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## **New York State's Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program Fact Sheet**

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**N**ew York's Delinquency Prevention Grant Program is supported by federal funds awarded to the Division of Criminal Justice Services under Title V of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. New York's funding allocation was raised to \$2.4 million in 1999. The Division of Criminal Justice Services administers federal funds to local programs that target youth 7 - 15 years old.

New York's Delinquency Prevention Program focuses on the risk and protective factors shown to be related to juvenile delinquency. Using this approach, communities first identify the risk factors that contribute to their delinquency problems. Risk factors include: drug use in the home and the community; long-term unemployment in their areas; poor academic achievement; truancy; lack of positive peer influence; lack of school or community involvement; and high levels of community or family violence. In assessing risk, communities consider a range of family, peer, school, and community factors that foster delinquency.

Once risk factors are identified, the community increases the protective factors that can prevent or reduce delinquent behaviors. Mechanisms to promote protective factors may include the use of mentoring programs, organized family activities, community volunteer opportunities, and academic tutoring. Protective factors can increase a child's own resiliency to risk. They also can enhance the living environment by fostering positive social interaction, encouraging strong bonding within the family, and creating attachments within the community.

The central concept is that preventing delinquent behavior and is much more cost-effective in

reducing juvenile crime than rehabilitating adjudicated delinquents. In many cases, the cost savings is measurable in both dollars and lives.

Prevention strategies succeed when they are positive in orientation and comprehensive in scope. Successful community strategies create opportunities for healthy physical, social, and mental development of juveniles. Programs consider the influence of family, peer group, school, and the community on a child's development.

### **Delinquency Prevention Program Goals**

Reducing delinquency and youth violence is the primary goal of the Title V Program. One way to meet this goal is to support local efforts that enhance skills and create a healthy, nurturing environment that develops and responsible citizens. There are several objectives to achieve the program goal.

- To form Prevention Policy Boards (PPB) within communities to mobilize, endorse and sustain delinquency prevention efforts.
- To coordinate diverse resources that support a client-centered continuum of services for at-risk youth and families.
- To implement and monitor prevention strategies, and modify the plans as needed.

### **Delinquency Prevention Programs in New York State**

Forty jurisdictions across New York State currently receive program funds to target juvenile delinquency problems. The following

briefly describes some of those programs.

### *Canandaigua*

The City of Canandaigua worked with community organizations to open a youth center and implement a diversified juvenile delinquency prevention program in 1996. The center provides a meeting place for at-risk youth in a supervised and structured environment. This facility, located in the targeted neighborhood, offers recreational and tutorial services to the young people.

Often aggressive behavior is associated with stress in the home. The program offers crisis intervention to families of participating juveniles who demonstrate violent behavior. This in-home component stresses appropriate parenting skills to those who are responsible for the youth.

The program supports a community policing officer who is trained to identify outward symptoms of troubled juveniles. This officer serves as a liaison to social service programs and coordinates juvenile participation.

### *Oswego County*

The Fulton-Oswego Corridor Community Service Programs were established to combine youth-community service programs with informational, educational, and recreational components. Youth receive a small stipend for their community service work and are expected to participate in meetings that identify risk factors and offer intervention skills. A key element of this program is the continued school enrollment as a condition of program participation.

### *Livingston County*

The Home-Based Crisis Intervention Program began in 1996 to prevent the out-of-home placement of delinquent youths. This intervention targets youths whose behavior is attributable to dysfunction within the families. The program diverts youth from family court intake to appropriate family intervention and counseling.

### *Village of Spring Valley*

The Village of Spring Valley started the Student and Families Enrichment (SAFE) Program in 1998 to help young students experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties. SAFE focuses on enhancing academic performance to prevent school drop-outs while reducing disruptive behavior and involvement with substance abuse.

SAFE assigns a mentor to each student who then works in individual and group settings to explore with the students various techniques that can dispel aggression and resolve conflicts. After-school programs are held during the week from 2:30 - 6:30 p.m. Meetings between parents and SAFE Program members help promote the child's progress.

### *Erie County*

The Erie County Department of Youth Services initiated the Detention Aftercare Resource Team (DART) to reduce the number of youth who recidivate to the detention center. The program provides counseling, mental health, social services, employment and other needed services that are offered in Erie County. Each family is involved as a positive force in the lives of their children and receives a coordinated case service plan that is structured to motivate them in the right direction. Youth and families are referred to appropriate community-based agencies for services.

### **For More Information...**

For more information about organizing a Delinquency Prevention Program in New York State, contact the Division of Criminal Justice Services, Office of Funding and Program Assistance, by telephone at (518) 485-7905 or by Internet E-mail at [criminaljustice.state.ny.us](mailto:criminaljustice.state.ny.us).