

North Carolina Comprehensive Statewide Juvenile Reentry Systems Reform Planning

Improving the successful reintegration of
juveniles into the community

A proposal submitted by:
Juvenile Community Programs, Juvenile Court Services, Juvenile Facilities,
and Juvenile Clinical Treatment Services
Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice
North Carolina Department of Public Safety

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Comprehensive Statewide Juvenile Reentry
Systems Reform Planning Program
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Program Narrative

The Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (DACJJ) in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety is pleased to offer the following grant proposal to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. This proposal outlines how DACJJ will organize a plan to make significant, strategic changes to North Carolina's juvenile justice system approach and programming that will help to increase the success of juveniles as they move through our systems and return to their communities. North Carolina is well positioned to design and implement these changes, as it recently released a juvenile facilities strategic plan, with specific recommendations on how to improve facilities and services for our youth; it already has implemented a statewide web-based system in NC-JOIN (North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network) that allows staff at various points in the state's juvenile justice system to track the progress and placement of youth being served; and it has the substantial expertise of Research Triangle International (RTI) as its sub-grantee, with its corporate offices 20 miles from our state capital, ready to provide technical assistance on improving data quality and developing our evaluation plan.

Statement of the Problem

Target population for the project

The target population for this project is youth returning from youth development centers (YDCs) and other residential placements that include multipurpose group homes, Eckerd short-term residential facilities, WestCare short-term residential facilities, and psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs). Please see Table 1. All of these youth have received Level II or III

dispositions¹ in juvenile court and are considered medium to high risk as measured by DACJJ's risk and needs assessment.

Table 1. The demographics and population description (from FY 12-13) for youth in the five placements to be targeted by this juvenile reentry plan.

Placement	Demographics	Population description
Youth development center (YDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 1 in 3 juveniles who were committed to a YDC received an adult arrest as of FY 08-09 data. • The average length of stay in YDC is 14 months. • Average age of juveniles at commitment in FY 12-13: 15.7 years old (n=208) • Average age of juvenile who exited commitment in FY 12-13: 16.8 years old (n=255) 	The structure of the juvenile code limits this disposition to those juveniles who have been adjudicated for violent or serious offenses or who have a lengthy delinquency history and have received a Level III disposition.
Multi-purpose group homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of youth served were under court supervision • 115 youth were served in FY 12-13 • 80% of youth served completed the program successfully • 15.3 was the average age of youth being served in the Multi-Purpose Group Homes • 83% of youth served were male, 17% female 	Youth being referred to multi-purpose group homes have received a Level II court ordered disposition. Typically, these males and females have had multiple adjudications for person and property offenses and have received multiple community-based interventions. These youth have also experienced school discipline problems, substance abuse, gang involvement, mental health needs, and family discord.
Eckerd short-term residential facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of youth served were under court supervision and received a Level II disposition by the court. • 176 youth were served in FY 12-13 • 127 youth were discharged in FY 12-13 of which 85% completed the program successfully • 160 of the 176 youth served were between the ages of 14-17 	All juveniles in this placement are male, have a Level II disposition, have been assessed as medium and high risk, and can be defined as serious and/or chronic juvenile offenders. Typically these youth have had multiple adjudications for person and property offenses and have received multiple community-based interventions. These youth have also experienced school discipline problems, substance abuse, gang involvement, mental health needs, and family discord.
WestCare short-term residential facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 51 clients were provided services in FY 12-13. • 100% of the youth served were 	All referrals originate with a juvenile court counselor. Typically, those admitted have had multiple adjudications for person and property

¹By statute, there are three disposition levels for adjudicated youth in North Carolina: Level I, Community Dispositions; Level II, Intermediate Dispositions; and Level III, Commitment (see http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_7B/GS_7B-2508.html)

	<p>under court supervision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of the youth served were between the ages of 13-17 • Thirty- five clients were discharged through June 2013 with a 94% successful completion rate. • The average length of stay for discharged clients was 181 days. • The average age of the population was 15.8 years. 	<p>offenses and have received more than one community-based intervention. These youth have also experienced school discipline problems, substance abuse, gang involvement, mental health needs, and family discord.</p>
<p>Psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In FY 11-12, 14 juveniles who were adjudicated with a violent offense were referred to PRTFs. • 10 of the 14 juveniles had a disposition of some kind of sexual offense. • The other 4 had dispositions of assault with a deadly weapon, kidnapping, burglary, and robbery. 	<p>DACJJ sometimes refers juveniles to PRTFs if necessary. These are long-term treatment programs for teens age 13-17 that are experiencing severe and persistent emotional challenges. They may also have secondary conditions (education, social, behavioral, neurological, or intellectual deficits) which require special treatment and care.</p>

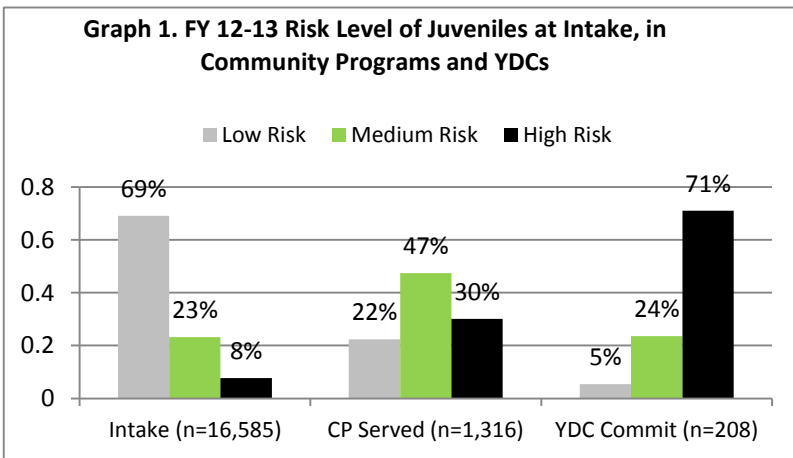
Of special consideration for the population to be served in reentry programs and services are the juveniles who were committed to YDCs as they are the most serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offender population in North Carolina. Juveniles who leave YDC commitment have been confined on average for 14 months and are generally age 16 or older at exit. The past three recidivism reports completed by the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission (the Commission) discovered that, on average, 35.9% of youth released from a YDC had an adult arrest within three years. DACJJ will greatly benefit from being awarded this planning grant as more research is needed to better understand and track the population of juveniles who leave juvenile jurisdiction after residential confinement.

North Carolina’s definition of medium and high risk offending

The NC Assessment of Risk (NCAR) and the NC Assessment of Juvenile Needs (Needs Assessment) were completely developed in the year 2000. The exact same instruments are being used to date. In 2004, 2006, 2007, and 2008 Craig Schwalbe, Columbia University School of

Social Work, published journal articles demonstrating the predictive ability of the NCAR.² The NCAR is conducted by juvenile court counselors on every juvenile who has a complaint alleged to a local juvenile justice office. If a juvenile who has already gone through intake with a court counselor has a subsequent complaint filed, then a second risk assessment is completed. Needs assessments are conducted on all juveniles who go through intake and every 90 days a new needs assessment is created for juveniles under court-ordered supervision. The items addressed in the risk and needs assessments help determine the presence of criminogenic risk factors and help the juvenile court counselor assess how much supervision and control is needed.

Items on the assessments include but are not limited to: the juvenile’s age when s/he was alleged to have committed their first offense, prior undisciplined or delinquent referrals, runaway history, use of alcohol or illegal drugs, behavior problems at school, peer relationships, and



parent/guardian/custodian relations. Each item has a point value. The scores of the items are then tallied to determine if the juvenile has a low risk, medium risk, or high risk of future

offending and low, moderate, or high level of service needs. Please see Graph 1 for an illustration of the risk levels of juveniles at intake, in community programs, and in YDCs.

²Schwalbe, C. S., Fraser, M. W., Day, S. H., & Arnold, E. M. (2004). North Carolina Assessment of Risk (NCAR): Reliability and predictive validity with juvenile offenders. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation, 40*, 1-22.
 Schwalbe, C. S., Fraser, M. W., Day, S. H., & Cooley, V. (2006). Classifying juvenile offenders according to risk of recidivism: Predictive validity, race/ethnicity, and gender. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 33*, 305-324.
 Schwalbe, C. S. (2007). A meta analysis of juvenile justice risk assessment predictive validity. *Law and Human Behavior, 31*, 449-462.
 Schwalbe, C.S. (2008). A meta analysis of juvenile justice risk assessment instruments: Predictive validity by gender. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 35*, 1367-1381.

Of all juveniles who went through intake in FY 12-13, only 8% were determined to be high risk. Of the juveniles served in community programs (including a large portion where placement was required to be a residential setting), 30% were high risk and 47% were medium risk. Lastly, of the YDC commitment population, 71% were high risk and 24% were medium risk.

Recidivism rates and positive youth outcomes in North Carolina

Recidivism in North Carolina is tracked yearly as adjudication in juvenile court or conviction in adult court by the DACJJ staff (see Table 2). In addition, the NC Sentencing and

The suggested definition for reporting recidivism under this grant will be:

Youth with a juvenile complaint, juvenile adjudication, adult arrest and/or conviction where the offense date was within 6, 12, or 24 months of the termination date from confinement.

Policy Advisory Commission (the Commission) looks at juveniles with a delinquent complaint closed, diverted, dismissed, or adjudicated in a biennial report, with tracking on all juvenile offenders for 3 years (see Table 3). In the DACJJ annual legislative report, the tracking of

recidivism for North Carolina youth is broken down by the type of intervention they received as well as by whether they were adjudicated delinquent or convicted of an adult charge within 6, 12 and 24 months.

Our objective of this planning grant is to provide intensive case management services and offer programs for juveniles leaving confinement settings to reduce recidivism and increase public safety. To measure the rates of reoffending DACJJ suggests using a more precise time frame than the Commission's reporting protocol. DACJJ's aim is to pinpoint the time frames when most juveniles re-offend to better construct services and support mechanisms to reduce subsequent offending in both justice systems.

Table 2. Breakdown of DACJJ recidivism rates in North Carolina by programming and recidivism type, FY 12-13.

Type of programming	Recidivism type (all with distinct juveniles)	0 to 6 Months (juveniles who could be followed for a full six months post-discharge)	0 to 12 Months (juveniles who could be followed for a full twelve months post-discharge)
Juvenile Community Programs Section contractual service	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	10% (n=121)	15% (n=114)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=61)	9% (n=71)
JCPC-Endorsed Level II Programs	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	10% (n=40)	15% (n=37)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=19)	8% (n=19)
Eckerd Community-Based Services	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	7% (n=23)	12% (n=17)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=38)	10% (n=38)
AMIkids Community-Based Services	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	6% (n=21)	12% (n=20)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=15)	10% (n=17)
Eckerd Short-Term Residential services	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	15% (n=28)	25% (n=27)
	Adult Convictions	6% (n=11)	16% (n=19)
Multi-purpose Group Home	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	8% (n=12)	17% (n=20)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=7)	6% (n=7)
WestCareFemale Residential Program	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	5% (n=2)	11% (n=2)
	Adult Convictions	11% (n=4)	6% (n=1)
Craven Transitional Home	Juveniles with Complaints Adjudicated	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)
	Adult Convictions	5% (n=1)	14% (n=2)

Table 3. The past three recidivism reports completed by the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission (Commission) on the entire juvenile population in North Carolina

Report	Subsequent Complaints within 3 years	Adult Arrests within 3 years	Overall Recidivism
May 2009 Report (04-05 cohort)	36.7%	21.4%	44.8%
May 2011 Report (06-07 cohort)	33.6%	22.8%	43.0%
May 2013 Report (08-09 cohort)	34.4%	23.7%	44.0%

Only some of DACJJ’s service providers are required by contract to provide DACJJ with positive youth outcomes. One example is the Youth Outcome Survey conducted by the Multi-Purpose Juvenile Homes in the state. In order to follow the progress of program-served youth, the contracted provider conducts outcome surveys at six and twelve months post discharge from the continuing care program. These surveys help all parties understand the success of post-discharged youth served through a Multipurpose Juvenile Home. Listed in Table 4 are data from the surveys completed during FY 12-13.

Table 4: Multi-Purpose Homes: Youth Outcome Survey, FY-12-13

Living in a safe home environment that is either in the child’s permanent home or the next logical, most appropriate setting towards a permanent home	82%
Maintaining a positive on-going relationship with a caring, responsible adult	76%
Maintaining optimal health functioning with needed and appropriate supports	84%
Following substance abuse recovery plan	57%
Regularly participating in pro-social community activities	36%

Current reentry process

Juvenile reentry in North Carolina begins at court disposition, continues throughout the youth’s confinement term, and follows their release to the community. It requires a continuum of care designed to not only guard against the reemergence of antisocial behavior, but rather, to promote ongoing progress toward service plan goals. For example, YDCs provide transitional services to youth such as assisting with school reentry and developing money management and

job seeking skills. Aftercare is conceptualized as the final stage of programming for youth in an effort to drive home the notion that while reintegration into the youth's home community may consist of a different setting, the facilitation and monitoring of progress toward service plan goals must continue. Aftercare services are therefore aimed at linking newly released youth with their communities, treatment providers, families, schools and/or employment, while slowly diminishing the role of DACJJ.

Pursuant to *N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-2514*, juvenile court counselors supervise all juveniles released from commitment status on post-release supervision (PRS). Initial supervision is provided at the intensive level for a period of at least 15 calendar days, unless the Chief Court Counselor determines a different level of supervision is appropriate based on the juvenile's placement. Pursuant to *N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-2514*, the juvenile must be supervised on PRS for at least 90 calendar days and not more than 12 months. In FY 12-13, the average daily population (ADP) of juveniles on PRS was 156.41 and a total of 442 juveniles were on PRS at some point in the year.

Examples of effective measures/programs currently in use

North Carolina has begun to increase the amount of evidence-based programming available to its juvenile offenders. Some examples include:

- AMIKids provides Functional Family Therapy (FFT), an evidence-based intervention for working with adjudicated youth and their families as a home-based dispositional alternative.
- WestCare North Carolina Girls Program is a gender responsive residential facility for girls 13-17 which employs Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT).
- YDCs provide Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), which is a psychosocial treatment approach for youth with posttraumatic stress.

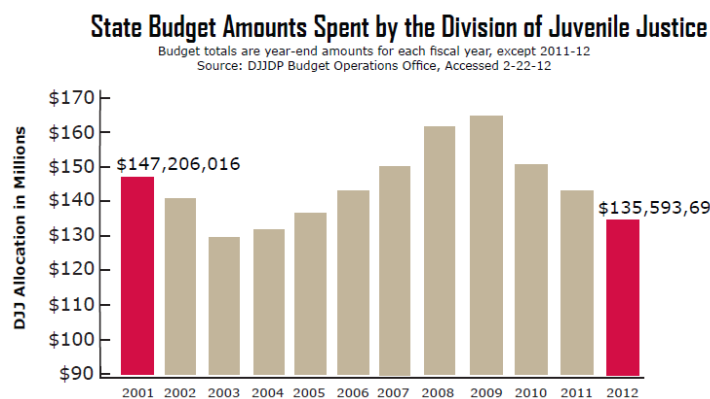
Key policy and practice barriers to improving youth outcomes

Juvenile age of jurisdiction

The most prominent policy barrier to improving youth outcomes is yet to occur in North Carolina – raising the juvenile age of jurisdiction. Many bills have been drafted then die in the legislative process. Very few research and/or state entities have a real concrete grasp on the multitudes of resources the juvenile justice system will need to remain effective in serving a higher-risk population. Since the current original juvenile jurisdiction upper limit is age 15 at offense, the majority of juveniles are in the early stages of criminal development. When the juvenile jurisdiction in North Carolina expands to include 16 and 17 year-olds, the juvenile justice system will need to expand with the service needs of the older youth, their families, schools, and communities.

Inadequate funding

By 2012, the budget of the former Division of Juvenile Justice had been reduced by 15%, or \$25 million, and the division had downsized its workforce by 15%, or approximately 300 jobs.



The division had also closed two YDCs, three detention centers, and condensed the number of juvenile court districts, from 39 down to 30, resulting from declines in committed youth, legislative mandates, as well as in response to the state's fiscal crisis. DACJJ has also cut substantial amounts of its community programming dollars, including completely eliminating the Governor's One-on-One mentoring program, the Support Our Students afterschool program, and closing a number of the state's multipurpose group homes. This substantial decrease in the budget has forced staff to do more with less.

Ultimately, this has resulted in increases in workload with no increases in salary. Some types of intensive programming cannot be offered to the extent needed simply because it is cost prohibitive at the moment.

Limited opportunities for training

Another barrier is the limited amount of opportunities state employees have for training. Court counselors receive minimal training, and facilities staff no training, on statewide data systems such as NC-JOIN, which can lead to errors and omissions in the juvenile data. Statute requires that juvenile court counselors play an active role in the after-care process of reentry but in practice this follow-through has been less rigorous. Many court counselors are in need of training on effective case management as well as training in practices that will facilitate their ability to develop effective relationships with this challenging population.

North Carolina's current juvenile justice initiatives and enhancements

North Carolina has already initiated several programs and operational enhancements designed to improve the efficacy of the juvenile justice system and juvenile outcomes. These initiatives include:

- **The Reclaiming Futures Initiative in North Carolina:** This effort is designed to help improve the collaboration among juvenile courts, probation, adolescent substance abuse and mental health treatment providers, and the community to improve outcomes for youth. The model embodies three major elements: improvement in treatment services for mental health and drug and alcohol use, a comprehensive system of care that coordinates services, and the involvement of the community in creating new opportunities for youth.
- **Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils (JCPCs):** DACJJ partners with legislatively mandated Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils in each county in North Carolina to galvanize community leaders, locally and statewide, and to reduce and prevent juvenile crime. JCPC board members are appointed by the county Board of Commissioners and meet monthly in each county. DACJJ allocates approximately \$23 million to these councils annually. Funding is used

to subsidize local programs and services such as home-based family counseling, psychological assessment, teen court, skill building, and restitution/community service, among others.

- **NC-JOIN (North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network):** This is a state-wide web-based system that allows staff at various points in the state's juvenile justice system to track the progress and placement of youth being served by various programs and facilities. It has become an essential tool in providing the data necessary for making decisions on the appropriate use of scarce resources to help fund and direct services for youth involved in crime prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts both at the state and local levels. Future plans include expanding appropriate access to community prevention and intervention programs funded through local JCPCs in each of the 100 counties. It also needs to be expanded to allow staff in YDCs to enter documentation of treatment services provided in YDCs.

- **The C.O.R.E. Project (Collaborative for Offender Reentry Enhancement):** This was a pilot project in which state and local program partners were able to successfully identify service gaps in reentry, which, when filled, greatly enhanced the success of those youth that return to our communities from YDCs. They identified three stages of supervision and services in the C.O.R.E. Project that constitute one seamless system of reentry: Phase I—Institutionally-Based Programming, Phase II—Community-Based Transition Programs, and Phase III—Community-Based Long-Term Support. The C.O.R.E. Project was grant funded, and lasted from 2003 to 2006. Frabutt, Di Luca, and Graves (2012)³ noted that preliminary recidivism findings revealed a 36% recidivism rate for program participants (n=44) across the juvenile and adult systems. Of note was that the first recidivism offense was less severe than the one the juvenile had committed prior to the project. There was also a decrease in weapons charges at the first recidivism offense. Ultimately, the C.O.R.E. Project was not continued past 2006, which was primarily due to frequent staff turnover at the Coordinator positions. With no continuity in the role, the program suffered and ultimately ended. Lessons were learned and DACJJ can improve upon the infrastructure that was built during the C.O.R.E. Project.

³Frabutt, J.M., Di Luca, K.L., & Graves, K.N. (2012). Envisioning a Juvenile Justice System that Supports Positive Youth Development. *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy*, 22(4), 107-125.

• **DACJJ’s juvenile justice facilities strategic plan:** In April of 2014, the N.C. DACJJ released their juvenile justice facilities strategic plan⁴. The plan contained six fundamental recommendations:

- Phasing out outdated/unsafe/underutilized facilities;
- Renovating/expanding facilities that are safer, more secure, and more cost-efficient;
- Enhancing support operations, such as transportation;
- Continuing to provide treatment and education rooted in a cognitive-behavioral approach, targeting criminogenic needs;
- Reinvesting cost savings into community-based programming; and
- Planning and preparing for potential future changes to the juvenile justice system.

Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

North Carolina has made some great strides in its juvenile justice system reforms, recognizing the need to focus on rehabilitative programming that provides necessary services to our most serious juvenile offenders. However, currently there are still great deficits and gaps in this programming and statewide infrastructure. A juvenile justice facilities strategic plan was recently released, but this planning grant would ensure that North Carolina has the ability to go beyond this plan and fully flesh out a feasible, workable plan for reentry reform implementation. This greatly expanded plan would also allow our legislature to see the feasibility and value in the changes suggested, ensuring that adequate funding is allotted to DACJJ to allow successful completion to this plan.

The majority of juveniles who leave commitment status are age 16 or 17. The age of original jurisdiction on juveniles who commit illegal acts ends at age 15. Thus, very few are eligible to remain under supervision after the period of post-release supervision conducted by juvenile justice officials. The focus of DACJJ in the reentry process then shifts to reduce adult

⁴The full plan can be found here:
<https://www.ncdps.gov/div/JJ/JJ%20Facilities%20Strategic%20Plan%20041014%20FINAL.pdf>

arrests and adult convictions. As current statistics reflect (e.g., Commission recidivism reports), approximately 1 in 3 juveniles who were committed to a YDC will receive an adult arrest⁵. **The goal of DACJJ is to reduce this likelihood to 1 in 6 juveniles receiving an adult arrest within 3 years of leaving a YDC.** Of similar concern and concentrated focus for DACJJ for reentry efforts are the juveniles who were confined in a PRTF (Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility), and juvenile group homes. This combined population is medium and high risk for reoffending and for having medium to high service needs profiles.

Goals and Objectives

To address the current gaps in the North Carolina juvenile justice system, this project will meet the following goals and objectives:

- Goal 1. Establish a task force to guide the development of a juvenile reentry systems reform strategic plan.
 - Objective 1. DACJJ will assemble a diverse group of task force members within the first month of the grant, and manage and document the task force's work throughout the planning year.
- Goal 2: Develop an outcome measurement and evaluation plan.
 - Objective 2: RTI (our proposed sub-grantee) and DACJJ will identify the points at which juveniles are most likely to reoffend.
 - Objective 3: RTI and DACJJ will increase juvenile data quality, including increasing the time period that juveniles are tracked after release.
- Goal 3. Develop a juvenile reentry systems reform strategic plan.
 - Objective 4. DACJJ will recommend increasing use of evaluation and evidence-based programming.
 - Objective 5. DACJJ will create a plan to increase the continuum of care for the most serious juvenile offenders.

⁵Flinchum, T., &Hevener, G. North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, (2013). *Juvenile recidivism study: FY 2008/09 juvenile sample*. Retrieved from website: http://www.nccourts.org/Courts/CRS/Councils/spac/Documents/ncspacjuvrecid_2013.pdf

- Objective 6. DACJJ will create a plan to increase training and oversight of our juvenile court counselors.
- Objective 7. DACJJ will create a plan to phase out outdated and unsafe facilities, renovate and expand safer, secure, and more cost-efficient facilities.
- Objective 8. DACJJ will create a plan to engage both families and youth in case planning, supervision, and services.
- Objective 9. DACJJ will devise a plan to reduce the likelihood of adult arrest from 1 in 3 to 1 in 6 for juveniles within 3 years of leaving a YDC.
- Goal 4. Develop an implementation plan.
 - Objective 10. Over the course of the planning project, DACJJ will develop a realistic juvenile reentry strategic plan implementation schedule.
- Goal 5. Develop a sustainability plan.
 - Objective 11. Over the course of the planning project, the DACJJ will build and support an action plan to sustain implementation of the juvenile reentry strategic plan with or without OJJDP implementation funding.

Performance Measures

DACJJ has strong capacity to provide the required Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) performance measures for the planning project, as well as the implementation project if awarded. Specifically, DACJJ is well-equipped to collect, analyze, and report on the population that is in confinement facilities, and subject to post-release/reentry supervision (group homes, PRTFs and YDCs). There are two established juvenile justice data systems with policy and procedure requirements for up-to-date, accurate data. The first is NC-JOIN (North Carolina - Juvenile Online Information Network⁶), and the second is ALLIES (A Local Link to Improve Effective Services⁷). NC-JOIN has been in operation statewide since January 1, 2004 and consists of juvenile-centered intake, court, facility and non-court-ordered

⁶ <https://www.ncdps.gov/Index2.cfm?a=000003,002476,002487,002522>

⁷ <http://www.ncdps.gov/index2.cfm?a=000003,002476,002483,002482,002514>

and court-ordered supervision data elements. ALLIES has had a live statewide client tracking component since July 1, 2011 and consists of youth-centered and program-centered program funding, program participation, and a few outcome data elements for prevention, intervention, suppression, and reentry/transitional programs. The adult correctional data system called OPUS (Offender Population Unified System) was established in 1995⁸ and includes information on adult offenders, convictions, court-ordered supervision, prison stays, and reentry. Since all three data application systems are in the Department of Public Safety it is relatively easy to match and track offenders from one system to another. DACJJ is positioned to provide qualitative and quantitative information on the reentry offenders as they penetrate each justice system in North Carolina. RTI (our proposed sub-grantee) will be on hand to further the data collection and analysis capacity within and outside of the three data systems.

In addition to the wealth of electronic data to be sourced for reporting on performance measures, DACJJ and RTI will thoroughly document all major issues and decisions related to the work of the task force, particularly those concerning the development of the juvenile reentry strategic plan, the implementation plan, and the sustainability plan. For reporting on performance measures related to the outcome measurement and evaluation plan, RTI will carefully document the design considerations, decisions, and modifications. A logic model that maps the project's goals, objectives, performance measures, data, and data sources is contained as an attachment to this narrative.

All data captured for this project will be for the purposes of internal improvements in DACJJ procedures, protocols, and programming. Though this project is collecting data on juvenile offenders in the DACJJ system, it is only for the aforementioned uses and not for

⁸ <https://www.ncdps.gov/index2.cfm?a=000003,000008,001147,002429,002430>

contribution to generalizable knowledge. Therefore, these activities are not research and 28 CFR part 46 does not apply.

Project Design and Implementation

Task structure

This planning project will contain five distinct tasks. They are:

- Task 1. Establish, manage, and document the juvenile reentry task force in North Carolina
- Task 2. Develop the outcome measurement and evaluation plan
 - Task 2A. Develop a definition of recidivism and baseline recidivism, develop the baseline recidivism plan
 - Task 2B. Establish priority reentry outcomes
 - Task 2C. Establish annual recidivism improvement targets
 - Task 2D. Establish a plan for managing and reporting data
- Task 3. Develop the juvenile reentry strategic plan
 - Task 3A. Identify the key findings in a self-assessment
 - Task 3B. Identify systemic policy and practice reforms and capacity-building
- Task 4. Develop the juvenile reentry implementation plan
- Task 5. Develop the juvenile reentry sustainability plan

Task 1: Establish, manage, and document the juvenile reentry task force in North Carolina

Within the first month of award of this planning grant, a juvenile reentry task force will be assembled by DACJJ. The task force will meet monthly to discuss advancements to the current strategic plan and outcome improvement targets and goals. Discussion will be enhanced by various guest speakers such as court system staff, program providers, and subject matter experts, particularly those with experience implementing systems change initiatives. RTI will assist DACJJ in facilitating and thoroughly documenting the work of the task force. The task

force, which may be divided into smaller issue-oriented subcommittees, will work with DACJJ in developing the deliverables for Tasks 2-5, which will be finalized by the end of this project.

To ensure that all expertise is included in the task force's approach (and to ensure future engagement of all parties at implementation), a diverse group of people will be included on the task force. Parties to be included in the task force include:

- Juvenile court services staff, such as the Director
- Juvenile facilities staff, such as the Director
- Juvenile justice community programming staff, such as the Director
- Juvenile justice clinical treatment services staff
- N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) representative
- N.C. Department of Public Instruction (DPI) representative
- Mental health provider representative
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Juvenile Crime Prevention Committee (JCPC) Chair or Co-Chair
- Workforce Development Board member
- Sheriff or Chief of Police
- Juvenile Court Judge
- Subject matter expert (such as a professor or non-profit associate) that focuses on juvenile justice reform and research into evidence-based programming in the juvenile justice system
- Legislative representative
- Alternative school representative
- Adult correction case manager or supervisor

It is important to highlight that the task force will include representatives from the state corrections department, community corrections agency, and local secure confinement system to ensure that everyone is able to bring their perspectives to the discussion as well as feel that this is

a collaborative effort between them all to ensure successful reentry. DACJJ is including letters of support from these entities in this grant proposal. Additionally, this project has the support of the Commissioner of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice. The Commissioner is demonstrating support for this project by providing in-kind time of DACJJ staff members to work on the project as well as a 50% price matching with OJJDP.

DACJJ staff has been successful in establishing and managing task forces in the past. For example, staff in the Governor's Crime Commission of DACJJ assembled a diverse group of law enforcement, researchers, judiciary, school board members, and others for the Governor's Gang Task Force. Established in October 2010 through Executive Order No. 69, the purpose of the Governor's Gang Task Force was to enhance anti-gang law enforcement efforts and develop gang prevention policies in North Carolina. This task force convened and met many times for discussion and collaboration, and by December of 2012 had developed a comprehensive final report detailing recommendations for addressing gangs in the state.

Task 2. Develop the outcome measurement and evaluation plan

During the planning year, the project sub-grantee RTI will design an outcome evaluation of North Carolina's statewide juvenile reentry initiative that is sensitive to the requirements of the Second Chance Act. In doing so, RTI will collaborate with DACJJ to achieve sub-tasks 2A-2D below.

Task 2A. Develop a definition of recidivism and baseline recidivism, develop the baseline recidivism plan

RTI and DACJJ will establish a clear definition of recidivism and baseline recidivism rates for the target population that includes multiple measures within the juvenile and adult justice systems (e.g., new juvenile petition/adult charge, new juvenile adjudication/adult

conviction, re-commitment/adult incarceration, violation of discharge conditions), and disaggregates recidivism measures by risk and needs levels.

Task 2B. Establish priority reentry outcomes

RTI and DACJJ will establish positive youth outcome measures (e.g., improved school attendance and performance, reduced substance use, improved mental health functioning, obtaining a job or completing a certification, rejoining a family unit, etc.) expected to be achieved by the reentry initiative and baseline measures from which these outcomes can be assessed. RTI will generate baseline measures from which these outcomes can be assessed. RTI and DACJJ will identify annual improvement targets for recidivism and positive youth outcomes.

Task 2C. Establish annual recidivism improvement targets

RTI and DACJJ will identify annual improvement targets for recidivism and positive youth outcomes.

Task 2D. Establish plan for managing and reporting data

During the planning year, RTI, working collaboratively with DACJJ, will design an outcome measurement and evaluation plan of North Carolina's statewide juvenile reentry initiative that is sensitive to the requirements of the Second Chance Act. Specifically, RTI and DACJJ will establish a clear definition of recidivism and baseline recidivism rates for the target population that includes multiple measures within the juvenile and adult justice systems (e.g., new juvenile complaint, new juvenile adjudication/adult conviction, re-commitment/adult incarceration, violation of discharge conditions), and disaggregates recidivism measures by risk and needs levels. The analysis of recidivism will be mindful to assess the timeframes when most juveniles re-offend to better develop services and support mechanisms to reduce subsequent offending. As mentioned above, DACJJ maintains comprehensive individual-level data on

juveniles and adults involved across the continuum of justice system case processing phases so deriving multiple recidivism measures will be possible.

Additionally, RTI and DACJJ will work together to develop a plan that describes data collection, analysis, and reporting of outcome improvements to provide ongoing feedback, ensuring continuous quality improvement on the reform effort. RTI will explore the feasibility of implementing a random assignment scheme or other methodologically rigorous design. In the event that random assignment is not feasible, RTI is confident that with their experience with DACJJ's detailed individual-level administrative data, it will be possible to develop a scientifically sound, quasi-experimental design for measuring recidivism and positive youth outcomes. For example, RTI was successful in applying propensity score matching techniques to identify a sample of treatment and comparison subjects from DACJJ's administrative data to evaluate the Value-based Therapeutic Environment (VBTE) Model used in multipurpose homes that serve youth involved in North Carolina's juvenile justice system. In fact, this evaluation was used as evidence to classify the VBTE Model as "promising" on the Office of Justice Program's CrimeSolutions.gov website.

RTI will also assess the feasibility of expanding the scope of the evaluation to include: (1) an implementation study, which is an important aspect of an evaluation of a Second Chance Act initiative given the mandatory requirements (per page 8 and 9 of the solicitation), (2) a fidelity assessment of reentry programs and services, and (3) a cost-benefit study.

In carrying out this work, RTI will closely align its work with DACJJ's strategic planning process to gain in-depth understanding of the issues concerning the development and implementation of a statewide juvenile reentry initiative. As such, RTI will be tasked with the following: (1) attend all strategic planning meetings to document major decision-making to

inform the evaluation design, hold regular calls with the DACJJ's project staff to discuss progress on the development of the reentry strategy and evaluation, and meet with the DACJJ's project and research staff and other stakeholders as needed to inform the development of the evaluation plan; (2) assess quality and completeness of individual-level administrative data and build an electronic data inventory to be used to map available data elements to recidivism and positive youth outcome measures; (3) map available data elements to outcome measures, identify gaps or data quality issues, and make recommendations to address gaps; (4) if needed, complete human subjects review to obtain and analyze data to inform development of recidivism and positive youth outcome measures; (5) generate baseline recidivism and positive youth outcome measures, review findings of the self-assessment guided by NRRC and abstract information relevant to evaluation design, start development of interview instruments and/or questionnaires; (6) compile and report required performance measures for the planning project (see Planning Process Logic Model as one of the proposal attachments); (7) synthesize information gathered over the planning process, finalize evaluation design (including the definition of recidivism and positive youth outcomes, a plan for data collection, analysis and reporting, evaluation logic model), and construct NC's statewide reentry initiative logic model; and (8) contribute to required OJJDP quarterly and/or annual report, as needed.

Task 3. Develop the juvenile reentry systems reform strategic plan

As mentioned previously, DACJJ released a juvenile justice facilities strategic plan to the legislature and public in April 2014 that placed a significant emphasis on continued deinstitutionalizing of juvenile offenders and reinvesting in community services with the greatest emphasis being on reentry services. This plan laid out a basic framework of how North Carolina over the next three years will reinvest more than 4 million dollars that primarily once served youth in YDCs into community-based reentry services. To formulate this plan and address the

multifaceted issues and opportunities in developing this strategic vision, division leadership organized a collaborative and comprehensively-represented group of leaders from areas throughout the department and from across the state, including Adult and Juvenile Facilities, Adult and Juvenile Programs, Community Corrections and Juvenile Court Services, Engineering Services, Human Resources, Budget, Staff Training, and Communications.

As noted, this plan included five strategic goals: more efficiently and effectively utilize existing resources in the state; phase-out facilities that are outdated, unsafe and/or underutilized; renovate and expand facilities that are safer, more secure, and more cost-efficient; restructure transportation operations and needs and review and adjust staffing patterns and salary grades to reduce operating costs at YDCs; provide a treatment and education approach that is rooted in a cognitive-behavioral treatment approach and targets criminogenic needs based on established principles of effective programming; reinvest cost savings into community-based programming to avoid costly youth development center commitments, revocations, and recommitments and to increase public safety; and to plan and be prepared for potential future changes in the juvenile justice system. Assistance of the OJJDP grant will allow the state to take a year to research and plan the best methodology for using these dollars. The ultimate goal is to develop a continuum of reentry services for all youth returning to their communities. These improvements will be identified and developed in Tasks 3A and 3B.

Task 3A. Identify the key findings in a self-assessment

DACJJ will benefit from the assistance of the National Resource Reentry Center (NRRC) to critically assess this plan and identify strengths, weaknesses, and additional system-wide improvements. The assessment will guide us as we to ensure that the reentry strategic plan addresses the adoption, integration, and effective implementation of the principles and practices demonstrated to improve youth outcomes. With respect to reducing recidivism, DACJJ will rely

on the expertise of the NRRC to ensure that the strategic plan contains the necessary components to meet the DACJJ goal of reducing the likelihood of adult arrest from 1 in 3 to 1 in 6 in the 3 years following discharge from a YDC.

Task 3B. Identify systemic policy and practice reforms and capacity-building

Once the self-assessment has been completed, DACJJ will describe which systemic policy and practice reforms and capacity-building activities the state will implement to achieve our improvement targets. The three areas targeted for improvement are:

- Revised risk/needs assessment instruments: This may include improved training for all juvenile counselors so that they are able to conduct thorough assessments and expand service and treatment planning.
- DACJJ's approach to pre-release services and planning as well as post-release services and supervision: This may include placing a priority on the selection of service providers or contractors who are using evidence-based programming.
- DACJJ's approach to enhancing program/policy monitoring, quality assessments, implementation supports, accountability practices, as well as outcome data collection, analysis, reporting, and decision-making: This may include requiring service providers and contractors to provide well-supported, sound evaluation plans with their grant/contract proposals.

To facilitate the development and implementation of the strategic plan, DACJJ will be assisted by local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders (e.g., mental health, housing, child welfare, education substance abuse, victim services, child support, employment services, law enforcement) with which it already has established

relationships and collaborates extensively. For example, through its JCPCs,⁹ DACJJ already requires a local planning process. JCPCs, which operate in all 100 NC counties, conduct their own yearly needs assessment to determine the most appropriate grant projects (i.e., services to be funded) for their counties. They meet monthly to discuss these issues and make their county's funding choices. Through this grant JCPCs will also be charged with identifying reentry services.

DACJJ may also collaborate with the North Carolina State Collaborative for Children and Families, which, through a System of Care framework, provides a forum for collaboration, advocacy and action among families, public and private child and family serving agencies and community partners to improve outcomes for all children, youth, and families. This group develops recommendations regarding the coordination of services, funding, training and local reporting requirements to eliminate duplication and make the system more consumer friendly and provides support for local Collaborative and Child and Family Teams. It includes representatives from DACJJ, Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services (MH/DD/SAS), Division of Social Services (DSS), Exceptional Children's Branch at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Medical Assistance, the Governor's Crime Commission, Administrative Office of the Courts, and Public Health.

Task 4. Develop the juvenile reentry implementation plan

Once the juvenile reentry strategic plan has been developed in Task 3, DACJJ will work with the task force to develop an implementation plan. This plan will delineate how DACJJ will execute our strategic plan, including key activities and timeline in the implementation process, as

⁹JCPC boards include the following representatives: the local school superintendent(s), a chief of police, the local sheriff, the district attorney, the chief court counselor, the director of the area mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse authority, the director of the county department of social services, the county manager, a substance abuse professional, a member of the faith community, a county commissioner, two persons under the age of 18, a juvenile defense attorney, the chief district court judge, a member of the business community, the local health director, a representative from the United Way or other nonprofit agency, a representative of a local parks and recreation program and up to seven members of the public to be appointed by the county board of commissioners.

well as roles and responsibilities of all parties and the utilization of external experts and consultants.

DACJJ has been successful in the implementation of other statewide initiatives. For example, NC-JOIN has been in operation statewide since January 1, 2004. It allows staff statewide to enter and review juvenile-centered intake, court, facility and non-court-ordered and court-ordered supervision data elements of juveniles across the state. NC-JOIN places crucial information at the fingertips of court counselors, detention and youth development center staff throughout the state. Future plans include expanding appropriate access to community prevention and intervention programs funded through local Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils in each of the 100 counties.

Task 5. Develop the juvenile reentry sustainability plan

DACJJ will also work with the task force to develop a sustainability plan that identifies how we will sustain the work in the strategic plan if implemented with or without the help of the subsequent implementation award. Incorporated in the sustainability plan will be DACJJ's current plan to reinvest dollars from the closure of YDCs into reentry services in the community. This plan is supported by the Department of Public Safety, legislature, and the governor. With the reinvestment of resources, DACJJ will be able to sustain the re-entry efforts developed in the planning year and implemented during the implementation funding cycle. Of note, DACJJ has had past success in sustaining effective programs. Juvenile Community Programs had previously grant-funded a male transitional home that served young men returning from YDCs and other residential placements who could not return home, often due to gang involvement or unstable environments. This home boasts a 100 percent youth employment rate and enrolls its youth in community college or GED classes. Due to its success, it is now fully state funded by the General Assembly and a female transitional home is being planned.

Capabilities/Competencies

Overall, this project will function under the oversight of four sections in the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice (DACJJ): Juvenile Community Programs, Juvenile Court Services, Juvenile Facilities, and Juvenile Clinical Treatment Services. These sections will work collaboratively to ensure that the processes and tools implemented as a result of this plan are functioning as intended and that all sections are involved in the improved juvenile reentry process.

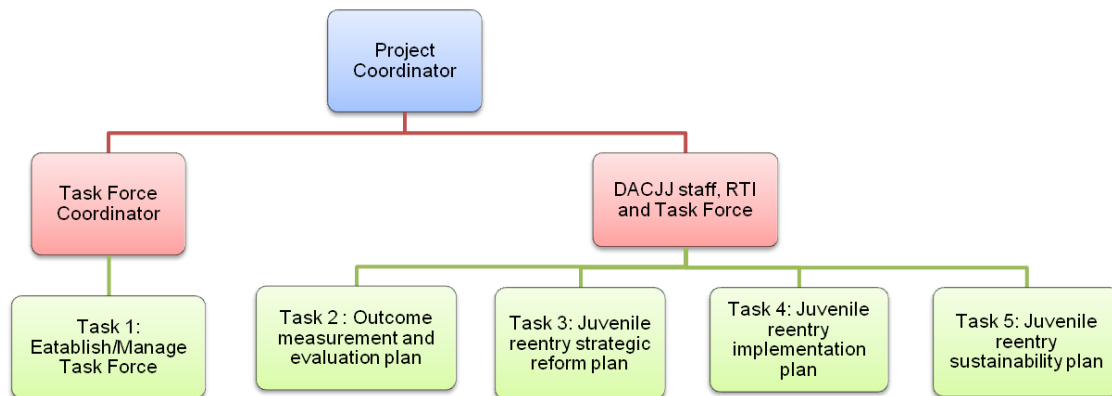
DACJJ staff is accustomed to working together to accomplish important tasks. For example, staff from all sections came together to formulate the juvenile justice facilities strategic plan in the spring of 2014. Staff in all sections work together every year to complete legislatively mandated annual reports on the functioning of juvenile justice systems and youth outcomes, such as the juvenile justice overall annual report and the Annual Evaluation of Community Programs Report.

Another successful collaboration in the state is centered on justice reinvestment. A bipartisan, inter-branch work group developed policies to improve sentencing, supervision, and treatment options for adult offenders. The 2011 Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) expanded felony drug diversion, required supervision of all felony offenders released from prison, allowed short jail stays to be used for violations of community supervision, and focused supervision and treatment resources on offenders who present the highest risks and needs. The budget act that same year included closure of four adult prisons. A 2013 report of the Sentencing Policy and Advisory Commission found that a combination of factors, including justice reinvestment reforms, has contributed to a nearly 9 percent decrease in the prison population over the last 18

months. The state expects to save \$290 million over the first five years, and to be able to reinvest at least \$4 million to expand adult community-based treatment programs.

An overall project coordinator will ensure that all tasks are progressing as indicated in the project timeline as well as engage in project and budget management. The task force coordinator will establish the task force and assist it in meeting logistics and function. DACJJ staff and sub-grantee RTI will be in charge of completing Tasks 2-5 by the end of the planning project, with oversight and recommendations from the task force.

Dr. Julie Singer will be the Project Coordinator. She serves as the Community



Development Program Manager in the Juvenile Community Programs section of the Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice. Previously, she served as the Director of the Criminal Justice Analysis Center in the North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission. She has a Master’s and Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Social Psychology (concentration in justice studies) from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Dr. Singer has been involved in a multitude of research projects encompassing evaluation, criminal justice (with a special focus in juvenile justice) and survey research. While in graduate school, Dr. Singer worked at the Grant Sawyer Center for Justice Studies, a research group within the University of Nevada. As part of this position, she worked with the National

Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges on an evaluation of dependency drug courts in the state of Utah.

Dr. Singer worked at RTI International for three and a half years, being involved in contract research for the Department of Homeland Security, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. During this time, she served as a lead on contract research proposals, a task leader, and project director. She served as task leader on the subject matter expert (SME) panels for a DHS project. In this role, she handled the recruitment and contractual agreement with SMEs for the project, as well as all meeting logistics, travel reimbursement, meeting notes, and meeting reports. She also coordinated the meetings of the North Carolina Governor's Gang Task Force during their final six months of meeting and report writing.

This project will also utilize the services of our staff in DACJJ's Office of Rehabilitative Programs and Services, formerly named Research & Planning. They provide research, planning, program development, and decision support services to staff in the Department of Public Safety so they can make informed policy and operational decisions. These services are also provided to members of the North Carolina General Assembly, state officials and the general public. The staff in this office has the ability to pull data directly from the statewide databases using SAS and SQL. Their assistance will be vital in helping to bring together the measurable objectives in this project.

RTI International will be sub-contracting on this grant to provide technical assistance to DACJJ in the areas of data quality and management as well as creating a sound evaluation plan. RTI International, located in Research Triangle Park, NC, is one of the world's leading research institutes, dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice. RTI

is renowned for its expertise in designing and conducting criminal justice and juvenile justice related evaluations, and has a demonstrated history of working together with funding organizations and implementation sites to produce data and analyses that support systems change initiatives, program development, and continuous quality improvement. Evaluations such as the Multi-site Evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative and the Evaluation of the Value-based Therapeutic Environment Model used in multipurpose homes that serve youth involved in North Carolina's juvenile justice system demonstrate that RTI is the ideal evaluation partner for the proposed project.

The sub-grant lead on the project will be Debbie Dawes. Ms. Dawes is a research social scientist in RTI's Center for Justice, Safety, and Resilience. She has 20 years of experience involving public policy analysis, and process and outcome evaluation. At RTI, Ms. Dawes works with staff from correctional and juvenile justice agencies, as well as NCIC, to acquire, prepare, and analyze administrative data to support numerous evaluations including the *Multi-site Evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)*, and the follow-up study, *Prisoner Reentry Services: What Works for Whom*. Under the SVORI evaluation, Ms. Dawes led the analysis of juvenile reentry outcomes (e.g., substance abuse, mental health, education, recidivism) and co-authored the technical report, *Boys' reentry experiences: Pre- and post-release characteristics, service receipt, and outcomes among juvenile male participants in the SVORI multi-site evaluation*. She was also the Data Collection and Outcome Analysis Task Leader for the *Evaluation of the Value-Based Therapeutic Environment Model*, a residential treatment model for juvenile justice-involved youths in North Carolina. Before joining RTI, Ms. Dawes served as staff to the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission. As a research and policy associate, Ms. Dawes facilitated the Commission's development of

research-based criminal and juvenile justice policy recommendations to the state legislature and other decision-making bodies. In this role, she developed protocols and conducted semi-structured interviews with field practitioners, program managers, and administrative directors; collected, processed, linked, and analyzed primary and archival administrative data from the state departments of correction and juvenile justice, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the State Bureau of Investigation; summarized findings, conclusions, and recommendations in technical reports; and presented findings to decision-making groups.