



# **VENTURA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE MULTI-AGENCY JUVENILE JUSTICE PLAN**

**April 2008**

**Submitted to the California Corrections Standards Authority  
on behalf of the County of Ventura and the  
Ventura County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council**

**Ventura County  
Comprehensive Multi-Agency  
Juvenile Justice Plan**

**Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
April 2008**

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District 4**

**Steve Bennett  
District 1**

**Linda Parks  
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**Submitted by**

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**The Honorable Donald Coleman  
Presiding Judge, Juvenile Court**

**On behalf of the  
County of Ventura  
and the  
Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council**

**Updated by  
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**April 2008**

**COMPREHENSIVE MULTI-AGENCY  
JUVENILE JUSTICE PLAN – 2008 UDATE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Ventura County is continually engaged in maintaining and augmenting its juvenile justice system. The Ventura County Probation Agency (Probation Agency) continues to provide and collaborate in a broad range of interventions, including a rich array of prevention and diversion efforts; community based supervision; in-custody programs; wraparound, placement and aftercare services among others.

Updating the Juvenile Justice Master Plan has revealed that the evidence based programs currently funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) are valuable and vitally important in the County's juvenile justice continuum. None is being proposed for elimination. In fact, quite the opposite is the case; those programs are so effective that there is widespread support for expanding and/or replicating them in additional areas of the County if and when funding can be identified to do so.

Context for Juvenile Justice Planning: Data indicates that the number of juvenile arrests has decreased since the initial Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan (CMJJP) in 2000 and that between 75% and 80% of youth who come to the attention of law enforcement are diverted, either by the arresting agency or through the Probation Agency's Early Intervention program. Cases not diverted are referred to the District Attorney for filing. A one-day snapshot of juveniles in the justice system on August 1, 2007, indicated there were 1,127 juveniles on informal probation, 2,009 on court-ordered probation supervision, 36 juveniles in placement and 197 in the Juvenile Facilities (JF). Further, since its first CMJJP in 2001, Ventura County has significantly *decreased* the number of youth in out-of-home placement and has *increased* the number of in-county, as compared to out-of-county, placements.

On September 1, 2007, when the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) "realigned" young offenders committed for non-WIC Section 707(b) offenses to the counties, there were 32 non-707(b) Ventura County youth in DJJ institutions and 18 on DJJ parole. These young offenders became the responsibility of the Probation Agency, rather than of DJJ, and future non-707(b) offenders, except specified sex offenders, will be ineligible for commitment to the state and will remain in Ventura County for housing, supervision and treatment.

Identified Gaps and Programs Needing Expansion: Gaps and programs requiring expansion were identified in specific parts of the juvenile justice continuum and across the entire continuum. The programs and services in need of expansion, replication, and/or creation are described in the Updated Plan. The major gaps or service needs identified by County stakeholders include the following:

- Develop additional services, including intensive day treatment and residential treatment facilities, for seriously mentally ill youth, deep end substance abusing youth and deep end dually diagnosed youth.
- Recreate WERC for youth and young adults to enhance the number of work projects and community service projects available, prepare youth to find and keep meaningful employment and increase restitution to victims.
- Increase vocational skill development and job readiness training opportunities for girls and boys in Youth Services, on Field Supervision, in the JF, and on aftercare.
- Develop facilities, supervision services and aftercare for non-707(b) offenders returning from, and those no longer eligible for, state custody.
- Reinstigate the Gang Violence Suppression Program (GVS) countywide and expand other gang intervention and tagging abatement efforts.
- Enhance programming at the JF, especially vocational training, mental health services, substance abuse services, and intensive anti-gang programming.
- Enhance literacy programming with a GED focus and provide additional Reading Specialists throughout the justice system.
- Develop additional placements, particularly those for mentally ill youth, youth with sex abuse issues, girls who are pregnant, and others with special needs.
- Expedite processing of informal cases to ensure consequences occur as soon after the illegal, unacceptable behavior as possible.
- Replicate the Aftercare Day Reporting Center as well as other existing JJCPA programs in additional parts of the County.
- Sustain Drug Court and Adelante! Mental Health Court.

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# **VENTURA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE MULTI-AGENCY JUVENILE JUSTICE PLAN**

## **UPDATE**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Ventura County (County) initiated a review of its Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan (CMJJP) in the summer of 2007 to assess the strength and viability of the existing juvenile justice service continuum and to determine what additions, deletions, and/or changes would enhance its effectiveness. The study reviewed relevant demographics, assessed current capacity, challenged existing programs, considered new demands on the justice system such as the realignment of juvenile offenders from the state to counties, and investigated emerging innovations and best practices.

This update of its CMJJP is consistent with Ventura County's commitment to continually seek effective, collaborative responses to juvenile crime and thereby provide the best possible services to youth, families, and communities throughout the County. Led by the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC), the County revisited and updated its 2001 CMJJP in order to:

- Ensure the effectiveness of existing programs and services,
- Identify additional evidence-based programs and practices with which to augment the existing continuum,
- Pinpoint gaps or deficiencies in the existing continuum, and
- Reevaluate countywide and area-specific needs for service.

Updating the CMJJP was a concerted effort to proactively identify emerging issues and assess existing strengths and needs. It brought concerned public and private constituencies together to improve service delivery and address pending problems. This CMJJP update continues the County's long and impressive history of interagency collaboration and communication focused on keeping the juvenile justice system strength-based, innovative, vital, and responsive to the needs of Ventura County's diverse communities.

Ventura County is a recognized leader in developing and sustaining effective juvenile justice initiatives. The County pioneered what has come to be known as "the Ventura Model for Interagency Children's Mental Health Services," which has been replicated in a number of other jurisdictions as their "Children's System of Care." The Ventura County Probation Agency's (Probation Agency) Juvenile Restitution Project (JRP) was one of the first youth restitution programs in the nation, and its South Oxnard Challenge Project was one of the first field tests of the emerging concepts of "corrections of place,"

which seeks to empower an entire community to participate as true stakeholders in delinquency prevention and correction.<sup>1</sup>

Since submitting its first CMJJP in 2001 to the (then) Board of Corrections, Ventura County has continued to augment, enhance, and improve its juvenile justice system. It addressed its most glaring deficiency, a lack of suitable detention and commitment space, by constructing, staffing and, in 2003, opening the Juvenile Justice Facilities (JF). A state-of-the-art detention and commitment complex with a total capacity of 420 male and female youth, the new JF replaced the dilapidated and inadequate 84-bed Clifton Tatum Center (CTC).

Not only does the JF provide much needed detention and commitment housing, it also has enabled the provision of innovative in-facility and aftercare programs, such as a Targeted Reentry Program based on Dr. Troy Armstrong's research (for which the JF is the first California site). The JF is also the site of a partnership with The Boys and Girls Club in which they operate a 'clubhouse' / program and activity center in an unused part of commitment housing.

To ensure the most appropriate use of its detention capacity, the Probation Agency has, since 2002, participated in the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI), funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF). Collaborating with the Juvenile Court Judges, local law enforcement, the Public Defender's and District Attorney's offices, and the community, the Probation Agency has safely reduced the population of youth in custody by using risk-based criteria for booking, as well as detention alternatives, including community confinement, home supervision, and electronic monitoring programs.

The Probation Agency continues to provide and collaborate in a broad range of interventions, including prevention and diversion efforts; community-based supervision; in-custody programs; wraparound, placement, and aftercare services. The Probation Agency is continuing programs proven effective by its South Oxnard Challenge Project research, including the Repeat Offender Prevention Program and the Aftercare Day Reporting Program. The Probation Agency is a key partner in the County's Juvenile Drug Court and also sought and was awarded a juvenile Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Grant (MIOCRG) to establish both a Mental Health Court and targeted treatment for juvenile sex offenders.

Since its 2001 CMJJP, the Probation Agency has consolidated a number of field units, formerly scattered throughout the western portion of the County, in a new location (Williams Building) it shares with other County departments. Bringing multiple agencies under one roof has allowed a blending of resources that produces enhanced access to needed services and supports for youth and families. The multi-service Williams Building facilitates service providers' interactions with their clientele as well as with probation staff. The building is centrally located, is served by public transportation, and offers a variety of public and social services for probationers and their families. Additional County services are nearby, within walking distance.

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<sup>1</sup> Ventura County Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan, January 2001, pg. 3

While the Probation Agency and its partners have been creative in developing strategies to strengthen the juvenile justice continuum, new challenges continue to surface. They are now faced with the "realignment" of young offenders (those committed for non-WIC Section 707[b] offenses) from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to the counties. On September 1, 2007, the realignment brought new demands for custody housing, treatment services, and long-term programming to Ventura and all California counties.

The Probation Agency is engaged with its partners in productive strategies for developing appropriate interventions and services for the 45 non-707(b) youth in DJJ custody at the time of the realignment, as well as for future non-707(b) offenders who can no longer be committed to the state (all but sex offenders). These young offenders have extensive treatment and service needs and are generally more sophisticated than comparable youth in local custody. In many if not most cases, those youth returning from DJJ are young adults in their late teens and twenties. Moreover, most of those whom Ventura County has committed to DJJ, but will no longer be able to commit to the state, are offenders who have exhausted and/or failed all local treatment and intervention options.

What is certain is that Ventura County will continue to be proactive, collaborative, innovative, and thoughtful about its juvenile justice system and will continue to operate from a platform of best practices in its service to the community. Updating the CMJJP has revealed that the evidence-based programs currently funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) are valuable and vitally important in the County's juvenile justice continuum. None are being proposed for elimination. In fact, quite the opposite is the case; these programs are so effective that the JJCC wants to expand and/or replicate them in additional areas of the County if and when funding can be identified to do so.

Unlike the initial CMJJP, this updated plan is not focused on using JJCPA funds to develop new programs or new initiatives. Rather than changing how JJCPA dollars are being allocated, this plan will serve as a guide for the County to use in seeking grants and/or other funding opportunities. The updated CMJJP clarifies the appropriateness of current JJCPA-funded and other existing programs and identifies gaps or shortcomings in the service delivery system for which new, additional funding is needed.

The updated CMJJP positions Ventura County to pursue and generate system-wide support for grants, foundation initiatives, research efforts, and/or other funding opportunities that may arise. It is yet another indicator of the County's ongoing pursuit of best practices in service delivery and its commitment to proactive assessment of the needs of youth, families, and communities in all areas of the juvenile justice continuum, from prevention through aftercare, throughout Ventura County.

## II. BACKGROUND AND STATISTICAL BASIS FOR PLANNING

Ventura County is located on California's Pacific coast, and forms the northwestern part of the Greater Los Angeles Area. It is often referred to as the Gold Coast and is ranked as one of the top 100 highest-income counties in the country and as the sixth wealthiest county in California by per capita income.<sup>2</sup> As of the 2000 census, the County had a population of 753,197. According to the State Department of Finance, by July 1, 2005, the population had grown to 814,262, and by July 1, 2006 it was 821,698.<sup>3</sup> By 2020, Ventura is projected to be home to almost 956,400 residents.

The county seat is the city of Ventura (formally known as San Buenaventura) and the county's largest city is Oxnard. The Department of Finance reports the populations of Ventura County's cities as follows in Table 1.

**Table 1: Population of Cities in Ventura County**

<b>City Populations – January 1, 2006</b>			
Oxnard	189,990	Moorpark	35,801
Thousand Oaks	127,644	Santa Paula	29,133
Simi Valley	122,708	Port Hueneme	22,388
Ventura	106,710	Fillmore	15,180
Camarillo	64,034	Ojai	8,156

The State Department of Justice reported the youth population (ages 10 – 17) to be 106,100. Department of Finance data related to the at-risk youth population (children 10 – 14 and youth ages 15 – 19) indicates that these groups constituted approximately 7.7% of the county population in 2000, will shrink to roughly 6% by the year 2020 and will rise again to approximately 6.5% of the county's total population by 2050.

**Table 2: Ventura County General Population and At-Risk Populations -- 2000 - 2050**

<b>GENERAL POPULATION</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
<b>VENTURA General Population</b>	757,172	860,664	924,410	982,794	1,025,709	1,071,905
<b>% Change</b>		0.14	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.05
<b>VENTURA 10-14</b>	60,842	57,348	55,440	62,244	66,794	71,171
<b>% Change</b>		-0.06	-0.03	0.12	0.07	0.07
<b>% of Gen Pop</b>	8.0%	6.7%	6.0%	6.3%	6.5%	6.6%
<b>VENTURA 15-19</b>	55,924	67,713	56,250	58,459	66,367	68,775
<b>% Change</b>		0.21	-0.17	0.04	0.14	0.04
<b>% of Gen Pop</b>	7.4%	7.9%	6.1%	5.9%	6.5%	6.4%

**Juvenile Arrests:** In 2005, the last year for which comprehensive data are available, the Department of Justice reports 6,301 juvenile arrests including those for felonies, misdemeanors, and status offenses. Of this total, DOJ reports 921 felony arrests (778 of them male and 143 of them female), 3,675 misdemeanor arrests (2,795 of them male

<sup>2</sup> Wikipedia, Ventura County

<sup>3</sup> California DOF, California County Profiles, 2007, Table A5

and 880 of them female), and 1,705 arrests for status offenses, not distinguished by gender.<sup>4</sup>

It is noteworthy that there were fewer juvenile arrests of all kinds in 2005 than there had been in 2000 when the initial CMJJP was being developed. There were 140 (13.2%) fewer felony arrests and 327 (8.2%) fewer misdemeanor arrests in 2007 than there had been in 2000. These decreases reflect not only a downward trend in juvenile crime experienced across the country but also Ventura County's use of proven effective programs including its JJCPA programs, its comprehensive continuum of services, and its ongoing evaluation and improvement of its programs and services.

**Juvenile Probation:** As is the case in most years, between 75% and 80% of citations were diverted through the Probation Agency's Early Intervention program. Of the cases referred to the District Attorney for filing, approximately 2,321 received a probation sanction; 1,682 of these were placed on informal probation; and 639 received formal probation. During the course of 2005, there were 896 youth held in JF Detention.

A one-day snapshot of juveniles in the justice system was conducted for this study on August 1, 2007. On that day, there were 1,127 juveniles on informal probation, 2,009 under court-ordered probation supervision, 36 juveniles in out-of-home placement, and 197 in the JF.

Of the juveniles on informal probation, the tables below show that the majority came from Oxnard. The rest were from Simi Valley, Ventura, Santa Paula, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, Camarillo, and Fillmore. Their ages ranged from 9 – 21 years old, with the majority in the 14 – 18 year old age groups.

**Table 3: Informal Probation Population by City – August 1, 2007**

<b>Informal Population by City</b>	
<b>City</b>	<b>Total</b>
Oxnard	341
Simi Valley	143
Ventura	121
Santa Paula	97
Moorpark	72
Thousand Oaks	72
Camarillo	64
Fillmore	57
Other	160
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,127</b>

<sup>4</sup> California Department of Justice Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Tables 3c and 4c, per 2005

**Table 4: Informal Probation Population by Age – August 1, 2007**

<b>Age of Informal Population</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Total</b>
9	1
11	5
12	15
13	67
14	145
15	191
16	233
17	268
18	164
19	19
20	11
21	6
22	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,127</b>

Snapshot data also demonstrate that the Probation Agency had 2,009 juveniles under formal supervision on the day studied. Those youth had been granted probation for offenses related to WIC Sections 602, 654.1, 654.2, DEJ and 725. As illustrated by Tables 4 and 5 below, the majority of those juvenile offenders came from Oxnard, Ventura, Simi Valley, Camarillo, and Thousand Oaks, and 16 – 19 year olds constituted the most prevalent age group of juveniles on probation supervision.

**Table 5: Juvenile Probation Population by City – August 1, 2007**

<b>Juvenile Probation Population by City</b>	
<b>City</b>	<b>Total</b>
Oxnard	699
Ventura	246
Simi Valley	227
Camarillo	114
Thousand Oaks	114
Santa Paula	101
Fillmore	94
Moorpark	94
Port Hueneme	61
Newbury Park	47
Ojai	31
Other	181
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,009</b>

**Table 6: Juvenile Probation Population by Age – August 1, 2007**

<b>Ages of Probation Population</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Total</b>
12	6
13	21
14	79
15	169
16	357
17	462
18	496
19	299
20	89
21	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,009</b>

**Juvenile Facilities:** In 2003, Ventura County opened its new 420-bed Juvenile Facilities (JF) complex, replacing the former juvenile hall and commitment programs. The total capacity of the JF is 420, with 240 beds in detention and 180 in commitment. In FY 2005 – 06, the average daily population of the JF was 70.08 youth in detention and 72.5 youth in commitment.

The one-day snapshot also gathered information about youth in the JF. At the time of the snapshot on August 1, 2007, there were 81 youth in detention and 116 in commitment. The majority of these youth came from Oxnard, Ventura, and Simi Valley, and most were in the 16 – 18 year old age range. Eight of the youth in detention and 13 in commitment were females. Seven of the youth in detention were awaiting placement.

**Table 7: Cities of Origin of Youth in the JF – August 1, 2007**

<b>Cities of Youth in JF 8/1/2007</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>Detention</b>	<b>Commitment</b>
Oxnard	27	50
Ventura	8	15
Simi Valley	14	11
Camarillo	7	4
Thousand Oaks	3	4
Santa Paula	2	9
Other	20	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>116</b>

**Table 8: Ages of Youth in Juvenile Facilities -- August 1, 2007**

Ages of Youth In JF -- 8/1/2007		
Age	Detention	Commitment
13	2	0
14	5	4
15	9	17
16	20	24
17	24	40
18	19	26
19	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>116</b>

**Placement:** In addition to youth supervised in the community and youth housed in the JF, the Probation Agency also has responsibility for youth in placement. On the date of the snapshot, Ventura County had 36 juvenile offenders in placement, 10 of whom were female and 26 were male. Of the total placement population, 33 were in group homes and 3 were in wraparound services in lieu of being taken out of their homes. There were four placement youth (2 males and 2 females) out to warrant, i.e., AWOL from their placements.

It is noteworthy that the number of youth in placement has been significantly decreased since the development of the original CMJJP, from an average of 68 youth to the snapshot's 36 youth in placement. Another significant achievement is that currently 20 (61%) of the group homes being used for Ventura County youth are located within the county. At the time of the first CMJJP, many more youth were placed out of county. Ventura has worked hard to place youth close to home so as to provide consistent transition and aftercare services when youth return from placement. While there were 13 youth (39%) in group homes outside Ventura County, no Ventura County youth were placed out of state.

**Youth in State Custody:** Ventura County has averaged between 80 and 115 young offenders in what is now called the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), formerly known as the California Youth Authority (CYA). As of June 1, 2007, there were 25 Ventura County offenders committed for WIC Section 707(b) offenses and 51 committed for non-707(b) offenses. Of the latter, 32 were in DJJ institutions and 19 were on DJJ parole.

On September 1, 2007, when the DJJ realignment became effective, there were 32 non-707(b) Ventura County youth in DJJ institutions and 18 on DJJ parole. Legislation clarifying the realignment, AB 191, specifies that youth in DJJ institutions *may be* recalled by the county but youth currently on DJJ parole *will be* returned to the county and "transitioned to local probation" when they violate the terms of their parole. In other words, Ventura County could elect to take back some or all of the 32 non-707(b) offenders currently in DJJ institutions, as well as some or all of the 18 non-707(b) offenders currently on DJJ parole; however the Ventura County must accept all those

parolees who violate their parole after September 1, 2007. Further, youth going to parole from institutions after September 1, 2007 become the responsibility of the Probation Agency, rather than of DJJ.

Where and how those young offenders will be housed, supervised, and provided services are complex questions, made more difficult by the fact that the majority of offenders Ventura sends to DJJ remain in state custody until they are young adults, over 18 years old. As illustrated by Table 9, below, of the 70 youth Ventura sent to DJJ between 2004 and 2007, two-thirds are now over the age of 18.

**Table 9: Ages of Youth Committed to DJJ, 2004 – 2007**

<b>Ages of Youth in DJJ – 2004 - 2007</b>		
<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
16-18	22	31%
19	21	30%
20-23	26	37%

When these young offenders are returned to the County, it will be particularly challenging to house them in appropriate custody settings because, although they will continue to be wards of the Juvenile Court, state and federal law (as well as good correctional judgment) prohibits housing them with younger juveniles. The Probation Agency is considering a number of possible options, such as using a currently empty detention pod and a currently empty half-pod in commitment to house and program DJJ returnees at the JF, and/or using a unit at its (adult) Work Furlough Facility for them, and/or creating an intensive day reporting program, potentially with supported housing and electronic monitoring, for these young adult offenders.

Also under consideration is the possibility of joining with San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties to house and provide services on a regional basis. One possible option is to create an intensive program / treatment facility to serve a high-need sub-population such as sex offenders or those with serious mental health problems. Pooling the three counties' offenders could create a large enough population to allow cost effective provision of specialized services not possible for any one county alone.

The Probation Agency is working with its partners on productive strategies to address the DJJ realignment. It is likely that further strategies will emerge as the realignment progresses and the complex jurisdictional and programmatic issues become clearer.

A key element of the realignment is the block grant funding accompanying the transfer. Intended to help counties expand and/or develop programs and treatment options for youth formerly in state custody, the block grants were based on a formula utilizing each county's at-risk youth population and juvenile felony dispositions, offset by the sliding scale fees the county was paying for offenders sent to DJJ. Under this formula, Ventura County's block grant allocation would be \$389,000 for the remainder of FY 2007-08 and would increase to \$1,778,000 in FY 2008-09 and to \$2,171,467 in FY 2009-2010.

Figure 1: 2007 Continuum Of Juvenile Justice Resources

# 2007 CONTINUUM OF JUVENILE RESOURCES\*

PREVENTION	INTERMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS	OUT OF HOME/ RESIDENTIAL	INSTITUTIONS/ AFTER CARE
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	211 Referral Line	Boys & Girls Clubs	Aftercare Day Reporting
Boys & Girls Clubs	ACTION	Casa Pacifica Shelter	Another Chance Tutoring
Children's System of Care	Big Brothers/Big Sisters	Casa Pacifica Wraparound	Behavioral Health
City Impact Mentoring	Blue Book	Interface Children Family Services	Boys & Girls Clubs
First 5 Child Study Team	Boys & Girls Clubs	Interagency Case Management Council	CFMG.
Grizzly Academy	Coalition to End Family Violence	Parent Project	City Impact
Interface Children Family Services	Children's Full Service Partnership	Therapeutic Behavioral Services	Coalition to End Family Violence
Neighborhoods for Learning	City Impact Mentoring	Placement	Enhanced Institutional Services
Parent Project	Cool Homes	Post Placement	Girls Inc.
Pyles Boys Camp	Expanded Early Intervention Program	Vista Del Mar	Healthy Returns Initiative
Santa Paula FRC	Graffiti Action Program	Youth in Transition Advocacy Committee	Interface Children Family Services
THRIVE	Interface Children Family Services		Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative
United Parents	Kids and Families Together		Miracle House
Campfire USA	Kinship Support Services		Palmer Drug Abuse Program
City Corp	Police Activities League		Planned Parenthood
Commission on Human Concerns	Parent Project		Public Health
Clinicas de la Comunidad de Oxnard	School Resource Officers		Read to Succeed
El Centro de la Colonia	SELPAS		Targeted Reentry Program
Job & Career Centers of Ventura County	THRIVE		Ventura County Office of Education
Lesbian Coalition – Partners in Prevention	Truancy Curfew		Volunteers in Probation

\*Partial Listing

### III. CURRENT RESOURCES AND CONTINUUM OF CARE

Ventura County has a strong array of programs and services in place. This section provides an overview of the major elements of those resources. The graphic on the previous page, Figure 1, is a partial listing summarizing the currently existing juvenile justice continuum of care. Both the chart and the narrative, which follow, are organized by level of risk and intensity of intervention. Prevention programs are defined as those targeted primarily at low-risk youth, while early intervention programs generally focus on youth who have some level of risk. Intermediate interventions apply to those youth who are "deeper" into the justice system and have committed some delinquent act(s); intermediate interventions serve as alternatives to the most restrictive end of the continuum – placement and/or incapacitation through detention or commitment to a structured institutional setting. Aftercare encompasses those programs, services, and supervision strategies intended to help youth make a crime-and-drug-free transition back to their homes and families after placement or custody.

#### PREVENTION

There is a wide variety of programs, agencies, and community organizations providing prevention services to youth and families in Ventura County. Many of these programs are private and/or local and do not directly involve County agencies or services; however, some County agencies, including the Probation Agency, provide preventive services, and consider them important elements of their long-term public safety mandate.

Shown alphabetically, the major prevention services and/or programs currently in place include the following:

- Big Brothers / Big Sisters provides mentoring and other support services.
- Boys & Girls Clubs provides pro-social activities, vocational, and other counseling and support.
- Child Abuse Prevention Program (CAPP) is a collaborative effort between Human Services Agency (HSA), Juvenile Dependency (JD), and Public Health (PH). A Public Health Nurse provides prevention education and works with children and families who are at risk of being victims of violence and abuse.
- Children's System of Care, overseen by the Ventura County Interagency Policy Council, incorporates all the services related to and provided by Children's Mental Health.
- City Impact's Mentoring Program deals with children and youth at risk of entering the juvenile justice system.

- First Five Commission's Child Study Teams (CST) seeks viable interventions for at-risk children and families.
- Grizzly Academy offers GED preparation, job skills development, military drill and ceremony experience, and community college experience.
- Interface Children Family Services provides counseling, treatment, advocacy, and referrals for at-risk children and youth.
- Neighborhoods for Learning (NFL) provides early childhood education and readiness for learning.
- Parent Project offers parenting education and support for parents.
- Pyles Boys Camp instills confidence, pride, value for hard work, and respect for self and others.
- Santa Paula Family Resource Center provides services, support, and activities for youth and families.
- Truancy Habits Reduced Increases Vital Education (THRIVE), funded through JJCPA and other sources, provides truancy reduction services and interventions.
- United Parents offers parenting education and support for parents.

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

As with prevention, there are a number of early intervention programs and services available for youth and families in Ventura County. The key concepts in early intervention are to respond immediately to pre-delinquent or delinquent acts with an appropriate level of intensity. For low-risk youth, who have not yet committed any serious offenses, the goal is to provide clear consequences, preventing further delinquency. For high-risk youth, the intervention must be stronger and the services addressing associated risk factors must be more intense.

In addition to early intervention services provided by community-based organizations (CBOs), the Probation Agency's Youth Services unit provides both types of early intervention. For youngsters referred to Youth Services for the first time and/or for minor offenses, prevention classes, family mediation, restitution, community service, and charitable contributions are among the interventions used. Youth Services oversees the Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP), which is an intensive, comprehensive, multi-disciplinary program serving first-time wards. Youth Services additionally refers cases to the Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP), typically for parent/child mediation or resolution of minor offenses such as fighting.

Youth Services also operates the comprehensive, JJCPA-funded Expanded Early Intervention Program, primarily serving youth diverted from formal court handling. The

program provides positive activities, mentoring, medical and mental health support and counseling, as well as drug and alcohol counseling.

Key early intervention services and/or programs currently in place include the following, again identified in alphabetical order:

- 211 Referral Line, operated by Interface Children Family Services, provides links to family, social, and health services.
- ACTION, a CBO, provides parent and teen supported services including support groups for teens with substance abuse and related problems and a hot line for parents and teens in crisis.
- Big Brothers / Big Sisters provides mentoring for at-risk youth.
- Blue Book, also maintained by Interface Children Family Services, is a resource directory for family, social, and health services.
- Boys & Girls Clubs provide pro-social activities, vocational and other counseling and support.
- Children's Full Service Partnership (CFSP), funded through Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act, provides mental health assessments and services for youth early in their involvement with the juvenile justice system; the services youth are referred to can continue even if those youngsters become 602 wards.
- City Impact Mentoring Program provides services countywide.
- Coalition to End Family Violence is an early intervention effort now in place in every Boys and Girls Club in the County.
- Cool Homes, provided countywide by Interface Children Family Services, are intended to provide short-term housing for youth.
- Expanded Early Intervention Program, funded through JJCPA, is the Probation Agency's Youth Services program mentioned above that provides positive activities, mentoring, medical and mental health support, and drug and alcohol counseling via contracts with CBOs. Expanded Early Intervention serves youth and families living in Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, and Ventura.
- Frontier is a continuation high school.
- Graffiti Action Program (GAP) is a City of Oxnard mobile effort to remove graffiti from the community.
- Habitual Offender Prevention Efforts (HOPE) aka Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP), funded through JJCPA, is the Probation Agency's

comprehensive, multi-disciplinary program that provides intensive services for first-time wards, 15½ or younger, with at least three of the four risk factors related to difficulties with family, school, substance abuse, and other pre-delinquent behaviors.

- Interface Children Family Services provides counseling, treatment, advocacy, and referrals for youth in, and diverted from, the juvenile justice system.
- Kids and Families Together provides services to youth and families to help families become and remain self-sustaining.
- Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP), provided by the Ventura County Human Services Agency, Children & Family Services (CFS), offers preventive, community-based, family support services to relatives caring for dependent and non-dependent kin, including those under legal guardianship and adoption. "Foster care prevention" services include mentorship, legal assistance, transportation help, food vouchers, safety equipment for the home, tutoring, housing (one-time financial assistance), and case management. KSSP also provides placement transition services.
- Parent Project provides parenting education and support for parents.
- Police Activities League (PAL) offers athletic and other pro-social activities for youth.
- School Resource Officers (SROs) are available to work with youth and families in Oxnard and Simi Valley; however, many other police departments in the County no longer have SROs.
- Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) provides educational advocacy and monitoring; services are available to youth throughout the continuum.
- Truancy Curfew, created by ordinance for the City of Ventura, is an 8 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. weekday curfew seeking to help keep youth in school.
- Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) offers family mediation as well as opportunities for mediation to resolve minor offenses such as vandalism.

## **INTERMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS**

Ventura County and the Probation Agency have invested significantly and successfully in intermediate interventions that deliver proven, strength-based, and community-based supervision and services for juvenile offenders and their families. Because intermediate interventions help to reduce the number of youth sent to out-of-home placement, detention, and commitment, they are cost effective as well as productive in holding offenders accountable while protecting public safety.

The cost effectiveness of intermediate interventions can be demonstrated by comparing the daily cost of Probation Agency programs to the daily cost of detention and commitment in the JF. Table 10 below shows that the Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP), the Gang Violence Prevention Program (GVP), and the Aftercare Day Reporting Center (DRC) – all of which have been proven effective – cost less than one-tenth of what it costs to house an offender in the JF. Intermediate Interventions – used appropriately for the right offenders – are clearly the best bargain in the juvenile justice continuum. They produce cost-effective public safety in the short and long term as well.

**Table 10: Per Day Cost of Selected Intermediate Interventions vs. JF**

PER DAY COST COMPARISON		
INTERVENTION	ANNUAL COST	COST PER DAY
ROPP	\$6,143	\$29.56
GVP	\$2,943	\$10.39
DRC	\$5,103	\$36.18
JF Detention	\$142,138	\$389.42
JF Commitment	\$102,433	\$280.64

Intermediate Interventions are the major focus of the Probation Agency's Juvenile Services Division. This division is comprised of several units including the Intensive Supervision Services-Juvenile unit, the Juvenile Supervision Services unit, the Day Reporting/Aftercare unit, Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP), and the East County Juvenile Services unit. The Intensive Supervision Services-Juvenile unit supervises juvenile offenders who have been identified as posing the greatest risk to the community due to their gang activity and/or criminal behavior. The officers assigned to this unit are armed and may work in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies to provide a high level of supervision and surveillance for this population. Although suppression of gang/criminal activity is a main focus of this unit, the officers also utilize community resources to provide needed services to the juveniles and their families, and emphasize employment as a means for youth to make restitution to their victims.

The Juvenile Supervision Services unit handles all other juvenile cases in the western part of the county. In this unit, officers work in conjunction with schools and community resources to provide services for minors and their families. Officers in this unit also intensively monitor and test juveniles involved in the Juvenile Drug Court program.

The Day Reporting/Aftercare Program is a multi-disciplinary program providing intensive aftercare services for wards returning to the community after a commitment in the Juvenile Facilities or suitable placement. ROPP is an intensive, comprehensive, multi-disciplinary program serving first-time wards meeting three out of four risk factors for chronic offending.

The East County Juvenile Services unit handles all juvenile cases in the eastern portion of the county. Caseloads range from maximum to minimum supervision and officers work in conjunction with schools and community resources to provide services for minors and their families.

The Probation Agency has effectively leveraged its resources by proactively establishing ties with associated agencies, as noted above. DPOs regularly work with law enforcement on gang intelligence and suppression activities and graffiti abatement. They interact on an ongoing basis with regular and continuation schools to reduce crime and misbehavior on campus and to impact truancy. Further, as noted previously, the Probation Agency's Juvenile Services units share space in the Williams Building in Oxnard with collateral agencies, thereby facilitating "one-stop service delivery" for probationers and at-risk youth and families.

Exemplary of Ventura's collaborative, multi-disciplinary delivery of intermediate interventions and services, the Williams Building houses probation staff plus programs offered by the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department and Interface Children Family Services. At this one location, Behavioral Health offers the following:

- Children's Options provides multidisciplinary mental health services to children, adolescents, and families meeting eligibility criteria. Services may include individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, medication monitoring, psychological testing, case management, and crisis intervention.
- A New Start for Moms delivers outreach and outpatient counseling to alcohol and other drug-using pregnant and parenting women. Comprehensive services available on site include childcare and transportation.
- Transitions helps young adults, ages 17½ to 21, develop independent living skills and social and community supports, while also reducing psychiatric symptoms and substance use that negatively impact life functioning.
- Oxnard Adult Mental Health Clinic serves adults (over 18 and under 65) who have substantial impairment in their ability to function as a result of a mental illness.
- Alcohol & Drug Program and Drinking Driver Program offer treatment and education programs for people referred by the Court/Probation Agency and/or the California Department of Motor Vehicles. These programs provide information, counseling, and support to help modify attitudes and behaviors that contribute to alcohol and other drug abuse. The programs address, but are not limited to, driving under the influence.

In the same location, Interface Children Family Services offers the following:

- Youth Crisis Services provides crisis intervention counseling for youth (10 – 17) and their families regarding delinquent behavior, drug concerns, and dysfunctional family relationships.

- Children's Full Service Partnership requires a referral from the Probation Agency and provides counseling, assessment, tutoring, and mentoring for offenders displaying a combination of mental health needs and beginning criminal behavior.
- Victim Offender Reconciliation Program provides restitution services and mediation between victims and offenders. The VORP process gives victims a unique opportunity to confront their offender and express their feelings about being victimized. VORP also offers mediations between youth and their parents in the case of runaway, truancy, etc. This program is available for anyone wishing these services.
- Oxnard Youth Services Bureau provides up to 10 no-cost counseling sessions to youth who reside in Oxnard. Referrals are generated through the 211 line, walk-ins, and referrals by probation officers. Three no-cost counseling sessions are available to youth who enter a Cool Home after they return home.

Not all the programs and services offered at the Williams Building are intermediate interventions; some are prevention services and others are early intervention efforts. The fact that they are available in the same location where offenders come to meet with their probation officer is the important consideration.

Ventura County's Intermediate Intervention services and/or programs include the following, again in alphabetical order:

- Adelante! Mental Health Court, part of the Juvenile Wellness Court described below, serves mentally ill juvenile offenders using intensive case management, court progress review hearings, and integrated treatment and community supports.
- Alcohol / Drug Program (ADP) Clinics, located in Simi Valley, Oxnard, and the City of Ventura, provide treatment and counseling services; each clinic has at least one adolescent substance abuse specialist on staff.
- Boys & Girls Clubs provide pro-social activities, vocational and other counseling and support in conjunction with other intermediate interventions.
- California Conservation Corps (CCC) offers community service work and employment services, and also provides housing for youth in the program.
- City Corps is a CBO providing community service work and employment services for justice system youth in and from Oxnard.
- City Impact is a CBO offering counseling and other services for youth in the justice system.

- Coalition to End Family Violence provides anger management counseling for teenage males with a focus on developing skills necessary to break the cycle of violence.
- Community Commission of Ventura County (CCVC) is an interagency group overseeing, coordinating, and seeking to enhance programs and services for youth and families.
- Community Confinement/Electronic Monitoring Program is a Probation Agency intermediate sanction designed as an alternative to institutional custody, wherein Community Confinement staff supervise youth based on their individual circumstances and needs; some youth are placed on home confinement with supervision and conditions of compliance but no electronic monitoring (EM); higher-risk youth are placed on EM. Staff conduct random drug testing, contact school officials regarding attendance and performance, and conduct room searches for contraband; if a youth is found to be in violation of his/her release contract, staff may return the youth to custody.
- County Graffiti Task Force facilitates information sharing among law enforcement, the Probation Agency, and the District Attorney's office to identify taggers and coordinate graffiti removal.
- Forensic Adolescent Program (FAP) is a highly specialized sex offender treatment program serving mainly West County residents between the ages of 12 and 18 who admit to their offense, have family participation, and have the cognitive ability to engage in group treatment.
- Gang Violence Prevention Program (GVP), funded through JJCPA, provides collaborative intensive supervision, along with the Santa Paula Police Department, to enforce Court-ordered terms and conditions for gang-involved probationers in Santa Paula and Fillmore. GVP works closely with schools in those cities to ensure enrollment and satisfactory attendance of these youth; it also provides training to school staff and others, and partners with Palmer Drug Abuse Program (PDAP) to deliver individual counseling, mentoring, vocational training, and other support services to gang-involved youth and their families.
- Gateway is the Continuation High School working with youth on supervision and aftercare; a Youth Services probation officer is assigned to the campus and assists with transition and truancy issues.
- Habitual Offender Prevention Efforts (HOPE) aka Repeat Offender Prevention Program (ROPP), funded through JJCPA, is the Probation Agency's comprehensive multi-disciplinary program that provides intensive services for first time wards, 15½ or younger, with at least three of the four risk factors related to difficulties with family, school, substance abuse, and other delinquent behaviors.

- Healthy Returns Initiative (HRI), funded by The California Endowment, is an effective multi-agency program that is a partnership among a Behavioral Health social worker, a Public Health nurse, and a probation officer to provide intensive, collaborative aftercare for youth who have a health and/or a mental health issue.
- Intensive Dual Diagnosis Treatment (IDDT) is a specialized service component of the Adelante! Mental Health Court which treats youth with co-occurring disorders.
- Interface Children Family Services provides counseling, treatment, advocacy, and referrals for youth in the justice system, often in collaboration with and as part of court-ordered probation supervision.
- Juvenile Drug Court, part of the Juvenile Wellness Court described below, and funded by JJCPA since 2007, provides collaborative, multi-agency, intensive case management, integrated treatment, and community supports for juvenile offenders with significant substance abuse issues.
- Juvenile Wellness Court, which includes both the Juvenile Drug Court and the Juvenile Mental Health Court (Adelante!), is an interagency partnership among the Probation Agency, the Behavioral Health Department, the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's Office, and the Superior Court to provide intensive and integrated case management, treatment, supervision, and community supports for youth in the justice system who have serious substance abuse and/or mental health issues.
- Multi-Systemic Intervention Program (MSIP) is Ventura County's Juvenile Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction (MIOCR) grant program, which is funded through June 2008, to intensively treat and supervise 25 mentally ill youth for 18 months each, and 50 mentally ill, sex offender youth for 15 months each (Note that some of the MSIP grant funds a portion of the Adelante! Mental Health Court.).
- Palmer Drug Abuse Program (PDAP) provides substance abuse programs and groups for youth in the justice system, as well as other youth in need of these services.
- Parent Project provides parenting education and support for parents.
- Port Hueneme Police Department Special Problems Office includes an officer who specializes in tagging and graffiti identification and abatement.
- Program to Evaluate and Treat Sexual Abuses (PETSAs), an Interface Children Family Services program, offers specialized treatment for a limited number of mentally ill sex offenders.
- Simi Valley Police Department Youth Services Section handles informal cases and provides necessary services.

- Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS) provides short-term, intensive in-home, targeted behavioral interventions to prevent out-of-home placement.
- Ventura County Rainbow Alliance provides advocacy and services for gay, lesbian, and transgender youth and families, in and outside of the juvenile justice system.

## **OUT OF HOME / RESIDENTIAL**

The Probation Agency's Placement Unit (PLAU) has primary responsibility for youth in out-of-home placement. Probation officers match youth with appropriate placement facilities, monitor those facilities, supervise youth in placement, and work to transition youth from placement back to the community. PLAU uses an inter-agency model of service delivery with a probation emphasis. Officers generally provide an intensive level of supervision with correspondingly small caseload sizes. Placement officers meet with the parents of youth going to placement to develop a comprehensive treatment plan, and continue to meet with the family monthly while the youth is in placement to help plan for and support the youth's positive return. After placement, officers continue to work with the family as a team, sometimes using wraparound services, for at least 30 days post-placement, during which time the placement order is continued. For youth who experience no significant problems in those 30 days, placement is terminated and the youth's continuing supervision is transferred to the appropriate field supervision officer. The major out of home / residential services and/or programs currently available to or working with the Probation Agency's PLAU include the following, again in alphabetical order:

- Boys & Girls Clubs provide pro-social activities, vocational and other counseling and support.
- Casa Pacifica is an RCL 13/14 placement in Ventura County for youth in need of intensive treatment; it is also the County's wraparound provider.
- Children's Services Oversight Committee (CSOC) is a collaborative partnership among the County's placing agencies (Probation Agency, Behavioral Health, and Health Services Agency) and local group home providers; CSOC's goal is to enhance communication and develop / clarify protocols that deal with foster youth.
- Interagency Case Management Council (ICMC) is an interagency collaborative that partners in decision making about dependent (WIC Section 300) and delinquent (WIC Section 600) youth facing and/or in placement; what is now the ICMC was formerly known as the Placing Agencies Council (PAC).
- Interagency Placement Expansion and Review Committee (IPERC) partners representatives from the Probation Agency, Behavioral Health, and the Health Services Agency to approve / support group home provider applications for

placement of Ventura County foster youth; the approval includes group home inspection and review of program services.

- Interface Children Family Services provides counseling, treatment, advocacy, and referrals for youth in, or returning from, out-of-home placement, often in collaboration with and as part of court-ordered probation supervision.
- Parent Project provides parenting education and support for parents.
- Placement Agencies Collaborative (PAC) brings together Case Managers and Supervisors from the Probation Agency, Behavioral Health, and the Health Services Agency to discuss group home providers and county protocols for dealing with foster youth.
- Residential Placement Clinical Oversight Team (RPCOT) is a collaborative effort by the Probation Agency, Behavioral Health, and the Health Services Agency to discuss suitability of foster youth entering RCL 14 placement facilities.
- Vista Del Mar is a psychiatric hospital in the County; however it does not take younger children or youth without insurance.
- Youth in Transition Advocacy Committee provides support and advocacy for foster youth returning to the community and/or for those aging-out of the foster care system.

## **INSTITUTIONS / AFTERCARE**

Since submitting its 2001 CMJJP, Ventura County has completed and moved into its new Juvenile Facilities complex (JF). The JF's detention component, comprised of three 60-bed general population units and one 60-bed special population unit, can house and program up to 240 male and female youth who have been charged with criminal offenses and require detention pursuant to the JDAI risk-based criteria for booking. The special population unit contains three 20-bed living units, one of which is designated for youth with significant mental health issues, one for youth who present high security risks, and one for youth who are newly received in the facility and are undergoing classification and risk assessment.

The commitment component can house and program up to 180 male and female youth ordered by the court to serve a period of post-adjudicated confinement. The commitment component of the complex is comprised of three 60-bed housing units, each of which contains four 15-bed living units, four classrooms, two program rooms, and a shared dining/activity area. Each living unit has its own dayroom and outdoor exercise area. Sleeping rooms are a combination of three 4-person dorms and single rooms.

Youth in the JF are provided constructive individual and group activities, including educational programming provided by the Providence School, an accredited school

program administered by the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE). The Ventura County Behavioral Health Department provides psychiatric and crisis intervention services as well as group, individual, and family therapy; and the California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG) provides medical services under contract with the county.

Cognitive behavioral programming is provided by Probation Agency staff and CBOs. These programs include a gang intervention program, a gender-specific program for females (Girls Inc.), and a problem-solving/social skills program (Thinking for a Change). Additional programming includes tutoring, anger management, substance abuse counseling, religious services, health education, life skills, community service, GED preparation, and pro-social activities such as chess, music, and dance programs.

In the commitment facilities, there are educational and therapeutic programs, as well as vocational and emancipation-based programming for older youth. One of the commitment housing units is a dedicated female program designed to deal with gender-specific issues. Another is a 'secure' commitment unit for youth moving from detention to commitment who are transitioning to a less secure setting. Commitment residents at the Juvenile Facilities also have the opportunity to participate in community service by volunteering their labor and time to non-profit groups, including but not limited to Food Share, Habitat for Humanity, and other community organizations.

The major institutional and aftercare programs currently available in the JF or working with the Probation Agency's Facilities and Aftercare units include, in alphabetical order, the following:

- Aftercare Day Reporting Program, funded through JJCPA, helps youth, ages 14 – 18, from the cities of Oxnard and Ventura transition into the community following their release from a custody facility or residential placement. Probation officers in this unit provide intensive supervision when youth are first released; over the course of the 4 – 6 month program, supervision is gradually reduced. Officers work with community-based service providers to provide support in the area of life skills, parenting programs, substance abuse treatment, and linkages to education/vocational resources, among others.
- Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous (AA and NA) groups are held in the JF.
- Another Chance Tutoring (ACT) is offered in the JF and for youth who are in the Aftercare Day Reporting Program.
- Art classes are available to youth in the JF.
- Athletic activities and events are available in the JF.
- Behavioral Health Substance Abuse Groups are provided in the JF.

- Boys & Girls Club runs a clubhouse in an unused unit in the JF, providing recreational and educational activities for youth in the commitment component.
- Boys & Girls Club also provides vocational and other counseling and support in the JF and during aftercare; however, only youth from Oxnard and Port Hueneme who are 16 and older and have 120 days to serve are eligible for this programming.
- Chess Club has been formed and is supported with help of volunteers in the JF.
- City Impact provides drug education and sex education for youth in detention in the JF.
- Coalition to End Family Violence partners with the Boys & Girls Club to provide counseling and other services in the JF.
- Enhanced Institutional Services, funded through JJCPA, provides cognitive behavioral programs for youth in custody, as well as alcohol and drug education services, anger management groups, parenting classes, gender-specific programming, transition planning, and release discharge planning for high-risk youth, primarily females, committed to the JF and/or in the JF awaiting placement.
- GED preparation and services are available in the JF.
- Girls Inc. provides programming for girls in the JF.
- Healthy Returns Initiative (HRI), funded by The California Endowment, is an effective multi-agency program which starts in the JF and follows youth into the community; it is a partnership consisting of a Behavioral Health social worker, a Public Health nurse, and a probation officer to provide intensive, collaborative aftercare for youth who have a health and/or a mental health issue.
- Intensive Dual Diagnosis Treatment (IDDT) is provided by a Behavioral Health specialist in the JF.
- Interface Children Family Services provides counseling, treatment, advocacy, and referrals for youth in aftercare, in collaboration with, and often as part of, court-ordered probation supervision.
- Juvenile Assessment Service Plan (JASP) is a comprehensive, assessment-based case plan developed for and with each youth in the JF that describes needed in-facility and release / aftercare interventions and services.
- Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is an ongoing effort to maintain booking criteria, expedite booking /

processing, ensure diversion of appropriate offenders from custody, and use alternatives to detention for appropriate offenders.

- Life Skills Training is provided by volunteers in the JF to prepare youth for independent living by teaching them to do budgeting, keep track of money, etc.
- Literacy Program is provided by volunteers in the JF.
- Miracle House provides substance abuse assessments and interventions for youth who are in detention at least 14 days and youth who are in commitment for 100 days or more, and provides substance abuse counseling groups for youth in commitment and on aftercare.
- Palmer Drug Abuse (PDAP) partners with the Boys & Girls Club to provide counseling and other services in the JF.
- Parent Project provides parenting education, support for parents, and runs parenting groups in the JF.
- Planned Parenthood provides sex education groups for youth in custody in the JF; however the grant funding this activity expired in November – December 2007.
- Providence is the high school in the JF that provides educational programming in unit classrooms for youth in detention and at an in-facility campus for youth in commitment, and provides special education programming throughout the JF
- Public Health partners with the Boys & Girls Club to provide health assessments, training, and related activities in the JF.
- Reading Club run by volunteers in the JF.
- Read to Succeed is effective, intensive programming in which a certified Reading Specialist works with youth on aftercare.
- Success Maker is an assessment-based program in the JF that assesses youths' reading and math levels and other educational needs, and provides 4-5 hours a week of Success Maker curriculum to help enhance their educational capacity.
- Targeted Reentry Program (TRE) is a pilot project (with the JF being the only site in California) based on Dr. Troy Armstrong's research that works with youth who have 90 days left on their commitments and provides aftercare services for 12 months after release.
- Transitions provides vocational counseling and support.

- Ventura County Supported Employment provides employment readiness and support services to youth and adults in and out of the justice system.
- Ventura County Supported Housing, funded by the Multifamily Housing Program (MHP) and the State Department of Housing and Community Development. Services include housing placement and support provided by the County Behavioral Health Department. Services are provided for youth who are 18 – 24 years old, are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, have aged-out of foster care, or have run away from home. Program also provides services for youth under 18 who are emancipated and homeless, or at risk of homelessness.
- Volunteers in Probation (VIP) is a cadre of approximately 100 volunteers who help with programming in the commitment and detention units in the JF.
- Writer's Workshop operates for interested youth in commitment in the JF.

#### **IV. GAPS ADDRESSED SINCE 2001: A REPORT CARD**

As noted previously, this update of Ventura County's CMJJP continues Ventura's on-going dialogue about juvenile justice issues, including delinquency prevention, addressing the needs of at-risk youth and families, interdiction and correction of crime, and the appropriate placement for youth who must be removed from their homes for either their own or the public's safety. By undertaking this study, Ventura County is maintaining its commitment to proactive planning and measuring progress.

As a part of the updating process, the JJCC asked for a "report card," a synopsis of its progress in meeting juvenile justice system goals first laid out in the County's Local Action Plan in 1996. The JJCC asked to see which of the previously identified gaps had been filled, what areas continue to need attention, and what, if any, new gaps had emerged.

In seeking to answer those questions, this study has found Ventura's track record related to filling previously perceived gaps in service to be quite positive. In the ten years since that first Local Action Plan and the five years since submission of its initial CMJJP, Ventura has not only opened the new Juvenile Facilities complex but also revised and retooled some programs, eliminated others for which the need no longer existed, and introduced new programs, services, and interventions to deal with new and emerging issues confronting its juvenile justice continuum.

Figure 2 on the following page displays the continuum prior to 1996 and pursuant to the initial Local Action Plan, and indicates gaps identified in the first CMJJP in 2001. The table that follows the diagram identifies the changes to the continuum as a result of, and since, those plans. These tables, coupled with the table in Figure 1, *Continuum of Existing Juvenile Justice System Resources*, in the previous section, verify that Ventura County has made impressive progress and accomplished significant improvements in its service delivery over the last decade. While there is still more to do – and that will always be true – Ventura County can be very proud of what it has done to date.

If the report card gave a grade, that grade would be an "A."

# 2001 CONTINUUM OF JUVENILE RESOURCES

Figure 2: 2001 Continuum of Juvenile Justice Resources

Prevention	Intermediate Interventions	Out of Home/ Residential	Institutions/ After Care
<p><b>Existing In and/or Prior to 1996</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversion</li> <li>Police Activity Leagues</li> <li>Teen Centers</li> <li>Boy and Girl Scouts</li> <li>'Cool Homes'</li> <li>DARE</li> <li>Curfews</li> <li>Boys and Girls Clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Mediation</li> <li>VORP</li> <li>Oxnard H.S. Peer Court</li> <li>Gang Prevention</li> <li>Early Intervention Pilot</li> <li>Prevention Classes</li> <li>School Teen Courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Homes</li> <li>Foster Homes</li> <li>Placement Facilities</li> <li>Rainbow Youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clifton Tatum Center</li> <li>Colston Youth Center</li> <li>Work, Restitution &amp; Competency Program (WERC)</li> <li>CYA</li> </ul>
<p><b>Newly Developed/ Expanded Since 1996</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SOCP</li> <li>Conejo Youth Employment</li> <li>Ventura College Tutoring</li> <li>Ventura YES</li> <li>Port Huename PD Youth</li> <li>TUPE</li> <li>Young Men as Fathers</li> <li>Behind the Mask</li> <li>Victim Mediation Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternatives to Custody</li> <li>Intensive Field Supervision</li> <li>JRP Work Crews</li> <li>Community Work Project</li> <li>Community Service Work</li> <li>Community Confinement Program</li> <li>GRIP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Juvenile Placement and Aftercare Team (JPAT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tri-Counties Boot Camp</li> <li>Begin Construction of Juvenile Justice Complex</li> <li>CYC Expansion/Transition</li> <li>Moved &amp; Expanded former JRP, now WERC</li> </ul>
<p><b>Needs Still to Be Addressed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More Community Centers</li> <li>Additional Teen Courts</li> <li>More Pro-Social Activities</li> <li>Services for WIC 300 youth</li> <li>P.O.s in Schools</li> <li>Prevention Coordinator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Oxnard Challenge Project (SOCP)</li> <li>SOCP Day Reporting Ctr.</li> <li>Gang Violence Suppression Program (GVS)</li> <li>Community Intervention, Prevention &amp; Accountability (CIPA)</li> <li>Gateway Recovery (GRIP)</li> <li>Juvenile Drug Court</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More Placements-All Kinds</li> <li>In-Patient Drug &amp; Mental Health Treatment Services</li> <li>'Cool Homes' as Alternatives to Placement</li> <li>Residential Drug Treatment Beds for Boys</li> <li>Placement Options &amp; Services for Girls</li> <li>Transitional Housing for Youth Awaiting Placement</li> <li>Independent Living Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More Full Service Day Reporting Centers</li> <li>Assessment &amp; Case Plans for Aftercare Services</li> <li>Continuing Aftercare Services &amp; Support</li> <li>Transition Youth into School after Custody</li> <li>Augment Resources in Existing Facilities</li> <li>Develop WERC-like Facility for Pre-Emancipation</li> </ul>

The following table provides an overview of the improvements made and gaps filled between 1996 and 2007. As do the other visuals in this document, Table 11 presents the previously identified gaps by area of the continuum, and shows what has been accomplished since the previous CMJJP in 2001.

**Table 11: Continuum Enhancements and Gaps Addressed**

<b>CONTINUUM ENHANCEMENTS AND GAPS ADDRESSED 1996 - 2007</b>	
<b>Prevention</b>	
Focus on keeping young people in school; identify and solve problems affecting school performance through enhanced collaboration between schools and Probation Agency; January 2008 School Summit scheduled.	More Still Needed
Develop and/or support Youth, Teen, and/or Community Centers to provide recreation, tutoring, and other after school activities for youth of all ages; partly achieved through Campfire USA, Childcare-Children's Adeste, El Centrito de la Colonia, El Concilio, City Impact, City of Oxnard Library, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Ventura County, City of Oxnard Recreation and Community Service, Elementary School Districts, Police Activity League (PAL), The Foundation for Educational & Employment Resources and Development, Ventura Family YMCA, and Youth Athletes for Christ.	More Still Needed and Ongoing
Provide access to pro-social, life skills activities such as field trips and cultural activities for younger at-risk youth; partly achieved through Teatro Inklatech, United Farm Workers, The Foundation for Educational & Employment Resources and Development, Resident Initiatives Program of Oxnard Housing Authority, Hip Hop Congress National, El Concilio del Condado de Ventura, City Impact, Commission on Human Concerns, Committee on Raza Rights, Boy Scouts of America, Boys & Girls Clubs, ACTT, Art of the Masters, and City Corp.	More Still Needed and Ongoing
Enhance communication between CPS and the Probation Agency to provide and/or broker more services to at-risk youth and WIC Section 300 (dependency) and WIC Section 602 probation cases – partly accomplished through new 241.1 WIC protocol established; CPS automated access to Probation.	Ongoing
Continue expansion of parenting education programs and emphasis on parents' participation in interventions affecting their children; partially accomplished by Coalition Family Harmony Program and expansion of Parent Project.	More Still Needed

Create a Prevention Coordinator position.	Still Needed
<b>Early Intervention</b>	
Collaborate with schools, CPS, mental health agencies, and others to enhance mechanisms for early identification of risk factors and resiliency-building interventions for youth who have not yet been referred to probation.	More Still Needed and Ongoing
Expand and/or replicate the Early Intervention elements of the SOCP – Partly accomplished by JJCPA Expanded Early Intervention caseloads in Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark and Ventura.	Accomplished and More Needed
Expand the number of probation officers on school campuses to help reduce truancy, school performance problems, and school violence – partly accomplished in 2007 by adding a probation officer to the Camarillo Gateway site.	Still needed for other campuses
Support and expand truancy reduction programs; accomplished by adding Thrive to JJCPA Programs and developing City of Oxnard STOP program.	More Needed
Develop multi-agency mechanisms to identify and intervene with younger children (10 years old and younger) with serious mental health problems – partly accomplished through CFSP/MHSA; more needed.	More Needed
Expand parenting training to offenders and their parents; partly accomplished through Coalition Family Harmony and Parent Project; more needed.	More Needed
Expand mentoring and tutoring services and positive role models for early intervention with at-risk youth; partly accomplished by Oxnard African American Pastors Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ventura County, City Impact, Commission on Human Concerns, and Hispanic Ministerial Alliance.	More Still Needed
Improve continuity for informal cases referred to the DA.	Improved and Still Needed
<b>Intermediate Interventions</b>	
Develop additional Day Reporting Centers and consider the possibility of a mobile DRC.	Still Needed

Replicate the Gang Violence Suppression (GVS) effort piloted by the Ventura Police Department and its partners in the City of Ventura -- partly accomplished by City of Oxnard and GVP in Santa Paula and Fillmore as part of JJCPA.	Still Needed in other parts of County
Revitalize and ensure access to needed mental health services for at-risk youth and youth in custody to keep them from penetrating more deeply into the justice system and/or victimizing themselves and others -- partly accomplished through Healthy Returns Initiative, CFSP through MHSA and Behavioral Health, and Adelante!	Accomplished and Ongoing; More Needed
Ensure availability of adequate drug and alcohol treatment, services, and programming for both youth in institutions and those on field supervision -- partly accomplished through Juvenile Drug Court, Recovery Classroom at Gateway, Alcohol & Drug Program, Community Action Resource Exchanges of Ventura County, Solutions Parent and Teen Support Group, Vista del Mar, and Ventura County Alcohol & Drug Board.	Accomplished and Ongoing; More Needed
Enhance the availability of anger management training; consider the possibility of negotiating with elementary, middle, and high schools to add anger management courses to their curricula -- partly accomplished through JJCPA programs.	Accomplished and Ongoing; More Needed
Expand counseling and treatment for sex offenders; partly accomplished through MIOCR.	Accomplished and Ongoing; More Needed
Add more work sites and more vocational training possibilities, in WERC program; involve probation youth in work experience programs which offer academic credit as well as vocational training; and partner with school districts and the COE to develop ROPP Programs with open entry/open exit for youth on field supervision; partly accomplished through Arbor Employment & Training, City Corp, and Challenge Centers of Oxnard.	WERC has been eliminated; it and other vocational services are Still Needed
<b>Out of Home / Residential Care</b>	
Seek to develop additional foster care, foster family agency, group home, specialized group home, and residential treatment beds, including specialized placements for girls.	Accomplished and More Still Needed
Continue to seek and/or develop 'Cool Homes' as an alternative to placement in Juvenile Hall for youth who could safely be released except for the fact that their homes are chaotic and unsafe.	Accomplished and Still Needed

Seek to develop in-patient, residential drug, and mental health treatment services for teens and younger children, particularly those diagnosed with serious mental illnesses at younger ages.	Still Needed
Develop and/or enhance specialized placements for seriously mentally ill juveniles.	Still Needed
Explore the possibility of contracting with Vista Del Mar to use the currently vacant, 20 – 24 bed, Pacific Shores facility as a juvenile residential treatment center.	Still Needed
Develop residential drug treatment beds for boys.	Still Needed
Develop additional placement options and gender-specific services for girls. Partly accomplished through JJCPA – Enhanced Institutional Services/Girl's Incorporated of Carpinteria.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Develop and/or expand transitional housing capacity for youth awaiting placement, and especially for those who need special placements for mental health, drug and alcohol and/or sex offender treatment, and for some returning from placement, foster care, or camp.	Still Needed
Develop and/or expand independent living home(s) for 17 – 18 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Still Needed
<b>Institutions and Aftercare</b>	
Expand custody capacity by completing, staffing, and occupying the Juvenile Justice Complex.	Accomplished
Expand former JRP.	JRP should be Reinstated
Provide additional resources for the county's existing institutions, most particularly mental health services and staff, as well as drug and alcohol counselors and program staff.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Create full service Day Reporting Center(s) to enable structured reentry to the community and aftercare services; partly accomplished through JJCPA – Aftercare/Day Reporting.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Assess youths' strengths; develop and implement case plans for youth in-custody and during aftercare.	Accomplished and Ongoing

Ensure the provision of coordinated aftercare services.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Facilitate continuing mental health and drug and alcohol services, as well as educational support, anger management, parenting training, and other necessary services in the Day Reporting Center during the period after custody or out-of-home placement.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Partner with schools and the County Office of Education to help transition youth into school as they leave institutions and/or placement. Assign a Probation Agency staff position to manage transitions and additionally work with youth in Gateway.	Accomplished and Ongoing
Develop JRP-like facility for pre-emancipation.	Still Needed

Figure 3: 2007 Gaps and Programs Needing Expansion

# 2007 GAPS AND PROGRAMS NEEDING EXPANSION

PREVENTION	EARLY INTERVENTION	INTERMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS	OUT OF HOME/ RESIDENTIAL	INSTITUTIONS/ AFTER CARE
Involve Faith/Business Communities	Expedite Citation Processing for Informals	Develop Programming for Young Adults	Develop More Placements and More Local Placements	Expand HRI and TRE
Implement Nurse Family Partnership	Expand Kinship Support Services Program	Recreate WERC	Expand Independent Living Capacity	Expand Programming at JF
Develop Additional Pro Social Activities	Expand Probation's Use of CFSP	Develop Interventions for Non 707(b) Offenders	Develop Transitional Housing	Develop Interventions for Non 707(b) Offenders
	Develop Leadership Training Academy	Replicate DRC & ROPP in the East County	Develop Interventions for Non 707(b) Offenders	Expand Literacy Program and Develop GED Focus
	Develop Additional Cool Homes – widen eligibility	Enhance Intensive Supervision in East County	Explore Regional Efforts to Treat Mentally Ill Offenders	Enhance Transition Services
<b>ACROSS THE CONTINUUM / SYSTEMWIDE</b>				
Enhance Dual Diagnosis Services and Treatment				
Enhance Gang Involvement Reduction and Prevention				
Enhance Mental Health Treatment and Services				
Enhance Reading Services				
Address Schools / Education Issues				
Enhance Service Learning / Community Service Work				
Enhance Skill Development				
Enhance Substance Abuse Treatment and Services				
Address Transportation Issues				
Enhance Vocational Training / Job Readiness and Job Placement				
Enhance Cross Training				

## **V. GAPS AND PROGRAMS NEEDING EXPANSION**

What this study found is most impressive on a number of levels. The array of programs in place (see Figure 1), as well as the number of previously identified gaps which have been addressed (see Figure 2 and Table 11), clearly demonstrate that Ventura County is attentive to the needs of youth and families in and outside of the juvenile justice system. Moreover, the County continues to utilize interagency planning, partnerships, collaborative program delivery and blended funding throughout its service delivery models. Multi-agency collaboration is one of the system's greatest strengths and has been extremely effective in crafting and maintaining the comprehensive, effective juvenile justice service continuum in place today.

The Probation Agency has been, and continues to be, assertive about innovation, taking responsible risks and implementing models which research shows will benefit the system. The Probation Agency continues to test new service delivery models, new relationships, and new ways of doing business, while also maintaining standards of excellence for its ongoing mandates and functions. The Probation Agency believes in and practices strong early intervention, but understands and continues to develop the equally strong graduated sanctions that are needed to provide meaningful consequences in appropriate cases.

Having been proactive in seeking grants and other funding to create new initiatives and expand existing interventions, Ventura County has also been conscientious about sustaining successful efforts when grants are completed and/or initial funding expires. Agencies in the county have learned to leverage funds and to bring their resources together to expand all of their capabilities.

Ventura County has consistently sought to move its youth and family service delivery systems forward and to position itself to address new and emerging challenges. As demographics shift and new populations are 'realigned' under the County's control, the Probation Agency has sought to recognize both its strengths and gaps in service that require attention.

In order to identify its current gaps or deficiencies, the JJCC convened a series of focus groups composed of a broad sample of individuals from both the public and private sectors involved in juvenile justice and youth service in Ventura County.<sup>5</sup> The program, intervention, and/or service gaps, displayed in Figure 3 on the previous page, represent the best thinking in the area. They are the efforts these stakeholders believe are important to building an even more fully developed continuum of responses to juvenile crime and correction.

No one expects that all – or even most – of these gaps can be filled at once. Some are obviously more immediate than others; some are more easily tackled than others. Given the nation's fiscal downturn and the state budget shortfall anticipated for the coming year, Ventura County must expect to be impacted as well. Financial realities

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<sup>5</sup> Please see Appendix A, Participants in JJCPA Plan Update Focus Groups

suggest it will be difficult to maintain what exists, let alone attempt new initiatives at this time. However, this updated CMJJP and the gaps and services needing expansion, which follow, comprise the platform from which Ventura County can continue to plan for the future and to pursue public and private funding, grants, foundation support, and whatever other dollars may become available.

In the following presentation of gaps and programs needing expansion, in addition to those shown in specific parts of the juvenile justice continuum, there are also gaps that were considered "systemwide" and others described as "general." These are delineated following the continuum-specific gaps below. Some of the systemwide gaps are particularly urgent and require attention as soon as possible.

## **PREVENTION**

### Involve the Faith Community and Business Communities

- Reach out to educate the faith and business communities and ask for their help, perhaps with after school activities, programming for middle school age youth, shelter care/cool homes, mentoring, job readiness and placement, etc.

### Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)

- Implement NFP to prevent pregnant and parenting youth from entering the justice system. Over the last two years, 119 probation youth were pregnant and 40 were parenting young children. NFP services may have had significant positive effect on those youth, keeping them from entering or penetrating further into the justice system.

### Pro-Social Activities for Youth After School, Evenings and Weekends

- Need more PAL programs (although it is reported that there is room for more youth in most PAL programs).
- Augment Boys & Girls Club activities.
- Encourage the faith and business communities to develop daytime activities and job placement opportunities for youth.

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

### Citation Processing / Informals

- Expedite citation review so consequences occur sooner; youth need to experience a timely connection between their misbehavior and a sanction.

### Expand the Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) – immediate implementation

- KSSP is an HSA program providing tangible goods (Target cards, gas cards for transportation, taxi vouchers, enrollment in extracurricular activities, etc.) and other services geared to help children living with relatives be self-supporting, and to teach and help them make life decisions.

Expand the Parent Project for Early Intervention youth and families (as well as others throughout the continuum).

### Expand Probation Agency's Use of the Children's Full Service Partnership (CFSP) – immediate implementation

- CFSP deals with youth early on, identifies them at the Youth Service level, does mental health assessments, and provides / refers to needed services. The services youth are pointed toward can continue even if those youth become 602 wards.

### Leadership Training Academy

- Develop a leadership academy for middle school-age youth who are beginning to get in trouble.

### Mentors

- Need mentors for younger youth, especially males.
- Need mentors for serious male offenders.
- Need mentors for pre-adjudicated, Early Intervention youth, as well as those who are post-adjudicated.
- Need mentors / navigators for gang-involved youth to provide a consistent positive presence and take the place of gang supports.
- Mentors could be used to transport youth and families to services.
- Lions and Rotary Clubs are interested in helping with mentors; are talking to Boys & Girls Clubs and Juvenile Court Judges about ways they can help.

### Shelter Care / Cool Homes

- Need place where law enforcement can take youth who must be removed from their homes for a while but are not eligible / appropriate for JF; need places in addition to Interface Children Family Services' Cool Homes which do not take youth with violence, theft, or substance abuse issues.
- Cool Homes should be located in all the cities in the county; this will ease jurisdictional issues for law enforcement when responding to crises in Cool Homes.

### Tagging Abatement

- Need for increased intervention with taggers countywide.
- Countywide Gang Task Force recently developed a committee to address graffiti vandalism countywide. The committee is made up of deputy district attorneys, law enforcement, and probation; its purpose is to explore more effective ways to deal with taggers and graffiti vandalism.

### Truancy

- Ensure THRIVE / truancy program is sustained.
- Enhance truancy interventions in addition to THRIVE.

### Tutoring for Youth Service Clients on Informal Probation

- These youths' academic performance starts slipping almost at once; youth in Youth Services who are challenged academically, including those in CFSP, need specialized tutoring services in their homes.

## **INTERMEDIATE INTERVENTIONS**

### Develop Programming for Young Adults (19 – 24 years old)

- This is especially important for youth returned from DJJ and those in local custody beyond their 18th birthday.

### Develop a JRP facility and/or program

- Recreate the former, successful JRP for Ventura County offenders, including those returning from DJJ, to enable youth and young adults to do real work in and for the community, make reparations, and pay restitution.
- Consider a regional facility / program (with Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties) for youth returning from, and those no longer eligible for commitment to, DJJ.

### Replicate existing JJCPA throughout the County.

- Replicate DRC and ROPP in East County.
- Enhance intensive supervision capacity in East County.

## **OUT OF HOME / RESIDENTIAL**

### Housing for juveniles (10 – 17 years old)

- Need more Independent Living housing.
- Need supported housing for youth leaving the JF or placement and/or returning from DJJ.

### Housing for young adults (18 – 24 years old)

- Need supported housing for youth aging out of placements, foster care, DJJ, etc.
- Need transitional housing countywide.

### Placement

- Need more local placements.
- Need more placements for youth with serious mental health issues.
- Need more placements for youth with sex abuse issues.
- Need placements for girls who are pregnant.
- Need more RCL 13 and 14 group homes in the county.
- Need more transitional housing for youth coming back from placement.

## **INSTITUTIONS / AFTERCARE**

### Communication between JF and Field Services

- Increase communication regarding clients' assessed needs, case plans, and release dates.

### Gender-Specific Programming

- Develop aftercare program for girls leaving JF.
- Provide more Understanding Relationship Violence programming in JF.
- Ensure full range of gender-specific programming in JF, including vocational and job readiness.

### Healthy Returns Initiative (HRI)

- Expand HRI to serve every youth who has been in JF, whether or not the youth has health or mental health issues, i.e., provide intensive aftercare for three (3) months on small caseloads to all youth leaving JF.

### Juvenile Facilities (JF)

- Need more staff to oversee programs, get youth to services, implement programs like the Military Vocational Program (MVP), mentor youth in custody, and provide counseling and other services.
- Need additional Behavioral Health staff for service delivery and psych evaluations. Evaluations are not getting done quickly enough to ensure cases being heard and/or resolved as expeditiously as possible.
- Need volunteer dentists and dental hygienists.
- Need more substance abuse services, including perhaps substance abuse prevention education for all youth in custody.
- Need intensive gang programming such as the program operated by Los Compadres in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria Juvenile Halls.
- Need housing at JF for mentally ill juvenile offenders.
- Reinstigate Violence Intervention Program (VIP).
- Expand Targeted Reentry Program (TRE) countywide.
- Provide Understanding Relationship Violence program for girls.

### Literacy Program with GED Focus

- Create a young adults' Literacy Program at Work Furlough for offenders coming out of or no longer eligible for commitment to DJJ.
- Encourage GED programming for youth in JF and/or on field supervision who are unable or unlikely to complete a traditional high school curriculum.

### Facilities, Supervision, Services, and Aftercare for Non-707(b) Offenders

- Consider using a currently empty detention pod and a currently empty half-pod in commitment to house and program DJJ returnees at JF.
- Consider using a unit at the Work Furlough Facility to house and program older DJJ returnees and non-707(b) offenders.
- Consider developing an intensive day reporting program, potentially with supported housing and electronic monitoring, for these young adult offenders.
- Consider joining with San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties to house and provide services on a regional basis, perhaps by developing an intensive program / treatment facility to serve one or more high-need sub-populations such as sex offenders or those with serious mental health problems.

### Transition Services and Programs

- Enhance interagency communication and collaboration with various governmental and community-based agencies.
- Develop additional supportive transition programming.
- Probation to create a Transition Team.
- Help identify resources for youth in transition.
- Consider developing and providing a resource card to youth leaving JF.

## **ACROSS THE CONTINUUM / SYSTEMWIDE**

### Culture Specific Programming

- Develop more culturally competent, grassroots services in neighborhoods.
- Reach out to various communities to foster relationships.

### Dual Diagnosis Services and Treatment

- Need additional treatment and services for deep-end dual diagnosis youth. While enhanced Adelante! works with these youth, it has to have a willing client. Behavioral Health is used for some of the groups and counseling; however, more is needed.

### Gang Involvement Reduction and Prevention

- Expand Gang Violence Suppression (GVS) programs countywide.
- Need more gang intervention efforts for 'front end' youth and youth on aftercare to prevent re-involvement upon youths' return to their communities.
- Need mentors / navigators for gang-involved youth to provide a consistent positive presence and take the place of gang supports.

### Mental Health Treatment and Services

- Need a seamless continuum of care.
- Need more bilingual therapy, more MFTs who can do counseling in Spanish, especially with monolingual parents of bilingual youth in the system.
- Need housing for mentally ill juvenile offenders in the community and at the JF.
- Need intensive day treatment.
- Need treatment for youth with deep-end mental health issues who do not meet Adelante! criteria.
- Expand Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) and other treatment programs in JF and on field supervision / aftercare.
- Expand Children's Full Service Partnership (CFSP), funded by the MHSA / Prop 63, to enable more Youth Services / Early Intervention clients to get needed mental health services.
- Provide tutoring for youth in CFSP – *This is being looked into for immediate implementation.*
- Ensure that Adelante! is sustained.
- Research issues related to minors refusing to take their medications.
- Need residential mental health treatment facility(ies) for children, youth, and young adults.
- Need longer-term mental health treatment facility(ies) for DJJ parolees and youth no longer eligible for DJJ commitment.
- Consider possibility of a regional mental health facility for justice system youth from Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties to serve both existing populations and those coming to the counties via DJJ realignment.
- Fund a dedicated prosecutor / public defender for Adelante! / Juvenile Drug Court.

### Reading Services

- Need more reading specialists and support throughout the system.
- DRC has a very effective reading specialist.
- JF and field units require specialized literacy support in order to facilitate clients' success.

### Schools / Education

- Full day educational programs should be prioritized in lieu of independent studies.
- Rethink practice of placing all Drug Court and drug treatment participants in Gateway and of requiring all youth exiting the JF to attend Gateway.
- Enhance schools' participation in early intervention with young children.
- Generate more support for children and families who are identified by first and second grade teachers as students exhibiting risk factors.
- Enhance schools' efforts regarding truancy.
- Schools educate the Court and the Probation Agency regarding 26.5 Education Code services – *Immediate Implementation*.

### Service Learning / Community Service Work

- Re-create Juvenile Restitution Program (JRP).
- Establish work crews, supervised by Probation Agency staff, CBO staff, or volunteers.
- Reinstigate community service projects.

### Skill Development

- Enhance teaching of basic life skills in JF and for youth assigned to field services, including at prevention and early intervention levels – cover such skills as using computers, handling money, and applying for college or vocational school.
- Reading skills.
- Parenting programs to enable parents to help their children, provide strength-based services, and bring services to youth and families.

### Substance Abuse Services and Treatment

- Need a seamless continuum of care across the county and across the system (from prevention through aftercare).
- More intensive treatment and day treatment services, including among other things a Recovery Classroom.
- Need residential treatment facility(ies) / in-patient treatment.
- Need enhanced services in JF.
- Need enhanced services and treatment in East Valley.
- Ensure that Drug Court is sustained.
- Need Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups for teens.
- Fund a dedicated prosecutor / public defender for Drug Court.

### Transportation

- Need to facilitate transportation of youth and families to Court, Probation, CBO programming, work sites, etc.

### Vocational Training / Job Readiness and Employment

- Conduct vocational assessments for all youth in JF and on field supervision.
- Provide vocational training and job readiness services, emphasizing employability skills, in JF and for youth on field supervision.

## **GENERAL**

### Countywide Legislative Advocacy Group for Youth and Juvenile Justice Issues

- Consider developing an advocacy body and/or a "Juvenile Justice Cabinet" to provide a forum for ongoing communication, collaboration, advocacy, and legislative support.

### Enhance Cross Training of Line Staff from Probation, HSA, and Public Health

- Develop regular and ongoing mechanisms to enable staff who deal with WIC Section 300 (dependency) and WIC Section 600 youth to learn each other's issues, strengths and limitations, and to facilitate 'speaking the same language' with the families and youth they serve.

### Improve Communication between Probation and CBOs

- Need to be able to share information about available resources, programming, requirements and criteria, etc. – *Being looked at for Immediate Implementation.*
- CBOs would very much like to have a standardized / shared intake system that everyone could access.

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESPONSES NEEDED  
TO FURTHER AUGMENT  
THE JUVENILE JUSTICE CONTINUUM**

- Develop additional services, including intensive day treatment and residential treatment facilities, for seriously mentally ill youth, deep-end substance-abusing youth, and deep-end dually diagnosed youth.
- Recreate JRP for youth and young adults to enable service learning, enhance the number of work projects and community service projects available, prepare youth to find and keep meaningful employment, and increase restitution to victims.
- Increase vocational skill development and job readiness training opportunities for girls and boys in Youth Services, on field supervision, in the JF, and on aftercare.
- Expand Gang Violence Suppression Programs (GVS) countywide and expand other gang intervention and tagging abatement efforts.
- Develop facilities, supervision services, and aftercare for non-707(b) offenders returning from, and those no longer eligible for, state custody.
- Develop programs for young adults (19 – 24 years old).
- Replicate Day Reporting Center and ROPP as well as other existing JJCPA programs in additional parts of the county.
- Implement and/or expand the Probation Agency's use of Nurse Family Partnership, Kinship Support Services Program, and Children's Full Service Partnership.
- Expand the Healthy Returns Initiative to provide intensive aftercare for all youth leaving the JF.
- Enhance programming at the JF, especially vocational training, mental health services, psych evals, substance abuse services, and intensive anti-gang programming.
- Expand the Targeted Reentry Program (TRE).
- Develop additional placements, particularly those for mentally ill youth, youth with sex abuse issues, girls who are pregnant, and others with special needs.

- ❑ Create transitional housing for youth awaiting placement, in need of special placements, returning from placement, and leaving the JF; and create independent living capacity for youth working toward emancipation, aging out of placement, etc.
- ❑ Expedite processing of informal cases to ensure consequences occur as soon after the illegal, unacceptable behavior as possible.
- ❑ Enhance literacy programming with a GED focus and provide additional Reading Specialists throughout the justice system.
- ❑ Develop additional Cool Homes and widen acceptance criteria.
- ❑ Increase truancy abatement efforts.
- ❑ Expand programs and pro-social activities aimed at younger, at-risk youth, including positive role models, mentoring, and tutoring.
- ❑ Develop more pro-social activities for youth after school, evenings, and weekends.
- ❑ Sustain Drug Court and Adelante! Mental Health Court.

## VI. VENTURA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE STRATEGY

Ventura County's Juvenile Justice Strategy continues to be 'balanced' in that it strives to empower youth, families, and communities; restore victims; and develop offender competency and accountability.

Ventura's strategy also incorporates the key principles of graduated sanctions, namely to provide:

- Immediate low-level sanctions in the community for first time, non-violent and low-risk offenders.
- Intermediate sanctions within the community for more serious offenders.
- Secure residential programs for the most violent offenders to remove high-risk offenders from the community for a period of time.
- Aftercare programs that provide the highest level of social control and treatment services for offenders being transitioned back into the community.

Ventura's strategy is built on collaboration, interagency planning, partnerships, collaborative program delivery, and blended funding. Multi-agency collaboration is one of the system's greatest strengths and has been extremely effective in crafting and maintaining the comprehensive, effective juvenile justice service continuum in place today.

Finally, Ventura's strategy operates from a platform of strength-based, evidence-based, and best practices in its service to the community. The Probation Agency continues to test new service delivery models, new relationships, and new ways of doing business, while also maintaining standards of excellence for its ongoing mandates and functions. The Probation Agency has been, and continues to be, assertive about innovation, taking responsible risks, and implementing models that research and/or other jurisdictions' experience suggest will benefit the system.

The goals of Ventura County's Juvenile Justice Strategy are to:

- Continue to enhance the juvenile justice continuum's strengths,
- Reduce the challenges facing it,
- Continue its collaborative, interagency planning and implementation of juvenile justice programs and services,
- Leverage existing resources and optimize resource sharing, and
- Evaluate its efforts in order to maintain what works and eliminate inefficient and/or ineffective interventions.<sup>6</sup>

Because there is no additional funding currently available, and because they continue to prove effective and successful, Ventura County will continue to use its JJCPA allocation to support the following programs currently funded through JJCPA:

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<sup>6</sup> Ventura County Comprehensive Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Plan, January 2001, pp. 55-56

AFTERCARE/DAY REPORTING

ENHANCED INSTITUTIONAL SERVICES

EXPANDED EARLY INTERVENTION

GANG VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

HABITUAL OFFENDER PREVENTION ENDEAVOR (HOPE) (aka ROPP)

JUVENILE DRUG COURT

THRIVE: TRUANCY HABITS REDUCED INCREASES VITAL EDUCATION

Ventura will initiate implementation of additional elements of this updated CMJJP as resources allow, and will seek public and private funding, grants, foundation support, and /or other potential funding streams if and when opportunities become available.

Ventura will continue to evaluate and monitor existing services to ensure their ongoing viability; making modifications when necessary to ensure that the juvenile justice continuum maintains the highest possible level of service to youth, families, and communities throughout Ventura County.

**APPENDIX A**  
**PARTICIPANTS IN CMJJP UPDATE**  
**FOCUS GROUPS**