

Juvenile Drug Courts 101



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Juvenile Drug Court Facts

- There are currently 443 juvenile drug courts in the United States
- There are 59 juvenile drug courts in the planning stages
- Juvenile drug courts are thought of as “problem solving” courts
- Juvenile drug courts incorporate the theory of therapeutic jurisprudence

Emergence of the Juvenile Drug Court

- Rates of smoking, drinking, and other illicit drug use among students increased and remained high
- Dealing with substance-abusing juveniles in traditional juvenile court often meant:
 - Long treatment waiting lists
 - Disjointed service delivery
 - Lack of family engagement
 - No input into the nature or extent of treatment
 - Lack of follow-up by the court to verify court orders had been fulfilled

Emergence of the Juvenile Drug Court

- Due to these factors and the success of the adult drug court model in the mid-1990s a number of innovative juvenile courts started drug court dockets that focused on the problem of substance abuse

What is a Juvenile Drug Court?

- A docket within a juvenile court to which selected delinquency cases are referred
- Deals with youth that have been identified as having problems with alcohol and/or other drugs
- The court maintains close oversight
- Comprised of a team of professionals that works closely together in non-adversarial roles

Who makes up a juvenile drug court team?

- The judge both leads and works as a member of a team:
 - Coordinators
 - Prosecutors
 - Defense Attorneys
 - Treatment Representatives
 - Social Services
 - School and Vocational Training Programs
 - Probation Officers

What are the goals of a juvenile drug court?

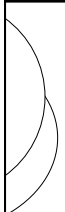
- Provide immediate intervention, treatment, and structure
- Improve juveniles' level of functioning
- Provide juveniles with skills that will aid them in leading substance-free and crime-free lives
- Strengthen families of drug-involved youth
- Promote accountability

Recovering Lives, Uncovering Hope

- Sponsored by the US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, and the Drug Court Programs Office
- Published in 2003
- Profiles juvenile drug courts in Jacksonville, FL, Missoula, MO, Las Cruces, NM, and San Francisco, CA

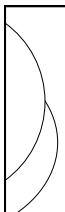
Guidance for Juvenile Drug Courts

- *Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice*
 - Created by a diverse group of practitioners, researchers, and educators
 - Brought together by the National Drug Court Institute and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
 - Known as the *16 Strategies* and became a guide to planning, operating, and implementing juvenile drug courts




Guidance for Juvenile Drug Courts

- The workgroup set out to identify:
 - Key players and their roles
 - Essential components
 - Key issues that face juvenile drug courts and approaches to address these issues
 - Procedures shown to be effective through experience and current research



Publications & Handouts

- Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice (list of the 16 Strategies...for a complete copy of the publication, visit our website at www.ncjfcj.org)
- The Promise and Challenge of Juvenile Drug Courts



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