



J.D.A.I On the Move

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative



THE ANNIE E. CASEY
FOUNDATION

Juvenile Court and JDAI: Building Alternatives to Detention by Partnering with Law Enforcement Agencies

When the Annie E. Casey Foundation (the Foundation) developed the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in 1990, juvenile crime was on the rise and the public wanted harsh, swift punishment for kids. During the early 90s, courts across the country detained increasing numbers of youth and localities built more detention centers. The Foundation decided to invest in a different approach to juvenile crime by starting JDAI and focusing on using alternatives to detention because simply incarcerating the kids was not the solution. At the time, it was not popular, but five communities adopted the JDAI model.

JDAI has eight core strategies: collaboration, data-driven decisions, objective admissions, alternatives to detention, expedited case processing, special detention cases, reducing racial disparity, and conditions of confinement. Each core strategy is integral to reforming the operation of the juvenile justice system. In Memphis and Shelby County, our collaborative, the Governing Committee, is a diverse group of juvenile justice system stakeholders. The Governing Committee meets every other month to analyze data, make decisions, and report on the implementation of projects and programs intended to keep youth who are not a risk to public safety monitored within the community.



Another core strategy is using objective instruments to guide detention decision-making. Currently, the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County (Juvenile Court) uses a detention assessment tool (DAT) to determine which youth should be held in detention. The DAT determines whether to detain a youth, release a youth to community or release a youth to their parents or guardian without supervision. It examines a number of factors including the current offense(s), prior offense history, prior failure to appear before the court, and aggravating or mitigating factors. Each factor has a point value that determines an overall score. This score identifies two risks: the public safety risk and risk of failure to appear before Juvenile Court.



In January 2009 an average of 72 juveniles were held in the detention facility. In that same period for 2014, the average daily population was about 38—a drop of almost 48 percent.

The Juvenile Court embraced the eight core strategies of JDAI and started using a DAT. Juvenile Court also partnered with the law enforcement agencies to create two programs: Summons in Lieu of Transport (Summons) and Law Enforcement Assessment Phone-In (LEAP). The Summons program provides law enforcement officers with the option of providing juveniles summonses instead of arresting and transporting them to the Detention Services Bureau for certain offenses. The Summons program provides officers discretion in determining how to engage effectively with youth who may be engaging in delinquent behavior. Juvenile Court receives a copy of every summons issued to a youth. The Court’s probation officers engage with court-involved youth to develop a plan that both holds the youth accountable and meets their need for services or supervision.

LEAP allows law enforcement officers to call Juvenile Court’s detention facility intake office to determine if a youth would be detained under the DAT if they transported the youth to detention. If the youth would not be detained, then the officers do not need to spend time driving the youth to detention intake. LEAP started as a pilot program in September 2013 with the Shelby County Sheriff’s Office. Based on the success of the Sheriff’s Department, MPD joined LEAP in August 2014.

Purpose of Detention

As a first step, every JDAI site participates in a Systems Assessment, which is a qualitative analysis of how a site's juvenile justice system operates. The assessment includes interviews with key stakeholders and analysis of laws, policies and practices.

The System Assessment for Memphis and Shelby County occurred in 2012. As a result of the process, we learned that many stakeholders understood and agreed how the juvenile justice system operated locally. Stakeholders discussed when detention is used for other purposes, such as sanctioning youth for violating court orders and "to get kids' attention."

We also had meetings to decide on the primary purpose of detention, which is to ensure youth appear in court and do not reoffend prior to their disposition hearing. The Governing Committee then held a series of meetings to determine which policies needed to change to align with this purpose.

Current policy clearly describes when it is the correct time to use detention. "A child ***shall be detained*** for the following reasons: (1) Committing a crime against a person resulting in the serious injury or death of the victim; or involving

the likelihood of serious injury or death to such victim; (2) Possession of a handgun or carrying a weapon; or (3) Escapee from juvenile facility, institution, or other court-ordered placement; or



A child ***may be detained*** for the following reasons: (1) Failure to appear at a juvenile court hearing; or (2) Violation of a court order.

A child ***shall not be detained*** for the following reasons: (1) Punishment; (2) Treatment; (3) To arrange for services; (4) To meet the demands of the community, police, victim or school administrators; (5) To provide convenient access to the Child; (6) To satisfy the demands of the Child's parent (s) or guardians(s); (7) To facilitate the interrogation of the Child or investigation of the offense; or (8) To teach youth a lesson."

"Voices from the Field": Shelby County Public Defender Stephen Bush



When Shelby County Chief Public Defender Stephen Bush considers what justice should look like in Memphis, he thinks about what it *could* look like for the more than 50,000 children under the age of 6 growing up in our city today. While our community and our country still have a long way toward achieving a justice system that provides everyone a fair shake, Bush believes that it is possible to build a better system of justice for this generation of young Memphians.

When the Department of Justice entered into an agreement with Shelby County Juvenile Court and Shelby County Government, the Public Defender's Office was brought back into juvenile court for the first time in forty-years. The newly formed Juvenile Defender Unit, a service of the Public Defender, is providing zealous, independent advocacy for children facing detention. These highly specialized juvenile defenders have also developed a monthly training program for private appointed

counsel. Recently, the unit brought two social workers on board to build plans for alternatives to detention and also to connect children and families to existing social services.

As a member of the JDAI Governing Committee, he views JDAI as a critical component in developing a more effective and progressive approach to working with children in crisis. "JDAI has been essential to dramatically reducing the unnecessary detention of children in Shelby County," said Bush. "The research is clear and compelling that jailing a child has such grave consequences that detention should only be used when there is absolutely no other alternative. I applaud the creative and tenacious work of our JDAI task force, as well as the vision of the Casey Foundation and the leadership of juvenile court in this sustained area of focus. Finding alternatives to detention is good for our kids, makes our community safer, and reduces costs for local taxpayers across the board."

Bush sees the JDAI effort to provide training for Memphis Police Officers as a major step in the right direction. Since law en-

forcement contact is often the first decision point for how deeply a child will be involved with the justice system, it is important that police officers have an understanding of youth brain development in children, and how their willingness to take risks, inability to comprehend consequences and argumentative attitudes are hardwired into the adolescent brain.

"Reshaping how we respond to children in crisis and how we view these children is challenging to those of us engaged in this work, but it should also be challenging to anyone who lives in this community," says Bush. "Changing how we talk about, how we view and, ultimately, how we treat children who come into contact with the system is not just a task for police officers, probation officers, lawyers and magistrates -- it is the difficult work we all should push ourselves to confront. I often say, 'Justice doesn't start in the courtroom. It starts in the community.' And I see that JDAI is reaching out beyond the walls of Juvenile Court. It is looking for partners in our community willing to help children who so desperately need it."

COMMUNITY CORNER

Landmark Training: “An Urban Farming Solution”



Landmark Training Development Company (LTDC) operates an urban farm in the Orange Mound Community in Memphis, Tennessee. Mike Minnis, Director of Urban Farm and Youth Training Program, works closely with the Juvenile Court’s Community Service Coordinator, Jennifer McKissick, to assist and provide youth with community service opportunities

LTDC provides training to young people to help them develop the pro-social skills that will aid them in navigating the job market. The urban farm is both a training facility and a source of nutritious food for community residents, and it provides produce for sale at Whole Foods. First and foremost, Mike aims to teach young people how to farm and provide high-quality foods for individuals and families living in the Orange Mound Community. Additionally, sale of a portion of the organic, certified produce LTDC grows helps the organization maintain its self-sufficiency.

Mike met with Juvenile Court’s Chief Administrative Officer, the JDAI Site Coordinator and other representatives of community-based organizations to discuss barriers and solutions to helping at-risk youth. Juvenile Court’s Community Service program sends at-risk youth to LTDC to perform court-mandated community service as an alternative to more severe sanctions. Youth who successfully complete their court-mandated community service are invited to participate in the Youth Farming Training Program. The training is a combination of traditional and experiential learning. During the course of the program, youth earn an hourly stipend for 180 hours of work as well as food for themselves and their families. For more information, please visit <http://landmarktraining.webs.com/>.

Part of LTDC’s mission is to provide targeted economic opportunities for young people. LTDC’s core programs include: Urban Farming, three community vegetables gardens; Youth Urban Farm Training Program, a work program that teaches youth about organic gardening, nutritional health, the value of hard work, and entrepreneurship; and Farmer Market and Food Pantry, the sale and free distribution of produce and healthy meals.



MARRS – Mediation and Restitution/Reconciliation Services

It all starts with a second chance. At Mediation and Restitution/Reconciliation Services (MARRS), first and second time juvenile offenders are given a fresh start to right their wrongs and experience meeting with the people they have offended. The Executive Director for MARRS, Bridgett Bowman, is member of JDAI’s Alternative to Detention Subcommittee.

The mission of MARRS is to intervene in the lives of young people who have committed first and second juvenile offenses. MARRS is a youth outreach program developed by Memphis Leadership Foundation in partnership with Christ United Methodist Church, and serves about 150 people a year. The program uses innovative techniques that combine faith and juvenile justice practices to positively impact behavior. Court-referred participants attend character development training and leader-

ship classes, and complete community service.

When Shelby County Trustee David Lenoir met MARRS Executive Director Bridgett Bowman, he saw great potential for collaboration. Lenoir wanted to tap into a part of the community that has unrealized potential for entrepreneurship. After reading a book entitled, *Who Owns the Ice House*, he resolved to introduce the nationally-recognized Entrepreneurial Learning Initiative (ELI) to ex-offenders. A cohort of eight students embarked on the 8-week program Jan. 20. ELI is taught by staff from the Trustee’s Office.

“Many of the character traits that these youth possess are the same for an entrepreneur – creativity, risk taking, and tenacity,” said Lenoir. “We all have made mistakes, and the goal of our partnership with MARRS is to

instill the entrepreneurial mindset and provide them with opportunities to channel their energy in a positive way.”

With its innovative approach to juvenile justice, MARRS has collected more than \$42,000 in restitution fees and has supervised over 60,000 hours of community service. In 2012-2013, MARRS reported only four out of 61 eligible participants re-offended.

MARRS is still accepting youth for their FACE FORWARD program. Please contact them for more information.



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Get Involved!

There are many ways you can be a part of the Memphis-Shelby County Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiatives (JDAI). JDAI is always seeking programs, services, suggestions and ideas about how to provide alternatives to secure detention.



To learn about volunteer opportunities or to get involved, contact the site coordinator, Kimbrell Owens.

| Memphis-Shelby JDAI | Schedule of Events |
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| <p>Executive Committee <u>Chair:</u> Cheryl Beard Larry Scroggs Dini Malone Gary Cummings Bill Cash Heather Mclemore Audrey Gonzalez</p> <p>Governing Committee <u>Chair:</u> Cheryl Beard</p> <p>Subcommittees and Chairs <u>Alternatives to Detention</u> Chair: Audrey Gonzalez</p> <p><u>Data</u> Chair: Bill Cash</p> <p><u>Disproportionate Minority Contact</u> Chair: Heather Mclemore</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 27, 2015: Memphis and Shelby County Governing Committee meeting • March 28, 2015: Teen Movie Madness, Cordova Library • March 28, 2015: Girl Talk, Cornelia Crenshaw Library • March 28, 2015: The People’s Conference on Juvenile Justice, LeMoyne-Owen College • April 1, 2015: ACT Prep Session, Parkway Village Library • April 9, 2015: Job Search Help, Frayser Library • April 11, 2015: Free Legal Clinic, Benjamin Hooks Library • April 25, 2015: Living the Dream Conference, Hickory Ridge Town Centre |

A Word from the Court - “All Things Data” Shannon Caraway

Shannon Caraway is the Computer Systems Analyst for Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County (Juvenile Court). She began working for Shelby County Government in June, 1987. In December, 1989, the Juvenile Court hired Shannon to work in the Evaluation & Referral Section. In 1992, she became the Office Information Systems Clerk and earned a promotion to Computer Systems Analyst.



Juvenile Court is very fortunate to count Shannon as a member of its family for the last 27 years. She consistently goes the extra mile to assist others. Her colleagues say that her mantra is: “How may I help?” Her computer system skills and complete dedication are truly indispensable to Juvenile Court's 249 employees.

Shannon was part of the JDAI Initiative in Memphis and Shelby County from its inception. She attended planning meetings to learn JDAI’s goals and objectives. Then she quickly began the work of developing the data fields needed to measure our progress, and she ran extensive reports to analyze where we were and where we were going

Shannon has administered projects and information system enhancements that have changed the Juvenile Court staff’s daily work lives for the better. She configures and compiles statistical data reports of every variety from the local to the federal level on every project Juvenile Court participates in, including countless requests from outside agencies. Shannon is a leader and admired by all who know and work with her.