



Office of Juvenile Justice  
and Delinquency Prevention

# JUVENILE DRUG COURT

## PERFORMANCE REPORT

### January-June 2020

**ENHANCING SAFETY • ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY • EMPOWERING YOUTH**

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# INTRODUCTION

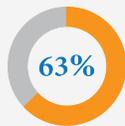
The Juvenile Drug Court program, administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), funds the implementation and improvement of juvenile drug treatment courts (JDTCs). JDTCs are specialized courts designed for youth with substance use disorders who come into contact with the juvenile justice system and are at medium to high risk for reoffending. JDTCs focus on collaborating with the family to help youth successfully complete program requirements and prevent them from further offending.

OJJDP requires grantees to report on performance measures to demonstrate whether the Juvenile Drug Court program achieved its goals and to improve program and policy decisions. This report presents Juvenile Drug Court program activities occurring between January and June 2020 and highlights grantee results achieved with OJJDP funding.

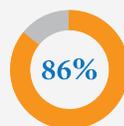
## Highlights

**385**  
NUMBER OF  
YOUTH SERVED

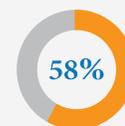
Youth that Demonstrated Short-Term<sup>1</sup> Positive Behavior Change



Youth that Demonstrated Reduced Short-Term Substance Use



Youth Exiting Program Successfully



Youth Reoffending in the Short-Term



## OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

Between January and June 2020, OJJDP’s Juvenile Drug Court program funded 20 awards and 100 percent of the awards completed their reporting requirements (figure 1). Nineteen awards were operational (or provided services during the activity period) and reported performance data on their grant activities. During the activity period, OJJDP awarded in excess of \$7.3 million<sup>2</sup> for JDTCs.

Figure 1. Award Details



<sup>1</sup> Short-term includes youth tracked for the behavior of interest who received services during the activity period or youth who exited the program during the activity period.

<sup>2</sup> The funding amount represents the total amount awarded by OJJDP to those grantees that were operational during the activity period and does not count for the total amount spent during the activity period.

## EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

OJJDP encourages grantees to use evidence-based practices and 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. OJJDP’s Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines outline evidence-based practices regarding eligibility criteria, screenings and assessments, incentives, sanctions, and substance abuse treatment for JDTCs. During the January–June 2020 activity period, 74 percent of awards ( $n = 19$ ) used one or more evidence-based program or practice.

## YOUTH SERVED

During the January–June 2020 activity period, the total number of youth served was 385. Sixty-seven percent of youth served ( $n = 258$ ) were new enrollments receiving JDTC services for the first time, and 91 percent received service from an evidence-based program or practice.

**258**  
Youth Receiving  
Services for the First Time

## SERVICES PROVIDED

JDTCs work collaboratively with service providers to coordinate substance use and mental health treatment for eligible program youth.

*Figure 2. Services Provided to Youth*

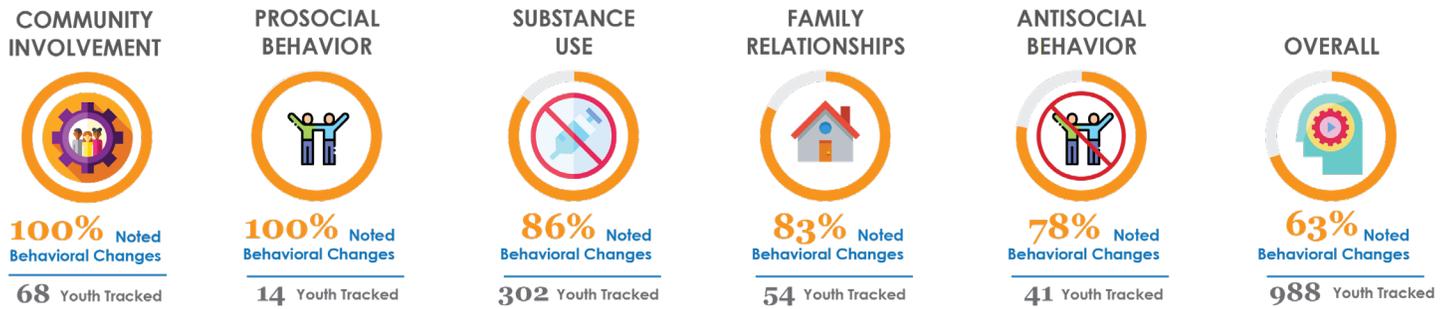


During the January–June 2020 activity period, 302 youth received substance use treatment and counseling through Juvenile Drug Court program grantees (figure 2). In this activity period, the grantees provided mental health services to 236 youth, and 134 youth were enrolled in other services, such as educational services, social skills building, and cultural skills building.

## TARGET BEHAVIORS

JDTCs track youth participants for behavior changes to measure the program’s impact in several targeted areas, such as job skills, community involvement, and school attendance. As shown in figure 3, 100 percent of tracked youth demonstrated a short-term, positive change during the activity period in community involvement and prosocial behavior targeted areas. Additionally, 86 percent of tracked youth showed a reduction in a substance use target area. Overall, 63 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 their program. Youth who fulfill all program obligations and requirements “successfully exit,” while those who fail to complete the requirements, such as those who were expelled or who left voluntarily, “unsuccessfully exit” the program. Grantees reported that of the 121 youth who exited their Juvenile Drug Court program during the activity period, 58 percent ( $n = 70$ ) successfully exited (figure 4).

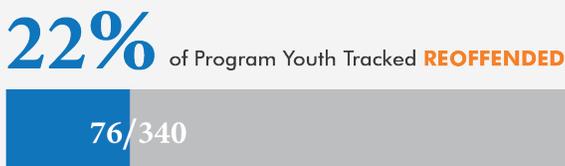
**Figure 4. Percent of Youth Exiting Successfully**



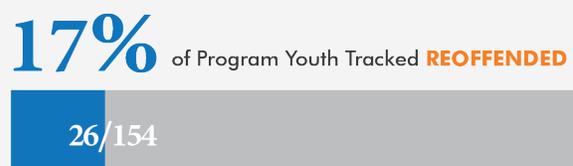
## PROGRAM YOUTH RECIDIVISM

Grantees track program youth who received services during the activity period or program youth who exited the program during the activity period for the rate of recidivism. Grantees reported 22 percent of program youth recidivated in the short term during the January–June 2020 activity period (figure 5). Only 17 percent of program youth who exited the program 6–12 months prior to the activity period reoffended in the long term<sup>3</sup> (figure 6).

**Figure 5. Short-Term Recidivism Outcomes**



**Figure 6. Long-Term Recidivism Outcomes**



<sup>3</sup> Long term includes youth tracked for the behavior of interest who exited the program 6–12 months before the start of the activity period.

## CONCLUSION

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JDTCs represent a specialized approach to respond to the needs of youth with substance use disorders. By implementing OJJDP's Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines and evidence-based treatments, JDTCs reduce recidivism and substance use among youth and increase their likelihood of successful outcomes.<sup>4</sup> The data reported by OJJDP's Juvenile Drug Court program grantees reinforce the research findings by showing a measurable impact on the lives of the youth served by JDTCs.

During the January–June 2020 activity period, OJJDP funded 19 operational awards serving a total of 385 youth. JDTC grantees provided substance use counseling to 302 youth and mental health services to 236 youth. Program youth showed improvement in several areas, including community involvement, prosocial behavior, substance use, and family relationships. Eighty-six percent of youth showed reduced substance use behaviors in the short term. Of 121 youth exiting the program during the activity period, 58 percent successfully completed all requirements for JDTC graduation. Grantees were especially successful at reducing recidivism during this activity period; 78 percent of youth did not reoffend in the short term and 83 percent did not reoffend in the 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 use disorder who encounter the juvenile justice system.

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<sup>4</sup> *Assessing the effectiveness of drug courts on recidivism: A meta-analytic review of traditional and non-traditional drug courts.* 2012. *Journal of Criminal Justice* 40:60–71. Mitchell, O., Wilson, D.B., Eggers, A., and MacKenzie, D.L.