

**THE AFTER SCHOOL PROJECT**

**Financing After School Programs:  
Prospects For Juvenile Justice Funding**

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## FINANCING AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS: PROSPECTS FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE FUNDING

### Introduction

In 1999, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) began developing a new program designed to expand after school programs in low-income communities. Operating in three cities over a five-year period, RWJ aims to substantially increase the number of young people participating in positive activities that connect them to responsible adults during out-of-school time.

One of the primary goals of this project is to identify new revenue sources. Given President Clinton's focus during his tenure on positive youth volunteerism and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers' national effort to increase the availability of after school programs, one could argue that funding streams for after school programs have greatly increased over the past decade. In discussions about this project, however, youth development practitioners and researchers alike emphasized that most of the available funding for youth-related programming is still deficit-oriented i.e., rather than supporting positive developmental activities for kids, the great majority of youth-serving programs focus on the treatment of *problems* such as substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and especially, juvenile crime.

For example, according to a 1988 study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the U.S. spent between \$15 and \$20 billion each year to arrest, prosecute and detain juvenile offenders.<sup>1</sup> These numbers are growing despite a significant drop in juvenile crime since the early 1990s. In contrast, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, the only federally funded after school program, received \$450 million in 1999<sup>2</sup>. RWJ's project is attempting to address this gap, by ensuring that after school programs have consistent and stable funding, enough to enable them to grow and serve more disadvantaged youth.

Given the proven effect of constructive after school programs on preventing criminal behavior in young people, the After School Project sought to determine whether funding could be re-directed from the juvenile justice system to expansion of after school programs. We investigated the structure of juvenile justice funding in the United States, the current national and local policy environment for these issues, and how juvenile justice funding is currently applied.

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<sup>1</sup>American Youth Policy Forum, *What Does America Spend for Juvenile Justice?* According to AYPF, this Bureau of Justice Statistics study has not been repeated since 1988.

<sup>2</sup>President Clinton has requested an increase in this program's funding to \$1 billion. As of this writing, House and Senate Conferees have agreed to \$600 million. Confident prognosticators agree that the result will be an even compromise, at \$800 million.

We conducted our research under the hypothesis that opportunities may exist to re-direct funding earmarked for juvenile justice interventions away from traditional punishment strategies toward more preventive youth development measures, especially programs that serve children during the peak hours of juvenile crime, weekdays from 3 PM till 8 PM. To take the hypothesis further, we assume that such a re-direction would realize considerable cost-savings in juvenile justice systems across the country, since most experts agree that after school and other positive youth development programs are cheaper to operate than the total costs of arresting, prosecuting, incarcerating, and treating juvenile offenders.

This paper summarizes our findings, which are derived from several sources: interviews with several juvenile justice advocates, researchers and practitioners; a review of the literature about federal funding programs for both juvenile justice and after school activities; and a review of relevant evaluations and research publications. A listing of the individuals we interviewed and the articles we reviewed are attached in Appendices I and II.

For this paper, we reviewed data from crime prevention groups showing that Americans, propelled by a barrage of sensationalized news coverage spotlighting horrific crimes committed by young people, are supporting increasingly high levels of spending for juvenile justice. We also reviewed data documenting the cost-effectiveness of primary supports like after school programs, in reducing youth crime and recidivism.

These data notwithstanding, we conclude that re-direction of federal and state juvenile justice funding into financing for after school programs, while not impossible, would be difficult to execute in practice at any scale. Our reasons are as follows:

1. Most funding for juvenile justice programs is administered by states. The relatively small funding from the federal government is limited in scale, highly fragmented among many federal agencies, and mainly geared to nationally significant research and demonstration projects.
2. States are for the most part shifting away from prevention, toward more expensive, punishment-oriented strategies. States have relatively few funds remaining for prevention after supporting the costs of courts, probation and residential placements for young offenders.
3. The few prevention dollars that *are* spent by states focus on individuals (and families of those individuals) who are either already in the justice system or are at very high risk of entering it. They are not directed toward primary prevention strategies that reduce risk factors (like gang membership) and increase protective factors (like meaningful relationships with caring adults).

In short, although juvenile justice and youth development practitioners may share some goals, interventions through the juvenile justice system and those carried out through after school programs are inarguably very different. The juvenile justice system is perceived as a mechanism for dealing with the hardest-to-serve youth the ones already in serious trouble. After school programs are perceived as targeting at-risk youth, the common term for those not yet involved in the justice system but in danger, because of their life circumstances, of becoming involved if they are not given constructive supports. However true or false these perceptions are, they create an understandable conflict in the notion of re-directing funding from juvenile justice budgets to support after school programs for at-risk youth.

Although national efforts to support after school programs have gained momentum in the last several years, we believe the RWJ After School Project should focus its efforts on increasing *state*-level funding for after school programs, and help state policymakers better understand the cost-effectiveness of after school programs in reducing juvenile crime.

## **Background: The Opportunity**

### Public Interest

Among those issues that maintain a steady hold on the imaginations of the American people, crime, and the fates of our children, definitely rank topmost. Although statistics show that adolescent crime has substantially declined since 1993,<sup>3</sup> the horror of recent school shootings and well-publicized cases involving very young offenders have led to an overall perception that America has a huge juvenile crime problem. Moreover, taxpayers seem willing to spend enormous amounts of public dollars to address this problem. Americans, strongly influenced by what they see on television, still believe that a dangerous new breed of juvenile superpredators<sup>4</sup> is emerging and growing.

According to a report by the American Youth Policy Forum,<sup>5</sup> more than half of all TV news stories involving youth focus on violent crime. When the Gallup organization conducted a poll in 1994,<sup>6</sup> a nationwide sample of adults believed that juveniles were responsible for 43% of all violent crime more than three times the percentage of violent crime actually committed by youth 17 and under. These perceptions, in part, have helped fuel increased spending for juvenile justice policies that to many seem misguided. Most juvenile justice practitioners will attest to the harmful consequences of trying juvenile offenders as adults, which may deny them access to even the minimal level of services available to them in juvenile correctional facilities. Children in their early teens are often incarcerated with adult offenders, putting them in danger of being abused and virtually guarantying that rehabilitation of these very young offenders will become an even more difficult task.

On the other hand, Americans also place a high priority on spending for programs aimed at increasing positive opportunities for young people, especially those living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. A survey conducted last year by the Opinion Research Corporation International showed that providing access to after school programs and early childhood development programs like Head Start ranked just below shoring up Social Security and

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<sup>3</sup>According to a 1998 study by the Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)*, shows that after years of steady increases, the rates of violent crime, property crime and overall index of crimes decreased every year since spiking up in 1991.

<sup>4</sup>*Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works and What Doesn't*, Richard Mendel, American Youth Policy Forum, p. 29, Superpredators or Scapegoats.

<sup>5</sup>*False Images: The News Media and Juvenile Crime, 1997 Annual Report*.

<sup>6</sup>Males, M. *Wild in Deceit: Why Teen Violence is Poverty Violence in Disguise*, EXTRA, March/April 1998.

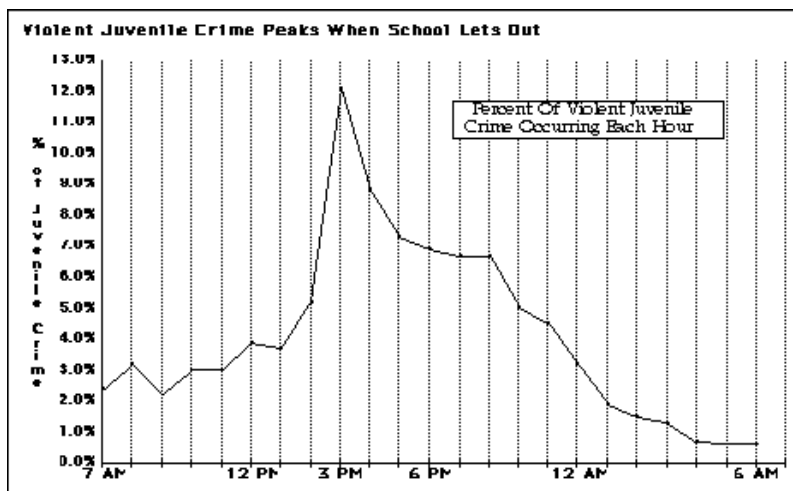
Medicare and far ahead of paying off the national debt and building new highways as priorities that were more important than cutting taxes.<sup>7</sup>

### Youth Development as a Crime Prevention Strategy

The links between the youth development and juvenile justice fields are straightforward and understood by most who work in these fields. First, it is clear that much of juvenile crime occurs in hours of the day that are most crucial for youth development programs. In other words, after school programs are considered important not only because they provide positive educational and social opportunities for young people, but because these activities *occupy* young people during the hours when they are most likely to be idle, and therefore most likely to get into trouble. A recent study produced from the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System, showed that half of all violent juvenile crime takes place between 2:00 PM and 8:00 PM and nearly *two thirds* takes place between 2:00 and 11:00 PM (See Figure 1)

**Figure 1**

After spiking between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM, violent juvenile crime begins a steady drop until 7:00 AM the next morning, and remains low until school is dismissed the next day. This pattern is illustrated below.



**Figure 1** Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, *After School Crime or After School Programs: Tuning In to the Prime Time for Violent Juvenile Crime and Implications for National Policy, A Report to the United States Attorney General, 1999*

<sup>7</sup>Survey conducted for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, sent to 1016 adults, age 18 and older, during the period of August 12-15, 1999. The results were as follows:

**Which of these priorities are more important than cutting taxes?**

Shoring up Social Security and Medicare	67%
<b>Providing Access to after school programs and early childhood development programs like Head Start</b>	<b>66%</b>
Paying off the National debt	48%
Building new highways	32%

Second, research now shows that youth development programs can have a significant preventive effect on juvenile crime. Constructive after school programs are not only able to reduce the first occurrences of delinquent behavior, but can also be used to prevent youth from relapsing into delinquent behavior. For example:

1. Recreational programs made available to all children in a public housing project in Ottawa, Canada, led to a 75% drop in the number of arrests for youth residing in the targeted project, while the arrest rate for youth in a nearby housing project not benefiting from the programs rose by 67%.<sup>8</sup>
2. A Columbia University study compared public housing complexes with and without an on-site Boys and Girls Club. Complexes with a Club that also delivered a social skills training curriculum suffered significantly less vandalism, drug trafficking, and juvenile crime.<sup>9</sup>
3. A 1996 study of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring project revealed that youth assigned a mentor were 46% less likely to take drugs, 27% less likely to drink alcohol and almost one-third less likely to strike another person, in comparison with a control group of youth who applied for a mentor but were placed on a waiting list.<sup>10</sup>
4. In one of the most rigorous studies of after school s longitudinal effects, the Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) was shown to increase rates of high school graduation and college attendance for at-risk youth, in comparison to a randomly-assigned control group. The program also had the effect of delaying or stopping many young people from becoming parents too early in their development as young adults. QOP participants were also convicted of less than one-sixth as many crimes as control group youth.<sup>11</sup>
5. The [nationwide] cost of serving youth in a correctional facility averages \$37,000 to \$60,000 per year, as compared with \$3,000 to \$4,000 in an after school program.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, almost everyone supports the benefits of after school programs, especially law enforcement and juvenile justice officials. In March 2000, George Mason University conducted a study among police chiefs, district attorneys and sheriffs about the most effective strategies for reducing school and youth violence.<sup>13</sup> According to the survey, 72% of those responding strongly favored after school programs and educational child care programs, versus hiring more police officers (13%) and prosecuting juveniles as adults (12%).

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<sup>8</sup>Cited in *Less Hype More Help* supra n.4, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup>Schinke, P.P., Orlandi, M.A., and Cole, K.C., Boys and Girls Clubs in Public Housing Developments: Prevention Services for Youth at Risk, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 1992.

<sup>10</sup>Tierney, J.P., Grossman, J.B., with Resch, N.L., *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters*, Philadelphia, Public/Private Ventures, Inc. 1995.

<sup>11</sup>Hahn, A. with Leavitt, T. and Aaron, P., *Evaluation of the Quantum Opportunities Program: Did the Program Work?*, Waltham, MA. Center for Human Resources, Brandeis University, June 1994.

<sup>12</sup>Op Cit. 8 Mendel.

<sup>13</sup>Survey conducted for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, sent to 359 police chiefs of departments with 10 or more officers, and the 101 sheriffs and 101 state s attorneys for Illinois. The survey had a 65% response rate.

In summary, the American public is concerned with juvenile crime and they are willing to spend money to reduce it. Professionals in the juvenile justice system believe that the most effective measures against juvenile crime emphasize positive youth development opportunities during the crucial hours after school lets out for the day. Therefore, the RWJ After School Project is understandably interested in the notion that perhaps some of the substantial funding for juvenile justice systems and policies could be re-deployed into highly effective and popular preventive programs for youth.

This notion is not an entirely new concept, and borrows in part from the community justice movement that is taking hold in some jurisdictions. Community justice is a broad term that covers a range of issues in the criminal justice field. Faced with extremely high (and rising) costs of law enforcement, courts, and incarceration, some jurisdictions are exploring the question of whether current criminal justice costs can be re-directed or re-organized to support community-based programs that deal with justice-related issues. For example, the budgets of a corrections department or a probation agency could, in theory, be analyzed and re-organized so that portions go toward services for young offenders, or programs that successfully re-integrate ex-offenders into their home communities. Cost-savings are realized through drops in crime that lead to a lesser reliance on law enforcement, the courts, incarceration, and probation and parole. Whether or not the budgets of corrections agencies, law enforcement, probation, and other entities can be successfully re-structured in practice remains to be seen, as the community justice experiment is still in the earliest stages of development. Presently, we have no concrete lessons to take from this movement that address our particular question.

The staggering costs of juvenile justice in this country, however, seem to highlight juvenile justice budgets as obvious potential resources for funding of preventive programs. However, juvenile justice funding is complicated and makes re-direction a highly difficult (not to mention highly political) task. The next section of this paper summarizes the way this funding is administered at both the federal and state level.

### **Funding for Juvenile Justice in the United States**

Federal Funding for Juvenile Justice: Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs (OJJDP)

The major federal agency administering juvenile justice funding is the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), an agency within the Department of Justice (DOJ). OJP was set up to provide federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, improve the criminal and juvenile justice systems, increase knowledge about crime and related issues, and assist crime victims.

OJP has a number of branches, and the agency most relevant to this inquiry is OJJDP. The stated purpose of this agency is to provide grants and contracts to states to help them improve their juvenile justice systems and sponsor research, demonstration, evaluation and statistics to improve the nation's understanding of and response to juvenile violence and delinquency. Historical briefs about OJJDP indicate that the agency has been transformed from a small outpost within DOJ handling mainly soft issues to a major player if not *the* major player in the juvenile justice policy world.

Despite this expanded role for OJJDP, the federal government has followed the general trend of the last decade and has shifted responsibility for the design, operation, and funding of its juvenile justice programs to the states. OJJDP awards grants and contracts or enters into cooperative agreements to implement programs, provide technical assistance, conduct research and collect and analyze data. Grants are awarded on both a formula and discretionary basis. Formula grants are typically awarded to states, varying in size by population, juvenile population, crime rates, etc. Discretionary funds are awarded directly by OJP to state and local agencies as well as private organizations.

OJJDP's major funding programs (and their applicability to after school programs) are described below:

1. OJJDP Formula Grants, at \$89 million in 1999, fund a variety of juvenile justice programs. Roughly a third of this amount goes toward efforts intended to prevent juvenile crime, though these programs are not typically after school programs.<sup>14</sup>
2. Juvenile Accountability Block Grants, at \$250 million in 2000 by formula to states, are given to states that have implemented, or are considering implementation of, legislation and/or programs promoting greater accountability of the juvenile justice system.<sup>15</sup> Few if any of these funds are used for after school efforts.
3. Title V (\$95 million in 2000) is the largest block of funds administered by OJJDP strictly for crime prevention. According to the publication by the Children's Defense Fund, *School-Age Care, Federal Funding Opportunities*, Title V is the only federal funding source focused solely on delinquency prevention.<sup>16</sup> Juvenile justice professionals interviewed for this report knew only anecdotally of small sums of Title V money going toward after school programs.
4. Law Enforcement Programs: Other offices within the Department of Justice administer programs focused more on law enforcement, such as the Local Law Enforcement Block Grants administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. There seems to be some flexibility within this portion of funding that allows some grants to go for after school-type programs, although some nexus with law enforcement seems to be the general requirement. With funding for local governments to improve public safety, last year \$50 million of these funds were earmarked to the Boys and Girls Clubs for their gang prevention work. Anecdotally, the district attorney's office in Boston is also using some portion of their LLEBG funds for after school programs.
5. Operation Weed and Seed funds state and local governments and nonprofit organizations through a \$33.5 million appropriation in fiscal year 1999. Administered by OJP's Executive Office of Weed and Seed, several elements of Operation Weed and Seed have a youth-specific focus. For example, all Weed and Seed sites are required to have one or

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<sup>14</sup>Memorandum to Carol Glazer at RWJ from Jeff Kaban, *Fight Crime: Invest in Kids*, August 2, 2000.

<sup>15</sup>Accountability programs involve activities such as implementing a system of graduated sanctions, and developing systems to efficiently track juveniles through the system.

<sup>16</sup>Children's Defense Fund, *School-Age Care: Federal Funding Opportunities*, February 1999, p. 13.



more safe havens to provide after school tutoring and recreation. Weed and Seed sites are encouraged to apply for funding under Weed and Seed Special Emphasis Initiatives in areas with a youth focus, including: truancy prevention, conflict resolution, justice innovations, jobs for at-risk youth, anti-gang programs, prevention through the arts, and mentoring. However, we found scant anecdotal evidence that after school programs are actually receiving major funding from this source.

Finally, one federal juvenile justice program *not* administered by DOJ is the Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFS) Program (\$250 million in 2000), administered by the Department of Education (DOE). According to *Fight Crime/Invest in Kids*,<sup>17</sup> [a]fter-school programs are already an allowable use of SDFS funds, but most observers agree that very little of the money is actually spent for that purpose. The reality, according to *Fight Crime*, is that SDFS funds mainly go toward D.A.R.E, which is one of the most popular anti-drug curriculums in the country. In addition, the money is distributed so widely that many districts do not receive enough of the funds to do anything useful and it is very difficult to track how districts decide to spend their funds. In this year's budget session, some congressional staff argued to combine the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers with SDFS. Many advocates, however, believed this was a risky proposition since it might result in less aggregate funding than the present.

As we have seen, existing federal funds for juvenile justice programs are not substantially used, in practice, to fund after school programs. A deeper review of historical literature and discussions with juvenile justice professionals reveals some reasons why this is so. These obstacles are described below:

- While OJJDP seems to have provided core program support to youth organizations for direct services in the past, today there are only two DOJ programs which fund direct services. One of these is the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), started in 1992, with a FY 2000 allocation of \$6 million for one-to-one mentoring between at-risk young people and adults over age 21. The second was an earmark in FY 2000 of \$50 million from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Boys and Girls Clubs (BCGC) of America to provide safe havens to target areas. A few anecdotal stories of DOJ funding for after school are provided in Appendix III.

The rest of OJJDP seems focused on research, demonstrations and evaluations through a series of relatively small-scale efforts to test and evaluate crime prevention strategies and train public and nonprofit service providers.

- Federal programs geared to prevention of juvenile crime are fragmented among the Departments of Justice, HHS, and Education. For example, one of the largest crime prevention programs for youth, the Safe and Drug Free Schools program, has been administered by the Department of Education. Another effort, Safe Schools/Healthy Students is jointly administered by HHS, DOJ and DOE.

Programs are so fragmented that earlier this year, Janet Reno called for a "national agenda for children" to be implemented by the Juvenile Justice Coordinating

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<sup>17</sup>Op Cit. 16.

Committee, a multi-agency effort to coordinate the work of the many federal departments dealing with children, including DOE, DOJ and HHS.

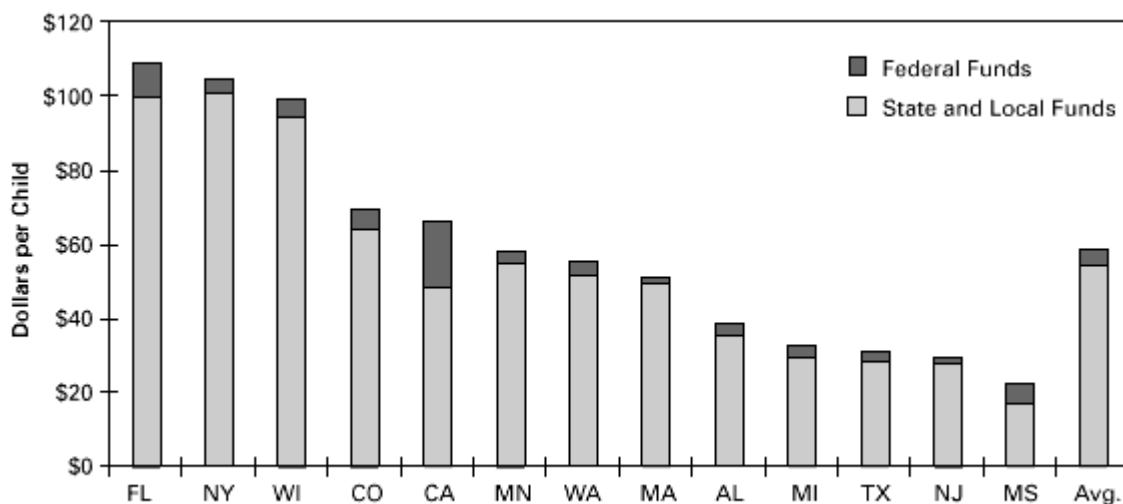
- OJJDP's attempts at dealing with primary prevention strategies are focused on comprehensive approaches to community building. For example, OJJDP supports local implementation of a Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders which involves planning among local law enforcement, mental health, justice, and other agencies toward a comprehensive continuum of care system. None of these projects provides direct service dollars to community-oriented prevention programs. Resources are focused instead on planning and coordinating existing resources.

If federal juvenile justice funds do not provide feasible revenue sources for after school programs, then turning to state juvenile justice budgets seemed a likely next step in our inquiry, especially since states allocate enormous sums to the juvenile justice system. However, our subsequent examination of how juvenile justice budgets are administered at the state level, and the background behind state juvenile justice policies (discussed in the next section) revealed additional complexities with that potential revenue source as well. The fact that juvenile justice systems are administered state-by-state, with a wide range of operational differences within each state, poses an obstacle to the re-direction of this funding in and of itself. For instance, if RWJ were to attempt to find revenue sources for after school programs within state juvenile justice budgets, it would first have to expend considerable time and effort assessing how each state's juvenile justice system works.

#### State Spending for Juvenile Justice: Overview

As illustrated in the chart in Figure 2, the overwhelming majority of funding for juvenile justice and youth services takes place at the state level.

**Figure 2. Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Spending Federal and State and Local Funds per Child, SFY 1995**



Source: The Urban Institute.

Since juvenile justice is primarily a state and local responsibility, it follows that there are 51 state juvenile justice systems. Most of these are divided into local systems delivered through county courts and local probation offices and state correctional agencies, each with its own rules and idiosyncrasies. For states of interest to the RWJ After school Project, the following agencies administer juvenile justice programs:

### Florida

Bureau of Data and Research, Department of Juvenile Justice  
Department of Juvenile Justice  
Juvenile Justice Accountability Board

### Illinois

Department of Corrections  
DOC Juvenile Field Services  
Illinois Judges Association

### Massachusetts

Department of Youth Services  
Massachusetts Court System

### Overview of State Funding: History

Our current methods for operating juvenile justice systems actually originated from a constructive response to juvenile crime. But by the 1990 s and thereafter, most people had forgotten that juvenile justice courts and correctional facilities were originally established to treat younger offenders more humanely, to give them a second chance to become productive, law-abiding adults. Crimes involving extremely young offenders have gotten much publicity; horrific school shootings by offenders as young as 11 years old have created a new public rallying point: adult time for adult crime. Voters in public opinion polls consistently supported the idea that youthful offenders who commit serious crimes should receive the same punishments as adult wrongdoers.

As a result, virtually every state in the nation enacted legislation in the 1990 s either mandating the transfer of youthful offenders to adult courts or easing the legal process for prosecutors and judges to do so. Most states have also increased punishments for juvenile offenders and/or included juvenile convictions in adult three strikes and you re out laws. They have scaled back privacy protections that historically shielded the identities of juvenile offenders and have expanded the bed capacity of their juvenile detention centers and locked correctional facilities. Suddenly, transfer to criminal court has become common practice in our justice system for youth, not only for a handful of serious offenders, not only for those whose cases have been reviewed in totality by a judge, but for a wide swath of the juvenile offender population.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

The federal government has helped spur this trend onwards, requiring states to consider new laws to try more youths in adult court as a condition for receiving federal delinquency prevention and juvenile justice funding.

#### Overview of State Funding: The Present

If we look at the current trend of juvenile crime spending at the state level, evidence exists that seemingly supports our early hypothesis that a portion of state juvenile justice funds could possibly be re-directed to more preventive measures. Overwhelmingly, juvenile justice professionals confirm the growing research that the strategy of adult time for adult crime is not only expensive; it may be dangerous and counterproductive. In study after study, juvenile offenders who are transferred to criminal court recidivate more often, more quickly, and with more serious offenses than those who are retained under juvenile jurisdiction. Moreover, as a result of these new laws, more than 3 million young people are arrested each year. And from 1985 to 1997, the population of youth in adult state prisons more than doubled, and the number of youth in local jails increased by 50%.<sup>19</sup>

With this swelling population of youth that are tried in criminal court and prosecuted as adults, states now spend the bulk of their juvenile justice funds on incarceration of juvenile offenders, with relatively little remaining for preventive measures like constructive after school programs. According to the American Youth Policy Forum, two-thirds of all dollars now spent on juvenile justice go to housing delinquent youth in institutional settings outside their family homes, with costs ranging from \$35,000 to \$70,000 per year.<sup>20</sup>

According to a report by the National Association of State Budget Offices, a conservative estimate of state spending for juvenile justice in fiscal year 1998 was \$4.4 billion, representing an increase of over 65% from fiscal year 1994. (This estimate leaves out many important variables, and whole states, so is likely to be greatly understated. A better estimate of total spending by states is between \$9-\$12 billion annually, 90% of the national total). By far the largest percentage of these funds went to residential placements. According to NASBO, spending for prevention programs was less than 8% of the overall national total.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>National Association of State Budget Offices, *State Juvenile Justice Expenditures and Innovations*, 1998.

Illustrated below is a listing of juvenile justice allocations, showing dollars for prevention, in states of interest to the RWJ After School Project:

State	Total \$\$ on Juvenile Justice	\$\$ on Prevention	% for Prevention
Colorado	\$ 61 million	\$ 11 million	18 %
Florida	\$ 402 million	\$ 45 million	11 %
Illinois	\$ 91 million	\$ 17 million	19 %
Massachusetts	\$ 105 million	\$ 14 million	13 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 659 million</b>	<b>\$ 87 million</b>	<b>13%</b>

All figures are for 1998. Source: National Association of State Budget Offices

### Juvenile Justice Spending and After School Programs

From an outsider's perspective, the problem of juvenile crime vs. the available solutions appears to have a beautifully simple answer. *If* states are spending huge sums of money on increasingly punitive juvenile policies, and *if* those policies are shown to have an even more detrimental effect on the future behavior of young offenders, why then shouldn't some portion of juvenile justice funds be directed toward preventive after school programs that are proven to reduce criminal behavior?

However, the question as stated ignores one crucial aspect of the juvenile crime problem, which is that crime (and especially, juvenile crime) is an inherently *political* issue in America. The issue of juvenile crime goes to the very heart of cherished personal ideals that Americans hold about children, families, and their desires to feel safe in their homes and communities. As such, politicians and policymakers easily win public approval for the more punitive measures to fight juvenile crime, even though those measures may be more expensive to taxpayers than investments in education and preventive programs. Although research has shown that the public can and does support preventive measures, research has also shown that, paradoxically, the public is very unwilling to re-direct the enormous allocations that go toward arresting, prosecuting, and locking up young people. Politicians often win, in fact, on platforms that include costly get-tough crime policies.

For an initiative like the RWJ After School Project to succeed in re-directing state funds from juvenile justice funding toward after school programs, the project would initially have to make substantial investments in advocacy and communications to re-shape the political and social climate around the issue of juvenile crime, perhaps within very targeted areas. For example, RWJ could invest in a particular locale and bring together state government officials, local juvenile justice professionals, and the local after school programs to begin planning a new approach to juvenile crime that would rely more on prevention and less on detention.

Another potential area of promise is to seek other sources of state funding for after school programs. For example, one could demonstrate the positive effects of primary prevention

programs on crime reduction, and seek state appropriations not from funds earmarked for justice spending, but from general revenues. Several states, including Delaware, Kentucky, New York, Maryland, California and Illinois, have recently done just that. Two years ago, for example, the California Attorney General gained the state legislature's approval for a \$50 million appropriation for after school programs; and increased that appropriation to \$80 million and \$100 million in each of the two successive years. In 1998, the governor of Illinois created a \$10 million Teen Reach program, which doubled in size last year.

## Prevention Defined

Of all the obstacles to re-directing juvenile justice funding that we have identified, the greatest may lie within the very nature of the juvenile justice system in America. Although juvenile justice agencies and correctional facilities may often do more harm than good to young people, the best professionals in the field will still say that the primary aim of juvenile justice systems is (or should be) to help children who are already in trouble. Moreover, they will say that most after school and other youth development systems do not deal with the tough kids the ones already in trouble with the formal system, and therefore the juvenile justice systems need even *more* funding to help these kids who have no other source of help. This perspective, understandably, does not lend itself to thinking about how to *re-direct* resources from juvenile justice budgets.

Operating in the "best interest of the child," American juvenile justice systems have traditionally focused on the individual juvenile offender's extenuating circumstances and treatment needs. Not surprisingly then, the most popular preventive-oriented strategies for dealing with young offenders are designed to work with *individuals*, through a variety of counseling and case management approaches.<sup>22</sup> This strategy of dealing with young people already in the justice system contrasts with primary prevention strategies, which seek to reduce risk factors (like gang membership) and increase protective factors (like meaningful relationships with caring adults). After school programs, which are clearly primary prevention strategies, have been evaluated for their positive effects on at-risk youth, yet they receive relatively little attention in the literature on juvenile crime prevention. What *does* get attention are approaches aimed at treating problems with individual offenders. For example, much of the juvenile crime literature seems to emphasize case management and assessment teams. The case manager follows each youth from the point of intake through initial needs assessment, probation, incarceration, and aftercare to monitor progress and adjust the treatment plan appropriately. Whenever possible, it is assumed to be best for the youth to be

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<sup>22</sup> The term prevention has been the subject of much debate in the literature on criminal justice. There is no commonly accepted definition. A recent paper prepared for the US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs gives the following account of the issues in defining prevention in criminal justice: Crime prevention is widely misunderstood. The national debate over crime often treats prevention and punishment as mutually exclusive concepts, polar opposites on a continuum of soft versus tough responses to crime: midnight basketball versus chain gangs, for example. Both midnight basketball and chain gangs may logically succeed or fail in achieving the scientific definition of crime prevention: any policy which causes a lower number of crimes to occur in the future than would have occurred without that policy. Some kinds of punishment for some kinds of offenders may be preventive, while others may be criminogenic or crime-causing, and still others may have no effect at all.

in community-based programs, allowing caseworkers to develop support networks (that may include after school programs) and, whenever possible, to involve the family.

Another group of strategies designed to prevent chronic crime and recidivism emphasizes more *community and rehabilitation-oriented courts*, particularly for minor offenders. Juvenile drug courts provide treatment services and extensive individual attention to young offenders troubled by alcohol and drug abuse. In teen courts, young people help determine sentences for other youth, and gun courts or gun awareness programs, aim to heighten sensitivity of young first-and second-time weapons offenders to the damage caused by guns.

Finally, many states are moving to reform their juvenile detention facilities, which hold about 25,000 young people a day nationwide and cost \$1 billion per year to operate. A number of demonstration and reform efforts have shown that detention populations can be reduced, substantially saving millions of dollars, with better services, monitoring, and alternatives-to-detention programs. In similar fashion, states are also investigating better-designed and managed correctional facilities that use various education, therapy, and other rehabilitation services based on their potential to reduce recidivism.

All of these preventive approaches have a decided place in a juvenile justice system that is more humane, less costly and far more effective in achieving the important objective of reducing juvenile crime. However, because prevention has appropriately been in the province of the courts, probation, and law enforcement systems rather than the systems that are more focused on the evolving field of positive youth development (such as education and human services), after school programs geared to children who have not yet committed offenses are not seen much in the literature on crime prevention.

### **The Views of the Juvenile Justice Advocates**

Our discussions with juvenile justice advocates, researchers, and policy analysts reaffirmed our evolving sense that, after accounting for spending on corrections, probation, and preventive-oriented treatment for children already in the system, a very small percentage of resources are left in the juvenile justice system that could possibly be used to fund after school programs.

Following are some quotes:

*Any juvenile justice professional would be thrilled to fund primary supports, but only after you've successfully served the high end users (i.e., repeat offenders and other kids with serious problems). Juvenile justice people get worried about youth development cause it doesn't deal with the toughest kids*

*Let's leave juvenile justice money in the juvenile justice system, helping troubled kids get back on track. We shouldn't rob Peter to pay Paul. Let's focus on getting new money for primary supports i.e., for early childhood programs, after school, and serving kids who aren't in the system yet.*

*[It's] doubtful that you can get the most leverage from juvenile justice funding. That mostly pays for the mandated court-ordered services, including placement, probation and intensive*

*monitoring of kids after school Prevention is funded by what s left over, unless the state funds it explicitly*

*We believe that the first priority should be to help meet the needs of children who are most at-risk of becoming criminals. From our anti-crime perspective it only makes sense that we focus on the at-risk populations until that need is met because programs for these kids will have the biggest crime-prevention impact we re also most certain to improve both impact and cost-savings if we start by serving the most at-risk kids. That will make it easier to win support for expanding the programs.*

These conversations and a review of the literature netted only a few anecdotal stories, as follows:

1. Through the RWJ-funded Detroit Health Council (a UHI site), the Wayne County Department of Juvenile Justice allocated \$50,000 of state funds as a match to provide after school services to youth in the four zip codes where the largest percentage of kids who are referred to the juvenile justice system live. Most of the \$100,000 is allocated to the Communities in Schools program, which is providing services in two middle schools within each of the four zip codes. The initiative specifically targets chronic truancy and other kids with a whisper of a problem, and aims to provide a variety of services to kids before they encounter the juvenile justice system. It is a primary prevention program.
2. Some District Attorneys in New York, namely in Nassau County, Westchester and Brooklyn, have used both Operation Weed and Seed as well as drug asset forfeiture funds, for after school programs. This bears out the finding that law enforcement professionals, and district attorneys are phenomenal advocates for these programs, even where they hate social programs.
3. A report by the Memphis and Shelby County Tennessee Crime Commission stated, Any comprehensive, juvenile crime prevention/reduction strategy must include a provision for after school activities. When teens are supervised and engaged in fun and productive activities they are less likely to be involved in crime and drug use. Research shows that providing community based after school programs and a coordinating agency for these programs can reduce juvenile crime. Investment in after school programs is not only an investment in crime prevention, but also an investment in the future of Memphis and Shelby County.

## **Conclusion**

We conclude that at present, juvenile justice systems at the federal and state levels are not particularly good sources of systematic funding for after school programs. The U.S. will spend close to \$12 billion on juvenile justice this year and, currently, the public will do something about juvenile crime is high. However, after accounting for constraints at the federal and state level, relatively small sums of money will be allocated to *prevention* of crime. The bulk of funding will be directed to courts, probation and residential facilities for youth through strategies that are more punishment oriented.



And, while we know that primary prevention measures (i.e., reducing risks and providing positive supports like relationships with caring adults) work quite effectively in deterring juvenile crime, those justice funds that *are* spent on prevention will target young people who've already entered the justice system. These approaches will emphasize direct services to those children and their families, rather than serving all young people in a community setting.

Some cities and states have appropriated line items in their budgets (often through the local juvenile justice agency), citing numerous studies linking after school programs with a reduction in juvenile crime. This trend is one that RWJ can build upon through its After School Project. Rather than attempt to re-deploy funding targeted to young people in the juvenile justice system, however, the best use of RWJ resources would be to support a national policy agenda calling for an overall increase in funding for after school programs.

## Appendix I

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## Appendix II

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## Appendix III

### Examples of DOJ Funding for After school Programs

#### *A Demonstration After school Program*

Grantee: University of New Mexico Regents

FY99 Funding: To Be Determined

OJP Sponsor: OJJDP

Project Description: Known as Estrella, this project is designing and evaluating a pilot after school program to reduce juvenile delinquency and increase educational retention at Gadsden Independent School District in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. Through a curriculum of hands-on science and reading projects and supervised recreation, Estrella will provide a constructive alternative to afternoons of unsupervised free time. New Mexico Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (NM MESA) will provide the academic component of the program. Middle school students will mentor elementary students in a highly interactive learning environment developed through the use of the nationally recognized MESA curriculums. The New Mexico Police Athletic League (PAL) will provide a sports component to round out the program, and the University of New Mexico's Institute for Social Research will evaluate it.

#### *Boys and Girls Clubs of America Program*

Grantee: Boys and Girls Clubs of America

FY99 Funding: \$40 million

OJP Sponsor: BJA

Project Description: The Boys and Girls Clubs of America received \$40 million in FY 1999 from the Department of Justice to establish new clubs in at-risk communities and to strengthen and support programs and violence prevention outreach initiatives in existing clubs. Boys and Girls Clubs, one of the nation's largest sponsors of after school programs, provide a range of program services to school-age children, including remedial education, recreation and sports activities, and mentoring. The Clubs have had impressive success working with young people in public housing in distressed neighborhoods. These funds will be targeted to public housing and to gang prevention activities.

#### *The SAGE Project and PRIDE Center After school Program*

Grantee: Springfield College

FY99 Funding: To Be Determined

OJP Sponsor: OJJDP

Project Description: The SAGE project is continuing a program to prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency and school violence. The long-term goal of the PRIDE Center is to provide a comprehensive year-round juvenile delinquency prevention and intervention program that supports the SAGE project as a whole. This project enables the collaborating organizations to: 1) expand and enhance structured adult-mentored and supervised educational opportunities for court-involved and high-risk youth; 2) involve additional city agencies and community-based organizations through the PRIDE Center; and, 3) continue to evaluate and disseminate findings on the project's success for replication in other urban areas.