

# THE JJC CONNECTOR

The Clark County Juvenile Justice Center Newsletter – Spring 2012, Volume 3, Issue 2

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Pat Escamilla, Clark County Juvenile Court Administrator, announced in April that, with the approval and support of our Superior Court judges, our department has decided to implement Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) strategies. This decision supports our court's commitment to develop practices that align with Balanced and Restorative Justice. This was not a decision Pat took lightly. He spent several months talking to other juvenile court administrators who are using JDAI in their jurisdictions, asking them about the benefits of the program as well as the challenges.

Rand Young, Washington State JDAI Coordinator, visited Clark

## Clark County Begins Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)



Rand Young at JDAI training

County on April 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> to conduct the first of several trainings for Clark County Juvenile staff on what is involved in utilizing JDAI principles. Rand was the administrator of Spokane County Juvenile Court when he brought JDAI to Spokane County. He retired eight years ago and became the state JDAI Coordinator.

### History

The Annie E. Casey Foundation developed the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative in 1990. At that time serious juvenile crimes were of growing concern and there was public pressure that youth be incarcerated in a manner similar to adults. Juvenile courts began building bigger detention centers and incarcerating more youth. Laws were enacted to establish mandatory sentencing and to remand older juveniles to adult courts and to send them to adult prisons. In response to this trend, the Casey Foundation stepped forward and said, "We don't need

to be locking all of these kids up. There are different and more effective ways to address juvenile crime."

It was not a popular stance at that time, yet in the 22 years since JDAI was introduced, the communities that use their model have shown a significant decrease in the number of juvenile crimes that were committed, a decrease in the number of youth being incarcerated, and a decrease in the number of days incarcerated kids spend in detention.

JDAI has over 20 years of positive outcomes. The jurisdictions that practice JDAI principles have experienced no increase in juvenile crimes. In fact, juvenile crime rates have decreased in most of the sites. In spite of this fact, JDAI is not promoted as a crime reduction strategy. Rather JDAI is a way people who work in Juvenile Justice do their jobs differently, with the focus being on responding to juvenile offenders in more effective ways.

Currently JDAI has been adopted by over 140 juvenile courts in 36 states. Since 2002, JDAI has been adopted in nine Washington counties: King, Pierce, Spokane, Whatcom, Benton-Franklin, Mason, Skagit and Adams.

### Structure

There are eight core principles involved in JDAI. Juvenile courts that agree to participate in the initiative must agree to utilize all eight of the principles. It can't be done piecemeal. JDAI believes that fidelity to its model is essential



Pat Escamilla, Clark County Juvenile Court Administrator, with Rand Young.

success. The core principles are:

**1. Collaboration and Leadership** –

The juvenile court administrator collaborates with other community stakeholders, such as schools, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, police chief and sheriff to engage in joint planning and policy-making. This group becomes the Steering Committee that appoints a work group for each of the following strategies.

**2. Data Driven Decision Making** –

A work group evaluates the past and current daily detention population to assess the number of admissions, length of stay, gender, race, ethnicity, whether youth were detained for PVs, new charges, felonies vs. misdemeanors, warrants, etc.

**3. Detention Admission Policy** –

Another work group will look at the current risk assessment which determines who is held in detention based on safety risks, flight risks, etc. The goal of JDAI is to stop detaining youth who do not need to be held. A step toward achieving this goal is to develop a standardized decision-making process to ensure equity and appropriateness for determining which youth are held.

**4. Alternatives to Detention** – A

work group will be responsible to coordinate the development of alternatives for holding youth accountable without the use of detention, including day reporting, weekend reporting, community service, and electronic monitoring. One important goal is minimizing disruptions to the youth's connections in the community, such as school, treatment, and pro-social activities. These "protective factors" increase the likelihood that a youth will not commit new crimes.

**5. Expedite Case Processing** –

Decreasing the amount of time between the commission of the offense and addressing the offense, increases for the youth the connection between their actions and its consequences. This is an important factor in changing behaviors. It is also important to decrease the length of time youth spend in detention waiting for a decision to be made about their case. Research has shown that time in detention does not change a youth's behaviors, and in fact is harmful to their future success in becoming healthy, safe citizens. More detention time does not result in better outcomes.

**6. Warrants & Probation**

**Violations** – We want to implement practices that greatly reduce the number of youth who fail to show up for their court appearance and develop a broader range of responses for youth who violate their probation conditions. Research has shown that, on average, 80% of the youth in detention are there for failing to appear in court or for probation violations of misdemeanors. We believe that the

community is better served when detention is reserved for those youth who commit serious crimes or in some other way present a risk to the community or themselves.

**7. Reduce Racial Disparities** –

Even though Clark County's data shows its juvenile court does a good job of treating youth of color equally compared to many other communities, the data also shows that in Clark County youth of color spend more time in detention on average than their Caucasian counterparts. We need to analyze the data on youth in detention to determine why this disparity exists and make sure we have interventions in place to respond with equity for all youth.

**8. Conditions of Confinement** -

We want to make sure the youth are better when they come out of detention than they were when they went in. JDAI has over 300 Best Practice standards to ensure that when youth do spend time in detention, that time is spent in meaningful ways. JDAI institutes a review process that includes a self-inspection every 2 years, and a plan of action is developed based on the results of the review.

**Data from Spokane County**

Rand shared some of the data collected in 2010 by Spokane County Court related to crime rates and use of detention to illustrate the kinds of changes that take place when JDAI is implemented. For Spokane County, following JDAI implementation there was a:

- 57% decrease in the Average Daily Population (ADP) in detention.
- 52% decrease in the number of youth of color

- 57% decrease in felony petitions filed against juveniles

Rand couldn't claim that the decrease in detention time directly led to the decrease in crime, but this data, and data from other sites across the nation, does show that crime does not increase when JDAI principles are implemented.

### Addressing Other Concerns

Rand acknowledged that change isn't easy. There are traditional ways of doing things that seem to make sense, but when the data is collected and evaluated, we find that our usual ways of conducting business are not as effective as we may have thought.

Pat Escamilla evaluated our detention records and found that, consistent with data from across the nation, over 80% of the kids in Clark County's juvenile detention facility were there for probation violations or misdemeanors. Less than 20% were detained for felonies.

Detention is an appropriate intervention for offenders who commit serious crimes or who present a risk to the community or themselves. However, we can, and need to, implement more appropriate and effective alternatives for the youth who commit less serious offenses, and for the many youth who are failing to follow their probation conditions in ways that do not represent a risk to the community.

Some parents voice concern that their kids are not being held accountable if they are not being held in detention. However, significant research clearly shows the harmful effects of putting kids in detention. The studies have consistently shown that detention doesn't work as a deterrent to youth committing more crimes.

Time in detention simply doesn't

change a youth's behavior in most cases. They usually return to the same behavior they exhibited before being detained within a few days of their release. The more frequently they're put in detention, the shorter time their "honeymoon" period lasts.

Putting kids in detention disrupts their positive connections to the community, interfering with pro-social activities in which they're already involved: school, after school activities such as sports and employment. The importance of these activities is that each positive community connection decreases the youth's likelihood of becoming involved in criminal behavior. For youth who lack these protective connections in their lives, the most effective deterrent to future crime is to help them build those connections into their lives. Having youth positively connected to the community makes the community a safer place for everyone.

To meaningfully hold youth accountable for their behavior, alternatives to detention can include:

- Restorative Community Service
- competency or treatment programs\*
- house arrest
- weekend programs\*
- electronic monitoring
- telephone monitoring
- community coaches\*
- day/evening reporting\*
- alternative schools\*

*\* focusing on schooling or risk factors (substance abuse, anger management, mental health)*

Each of these alternatives allows the youth to be held accountable while making it possible for the youth to maintain positive community connections.

Rand Young reported that when JDAI was introduced in Spokane County, one unanticipated outcome was parents reporting that they were learning to communicate with their kids differently. They saw a marked improvement in their relationships with their kids.

Another impact of implementing JDAI principles is that detention staff become understandably concerned about how JDAI will impact their jobs. If there are fewer kids in detention, does that translate into a need for fewer Detention Officers? The answer is a yes and no – less staff used in detention, but using some current detention staff out in the community. The goal of Clark County Juvenile Court, in alignment with JDAI's goals, is to focus on using existing staff in more effective and restorative ways. Some of our current detention will be given the opportunity to work in different ways with youth in the community. The intent is not to cut any positions, but rather to use staff in more effective ways. So while there will be fewer staff assigned to work in detention, more staff will be needed to work with youth in the community.

Examples of these new roles for some detention staff could be running some of the alternative programs, such as the evening and weekend reporting, taking a youth to an agency prior to their appointment (such as a drug and alcohol assessment), walking them through the steps they'll be taking, familiarizing them with the place and the process. This reduces the youth's anxiety about the appointment and increases the chances he or she will follow through. Additionally, there will likely be weekend programs utilizing curriculum in which staff lead kids

in pro-social activities in the morning, then take them out on community service projects in the afternoon.

## Summary

This change will affect everyone involved – the youth and their families, the community, probation and detention staff, judges, defense attorneys and prosecutors.

Clark County Juvenile Court is a leader in the state when it comes to developing alternative programs. Our court's Balanced and Restorative Justice philosophy permeates the work we do with kids, crime victims, and with the community. We have a Restorative Community Service program, a Victim Impact Program, Diversion and Community Accountability Board programs that are seen as models that other court's desire to replicate. Yet there are still many opportunities for growth and enhancement of our court's restorative work. JDAI is a tool that will help us implement even more of these practices and programs.

## Welcome Commissioner Dayann Liebman



Commissioner Dayann Liebman enjoys working in Juvenile court.

"I like the kids and I love the staff," she said. We are fortunate to have her expertise. She's been a family law attorney in Clark County for over 30 years.

Dayann got her law degree from the Northwestern School of Law

at Lewis and Clark University in Portland, Oregon, after earning her Bachelor degree in Sociology from Washington State University in Pullman. She chose law because she wanted a career that would sustain her interest in the long term. As a self-described "math nerd," she had planned to handle tax law and business cases. "When you're a brand new associate you're expected to do family law," she explained. "With-in the first six months I decided I liked it. I found I have the patience and the temperament to work with people who were not at their best and who were in crisis."

Though new to both Juvenile Court and criminal law, her experience in working with situations involving minors is an asset to her work with juvenile offenders. She has a good understanding of what kids experience in their homes and in their community.

When told she was selected for the Commissioner position, Dayann asked for a month to transition. She had to wind down her private practice in order to assume her new responsibilities. During that month, she worked full-time on her family law cases and full-time getting up to speed on the judicial tasks she was about to perform. She shadowed judges to observe how they handled the various types of cases, and immersed herself in a crash course on criminal and juvenile law, familiarizing herself with the myriad of laws, documents and terminology that are involved in these cases. She was sworn in on October 27, 2011.

From January 30<sup>th</sup> through February 3<sup>rd</sup> Dayann attended Judicial College, an intensive training in which new judges and commissioners learn about topics such as best practice, interpreting laws, how to work with court

staff, how to handle difficult people in the courtroom, how to maintain order and security, etc.

In addition to hearing juvenile criminal cases, Commissioner Liebman is one of two full-time commissioners who cover the Family Court. She also hears Truancy, Child in Need of Services (CHINS) and Domestic Violence & Protection cases. She's probably the most travelled commissioner in the county, since she hears the Domestic Violence cases in whatever courtroom is vacated by the Superior Court Judge who covers Arraignments on any given day.

She's used to travelling, though, having grown up as a military dependent. Her father was an officer in the Air Force. She attended 10 different schools during her primary and secondary education. She went to kindergarten and first grade in England and graduated from high school in Germany. While it's hard to have to start over in a new place every couple of years, she enjoyed the variety of places and experiences to which she'd been exposed.

Dayann has lived in Vancouver since 1974. She loves the outdoors and said this is a great place to enjoy her favorite pastimes, camping, hiking and kayaking.

Before she started her new position, her dogs, Reese (a Golden Retriever- Australian Shepherd mix) and Wookie (a gigantic Malamute whom she describes as a woolly mammoth) regularly accompanied her to work. "Reese came with his name," she said, "but I named Wookie. His original name was Red, and it just wasn't big enough for him." Since we have a lot of dog lovers in our building, Reese and Wookie might eventually be quite welcome guests here at the Juvenile Justice Center as well.

## 2012 Volunteer Recognition Night

This year's Volunteer Recognition Night featured several of our regular volunteers. The guest speaker, Al Jaffe, coordinates the annual Fishing Derby at Kline Pond.



Al Jaffe, Fishing Derby Coordinator

Al has been involved in the project for over 30 years. All of the organizers are volunteers. There are no paid staff.

The Lions Club used to sponsor the entire program. The state provided funding at one point. When the state funding ended, the organizers didn't want to decrease the size of the event. They are committed to raising the money to keep the event the same size or larger every year. This is the Fishing Derby's second year as a nonprofit program, so donations are now tax deductible.

The project keeps growing every year. This year alone they served over 700 kids, including 200 mentally challenged kids with special needs on April 13<sup>th</sup> and over 2300 in the public events on April 14<sup>th</sup>. They had over twice the number of vendors they had in the past. Home Depot attended this year. The Federal Game and Wildlife Department hosted an archery event. Al is going to Washington, D.C. to do a presentation on the Fishing Derby to "the feds" to show them what can be done for kids in the community.

They stock the pond with 1000 fish anywhere from 12 to 21 inches long. They award prizes for the 3 biggest fish caught and a booby prize for the smallest fish. Prizes include trophies,

fishing gear, coupons for free pizzas and toys. They raffled off bicycles every hour. Al shared a story about a boy in a wheelchair who won a bicycle. He asked the family if they wanted to choose a different prize. They said no. Their son was involved in a program through Legacy Hospital. They said they'd have someone from the program fit the bicycle to their son and teach him how to ride it.

Clark County Juvenile Justice Center sends kids to help with the project every year. There are many things they can do, from face painting to helping the little kids with their fishing poles.

For more information about the Kline Pond Fishing event, log onto: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/kids/kline.html>

Donna Boyer introduced JoAnn Aberle and Bob Marble, who have volunteered for the Community Accountability Board, contributing a combined total of more than fifty years to the juvenile court.

There were representatives from two of the gardening projects. Jodee Nickel is in charge of the 4H RCS Food Bank Garden at the Heritage Farm in Hazel Dell.



Jodee Nickel with Kevin Memsic, JJC Special Programs Manager

Kathy Placek, Elisa Wells and Caroline Reiswig represented the Camas Roots Garden.



Kathy Placek, Elisa Wells, Caroline Reiswig from Camas Roots Garden

Both gardens raise produce for local food banks. The organizers educate the kids on healthy gardening practices as well as on the importance of providing food for those in need. With the economy the way it is right now, more kids understand the need for help with basic necessities like food.

The Clark County Juvenile Justice Center is very grateful to all of our generous volunteers. We could not do the work we do without each and every one of you. The community is an important part of Balanced and Restorative Justice, and our volunteers play a vital role in helping our young people find a valued place in their community.

## Second Annual Digital Storytelling Showcase

In recent years April 20<sup>th</sup> has been known among drug users as a date to celebrate illegal drug use. For the second year in a row, the Clark County Juvenile Court and Juvenile Recovery Court, STASHA's Peer Education program, and Clark County Youth House have worked together to provide an alternative message to commemorate this date. The Digital Storytelling Showcase is a public presentation of videos to make April 20<sup>th</sup> a day to celebrate sobriety and success in the lives of youth who have set different goals for themselves.

This year the event took place at Clark College in the Foster Auditorium. Sixteen youth showed their videos and spoke publicly about their life experiences. Their videos are both emotionally powerful and highly artistic creations.

This year's Digital Storytelling presenters were Anna Lookingbill, the Education Coordinator from Juvenile Recovery Court, and Tiffany Schwieterman, the new prevention specialist at STASHA, (Strong Teens Against Substance Hazards and Abuse). They both did excellent work guiding the kids in their story-telling.

See photos of the participating artists on page 8.

## Aggression Replacement Training for Parents



The Parent ART class is starting its fourth year. Michelle Karnath, a Family Specialist in the Connections unit, took the initiative to start the class and she's been the lead teacher ever since. Two other Family Specialists, Pat Lindemaier and Carol Murch, assist her.

Originally the Family Specialists took the ART training so they could tell the parents more about what their kids were learning in the youth ART class. Offering the class to the parents themselves has proven to be far more effective in helping them understand what their kids are doing so they can reinforce the skills at home. After the first parent class, Jackie Hull, the lead teacher for the youth's class, noticed that the youth whose parents took the adult class did better in ART. This is one area in which parent involvement goes a long way to enhance the kids' success.

Michelle said the class has not only been a source of education for the parents. It's also a safe environment where parents can share their struggles with others who are having similar experiences. The group members form a strong bond as they do through the class together.

"Parenting teens is tough sometimes," Michelle acknow-

ledged. It's nice for parents to be able to share their frustrations and give and receive support in the process.

Part of the ART curriculum is a list of social (communication) skills that help people express their anger and other feelings appropriately. Sometimes the parents learn the same skills the kids learn in their class, while other times they learn complementary skills. For example, when the kids are learning the skill, "Making a Complaint" the parents learn "Answering a Complaint."

"It's actually been fun teaching the class," Michelle said. "It's rewarding to see a shift in parents when initially they don't really buy into it and then suddenly it starts working. When they get halfway through the class and they say, 'I don't have anything to role play.' that's when I know it's working. It's empowering for the parents."

"Things don't change overnight," Michelle warned. Sometimes the kids' behavior gets worse before it gets better, as the kids push harder to find where the parents' new limits are. We try to prepare parents for that and encourage them to stick to it.

While the kids attend ART three days or nights a week (Tuesday through Thursday) the parents only attend two nights (Tuesday and Wednesday).

Michelle wants people to know that it's not a judgment on the kids or the parents to be asked to take the ART class. We're not saying, "You're a bad kid or a bad parent. We can spend a lot of time beating ourselves up. It's the 'coulda, shoulda, woulda' syndrome."

"The reality is everybody gets mad," she said. None of us is perfect. We can all benefit from

learning new skills to handle how we respond to anger. "Things will always be better if we can stay in control of ourselves," Michelle explained. That's what ART is all about.

While Pat and Carol's kids are grown and on their own, Michelle still has kids at home. So she has an abundance of fresh material to share in class. The funniest stories she shares are the ones in which her daughter, Natalie, tells her when they have disagreements, "And you're an ART teacher?"

We all have a lot of fun in class. Michelle has noticed that even when the kids don't complete ART, some of the parents keep attending. That says a lot for the class.

## Deja Hubbard's Farewell



Deja Hubbard worked in the Connections unit for over ten years. She was a Detention Officer for a year and a half before that. She left the department in March to pursue a job as a flight attendant with Alaska Airlines. Obviously this is quite a contrast to her work in Juvenile Court, but with the experience she's gained here, we know she'll easily be able to handle any unruly passengers that dare to disrupt her flights!

Deja started in Connections in 2001 as a Probation Associate. A year into the program Kay Vail, transferred to Consolidated Juvenile Services (CJS) and Deja

was promoted to take her place. Ruhi Tufts became the new Probation Associate for the team.

Carol Murch remains as the original Family Specialist. Barbara Jewell, who passed away in 2005, was the team's original Care Coordinator. The remaining Care Coordinators filled in until Alan del Mundo was hired later that year.

After the birth of her twin daughters in 2005, Deja reduced her hours to half time and D'Alene White was hired to job share with her. Two years later, she added another daughter to her family.

The team has undergone many other changes over the years.

Nicole Steinman was the Probation Associate for five years, after Ruhi Tufts was promoted to a Probation Counselor position in CJS. Alan del Mundo was the Care Coordinator until 2009 when the team was transformed into Enhanced Services when we lost the Care Coordinator position due to budget cuts. The team no longer does wrap-around meetings, but still works with kids who require extra support and services. D'Alene now works full-time.

Deja was very skilled at working with the youth. She has a phenomenal memory for numbers, and could recall the phone numbers, community service hours and discharge dates of most of the kids on her caseload. She could handle the most sensitive and difficult topics with a calm, matter-of-fact demeanor. Very little shocked her, or if it did she didn't show it. She was a very caring and supportive colleague. She knew the names of all the spouses and children of everyone in the department, and remembered birthdays, anniversaries and other special events.

Though we all miss Deja very much, we're happy she found a job that will fulfill her love of travel

and utilize her outstanding people skills. We wish her luck, and look forward to her future visits to JJC.

### **Paul Coiteux, Lead Worker in Detention**



Paul Coiteux, Lead Worker in detention

Paul Coiteux became a Lead Worker in detention for Swing Shift in October 2011. He's worked for Clark County Juvenile Justice Center for 26 years as a full-time Detention Officer, and as an on-call worker for a year before that.

Paul sees his position as a Lead Worker as one in which he has to set an example for others. People come to him for answers, and he has to make sure the information he gives them is accurate or it comes back to bite him. Fortunately he's been here a long time, so he has a lot of experience upon which to draw. He has to make decisions at intake about whether kids will be held or sent home. He has to make decisions about how to handle emergencies, like whether a youth will be placed on suicide watch, if an out of control youth should be put in the restraint chair, or if a youth who's high on drugs needs to be taken to the Emergency Room. If a youth doesn't have legal citizenship status, he has to call Immigration.

Paul also credits the new building with making detention a mellower place. There are fewer fights. They're able to focus more on rules and hygiene now that they don't

have to deal with as many crises.

"Structure is important," Paul said. "We need to show the kids that there are consequences for their actions and it's important for them to own up to their mistakes... The kids value discipline as long as it's fair."

There's a lot more focus on mental health than there was in the past. The kids we used to call "incorrigible" we now know have mental health disorders. We see a lot more kids on medication than we used to see.

We have a good staff here, he said. They're caring and empathetic.

In his off hours Paul is a baseball umpire and a football ref. He coached one of his sons through baseball and another son through soccer. His sons are all grown now. One is a baseball/football coach at Mt. View High School. Another son is a nurse at Southwest Washington Medical Center. His third son works in construction.

For fun, Paul likes to work out. He likes to take trips to Mexico and other countries. He enjoys camping and hunting, though he doesn't get to do either of those activities as often as he would like.

### **Helpful Websites: Posit Science Brain Fitness News**



Posit Science offers a free online newsletter. Their April 2012 issue offered two articles on teen brains, one on teen depression and another on why teens think the way they do.

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The article on teen depression describes how early onset depression differs from adult onset depression, and how a new blood test to diagnose depression will hopefully decrease the stigma that a lot of people attach to mental illness.

The article on how teens' brains work helps to demystify a number of typical adolescent behaviors, such as why adolescents are so emotional, why they engage in such risky behaviors, and how parents can respond to the extreme changes

their teenagers undergo.

Both articles are informative and helpful in understanding how our young people differ from adults.

To read the articles, log onto:  
<http://view.et.positscience.com/?j=fe5b17717d630d7e7014&m=fecc167077670774&ls=fd01272726c077970177777&l=fe8f1579>

## 2012 Digital Storytelling Showcase Artists



First row, left to right: Alexandria, Tristan, Flynn, Natosha  
Second row, left to right: Diamond, Cara, Amber, Joshua  
Third row, left to right: Ashley, Hayden, Riley, Samantha  
Fourth row, left to right: Jessica, Kassie, Angalina, Jennifer