



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

JUVENILE DRUG COURT

PERFORMANCE REPORT

January-June 2018

ENHANCING SAFETY • ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY • EMPOWERING YOUTH

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INTRODUCTION

The Juvenile Drug Court grant program, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), supports services and specialized treatments for youth with substance use disorders who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. This report presents how 16 Juvenile Drug Court grantees provided services to 512 youth during the January–June 2018 activity period and highlights the short- and long-term outcomes achieved by grantees with the support of OJJDP funding. Short-term outcomes are defined as benefits or changes that youth experience while enrolled in the program or 0–6 months after completing the program’s requirements and long-term outcomes are measured 6–12 months after that participant completes program requirements. Overall, 80 percent of program youth demonstrated short-term behavior improvement with 74 percent of youth showing reduced substance use. Only 7 percent of youth reoffended during the activity period and 47 percent of youth exited the program successfully completing all program requirements. Evidence-based practices were implemented by 88 percent of grantees.

Highlights



BACKGROUND

Juvenile drug treatment courts (JDTCs) are specialized courts designed for youth with substance use disorders who come into contact with the juvenile justice system and are at medium to high risk for reoffending. Eligible youth are connected with evidence-based, family-centered treatment to address their substance abuse and other cooccurring risk factors. OJJDP’s Juvenile Drug Court grant program provides funding to support JDTCs in implementing system changes, delivery of services, and programming enhancements aligned with OJJDP’s JDTC guidelines. OJJDP guidelines present best practices for implementing JDTCs including eligibility requirements, case management procedures, and collaborative partnerships. Grantees receiving funding through this program are required to report on performance measures that assess whether they are meeting the objectives of their grant awards.

OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

Between January–June 2018, OJJDP’s Juvenile Drug Court program funded 18 grants, of which 94 percent completed their reporting requirements. Two grantees reported that they were not operational and did not expend grant funds during the activity period, resulting in 16 grantees providing services during the activity period (figure 1). The total available funding during the period exceeded \$6.6 million.

GRANTEE PERFORMANCE

Performance measures help OJJDP determine whether the Juvenile Drug Court program achieved its goals and objectives and inform program and policy decisions. Grantees are required to report on several core measures, including youth served, target behaviors, and recidivism to demonstrate the outcomes of the JDTC model.

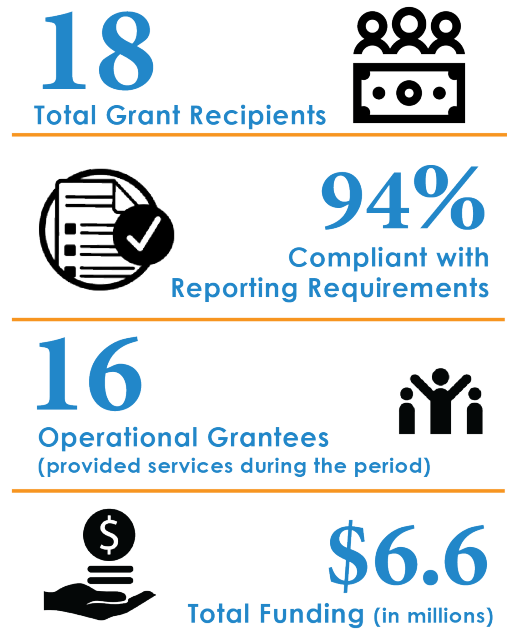
EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

OJJDP encourages grantees to use evidence-based practices in their programs. Evidence-based practices include program models shown, through rigorous evaluation and replication, to be effective at preventing or reducing juvenile delinquency or related risk factors. For JDTCs, evidence-based practices are outlined in OJJDP’s “Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines” and inform eligibility criteria, screening and assessments, incentives, sanctions, and substance abuse treatment.¹ During the January–June 2018 activity period, 88 percent of Juvenile Drug Court grantees used federal funds to implement an evidence-based practice and align with the JDTC guidelines.

YOUTH SERVED

During the January–June 2018 activity period, Juvenile Drug Court grantees served a total of 512 youth. Forty-one percent (n = 208) were new enrollments receiving JDTC services for the first time and 98 percent (n = 502) were served using an evidence-based program or practice.

Figure 1. Award Details



¹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 2016. *Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/250368.pdf>

SERVICES PROVIDED

JDTCs work collaboratively with service providers to coordinate the treatment of substance abuse and other cooccurring risk factors

for eligible program youth. During the January–June 2018 activity period, 344 youth received substance use treatment and counseling through the Juvenile Drug Court program (figure 2). Mental health services were also provided to 190 youth and 200 youth were enrolled in other services, such as educational services, social skills building, and cultural skills building.

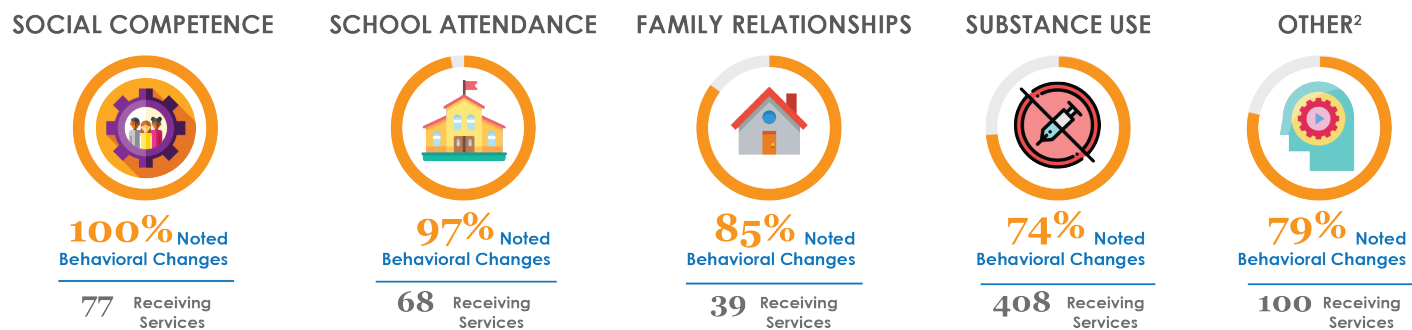
Figure 2. Services Provided to Youth



TARGET BEHAVIORS

Youth participating in JDTCs are tracked for behavior changes to measure the program’s impact on youths’ performance in several targeted areas, such as social competence, family relationships, and school attendance. As shown in figure 3, the largest short-term improvement was observed among youth tracked for social competence, with 100 percent of youth demonstrating a positive change during the January–June 2018 activity period. For youth tracked for substance use, 74 percent showed reduced substance use behavior in the short-term. Overall, 80 percent of program youth tracked showed a behavioral improvement in the short-term.

Figure 3. Short-term Outcome Percentages for the Specified Target Behaviors



YOUTH EXITING SUCCESSFULLY

Each JDTC creates and defines the requirements for youth to successfully complete the program. Youth who fulfilled all program obligations and requirements “successfully exited” while those who failed to complete the requirements, such as those expelled or who leave voluntarily, are considered to “unsuccessfully exited” the program. Grantees reported that of the 225 youth who exited the JDTC program during the activity period, 47 percent (n = 106) successfully exited (figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of Youth Exiting Successfully



² Others including job skills, cultural skill building/cultural pride, GPA, employment status, and prosocial behavior.

PROGRAM YOUTH RECIDIVISM

To track the program’s success at reducing recidivism and improving outcomes for participants, grantees track youth for up to 12 months after exiting the JDTC and report data on youth who reoffend. Short-term recidivism was 8 percent amongst program youth during the January–June 2018 activity period (figure 5). Recidivism was higher in the long-term with 19 percent of youth reoffending during the activity period (figure 6).

Figure 5. Short-term Recidivism Outcomes

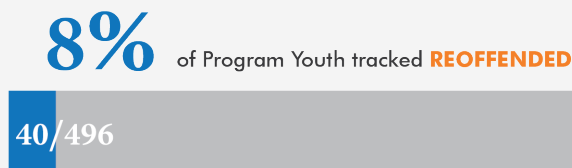
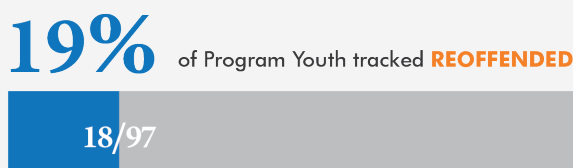


Figure 6. Long-term Recidivism Outcomes



CONCLUSION

JDTCs offer a specialized way for juvenile courts to respond to the needs of youth with a substance-abuse disorder and their complex risk factors. When implementing evidence-based practices and interventions, these courts reduce recidivism and substance abuse among high-risk participants and increase their likelihood of successful rehabilitation³. The data reported by OJJDP’s Juvenile Drug Court grantees reinforce the research findings, showing a measurable impact on the lives of the youth served by JDTCs.

During the January–June 2018 activity period, 16 JDTC grantees served a total of 512 youth with the support of OJJDP funding. Grantees supported substance use counseling for 344 youth and mental health services for 190 youth. Program youth showed improvements in several areas, including social competence, school attendance, and family relationships. In the short-term, 74 percent of youth showed reduced substance-use behaviors. Of the 225 youth exiting the program during the activity period, 47 percent successfully completed all requirements for JDTC graduation. Grantees were especially successful at reducing recidivism during this activity period: 92 percent of youth did not reoffend in the short-term and 81 percent had not reoffended 6–12 months after exiting the program. These results indicate the success of specialized drug courts at improving the outcomes of youth with a substance abuse disorder who encounter the juvenile justice system.

³ Mitchell, O., Wilson, D.B., Eggers, A., and MacKenzie, D.L. 2012. *Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: A meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts.* *Journal of Criminal Justice* 40:60–71.