

STAR White Paper 2016

Diversion Programs and Supervision Strategies for Youth and Young Adults

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Cite as: St. Louis Alliance for Reentry (STAR). 2016. *White Paper: Diversion Programs and Supervision Strategies for Youth and Young Adults*.

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Diversion Programs and Supervision Strategies for Youth and Young Adults

Our previous paper provided an overview of youth and young adults involved in criminal activity, with emphasis on identifying common demographic and risk factors for ages 16 to 24. Incarceration and arrest information highlighted the challenge in effectively supervising clients falling within this age range. Within Juvenile Court, Adult Supervision, schools, and the community, alternative diversion and supervision methods are used to address client needs, promote public safety, and ensure that the client becomes and stays a positive member of the community. As diversion programs and supervision strategies are methods in achieving this goal, this paper highlights some of the programs and strategies utilized within the St. Louis area for both youth and young adults.

Youth Programs and Strategies

A variety of programs and strategies are available specifically for youth within the St. Louis area. The focus of these is either preventative, before youth enter the criminal justice system to avoid potential future encounters, or for restorative purposes, after being introduced to the system to set the individual on a more positive track.

- **Juvenile Drug Court (JDC)**

- Created under the direction of the Drug Court, this is a voluntary diversion program to assist youth (ages 12 to 16 years and 5 months) from stopping the use of drugs. The participants have previously been charged with a non-violent delinquency offense, have an alcohol or other drug abuse problem, and want help.
- The program teaches youth better ways to cope with the struggles and fears in their everyday lives through regular court appearances, drug testing, group and individual counseling, attendance at self-help meetings (i.e. Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous or Marijuana Anonymous), and requiring regular school attendance.
- A participant successfully graduating from the program has his or her law violation discharged. A participant who fails to comply with the program requirements faces sanctions, or his or her termination, including a probation violation filed with the court.^{1,2}
- Below is success and recidivism rates for all youth who participated in the program:³

Year	Graduated	Recidivated within 1 year
2010	36%	20%
2011	43%	17%
2012	13%	38%
2013	46%	15%
2014	16%	16%

¹ Laurretta Coleman, e-mail message to author, April 21, 2016.

² Dimitri Gay, “St. Louis City Juvenile Drug Court Handbook” (St. Louis City Juvenile Drug Court, 2006).

³ Ken Mayo, Grants, Research, and Special Programs Family Court-Juvenile Division of Missouri Courts, May 17, 2016.

- **Alternative School Interventions**

- Unlike typical school interventions that rely primarily on school and state officials, restorative solutions focus on the inclusion of all involved parties to find “solutions that promote repair, reconciliation and the rebuilding of relationships.”⁴ The goal is to create a climate that promotes healthy relationships, community building, and the development of social-emotional understanding and skills.
- Restorative Justice Circles inside of the classroom include problem solving, community building, fostering student-teacher relationships, and allowing for fair, respectful dialogue to establish classroom values.
- Restorative Justice Circles outside of the classroom may include conferences with administrators, peer juries, or more intense interventions like suspensions or expulsions.⁵
- Limited data on Restorative Justice programs in St. Louis is available; however, for the City of St. Louis, suspension severity has decreased by 27% in schools using Restorative Justice Circles and restorative discipline.⁶
- Similar to the school intervention program in St. Louis, a school based intervention program found in the Los Angeles Unified School District has promising results as shown in the decrease in the number of student suspensions and expulsions:
 - The number of student days lost to suspension decreased by **92%** from **74,765** days in the 2007-2008 school year to **6,221** in the 2014-2015 school year.
 - The number of expulsions decreased by almost **50%** from **141** in the 2011-2012 school year to **77** in the 2014-2015 school year.⁷

⁴ Center for Restorative Justice, 2011.

⁵ T. Bruntmyer, “Integrating Restorative Practices in a SW-PBS System: Can we reduce the need for suspension?” Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support, last modified 2014, <http://pbissmissouri.org>.

⁶ Mara Schiff, “Restorative Practices: Applying Restorative Justice Practices in the Juvenile Justice and Education Systems” (presentation, Technical Assistance Partnership Webinar, April 10, 2013). http://www.tapartnership.org/events/webinars/webinarArchives/presentationSlides/20130410_RestorativePracticesPT_QC_SL.pdf.

⁷ “Restorative Justice,” *Center for Conflict Resolution*, accessed May 24, 2016, <http://ccrkc.org/restorative-justice/>.

Example School-Based Restorative Justice Model:⁸				
	Structure	Application	Duration	Outcomes
Peer Mediation	Small, informal group of affected parties with trained facilitator	Healing discipline	Minimal	Informal resolution
Peer/ Accountability Boards	Trained facilitator with 5-6 board members and wrongdoer/ referred party	Consensual approval of case plan	Moderate	Signed agreement by all participants
Conferencing	Trained facilitator with 5-10 affected parties	Healing dialogue and consensual approval of case plan	Moderate	Signed agreement by all participants
Circles	Trained facilitator with more than 10 affected parties and community members	Healing dialogue	Minimal to significant	Verbal agreement by all participants

- **Innovative Career Academy (ICA)**

- The St. Louis Public Schools, MERS Goodwill, and the St. Louis City Family Court – Juvenile Division work in collaboration to serve at-risk youth between the ages of 10 to 18 in a manner that recognizes and responds to risk factors in the community that may otherwise negatively impact youths’ lives.⁹
- The ICA is the first community partnership school in the country to be overseen by a judge and is designed as a one-stop service center through three student tiers:
 - St. Louis Public School youth who have been suspended
 - MERS students attempting to get their GED and a job
 - Division of Youth Services youth expelled under the Safe Schools Act
- The school attempts to educate the students on life skills and making better decisions. Days at ICA are deliberately long, from 9 a.m. until at least 6:30 p.m., as most offenses in St. Louis City occur between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- 75-80% of students enrolled in the program report better grades and behavior. Additionally, the ICA has been recognized as an award winning school and in total, over 45 community agencies have partnered with the ICA.¹⁰

⁸ See note 5 above.

⁹ Innovative Concept Academy, retrieved June 14, 2016, <http://www.innovativeconceptacademy.com/mission>.

¹⁰ Jeannette Cooperman, “Tough Kids Turning,” *St. Louis Magazine*, August 3, 2010, <https://www.stlmag.com/Innovative-Concept-Video-Documentary/>.

St. Louis Area Police Initiatives

Both the St. Louis City and County Police Departments have implemented initiatives in the hopes of having a positive impact on the relationship between law enforcement and young residents, as well as reduce the number of youth in the criminal justice system.

St. Louis City PD initiatives:

- **Gang Resistance Education and Training Program (GREAT)**
 - Used as an early intervention tool aimed at assisting elementary and middle school children, this program focuses on developing more positive relationships between youth and law enforcement through school-based education. Also, the program seeks to deter youth from gang activity.^{11,12}
- **Students Talk it Over with Police (STOP)**
 - Implemented in St. Louis after first being executed in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, this program seeks to decrease the risks of “initial volatile interactions” between youth and police officers.^{13,14}
 - Students who participate are given a pre- and post-test to gauge differences in opinions of police officers and also to measure feelings of safety in the company of police officers.¹⁵ As this is a new initiative, the data is still being collected.

St. Louis County PD initiatives:

- **Community Mental Health Liaison (CMHL)**
 - Clients are referred to CMHLs by law enforcement and the courts to support these individuals by connecting them to community resources and facilitating treatment as needed for up to 30 days.¹⁶ Since the program’s inception over 17,000 referrals have been made to across Missouri.¹⁷
- **Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)**
 - Trained officers in this program aim to divert youth and young adults away from entering the criminal justice system.
 - The officers deliver “positive law enforcement crisis intervention service to people with mental illness in the St. Louis area”¹⁸ through collaboration with the area’s mental health services.¹⁹

¹¹ G.R.E.A.T. Gang Resistance Education and Training, retrieved April 21, 2016, <http://www.slmpd.org/great.shtml>.

¹² Lt. P. Johnson, personal communication, April 21, 2016.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ 2015 S.T.O.P. Awards, retrieved April 21, 2016, <http://www.stopawards.com>.

¹⁵ See note 12 above.

¹⁶ Community Mental Health Liaisons, retrieved April 21, 2016, <http://www.mocoalition.org/#!/community-mental-health-liasion/cvzg>.

¹⁷ C. Patterson, personal communication, April 21, 2016.

¹⁸ St. Louis Area Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), retrieved April 15, 2016, <http://stlouisco.com/LawandPublicSafety/CrisisInterventionTeam>.

¹⁹ J. Romo, personal communication, April 21, 2016.

Young Adult Programs and Strategies

There are a number of strategies and programs available in the St. Louis area for adults. While many of these are not exclusive to young adults, young adults are often referred to these programs based upon the assessment of each individual’s risk factors and needs.

- **Pathway to Change**

- This management approach is utilized by the Missouri Department of Corrections and is offered at every field supervision district within the St. Louis area. Any individual under the supervision of Probation and Parole is able to partake. The curriculum focuses on building cognitive skills by addressing issues related to criminal behavior and recidivism.
- Recidivism rate after 2 years for clients for those who successfully completed Pathway to Change compared to those clients who were terminated for non-attendance or did not complete the program for other reasons.²⁰

Completion of Program	Non-Completion of Program
15.8%	29.8%

- **Day Report Programs**

- This supervision enhancement program is designed to address the needs of those who have demonstrated an inability to successfully function with less supervision and is in need of additional structure.
- A specific personalized plan is developed for each individual addressing his or her unique needs. This includes daily contact provided through a “clearinghouse” or “service center” for a variety of services and referrals to community resources. Probation and Parole currently offers this program at two locations in the St. Louis area.
- Recidivism rate after 2 years for clients for clients who completed the program compared to those who were terminated or failed to complete program requirements:²¹

Completion of Program	Non-Completion of Program
11.5%	37.3%

- **Community Partnership for Restoration (CPR) and Gang CPR**

- CPR is an intensive substance abuse treatment-based supervision strategy that provides treatment and community reentry-based services for clients who are actively abusing drugs and/or alcohol.
- CPR also has a specialized track for St. Louis City gang members called Gang CPR, devised through the collaborative efforts of the St. Louis City Circuit Attorney’s Office and Police Department, and the Missouri Board of Probation and Parole.
 - Participants are documented gang members or gang associates with prevailing issues such as ongoing criminal activity, antisocial thinking and values, weak family/supportive significant other ties, educational/vocational deficits, and substance abuse.

²⁰ “Eastern Region Community Corrections Intervention Report,” Missouri Board of Probation and Parole, March 2015.

²¹ Ibid.

- Recidivism rates after 2 years for CPR or Gang CPR clients for those who successfully completed the program compared to those clients who were terminated or failed to meet program requirements:²²

Completion of Program	Non-Completion of Program
15.6%	53.4%

- **St. Louis County Choices Program**

- This substance abuse recovery program is operated by the St. Louis County Department of Justice Services (DJS). Participants commonly enter this program for probation violations, stealing, and burglary offenses, and are under the age of 25 with 26.3% of the 183 clients in 2014 under this age.
- The program offers a 90-day treatment program housed in St. Louis County Justice Center that incorporates individual and group therapy, psycho-educational groups, 12-step recovery programming, relapse prevention therapy, psychopharmacology, and aftercare services in addition to a variety of other services.²³
- For 2014, out of 196 individuals admitted to the program, 190 successfully completed it. Moreover for that year, the following depicts the success rates for clients who completed the program the previous year:²⁴

Remained on Probation	76.6%
Completed Probation	10.5%
Not Arrested in 1 st Year of Completion	78.4%
Unsuccessful Completion of Probation	12.9%

- **Felony Redirect Program for St. Louis City**

- This post-plea/deferred sentencing diversion program is designed to allow individuals with nonviolent felonies and little or no criminal history to accept responsibility of his or her actions and enter an intensive course of supervision.
- With sentencing deferred for at least one year while enrolled, the participants appear regularly before the Redirect Program Judge and are required to successfully complete all directives set by the Judge and the Probation Officer.
- Since coming into effect in July 2015, the initial results have been promising as only one participant has been terminated from the program.²⁵

- **SAIL (Sentencing Alternatives Improving Lives) Program**

- Designed as an alternative to prison, this court-supervised, therapeutic justice program began in March 2015 by assisting participants with developing the necessary skills to live crime and drug free lives.
- Three phases comprise this program:
 - 1. Assessment & Intensive Supervision** – Participants identify problems and set personal goals.

²² Ibid.

²³ “An Evaluation of the 16th Year of Choices, a Substance Abuse Recovery Program operated by the St. Louis County Department of Justice Services,” St. Louis County Department of Justice Services, August 2014, 13,18.

²⁴ Ibid., 36.

²⁵ Todd Schwent, District Administrator Missouri Board of Probation and Parole, personal communication 4/18/16.

2. Primary Treatment/Learning Stability – Participants continue to secure resources for necessary growth by developing support to include family, friends, and community members.

3. Healthy Life Maintenance & Beginning Transition to Community – Participants develop post-graduation plans including a support plan and a school/work plan. Additionally, they must demonstrate six months of sobriety and produce a final reflection essay.²⁶

- As this is a new program, it is just now seeing results from its first year from the eight participants initially selected:
 - Two participants dropped out by terminating themselves and were sent to prison.
 - Two are still working through the program.
 - Four participants successfully graduated as of March 24, 2016, having their guilty pleas withdrawn and drug charges dismissed. Each participant told the judge they were now working or in school, bettering relationships with their families, and had completed treatment programs to maintain their sobriety.
- Currently there are five new participants beginning the 12 to 18 month program.²⁷

Conclusion

Since no diversion program or supervision strategy can successfully change all youth and young adults, the programs and strategies must be diversified to suit each client's needs. As exhibited above, the initiatives are executed in a variety of ways including court-based, school-based, and law enforcement-based implementations. With the goal of these implementations to reduce recidivism and divert youth and young adults away from future involvement in criminal activity, there continues to be a need to find the best ways to help these individuals succeed. Regarding this issue, the next white paper will identify the best practices currently used across the nation when working with criminally involved youth and young adults.

²⁶ "SAIL (Sentencing Alternatives Improving Lives) Program Participant Handbook," (Sentencing Alternatives Improving Lives, March 2015).

²⁷ Robert Patrick, "New program in federal court here helps defendants avoid prison," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, last modified March 24, 2016, http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/new-program-in-federal-court-here-helps-defendants-avoid-prison/article_df453143-ff85-5101-89a9-3068694902fa.html.

RESOURCES

Juvenile Drug Court (JDC), (314) 552-2000

A voluntary diversion program for youth who have been charged with a non-violent delinquency offense, and who have an alcohol or other drug abuse problem. The program is a commitment of a minimum of eight months and hopes to create positive changes in participants' lives by having them to become clean and sober. It also teaches youth better ways to cope with the trials and tribulations in their everyday lives. By successfully graduating from the program, the law violation is discharged.

<http://www.stlcircuitcourt.com/DrugCourt/Juvenile%20Handbook.pdf>

Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (MO SW-PBS), Moswpbs@missouri.edu

The program aims to create safe and structured environments to better students' abilities to learn in school using research-based practices. This structure teaches appropriate behavior using a three-tiered model to provide the proper level of support depending on the student's needs.

pbissmissouri.org

Innovative Career Academy (ICA), (314) 552-2000

St. Louis Circuit Court Judge Jimmie Edwards created this program in 2009 for youth he saw in his courtroom that were struggling on their own. This is the only school in the United States overseen by a court system focusing on youth education and rehabilitation. The curriculum includes math, science, English, and history, and additionally seeks to challenge these youths' minds so they can develop useful and efficient skills.

<http://www.innovativeconceptacademy.com/home>

Gang Resistance Education and Training Program (GREAT), (314) 444-5968

Established in 2006 by a partnership between the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department and Area Resources for Community and Human Services (ARCHS), this program has worked to prevent violence and gang membership to over 2000 youth at the elementary and middle school levels. Currently nine police officers run the program through classroom visits and instruction.

<http://www.slmpd.org/great.shtml>

Students Talk it Over with Police (STOP)

Implemented in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 2010, the program focuses on promoting a positive relationship between youth ages 12-17 and the police. Between both parties, the program seeks to decrease the number of chances for volatile encounters and to create a viable, positive relationship. In 2015 the St. Louis program began operating a 6-week education curriculum in seven schools with three of those schools having a second round of education.

<http://www.stopawards.com>

The Community Mental Health Liaison (CMHL), (573) 634-4626

As part of the Strengthening Mental Health Initiative in 2013, CMHL was put into place to form better partnerships between Community Mental Health Centers, law enforcement, and the courts. The partnership works to have individuals with behavior or health issues gain better access to behavioral health treatment and avoid needless jail, prison, or hospital time. Now, statewide in Missouri there are 31 CMHLs.

<http://www.mocoalition.org/#!/community-mental-health-liasion/cvzg>

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), (314) 615-7117

The goal is for law enforcement to provide positive crisis intervention to individuals with mental illnesses and/or substance abuse issues. By having law enforcement trained in areas like proper communication, counseling, and empathizing with individuals, they are able to handle these situations and assist without further escalation.

<http://stlouisco.com/LawandPublicSafety/CrisisInterventionTeam>

Pathway to Change, (573) 751-8488

The Missouri Department of Corrections uses this form of offender management to build cognitive skills in individuals in order to address recidivism and criminal behaviors. The twelve-week program focuses on issues like decision making, values and attitude, relationships, and thinking errors.

<http://doc.mo.gov/Documents/prob/SupervisionStrategies.pdf>

Day Report, (573) 751-8488

Missouri Probation and Parole utilizes this program for individuals with one year of supervision left and who have been unsuccessful with lower levels of supervision. It offers more structure and control over individuals who have two or more special needs on the needs scale, which are not included in the substance abuse category.

<http://doc.mo.gov/Documents/prob/SupervisionStrategies.pdf>

Community Partnership for Restoration (CPR) and Gang CPR, (314) 877-1000

For CPR, Missouri Probation and Parole uses this program as a resource for parolees living in St. Louis City and for probationers sentenced in St. Louis City. The intensive supervision provided in this program offers substance abuse treatment and reparation boards, in addition to other services. For Gang CPR, Missouri Probation monitors documented male gang members closely in this intensive supervision program. The same services CPR offers are offered in Gang CPR, in addition to life skills.

<http://doc.mo.gov/Documents/prob/ResourceGuide/EC.pdf>

St. Louis County Choices Program, (314) 615-5245

The St. Louis County Department of Justice Services offers this 90-day substance abuse program at the Justice Center to individuals sentenced by the St. Louis County Judicial Court. While in the program, individuals learn about addiction and its affects through classes and lectures, group sessions, and individual counseling. The program addresses main areas of concern through five phases: criminality, substance abuse, anger management, life management, and relapse prevention.

<http://www.stlouisco.com/YourGovernment/CountyDepartments/JusticeServices/InmatePrograms>

Felony Redirect, (314) 622-4941

The program is offers services including behavior modification, education, job skills training and employment, and community service to redirect the participant into a more positive and productive lifestyle. Individuals are referred by defense attorneys, assistant circuit attorneys, and judges. Upon successful completion of all terms of the contract, the participant's plea of guilty is withdrawn and the Circuit Attorney's Office dismisses the charges.

<http://www.circuitattorney.org/Felony%20Redirect%20Program.aspx>

SAIL (Sentencing Alternatives Improving Lives)

This program is run by the U.S. District Court in the pretrial services office in collaboration with law school teams at St. Louis University and Washington University. Participants cannot be accused of violent crimes or sex offenses, and must live close enough to attend meetings once a week. They are subject to random drug urinalysis and home visits, have pretrial service reporting, weekly team meetings, must network and find resources, engage in school and work/employment programs, participate in Moral Recognition Therapy (MRT), and conduct self-assessments.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjiJH62K_tA

http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/new-program-in-federal-court-here-helps-defendants-avoid-prison/article_df453143-ff85-5101-89a9-3068694902fa.html