

# 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

Wednesday, March 4, 2020  
10 a.m.–12:12 p.m.

## SUMMARY

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (“Coordinating Council”) held a quarterly meeting on March 4, 2020. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) hosted the meeting. Coordinating Council members participated in person and via phone, and members of the public observed in person and via live stream.

The topic for this meeting was federal and state-level reentry programs and their positive impact on youth and communities.

**Elizabeth Wolfe**, *Designated Federal Official (DFO) and OJJDP Training and Outreach Coordinator*, 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.

Federal agency representatives shared information about reentry programs. Presenters were Dr. **Sanzanna Dean**, *Deputy Associate Administrator, OJJDP* and **Jennifer Kemp**, *Director of Youth Services, Office of Workforce Investment (OWI), Employment and Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)*.

In the Youth Spotlight, two participants and two state-level officials provided details about their experiences with reentry programs and answered questions from Council members.

**Katharine Sullivan**, *Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General (PDAAG), OJP, DOJ*, shared remarks.

## WELCOME, OPENING REMARKS, INTRODUCTIONS

**Ms. Wolfe** opened the meeting, and Administrator **Harp** welcomed the meeting presenters and participants from federal agencies and the field. She noted that PDAAG Sullivan would be joining toward the end of the meeting.

Participants represented OJJDP, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), the Pew Charitable Trusts, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Education (DoE), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). One practitioner member participated.

## **PANEL PRESENTATION: FEDERAL REENTRY PROGRAMS**

**Dr. Sanzanna Dean**, *Deputy Associate Administrator, OJJDP*  
**Jennifer Kemp**, *Director of Youth Services, OWI, Employment and Training Administration, DOL*

Dr. Dean currently serves as Deputy Associate Administrator for the Intervention Division within OJJDP. She administers programs geared toward keeping youth from moving deeper into the juvenile justice system. The division oversees OJJDP's work in the areas of diversion programming, drug courts, opioid abuse, community supervision, corrections, and reentry.

Ms. Kemp directs the Division of Youth Services at DOL's Employment and Training Administration. Her team is responsible for the day-to-day operations, technical assistance, performance, and policies of several workforce development and youth employment programs. The largest of these programs are the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth formula program, the YouthBuild program, and the Reentry Employment Opportunity program.

### **OJJDP Reentry Programs**

Reentry fits into public safety and accountability in the OJJDP mission: "OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile delinquency and victimization. OJJDP supports the efforts of states, tribes, and communities to develop and implement effective and equitable juvenile justice systems that enhance public safety, ensure youth are held appropriately accountable to both crime victims and communities, and empower youth to live productive, law-abiding lives."

#### Definition of Reentry

In the context of OJJDP programming, reentry is defined as an evidence-based process that begins while offenders are confined and ends with their successful reintegration into the community.

- Successful reintegration is denoted by no criminal behavior, including but not limited to arrest up to 24 months post-release. OJJDP programs are measured at 6-month increments throughout the 24-month period.

### Purpose of Focusing on Reentry

- Based on data from the [OJJDP Statistical Briefing Book](#), more than 43,000 juvenile offenders are in residential placement nationwide on any given day. Most of these young people eventually will return home and need assistance to reintegrate successfully.
- Although the rate of youth incarceration has continued to decline over the past 10 years, the development of comprehensive approaches for reducing recidivism remains a challenge for most state and local agencies.
- States and local entities require access to good data, changes to service delivery models, and coordination with multiple systems and organizations to effectively impact recidivism. Coordination and design are needed to effectively impact the multiple barriers to reentry.

### Barriers to Reentry

Youth returning to their communities after placement in a juvenile justice facility often face a multitude of challenges and have a need for community-based services that address many of their needs that were left unmet before they entered the system. Areas in which they need support are:

- Education;
- Housing;
- Employment and training;
- Health and mental health;
- Parenting support for young mothers/fathers; and
- Access to other support services.

The implementation of a coordinated community-based response to these barriers supports recidivism reduction and enhances overall public safety for young people and the communities to which they return.

### OJJDP Second Chance Act Reentry Programs

OJJDP has a portfolio of programs funded and authorized by the Second Chance Act (SCA) of 2007, which was reauthorized in 2018. The SCA Youth Offender Reentry Program encourages collaboration between state agencies, local government, and community- and faith-based organizations to address the challenges that reentry and recidivism reduction pose for moderate- to high-risk juvenile offenders returning to their communities from juvenile residential or correctional facilities. The program works to encourage collaboration between state agencies, local government, and community- and faith-based organizations to address barriers to reentry and to focus on recidivism reduction, specifically for young people who were placed in juvenile correctional facilities and who pose a moderate to high risk to their communities.

OJJDP's most recent funding portfolio of programs includes:

- *Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Second Chance Act Ensuring Public Safety and Improving Outcomes for Youth in Confinement and While Under Community Supervision*  
OJJDP provided a total of \$3,961,101 to six sites (states or localities) to support reentry strategies that address treatment services for youth with co-occurring substance abuse problems and mental health disorders, reentry services for gang-involved youth, and

training and technical assistance to improve community supervision practices for juveniles who are placed on probation or are being released from secure confinement. Sites funded in FY 2018 (the only year of that funding) will complete their programs in FY 2021.

- *FY 2019 Second Chance Act: Youth Offender Reentry Program*  
OJJDP funded nine sites at a total of \$6,729,900 to provide more traditional supports such as educational, vocational, and job placement services for youth while in confinement and following their release. The youth also receive substance abuse treatment, assistance locating housing, and help arranging mental and physical health care.
- *FY 2020 Proposed*  
For FY 2020, OJJDP is proposing to fund up to nine sites, for a total of \$6,750,000, with a focus on providing a broad scope of reentry services by states, local governments, and tribal governments in partnership with services in the community. Prospective grantees – such as federal corrections and supervision agencies, service providers, and nonprofit organizations – will provide comprehensive services for moderate to high-risk youth offenders before, during, and after release from confinement.

#### Second Chance Act: Addressing the Needs of Incarcerated Parents and Their Minor Children Program

This ongoing OJJDP program supports programs in correctional facilities that encourage family engagement between incarcerated parents and their minor children when it is in the best interest of the children. Recent funding has been as follows:

- FY 2018: 10 sites totaling \$7,180,204.
- FY 2019: 7 sites totaling \$4,504,313.
- FY 2020 (Current solicitation): Funding for up to 10 sites totaling \$5 million

Dr. Dean encouraged agencies and organizations to view the FY 2020 solicitation and share it broadly.

#### Juvenile Reentry Program Outcomes

For the reporting period June – December 2018, OJJDP served 2,531 youth. Of those:

- Forty-three percent successfully completed program requirements;
- Forty-three percent exhibited improvements in targeted behavior as deemed by the program, from attitude change to working toward a specific goal; and
- Twenty-two percent were adjudicated for a new offense (within 6-12 months of exiting the program).
  - The SCA grantee programs funded by OJJDP provide program services that begin prior to release and continue post-release to ensure successful reintegration. The 22 percent measure is a gauge of reducing recidivism.

#### OJJDP Juvenile Reentry Toolkit

OJJDP worked in a coordinated fashion with youth, youth-serving agencies, and other community members to develop a juvenile reentry toolkit specifically focused on young people:

*Reentry Starts Here: A Guide for Youth in Long-Term Juvenile Corrections and Treatment Programs.*

This guide is based on the premise that reentry planning starts while the youth is in the facility, and that the young person and the family members are actively involved in that process. The guide provides action steps that young people can take to prepare for reentry, and it addresses each of the barriers discussed here, planning for work and school, and medical and dental issues. Youth can complete a pullout guide and an action plan at the end.

The guide provides an opportunity for young people to begin thinking about what reentry means to them, and to work with their caseworkers and reentry coordinators to develop a plan that meets their needs. The guide was specifically designed to be practical and easily understood by youth and their family members while they are transitioning back into society, and it is meant to set people up for success and to lessen the chances of reoffending. The guide provides youth, family, reentry staff, and other support persons with key information on how to support youth as they prepare to return to their communities upon release. Dr. Dean shared [this video](#) that highlights OJJDP's reentry programs.

For further information, please reach out to Dr. Dean at [sanzanna.dean@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:sanzanna.dean@ojp.usdoj.gov) or 202-305-1989.

Discussion

*Jake Horowitz, Policy Director, Public Safety Performance Project, Pew Charitable Trusts:*  
What have you found that works for sustaining an investment in reentry services at the state or local level? Is there a discussion as part of each proposal or during the term of a grant program about how to sustain programming beyond the federal injection of money?

*Dr. Dean:*

Reentry is not a singular event. Because the real measure comes after youth complete the program, a commitment to supporting young people post-completion and post-release is required of the local community and from state and local agencies in long-term partnership. OJJDP requires applicants to explain their sustainability plans and how they will continue to meet the objectives of the program.

*Online Participant:*

Are any grants available for or targeted to tribes?

*Dr. Dean:*

Many of OJJDP's funding opportunities are eligible for state localities and/or tribes. When applications are posted to [the OJJDP website](#) or published in the Federal Register, the eligibility information is listed up front.

*Administrator Harp:*

The Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS) includes Healing to Wellness Courts and Tribal Youth Development. Tribes are eligible to apply for all other grant opportunities. Many solicitations are geared to states, localities, and tribes.

## **Department of Labor Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO)**

Ms. Kemp oversees the office that focuses on youth within the Employment and Training Administration's Division of Youth Services. Through its three main programs, DOL OWI oversees multiple programs. Not every reentered kid wants to go to a "reentry program" and be labeled as such; youth need to pick a program that will give them the best outcome chances.

### REO Youth/Young Adults

- REO youth/young adult programs serve youth and young adults between the ages of 14 to 24 who are currently or have been involved in the juvenile or adult justice systems. All programs involve the youth and the case manager making a plan and putting in place the necessary supports.

### Youth Program Goals

The goals of REO are to:

- Improve workforce outcomes for justice-involved youth and young adults;
- Assist communities in planning and implementing comprehensive reentry programs;
- Inform the public workforce system on how best to serve this population; and
- Develop strategies and partnerships that facilitate successful workforce outcomes for participants.

### Program Components

People need a lot of support for reentry success, including:

- Tutoring;
- Mentoring;
- Career exploration;
- Summer employment and internships;
- Occupational skills training and engagement (including apprenticeships) in high-demand industries;
- Restorative justice;
- Career counseling;
- Case management;
- Job placement;
- Legal services; and
- Referrals to other transitional services.

Every community has Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, which can be found by visiting [CareerOneStop](#) and entering a ZIP code. This is a good place at the local level to get pieces needed for reentry success. These programs reach rural, under-resourced communities.

All REO programs are demonstration programs and therefore do not provide much evaluation data. OWI wants to think systematically about what it can do to make reentry programs better; because of that, it works very closely with the evaluation office at DOL and performs many randomized controlled studies of its programs.

DOL develops solicitations totaling approximately \$25 million for youth ages 16 to 24, based on appropriations language. In addition, about 45 percent of DOL’s adult program funds are given to people under age 24.

#### Evaluation of REO Programs

- In 2017, DOL’s Chief Evaluation Office funded a 5-year independent evaluation of REO-funded programs.
- The evaluation includes:
  1. An evidence review of reentry program models;
  2. An implementation evaluation focusing on year 2016-2018 grantees; and
  3. An impact evaluation.

#### Federal Bonding Program

The Federal Bonding Program – [www.bonds4jobs.com](http://www.bonds4jobs.com) – has been around for 50 years. This free service for anyone who needs it ensures liability coverage up to \$25,000. Federal financing of fidelity bond insurance is issued free of charge to employers. This unique job placement tool assists formerly incarcerated individuals and other at-risk/hard-to-place job applicants (e.g., recovering substance abusers, welfare recipients, poor credits) with securing employment.

Administrator Harp described this program as the most practical program for solving barrier issues. She noted that, when she was prosecuting in rural jurisdictions, workforce partnerships gave people the ability to contribute, work hard, add value to their employer, be paid for it, support their families, and be responsible members of their communities.

For more information, visit the [DOL reentry page](#).

## **COORDINATING COUNCIL MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

The remainder of the Council members introduced themselves to the Youth Spotlight guest presenters.

**Sandy Norcom** is HUD’s Strong Families program lead. Through this program, public housing authorities hold yearly fairs that bring a range of empowering resources to low-income families. She also works with financial literacy and America Saves for Young Workers programs.

**Jasmine Akinsipe** is the program lead for DoE’s Title I, Part D grant program, which serves neglected, delinquent, and at-risk students. The program’s primary goal is to ensure that these students receive the same education as their peers while in different and often more restrictive learning environments.

**Ana Sanchez-Zimak** is a staff member at DHS’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency, which oversees the processing of juveniles and families in the country without legal status and transfers them to HHS’s Office of Refugee Resettlement.

**Jake Horowitz** is the Director of the Public Safety Performance project at The Pew Charitable Trusts, a nonpartisan, nonprofit public charity that brings research and data to bear on some of today's most challenging public issues.

**Jennifer Burnszynski** is HHS Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Services Policy. Beyond its direct work on health and public health, HHS has programs that focus on the economic well-being of Americans, including the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; child support; and Medicaid, which promotes health and economic security. HHS programs that specifically touch young people include the Child Welfare Program and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program. HHS also coordinates with the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs.

**Shawn Berg** is the program lead for the Criminal Justice Team in the HHS Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which typically serves drug courts and reentry programs. SAMHSA currently has no juvenile drug courts but has worked closely with OJJDP and is in development of new standards for juvenile drug courts. SAMHSA also focuses on reentry programs. Both drug courts and reentry programs can serve transitional youth ages 17 to 24.

**Eugenia Tyler-Dawson** serves as the U.S. Department of the Interior Policy Coordinator for Justice Services in the Office of Justice Services within BIA, one of the primary agencies serving American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children in this country. The Bureau works with the juveniles on justice matters, public safety, and law enforcement, and it houses the Bureau of Indian Education, which has schools across the country. The Bureau's Office of Indian Services (OIS) is primarily responsible for carrying out the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act, which protects AI/AN children to ensure they are housed wherever possible with families that retain the Indian culture and societal norms to which they are accustomed.

**Maura Corrigan** is a practitioner member of the Council. A retired Justice and Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, she is currently a lawyer at the Butzel Long law firm in Detroit, Michigan. Earlier in her career, she ran human services in the State of Michigan and then worked at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC on issues of child welfare.

## **YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: REENTRY PROGRAM SUCCESS STORIES**

Administrator Harp welcomed the presenters, noting the importance of having the help of professionals in the field and juveniles to inform the Federal Government's decisions and therefore help it best serve youth and the juvenile justice system.

**The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice: Changing The Way We Do Business**  
*Ashaki McNeil* is a Reentry Program Manager at the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice (VA DJJ), where she manages the development and implementation of a statewide reentry service delivery system that supports the effective transition of juvenile offenders from commitment to parole. Formerly, Ms. McNeil served as a Program Analyst and Disproportionate

Minority Contact (DMC) Coordinator within the VA Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). Prior to her work with DCJS, she spent more than 10 years working with the VA Departments of Juvenile Justice and Correctional Education and the VA Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention.

Ms. McNeil explained that the state-run VA DJJ's 32 court service units house probation and parole officers. Two other units are locally owned and operated but are licensed and certified by VA DJJ. The Department currently has one state-owned-and-operated facility – a juvenile correctional center – and partners with local detention centers in an effort to keep kids closer to the communities from which they come and in smaller environments than the facility located in the Richmond metro area. Youth come from all over the state to that one facility, making it difficult for families to visit and removing kids completely from the communities with which they are familiar.

### Transformation Goals

VA DJJ developed the following goals for transforming its system:

- Create a system that emphasizes the cornerstones of positive youth development (safety, connection, purpose, and fairness).
- Use Core Principles of Reducing Recidivism to enhance reentry procedures and practices.
- Increase/enhance stakeholder partnerships to improve community reentry.
- Leverage resources to build and sustain a continuum of evidence-based programs (EBP).
- Develop a family engagement framework across residential and community programs.

### OJJDP Reentry Grant

VA DJJ applied to OJJDP for a reentry grant in 2014 and received funding. It used the planning year to identify the gaps in its system. Evidence-Based Associates performed an assessment on existing practices and produced *Improving Reentry Outcomes for Youth in Virginia's Juvenile Justice System*. That document includes all of the findings as well as recommendations based on the core principles for filling the gaps. Each year, the Department revisits the document and checks off accomplished items.

### Reentry Task Force

OJJDP required a reentry task force, and Virginia's Governor brought together a committee of all the state's child-serving agencies; each director appointed members to the Task Force. Memoranda of agreement (MOA) were established with Virginia's Department of Social Services and Department of Medical Assistance Services, as well as:

- Social Services (Child Welfare) and Foster Care;
- Behavioral Health/Development Services;
- Department of Motor Vehicles;
- Nonprofits;
- Criminal Justice Services;
- Community College System;
- Workforce Development;
- Medical Assistance Services;
- Aging/Rehabilitative Services; and
- Education.

Examples of how these MOAs are operationalized include the following:

- If a young person is in foster care prior to commitment, a foster care worker will continue to work with that youth while he or she is in commitment and will participate in treatment team reentry planning meetings; when that young person returns to the community, placement is already set up.
- Certified reentry advocates give learner's permit testing to young people who are in commitment, and the Department of Motor Vehicles makes sure that all kids leave commitment with state-issued IDs.

### Phase One Implementation

VA DJJ began by focusing on staff and on changing the culture. It developed a comprehensive reentry manual, convened a training forum for all staff, and transformed housing units into small communities with an emphasis on positive staff and resident relationships. The manual begins on day one of reentry, with an initial family meeting.

VA DJJ hired a family engagement coordinator and developed a transportation program that is available to and free for all families across the state. It convened a Family Engagement Subcommittee and increased family engagement activities.

### Phase Two Implementation

VA DJJ next developed the continuum of services and created a transition home for hard-to-place youth. This dormitory-style house hired a family advocate to ensure parents had a voice.

### Conclusion

From these reentry planning and programming efforts, VA DJJ concluded that:

- Transformation is never-ending or forever changing.
- It is important to take care of staff, who in turn take care of children and families.
- Creating meaningful opportunities for engagement between staff and the youth, and the families they serve, positively affects outcomes.
- Results come in different forms.

### Youth Perspective

*Christopher Quintanilla* is 22 years old. He currently works full time at a hair salon as a barber and is a student at Northern Virginia Community College, majoring in organizational psychology. He was released from the Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center in 2018.

Mr. Quintanilla explained that he had spent some time with VA DJJ when he was 16 years old and that he reflects often on his transitional period and on its relevance to decisions around reoffending. He compared the experience of juvenile justice incarceration and release to a fish living in a fishbowl and then being released back into an ocean, and he stressed the importance of mental preparation for that transition.

Mr. Quintanilla often associates his decision to move forward in a positive manner and not to do anything that would affect him negatively in the future with receiving inspiration and guidance.

He believes the focus should be on inspiring residents to decide to change their lives completely. This requires a level of connection that ensures clear communication to understand the young person's thoughts and potential reactions to life after release.

For Mr. Quintanilla, staying busy and productive as well as limiting distractions were key to remaining out of trouble after release. He explained that transitioning takes hard work and effort, and that the person will need to take charge and decide to do better. He asserted that challenge inadvertently promotes growth. He likes that things are moving forward and not getting worse.

### **Iowa's Juvenile Reentry Systems**

*Dave Kuker* is an Executive Officer for the Department of Human Rights Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning. He has been involved in various capacities in juvenile justice issues – including grants administration, committee staffing, research, program and policy development, and compliance monitoring of secure juvenile facilities – for nearly 30 years. He is the lead staff person for Iowa's Juvenile Reentry Systems (JReS) effort and is the coordinator for Iowa's DMC Subcommittee, a subcommittee of Iowa's Juvenile Justice Advisory Council (the Iowa SAG). He is Iowa's State Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative Coordinator, and he assists with administration for Iowa's federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) formula grant funding.

Mr. Kuker referred to a guideline JReS produced through its onsite work in facilities. It lists major activities of key parties for placement and reentry in the juvenile justice system. The document, which reflects the structural work the office has done and is meant to give a perspective for state officials and for facility officials, can be used by facilities to develop checklists. The goal is to provide a backbone for programmatic implementation; activities will vary by facility.

This case management tool is intentionally organized from pre-placement through release to the community. It shows the responsibilities of the various parties, including probation officers, caseworkers in a facility, and vocational rehabilitation staff. As a practical guide, JReS added programs that are available statewide for youth and included resources.

### **Model Data Project Framework**

Mr. Kuker explained that JReS should be able to answer the following questions:

- How many youth are involved in various stages of the system?
- What are the key characteristics of the youth involved?
- How did the youth become system-involved?
- How did the youth move through the system?
- Is the system fair?
- How did the youth change while in the system?
- Does the system meet the needs of youth and families?
- What was the experience of youth in the system?
- How much does it cost?
- What are long-term measures of success?

The federal Family First legislation directs states to keep youth out of institutional confinement and supports ways to do so. It also forces the state to operate as a single juvenile justice system. The state needs family-based and evidence-based services, and the requirement of at least six months of aftercare for young people necessitates a Qualified Residential Treatment Program.

### **Systems Reform and Case Management: Juvenile Risk Level**

Administrators and field staff informed the following:

- *High-risk juveniles* are likely to have high re-offense rates and have the most room for improvement if they receive an effective intervention.
  - Mr. Kuker explained that, although JReS is doing a lot of work with this group, it needs to be doing more.
- *Low-risk juveniles* have little likelihood of reoffending even without intervention and have little room for improvement.
- Juvenile justice systems will get more delinquency reduction benefits from intervention dollars by focusing the most effective and costly interventions on higher-risk juveniles and providing less intensive and costly interventions to the lower-risk cases.

### **JReS Data**

Mr. Kuker reviewed data from Iowa's juvenile reentry systems. He shared information about *services received by youth on formal probation by risk level*, noting the high likelihood that these services had been undercounted. The average number of services were approximately even, with low-risk youth receiving 2.3 services, moderate-risk youth receiving 2.4 services, and high-risk youth receiving 2.2 services.

*New facility admissions* numbers are very low, with the total number of group care admissions in 2019 being 534 in JReS facilities and 738 in all facilities in the state. According to the Iowa Aftercare Services Network, *the rate of recidivism* – recidivism indicating that the exit from placement resulted in a new complaint to Juvenile Court Services or a charge in Adult Court within one year of release – was lower for the JReS-adjacent Iowa State Aftercare Services Network (ISASN) than for the single state training school (STS). ISASN provides an advocate for each youth aging out of the system; advocates check in on youths when they are in their homes, connect them to various resources in their communities, advocate with potential contacts (e.g., landlords, employers), and help them troubleshoot age-appropriate issues. Reentering youth also receive financial support in the form of a cash subsidy.

### **Youth Transition Decision-Making Teams**

Youth Transition Decision-Making Teams (YTDM) are meetings led by youth with assistance from a facilitator who is trained/approved in this specialized model. YTDMs provide the process being utilized in select JCS jurisdictions to develop permanent/transitional plans. Importantly, they are a tool to build support for youth returning to the community by:

- Obtaining full or part-time employment;
- Developing a crisis/safety plan;
- Gaining increased knowledge of the job application and interviewing process;
- Completing treatment requirements successfully; and
- Learning how to budget.

## **Youth Perspective**

*Levi Kranz* has experienced a number of facets of community-based and placement services in Iowa's juvenile court system, and he is improving and succeeding in life. He lives in an apartment in Sioux City, currently is in his junior year of high school, and works part time at a local McDonald's. Mr. Kranz continues his work with his juvenile court officer, Stephan Pearson. He enjoys participating in football and wrestling, making music, writing, and spending time with his family and friends. He offered information on the educational, life skills, employment skills, and other services that helped his transition home.

Mr. Kranz shared what he feels helped him rethink his path of delinquency, noting that every juvenile has a different story, including some who live on the streets. He explained that his mentality was wanting to have fun and having no limits, and his actions landed him in Clarinda Academy juvenile detention. He was in Jackson Recovery Center as well as STS.

Mr. Kranz became involved with drugs at age 13 and began committing crimes. He was placed in Jackson Recovery, which he said helped him to refrain from doing drugs but did not help him reform. After his release, he went back to his old life and fell back into his old ways. He eventually ended up in Clarinda Academy, a place he describes as corrupt. He made the decision to pretend to be reformed just to go home and get back to his old life, where he was introduced to activities and people who were even more dangerous. He found himself on the run and realized this was not how he wanted to live. Eventually, he was caught.

While in juvenile detention, Mr. Kranz met one of the speakers, Adam. Adam had been through many of the same experiences, and Mr. Kranz felt that Adam understood his perspective. He also saw Adam as a model for change.

Mr. Kranz then moved to STS, which he describes as the best program he has been through. There, he became involved with Youth for Christ, which gave him more examples of reformed offenders and helped him feel understood. He realized that he wanted to change, and he worked in the program for months with the mindset of getting the best out of it, coming home, and finally being able to do something with his life. He studied building trades, building things in woodshop and learning a lot. His goal after he graduates high school is to get a carpentry apprenticeship. He hopes to build his own house someday.

Mr. Kranz explained that STS also has a reward program that allows residents to pursue other interests, such as making music. He eventually participated and found it to be a very good distraction from feeling sad about being away from home. He explained the value of being introduced to new hobbies that can replace other, less healthy behaviors after release; he no longer runs around with his old playmates since he was introduced to young adults through community activities such as bowling.

At STS, Mr. Kranz was introduced to Jason Jackson, who did his YTDM. They talked and connected, and Mr. Kranz was excited to know that someone who came to visit him was from the same city as he and did good things in the community. They developed post-release goals, and Mr. Jackson is true to his word and continues to visit Mr. Kranz in Sioux City. They shopped

together for the suit that Mr. Kranz wore to this meeting, and Mr. Jackson provides moral support and motivates him to keep doing good things.

Mr. Kranz added that family functional therapy helped him and his mother get back on the same page and to communicate better. When he was in juvenile detention, the therapist and Mr. Kranz's mom would come there, and they all would work together. He felt that made a positive difference.

Mr. Kranz noted the value of introducing youth to someone who has been through what they have been through. He also expressed the importance of having a juvenile court officer or juvenile correctional officer who can create a structured environment, help with services, introduce youth to people, and do healthy things in the community. Youth need consequences, according to Mr. Kranz.

## **COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Administrator Harp thanked all of the presenters, asserting that the practical information they shared was what the Council needs to hear as it thinks about how to help youth and communities.

PDAAG Sullivan reflected back to Mr. Kranz's point that having structure and accountability is important. He responded that, although he has bonded with his probation officer, the probation officer would not hesitate to apply consequences if necessary.

PDAAG Sullivan added her perspective from her experience running adult drug and DUI courts that the most loving thing a judge or officer can do for people is to hold them accountable. She asked Mr. Kranz if he thought, in hindsight, that he had been ready for the first program he attended and if it actually had planted some seeds in him. He responded that that it may not have been terrible, but that a lot of inappropriate activity went on with the staff, and that the youths did not see it as a place to change behavior, but instead to do time and get back to what they had been doing.

PDAAG Sullivan thanked Mr. Kranz for answering her questions, commenting that, even in her current role running OJP, she never wants to forget the things she learned when she was in the field working one on one with people in the criminal justice system – whether they be victims, witnesses, juveniles, or adults – at all different stages.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

PDAAG Sullivan thanked Administrator Harp for her work, the members of the Council for their commitment to issues of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention and their expert guidance to DOJ, and Ms. Wolfe for the amazing job she does as the Council's DFO. PDAAG Sullivan underscored the importance of reentry to President Trump and Attorney General Barr. OJP has

awarded almost \$56 million to fund reentry programs in state, local, and tribal jurisdictions; a substantial portion of that funding is going to supportive services for youth coming out of residential placement and entering community service. PDAAG Sullivan is the Vice Chair of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement, which focuses heavily on reentry and juvenile justice among other areas.

PDAAG Sullivan added that the key is to find the interventions that work, and that DOJ is doing that work. OJP's new Executive Director of the Federal Interagency Reentry Council, Pastor Tony Lowden (in attendance), will lead the administration's efforts in this area.

## **WRAP-UP AND ADJOURNMENT**

Administrator Harp expressed her heartfelt thanks to the guests for their input and insight, explaining that they hold the Federal Government accountable in important ways. She thanked the presenters as well for sharing their expertise and experiences.

The Coordinating Council will meet next on Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 10 a.m., and the following meeting will take place on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 10 a.m. 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@usdoj.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Wolfe@usdoj.gov).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.