since the start of the pilot, we have received 10 cases from the Court.

7 were possession of Alcohol by a minor (all from the same party).

1 Criminal Mischief 3rd.

1 Larceny 6th

1 Breach of Peace

Final comments?

We think our success story is the fact that our PD is referring again, and that we are meeting regularly and our Board is committed to the youth making positive changes in their lives.