

Partnership Fund Pilot Award Summary

Concept Name: Do Right by Youth: A Comprehensive Strategy for Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment

Lead Agency: Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)

Funding Level: \$3,450,000

Number of States/Pilot Sites: 3

Summary of Funded Concept: This pilot will enable DOJ and three state or local agencies to develop, implement and test an integrated scorecard tool to realign how decisions will be made about resources and services for youth in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system based on evidence of impact and cost-effectiveness. Pilot goals include: 1) reduced recidivism rates for juvenile offenders through provision of more effective services and 2) cost savings and/or neutrality for Federal, state, and county juvenile justice systems, such as through decreased high-cost confinement for youth better served by detention alternatives.

The pilot will be implemented at two levels:

1. At the point of service level, state/local partners will assess optimal services for individual youth using an existing risk assessment and the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) which scores the effectiveness of services based on current research and evidence. The SPEP tool has been developed but requires testing in a real world setting.
2. At the juvenile justice system administration level, the SPEP score will be integrated with a cost-benefit rating to compare the per unit cost to the service type using standardized parameters. This integrated tool will become the state-level scorecard to guide government contracting of services by showing “optimal matches” for both the public and the youth.

The evaluation will track both system-level and youth-level outcomes, including 1) recidivism rates, 2) cost effects for all levels of government, and 3) implications for youth such as service availability and behavioral changes in substance abuse, school attendance and/or academic improvement. The evaluation will also inform adoption and implementation of the scorecard by other states and potential adaptation to other types of programs.

Addressing the Partnership Fund’s Goals:

- Improve administrative efficiency by realigning decisions about resources and services for youth in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system based on evidence of impact and cost-effectiveness.
- Improve service delivery by using the best evidence to inform both system-wide contracting choices that affect the specific services and providers accessible to youth and also point-of-service decisions about interventions for particular youth.

Changes from the Original Pilot Concept Submission: The funded pilot represents an adaptation by DOJ of a scorecard concept submitted by the Collaborative Forum. The pilot serves parallel objectives while leveraging existing resources and initiatives underway, such as the SPEP tool and the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention.

Original Pilot Concept Submitted by: The Collaborative Forum, adapted by DOJ.