

A Newsletter on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in Arkansas

A.C.J.J. WEBSITE GETS NEW LOOK, ADDED PAGES

The website of the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice has been undergoing design changes to upgrade its appearance and increase its functionality, according to Carlos Borrromeo, juvenile justice specialist at the Division of Youth Services JJDP Unit.

Among the changes are newly designed headers at the top of each page featuring a black and gold motif, new navigation bars in the left column of each page, plus the addition of a page titled "Compliance Matters," which offers information and help to service providers on compliance with requirements of the JJDP Act of 2002 (see article this page).

Links are also being added that will allow download of manuals, publications, reporting forms and other materials.



Website home page graphic

STATE OUT OF COMPLIANCE IN TWO AREAS, SAYS O.J.J.D.P

Following on-site visits of its staff to a number of Arkansas juvenile detention centers and adult jails and lockups during 2009, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the U.S. Department of Justice has notified the Division of Youth Services and the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice that the state is out of compliance with two provisions of the JJDP Act of 2002.

A letter from OJJDP Acting Administrator Jeffrey Slowikowski to DYS Director Ronald Angel advised that, following review and analysis of the state's 2006 Compliance Monitoring report, Arkansas "is not in compliance with the deinstitutionalization of status offenders and the jail and lockup removal requirements" of the Act because data from the report "could not be verified on-site."

According to terms of the JJDP Act, each state normally receives 20 percent of its grant funds administered by OJJDP for participating in the Act, plus an additional 20 percent for each of the four core requirements with which it has shown compliance. The letter advised that, based on OJJDP's findings, Arkansas is eligible to access only 60 percent of its FY 2008 Formula Grant award.

DYS staff, with approval from the ACJJ, appealed the ruling to OJJDP, but were advised in late fall that the agency's decision was firm.

Funds from the federal fiscal year 2008 formula grants had already been awarded to some 22 Arkansas agencies in the state's 2010 grant cycle, which began last July. On December 9, 2009, Angel sent to the state's formula grantees a letter advising that the remaining, unused funds in their agencies' JJDP grants must be reduced to accommodate the 40 percent reduction caused by the out-of-compliance classification.

The JJDP Act requires a state that is out of compliance with one or more core requirements of the Act must spend 50 percent of its remaining formula grant funds on efforts to achieve compliance in those areas where it has been found out of compliance. The OJJDP administrator, however, may waive the spending requirement if the state has 1) Achieved "substantial compliance" with each paragraph with respect to which the state was not in compliance; and 2) Made, through executive or legislative action an "unequivocal commitment" to achieving full compliance within a reasonable time.

A DYS spokesman said the Division "is making every effort to assure that data collection and substantiation at all of the state's facilities" involved in the non-compliant areas "will be brought up to acceptable standards as quickly as possible."

MOVING TOWARD COMPLIANCE



By Carlos Borromeo

Juvenile Justice Specialist for the State of Arkansas

Arkansas is a participating state with the federal government under terms of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act).

In a letter dated July 23 of last year, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in Washington, D.C. notified the state that it is not in compliance with the deinstitutionalization requirement of the Act, which provides that status offenders and non-offenders not be detained or confined in any secure setting; and further, the letter stated that Arkansas is not in compliance with the requirement for removal of juveniles from adult jails and lockups.

Another letter from OJJDP, dated September 30, advised that the state is "conditionally not [in] compliance" with another section of the Act, which requires that juveniles not be detained or confined in any institution in which they might come in contact with adult inmates.

Strategies, Plans Are Implemented

It is the goal of both state government and the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice – the State Advisory Group under the JJDP Act – to bring our state back into compliance within a year. Among the first steps taken by the ACJJ was the formation of a Compliance Monitoring Committee at its October 2009 meeting. The Committee will meet, advise the ACJJ on compliance matters, and suggest actions to speed and enhance compliance efforts.

With approval of the ACJJ and the Division of Youth Services, my office – the JJDP Unit in the Division of Youth Services – submitted a new Policies and Procedures Manual to OJJDP in November, a major first step in returning to compliance, since the state had not previously developed policies and procedures acceptable to OJJDP.

DYS Assistant Director Elbert Grimes has begun a dialogue with the state Office of Chief Counsel in consideration of possible legislative changes.

- In addition, my office and I are taking steps that include the following:
- We are creating new monthly reporting forms for all facilities that are monitored for compliance with the JJDP Act;
 - We have developed a laptop-based system that speeds and improves compliance monitoring;
 - We conducted a training session for juvenile detention center personnel in January and have scheduled OJJDP technical training for them in April;
 - We are partnering with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create a guide to the juvenile justice system for youths and their guardians;
 - We are producing an educational calendar that reminds recipients of the core JJDP Act requirements;
 - We are collaborating with the ACJJ Compliance Monitoring Committee to help make the ACJJ website more effective as a compliance tool;
 - We are developing educational materials to aid awareness among law enforcement, detention and other juvenile justice system personnel;
 - We are designing new educational displays about the core requirements;
 - I am working with the Public Defender's Commission with the goal of providing American Bar Association booklets titled "Representing Juvenile Status Offenders" to every public defender who represents juveniles;
 - We are working with the Arkansas Juvenile Officers Association and the Arkansas Juvenile Detention Association to emphasize compliance among their members; and
 - Our office has stepped up offers of training and technical assistance to any unit of local government or organization supporting the justice system's response to juvenile delinquency and victimization.
- Please contact me at carlos.borromeo@arkansas.gov for info or assistance.

PROTECTIONS UNDER THE J.J.D.P. ACT

Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders

Assure that status offenders or non-offenders are not placed in secure detention except by valid court order

Sight and Sound Separation of Juveniles from Adult Offenders

Assure that delinquent, status offending or non-offending youths are not detained or confined in any institution in which they have contact with adult inmates.

Removal of Juveniles from Adult Jails and Lockups

Disproportionate Minority Contact

Address ... efforts designed to reduce ... the numbers of juvenile members of minority groups who come into contact with the juvenile justice system

Kids and the Law

Kids and the Law is the newsletter of the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice, funded by the US Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Visit www.arjuvjust.net for updates of news and information.

For a free subscription, send your name, mailing address and occupation to:

*Kids and the Law, PO Box 241521
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or email: arjuvjust@aristotle.net*

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CRADLE TO PRISON PIPELINE GROUP BRINGS 'CHOICE BUS' TO DETER SCHOOL DROPOUTS

The Arkansas Cradle to Prison Pipeline Initiative, an organization dedicated to ensuring successful passage from childhood to adulthood for children and youth, has brought The Choice Bus, a learning tool to help prevent school dropouts, to Arkansas students.

Responding to statistics showing 75 percent of prison inmates dropped out before completing high school, the bus was designed to show young people the power of education, as well as the likely consequences of choosing to drop out of school.

It contains a full-scale replica of a prison cell, which is hidden behind a curtain and flat screen television. As vis-



itors enter the bus, a four-minute movie quizzes the audience on the earning potential of a dropout versus a high school and a college graduate.

The movie also features testimonials from prison inmates who express their

regret about dropping out. When the movie ends, the curtain opens to reveal the prison cell, demonstrating the stark reality experienced by many dropouts.

Students are then invited into the prison cell to briefly experience the uncomfortable living conditions. As the students leave the bus, tour guides give them pledge cards and ask them to commit to finishing school and making good choices.

The Choice Bus experience takes approximately 20 minutes and is designed for students in grades 6 through 10.

The Choice Bus was in the Little Rock area the week of March 1-5, where it visited the Mann, Dunbar, Henderson, Forest Heights, Pulaski Heights, Mabelvale and Cloverdale Middle Schools and the Hamilton Learning Academy.

The following week, March 8-12, the bus visited schools in the Delta region of Southeast Arkansas. Stops included Belair Middle School in Pine Bluff, Gould After-school Freedom School in Gould, Southeast Middle School in Pine Bluff, Clarendon High School, Brinkley High School, Strong Middle School in Marianna, Hughes High School in Hughes, and the West Memphis High School.

The Cradle to Prison Pipeline Initiative is considered a major contributor to the effort to reduce disproportionate contact of minority youths with the juvenile justice system.

Information about the Choice Bus is on the web at www.mattiestewart.org.

The Arkansas Cradle to Prison Pipeline group hosted its first annual conference in Little Rock April 30 through March 2, 2009, attracting some 1,000 participants. The group's next conference is expected to take place in 2011.

DIOCESE HONORS H. LEE LINDSEY FOR 'SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION'

H. Lee Lindsey, coordinator of DMC activities at the Division of Youth Services Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Unit, was recognized by the Catholic Diocese of Arkansas as one of two recipients of the Daniel Rudd Memorial Award for an African American Catholic who has made a significant contribution to his religion and community.

The awards were presented by Bishop J. Peter Sartain on Saturday, January 16 following a special high mass at Saint Andrew Cathedral in Little Rock in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Lindsey is a graduate of Catholic High School in Little Rock and attended Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. He received a bachelor's degree in sociology with a minor in criminology from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

He retired from the Arkansas National Guard with the rank of captain, receiving numerous medals and awards including the Iraqi Freedom Medal, the Army and Air Force Achievement medal, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

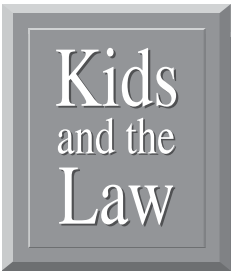
He has served as a VISTA volunteer, a Head Start teacher, and executive director of an agency operating 15



Lee Lindsey with Diocese Award

Head Start centers in Pulaski County. He joined the Division of Youth Services as a planning specialist in 2000, becoming a grants coordinator in 2003. In 2008 he was named coordinator for Disproportionate Minority Contact activities for the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice, working with that group's Statewide DMC Committee and with county-wide committees in Crittendon, Jefferson and Pulaski Counties.

A Little Rock native and current resident, Lindsey is a member of St. Bartholomew's Parish in Little Rock and is married to the former Annette McElroy. The couple has four grown children.



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STATE, FEDERAL OFFICES OFFER TRAINING, TECHNICAL HELP TO GRANTEES, OTHER AGENCIES

Law enforcement agencies, juvenile detention centers, Formula Grant and Juvenile Accountability Block Grant recipients and other agencies concerned with juvenile justice and delinquency prevention are eligible to receive technical assistance, training and materials to help them achieve and maintain compliance with requirements of the JJDP Act.

The help and materials are available through both state and federal juvenile justice offices. Those eligible to receive technical assistance include any tribe, unit of local government or organization supporting the justice system's response to juvenile delinquency and victimization.

In general terms, the state Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Unit at the Division of Youth Services can provide assistance and training concerning state information and reporting requirements, while the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) offers a broad array of help, a major component of which is provision of training and technical assistance resources that address the needs of juvenile justice practitioners and sup-

port state and local efforts to build capacity and expand the use of evidence-based practices.

OJJDP has developed a network of providers dedicated to delivering targeted training and technical assistance. Short-term assistance is offered off-site via telephone, email and internet, while long-term, extensive assistance is available on-site at the requester's locale.

Other assistance includes peer-to-peer information exchange, provision of publications, product reviews, program assessments and more.

Information on assistance and training from OJJDP is available at its website, www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/programs/tta.html.

Agencies requesting training or assistance from either the state JJDP Unit or national OJJDP must download a training and technical assistance request form and submit it to Arkansas' state juvenile justice specialist, Carlos Borromeo, at Division of Youth Services Slot 503, PO Box 1437, Little Rock, AR 72203.

At least 75 days advance notice is required for OJJDP technical assistance.

EVENTS CALENDAR

APRIL

CJJ National Conference, "Ensuring School Engagement and Success for Youth At Risk"
April 9-13, Washington, DC
Contact: 202-467-0864
Info: www.juvjustice.org

ACJJ Bimonthly Meeting
April 14, location TBA
Contact: tywan.hillard@arkansas.gov

MAY

ACJJ DMC Statewide Committee
10 a.m. May 25, DHS Building, Little Rock
Info.: lee.lindsey@arkansas.gov

JUNE

MidSOUTH Summer School on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Problems, UA at Little Rock
June 6-11
Info: www.midsouth.ualr.edu