



# **Juvenile Justice Task Force**

**Juvenile Professional Development  
Recommendation FY15- JJ #3  
Professional Standards for Juvenile Practice**

**June 13, 2014**



### Juvenile Justice Task Force: Members

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**This recommendation reflects a collaboration between:**

- **the Juvenile Justice Task Force,**
- **DCJ's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council, and**
- **the Denver Crime Prevention and Control Commission**





### **The Problem:**

- **Multiple disciplines are involved in working with youth, yet there is a lack of multidisciplinary training for professionals serving youth**
- **There is a lack of knowledge of adolescent development among many disciplines who work with youth**



### **Contributing factors:**

- **Children's Code is separate and distinct from other criminal codes**
- **Best practices include collaborative decision making and less adversarial case processing**
  - **Title 19 intent: Rehabilitation rather than punishment**
- **Developmental issues need to be considered when determining appropriate case processing and outcomes**
- **"Juvenile" delinquents are often seen as offenders rather than children**
- **§19-1-103(18) "Child" is any person < 18 years old**



### **Contributing factors:**

- **Case processing rotation**
  - **Training is often legal in nature**
  - **Salaries often lower for juvenile work**
  - **Working with juveniles is a stepping stone to work with adults**
- **Effective case processing requires:**
  - **Professionals have knowledge of effective and targeted strategies, the ability to work with a variety of professionals across disciplines, “juvenile language” that includes children and families**
- **Long term collateral and unintended consequences for children and families**



# Colorado Commission on Criminal & Juvenile Justice

## Recommended Core Competency Areas

*Brain Development:* Youth brain development and behavior/decisions.

*Effective Case Management:* Screening, assessment, effective report writing case planning, and referral.

*Consent, Release of Information, HIPAA, FERPA, 42CFR and Confidentiality:* Privacy and confidentiality rights of youth, what and how data information can be shared across agencies.

*Effective Communication Strategies:* Appropriate, respectful strategies to ensure effective communication between systems, providers and justice-involved youth and their families.

*Family Engagement:* Best practices for involving parents and families in the treatment process of justice-involved youth.

### ***Behavioral Health***

- *Trauma-informed response and/ or care:* Best practices for providers in trauma-informed services; an understanding of the high prevalence of traumatic experiences in justice-involved youth and the neurological, biological, psychological and social effects of trauma and violence on youth.
- *Best practices in supporting youth with mental health challenges*
- *Strategies for addressing vicarious trauma in providers working with justice-involved youth*
- *Principles of substance abuse, prevention, treatment and recovery*



### **States implementing professional development standards**

**Missouri** – Well trained and effective juvenile and family court professionals

- Juvenile Division Education Committee
- 10 Knowledge and skill areas
- Intermediate, advanced and ongoing training

**Florida** - Training, development and support for all Juvenile Justice Staff

- Instituted “Office of Staff Development and Training”
- Open to private provider staff as requested
- Instructor and online courses





### **BENEFITS of implementing professional development standards**

- Improved agency and cross-discipline *coordination and consistency*
- Creates *common knowledge and framework* across professionals when addressing youth and family issues
- Reduced likelihood that youth are pushed further into the juvenile justice system and other systems when they fail to meet the requirements of *contradictory case plans*



### **BENEFITS of implementing professional development standards**

- Expanded staff capacity and a more *integrated approach to care*.
- *Increased working relationships* through coordinated universal core standard trainings.
- *Reduction* of overall *system costs* and staff training.
- *Improved outcomes* for youth and families.



### **TARGET AUDIENCES**

Universal core standard trainings for professionals working with youth at related entities such as:

- Judicial District Attorney Offices; Diversion
- Colorado District Attorney's Council,
- Department of Human Services,
- State Office of the Public Defender,
- Colorado Office of Child's Representative,
- State Judicial (Court and Probation)
- Colorado Association of Family and Children's Agencies (CAFCA)



### PRECEDENTS

- Colorado's Trauma Informed System of Care
- Standardized Assessment Tool Implementation
- Child Welfare Training Academy
  - Child Welfare Action Committee – Karen Beye – ED of CDHS

“...all children in the public welfare system have access to quality services and to professionals with the knowledge, skills and abilities to make decisions that will help keep them safe and secure.”

(May 19, 2009, Governor Press Release, emphasis added)



Reform in child welfare and **related delivery systems** shall be directed at the following objectives: **Child Welfare Reform §26-5-102(2) C.R.S. (emphasis added)**

- (a) More **efficient and responsive service systems** for children, youth, and families;
- (c) Encouragement and authorization for a **truly integrated services system ...**
- (d) Focus **on...an entire array of services...**rather than forcing families to be transferred from agency to agency
- (g) Successful training efforts directed at county staff, providers, and families and other appropriate entities....**which training efforts shall include, but not be limited to,** the operation of the child welfare training academy...



**FY 15-JJ #3. Implement statewide juvenile professional standards via a cross-agency collaborative**

### **RECOMMENDATION FY15-JJ #3**

The Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice supports agencies within the executive and judicial branches of government, and agencies involved in critical decisions of case processing and treatment of juvenile offenders, committing to and participating in the creation, adoption and implementation of statewide juvenile professional development standards as directed by the state's Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Council. We recommend the following timeline for implementation:

**Phase 1** (September 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015): Commit to and participate in the creation of statewide juvenile professional development, including core training standards, and an achievable implementation plan.

**Phase 2** (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2018): Implement the plan, institutionalize core professional development standards in administrative practice, and ensure that training content will be continuously informed by new knowledge.



### **Phase 1: August 2014-September 2015**

Creation of :

- 1) core training standards and competencies
- 2) establish “completion” standards and record
- 2) identification of training methodology
- 3) achievable implementation plan



### **Phase 1: Collaborative Workforce Development Efforts**

- Partner with existing and natural training entities to institutionalize training standards and core competency areas:
  - Colorado's Executive, Judicial , and Administrative agencies
  - Higher education
  - Assessment centers other juvenile justice agencies
  - Conferences
  - Community nonprofit agencies
  - Professional organizations
  - Grants promoting training
- Explore federal, state and local funding opportunities.





### Phase 2: October, 2015 - September 2018

- Roll out the plan
- Institutionalize core professional development standards in administrative practice.
- Expand trainings offered

*Leading to...*

**better equipped and competent internal staff  
and contract provider staff to best meet the  
needs of the youth and families they serve.**



# Questions?