

Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Meeting

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531

Tuesday, December 10, 2019
1:00 –2:20 p.m.

SUMMARY

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (“Coordinating Council”) held a quarterly meeting on December 10, 2019. The meeting was hosted by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Council members participated in person and via phone, and members of the public observed.

The topic for this meeting was federal youth mentoring programs that positively impact bullying.

Elizabeth Wolfe, *Designated Federal Official (DFO) and OJJDP Associate Administrator*, along with other staff members, provided staff support for the meeting.

Caren Harp, *OJJDP Administrator and Vice-Chair of the Coordinating Council*, led and moderated the meeting.

A panel of federal agency representatives shared information about federal youth mentoring programs. Presenters included **James Antal**, *Associate Administrator, Special Victims and Violent Offenders Division, OJJDP*; **Jennifer Kemp**, *Director of Youth Services, Office of Workforce Investment, Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor*; and **Maria-Lana Queen**, *Acting Director, Community and Supportive Services Division, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*.

In the Youth Spotlight, two mentees and their mentors provided details about their experiences with mentoring and answered questions from Council members.

WELCOME, OPENING REMARKS, INTRODUCTIONS

Elizabeth Wolfe opened the Coordinating Council meeting. Council members participated in person and via phone, and members of the public observed.

Administrator Harp welcomed the meeting presenters and participants. She commended all Coordinating Council members who had shared information about their existing partnership work to Ms. Wolfe – including the U.S. Department of Education (DoE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), and U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) – noting that it would inform OJJDP’s end-of-year reporting to Congress. Administrator Harp asked that other members share their information by the end of the calendar year.

PANEL PRESENTATION: FEDERAL YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS THAT POSITIVELY IMPACT BULLYING

James Antal, *Associate Administrator, Special Victims and Violent Offenders Division, OJJDP*
Jennifer Kemp, *Director of Youth Services, Office of Workforce Investment (OWI), Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)*
Maria-Lana Queen, *Acting Director, Community and Supportive Services Division, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)*

Administrator Harp welcomed the panel presenters.

OJJDP Youth Mentoring Programs

Mr. Antal

Mentoring is defined as “a consistent prosocial relationship between an adult or older peer and one or more youth that helps to support positive youth development.” Mr. Antal has worked with OJJDP’s mentoring programs portfolio for many years and has partnered with multiple federal agencies represented on the Coordinating Council. He explained that mentoring fits within the vision and mission of OJJDP, and that it positively addresses risk factors for juvenile delinquency. It helps youth continue to grow and to be able to handle situations at home and/or in the community. It has been shown to improve self-esteem, academic achievement, and peer relationships, and to reduce drug use, aggression, depressive symptoms, and delinquent acts.

OJJDP is focused on supporting, through its funding, quality mentoring – whether this is one-to-one, group, peer, or adult-to-youth mentoring – by ensuring that mentors are properly trained and well supported, and that the matches are performed in a high-quality manner.

OJJDP’s Mentoring Efforts and Approach

OJJDP is the only federal agency that has long supported mentoring programs, awarding more than \$950 million in grants to mentoring organizations from Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 through FY 2019. The Office’s mentoring work intends to both increase opportunities for youth to have mentors and to improve the quality and impact of the mentoring they receive. OJJDP has funded research, programs, and training and technical assistance (TTA) in support of youth mentoring.

Past examples of OJJDP research and evaluation include the Practitioner-Researcher Partnership Mentoring Children of Incarcerated Parents Demonstration Program, in which the Office coordinated grant awards among a mentoring organization, a research partner, and an evaluation

partner; the three combined mentoring activities, research, and evaluation to identify best practices and workable approaches.

More recently, OJJDP has funded the Mentoring Enhancement Demonstration Program and the Practitioner-Researcher Partnership in Cognitive Behavioral Mentoring Program. Both programs, which are beginning to wind down, have been helpful in informing grant solicitations.

OJJDP's Programmatic Initiatives in Mentoring

OJJDP's premier funding solicitation is the Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative. Prior to this being instituted in FY 2015, OJJDP had developed various solicitations for national or multistate mentoring. This initiative helped concentrate mentoring funding into one solicitation with multiple categories.

In FY 2019, 33 awards were made to mentoring organizations in these categories: large, national organizations with a presence in 45 or more states (these include Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and 4-H); organizations in fewer than 45 but more than 5 states (these include the Cal Ripken Senior Foundation and Sea Research); and organizations collaborating and sharing best practices on important components for mentoring programs such as recruitment and training.

Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Initiative Funding by Category

OJJDP's funding categories for FY 2019 were National Mentoring; Multistate Mentoring; Collaborative/Juvenile Justice System; Opioid Program Sites; and Opioid State/Regional/Tribal. OJJDP funded programs in these 5 categories for a total of approximately \$81 million. The Office shifted its collaborative approach to focus on supporting mentoring programs for youth involved in the juvenile justice system – specifically, partnering mentoring organizations with probation agencies and juvenile courts to provide staff with an additional resource for working with low-level offenders.

In FY 2019, OJJDP used its \$14 million appropriation for opioid-related juvenile work by pairing mentoring organizations with substance abuse organizations to leverage their combined expertise and support youth impacted by opioids. The appropriation also supported state, regional, and tribal efforts in this area.

OJJDP Training and Technical Assistance

OJJDP provides TTA to the program sites that it funds as well as to any mentoring organization across the country. The National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC), which the Office started in 2013, is a significant source of onsite TTA and webinars on best practices, program models, and tools for mentoring organizations. [The NMRC website](#) is a comprehensive website and research board containing up-to-date skill-based information for mentors and mentoring organizations across the country to better inform their practices. NMRC seeks to improve the quality and effectiveness of youth mentoring across the country through increased use of evidence-based practices and sharing practitioner innovations.

2020 National Mentoring Summit

The National Mentoring Summit will take place January 29–31, 2020 in Washington, DC. OJJDP does not fund this summit but leverages it to connect newly funded mentoring grantees for highly valuable face-to-face peer learning.

Resources

Mr. Antal shared the following resource links:

- *OJJDP*: www.ojjdp.ojp.gov
- *NMRC*: www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org
- *Stop Bullying*: www.stopbullying.gov

Department of Labor Mentoring Programs

Ms. Kemp

Ms. Kemp oversees the office that focuses on youth within the Employment and Training Administration, Division of Youth Services. Through its 3 main programs, DOL's Office of Workforce Investment (OWI) focuses on mentoring for youth ages 14 to 21 and older youth ages 21 to 24. DOL mentoring focuses on helping people succeed in the workplace. Mentoring leads to better outcomes for youth, and a common theme throughout OWI's programs is a focus on youth who have not successfully completed high school; the goal is to help them either finish high school, earn their GED, or pass a high school equivalency exam.

Reentry Employment Opportunities Youth Mentoring Programs

OWI works to help youth develop resiliency through relationships. Through Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) Youth Mentoring Programs, OWI distributes approximately \$25 million in grants each year, mentoring being a piece of the REO grant support.

OWI uses mentoring to encourage youth to complete high school, to consider work and career pathways other than what they may have seen in their families or community, and to make connections with professional people. REO mentoring components can include one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring, peer mentoring, and/or service-based mentoring.

The YouthBuild Program and Mentoring

DOL developed the YouthBuild program – a competitive grant program serving at-risk youth ages 16–24 who have dropped out of high school – in partnership with HUD. This program has the strongest definition and component of mentoring; participants receive education and occupational skills training in construction and other in-demand industries.

DOL partners with the YouthBuild USA nonprofit to assist in administering the YouthBuild program. Since 2009, YouthBuild USA has designed and implemented an evidence-based YouthBuild Mentoring model, in which success is determined by mentored YouthBuild participants who graduate, successfully transition to a career and/or post-secondary education, and return to the YouthBuild program to mentor other participants.

A crucial element of mentoring is supporting career preparation by coaching participants on soft skills, exposing youth to potential employment opportunities, and offering ongoing transition support to program graduates. More than 90 YouthBuild programs have been trained on the

mentoring model and have access to online resources via the YouthBuild USA National Mentoring Alliance Community of Practice to strengthen and sustain the program in the event of staff turnover.

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Youth Program and Mentoring

Mentoring is one of the 14 required program elements for the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act Youth Program and Mentoring (WIOA) Youth Formula Program. WIOA is OWI's largest program and is funded at approximately \$850 million annually. The program's mentoring element – available in every community that receives WIOA youth funding – helps youth manage work, including difficult people in the workplace. WIOA Youth Formula Program grant funding goes from the states to local communities to participants at the local level. A case manager, or counselor, helps youth to map out a plan; mentoring is a key part of that process, and research shows those long-term relationships are highly important to the outcomes. The way to get involved is to connect at the local level and help direct funding to resources related to mentoring.

Resources

Ms. Kemp provided links to useful DOL mentoring information and resources. She will be happy to provide direct links if contacted.

- [Workforce GPS Adult Mentoring](#)
- [Workforce GPS Reentry Employment Opportunities](#)
- [Workforce GPS YouthBuild](#)

Using Housing as a Platform To Improve Outcomes for Low-Income Children and Families: Efforts Aligned with Youth Mentoring and Anti-Bullying Approaches

Ms. Queen

Mentoring Programs and Anti-Bullying Approaches

Ms. Queen, who represented the HUD Office of Public and Indian Housing, explained that HUD's mission includes using housing as a platform to improve outcomes for low-income children and families. She shared information about how HUD's community and supportive services programs aligned with its mentoring programs and anti-bullying approaches.

HUD provides funding to the nation's 3,200 public housing authorities (PHAs) in the form of competitive funding to focus on economic mobility and to help low-income families achieve self-sufficiency. HUD program areas that also include mentoring and anti-bullying approaches are:

- *Choice Neighborhoods*: This program focuses on housing, neighborhoods, and people.
- *Jobs Plus*: This program focuses on workforce, workforce development and employment, and increasing earned income for families, young adults, and youth.
- *Resident Opportunities and Self Sufficiency (ROSS) Grant Program Service Coordination*: This is a comprehensive case management and referral process, which can include mentoring opportunities and positive youth development.
- *ROSS for Education*: This program focuses on helping low-income youth to pursue post-secondary education and complete their federal applications for free student aid. This

support may be accompanied by Education Navigator services, a key mentoring component.

- *Juvenile Reentry Assistance Program (JRAP)*: HUD partnered with DOJ to create this program, which provides legal assistance to support justice-involved youth. JRAP is linked with mentoring and other supportive opportunities.
- *ConnectHome*: This program provides Internet accessibility in low-income communities. Young people need Internet access to complete their daily activities and to pursue their goals in life; without the Internet, they are at a disadvantage.

The Role of PHAs

PHAs are primarily responsible for providing HUD-assisted housing to low-income families nationwide. Assistance can include an array of supportive services in addition to housing.

HUD is responsible for addressing the needs of PHA households and for providing positive youth development for children and families. According to Ms. Queen, approximately 49 percent of the households these two PHA housing options represent include families with children:

1. Large, apartment-style city complexes (1,038,002 households); and
2. Tenant-based Rental Assistance, Housing Choice Voucher, and Project-Based Voucher – formerly known as Section 8 – serving 2,240,956 households across the country.

The average household adjusted income in these housing programs is a bit over \$14,000, compared to the average median income in the U.S. of \$59,000.

Self-Sufficiency Program Alignment with Mentoring and Anti-Bullying

HUD self-sufficiency programs can also include local partnerships with nonprofits or community partners, and the programs above have a 25 percent match requirement; in addition to HUD funding, PHAs must seek local partnerships to address the needs of children and families. Those partnerships can address:

- *Positive youth development opportunities* focused on mentoring, civic engagement, youth leadership development, anti-bullying approaches, and overall opportunities to help youth achieve their goals in education and career;
- *Summer youth employment and positive summer experiences* for vulnerable youth, and keeping youth safe absent of bullying and violence during the summer;
- *Positive law enforcement interaction*, including creative approaches to preventing bullying by focusing on team building and character development;
- *Coordinated community events/gatherings* that provide onsite youth supportive services focused on education and career pathways;
- *Community facilities offering safe spaces for youth* to engage with peers and to access nutritional meals, recreation, and other opportunities; and/or
- *Leveraged federal and nonprofit partnerships* that build cross-sector collaboration designed to create healthy, safe, place-based environments absent of bullying.

Program Alignment: Education

HUD has partnered to provide the following educational opportunities:

- *Addressing “book deserts” by developing book-rich environments*; this program promotes third grade reading proficiency and provides free, new books to households.

Partners: The National Book Foundation, DoE, Urban Library Councils, and the Center for Families and Learning

- *A free, online early-childhood (ages 2–4) education curriculum* makes sure that children who live in poverty attain the same standards for early childhood education as others. Partner: ABCMouse
- *Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Innovation Networks* provide education and career aspirations mentoring for low-income and public housing students. Partner: West Point Academy
- *Financial literacy programming* promotes financial savings/planning and building of assets. Partners: America Saves and Your Money, Your Goals

Program Alignment: Health

HUD works closely with HHS on a *Community Health Worker Initiative*, knowing that young people need to be healthy to thrive in life. This initiative promotes improving health and overall well-being of residents through federal and local partnerships.

Program Alignment: Economic Empowerment

HUD Strong Families empowers families by providing onsite supportive services – including access to health, youth mentoring connections, education, and economic empowerment opportunities – at approximately 900 PHA community events throughout the country around Father’s Day and Mother’s Day. HUD Strong Families was formerly HUD’s Father’s Day Initiative.

Program Alignment: Federal Partnerships

Historically, HUD has served as a formal, active partner within several federal interagency efforts to address bullying, provide mentoring opportunities, and support HUD-assisted youth in achieving their goals. Examples of past and present efforts include:

- *National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention*, a network of communities and federal agencies building local capacity to prevent and reduce youth violence;
- *My Brother’s Keeper Initiative*, a federal effort to address persistent gaps facing boys and young men of color and to ensure that all youth reach their full potential;
- *“Be Best” Campaign*, a public awareness campaign, promoted by the current First Lady, focused on well-being for youth and on advocating against cyberbullying and drug use;
- *Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs*, composed of 21 federal departments and agencies that support programs and services focused on youth; and
- *Coordinating Council*.

Resources

For more information on HUD’s programs addressing mentoring and bullying, please contact Ms. Queen at Maria-Lana.Queen@hud.gov or 202-402-4890.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Administrator Harp opened the floor for questions from Council members and others.

Question 1:

Coordinating Council member Jim St. Germain asked which organizations on the ground are partnering with HUD around mentoring, and who has access to the information and resources presented?

Answer:

Ms. Queen recommended that he be in contact with his local PHA (New York City Housing Authority) to learn what funding opportunities it is seeking and what funding it has received.

The [youth.gov website](#), which is managed by the federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, includes every federal program that has been funded and in what locality that funding has been awarded.

Question 2:

Coordinating Council member June Sivilli asked for information on the impact of the programs presented by the panel.

Answers:

DOL tracks data through a publicly available spreadsheet, to which Ms. Kemp can connect anyone by request.

HUD maintains quarterly reporting tracking mechanisms for each of the funding programs. Through those, it tracks childcare; early childhood education; and completion of the free application for federal student aid and, as a result, the number of students who have been enrolled in post-secondary education. It also tracks the number of computers and mobile devices provided to youth and young people.

OJJDP tracks the number of youth who are mentored by funded organizations.

Data collection is a challenge across programs, and agencies are working to improve this. Ms. Queen suggested that it is important and interesting both for the federal government to know how agencies are spending taxpayer dollars and for communities to know ways in which agencies are investing in them.

Administrator Harp noted that a little more than 1 million children were mentored between 2014 and 2018. She added that it is important to understand how many children are served, but it is equally, if not more, important to understand the outcomes of the mentoring, such as successful completion of school, advancing academically and in the appropriate timeframe, living drug and crime free, and a lack of contact with the court system.

Question 3:

Administrator Harp asked Ms. Kemp and Ms. Queen for information about state- and local-level contacts for DOL and HUD that a juvenile justice specialist, state advisory group (SAG), or

designated state agency could reach out to and access resources to improve the juvenile justice system or access services to provide for youth.

Answers:

Each PHA has a resident services division. Also, HUD has regional offices across the country, and the regional administrators and field staff are the local “eyes and ears.” Ms. Queen can provide points of contact and asked that someone at OJJDP email her with a request for that information.

DOL also has regional administrators, and every state has a workforce board. Local workforce boards exist as well. Ms. Kemp explained that doing a web search for “American Job Center” and inputting a ZIP code will provide the user with the nearest OneStop or American Job Center.

All panel presenters would be happy to address the OJJDP State Relations and Assistance Division (SRAD) Conference in September 2020 in San Diego.

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: LEARNING FROM MENTORS AND MENTEES

Administrator Harp welcomed and introduced Amira (mentee) and Anna Piccirilli (mentor) from Maryland, and Frankie (mentee) and Christina Garza (mentor) from Texas. Mr. Antal moderated a discussion that included the mentees and mentors.

Amira and Anna

Amira, 10 years old and in the fifth grade in her local elementary school, has been a Boys & Girls Club member at the Wiley H. Bates Club in Annapolis, MD, since 2016. She has participated in numerous programs, including Triple Play, Youth of the Year Suite, STEM Mentoring, Power Hour, Healthy Habits, MyFuture.net, Rooted in Reading, SMART Girls, Summer Brain Gain, and more. Through funding provided by OJJDP and after being identified by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BGCAA) Director as someone who would benefit from focused mentoring, Amira was paired with her mentor, Anna Piccirilli. They have been a mentor-mentee team for approximately 6 months.

Ms. Piccirilli has a well-rounded youth development background and experience working directly with various nonprofit organizations. After working with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Baltimore, she joined BGCAA as Director of Academic Success and currently mentors several youth ranging from 6 to 15 years old. In addition to weekly individual check-in meetings, the group gets together each Friday to participate in a fun activity such as cooking, a creative craft, or an UNO tournament. During this time, mentees have a safe space that encourages open dialogue and the opportunity to form new connections with other club members who are separated by developmental milestone ages.

Mentees often come to Ms. Piccirilli when an issue at the club arises, and Amira expressed this past summer that she was being bullied by another youth. Together with another staff member,

they discussed the incident and created a positive plan for moving forward. The adults helped provide a safe environment in which Amira felt comfortable sharing her experience.

Amira travels by bus to BGCAA every day of the school week but Tuesday, when she stays at school for dance class. When she is at the club (after school to 7 p.m.), she participates in a high-yield learning activity (e.g., kickball), Power Hour (part of the evidence-based program Project Learn) or visiting with Ms. Piccirilli, snack time (donated by the Maryland Food Bank [MFB]), targeted programs, and a hot meal (also donated by MFB). After programs are done, she gets organized free time and then goes home. Amira's favorite part of the afternoon is spending time with "Miss Anna" and having her to help with homework or with problems at home or at BGCAA. She loves all of the club programming.

BGCAA has STEM activities; a reading program; healthy habits, in which kids learn how to cook healthy food; and Triple Play, in which kids play various organized games. Except for the Frida activity mentioned above, club members remain within their age groups (Amira's group is grades 3–5).

Amira reported that she felt helped by Ms. Piccirilli this past summer, when the group enjoyed a multi-day stay at Ripken Baseball in Aberdeen, MD. They played baseball and engaged in other activities. Amira even went ziplining, which brought her out of her comfort zone.

Amira invites friends to come to BGCAA, and most of her friends attend along with her. Her sister also attends and is another of Ms. Piccirilli's mentees. Amira says the best parts of BGCAA and her mentor are the fun activities and getting help with homework.

Frankie and Christina

Frankie is a senior at the High School for Law Enforcement and Justice in Houston, TX. He wants to study criminal justice after graduation, and he sees himself being in the field of law enforcement. In pursuit of his dream, he wants to enlist in the U.S. Navy to train as a military investigator, with plans to later join the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Christina Garza serves as the Public Affairs Officer and Media Coordinator for the FBI Houston Division, which covers the Houston Metropolitan Area, Beaumont, Bryan, Corpus Christi, and Texas City. Prior to joining the FBI, she served for 6 years as the Media Relations Manager for the Harris County Sheriff's Office, the largest sheriff's office in Texas and the third largest in the U.S.

The Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Houston FBI/High School Initiative was launched last school year after the field office's Community Outreach Specialist heard about a similar partnership in other FBI field offices. The program takes place within the field office, making it easier for agents to find time to mentor students. Students from the high school visit for 2 hours once each month; the first hour is a case study, a case presentation, or some other FBI-related education. The second hour is lunch, when mentors and mentees spend quality time talking about each other's week, month, the college application process, or other subjects. In some instances,

BBBS provides an activity. The Houston program is in its second year, and Ms. Garza believes that her office has the largest participation in this program of any FBI field office in the country.

Frankie's high school is focused on a criminal justice curriculum. He joined the FBI program as a high school junior and now has been participating for 1.5 years. He reported that the program has supported him quite a bit in terms of finding a life focus. Ms. Garza, who has experience mentoring with other organizations, can share information that helps Frankie chart his path. Frankie describes this experience as "basically like catching up with a good friend." He sees her "not like an adult," but as a close friend.

Frankie explained that what drew him to join the program was his interest in working in the law enforcement field. His mother added that she has noticed positive changes in him; she reported that he loves going to the program, returns every month very excited, and gets more and more connected with Ms. Garza. A new element for Frankie is that he is looking toward his future.

Administrator Harp thanked the mentees for sharing their stories and expressed her excitement about their futures. She thanked the mentors for the meaningful work they are doing.

Ms. Sivilli echoed Administrator Harp's sentiments, adding that many children in America need this kind of support and guidance, and calling the mentors the "champions in America." She urged the mentees to tell their friends about these great programs.

Mr. St. Germain expressed his gratitude at hearing from the mentees and mentors. He noted that mentorship saved his life.

WRAP-UP AND ADJOURNMENT

The Coordinating Council will meet next on March 4, 2020 at 10 a.m. Future meetings will take place at 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 4, 2020 and Thursday, September 10, 2020. The date for the final meeting of the year will be scheduled at a later time.

Public comments may be sent to Elizabeth Wolfe, Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator, OJJDP at Elizabeth.Wolfe@ojp.usdoj.gov.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.