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GO TO MINNEAPOLIS

by Dave Marsden and Carrie Nathans

AN OUNCE OF SUPERVISION BEATS A POUND OF DETENTION, HENNEPIN COUNTY FINDS

by Dave Marsden

When Congress wrote the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act in 1974, one of its four cornerstones was to provide funding to states to "deinstitutionalize status offenders." In other words: when kids do things wrong that wouldn't be wrong if they did them as adults, don't put them into secure detention and corrections facilities.

In that spirit, the city of Minneapolis, Minn., its surrounding county of Hennepin, and Minneapolis Public Schools created the Juvenile Supervision Center (JSC) in 1995.

Two years earlier, a truancy workgroup had found a strong link between truancy and the following outcomes: low academic achievement, dropping out of school, crime, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy. In response, the JSC was developed as a way to



 @youtharehere  MPLS Rage Page

While serving as transportation committee coordinator for the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board (YCB), Evan Barnett worked with the group's young members to create a way for youths to engage with the community, expand their horizons, and enhance their opportunities. Together they launched Go-to Pass, a program that allowed high school students to take public buses to school. As Go-to Pass found its footing, the traditional yellow school buses that shuttled kids to and from school were gradually phased out.

The program was a game changer. From before dawn until 9 p.m. (10 p.m. was the previous curfew for youth in Minneapolis), young people could get to school safely, engage in afterschool activities or postsecondary education, and get and keep jobs. By increasing their mobility, Go-to Pass opened up a new world of opportunity for young people.

No School Buses Necessary

Barnett and his partner, Latoya Valagun, have made tremendous strides with the program. Now a youth development specialist with the Minneapolis Youth Commission, Barnett said involving young people in this effort was the key to its success. In partnership with the Minneapolis Youth Congress (MYC), he initiated a 2-year pilot

rein in kids who might have skipped school, broken curfew, or committed low-level misdemeanor offenses such as school disruption, fare evasion, theft, and simple assault.



The Minneapolis Juvenile Supervision Center resides within City Hall (above).

A History of Nonprofit Operation

The JSC was run by the Minneapolis Urban League from 1995 until 2008. Since 2008 the JSC has been operated by The Link, a local nonprofit that also engages in school dropout prevention, juvenile justice work, and housing services related to individuals experiencing homelessness.

The center operates today as a youth-friendly, safe, and secure site for law enforcement to drop off youths from age 10 to 17 who are picked up for curfew, truancy, or low-level offenses and who do not need and do not qualify for admission to the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center.

Always Open

The JSC is open year round and 24 hours a day.

According to Link Director Beth Holger–Ambrose, "Youth are dropped off at the JSC by police, at which time the staff performs a mental health screening," which is followed by an assessment related to any service needs they may have as a result of truancy, homelessness, substance abuse, sexual trafficking, or abuse and neglect. "The average length of stay is 2 hours," Holger–Ambrose reports, "with a flexible maximum of 6 hours to determine the service needs of the youth. Youths needing longer-term housing and services are transported to youth-friendly shelters."

"Needless to say," adds Officer Bruce Folkens,

program in 2010 for MYC members to begin using the passes.

As the program gained momentum, Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) funded an expansion to include 50 percent of its high school population—selected for having the highest number of free- and reduced-lunch students. Today, all high school students are eligible and school buses are a thing of the past. The pass also doubles as a school ID (with photo), so it is nontransferable and allows for data collection and tracking of students. Although a formal evaluation has yet to be performed, the data suggest that youth violence in the downtown area has declined 47 percent, and the opportunity for afterschool activities has begun to close the achievement gap for many minority students.

Outreach Workers Supervise and Mentor

Transportation is only one part of this effort. The Downtown Improvement District (DID), a nonprofit organization composed of business and building owners, was concerned about the influx of so many young people. As the hub for bus and rail transit, the downtown area had a history of problems with youths.

To address this, and to protect the safety of youths venturing away from their homes and neighborhoods, a team of outreach workers was hired to help students transition to this new way of life. The outreach workers provided instruction on how to use the Go-to Pass system and behave on the buses. Stationed at schools to serve as supervisors and mentors, they created a welcoming and stable atmosphere for youth.



"This method of handling status offenses and minor law violations works well for law enforcement, as there is minimal paperwork and officers are able to return to their assigned duties quickly. You know how valuable this program is when you never hear anything negative from anyone about it."

A Ride Home and a Chat With the Folks

Following the mental health screening and service assessment, the youth is most often transported home or back to school by the JSC staff or, on some occasions, law enforcement. Discussions take place with the family or school to determine the need for The Link to continue support for the youth and family over the longer term.

"The JSC has 12 staff," said JSC Director Blaine Turnbull. "Nine of the staff members handle 3,000 to 3,200 youths who are brought to the JSC every year. Three of the staffers are case managers who perform the follow-up service delivery over a 6- to 9-month period to those youths who are assessed as having longer-term needs and whose families are willing to engage. These services can also be provided by other staff working for The Link through their other programs."

Early Intervention, Lasting Change

Josh Peterson is the Youth Intervention and Outreach Coordinator for the Minneapolis Health Department. He works closely with Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator Sasha Cotton and Youth Development Coordinator Olivia Walker. These three individuals are at the heart of the daily operations of the National Forum through their responsibilities under the Minneapolis Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence.

"The JSC is tremendously important," says Peterson, "as it not only prevents youth victimization and engagement in crime by getting them off the streets to somewhere safe but also creates lasting change by providing an opportunity to intervene with youth at the first sign of risk and connect them with long-term resources and supports."

The JSC also works very well for the Minneapolis School District. According to Colleen Kaibel, the dropout prevention coordinator for Minneapolis Public Schools, it "provides early identification of students who need help and who have not had sufficient truancy issues to hit the schools' radar screen." She regards this as the beginning of

Community Consciousness of Youthful Needs Raised

The benefits of the outreach workers began to multiply. Downtown business owners once so concerned about the influx learned the truth: many of the youths they had been wary of were not high school students but homeless young adults in need of food, housing, and employment resources. Outreach workers were able to engage these individuals and direct them to much-needed services. They are now on duty throughout the school year, and the cost to maintain their services is about \$5,000 per week. Though the program does not operate in summer, youths have learned how to use the transit system and are willing to pay to maintain their mobility and independence.

The MPS has been a great beneficiary of Go-to Pass. Richard Mammen, chair of the MPS school board, champions the program: "It has opened up more of the community for young people and increased opportunity through the empowerment of mobility, as well as increasing opportunities for postsecondary education." Then he explains, "The light rail that connects downtown Minneapolis to St. Paul has provided improved access to the University of Minnesota." Mammen further notes the program has "expanded an awareness of youth needs and even changed the attitude and behavior of police toward young people."

Shane Zahn, director of safety initiatives for DID, maintains, "The DID has been able to help with good policy and procedure, as well as collaboration with police, MPS, and the YCB to establish rules of behavior and cut-off times for Go-to services." DID has also given the program financial support.

"The transition to Go-to passes, with the addition of the outreach workers, has been a great youth development tool," says Pam McBride, project director of Youth Development at the Minneapolis YCB. "It meets kids where they are and provides opportunities and engagement tools through the creation of relationships, which is what our young people want."

The Minneapolis Go-to Pass system has taught the community that reducing youth violence is not always about restrictions or limitations. It is about presenting opportunities to expand young people's horizons and become adults through thoughtfully provided freedom, with an expectation of responsible behavior in return.

NEWS & VIEWS

Reports

comprehensive services. Kabel believes the JSC is more a way of "preventing youth victimization than... dealing with youth being perpetrators."

By keeping young people from penetrating the juvenile justice system, treating them fairly, and basing their involvement with the system on their needs and not their low-level offenses, Minneapolis is engaging in best practice that has been shown to be in the best interest of youths and families.

Many Authorities Provide Oversight

A Joint Powers Agreement involving the city of Minneapolis, Special School District Number 1 (Minneapolis Public Schools), and Hennepin County is the basis for the current governance structure. This agreement is in force until Dec. 31, 2016. The members of the Joint Powers Board include the mayor of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis City Coordinator, the Hennepin County attorney, the Hennepin County administrator, the Minneapolis school superintendent, and a Hennepin County Juvenile Court judge.

The board meets at least once a year and delegates much of the ongoing supervision of the contractor (currently The Link) to a "work team" consisting of representatives from the city, the county, the schools, and The Link. This group meets monthly to

- Oversee the development of the center's strategic plan.
- Establish guidelines and conduct an annual evaluation and report.
- Review, design, and develop plans for the center and communicate recommendations for the board to review.
- Review and approve proposed promotional plans and materials to maximize community support, participation, and awareness.
- Assume responsibility for coordinating all aspects of curfew/truancy services in Hennepin County among the participating parties.

Further Reading

Eric Moore and Lola Adebara. 2012. "[Juvenile Supervision Center: 2012 Evaluation Report—Executive Summary.](#)" Rainbow Research, Inc.

The Case for Community-Based Alternatives to Youth Incarceration

Shaena M. Fazal, June 2014

The Youth Advocate Programs Policy and Advocacy Center has released [Safely Home](#), a report that describes how communities and systems can safely support high-need youths in their homes and communities. The key messages of the report are

1. A lack of effective alternatives for high-need youth contributes to youth incarceration.
2. Virtually anything that can be done in an institution can be done better in the community.
3. Systems can redirect institutional dollars toward less expensive community programs.
4. Communities cannot climb out of poverty, neighborhood violence, and other risk factors through incarcerations.
5. Community-based programs that provide the proper level of security are safe and effective alternatives to youth incarceration.

The report concentrates on the elements of effective community-based alternatives.

Causes of Death for Delinquent Youths 16 Years After Detention

Linda A. Teplin, Jessica A. Jakubowski, Karen M. Abram, Nichole D. Olson, Marquita L. Stokes, and Lead J. Welty, June 2014

In "[Firearm Homicide and Other Causes of Death in Delinquents: A 16-Year Prospective Study](#)," published in the journal *Pediatrics*, study authors examine rates of and risk factors for firearm homicide and other causes of death in delinquents 16 years after detention. Findings:

- Delinquent youths, through age 29, have higher mortality rates than the general population.
- Delinquent females died at nearly 5 times the general population rate.
- Delinquent Hispanic males and females died at 5 and 9 times, respectively, the general population rates.
- Compared with the general population, significantly more delinquent youths died of homicide, including homicide by firearm.
- Among delinquent youth, racial/ethnic minorities were at increased risk of homicide compared with non-Hispanic whites.

Preventing Youth Violence

Corinne David-Ferdon and Thomas R. Simon, June 2014

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Division of Violence Prevention, at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released [Preventing Youth Violence: Opportunities for Action](#) and its companion guide, [Taking Action to Prevent Youth Violence](#). These publications aim to help communities use strategies that are known to work in youth violence prevention. They provide information on youth violence, violence-related behaviors, current trends, costs of youth violence, disproportionality among those affected, causes of

Eric Moore and Lola Adebara. 2013. [*Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support Evaluation of Juvenile Supervision Center*](#). Minneapolis, Minn.: JSC Joint Powers Board and Workgroup.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Funding Opportunities

Interior Department to Grant \$6.7M to Hire Young People to Work on Public Lands Nationwide

The U.S. Department of the Interior will release up to \$6.7 million in grants to support conservation employment and mentoring opportunities at [43 projects on public lands across the United States](#). This amount represents a 60 percent increase over last year's funding.

Training Opportunities

Coalition for Juvenile Justice Youth Summit

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention will cohost the [2014 Juvenile Justice Youth Summit](#) Aug. 7–8, 2014, in Washington, D.C. The Youth Summit seeks to cultivate and empower a new generation of juvenile justice advocates. Youth participants will engage in skill-building, networking, and leadership development. Participants will learn the basics of juvenile justice and have the opportunity to delve into more detail on trending topics in juvenile justice reform. The event will also feature activities around the 40th Anniversary of the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

Federal Bullying Prevention Summit

The Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention invites State Education Agencies (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEA), as well as administrators, teachers, and partner community-based and nongovernmental organizations to attend its virtual meeting, "Keeping Kids Safe: Opportunities and Challenges in Bullying Prevention," on Aug. 15. Presenters will address current trends, research, and data, and SEA and LEA

violence, evidence-based approaches, and key prevention strategies. These reports can also be accessed at the CDC's [Injury Prevention and Control Web site](#).

Minimum Legal Drinking Age of 21 Saves Lives

William DeJong and Jason Blanchette, 2014

A recent article published in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* finds that the current law, which sets the minimum drinking age at 21, has had positive effects on the U.S. population. "[Case Closed: Research Evidence on the Positive Public Health Impact of Age 21 Minimum Legal Drinking Age in the United States](#)," which reviewed research published since 2006, finds that the age 21 law has reduced alcohol-related traffic crashes and alcohol consumption among youth and has protected drinkers from long-term negative outcomes they might experience in adulthood, such as alcohol and other drug dependence, suicide, homicide, and adverse birth outcomes. The article concludes that the age 21 law saves lives and is unlikely to be overturned.

News

Aspen Institute Reinvests in Innovative Community Collaboratives to Engage Opportunity Youths

On July 24 the *Opportunity Youth* Incentive Fund (OYIF) announced its second round of grants, with plans to provide new awards to 19 communities across the United States. The Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund is managed by the Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions and is dedicated to reconnecting "Opportunity Youth" to education and employment. Opportunity youth is a term used to describe the 6.7 million Americans age 16 to 24 who are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor market. [Read the full press release here](#).

Atty. Gen. Holder to Send Seven Additional ATF Agents to Chicago

Atty. Gen. Eric Holder said he will send seven additional Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives agents to the ATF field division office in Chicago, Ill., where they will coordinate efforts with U.S. Atty. Zachary Fardon and federal, state, and local law enforcement and community partnerships to advance proven strategies to reduce illegal gun trafficking and gun crime. Holder made the announcement following a visit to the Windy City, where he participated in a roundtable discussion with Mayor Rahm Emanuel on recent reductions in youth violence. [Click here](#) for the Department of Justice press release.

Chicago's Youth Impact Program Camp

On July 7, Chicago's Youth Impact Program (YIP) kicked off its first-ever summer camp. Eighty-three middle school boys attended day 1 of the 2-week camp, which aims to reduce youth violence, promote summer learning, and provide life-skills training and mentoring to at-risk boys. Supported in part by Northwestern University, the YIP camp delivers education on nonviolent conflict resolution, bullying, self-confidence, and leadership, with afternoon football training and practice.

administrators will share their successes and challenges in bullying prevention work. Participants will be asked to weigh in on the direction of federal bullying prevention efforts to support local programming. [Register for the meeting.](#)

Using Title IV–E for Juvenile Justice: The Multnomah County Experience

On Aug. 21 at 3 p.m., the Coalition for Juvenile Justice will present a Webinar on how jurisdictions can leverage Title IV–E of the Social Security Act to support home- and community-based programs and services in juvenile justice systems. Participants will learn about programs and services that are eligible for Title IV–E reimbursement, and ways stakeholders can support implementation of Title IV–E programs. Attendees will also hear one county's experience with Title IV–E implementation. [Register for "Using Title IV–E for Juvenile Justice: The Multnomah County Experience."](#)

Global Youth Justice Training Institute

The [10th Global Youth Justice Training Institute](#) will be held on Dec. 2–4 in Las Vegas, Nev. Participants will learn strategies for establishing or enhancing local youth justice diversion programs through teen, student, youth, and peer courts and juries. The program will address a variety of topics, from training youth and adult volunteers to grant writing and funding opportunities.

[Read the press release.](#)

West Virginia Governor Announces Review of Juvenile Justice System

Between 1997 and 2011, West Virginia experienced the largest increase of any state in the country in the number of youths confined to juvenile facilities. It was also one of only four states to increase commitment rates. To address this, West Virginia has taken numerous steps over the past several years, including the closure of a secure residential facility and establishing juvenile drug courts, truancy courts, and community-based programs. In June, Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin announced that he has joined with members of the West Virginia Legislature, justices of the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, and Pew Charitable Trusts to undertake a landmark, comprehensive review of West Virginia's juvenile justice system. The full [press release is here.](#)

Two New Programs Classified as 'Promising'

Two programs have recently been added to OJJDP's *Model Programs Guide* and [CrimeSolutions.gov](#) as promising programs. The [Front-End Diversion Initiative \(FEDI\)](#), originally implemented in four Texas probation departments, seeks to divert juveniles with mental health needs from adjudication in the juvenile justice system by using specialized supervision and case management. Researchers found that juveniles who participated in FEDI were significantly less likely to face adjudication compared with those who received traditional probation supervision. [Too Good for Drugs \(TGFD\)](#) is a school-based drug prevention program for middle school students that promotes prosocial attitudes, skills, and behaviors. Researchers have found that participation in TGFD results in marginal yet positive impacts such as reducing consumptions of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) as well as affecting important risk and protective factors associated with resiliency to ATOD use.

Other Resources

Vera Institute Creates Validated Tool to Identify Victims of Human Trafficking

The Vera Institute of Justice's [Trafficking Victim Identification Tool](#) has been tested with a diverse sample of potential victims of trafficking and found to be statistically reliable in predicting labor and sex trafficking. When used properly, the tool could give victim service providers, law enforcement, and legal, healthcare, and social service providers a standard means of identifying victims of human trafficking. The tool is divided into a long and short version.

National Gang Center Explains Why Some Youths Join Gangs

The National Gang Center, in conjunction with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, has released the online video ["Why Youth Join Gangs."](#) The video goes over the family, school, peer, and community risk factors that may play a role in a

youth's decision to join a gang. Gang researchers and practitioners give their perspectives on gang joining, and youths describe their gang experiences. It also addresses behaviors and circumstances that might be observed when interacting with youths at high risk of joining a gang.

Children's Bureau Video Examines Tribal Child Welfare Programs

The Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has released a [brief online video](#) introducing concepts described in the report, "A Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities." The video highlights the difficult history of evaluation and research in tribal communities and explores a new narrative for conducting culturally responsive and scientifically rigorous evaluations to support ongoing improvement in tribal child welfare programs. The Children's Bureau's Child Welfare Research & Evaluation Tribal Workgroup developed the roadmap.

Contact Us

Send questions or feedback about the newsletter to NFYVP@dsgonline.com or [subscribe](#).

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