

## INTRODUCTION

On September 28, 2001, Marybel Batjer, Chief of Staff for the Governor, directed the Work Study Group (WSG) of the Juvenile Justice Commission to provide a report to the Governor's Fundamental Review Committee on the status of the juvenile justice system in Nevada. The letter specifically asked the WSG to do the following: (1) present an overview of the system; (2) identify any structural problems; (3) identify service shortfalls and/or overlaps; (4) recommend potential statutory changes; (5) articulate budgetary implications; and (6) recommend personnel and/or administrative changes that should be considered during the next legislative session. The WSG has worked diligently to investigate these issues and to present this report on the behalf of the Nevada Juvenile Justice Commission.

## OVERVIEW

The Nevada Juvenile Justice Commission was created pursuant to the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Its members are appointed by the Governor and serve terms of four years. The principal purpose of the Commission is to advise the Governor and other State policy makers on matters relating to juvenile justice and delinquency prevention and to make recommendations concerning the expenditure of federal discretionary funds aimed at reducing delinquency. The Work Study Group was created by the Commission to focus on specific issues affecting the Nevada juvenile justice system. Its members are appointed by the Commission and represent an array of juvenile justice experts, including District Court judges, juvenile probation officers and State juvenile justice professionals.

The juvenile justice system in Nevada has developed over the years into a model that combines efficient use of both State and county resources. Although long-term correctional services are the responsibility of the State, probation and detention services are provided at the county or regional level. For example in FY 01 26,040 youth were involved in some level of local intervention or supervision, only 532 of these youth actually were referred to the State's correctional programs. This system has proven itself effective over the decades and has been able to adapt to the changing needs and the explosive growth of Nevada.

Since 1990, Nevada has added 978,682\* in population, representing a 79.17% increase. According to the State Demographer, the youth population ages 8-18 (the definition of the juvenile population as defined by Nevada statutes) increased 46.7% in just the six year period of 1995 through 2001. And at least in parts of the State, the population increase appears to be reflected in the proportions of at risk children. For example, the Clark County School District estimates that 40% of its students between Grades 1 and 8 fall below the U.S. Department of Agriculture poverty line. In view of the increasingly unbalanced population dispersion geographically, the role of the State has never been more critical.

\*State Demographer Report.

EXHIBIT <u>E7</u>	JuvJustice	Document consists of <u>15</u> pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entire document provided.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Due to size limitations, pages ____ through ____ provided.		
A copy of the complete document is available through the Research Library (775-684-6827 or e-mail library@icb.state.nv.us)		
Meeting Date		<u>1-15-04</u>

During the 1990's, because of Nevada's exponential growth, the juvenile justice system was under extreme pressure. The system struggled under the lack of a statewide comprehensive approach to cope with the burgeoning population, which in turn led to the growing incidence of delinquency, increased rates of pre-adjudicatory detention, and overcrowded correctional institutions.

In 1992, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) assessed the status of the Nevada system, and noted the following deficiencies: "persistent overcrowding at state and county facilities, few effective alternatives to confinement, disparate commitment practices, and the lack of adequate information to plan for the future and assess system performance." (Siegel, et al., National Center for Juvenile Justice, *An Assessment of the Nevada Juvenile Justice System Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations*)

Escalating commitments to state youth correctional facilities in the 1990's forced State and local juvenile justice agencies to re-evaluate their methods for providing interventions and treatment to adjudicated youth in Nevada. Despite the expansion of Wittenburg Hall in Washoe County and the juvenile detention facility in Clark County in the 1970's, development of the Carson City detention facility in 1979, and the expansion of the Douglas County China Spring Youth Camp in 1991, overcrowding at the Nevada Youth Training Center and the Caliente Youth Center remained a serious problem. The lack of capacity was exacerbated by the elimination of the Probation Subsidy Program, this contributed to detention center overcrowding as youth waited for placement in the State facilities. For example, 70 youth served "dead time" of over 30 days waiting placements in March 1997.

The 1997 Legislature responded to a system in crisis, which by then was subject to court orders attempting to address overcrowded conditions. That legislative session provided mechanisms and funding for immediate short-term relief in the form of increased facility capacity, along with funding to develop and expand community-based programs to address over-crowding. Through extraordinary foresight, the Legislators funded two interim study committees charged with developing a comprehensive strategy for improving the quality and range of services available to juvenile offenders in their own communities.

After examining the experience of other states' efforts to prevent delinquency and reduce institutional placement of juveniles, the 1997 interim Legislative Study Committee on Juvenile Justice (ACR 57) adopted the following policy statement for guidance:

The State of Nevada is experiencing growth related pressures in the juvenile justice system at every level, from community based interventions to state correctional institutions. It is vitally important that measures be taken to ensure that counties and state cooperate as much as possible in the planning and development of programs to meet the demand generated by this explosive growth. In light of the fact that counties are responsible for certain parts of the system and the state is responsible for other

portions, it is necessary for both parties to ensure that the resources we have are serving the proper profile of offender and making the best use of resources. The possibility of collaboratively developing services in a manner that benefits both parties exists. The Ohio plan can be used as a model to pilot the development of a funding mechanism that pays for institutional placements but subsidized the county for keeping youth in the community. The monies could be used to develop or purchase more community based services and to enhance those that currently exist. In the long run, this approach will reduce the demand for correctional beds and the related construction and operational costs.

In 1997, the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) initiated the Community Corrections Partnership Block Grant (CCPBG) and the Transitional Community Reintegration Program (TCRP). This was done to reduce commitment to state facilities in cooperation with the counties. Both offered funding for programming at the local level and provided relief within the State so that youth could be assessed and transferred to the appropriate correctional placement from detention within 30 days. The opening in June 2000 of the 96-bed Summit View Youth Correctional Center for serious/chronic male offenders also increased capacity at the state level. However, this facility is not currently available to the juvenile justice system pending the awarding of a new private provider contract.

Among the options considered for reducing the need for additional expansion of state facilities was the "Ohio Plan" model, cited by the Legislative Study Committee. The Ohio Plan provides financial incentives to local governments for keeping youthful offenders in community-based programs rather than in state institutions. While analyzing the data, it was determined that Nevada's statewide commitment rate for male offenders had been significantly reduced as a result of the Community Corrections Partnership Block Grant (CCPBG) and the Transitional Community Reintegration Program (TCRP) which were implemented in the Fall of 1997. In fact, the programs developed were proven to be so effective in reducing commitments that shifting to the somewhat radical funding formula called for in the Ohio Plan seemed inadvisable. Effective community-based programs do not represent the complete spectrum of services necessary to address the needs of this juvenile justice population. Nevada's increasing population will also drive the need for additional correctional beds within the next decade.

In 2001, at the request of DCFS, the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ), provided an updated assessment of the status of the juvenile justice system in Nevada. Among the significant findings were the following:

- (1) Between 1989 and 1997, Nevada dropped from the highest rate in the nation for commitment to State training schools to eighth place. The juvenile justice system fully expects this rate to be further reduced as additional years of data become available.

- (2) African American youth continued to be disproportionately represented as to commitments. However community based alternative programs funded by CCPBG and other sources had resulted in a significant decrease in disproportion.
- (3) Nevada lacked a standard classification system for juvenile sex offenders in 1991. By the time of the most recent study the State had made “significant progress in this important area.”
- (4) Although only limited information on mental health problems had been available to NCCD in 1991, the 2001 study noted that “the proportion of detained youth with diagnosed mental health disorders [at Washoe County’s juvenile detention center] approached or exceeded 50 percent...” Further, the perception of increased incidence of mental health problems in Nevada was consistent with juvenile justice research nationally. National independent studies show youth in local detention facilities, with mental health diagnosis, typically exceed 65% of the population detained.
- (5) The lack of a secure State facility for chronic and serious offenders had been remedied by the opening of Summit View Youth Correctional Center in 2000. [Note: This finding has been jeopardized by the recent closure of Summit View and the placement of offenders at great distance from Nevada, along with the uncertain future of the institution.]
- (6) Nevada had made “marked improvement” in overcrowding and waiting periods associated with commitment to State facilities and had “made progress in developing and implementing community-based alternatives to commitment.”<sup>1</sup>
- (7) Despite the existence of two juvenile mental health treatment centers, Desert Willow Treatment Center (DWTC) (which opened in Las Vegas in 1998) and Adolescent Treatment Center (ATC) in Sparks, there are still serious issues relating to the capacity and meeting the demand for services.
- (8) There is no official policy to prohibit overcrowding at State facilities, and the staff-to-resident ratios at both Nevada Youth Training Center (NYTC) and Caliente Youth Center (CYC) do not meet national standards.
- (9) NCJJ noted that at the time of its study, state officials reported that “not a single status offender” was in a State facility, however, there were “less serious delinquent youth who could be served in alternative settings” but for “service gaps, scarce resources and/or other factors.”
- (10) Despite progress in developing community-based programs, “[t]here is still not a coordinated range of private contracted programs to serve youth” presenting different levels of needs and risks, especially for females.

#### **NO IDENTIFIED OVERLAPS**

On a positive note, there is no evidence of overlapping or redundant services in Nevada's juvenile justice system. As described above, over the years, the counties and the State have adapted to changing needs and growth patterns and have adjusted their roles and responsibilities accordingly.

While both studies cited above identified areas requiring improvement to ensure that the system operates more effectively and efficiently, they also recognized that the system has achieved significant progress in critical realms and is operating very well in many areas. As such, the WSG believes that there is no identified need to change the system structure that currently exists, but rather administrators should continue making improvements to it.

The State of Nevada and county juvenile justice agencies need access to services that are not necessarily available in all jurisdictions, such as specialized sex offender programs or county-run camps. Resource sharing has existed on an informal basis for years; formalization of the process through interlocal agreements and memorandums of understanding would facilitate appropriate youths from northern and rural Nevada to be placed in Spring Mountain Youth Camp or specialized programs based in Clark County. Conversely, certain Clark County youths could be placed at China Springs Youth Camp or other programs around the State that better fit their treatment needs.

Stakeholders in Nevada's juvenile justice organizations fully understand that collaboration is essential to insuring effective service to our youth and also to maximize our limited funding. In that regard, as the WSG discussed the issues of primary concern identified in the studies, several themes continually emerged. These included the following:

### **SHORTFALLS IN THE SYSTEM**

**Funding Deficiencies.** As is described more fully below, nationally and in Nevada, funding deficiencies have led to gaps, and sometimes substantial absences, of critical juvenile services. This has been particularly true in the areas of mental health and substance abuse. Like many other states, Nevada has relied significantly on federal funding to bolster its delinquency prevention and intervention services. Of particular concern at the moment is the anticipated 30% cut in certain categories of federal funding. For example, with respect to JAIBG, the State expects to be cut approximately \$400,000, from \$2.3 million to \$1.9 million; and for Title V, the reduction will be approximately \$74,000, from \$262,000 to \$188,000. This will create a situation similar to 1987 fiscal recession when youth programs were cut across the nation and subsequently resulted in a dramatic increases in juvenile delinquency. These reductions come at a time when our population continues to explode, including a disproportionate number of at-risk youth.

**Mental Health Services.** Perhaps the single most pressing need in the system is the need for enhanced mental health services available to children and their families in the area of assessment and referral, and both outpatient and residential treatment. This crying need is apparent throughout the public systems that serve children in Nevada – beginning with pre-school, foster care and the school system. For example, it is

estimated that approximately 30% of all children in foster care suffer from serious emotional disorders (SED). Such a condition, if untreated, leads to behavioral problems in school, high risk for school failure and the problems that attend school failure including, school drop out or expulsion and delinquency. Once these youth come in contact with the juvenile justice system, they stay in the system longer and require mental health treatment not generally available.

Juvenile justice agencies in Nevada and across the nation have historically not received the funding and other resources necessary to address the growing needs of the juvenile population. The lack of resources, coupled with inadequate coordination of services among the juvenile justice system, schools, mental health service providers, child welfare and other related programs contributes to incomplete service delivery. One serious consequence of these deficiencies is escalation within the juvenile justice system – the tendency to bootstrap juvenile offenders to higher levels of correctional care than is warranted by their circumstances.

Recent national research and data collected from Nevada provide justification for a comprehensive plan to address these issues:

The November 2000 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention bulletin on *Co-occurrence of Delinquency and Other Problem Behaviors* found statistical significance in the relationship between persistent mental health problems and persistent serious delinquency for both males and females. At one study site, one-third of females who were serious delinquents also had mental health problems. The study also documented drug use as the most frequently co-occurring behavior with serious delinquency.

- The Coalition for Juvenile Justice's 2000 Annual Report entitled, *Handle With Care – Serving the Mental Health Needs of Young Offenders*, cited:
  - Between 50 to 75 percent of incarcerated youth have diagnosable mental health disorders.
  - Youth suicide in juvenile detention and corrections facilities occurs four times more often than youth suicide in the general public.
  - Youth of color, particularly males, frequently are misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all.
  - Early screening often means that a youth can be diverted into a safer and more appropriate mental health setting.

In Nevada, the significance of the mental health issue has already been recognized:

- ACR 57 and ACR 13 identified mental health and substance abuse as significant factors to be addressed in delinquency prevention efforts.
- Between fiscal years 1997 and 2000, twenty-two (22) youth (20 males and 2 females) were committed to the Division of Child and Family Services pursuant to NRS 62.213 requiring mental health treatment and correctional care. As a rule, such youth

stay in the juvenile justice system longer and require extensive mental health treatment that the State's juvenile training centers are not staffed or funded to provide. FY01 and FY02 through December 2001 show an additional nineteen (19) commitments for the eighteen-month period. This is an average of 6.3 every six months, compared to the 1997 to 2000 forty-eight month period of 2.2 every six months. This would project to over fifty (50) commitments for the fiscal year 2001 through 2004 period.

- A March 2, 2000, snapshot of youth detained in Washoe County's Wittenburg Hall revealed that 49% (40) of 81 youth had diagnosed mental health conditions.
- Even small regional facilities have felt the impact of high rates of mental illness among their residents and the added burden imposed upon staff. Of the 15 delinquent youth detained at the Northeastern Nevada Juvenile Center in Elko on January 12, 2001, 66% (10) had mental health concerns and 53% (8) had substance abuse issues. Of the 16 juveniles detained at Leighton Hall in Winnemucca on October 1, 2000, 38% (6) were on "suicide watch."

These statistics document the overwhelming need for additional services to address the mental health problems of youth in Nevada's juvenile justice system. Effectively addressing the needs of youth at the local level through community-based programs can be expected to produce less reliance on State institutional beds and expensive long term alternate placement, along with greater success and improved positive outcomes in diversion, probation, and parole programs.

Early screening and identification often means that a youth can be diverted into a safer and more cost effective mental health setting. Unfortunately, all too often, limited access to these services result in out-of home placements; school failure; prolonged lingering in detention facilities and/or rapid escalation to confinement in correctional facilities.

**Substance Abuse Services.** The link between substance abuse and delinquency is well known. There is a need to improve the availability of substance abuse services at every level -- prevention, intervention, and treatment. As indicated in the NCJJ report, preliminary data from the first large-scale longitudinal study of alcohol, drug, and mental disorders (ADM) among juvenile detainees show that two-thirds have one or more ADM disorders. NCJJ also noted that in 1997, 15 percent of Nevada juvenile offenders in custody were held on drug specific offenses. Nevada ranked fifth highest for in-custody drug offenders nationally -- two-thirds higher than the national average. There is still no comprehensive range of substance abuse services at all levels of the juvenile justice system. Training centers and community-based treatment programs experience persistent waiting lists.

- The January 13, 1999, *Nevada Institutional Survey* found that approximately 67 percent of 176 boys at the NYTC; 69 percent of the 67 girls and 59 percent of the 81 boys at the CYC were reported to have substance abuse problems. Furthermore, approximately 19 percent of the 456 youth incarcerated in juvenile institutions had records identifying drug offenses as the most serious offense adjudicated. Nevada

statistics exceeded the available national data of delinquent juveniles committed to public facilities for drug offenses by 210 percent.

- Based on extrapolations of data collected on a sampling of the October 1999 Juvenile Probation and Spring Mountain Youth Camp (SMYC) caseloads, the July 12, 2000, Clark County Family and Youth Services *Substance Abuse Study* revealed that 62 percent (1161) of 1,874 probationers had alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems of varying degrees of severity. Of the 80 youth at SMYC, 49 (61.5%) were reported to have serious AOD problems, with 25 (30.8%) having medium and 6 (7.7%) having low AOD problems.

**Educational Opportunities.** Several studies have demonstrated the strong link between school failure and delinquency. However, despite these findings and the acknowledged costs of school failure (lost earnings, lost taxes, and the burden on welfare, health care, correctional systems), it is an issue that has not been properly addressed nationally or locally. The 2001 Annual Report of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, *Abandoned in the Back Row: New Lessons in Education and Delinquency Prevention*, focuses on the inadequacies of the current system. Many children start school at a disadvantage because of their culture, economic status, family stress or special learning needs, and as they continue, they spiral into a deeper and deeper abyss of failure and shattered self-esteem.

Addressing school failure and behavioral issues at the outset is the most effective approach. For example, behavioral problems that impede learning are often readily identifiable by the time of pre-school or when a child enters the child welfare system. But all too often, these issues are missed or ignored, and by the time a youth first enters the juvenile justice system these issues have escalated and the youth has already developed a low commitment to school and has begun to associate with delinquent peers. The impact across the nation of “zero tolerance” policies to reduce drugs and violence in schools has been to encourage further poor outcomes such as delinquency, substance abuse and school dropout. Punishment is not an effective intervention for improving school performance; in fact, suspension and expulsion in many cases simply ensure that young people will be out on the streets, unsupervised and susceptible to further delinquent acts.

Policy makers should exercise caution in promoting responses to delinquent behavior (such as inflexible school violence policies and incarceration) without examining the long-term ramifications. The Coalition also recommends developing comprehensive integrated programs requiring partnerships among various agencies to provide students with an array of services. Such programs include special education services, alternative education, community schools, vocational education, mentoring, day reporting programs, and competency development programs.

**Minority Over-representation.** According to NCJJ, the most recent national research indicated disproportionate numbers of minority youth continue to enter the juvenile justice system in almost every state. In 1997, minority youth represented 25 percent of the State juvenile population in Nevada; however, 50 percent of juveniles committed to public correctional facilities and 39 percent of youth in county juvenile detention centers



were minorities. Improvement was shown by FY01 when 47.5% of the state commitments were minority youth, while they comprised 26.5% of the population. While the Juvenile Justice Commission has initiated efforts to deal with this issue and progress has been achieved, additional resources should be focused on prevention and early intervention programs that target minority youth to further reduce this overrepresentation.

**Gender Specific Services for Female Offenders.** Nevada tied for the sixth place in the high proportion of females in residential placement in the United States in 1997. Currently, a few gender specific programs are operating; DCFS has conducted training throughout the State on gender specific issues. The training is intended to support planning efforts and program development by providing an understanding of gender specific services and why they are needed. It is recommended that these efforts continue to be a top priority over the next decade.

**Program Evaluation.** As indicated earlier, enhancements to the juvenile justice system have been achieved and additional programs have been developed in response to identified needs or shortfalls. Typically, however, many of these programs are developed on limited budgets with no funding directed toward professional program evaluation. Evaluations that are completed are typically internal and not as thorough or comparative as they should be.

**Comprehensive Community Care Network.** The NCCD study in 1992 recommended the creation of at least 50 community-based residential beds in Nevada to reduce overcrowding and to provide more appropriate treatment. The NCJJ study noted important progress since that time. In a number of areas, county agencies and judicial districts have collaborated to create community-based beds where none previously existed. However, there is still no comprehensive care network of community-based residential programs. Without additional providers, funding mechanisms, and more diversity in programs, youth will continue to be placed inappropriately in detention and correctional facilities. There is also a need for additional outpatient community-based programs that are inaccessible because of extraordinary waiting list.

## **NECESSARY ACTIONS**

Based upon the above facts on mental health, substance abuse, and related juvenile justice issues it is evident that:

1. The counties and the State must expand community-based and correctional services earmarked for juvenile populations with substance abuse and mental health problems.
2. Program resources must be developed which can effectively treat delinquency, mental illness and substance abuse. Specialized programs of this nature would reduce the need to transfer youths among different programs, thereby preventing the trauma often associated with program change and, in all probability, decrease costs.

3. Resources must be developed to provide intensive services addressing substance abuse and mental health issues for youth in the juvenile justice system. Programs would involve a community approach to implement what works best in Nevada.
4. New initiatives should specifically address minority overrepresentation and gender specific issues.
5. Local and State entities must work in a collaborative effort to develop specific guidelines and outcome measures, including a professional evaluation of the process and outcome of programs and services provided.
6. The utilization of the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant program is a means to begin implementation of these actions. (see March 2002 JCEC recommendations to the Governor.)

Implementation of these six steps would be consistent with the strategy directed by ACR 57 and ACR 13 to improve the Nevada system of juvenile justice. This effort will also serve to fulfill the following purposes:

- *Reduce delinquency and enhance public safety*
- *Prepare responsibly for organizational and program needs based upon adolescent population projections*
- *Expand cost-effective community-based services*
- *Delay the need for future facility construction and accompanying operating costs*
- *Call for collaboration, consensus, and cooperation*

### **RECOMMENDATION: POTENTIAL STATUTORY CHANGES**

It appears that NRS Chapter 62, which governs much of the juvenile justice process would benefit from reorganization and some revision. The Juvenile Justice Commission and its Work Study Group would be pleased to volunteer to work with the Office of the Attorney General and the Legislative Counsel Bureau on developing a better organized and more user-friendly revision.

### **BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS**

Upon review of the Necessary Actions contained previously in this report it is evident that resources of time, collaboration and coordination will be essential. Additional budgetary resources will also be necessary for the implementation of a comprehensive plan to meet the described shortfalls and needs.

In consideration of the current fiscal climate and its realities, any additional fiscal resources should be considered only subsequent to the Governor's Summit. This would provide the means for processes and proposed outcomes to be developed through a comprehensive planning process. This would take into consideration all current resources

available. In this way budgetary impact may be minimized, as specific additional budgetary recommendations would come from the affected divisions and agencies through the planning process. This would prevent potential duplication and/or overlap. The plan implementation would be phased in over a designed time frame. This allows for not necessarily new funding, but for the shifting and reallocation of funds and other resources to meet the planned needs, further reducing budgetary impact.

**RECOMMENDED ADMINISTRATIVE AND PERSONNEL CHANGES**

As recommended in the NCJJ report, in order to enable the State to fulfill its essential role in providing coordination and oversight, modest development of infrastructure is necessary. A management analyst position to conduct quality assurance reviews and to analyze data and prepare reports for better informed decision-making and planning. A personnel specialist position should be added to assist with staff development and training needs.

**RECOMMENDATION: GOVERNOR’S SUMMIT**

Development of a comprehensive continuum of services at both the county and State level is critical to address the needs of Nevada’s youth and families who are within the scope of the juvenile justice system. Specific emphasis should be placed on programs for mental health, substance abuse, education, minority youth, and adolescent females. This collaboration can be spearheaded through the calling of a Governor’s Juvenile Justice Summit to develop the necessary strategies and plans to address the continuum of needs.

The WSG asks that Governor Guinn consider the calling of a “Juvenile Justice Summit” to bring together a group of primary stakeholders from Nevada to examine the critical issues facing the State juvenile justice population. The Summit would include members representing the following areas:

Mental Health	Education	Judiciary
Substance Abuse	Child Welfare	Legislative
Executive	Juvenile Public Defender	CASA
Probation	Health	Youth Corrections
Private Provider	Member of the Public	Law Enforcement
Family	Faith Organization	Attorney General
Adult Corrections	Business	District Attorney
Technology	Domestic Violence	Local Government
Juvenile Justice Commission	Children’s Attorney Project	Youth in/from Justice System

The Juvenile Justice Summit would bring together key stakeholders in a professionally facilitated environment to lay a strategic plan for the cooperation and collaboration needed to provide the resources (both fiscal and programmatic) necessary to provide impacting treatment to the juvenile justice population. This effort would not only provide

long-term savings to public resources, but also place Nevada at a heralded level of commitment to its youth.

The Summit would have the goal of developing a strategic plan to guide in developing a seamless continuum of services to the juvenile justice population. The strategic plan could include identification of:

- Youth that are not currently being provided necessary services
- The obstacles to providing needed services
- Methods of providing resources to implement needed services
- Integrated model for service delivery
- A pilot project
- Process for on-going oversight and planning for Juvenile Justice services
- Communication between and among all parties
- Plan for developing an organizational culture of collaboration

The juvenile justice system set forth in the plan should

- Be centered on a continuum of treatment for youth and their families with the needs and strengths of those children and their families guiding the types and mix of services provided
- Provide timely access to a comprehensive array of proven services for prevention, intervention and treatment
- Provide thorough screening, assessment, treatment and systems of support
- Be made available in the least restrictive setting that still provides for public safety
- Provide services to family of youth in the system who are eligible to receive support services
- Provide services to youth in a manner that is responsive to the cultural, gender based, and special needs of the individual child
- The Juvenile Justice System should provide flexible community-based services that require accountability from the youth involved and the provider of services
- Provide ongoing staff development and training to ensure that youth and families are receiving professional, evidence-based intervention and services

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The momentum gained at the 1997 Legislature continues today. A juvenile justice master plan is now more evident and both State and county stakeholders are working closely on the issues and challenges they face. Groups such as the Nevada Juvenile Justice Commission, the Juvenile Justice Commission's Work Study Group, the Nevada Juvenile Justice Administrators and the Silver State Detention Association have worked hard to promote collaboration amongst their membership.

The key to the ongoing success of the Nevada Juvenile Justice System will be the continued collaboration of its stakeholders. The system, through the gains realized by funding appropriations at the State and County level, is poised at this time to adequately handle the current level of referrals, programming needs and physical plant requirements for juvenile offenders. However, as Nevada continues its population growth, particularly in the metropolitan areas, the system can become strained once again if the collaborative effort of elected officials, the judiciary, juvenile justice practitioners and other stakeholders do not continue.

The collaborative, community approach will expand the existing State/county partnership to accomplish the two primary goals.

1. *To support local programs for delinquency prevention, rehabilitation and empowerment of youth and families, and as alternatives to incarceration in juvenile institutions; and*
2. *To promote safe operation of county and State juvenile institutions and enhanced treatment and rehabilitation opportunities.*

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<sup>i</sup> As indicated earlier, reports from the State Demographer indicate the youth population 8-18 increased 46.7% from 1995 through 2001. During the same period the State commitment rate for male juveniles *decreased* from .55% of the male juvenile population in 1995 to .27% of the male juvenile population in 2001, representing a *50.9% reduction* in the commitment rate of male juveniles based on population. If the 1995 male commitment rate had continued to the present, there would have been 850 male commitments in FY01 – 437 more commitments than actually occurred, representing a 106% increase over actual commitments.

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## ATTACHMENT A

The following explains the impact in terms of the number of fewer commitments by percentage of juvenile population during this period.

### **Male Juveniles Committed To State Youth Corrections** Population Figures from State Demographer June 2000 Report

	TOTAL MALE JUVENILE POP 8 TO 18	MALES COMMITTED	% OF MALE POP 8 UP TO 18 COMMITTED	
1995	106,540	589	.55%	
1996	113,247	619	.52%	
1997	119,212	612	.51%	
1998	124,207	448	.36%	
				1 <sup>st</sup> year of CCPBG, TCRP (Transitional Community Reintegration Program)
1999	131,493	455	.35%	
2000	137,312	419	.31%	
2001	154,481	413	.27%	

Comparing the State male commitment rate for the last four fiscal years (FY98-01) to the 1995 commitment rate, a reduction of 1232 male commitments to state correctional care can be estimated for this period. At a conservative figure of \$20,000 per commitment, the cost savings for those commitments would be \$24.6 million. Current national research continues to expound on the savings and other benefits of community based projects to reduce delinquency and diminish the need for long-term correctional care

### **Female Juveniles Committed To State Youth Corrections**

	TOTAL FEMALE JUVENILE POP 8 TO 18	FEMALES COMMITTED	% OF FEMALE POP 8 UP TO 18 COMMITTED	
1995	101,050	101	.10%	
1996	107,408	123	.11%	
1997	117,319	117	.10%	
1998	122,255	123	.10%	
				1 <sup>st</sup> year of CCPBG, TCRP
1999	129,406	133	.10%	
2000	135,132	161	.12%	
2001	150,189	120	.08%	

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Highest recorded % for girls occurred in 1975 at .21% and 1985 at .18%. This was before Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO). Nevada began participation with the federal OJJDP mandate for DSO in 1987. If DSO were not in effect, using the 1975 high point of .21% commitment rate would have equated to 195 more girls being placed in FY 2001, or a 162.5% increase over the actual. The FY01 female commitment rate of .08% represents the lowest rate recorded. There were 25.6% fewer female commitments in FY01 than FY00, perhaps resulting from increased efforts to provide appropriate community based gender specific programs.