



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

JUVENILE DRUG COURT

PERFORMANCE REPORT

July-December 2020

Publication date: Fall 2022

WORKING FOR YOUTH JUSTICE AND SAFETY

VISION STATEMENT

OJJDP envisions a nation where our children are free from crime and violence. If they come into contact with the justice system, the contact should be rare, fair, and beneficial to them.

MISSION STATEMENT

OJJDP provides national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to youth delinquency and victimization. The Office helps states, localities, and tribes develop effective and equitable juvenile justice systems that create safer communities and empower youth to lead productive lives.

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It is important to note that accurate data rely on correct data tracking and entry by the grantees and those agencies reporting to grantees, as such the data and analysis findings provided reflect the information as reported. The Office of Justice Programs makes no representations as to the accuracy or completeness of the data presented, nor does it make any inferences as to the effectiveness of grant funded programs and the associated outcomes.

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 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 their Juvenile Drug Court program achieved its goals and to improve program and policy decisions. This report presents Juvenile Drug Court program activities occurring between July and December 2020 and highlights grantee results achieved with OJJDP funding.

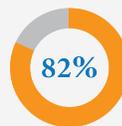
Highlights

388
NUMBER OF
YOUTH SERVED

Youth that demonstrated short-term¹ positive behavior change



Youth that demonstrated reduced short-term substance use



Youth exiting program successfully



Youth reoffending (short-term)



OVERVIEW OF AWARD INFORMATION

Between July and December 2020, OJJDP's Juvenile Drug Court program funded 20 awards and 95 percent of the awards completed their reporting requirements (figure 1). Eighteen 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 \$6.9 million² for JDTCs.

Figure 1. Award Details



¹ 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.

² 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.

³ The total funding amount for the activity period was \$6,964,325.

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 July–December 2020 activity period, 72 percent of awards ($n = 13$) used one or more evidence-based program or practice.

YOUTH SERVED

During the July–December 2020 activity period, the total number of youth served was 388. Sixty-three percent of youth served ($n = 246$) were new enrollments receiving JDTC services for the first time, and 97 percent received service from an evidence-based program or practice.

246

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 July–December 2020 activity period, 331 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 224 youth, and 125 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 social competence. Additionally, 82 percent of tracked youth showed a reduction in a substance use target area. Overall, 66 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 143 youth who exited their Juvenile Drug Court programs during the activity period, 59 percent ($n = 84$) 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 July–December 2020 activity period (figure 5). Only 16 percent of program youth who exited the program 6–12 months prior to the activity period reoffended in the long term⁴ (figure 6).

Figure 5. Short-Term Recidivism Outcomes

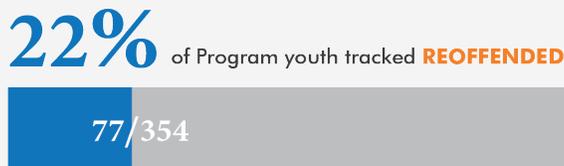
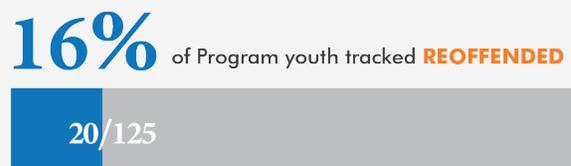


Figure 6. Long-Term Recidivism Outcomes



⁴ 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

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.⁵ 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.

While a lot of accomplishments were made during the July–December 2020 reporting period, many grantees and training and technical assistance providers experienced program implementation challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic led to lockdowns, court closures, and the inability of many social programs to operate in-person, which resulted in the decline in the number of families participating in JDTC programs.

During the July-December 2020 activity period, OJJDP funded 18 operational awards serving a total of 388 youth. JDTC grantees provided substance use counseling to 331 youth and mental health services to 224 youth. Program youth showed improvement in several areas, including social competence, school attendance, prosocial behavior, substance use, and antisocial behavior. Eighty-two percent of youth showed reduced substance use behaviors in the short term. Of 143 youth exiting the program during the activity period, 59 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 84 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.

⁴ *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.