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# OJJDP NEWS @ a Glance

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## New Program Supports Community Anti-Gang Efforts

We must focus on the immediate priority of safeguarding the public, while at the same time attacking the underlying causes that attract young people to gangs in the first place. We must work to offer our youth a viable alternative to gangs by providing opportunities for success as productive citizens, and we must also prepare those young people who have been held in confinement to return to their communities—not to their gangs.

—Attorney General John Ashcroft

Youth gangs are a serious problem throughout the nation, threatening public safety and damaging young lives not only in large urban areas but also in many smaller cities and rural areas. These gangs can be the most visible cause *and* the most visible result of extreme social and economic distress in disadvantaged neighborhoods. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has long supported efforts to address the problem of youth gangs. In FY 2004, gang reduction is one of OJJDP's priorities.

The Gang Reduction Program (GRP), already underway in four pilot sites, has a clear goal: reducing youth gang crime and violence in targeted neighborhoods by helping communities take an integrated approach to applying proven practices in primary prevention, secondary prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry (see "A Five-Pronged Approach to Gang Reduction," page 2).

The GRP plan has several key concepts:

- Identify needs at the individual, family, and community level and address those needs with a coordinated, comprehensive response.
- Inventory human and financial resources in the community and create plans to fill gaps and leverage existing resources to support effective gang reduction strategies.
- Apply the best research-based programs across appropriate age ranges, risk categories, and agency boundaries.
- Encourage coordination and integration in two directions: vertically (federal, state, and local) and horizontally (across communities and program types).

(Continued on page 2)

*Anti-Gang Efforts (continued from page 1)*

The four pilot sites—in Los Angeles, CA; Miami, FL; Milwaukee, WI; and Richmond, VA—are small areas (a few square miles or a single ZIP code) characterized not only by high levels of crime and gang activity but also by strong indicators of citizen involvement and significant existing program investment. OJJDP will support GRP development through cooperative agreements with local lead agencies and will also sponsor training, technical assistance, and evaluation activities. OJJDP and its federal partners will work together to identify and coordinate federal resources that respond to the needs of GRP sites. The federal partners will develop an inventory of existing resources and a plan to add programs where needed. ■

### **A Five-Pronged Approach to Gang Reduction**

- **Primary prevention** targets the entire population in high-crime, high-risk communities. The key component is a one-stop resource center that makes services accessible and visible to members of the community. Services include prenatal and infant care, afterschool activities, truancy and dropout prevention, and job programs.
- **Secondary prevention** identifies young children (ages 7–14) at high risk and, drawing on the resources of schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based groups, intervenes with appropriate services before early problem behaviors turn into serious delinquency and gang involvement.
- **Intervention** targets active gang members, close associates, and gang members returning from confinement and involves aggressive outreach and recruitment activity. Support services for gang-involved youth and their families help youth make positive choices.
- **Suppression** focuses on identifying the most dangerous and influential gang members and removing them from the community.
- **Reentry** targets serious offenders who are returning to the community after confinement and provides appropriate services and monitoring. Of particular interest are “displaced” gang members who may cause conflict by attempting to reassert their former gang roles.

## **News From the Coordinating Council**

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention brings together representatives from youth-serving federal agencies and youth-focused disciplines to coordinate federal programs related to delinquency prevention, missing and exploited children, and the detention/care of unaccompanied juveniles. At its July 2003 meeting, the Council addressed a variety of topics:

- J. Robert Flores, OJJDP Administrator and Council Vice Chairperson, emphasized the risk that mental health issues can pose for young people and urged coordination of federal efforts to weave a safety net for youth. Dr. Susan Orr of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services presented information on voluntary relinquishment of custody—situations in which parents who cannot afford needed mental health services for a child believe they must relinquish custody to a public agency so the child can receive treatment.

- Joe Connaty of the U.S. Department of Education described the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which develops afterschool enrichment opportunities and makes them available to inner-city and rural communities. As of 2002, the program was serving 1.2 million children in nearly 1,600 communities.
- Jeff Slowikowski and Phelan Wyrick of OJJDP presented an overview of the OJJDP Gang Reduction Program (see article in this issue).

Council meetings are held quarterly in Washington, DC, and are open to the public. The next meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2003. For additional information, visit the Council’s Web site at [ojjdp.ncjrs.org/council/index.html](http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/council/index.html). ■

## New Publications

Publications may be viewed and downloaded at OJJDP's Web site ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp)). Print publications may also be ordered from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (call 800-851-3420 or order online at [puborder.ncjrs.org](http://puborder.ncjrs.org)).

### Spanish Translations

OJJDP is committed to making its resources more readily accessible to the nation's growing Hispanic population. The second National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-2) estimated that 163,900 Hispanic children were reported missing in 1999—21 percent of all children reported missing that year. In light of this finding, OJJDP has recently issued Spanish-language editions of two publications that provide practical guidance for parents of missing children.

**Quando su Niño Desaparece: Una Guía para la Supervivencia de la Familia.** Spanish translation of *When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide* (2002), providing parents with helpful insights into what families should do when a child is missing.

Report. June 2003. 108 pp. NCJ 178902.



### Guía de Recursos de la Familia Contra el Secuestro Parental Internacional.

Spanish translation of *A Family Resource Guide on International Parental Kidnapping* (2002), presenting practical and detailed advice about preventing international kidnapping and increasing the chance that children who are kidnapped or wrongfully retained will be returned.

Report. June 2003. 148 pp. NCJ 199832.



### New Online: Juvenile Justice Practices Series

OJJDP is launching an important new online resource for juvenile justice policymakers, funding decisionmakers, and professionals who develop and administer programs for youth. The Juvenile Justice Practices Series of Bulletins, available on OJJDP's Web site, will distill the latest information—research findings, lessons learned, promising practices, useful tools, and organizational resources—for specific juvenile justice program areas. Among the areas to be covered are aftercare (reentry) services, basic system services, access to counsel, community-based alternatives, gender-specific policies and programs, and alternatives to suspension/expulsion from school. The series begins with the Bulletin described below.

**Aftercare Services.** Describes a continuum of resources—health, mental health, education, family counseling, and vocational services—for youth who are reentering communities after release from juvenile justice facilities. The Bulletin examines how comprehensive aftercare can address some of the problems that exist in the juvenile justice system. It also reviews relevant research and identifies promising programs and tools.

Juvenile Justice Practices Series Bulletin, Online Publication ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp)). September 2003. 31 pp. NCJ 201800.

## Summer Conferences Address Child Protection Issues

### AMBER Alert

During August 2003, teams from across the United States gathered in Dallas, TX, for the first National Training Conference on AMBER (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) Alert. The teams, which included law enforcement officers, broadcasters, and highway safety personnel, met under the leadership of Deborah J. Daniels, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs and National AMBER Alert Coordinator.

Attendees learned about best practices for conducting successful AMBER Alert programs and issuing alerts, relevant technology, what motivates kidnappers, and victim perspectives. The conference also marked the launch of a new AMBER Alert Web page ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/amberalert](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/amberalert)).

### Crimes Against Children

Dallas was also the site of the 15th annual Crimes Against Children Conference in August. Sponsored by OJJDP and presented by the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center and the Dallas Police Department, the conference brought together more than 2,000 law enforcement officers and others who work directly with cases involving crimes against children. Participants attended workshops on investigative techniques and other topics.

The Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Training Conference, which was held in conjunction with the annual Crimes Against Children Conference, offered workshops for members of the 36 ICAC Task Forces and the ICAC Investigative Satellites. OJJDP Administrator J. Robert Flores addressed the opening session of the ICAC gathering. ■

## Funding Update

Be sure to check the OJJDP Web site ([www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp)) regularly for the latest news on OJJDP funding opportunities, including grant application information, deadlines, and links to the Office of Justice Programs' online Grants Management System. To receive e-mail notification of new funding opportunities, subscribe to JUVJUST via the OJJDP Web site.

### Grant Awards

OJJDP awarded a number of program grants in September 2003:

- The **Drug-Free Communities Support Program** (DFCSP) made 180 new grant awards totaling \$17.2 million and also awarded \$35 million in continuation grants to 419 current grantees. DFCSP's **Coalition Mentoring Program** awarded 18 grants totaling \$1.3 million. A complete list of grantees is available on the OJJDP Web site.
- OJJDP's **Enforcing the Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) Discretionary Program: Community Trials Initiative** awarded five grants of \$960,000 each to develop comprehensive and coordinated programs for addressing underage drinking. The grantees are located in California, Connecticut, Florida, Missouri, and New York. The **EUDL Block Grant Program** distributed

\$357,660 to each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

- The **Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts in America: Management Information Systems Project** awarded seven grants totaling \$1.8 million to help child abuse and neglect courts develop, implement, and maintain automated information systems that enhance compliance with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.
- OJJDP's **Tribal Youth Program** (TYP) awarded 30 new grants totaling almost \$8.8 million to support tribal efforts to prevent and control delinquency and improve the juvenile justice system for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth. Under the **TYP Mental Health Initiative**, nine grants totaling \$1.8 million were awarded to tribal communities to provide mental health services to AI/AN youth. ■

## Upcoming Events

The Family and Youth Services Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is hosting the second **National Youth Summit** in Washington, DC, on November 6–8, 2003. Youth leaders from across the nation will join government officials and representatives from youth-serving agencies and organizations to promote Positive Youth Development, a policy perspective that emphasizes success-oriented opportunities and services. The summit theme is "Building on the Strengths of America's Youth." For more information, visit [www.ncfy.com/summit2003](http://www.ncfy.com/summit2003).

Street Law, a project of the OJJDP-sponsored Youth for Justice program, will hold the 6th annual

**Teen Parents and the Law (TPAL) Leadership Conference** in Washington, DC, on December 4–6, 2003. The conference will train participants to implement TPAL programs, which teach pregnant and parenting youth about family laws, community resources, and life skills. For more information, visit the Street Law Web site at [www.streetlaw.org/tpalpage.html](http://www.streetlaw.org/tpalpage.html), or contact Alexandra Ashbrook (call 301–589–1130, ext. 248; e-mail [aashbrook@streetlaw.org](mailto:aashbrook@streetlaw.org)). ■

For comprehensive information on upcoming events in the juvenile justice community, visit the OJJDP Web site at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ojjdp).

## The Five Promises Checklist: Helping Communities Help Youth

With support from OJJDP, the America's Promise organization has developed an online Five Promises Checklist that will help communities deliver needed services to young people. The five promises—caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, marketable skills, and opportunities to serve—are factors that can significantly improve a young person's chances of becoming a successful adult.

Across the United States, numerous organizations deliver services that fulfill one or more of these promises for many children. However, most communities lack the means to determine and track comprehensively which children are receiving which services. The checklist enables communities to make sure they are fulfilling each of the five promises for every child.

The checklist identifies specific, age-appropriate actions for the five promises, together with service providers who can address the actions. Each "Community of Promise" customizes the checklist tool to reflect local resources. Designed with flexibility in mind, the tool encompasses the wide spectrum of individuals who interact with young people, including parents, teachers, coaches, mentors, childcare workers, leaders of scout troops and faith organizations, and juvenile justice workers.

To learn more about the Five Promises Checklist, visit the America's Promise Web site at [www.americaspromise.org](http://www.americaspromise.org). ■

### The Five Promises



- 1 Caring Adults
- 2 Safe Places
- 3 Healthy Start
- 4 Marketable Skills
- 5 Opportunities to Serve

- **Caring Adults.** Ongoing relationships with caring adults—parents, mentors, tutors, or coaches—offer youth support, care, and guidance.
- **Safe Places.** Safe places with structured activities during nonschool hours provide both physical and emotional safety for youth.
- **Healthy Start.** Adequate nutrition, exercise, and health care pave the way for healthy bodies, healthy minds, and smart habits for adulthood.
- **Marketable Skills.** Marketable skills through effective education help youth successfully navigate the transition from school to work.
- **Opportunities to Serve.** Opportunities to give back through community service enhance self-esteem, boost confidence, and heighten a sense of responsibility to the community.



### About America's Promise

America's Promise was founded after the April 1997 Presidents' Summit for America's Future, held in Philadelphia, PA. Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter, and Ford, with First Lady Nancy Reagan representing her husband, challenged the nation to make youth a national priority. Their call to action included a commitment to fulfilling the five promises. Colin Powell is the founding chairman of America's Promise, which has grown into an alliance of more than 400 national partner organizations and 400 local initiatives (involving community and state partners).

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*Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*

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News @ a Glance is OJJDP's bimonthly newsletter, bringing you up-to-date notices of agency activities, recent publications, funding opportunities, and upcoming events—with an emphasis on providing quick access to online sources for publications and other resources. Let us know what types of features would be most useful to you (e-mail [askjj@ncjrs.org](mailto:askjj@ncjrs.org)).

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**SAVE THE DATE!**



**OJJDP satellite videoconference:**  
**Working Together To Stop the Prostitution of Children**

Thursday, December 11, 2003  
1:30–3:00 p.m.



For more information or to register online, visit [www.trc.eku.edu/jj](http://www.trc.eku.edu/jj)