

JUVENILE MENTORING PROGRAM (JUMP)

MENTORING—AN IMPORTANT STRATEGY FOR DIVERSION AND RE-ENTRY PROGRAMS

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CATHERINE WHITE, ELIZABETH MERTINKO AND DEBORAH VAN ORDEN



Information Technology International
10000 Falls Road
Suite 214
Potomac, MD 20854
www.ITInc.com

301-765-0060 (phone)
301-765-0080 (fax)

Information Technology International (ITI) supports the national evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), US Department of Justice.

Periodically, ITI releases evaluation findings focused on topical areas concerning mentoring. This bulletin is the third in this series.

Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.

If there was any doubt about what works to lower rates of delinquency and detention, and what lowered recidivism rates in the 70's, 80's or 90's, there should be no such confusion any longer... The investment of time, talent, and treasure by a caring adult in the life of a child cannot be over-estimated as an important factor in achieving success. The success of a well run mentoring program is proof. When a child is left to deal with his or her world alone, they are at great risk of trouble, violence and delinquency. (Flores, 2002)

INTRODUCTION

Each year thousands of youth have contact with the juvenile justice system. A variety of programs and sanctions await these youth, including diversion programs and probation. Some youth enter juvenile facilities, detention centers or treatment programs. Eventually, all but a few of these youth return to their communities. More than 2.8 million arrests of persons under the age of 18 were made in 1997, representing about 9.3 percent of the U.S. population between the ages of 10 and 17. An estimated 2.6 million arrests of persons under the age of 18 were made in 1998 (OJJDP, 1999). In 1993, juvenile courts handled nearly 1.5 million delinquency cases – virtually every one of them had some contact with a probation officer (Torbet, 1996). Of the estimated 600,000 persons released from prison in 2001, approximately 17 percent of these individuals were juveniles, under the age of 18. The number of adjudicated delinquency cases that resulted in out-of-home placement (i.e. residential treatment center, juvenile corrections facility, foster or group home) rose from 104,800 in 1988 to 163,200 in 1997 (OJJDP, 2000). An estimated 60 percent of all youth who are adjudicated delinquent are placed on formal probation. Approximately 30 percent of adjudicated delinquents are placed in residential facilities for specific or indeterminate time periods (OJJDP, 2000). Clearly, the task of providing services to court-involved youth, and especially those that support the re-integration of youth into society after detention, has become a critical concern at the community level. Former Attorney General, Janet Reno considered prisoner

reentry to be “one of the most pressing problems we face as a nation.” (Reno, 2000). Terence Donohue, Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), listed the juvenile component of the Serious, Violent Offender Reentry Initiative among the four prime OJJDP focus areas for FY 2002.

Increasing caseloads in juvenile court increase the demand for services to meet the varied needs of youth who have court contact. In 1996, 44 percent of cases that were disposed by juvenile courts were handled informally, with youth voluntarily agreeing to participation in programs or probation. Often these less serious offenders are viewed as good candidates for interventions such as mentoring, with a goal of preventing further and perhaps more serious delinquent activity. In this same year, youth were adjudicated delinquent in 58 percent of all formally processed cases: residential placement or probation was ordered in 82 percent of these (OJJDP, 1999). Dramatic increases in the numbers of released prisoners has led to growing interest on the part of correctional officers and policymakers in providing programs that will reduce the likelihood of a return to confinement. Prior research indicates that recidivism rates among juvenile parolees are high – ranging from 55 percent to 75 percent (Krisberg, Austin and Settele, 1991).

Youth who face multiple risk factors and who have become court-involved require a variety of interventions to provide them with the support

numerous aspects of daily life. One intervention that provides this type of widespread support is mentoring. Described as “the master key that can unlock the attention of at-risk students and make them receptive to learning” (Freedman, 1991) mentoring is an intervention that can be tailored to meet the needs of a variety of court-involved populations, from youth who are informally processed and require assistance in avoiding further court contact, to youth who are moving from the highly structured world of a detention center to navigate their neighborhoods.

In 1992, Congress amended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act. Among other revisions, it established a new delinquency prevention program – the Juvenile Mentoring Program

(JUMP), administered through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). In addition to providing funding to community-based organizations to provide mentoring services, the JUMP program also provided support for a training and technical assistance provider (the National Mentoring Center) and a national evaluation. Begun in 1995, the national evaluation has studied both process and impact issues by gathering data from all agencies implementing JUMP projects. Through this work, the national evaluation team has identified several JUMP projects that are using mentoring as a strategy to assist court-involved youth, either as a diversion program or as a re-entry support for youth returning home after a period of confinement.

THE JUMP PROGRAM—AN OVERVIEW

In 1995, OJJDP awarded the first 41 JUMP grants to community-based organizations to implement or expand mentoring projects. Since that time, there have been five more cohorts of grants awarded for a total of over 200 grant awards nationwide. Each grant award provides funding for three years in an amount ranging from about \$180,000 to \$220,000 total. JUMP funds are intended to be start-up monies: once an agency has received a JUMP grant, it is ineligible to apply for future JUMP funds. Thus, projects are expected to become financially self-sustaining by the conclusion of the JUMP grant award. The primary goals of the program, as delineated in the Federal legislation were to:

- Reduce school dropout rates.
- Improve academic performance.
- Reduce juvenile delinquency and gang participation.

JUMP projects are required to identify an at-risk youth population (using criteria outlined in the JUMP solicitation) from which to recruit project participants. All JUMP projects must meet certain Federal Guidelines. Mentoring matches must be one-to-one and utilize volunteer, adult (over age 18) mentors. Matches are expected to last for a minimum of one year. Currently, each JUMP project is expected to make and support a minimum of 25-30 matches per year. Projects must form a partnership with a local education agency (LEA), as documented in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) submitted with the JUMP application, if the grantee agency is not itself an LEA. However, outside of these general guidelines, JUMP projects are free to design interventions that best serve the needs of youth in their communities. The population of JUMP grantees, then, is a diverse group, including gender specific projects, projects that target a particular racial or ethnic group, and faith-based mentoring projects. Perhaps one of the fastest growing populations, both in JUMP and in the mentoring community is mentoring projects targeting and serving court-involved youth.

This bulletin describes JUMP projects working with court-involved youth. Populations served range from relatively minor offenders who are placed on formal or informal probation to youth who have been detained in facilities and are returning to the community at-large. Each project is described in detail, including the population served, the community-agencies that have partnered to provide the intervention and the challenges and achievements of each project

throughout the life of the grant. Where appropriate, we included information regarding the success of the project measured through assessment of quarterly narrative evaluation reports submitted to the JUMP national evaluation team. If available, local evaluation are presented and discussed.

Case #1: Juvenile Court Offers Mentoring Services to Youth on Probation

This 1999 JUMP project provides mentoring services to adjudicated youth who are either committed to a local juvenile detention center or who are on probation. The County's juvenile department and a non-profit organization serving African-American youth jointly applied for the grant and sponsor the program. At the time of this report, this project was scheduled to end its participation in the JUMP program in April 2001. As funds were not fully expended at this time, the agency was awarded a no-cost extension until May 31, 2002. A second extension was approved and currently the project is schedule to complete the JUMP grant in December 2002. At the time of this writing, the agency verbalized commitment to continuing the mentoring program beyond the JUMP grant, however replacement funds had not yet been identified.

Typical of JUMP projects, much of the first year of the grant was spent in building infrastructure and combining the resources of two existing mentoring projects. The project struggled with several key staff changes, as well as a move to a newly constructed juvenile facility at the beginning of the grant period. As a result, the project adjusted its match goals for each of the three years of the project.

As of August 2002, the project had reported data to the national evaluation on 92 youth, 84 mentors and 81 matches. Of these, 68 matches had ended, with an average match length of almost nine months. In addition to being matched with mentors, project youth also participated in a variety of programs designed to meet that youth's specific needs, including substance abuse treatment, individual and family counseling, and crisis resolution. Since all project participants are court-involved youth, they are mandated to comply with all court-ordered conditions for probation/parole.

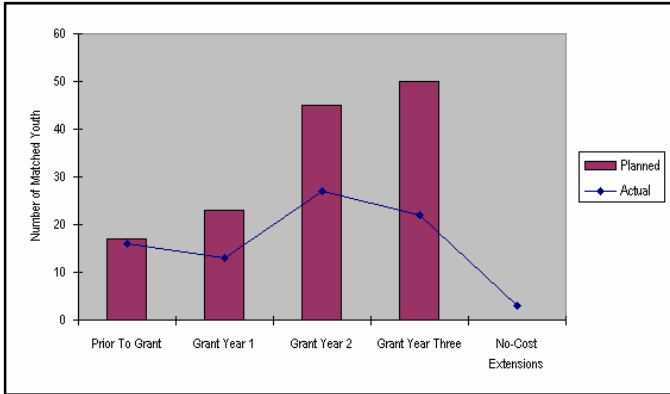


Exhibit 1: Match numbers peaked in Year 2, with most of Year 1 devoted to capacity building activities.

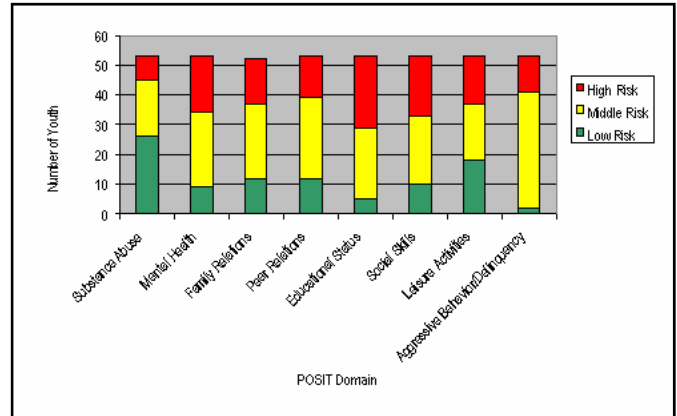


Exhibit 2: Educational status was the most frequently reported high-risk domain by youth in this agency.

A team consisting of Probation Officers, school personnel and project staff review youth records on a variety of criteria including a risk assessment to select appropriate youth for participation in the project. The project initially planned to focus on younger offenders (ages 11 to 15), particularly those with great needs for placement, treatment and stabilization. In reality, the project has served youth at the older end of this age range (average participant age 15). While the project serves a racially diverse group of youth, the majority of project participants (68 youth) are white. Seventy percent of project participants are male.

Data submitted by this project to the national evaluation team indicates that the youth enrolled face risks in multiple areas of their lives. All JUMP projects are required to administer the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) to each youth (age 12 and over) upon intake into the project. This 10-domain screening instrument, developed by NIDA, contains 138 questions that measure risk in the following areas:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| <i>Substance Use/Abuse</i> | <i>Mental Health</i> |
| <i>Physical Health</i> | <i>Family Relations</i> |
| <i>Peer Relations</i> | <i>Educational Status</i> |
| <i>Social Skills</i> | <i>Leisure Activities</i> |
| <i>Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency</i> | <i>Vocational Status</i> |

To date, this agency has submitted completed POSITs for 53 youth ranging in age from 12 to 18. In each domain, more youth scored in the middle and high-risk range, than did in the low-risk range. The most frequently cited high-risk domain was Educational Status, followed by Social Skills and Mental Health. Aggressive behavior/delinquency was the most frequently reported middle-risk domain, which is consistent with the population of non-violent and/or first time offenders who are targeted for participation in this project.

The *Vocational Status* domain of the POSIT is considered to be reliable for measurement of vocational risk in youth who are age 16 and older. Twenty of the youth from this agency completing the POSIT fell into this age range. Only one youth scored in the low-risk category on this domain – 15 youth scored in the high-risk domain and four in the medium-risk domain. While certainly not surprising, these results indicate

that youth enter the project in need of assistance in building job-readiness skills. Mentoring has the potential to achieve positive gains in this area.

JUMP projects are asked to provide ongoing information regarding the nature and frequency of youth contacts with the juvenile justice system. This data includes the date of the contact, the nature of the contact (offense) and the disposition. At the time of this report, the agency had provided juvenile justice contact information for 57 youth – nearly 67 percent of the youth served by the project. Youth varied in the number of contacts they had with law enforcement, with an average of 2.8 contacts per youth. These contacts were the result of a variety of offenses, with breaking and entering (82) and assault being the most common (18).

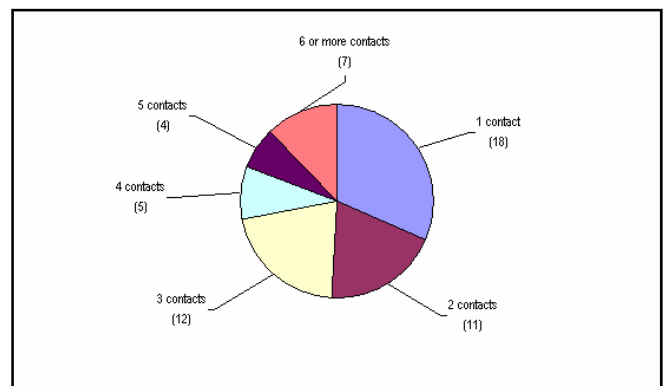


Exhibit 3: Youth varied in the number of contacts they had with law enforcement.

According to periodic narrative reports submitted by this agency to the national evaluation team, some matches ended as youth satisfied the conditions of their probation and were no longer court-mandated to participate in the project. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some matches continued to meet informally, while others had no further contact outside the formal mentoring program. Program staff encourages youth and mentors to maintain contact after the match has ended formally and extend invitations to these pairs to agency-sponsored group activities and outings.

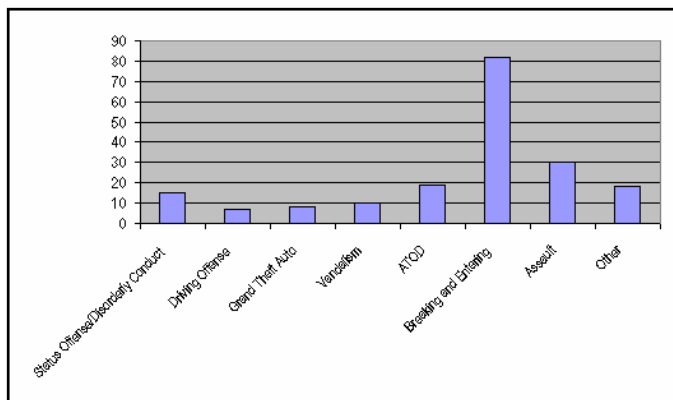


Exhibit 4: Breaking and entering and assault were the two most commonly reported offenses for youth in this project.

Case Study #2: An Inner-City Agency Targets Minority Youth

This project received JUMP funds in spring, 2001. The agency is a minority-led organization that provides educational, residential and employment programs to children, youth and families. It directs its major efforts toward African American and Hispanic youth. In addition to, the one-to-one mentoring services, the agency also provides a year-round alternative school for the County juvenile detention center, an education program for young women who reside at a non-secure detention residence, an HIV/AIDS prevention program and an adolescent parenting program for high school youth.

In its JUMP grant application, agency leadership stated a goal of serving court-involved youth between the ages of 10 and 18, who were detained in either secure or non-secure detention centers, or who were engaged in violent or gang related activities. Although the project originally planned to serve 225 youth over the three years of the grant, early experience indicated that this was an unrealistic expectation and the reduced it's goal to 150 youth over three years. Sixteen months into the implementation of the project, the agency has reported enrolling 61 youth. The age range has expanded, with the project enrolling youth as young as six, with a median age of 14. The project serves males and females in approximately equal numbers, with a majority (88 percent) of the project's participants being African American.

The agency has provided completed intake POSITs for 26 youth who were age 12 or older on intake into the project. Aggressive behavior/delinquency was the most commonly reported middle-risk domain (15 youth), followed by social skills and peer relationships. The most frequently reported high-risk domain was physical health (12) followed by family relationships and leisure activities. Clearly, the project targets a youth population that faces risk factors in multiple domains of their lives.

Examination of POSIT scores in the *Vocational Status* domain further illustrates this assertion. Ten youth completing the POSIT from this agency were age 16 or over at the time of the data collection. Only two of these youth scored in the low-risk range for this domain. One youth scored in the middle-risk

range and seven youth scored in the high-risk range for this domain.

To date the agency has recruited, trained and matched 54 mentors who have been recruited from a variety of sources including community groups, religious organizations and college students. The agency has not yet reported match end dates for any of its matches; therefore data regarding the average length of match is not available. Matches participate in individual, as well as group activities including workshops featuring performers in the visual arts, music, dance and drama. Pairs also attend workshops that stress the relationship between education and career success. Business owners and other guest speakers have been asked to provide information on entrepreneurship, teamwork and personal finances. Given the high percentage of youth scoring in the high-risk range for the *Vocational Status* domain of the POSIT, the emphasis on career development clearly is appropriate for this youth population.

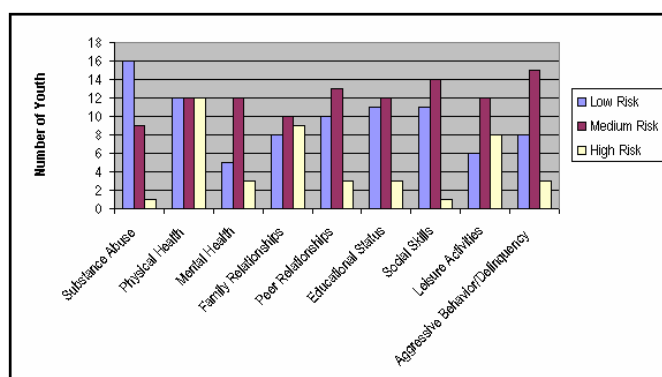


Exhibit 5: Aggressive behavior/delinquency was the most commonly reported middle-risk domain for youth in this agency.

The project also emphasizes the need for support of and close collaboration with parents and guardians. The project planned to include regular parent support group meetings facilitated by both school and project staff, which would include a series of parenting skills training workshops. Mentors receive training that focuses on communication, limit-setting skills, relationship building and positive ways to interact with youth. The project provides support to mentors through frequent and ready access to the Project Coordinator and staff.

Now beginning the second year of the JUMP grant, the agency has begun to outline a strategy for continuing the mentoring project after JUMP funds are expended. Although replacement funds have not yet been identified, the agency continues to cultivate funding sources at the state and local level.

Case # 3: A Rural JUMP Project Targets First Time Offenders

This 1999 JUMP project, located in the Midwest, offers mentoring services to first-time juvenile offenders between the ages of 10 and 15. The project represents collaboration between the County State Attorney's office and a local affiliate of a national mentoring organization. The project targeted youth recruitment to one middle school and several area elementary schools with a goal of recruiting 50 at-risk youth annually. An additional local goal was that the recidivism rate among participating youth at one-year would be less than 50 percent.

At the close of the JUMP grant, in the spring of 2002, the agency reported supporting 91 matches, with an average match length of approximately eight months. Youth participants ranged in age from 9 to 17 with an average age of 12. Although both male and female youth were eligible to participate in the project, 68 percent of the program participants were male. While the project reports serving youth of all races and ethnicities, most of the youth (60) served by the project are Native American. A sizeable number of white youth (54) also are served. To be eligible for the project, the youth must attend one of the schools with which the agency has a memorandum of understanding (MOU), be a first time offender, and indicate a willingness to participate in the project. The youth must also have a parent/guardian who is able and willing to support the match relationship. Most of the youth referrals came through the juvenile diversion coordinator in the county state attorney's office. These referrals are screened to assure that they are good candidates for the project and youth are then placed on a waiting list until a mentor becomes available.

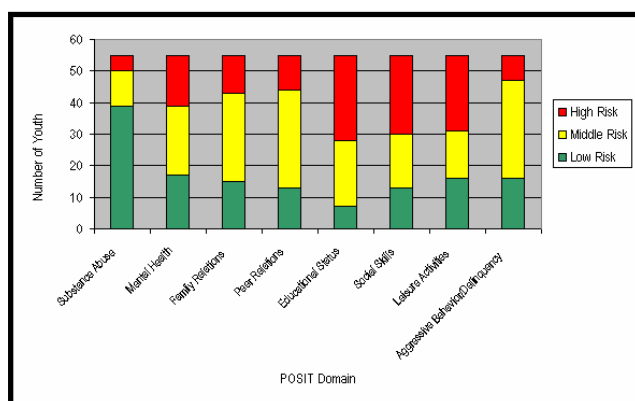


Exhibit 6: Youth in this project most frequently scored in the high-risk range for Educational Status and Social Skills.

Of the 107 youth enrolled in this project, 55 completed intake POSITs. For this group, the most frequently reported high-risk domain was *Educational Status* (27 youth). *Social Skills* (25 youth) and *Leisure Activities* (24 youth) also were frequently reported high-risk domains. *Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency* and *Peer Relationships* were the most frequently reported middle-risk domains (31 youth), closely followed by *Family*

Relationships (28 youth). Too few youth from this group were age 16 or older at the time of POSIT administration to allow for an analysis of data on the Vocational Status domain.

Data regarding justice system contact were available for 39 youth. The data indicates that the most commonly reported offenses were status offenses (27, often truancy) and burglary/theft/breaking and entering (25). Of the 39 youth for whom justice contact data were available, 11 youth had committed offenses after being matched with mentors. These offenses ranged in severity, however the highest number were status offenses (6, mostly truancy). Interestingly, youth who committed offenses after being matched with mentors demonstrated a slightly longer average match length (10 months) than did participants in this project overall.

Mentors have been recruited by the agency from a variety of sources including local colleges, law enforcement, area businesses and community based organizations such as an association of retired persons and a teachers' organization. The project also recruited some mentors from a local Air Force base. Each mentor must attend a 1 1/2 hour training session that focuses on topics such as communication skills, relationship building, limit setting skills and child development. The training also reviews physical and sexual abuse issues, personal safety for children, and techniques, tools and procedures to recognize, report and respond to an abuse situation or other crisis.

Like many other mentoring projects, this agency has struggled with some aspects of the data collection. Often the youth participating in these projects live in families characterized by a high rate of transience. It is not uncommon for mentoring matches to end abruptly as families move with little notice and no forwarding address. Nonetheless, the projects average match length is a noteworthy success. Narrative reports submitted by this agency to the national evaluation indicate that mentored youth demonstrated a decrease in school absenteeism. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the youth demonstrated improved self-esteem; a finding reflected in end-of-year surveys administered to project participants. For more than half of the project participants, grades remained the same or rose during the period of participation in the project. For the school year 2000-2001, 54 percent of participating youth had no further contact with the justice system, suggesting that the project may have had an impact on preventing/reducing recidivism.

This project's JUMP grant ended in August, 2002. At the time of this writing, the agency continues to provide mentoring services under its core programs, but has ceased offering mentoring to court-involved youth due to a lack of funding. Agency leaders continue to seek replacement funds to reinstitute the JUMP project, with one Federal application pending.

Case #4: A Suburban Mentoring Program Works with Court-Involved Youth and Families of Domestic Violence

This 1999 JUMP project, located in a Midwestern suburban city, represents a collaboration between an affiliate of a national mentoring organization, the juvenile court services office and the local school district. The original grant application outlined a plan to serve court-involved youth between the ages of 7 and 14 and their siblings. Eligibility for the project was limited to first-time, non-violent offenders. The project proposed to serve 20 youth annually for each of the three years of the grant. Before receiving the JUMP grant award, the agency had provided mentoring services to community youth for 29 years. The JUMP grant offered this agency an opportunity to develop and implement a mentoring project specifically targeting court-involved youth – a group that historically had not been served under the agency's existing scope of services. The director of the county probation office noted that this youth population generally has access to fewer services than their non-court-involved counterparts, therefore the JUMP grant truly involved extending mentoring services to youth who had previously been unable to access this type of support.

Like many mentoring projects, this agency emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in making and supporting the match. All youth who are enrolled in the project are required to have the permission of a parent/guardian before the match commences. Parents/guardians also are encouraged to participate in the agency's advisory committee meetings. Both the JUMP coordinator and the probation officers provide parents with information on other community services to help meet the family's needs. The agency has been instrumental in linking families with support including emergency housing, referrals for food and other concrete resources, summer camp referrals, mental health and substance abuse treatment services and educational advocacy. The project is staffed by a full-time JUMP Coordinator, a half-time program assistant and support from the sponsoring agency in the form of fundraising and mentor recruitment/training. Although originally scheduled to end in the fall of 2002, the project utilized funds at a slower rate than originally anticipated. The agency requested and received a no-cost extension enabling the program to run for an additional year. At this time, no replacement funds have been identified to continue the project after the termination of the JUMP grant, although agency staff continue to seek alternate funding sources.

At the time of this report, the grantee had reported data on 85 youth, 81 mentors and 69 matches. The average length of match was just over 10 months. The demographics of the youth served by the project are consistent with those outlined in the grant proposal – youth served are between the ages of 7 and 14, with an average age of 10.7. The project serves slightly more males than females (54 percent males). It serves primarily black (54 percent) and white (36 percent) youth with the remaining youth identifying themselves as Native American or bi-racial. As program implementation progressed, the project partners agreed to open the enrollment to youth whose families were involved in domestic violence.

Data regarding justice system contact was provided for 31 youth. Interestingly, the overwhelming percentage of these youth was male (71 percent). The most commonly reported offenses included burglary/theft/breaking and entering (21 offenses) and vandalism (14 offenses). For many of these youth, participation in the JUMP project was part of a diversion program for the youth in response to the initial offense.

The agency has submitted 21 POSITs to date. Given the relatively young age of the youth served by the project, it is not surprising that all of these youth scored in the low-risk range on the *Substance Abuse* domain. None of the youth who completed the POSIT are age 16 or over, therefore data on the *Vocational Status* domain of this instrument are invalid. The most frequently reported high-risk domains were *Leisure Activities* and *Educational Status* (8 youth). The most frequently reported middle-risk domain was *Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency* (14 youth). Given the agency's focus on serving youth who are court-involved, these findings are not surprising.

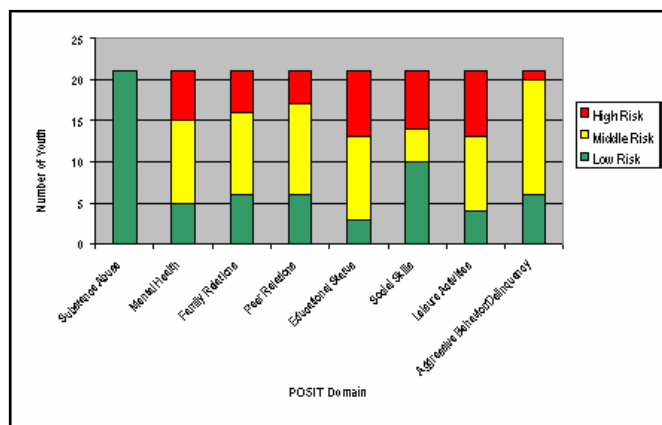


Exhibit 7: Leisure Activities and Educational Status were the most frequently reported high-risk domains by youth in this agency.

Mentors were recruited from a variety of sources including local labor unions and local businesses. Mentors are, in some cases, able to visit with youth in schools (such as sharing lunch or working together in the computer lab). Matches also participate in activities such as attending sporting events, visiting the mentor's workplace, participating in outdoor activities such as fishing or hiking, or completing educational activities (reading together, completing homework).

As of April 2002, two years into the project, 96 percent of non-offending siblings had no contact with local law enforcement. Periodic reports from the project indicate that school attendance and academic performance have improved for youth in the project.

Case #5: Southern Project Targets Youth in a Juvenile Detention Facility

This 2001 JUMP grantee represents a collaboration between the juvenile justice court, the local literacy council and the local school district. The program aims to address and ameliorate the many risk factors present in the community, including high teenage pregnancy rates, widespread manufacture, distribution and use of crystal methamphetamine and crack cocaine, increasing high school dropout rates, widespread gang activity and the disproportionate confinement of minority youth in the juvenile justice facility. The project's grant application indicates that serious and violent crime is on the rise in the local community, including the rate of commission of these offenses by juveniles. The project proposed to offer one-to-one mentoring to 50 youth per year, 80 percent of whom would reside in the local juvenile detention center. The remaining 20 percent would be referred to the project by local schools or the literacy council.

At the end of the first year of the project, the agency had reported data on 58 youth, 32 mentors and 30 matches. The youth population ranged in age from 13 to 17 and was primarily male (69 percent). Most of the youth served by the project were black (88 percent), though the project reported serving some white and Hispanic youth. This is particularly noteworthy in the context of the primary referring agency, the county juvenile detention center. A 1998 study of this facility reported that 78 percent of the youth detained in this facility were minorities, although minorities represented only 44% of the overall county population. Given the agency's focus on addressing the issue of disproportionate minority confinement, their concentration of services to minority youth is not surprising.

Data reported to the evaluation team by project staff indicate that 95 percent of referrals to the project come from the county juvenile detention center. Most of the youth who are referred to the project are detained in this facility for a short time, generally three to four weeks. During this time, project staff establish the mentoring match. Most mentoring activities take place after the youth has been released from custody and is on probation in their home community. Although the project employs two full-time staff members, juvenile probation officers provide significant support to mentors, especially with regard to their efforts to locate youth and keep them engaged in project activities.

The agency has submitted 43 completed POSITs to the evaluation team. Not surprisingly, the most frequently reported middle-risk domain was *Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency* (32 youth). This was closely followed by the *Substance Abuse* domain (29 youth). The most frequently reported high-risk domains were *Mental Health* and *Social Skills* (22 youth each). Of the youth who completed the POSIT, 27 were age 16 and older. Eighty-five percent of these youth (23) scored in the high-risk range for *Vocational Status*, indicating that youth participating in the project may benefit from activities designed to enhance employability and attainment of career/vocational goals.

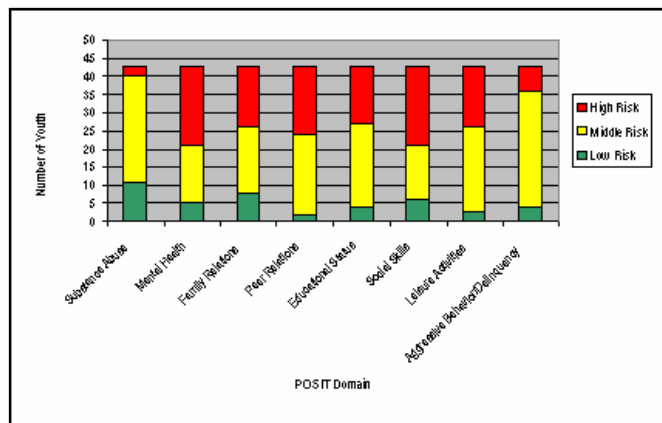


Exhibit 8: Aggressive behavior/delinquency was the most frequently reported middle-risk domain in this agency.

Since this project is relatively new, there is little data available to assess the impact of this project at this time. However, the project's success in recruiting youth and mentors during the first year is a noteworthy achievement. This project remains an important one to watch in the future to determine the impact of mentoring on reducing recidivism and lowering rates of juvenile delinquency in this high-risk population.

Case #6: Secure Detention Center Offers Mentoring As A Bridge To Returning Home

This project was among the first group of JUMP awards and began operations in July 1996. Located in a southern state, it was one of the few JUMP projects that served youth living in a juvenile correction facility. The primary goal of the project was to match youth in one-to-one relationships with volunteer mentors while the youth were detained in juvenile facilities. The mentoring relationships, established during the last year of the youth's period of confinement, would then serve as a major support for youth as they returned to the community. The program targeted youth between the ages of 15 and 20 who were committed to one of two facilities. Program enrollment was further limited to those youth who were planning to be paroled to the local area, so that mentors could reasonably be expected to maintain contact with youth following their release from detention. The programs focused recruitment on those youth who were considered to be at continued risk of educational failure or involvement in delinquent activities, or were at high-risk for recidivism. Although the project was originally designed to serve primarily non-violent, first time offenders, project staff quickly realized that this group was not characteristic of the population of the facilities. Therefore, the project opted to include youth who had histories of multiple or more serious offenses, but introduced screening procedures for youth to guard the safety of all project participants. By the conclusion of the JUMP grant, the project had reported data on 28 youth.

An examination of the challenges faced by this project throughout implementation and operation provides valuable lessons for other mentoring projects operating in a similar setting. Initially, this agency planned to implement the JUMP project in three separate facilities, one co-educational and two serving male youth only. Changes in agency leadership at the co-educational facility resulted in a lack of support for the project. Eventually the program was implemented in only the two facilities serving male youth only. Some of the volunteers who had a particular interest in working with female youth, as well as those living a prohibitive distance from the remaining facilities ended their participation with the program.

Some of the characteristics of a juvenile correctional facility resulted in unique challenges for the mentoring program. The highly structured schedule of activities resulted in the mentoring program meeting one hour per week on Thursday evenings. Because this was the designated time of the week for outside groups to sponsor activities, youth had to withdraw from participation in other groups, such as Boy Scouts, in order to participate in JUMP. Mentors were also unable to re-schedule missed mentor meetings and on occasion had to resign from the project when a schedule conflict occurred.

Facility rules also mandated that youth were not permitted to move about the facility unaccompanied by staff. All extracurricular activities occurred in groups and were supervised by correctional center staff. Some youth and mentors noted that this made the establishment of one-to-one relationships difficult. Both youth and mentors noted that they would have liked to have more privacy, particularly when discussing sensitive personal issues.

Project staff outlined a structured timetable that involved matching youth with mentors while youth were detained in correctional facilities. This component of the relationship was planned to last for eight months to one year, during which the youth and mentor would complete a curriculum designed specifically for this project. Following the youth's release from the facility, the program design stipulated that the youth and mentor would maintain contact for a minimum of one additional year, during which the mentor would assist the youth in navigating the often difficult re-entry to the community. In reality, however, in one of the two facilities youth tended to remain matched with mentors longer than one year as their release dates were re-scheduled. This necessitated that project staff continue to develop new activities to maintain the interest of youth and mentors entering their second years of the mentoring relationships. This task was complicated by the numerous restrictions mandated by the correctional facility. Finally, as youth were released, many were reluctant to interact with any individual whom they associated within the correctional facility. Few youth remained in contact with their mentors and, as participation in the mentoring program was not a condition of release, these youth frequently lost touch with the project and their mentors shortly after discharge.

Like most mentoring projects, this agency had some difficulty in mentor recruitment. The rigid schedule of program activities required that mentors be available for the same period of time each week, so there was little flexibility for mentors to adjust their participation to accommodate their schedules.

Additionally, the project staff noted that it often was difficult to recruit volunteers to work with youth living in a correctional facility. Great care was taken to address any concerns that mentors had regarding their safety or their ability to develop relationships with these youth. Most mentors interviewed noted that they quickly adjusted to the culture of the facility and grew to view their mentees as "normal boys who had made mistakes." Finally, the location of the facility, in a somewhat remote rural area, made it difficult to recruit mentors who were willing to drive a substantial distance to meet with youth.

Despite these challenges, the project received positive feedback from youth and mentors alike. Youth reported that one of the most valuable aspects of the project was the one-to-one relationship with an adult. Many of the youth commented that participating in the mentoring program gave them someone to talk to with a different or fresh perspective. Other youth noted that having a mentor helped to alleviate some of the boredom he experienced during his time in the facility.

Following the termination of the JUMP grant, this mentoring project closed due to a lack of ongoing funding. Evaluation team staff conducted an exit interview with project staff at this time, in which several staff members noted that they planned to participate in activities at the State level to increase the emphasis on, and support for, mentoring. At the time of this writing, however, it does not appear that a mentoring project has been re-established at any of the facilities involved in the original JUMP project.

Case #7: An Urban Mentoring Project Targets Gang Members

In 1999, this project was awarded a JUMP grant to expand an existing, successful mentoring project. In the original model, court-involved youth participated in a ten-week intensive program that involved goal-setting, career development and computer education. In addition, the youth received both one-to-one and group mentoring. An expanded

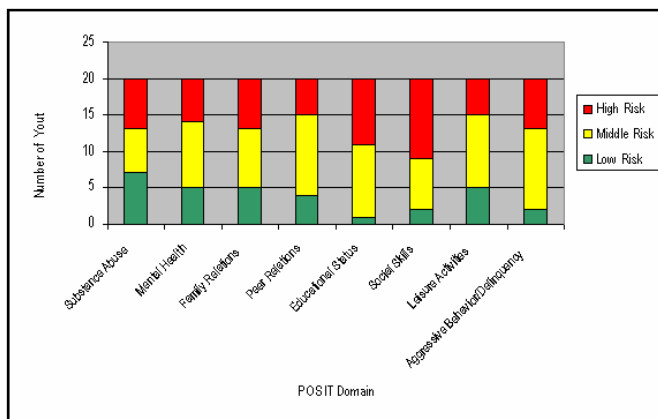


Exhibit 9: Social skills and Educational status are the most frequently reported high-risk domains for this agency.

program under the JUMP grant would allow the mentoring relationships that were established in the initial ten weeks of the project to be sustained for a year, offering the youth a source of stable, long-term support. The expansion of this project would be achieved through a collaboration between a local affiliate of a national youth-serving organization, a local affiliate of a national mentoring organization and the County Probation Office. The project had a goal of serving 130 youth (later reduced to 90 youth) over the three years of the grant and planned to recruit court-involved youth. Although the project is open to youth of all races/ethnicities, project staff anticipated that most youth participating would be Hispanic youth between the ages of 12 and 15. Agency staff outlined specific goals for youth participating in the project including:

- 90 percent or more would attend school regularly and would not drop out.
- 70 percent or more would increase their grade point averages by 0.5 at the end of one year.
- 75 percent or more would improve school attendance.
- 85 percent or more would have no school disciplinary actions over the course of the year.

Other goals included decreased participation in criminal activities and involvement in gang activities. Each youth was required to set personal achievement goals, with progress toward achieving these goals to be assessed at the end of the year.

As outlined in the JUMP grant proposal, the project has been successful in targeting its intended population. The project recruited 72 youth during the course of the project and reported 63 one-to-one matches with mentors. The average length of match was just over 8.5 months. Participating youth ranged in age from 10 to 18, with an average age of 15 (median age 12). Sixty-one percent of the youth served are male; 68 percent are Hispanic, with the remaining being white

youth (25 percent) and black (12.5 percent). Many of the project’s youth are gang involved; 47 percent were current gang members and 37.5 percent reported at strong gang presence in their neighborhoods at the time of their enrollment in the project. Eight youth were former gang members and five had immediate family members who were current or former gang members at the time they were involved in the program.

Juvenile justice contact information was available for 35 youth participating in the project. For these youth, the most commonly reported offenses were burglary/theft/breaking and entering (14 contacts), assault (11 contacts), ATOD offense (10 contacts), and status offenses (8 contacts). These contacts most often resulted in probation (26 contacts), fines (25 contacts) and diversion (24 contacts). On four occasions, the offense resulted in the youth’s being confined to a detention center.

In the course of the three years of the JUMP grant, this agency submitted 20 POSITs. This data indicates that youth participating in this project face risk in a variety of domains. The most frequently reported high-risk domain was Social Skills (11 youth) followed by Educational Status (9 youth). The most frequently reported middle-risk domains included Peer Relations (11 youth), Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency (11 youth), and Educational Status (10 youth). Of the six youth who were age 16 or over at the time of the POSIT administration, four scored in the high-risk range of the Vocational Status domain (Exhibit 9).

Parent involvement is an important component of the project. Each youth was required to have parental permission prior to participating in the project. Both youth and parents had an opportunity to approve the mentor before the beginning of the match. A monthly parent/guardian support group was organized and the Project

Case	Cohort and Award Year		Number and Percent of Youth by Gender						Number and Percent of Youth by Age							
	Cohort	Year	Male		Female		Total		<12		12-14		15-17		≥18	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Total All Cases			325	65	178	25	503	100	95	19	170	34	210	42	20	4
1	3	1999	64	70	28	30	92	100	0	0	40	44	48	52	4	4
2	5	2001	30	49	31	51	61	100	5	8	14	23	39	64	3	5
3	3	1999	73	68	34	32	107	100	31	9	57	53	19	18	0	0
4	4	1999	46	54	39	46	85	100	52	62	30	35	1	1	0	0
5	5	2001	40	69	18	31	58	100	0	0	15	26	42	72	1	2
6	1	1995	28	100	0	0	28	100	0	0	0	0	22*	100	0	0
7	3	1999	44	61	28	9	72	100	7	10	14	9	39	54	12	17

Exhibit 10: Characteristics of youth enrolled in case study sites.

* Data regarding youth age at intake were not provided.

Coordinator gathered feedback from parents/guardians via telephone to monitor the progress of the match.

JUMP funding for this project ended in June 2002. At this time, the agency continues to provide mentoring services to a similar population to that served by the JUMP grant. Funds to continue the program have been provided primarily through Federal grants that support gang suppression programs and violence prevention programs. Mentoring has become a facet of these collaborative efforts.

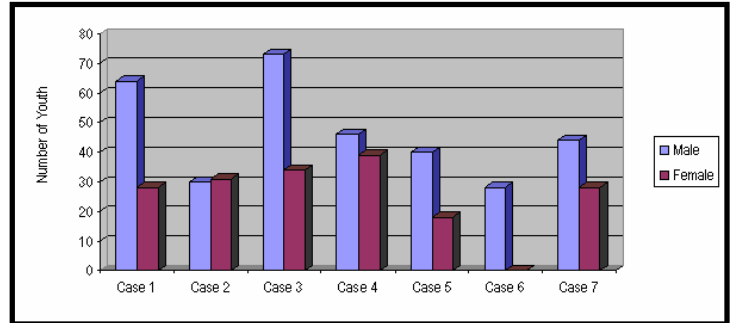


Exhibit 11: Gender of youth enrolled in case study sites.

Case	Cohort	Award Year	Youth	Mentors	Matches	Percentage of Youth Matched	Completed Matches	Average Length of Match
			N	N	N	%	N	Months
Total All Cases			503	411	416	83	194	
1	3	1999	92	84	81	88	68	8.7
2	5	2001	61	54	56	91.8	0	N/A
3	3	1999	107	74	91	85	63	6.68
4	4	1999	85	81	69	81	17	10.4
5	5	2001	58	34	36	62	8	4.3
6	1	1995	28	26	32	100	18	13
7	3	1999	72	58	51	70.8	20	8.15

Exhibit 12: Number of Youth, Mentors, and Matches by JUMP Program and Year of Award.

SUMMARY

Although youth in these projects ranged in age from under 12 years to over 18, 75 percent were between the ages of 12 and 17. The under 12 youth are mostly located at Sites 3 and 4 which specifically targeted younger youth in their recruitment plans. Overall, almost two-thirds of the youth are male. Only at Site 2 are there more females than males (Figure 10, Figure 11).

Reported by the more than 200 JUMP projects, mentor recruitment is the single most challenging aspect of mentoring efforts. Consequently, it is reasonable to hypothesize that recruiting mentors for a program targeting youthful offenders would be even more difficult. However, five of the seven aforementioned programs have been able to match more than 82 percent of their youth. For all of the described programs that have been in existence for more than three years, the mean length of each match is greater than 6.5 months.

The length of the mentoring relationship can vary significantly since participants are under the supervision of the courts. However, this variation may be more an artifact of the adjudication process and length of prescribed court supervision than a desire on the part of the youth to maintain or end the relationship. These relationships ranged from less than a month to 25 months.

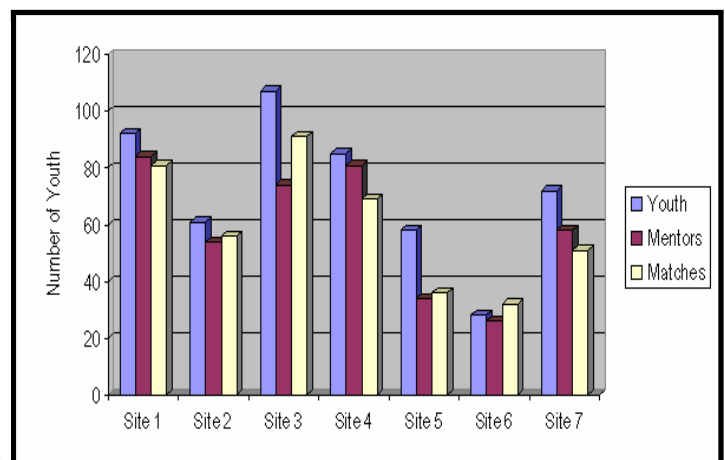


Exhibit 13: Number of Youth, Mentors, and Matches by Site

Case	Cohort	Award Year	Range of Match Length	Median Length of Match	Mean Length of Match	Distribution of Matched Youth by Length of Match			
			Months	Months	Months	<4 Months	4-6 Months	7-12 Months	>12 Months
1	3	1999	0-26	7.0	8.7	16	17	14	18
2	5	2001	N/A	N/A	N/A	—	—	—	—
3	3	1999	1-20	6.0	6.7	22	16	19	6
4	4	1999	2-19	10.3	10.4	2	2	7	5
5	5	2001	N/A	N/A	N/A	—	—	—	—
6	1	1995	3-25	17.5	13.0	6	—	1	11
7	3	1999	1-16	8.5	8.1	6	3	3	8

Exhibit 14: Measurement of Match Length - Range, Median, Mean, Mode

CONCLUSION

Planners and participants in each of the projects described consider their efforts to have been successful in meeting the goals outlined in their original grant applications. In their quarterly narrative reports to the evaluation team, program staff has been universally enthusiastic about the positive effects of the programs on their youthful mentees. Reports from mentors as they end their matches have been similarly positive.

One characteristic common to each of these programs is the effort to ensure that parents are active participants throughout the youth's involvement in the project. This is especially interesting because the youth are in the custody of the State in several cases and parental permission for them to participate is often not, technically, required. However, the project staff in each case has stressed how important parental participation and interest is to the success of their programs. Additionally, the youth themselves must exhibit an interest in participating to further strengthen the likelihood of a successful outcome.

Diversion and reentry programs tend to focus on training for the future and developing life skills, educational goals, vocational training, peer relationships and social skills. Mentoring as a component of a comprehensive reentry program can provide a support person to an individual who needs advice, support and encouragement to persevere and to achieve their goals.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Evaluating Your Program: A Beginner's Self-Evaluation Workbook for Mentoring Programs. (1999). Potomac, MD: Information Technology International.
<<http://www.ITIincorporated.com>>

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FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on OJJDP's Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), contact the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC) at 800-638-8736 (phone), 301-519-5600 (fax), or www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org (Internet). JJC also maintains a JUMP Web Page (www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/jump/index.html).

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