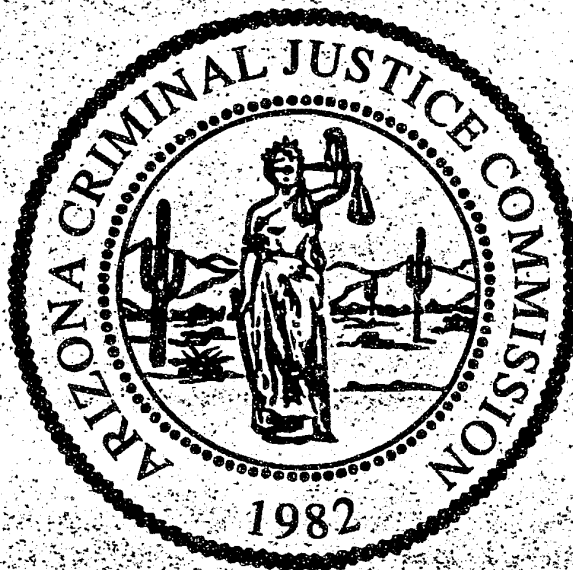


153315
Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

YOUTH AND CRIME TASK FORCE

**Schools and Crime Working Group
Funding Working Group
Recommendations**



July 20, 1994

153315

**U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice**

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The Commission is also statutorily authorized to "form subcommittees, make studies, conduct inquiries and hold hearings."

The statutes mandate the Commission to recommend "constitutional, statutory and administrative revisions necessary to maintain and develop a cohesive and effective criminal justice system" and to provide to the governor and legislature supplemental reports on "criminal justice issues of special timeliness."

No issue is of more "special timeliness" than the issue of youth and crime.

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Working Group Abbreviations:

PC = Protecting Children
PS = Protecting Society
SC = Schools and Crime
FC = Funding Choices

INTRODUCTION

The Youth and Crime Task Force is comprised of four separate working groups. On December 21, 1993, the Youth and Crime Task Force released the recommendations of the Protecting Society and Protecting Children working groups. Those recommendations provided rough guidelines for Arizona to redesign the way in which it deals with children as offenders and as victims.

The following Youth and Crime Task Force recommendations are the original output of the Schools and Crime and Funding working groups. They provide strategies for action for Arizona to redesign its educational environments so they are safe and crime free. They also acknowledge that the funding needed for any redesign to take place requires a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach. These recommendations provide the possibility of a more cost-effective system for addressing child abuse, neglect and juvenile crime.

SCHOOLS AND CRIME WORKING GROUP

We recognize that all children have a fundamental right to a public education and to be safe in their schools. We, therefore, recommend that the following proposals be implemented consistent with these rights and with our vision that Arizona's schools are:

- » safe and secure educational environments where learning is the primary focus;
 - » safe havens for children to escape from homes if they are abused, neglected, abandoned;
 - » safe havens for children to escape from the terror of neighborhood violence and crime;
 - » places which maximize opportunities for kids to be safe; and
 - » centers where children and families can access multiple services.
1. **We recommend** that the Arizona Department of Education establish a state-wide violence prevention vision/mission statement creating Arizona schools as safe sanctuaries for children.
 2. **We recommend** that the Arizona Department of Education implement and fund a statewide media campaign against drugs, gangs and violence in schools.
 3. **We recommend** that the Arizona State Board of Education require violence-prevention training as part of teacher training preparation for state certification.
 4. **We recommend** that the Arizona State Board of Education mandate and fund the establishment of comprehensive school safety action plans in all public school districts.



5. We recommend that students expelled and/or suspended from school be placed in alternative education programs. The Arizona State Legislature shall mandate, and each school district, shall establish, alternative educational settings requiring compulsory attendance for all students suspended, expelled, or who pose a danger to others or are a threat to the learning process. Funding streams shall follow all expelled students.
6. We recommend that the Arizona Legislature, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, and local governing boards adopt the *safety of the child* as the paramount standard for all educational decisions, and work to abolish:
 - a. all laws and/or regulations (federal, state and local) which prevent or prohibit the sharing of student information regarding criminal activity, violent behavior and/or classroom disciplinary problems;
 - b. the "stay-put" laws which allow students who pose a threat to others or to the educational environment to remain in the classroom while a hearing is conducted to determine whether their conduct was caused by a "disability," and recommend that they be placed in an alternative education setting until the resolution or conclusion of the hearing; and
 - c. the disability laws and regulations which permit mentally ill students who pose a danger or threat to others to remain in the classroom.

7. **We recommend** that the State Board of Education mandate that all school districts establish and implement measurable violence prevention goals and objectives consistent with the statewide vision/mission statement creating schools as safe sanctuaries.
8. **We recommend** that the State Board of Education require each school district to establish school level violence prevention teams to assess each school's violence and discipline problems, and to design and implement violence prevention policies and programs. The teams shall include, but not be limited to, administrators, faculty, students, parents, classified staff, representatives from the business community, the Children's Action Center, Neighborhood/School Centers, the neighborhood and law enforcement.
9. **We recommend** that the State Board of Education require that each school district implement violence prevention curricula for children at all grade levels which will include, but not be limited to conflict resolution, social skills development, peer mediation, peer counseling and student courts.
10. **We recommend** that each school district provide on-going in-service teacher training on violence prevention, and training on issues of drugs, gangs and crime. Each school district shall provide on-going parent training and instruction in parenting skills, the risk factors and early indicators of drugs, gangs, crime and violence at school. Coordination of these classes shall be through the Neighborhood/School Center in collaboration with the schools.



11. **We recommend** that each school district establish school activity and recreation programs that address the needs of all students, and provide a safe haven at the school for students both before and after school. These programs shall encourage the use of peers as tutors and mentors, and shall be well balanced between academics, special interest activities and sports. Schools shall be open on extended schedules and be available well before and after the school day begins and ends. Transportation to and from the activity programs shall be provided for all students who wish to participate. Coordination of these programs shall be through the Neighborhood/School Center in collaboration with the schools.
12. **We recommend** that each school district create and support "safe zones of passage" for students between home and school through such measures as Drug-and-Weapon-Free School Zones, enhanced law enforcement, and neighborhood/community patrols.
13. **We recommend** that each school implement parent partnerships for violence prevention, including establishing programs such as Parents on Patrol, bus-stop watch, parking lot watch, and neighborhood/community patrols.
14. **We recommend** that each school establish business/community partnerships to assist in promoting school safety, reducing and preventing school violence and discipline problems, as well as creating mentorships and employment apprenticeship programs for students and their families at each school. Corporations, businesses and service organizations shall be encouraged to "adopt-a-school."

15. **We recommend** that each school modify its physical environment to promote security and reduce the risk of violence by regulating entrance and exits, close monitoring of visitors, installing telephones in classrooms, providing portable radios, installing better lights and increasing campus security, closing campuses, removing lockers, acquiring and installing metal detectors, when deemed necessary.
16. **We recommend** that all schools become central to the lives of the families they serve and become an expanded community resource through the creation of Neighborhood/School Centers.
17. **We recommend** that all Neighborhood/School Centers be created as collaborative interagency efforts between schools, government and the community. These centers shall be school-linked "one-stop shopping" resources for families in their designated area. They shall facilitate the delivery of educational, health, social and recreational services to the children and families living within the school boundaries, and shall incorporate the following: flexible hours, maximum availability to families, provision of multiple services, a director/coordinator, and community representatives. The Resource Centers shall be used as the site for family conferences and administrative hearings.



- 18. We recommend** that each Neighborhood/School Center include, but not be limited to, the following services: 1) social services, 2) mental health and counseling services, 3) health services, 4) continuing education programs, crime/violence prevention, 5) information and referral services, 6) food and clothing banks, 7) resource library, 8) child care, 9) coordination of before after school programs, summer activity programs, etc.

FUNDING WORKING GROUP

Recommendations to the Commission:

1. **We recommend** that eligibility and entry for all programs in the Arizona children's service delivery system be through a single point of access which would be the regional Children's Action Centers. This change would reduce duplicate systems and administrative overhead. Full system access through these locations would allow early intervention which would include interdisciplinary case management.
2. **We recommend** that a multi-agency multi-jurisdictional task force be established to remove restrictions on funds and services for children that result from existing law, policy, and procedure. Federal and state funding must be decategorized or pooled into combinations of funding and services which become models for effective service delivery. Approaches which attach funds to children rather than particular services or agencies should be required. Additionally, this task force recommends law, policy, and planning changes to increase Arizona's share of under-utilized Federal funds and services.
3. **We recommend** that all state and local funding for children's services be non-lapsing.
4. **We recommend** that state and local agencies be required to cooperate to identify and eliminate barriers to inter-agency resource sharing including personnel, space, equipment, and funding. Policies and legislation shall be developed which reward agencies for cooperative efforts



which improve service delivery. Agency missions and performance standards must include direct references to resource sharing and greater overall system effectiveness.

5. **We recommend** that all children's justice services for prevention and treatment be examined to determine the most cost effective balance of these services. Once basic treatment needs are met, prevention programs which have long term cost saving potential shall become the first priority.
6. **We recommend** that menus of services be developed and funded that meet, not only the needs of urban children and youth, but also the unique needs of children and youth from Arizona's rural communities.
7. **We recommend** that early screening for risk factors be conducted in conjunction with Arizona's elementary schools. The results of this screening shall be used to guide budgeting for children's services as well as assist in the provision of case management services for each child. Both individual case management and the overall system shall be driven by a prospective and preventive view.
8. **We recommend** that all necessary policy and legislative action be taken to eliminate restrictions and market conditions which increase the cost of providing children's services over those of adults. The validity of requirements which mandate family involvement, child psychiatrists, and education and certification requirements shall be examined. All services be evaluated in terms of achieved results.
9. **We recommend** that a unified process for purchasing and contracting for children's services be developed and implemented. The process must allow purchase in the most economical lots and locations and from the most effective

service suppliers. The need for a stable availability of services through financially healthy providers shall be a major priority. Principles of managed care and capitation shall be followed so that no child is without a minimum level of services.

10. **We recommend** that rigorous program performance monitoring and evaluation be a mandatory component of all purchases of services and all programs funded. Additionally, a single state agency shall be required to compile an annual report of spending for children which identifies the sources and uses of funds and reports the effectiveness of that spending.
11. **We recommend** that a coherent state planning and funding mechanism for children's services be developed. That mechanism must, at minimum, include a state level Office of Children's Justice Services responsible for maintaining the state Children's Justice Plan, state level policy, service standards, licensing, contracting standards and procedures, federal funds coordination, funds distribution, and program evaluation and research. At the intermediate level of counties or multiple counties, there shall be regional children's service contracting entities governed by local boards and responsible for regional fund distribution, policy, contracting for services, regional plans, and local agency coordination. The lowest level of this structure should be the Neighborhood/School Resource Center with its multiple service delivery function.
12. **We recommend** regional contracting entities have special district taxing powers so that localities, at their option, could provide additional funding for services for children. Such local efforts should be rewarded through a formula which provides state matching funds.



13. **We recommend** that all funds for youth corrections, Department of Youth Treatment and Rehabilitation (except secure care), and treatment funds including those for probation be consolidated for administration by an appropriate Executive agency. That agency should allow maximum use of professionals to deal with delinquent and at-risk children outside the traditional criminal justice system.
14. **We recommend** that a statewide information service be implemented to provide local grant writers with timely information regarding government and private funding opportunities. It should be an easily accessible computer based system that allows its users to both provide and receive information.
15. **We recommend** that the State require juvenile service providers to form managed care organizations to provide a continuum of care for delinquent children and those children at risk of becoming delinquent. These organizations shall then compete for statewide or regional contracts with special incentives available for providers who operate in under-served areas.
16. **We recommend** development of a statewide service tracking system for individual children and families which provides necessary information for sound decisions regarding individual treatment and fiscal responsibility. Each child shall have a specific service "cap" developed based on their individual need and risk assessment. When that "cap" is exceeded a review should be conducted and a determination made of whether the particular child could benefit from remaining in the juvenile system.