

# KEY FINDINGS OF THE NATIONAL CROSS-SITE EVALUATION OF JUVENILE DRUG COURTS AND RECLAIMING FUTURES

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# JDC/Reclaiming Futures (RF) Initiative

- SAMHSA-CSAT, OJJDP, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) partnership to improve the effectiveness and efficacy of JDCs.
- Sponsored an initiative to rehabilitate nonviolent, substance-abusing youth by integrating JDC:SP and RF
- Multiple cohorts of JDCs funded under initiative



# National Cross-site Evaluation of JDCs and RF

Evaluation of the effectiveness and efficacy of  
JDC/RF programs.

# Cross-site Evaluation Team

- University of Arizona's Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW)
- Chestnut Health Systems
- Carnevale Associates, LLC
- Economic evaluation expert: Kathryn McCollister, PhD

# Cross-site Evaluation Overview

- Multi-Site, five-year evaluation of the Juvenile Drug Courts and Reclaiming Futures Initiative
- Charged with evaluating the processes, impact, and cost-effectiveness of integrating the JDC:SP and RF




# Key Findings & Applications/Implications

# Key Finding 1



Compared to IOPs, JDCs overall are *more effective* at reducing substance use *among youth with relatively more substance use at program intake*.



# Application/Implication: Finding 1

- JDC programs might be most effective and efficient by serving youth with high levels of substance problems.
- JDC programs with limited capacity to serve the youth in need in their community should consider focusing on high substance-problem youth and referring youth with less substance problems to IOP programs.
- Revise JDC program inclusion criteria to focus on high-substance use-problem youth.
- Use standardized, valid clinical tools to screen youth for program eligibility and assess their service needs.



# Key Finding 2

Juvenile Drug Court/Reclaiming Futures (JDC/RF) programs are *more effective* at reducing criminal behavior, than non-RF JDCs and IOPs *among youth with relatively more criminal activity at program intake.*

# Application/Implication: Finding 2

- JDC programs working with clients with high levels of criminal behavior might increase their effectiveness and cost efficiency by integrating elements of the Reclaiming Futures model into their programs.
- Revise JDC/RF program inclusion criteria to focus on high-crime youth.
- Use standardized, valid clinical tools to screen youth for program eligibility and assess their service needs.

# Key Finding 3

These program characteristics had desirable impact on client outcomes:

- Having a defined target population and eligibility criteria
- Utilization of gender-appropriate treatment
- Utilization of policies and procedures responsive to cultural differences
- Utilization of a non-adversarial approach
- Coordination with the school system
- Utilization of sanctions to modify non-compliance
- Utilization of random and observed drug testing


# Application/Implication: Finding 3

- Programs should select and utilize program components that effectively serve their target population.
- Programs utilizing the identified program characteristics might be more effective and efficient if they target youth with a particular severity of substance use and criminal behavior.
- Revise JDC and JDC/RF program inclusion criteria to focus on high-crime and high-clinical-problem youth.
- Use standardized, valid clinical tools to screen youth for program eligibility and assess their service needs.

# Key Finding 4



Integrated systems of care and treatment tailored to the target population are particularly critical to effectively serving the substance abuse treatment needs of JDC/RF program clients.



# Application/Implication: Finding 4

In order to optimize the effectiveness of the JDC, programs should increase support for the treatment network/community in the JDC area, as well as select and utilize program components that effectively serve their target population.

# Key Finding 5

JDC/RF programs that more fully implemented ...  
community engagement,  
collaborative partnerships,  
educational linkages, and  
community transition  
were more successful at reducing substance use  
with heavy substance users than programs that  
implemented those program components to a  
lesser extent.

# Application/Implication: Finding 5

- The nature and extent of the implementation of components of the integrated JDC/RF model impacts client outcomes.
- Revise JDC/RF program inclusion criteria to focus on high-substance use-problem youth.
- Use standardized, valid clinical tools to screen youth for program eligibility and assess their service needs.





# Summary

# Limitations

- ❑ Findings from 5 JDC/RF sites.
- ❑ There were more similarities across JDC/RF, JDC, and IOP programs than differences between them.
- ❑ There were several program characteristics that could not be tested due to lack of variability.
- ❑ Data collection challenges.

# Next steps

- Publishing and disseminating findings from the JDC/RF National Cross-site Evaluation.
  - Special issue of *Drug Court Review*
  - <http://sirow.arizona.edu/JDCRF>
  - <http://www.ojjdp.gov/Publications/index.html>
  - Email distribution of findings reports
- Additional analysis of data.
- Further research.

# Questions?



**Questions:** Contact Josephine Korchmaros, [jkorch@email.arizona.edu](mailto:jkorch@email.arizona.edu), or Monica Davis, [midavis@email.arizona.edu](mailto:midavis@email.arizona.edu)

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## Additional Information

<http://sirow.arizona.edu/JDCRF>

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/Publications/index.html>