



SPARTANBURG ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION

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SUMMARY

Title of the Project: Spartanburg Alternatives to Detention

The Spartanburg Alternatives to Detention project began on October 2006 to reduce the high detention rate among juvenile offenders in Spartanburg County. The project is administered by the Spartanburg Public Safety Department. The goal of the project is “To reduce and/or eliminate the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention for juveniles to decrease detention population, community costs, juvenile recidivism and to provide for an appropriate environment and services for qualifying juveniles whenever possible while protecting public safety.”

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has seen an increasing number of juveniles being held in detention centers pending court action. Juvenile detention has increased gradually since the 2001-2002 fiscal year. From FY 2001-2002 to FY 2005-2006, the number of juveniles being detained in South Carolina has increased by 19%. The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, recognizing that the problem needed to be addressed, looked for opportunities to partner in the state. Not only was Spartanburg Community was detaining a large number of youth in juveniles in DJJ facilities, but was also known to have an ability to partner in the community to address issues. In FY 2004-2005, Spartanburg detained 342 youth, and in FY 2005/2006, 361 youth were detained.

The Spartanburg Community implemented the Alternatives to Detention project, with the following goals: increase the use of alternatives to detention programming versus secure confinement; quickly identify eligible youth for release to an alternative placement while providing for public safety; ensure a juvenile’s presence in court without the need for confinement; assist juveniles in refraining from committing new crimes pending court disposition; provide intervention/prevention programs; assist juvenile offenders and their families with support services; and make appropriate referrals for services.

Spartanburg Public Safety Department was able to implement the project along with the cooperation of the Spartanburg County Sheriff’s Department, Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice, Seventh Circuit Solicitor’s Office, and Spartanburg Family Court.

This project was implemented quickly and efficiently and all of the goals achieved during the first year of operations. The project is half way through the second year of operations and is still meeting objectives.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Spartanburg community has a high detention rate for juveniles. The rate of occurrence per 100 for detention of Caucasian youth in Spartanburg is 26.98 compared to 18.63 for the state and the rate of occurrence for minority youth in Spartanburg is 37.67 compared to 21.5 in South Carolina.

The Spartanburg Alternatives to Detention project began on October 1, 2006, to reduce this high detention rate. The project is administered by the Spartanburg Public Safety Department. The goal of the project is “To reduce and/or eliminate the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure detention for juveniles to decrease detention population, community costs, juvenile recidivism and to provide for an appropriate environment and services for qualifying juveniles whenever possible while protecting public safety.”

The target population of the project is juveniles 13 to 16 years old in Spartanburg County charged with a crime, who are appropriate to remain in the community rather than being detained at DJJ facilities in Columbia. The project provides alternative services to allow these youths to stay in the Spartanburg community and to reside in their homes or with relatives. A case manager provides frequent checks on the identified youth as well as arranging for the alternative services. Police officers also do unannounced house checks and the project provides wrap around services for youth who are not Medicaid eligible. The services that are provided include:

Juvenile Residential Institution/Alternative Placement

Case Management

Curfew Checks

School Visits

Home Visits

Mentors

Counseling

Education Assessment

Employment Assistance

Referrals to Other Services

Court Assistance

The youth must observe a curfew and must restrict their movements outside of their pre-approved activities. Parents of the youth must cooperate with the program in order for the youth to successfully complete. Spartanburg County has a number of resources that lend themselves to the success of this project. The Spartanburg Youth Council provides a strong opportunity to develop responses to the problem of high detention rates. The Spartanburg Family Court, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the City of Spartanburg Department of Public Safety, the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Department, the Youth Council and others all agree that alternatives to detention are important and necessary for the juvenile justice system in the Spartanburg community.

Some of the charges being considered for the program are property crimes, disturbing schools, and other offences as long as guns and assaults are not a charge.

SCANNING

The problem identified that led to this project was the high number of juveniles being held in detention centers pending court actions. Juveniles were detained by the family court and law enforcement agencies if it was determined they were high risk offenders.

The Spartanburg community has a high detention rate for juveniles. The State recognized that the detention admissions had increased 19% from FY 2001-2002 to FY 2005-2006. The rate of occurrence per 100 for detention of Caucasian youth in Spartanburg is 26.98 compared to 18.63 for the state and the rate of occurrence for minority youth in Spartanburg is 37.67 compared to 21.5 in South Carolina. The problems were recognized by the State Government leaders and local governments due to the rising costs of detentions and overcrowding in detention facilities. The Spartanburg community has been concerned about the rising crime rate among juveniles for several years. We have participated in a OJJDP process “Targeted Community Action Planning” that works with youth with more severe crimes. As with many communities, youth are a priority of the community. For the Spartanburg community, the increasing number of juvenile crimes h

ANALYSIS

The Spartanburg Community has contracted with System Wide Solutions (SWS) to evaluate the process. The evaluation methodology for the project includes:

Part 1 – Conduct three or more on-site visits. The first visit was to work with the Project Director and the Case Manager to be certain that SWS personnel have a complete understanding of the project and each person’s role in the process. The second visit was to deliver and explain the database that was used to tract all quantitative requirements of the goals, objectives, and performance indicators. The third visit was to observe home visits and provide technical support, as needed.

Part 2 – Develop a database which can be used by the Case Manager and Project Director to capture and store the information required by the objectives and performance indicators. Help the Case Manager and Project Director identify exactly where to find the

data that is required by the objectives and performance indicators so that it may be entered into the database. Train project staff on how to use the database to complete reports and to monitor the youth and the project as a whole.

Part 3 – Design a youth satisfaction and family satisfaction survey. The case manager and others were trained in how to administer the survey and how to enter the data in the database.

Part 4 – A process evaluation was to be conducted that included interviews with project personnel, reviews of documentation, and observations conducted during the year. The youth and family satisfaction surveys were used to capture data. A method for documenting qualitative data consisted of documenting meetings and periodically sitting in on the meetings.

Part 5 – Conduct an outcome evaluation, which consisted of an analysis of data collected to meet objectives.

Part 6 – Summary reports of findings are completed.

Both state government and local law enforcement recognized that the high number of juveniles being detained was an issue for several years. The primary person involved in this situation as the juvenile or offender. Many times there are victims involved in the cases, who must be considered if the juvenile is to stay in the community. The juveniles' gains have been primarily related to drugs or property. Victims have had a loss of property and fear to deal with.

We realize the crime by juveniles in our community can not be solved by law enforcement alone. We are involving youth serving agencies as well as churches in our efforts to solve problems in the community.

RESPONSE

A range of responses to this process were researched. The Annie E. Casey Foundation staff made a presentation at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, and some of their research was considered as the local responses were determined for the project. The responses to youth, who were arrested and referred to the project are the following: The project provides alternative services to allow these youths to stay in the Spartanburg community and to reside in their homes or with relatives.

The Spartanburg community implemented a process to deal with youth in the Spartanburg community. Youth enter the program in one of two ways:

1. At the time of arrest, if possible, the youth is released to the home and parents with the additional services, or;
2. After the pre-adjudicatory hearing, a request is made that the youth will not be detained, but instead be placed on home detention. The youth is required to stay at home except for allowed appointments.

If the juvenile arrested is 13 years old or older, the arresting police officer is responsible for determining if a juvenile is to be detained. DJJ will assist in making that determination. The DJJ Detention Screening Advisory Form can help in making the decision as to whether the juvenile should be detained. Training of the county's law enforcement officers on the availability of the project and on how to make the decision as to whether to detain or not is an important part of the project process. The case manager, who is a City of Spartanburg police officer, is housed in the Department of Juvenile

Justice (DJJ) offices. She works closely with DJJ to assure appropriate decision making at the beginning of cases and to assure follow-up. She makes face-to-face visits to the juveniles twice a week and telephone calls three times a week. City and county police officers also make unannounced home checks on the youth. The youth must complete the services in their plan or face sanctions.

A case manager provides frequent checks on the identified youth as well as arranging for the alternative services. Police officers also do unannounced house checks and the project provides wrap around services for youth who are not Medicaid eligible. The services that are provided include:

- Juvenile Residential Institution/Alternative Placement

- Case Management

- Curfew Checks

- School Visits

- Home Visits

- Mentors

- Counseling

- Education Assessment

- Employment Assistance

- Referrals to Other Services

- Court Assistance

Over the last year, the case manager has added an anger management class and a specific class for girls based upon training she has attended.

The youth must observe a curfew and must restrict their movements outside of their pre-approved activities. Parents of the youth must cooperate with the program in order for the youth to successfully complete. Spartanburg County has a number of resources that lend themselves to the success of this project. The Spartanburg Youth Council provides a strong opportunity to develop responses to the problem of high detention rates. The Spartanburg Family Court, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the City of Spartanburg Department of Public Safety, the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Department, the Youth Council and others all agree that alternatives to detention are important and necessary for the juvenile justice system in the Spartanburg community.

The responses to be implemented were a result of assistance received from the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice, and the South Carolina Department of Public Safety. For the program to be successful, the program needed the support of Spartanburg Family Court, Seventh Circuit Solicitor's Office, all law enforcement in Spartanburg County as well as the Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice. This support was gained by the law enforcement officer and the Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice Director spending much of the first two to three months of the grant making presentations to different groups to gain their support. Prior to implementation of the project, we knew we needed the support of Spartanburg Family Court, local law enforcement leaders, and the Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice.

This project is important to this community as we look for opportunities to reduce juvenile crime as well as look for opportunities to reduce juvenile detention costs.

The goals for the project were the following:

1. Increase the use of alternatives to detention programming versus secure confinement

2. Quickly identify eligible youth for release to an alternative placement while providing for public safety.
3. Ensure a juvenile's presence in court without the need for confinement.
4. Assist juveniles in refraining from committing new crimes pending court disposition.
5. Provide intervention/prevention programs.
6. Assist juvenile offenders and their families with support services.
7. Make appropriate referrals for services.

The objectives are:

1. During the grant period, there will be increased organizational capacity to the Spartanburg community to implement the Alternatives to Detention system changes through the use of Formula Grant funds, in-kind and other grant funds that might be received.
2. During the reporting period, there will be increased organizational capacity to the Spartanburg community to implement the Alternatives to Detention system changes through an increase in the number of client service slots available for this program. The expected increase will be at least a 7% reduction in the number of youth detained from 2004-2005 from 342 to 317.
3. During the report period, at least three alternative detention program options will be available to include increased case management, additional services and home detention.
4. During the report period, at least 25 youth will be served with alternatives to detention.
5. During the report period, the rate of delinquency for the youth being served will be less than 20%. (Less than 5% of the youth being served will be re-arrested or seen at juvenile court for a new delinquent offense during the period.)
6. During the reporting period, the percentage change in the average daily population of pre-adjudicated and post-adjudicated juveniles in secure detention for Spartanburg County will be reduced by 7%.

7. During the reporting period, the percentage change in the average length of stay in days of juveniles residing in secure juvenile detention facility will decrease by at least 5% from the 2004-2005 rate for Spartanburg County residents.

8. During the reporting period, the number and percent of youth successfully completing the program will be at least 15, which is 60%. It is expected that the number will increase substantially in future years.

9. During the reporting period, the Case Manager will document improved system effectiveness through the number of youth returning to court for scheduled hearings which will be greater than 50%.

10. During the reporting period, the Case Manager will document the number and percent of youth satisfied with the program.

11. During the reporting period, the Case Manager will document the number and percent of program families satisfied with the program.

The process has been implemented with few problems. Initially this process has been funded through a three year Formula grant received from the South Carolina Department of Public Safety. We are half way through this process. Based upon information we are receiving from the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, we project this process is saving enough funds locally to allow local government to support the continuation after grant end. We expect to approach local government about continued funding in the next few months.

There have been few problems in the implementation of the process. A lot of planning occurred prior to the implementation of the process.

ASSESSMENT

To date the project has served over 50 youth, which is exceeding the number expected, that would have otherwise been detained in South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice facilities. We have the support of every law enforcement agency in Spartanburg County in implementing this process as well as the Spartanburg Family Court and the Seventh Circuit Solicitor's Office. Both state and local Department of Juvenile Justice have been supportive of our efforts. Additional alternatives have been implemented over the course of the project. At the end of the first year of the project only 5.5% of youth had re-offended, which is exceeding our projections of 20%. During the first year of the grant, 71% of youth successfully completed program, which exceeded the 60% projected. Of youth with court hearings, 85.7% attended all hearings, which exceeded the 50% projected. Of youth, 100%, reported being happy with the program, and 77.8% of parents reported satisfaction with the program. A couple of objectives could not be initially evaluated due to a data problem at the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. Responses have exceeded our expectations.

An evaluator was hired to assist with the evaluation. The Alternatives Case Manager has been the primary contact with the evaluator. We plan to continue to monitor the project and make adjustments as needed.

AGENCY AND OTHER INFORMATION

The Spartanburg Alternatives to Detention process was accepted by all levels of the Spartanburg Public Safety Department. The process had to be accepted at all levels as officers had to be willing to refer juveniles to the Alternatives Case Manager. Not only did the process have to be accepted by Spartanburg Public Safety Department officers by law enforcement throughout Spartanburg County. Any juvenile arrested in Spartanburg

County can be eligible to participate in the process. The Alternatives to Detention Case Manager, who is a law enforcement officer, spoke to officers in roll call throughout Spartanburg County. The first contact was made with chiefs at the Spartanburg County Chiefs meeting. The incentive the officers had to become engaged in this process was to have good feelings about not having to detain a juvenile. With time, and as the success of the program has spread, officers are making more and more referrals to the program. Local governments have been encouraged by the process as the cost of detention has been reduced.

Officers were provided with instructions on the process during roll call training. During the training, they were provided with instructions for referring youth to the project. As we entered into this process in October 2006, there was no data to support the process would be successful in Spartanburg. Officers had to begin making referrals without documentation that the program would be successful. To encourage the development of the process, officers have been involved in completing the house checks on youth, which has allowed numerous officers to see the success of the process. The success seen by the officers has been shared with other.

The resources available for the process has been the following: Formula grant funds received from the South Carolina Department of Public Safety under a three-year grant program. Expertise of staff from the state and local officer of the Department of Juvenile Justice has greatly assisted the implementation of the project. The Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice has supplied officer space for the Alternatives Care Manger.

The process implemented in Spartanburg has been seen as a model project in South Carolina, and has been implemented in other counties in the State of South Carolina.

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Mark Sanford
Governor
State of South Carolina

May 29, 2008

Director A. T. Fisher
Spartanburg Public Safety
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Regarding: Nomination of the Alternatives to Detention Case Manager Program
for the Herman Goldstein Award

Dear Director Fisher:

I am writing today to express my support for the nomination of the Alternatives to Detention case Manager Program (ACDM) for the Herman Goldstein Award. This grant program, done in conjunction with the Spartanburg Public Safety Department under the capable management Officer Tracey Fowler, has been a vital asset to the Spartanburg County Department of Juvenile Justice for over a year. Officer Fowler has used her considerable experience as a former School Resource Officer in her role and utilizes her knowledge of juveniles, the schools, and our community when addressing placement and intervention issues. Additionally, having a certified police officer as the Alternatives to Detention case Manager Program enables a considerably stronger link with other law enforcement entities helping them to better understand DJJ's role and mission, as well as their roles and responsibilities. The Alternatives to Detention Case Manager is able to see all sides of the juvenile justice system, and has used this experience to more effectively evaluate each case for placement in order to make the an appropriate placement decision, and put in place effective interventions to prevent re-offending by pre-adjudicatory youth. I believe the presence of the Alternatives to Detention Case Manager in this office helps significantly enhances DJJ's operations, *and* the lives of those she serves in our community.

Sincerely,

R. Michael Smith
Director, Spartanburg County
South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice

RMS/dlt