

August 7, 2002

***Evaluation Findings:
The Detention Diversion Advocacy
Program Philadelphia, Pennsylvania***

By
Lisa B. Feldman, M.A.
The George Washington University
Center for Excellence in Municipal Management

Charis E. Kubrin, Ph.D.
Department of Sociology
The George Washington University

The George Washington University

Evaluation Findings from The Detention Diversion Advocacy Program
**Center for Excellence in
Municipal Management**

Evaluation Findings: The Detention Diversion Advocacy Program Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

I. General Issues and Trends

Youth of color are over-represented in detention facilities across the country. Between 1989 and 1999, black juveniles between 12-17 were roughly three times as likely as whites in that age category to be detained upon arrest even when controlling for prior criminal history, and seriousness of offense (BJS, 2001). In addition to higher detention rates, many argue that Federal regulations have resulted in a disproportionate number of minorities receiving harsher sentences than that of their white counterparts.

Racial stereotyping in the media contributes to these trends. Some scholars also contend that when minorities are stereotyped as particularly predatory or perceived as coming from dysfunctional backgrounds, they are more likely to be recommended for formal processing, referred to court, adjudicated delinquent, and given harsher dispositions than comparable white offenders (Fagan, et. al, 1987; Bishop & Frazier, 1988; Conley, 1994; Bridges & Steen, 1998). Minorities have been the most severely affected by these depictions at all levels of criminal justice proceedings. In 1998, approximately 79 percent of the juvenile population in the United States was white and 15 percent was black. However, black juveniles were disproportionately involved in 29 percent of delinquency cases handled by juvenile courts, and white juveniles were involved in 67 percent. This means that black juveniles are nearly twice as likely to be involved in delinquency than their white counterparts. Additionally, black juveniles were involved in 35 percent of person offense cases, 29 percent of public order offense cases, 29 percent of drug law violation cases, and 26 percent of property offense cases (BJS, 2001). Numerous cities around

the country grapple with how to reduce this overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system.

In the early 1990's, changes in the federal guidelines for states to participate in the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Formula Grant Program (JJDP)—the federal grant program that provides funding to states for juvenile justice initiatives—required that states assess levels of minority youth confinement and implement strategies to reduce minority overrepresentation.

Changes in juvenile justice have also been implemented on a wider scale. In response to a growing tendency toward secure confinement of juveniles across the country, with hundreds of overcrowded juvenile facilities, numerous lawsuits have been brought against jurisdictions for poor treatment of their confined juvenile population.ⁱ Over 70 percent of the juvenile detention facilities in America are over their capacity.ⁱⁱ Overcrowding risks the health of facility residents and staff, and contributes to unsafe conditions.

In an attempt to decrease detention overcrowding, criminal justice scholars and practitioners have long debated appropriate sanctions and alternatives for delinquent youth. Along with new federal regulations, there has been a rhetorical shift on the part of state and local governments toward greater use of community-based programs. In turn, numerous evaluations of alternative programs across the country have been conducted to determine their success.

In one example, an evaluation by the American Corrections Association (1996) found that 59 percent of community based program graduates—all under pre-adjudication status—from the Washington, DC-based Community Connections pro-

gram completed the program, without being rearrested and appeared for all court-requested hearings. Program success was attributed to the frequent weekly contacts between case managers and the collaboration with schools and substance abuse counseling programs, case managers, educators, and service providers. Notably, Community Connections appeared to be more successful with clients who were charged with serious offenses such as assault than with clients charged with status offenses such as truancy.

A 1996 evaluability assessment and process evaluation of nine community-based programs in Pennsylvania found that along with high program participation rates, programs that adapt goals to meet the needs of both children and their families, place a strong emphasis on education, and include a structured training component for life skills such as substance abuse and pregnancy prevention have beneficial outcomes in reducing juvenile reoffending (Welsh et. al., 1996).

A third evaluation, conducted in 1999 of the San Francisco-based Detention Diversion Advocacy Program (DDAP), the same model as the Philadelphia program discussed in this report, Sheldon found that clients had lower rates of recidivism, the jurisdiction lowered the numbers of minorities under locked custody, and effectively linked clients and their families to needed social services. Sheldon attributed the program's success to small caseload sizes and the model of intensive supervision that not only keeps youth within their communities but also eliminates the stigma of formal court processing.ⁱⁱⁱ

A 1999 evaluation of community-based delinquency prevention programs in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania found that community programs do at least as well as secure detention facilities in reducing recidivism, with a rate of recidivism of 42 percent for program participants and 53 percent for the comparison groups over a three-year period

(Welsh et. al., 1999). The researchers from this evaluation conclude:

If community-based programs reliably can be shown to produce even the same outcome as more invasive efforts at less cost and in a more humane, less stigmatizing manner, their efforts should be welcomed and rewarded. Furthermore, if community-based interventions for high-risk minority youth can demonstrate reasonable reductions in recidivism, they provide a positive step toward addressing a persistent but under addressed problem: the disproportionate numbers of minority youth in juvenile detention facilities in America (Welsh et. al., 1999).

This report will consider the above assumption by determining the efficacy and potential of the Detention Diversion Advocacy Program (DDAP) in Philadelphia to supervise pre-adjudicated juveniles in a community setting. First, we provide an historical overview of juvenile justice practices and trends in the city to frame the juvenile detention issue and to provide context for the program. Second, we present findings from a quantitative study of client demographics and program outcomes, and a qualitative study of the perceptions of participating DDAP and criminal justice officials.

II. Historical Context of Juvenile Justice in Philadelphia

The 1970's

Overcrowding in juvenile detention facilities is not a new issue in Philadelphia. Since the 1970's, the Youth Study Center (YSC), Philadelphia's secure pre-trial detention center for juveniles, has been battling with facility overcrowding, a distinctly poor, minority youth population, and litigation and youth advocate resistance resulting from these conditions.

The Youth Study Center has a licensed capacity of 105, although its population in the 1970's often approached 200. This high

number of youth was partly attributed to the large proportion of status offenders, such as runaways, or truant youth housed in the facility.^{iv}

In 1974, fifteen YSC youth filed a class action lawsuit against the city in federal court. The suit, *Santiago v. City of Philadelphia*, challenged numerous allegedly unconstitutional conditions in the facility, including overcrowding.

Plaintiffs in the *Santiago* case charged that it was a violation of legal rights to hold juveniles in a secure facility who have committed no delinquent acts. By the time of the first *Santiago* settlement in 1978, legislators changed state law in Pennsylvania to prohibit secure detention of status offenders. City officials thought that this would result in a reduction in the number of youth in secure detention. Ultimately, as explained below, this was not the case.

Advocates for youth in Philadelphia have long argued for a juvenile detention philosophy that places only necessary restrictions on juveniles to ensure public safety and a juvenile's presence at trial.^v The first *Santiago* decree required that a juvenile be released from secure detention unless he or she was charged with a crime of violence and the crime was at least a misdemeanor of the first degree, if the juvenile was an escapee from an institution, or if he or she had a willful record of failing to appear at juvenile proceedings. The decree also stipulated that intake and court officials examine whether steps short of secure detention could reasonably reduce the risk of flight or misconduct while a juvenile awaited disposition on a case. In 1979, the decree was amended to incorporate new state detention regulations, but otherwise stayed in effect until 1985.

The 1980s

Between 1978 and 1985, there was a fluctuation in the number of detained youth at the YSC, with an increase in the population

during the early 1980s. The court amended the *Santiago* decree in 1985 to respond to a number of new issues at the facility. The major goal of the 1985 amendments was to reduce the population and the length of stay for juveniles. In turn, new standards were adopted to prevent judges from detaining juveniles perceived as low risk, including prohibiting the admission of youth charged with technical probation violations (such as missing school or court ordered counseling), youth with severe mental impairments, or juveniles under the age of 13.

Concurrently, the Department of Human Services (DHS) had been operating a detention alternative program in the city for many years, which consisted mainly of group homes with a total of only about 60 beds. In 1985, DHS and the Family Court began expanding detention alternative programs, adding more non-secure alternatives, such as group homes or shelter beds, and contracting with an array of in-home programs such as house arrest and tether supervision.

Disappointingly, these alternatives had little impact on the population at the Youth Study Center. Between 1984 and 1988, there was a significant increase in the percentage of Philadelphia youth detained at the YSC or in a community based shelter. While about 30 percent of arrested youth (3,062 detained of 10,015 juvenile court referrals) were detained in 1984, 60 percent (5,343 of 8,899) were detained 4 years later in 1988. With the failure of the *Santiago* decree to reduce the overcrowding at the Youth Study Center, a new 1988 consent decree was instituted which placed a cap of 105 on the number of beds the city could fill at the facility. Once the cap was reached, the Family Court was responsible for finding alternative placements for juveniles while they awaited disposition on an open case.

Since the 1984 cap was imposed, the City and Family Court created almost 500 alternative slots to secure confinement. These include community based shelter beds,

electronic monitoring slots, pre-hearing intensive supervision, and in-home detention slots. Despite the presence of this wide range of alternatives, reform advocates questioned whether they were targeted to youth who would otherwise be held at the Youth Study Center, or whether they were targeted to youth who would receive minimal supervision or no pre-trial supervision at all.^{vi} One concern of advocates in Philadelphia was whether detention alternatives had solved the problem of overcrowding appropriately, or if they created a system of “net widening.” Net widening is a term used to describe a phenomenon whereby low risk youth, who would otherwise receive some type of suspended sentence, or would be diverted from the juvenile justice system altogether, are placed in programs that are more intensive than necessary. As a result, the number of youth under intensive supervision increases, with no measurable reduction in the higher risk population within the facility that an alternative program was intended to serve.

The 1990s

In considering realistic ways to reduce the size of the secure detention population, there are typically two options: controlling who enters detention, and controlling how long juveniles who do enter stay in the facility. As juvenile justice experts in Philadelphia deliberated about how to enact policy and programmatic changes during the mid-1990s, they considered negative impacts which could potentially result from the overuse of secure detention when other, less restrictive, options might be more suitable. Some of the issues of concern expressed by reform advocates included: the risk caused to youth who reside in overcrowded detention centers which increase potential harm to youth, the stigmatization that results from being “locked up,” the disruption from school or work that results from secure confinement, and the fact that youth in secure detention prior to adjudication are more likely to receive a sentence that includes secure confinement compared to youth that

remain in the community, regardless of the offense.^{vii}

Also of concern was the high cost of juvenile detention. Since there was no federal reimbursement available to subsidize the costs to the city for the provision of secure detention services, it was the most costly, least reimbursable part of the juvenile justice system. Except for small sums under school lunch programs, no federal reimbursement was available in the country for secure detention. In addition, the State of Pennsylvania only reimburses secure detention costs at a rate of 50 percent—the lowest reimbursement rate for any children’s program that county-level children and youth agencies support.^{viii} Further, in Pennsylvania, county dollars for secure detention came out of the same allocation of funds for other delinquency programs and for all county-level programs that respond to child abuse and neglect. Consequently, although detention alternatives existed, the juvenile justice system relied on scarce resources to manage its detention population.

Along with city-level deliberations around juvenile detention, the State of Pennsylvania also considered minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system across the State. A 1992 study found that minority youths aged 10 through 17 constituted 75 percent of all those confined in secure detention facilities across the State, although minorities comprised only 12 percent of the state juvenile population.^{ix} As of June 1994, roughly 90 percent of youth detained in YSC were minorities.^x

In the early 1990’s the Juvenile Advisory Committee of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) commissioned research to analyze minority overrepresentation in the state, and to formulate statewide intervention strategies. The study showed that throughout Pennsylvania, minority overrepresentation increased as youth moved through the system. Thus, one could surmise that decreasing numbers of minorities were diverted out of the system at various stages. The PCCD

subcommittee concluded that actions should be taken to slow the entry or re-entry of minorities into the system, and it recommended the expansion and development of community-based prevention activities. Therefore, the state created and supported a number of community programs in Philadelphia in 1992 to combat the high number of minority youth in detention and committed facilities.^{xi} The Detention Diversion Advocacy Program in Philadelphia is one of these community alternatives.

III. The Detention Diversion Advocacy Program (DDAP)

In early 2000, the population at the Youth Study Center still fluctuated over capacity. At this time, the Department of Human Services (DHS) in Philadelphia sought the assistance of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ). For over fifteen years, CJCJ developed and managed detention diversion programs in response to overcrowded detention facilities around the country. Following negotiations with DHS officials, CJCJ entered into a contract with the City of Philadelphia to establish a detention advocacy and case management program (the DDAP program) designed to reduce the Youth Study Center (YSC) population of detained youth by 25.

In addition to reducing overcrowding in the YSC, the overarching goals of the DDAP program are to ensure juveniles attend their scheduled court hearings, and to reduce the likelihood that a juvenile will reoffend while awaiting case disposition. To accomplish these goals, the DDAP program uses intensive case management techniques, which are described below.

The DDAP program model is also designed to accomplish additional goals, which are only possible, if a juvenile resides in the community during his or her court proceedings. These goals include:

- Reducing the disproportionate confinement of minority youth.

- Offering well-coordinated interventions that reduce service fragmentation.
- Demonstrating that community-based services are an effective alternative to secure custody.
- Assuring the provision of quality, treatment-oriented services with decency and dignity to all program participants and their families.
- Reducing the unnecessary use of locked detention.

DDAP referrals typically come to DDAP staff through juvenile justice system officials (e.g.: DJJ staff, judges, defense lawyers, and probation officers). DDAP staff are expected to talk with family, teachers, lawyers, mental health providers, probation officials, community members, and other significant actors in the youth's life. Case managers conduct a review of all relevant records, including school and prior arrests, and then develop individualized service plans for presentation to judges, who accept or reject the service plan. Each plan is developed in the context of the youth's needs, and addresses key issues of residence, education, employment, counseling, drug treatment, transportation, mental health services, mentoring, and other factors central to community adjustment.

Once a judge refers a juvenile onto DDAP, he or she is released to the supervision of the DDAP program. Subsequently, DDAP case managers develop a case plan and monitor the youth's compliance with the plan. Monitoring is initiated immediately upon release and includes a minimum of three face-to-face contacts daily during the first week. The frequency of monitoring can decrease over time at the discretion of the case manager.

IV. Background and Scope of the Evaluation

In late fall of 2001, the William Penn Foundation in Philadelphia provided the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ)

with the resources to commission an evaluation of the DDAP program in its first year to determine whether DDAP has been implemented in such a way as to effectively monitor pre-adjudicated juveniles. In turn, CJCJ commissioned Lisa B. Feldman, M.A. from The George Washington University Center for Excellence in Municipal Management, and Charis E. Kubrin, Ph.D, from The George Washington University Department of Sociology to examine the progress of DDAP. Following the request of the Foundation, the researchers designed the evaluation to determine whether DDAP's initial goals have been achieved.

The evaluation design consists of two parts: The first part addresses, from an historical context, the state of juvenile detention in Philadelphia and identifies the pressing political and social issues the city has been dealing with over time, including overcrowding and disproportionate minority confinement in the Youth Study Center. The second part addresses whether DDAP effectively monitors high-risk juveniles in the community, by ensuring they attend all scheduled court hearings and do not reoffend. Further, the evaluation assesses how successful DDAP is at demonstrating that community-based services are an effective alternative to secure custody.

As DDAP is only in its second year and many youth are recent clients, it is premature to examine the extent to which DDAP clients recidivate once leaving the program. It is customary to examine patterns of reoffending after a period of at least 1-2 years post program participation.^{xii} Many of the youth in the sample (described below) have recently participated in DDAP while a few are a year post-program.

V. Findings

Data and Sampling Procedures

Data on youth participating in DDAP from December 2000 through December 2001

($n=97$) were collected from printouts obtained from the Philadelphia DDAP Program Director and information gathered from client case files including, intake forms, progress reports, parent and youth agreement forms, juvenile history inquiry forms, school attendance reports, and chronological data sheets which detailed the face-to-face interviews of case managers and youth. This collection of forms provided the evaluators with (1) *demographic* information on youth such as age, gender, race, (2) *offense* information including the reason(s) for detention and seriousness of offense(s), (3) *case* information such as the number of weeks the youth participated in the program and the relationship between the youth and his/her caregiver (e.g., mother, father, both parents, grandparents, etc.), and (4) *outcome* information including the outcome of the case (e.g., case withdrawn, probation, placement in private or public facility, re-arrested, etc.), the number of times the youth saw his/her case manager, whether the youth successfully attended all court hearings, and whether the youth was re-arrested at any point while in the program.

In addition to collecting information on DDAP youth, data on youth who remained in the juvenile court system were obtained from the Philadelphia Youth Study Center. Information on these youth was collected in order to compare the group of DDAP youth to a control group of youth who did not participate in DDAP but who remained in secure custody. A comparison determined the extent to which DDAP youth differ from YSC youth in terms of demographic characteristics (See Table I). Random sampling techniques were used to select the control group. During the period of December 2000 through December 2001, it was determined that roughly 4,500 youth were admitted to the YSC. To create a comparison group of 97 youth, every 46th person was selected for the control group. Thus, a comparison can be made between an equal number of youth who participated in DDAP and youth who were detained in the Youth Study Center while awaiting case disposition

For this group, data on age, gender, race, reason(s) for detention, seriousness of offense, and disposition were collected. The

following table compares the DDAP group to the Youth Study Center group on a number of demographic characteristics.

Table I: DDAP and YSC Sample Comparison

	DDAP Group (n=97)		Youth Study Center Group (n=97)	
	N	%	N	%
Race/ethnicity				
▪ Caucasian	11	11	16	16.5
▪ African American	69	71	59	60.8
▪ Hispanic	15	16	19	19.6
▪ Asian	0	0	3	3.1
▪ Other	0	0	0	0
▪ Missing	2	2	0	0
Sex				
▪ Male	81	83.5	71	73.2
▪ Female	16	16.5	26	26.8
Average age	16.26		16	

As shown in Table I, DDAP youth do not differ dramatically from YSC youth with respect to race. The majority of youth in both samples are African American (71 percent in DDAP and 61 percent in YSC), and fewer than 17 percent of both samples are white. Percentages of Hispanics are roughly similar as well (16 percent for DDAP and 20 percent for YSC). There is a significant difference between the DDAP and YSC samples in terms of gender, however. While nearly 84 percent of DDAP clients are male, only 73 percent of YSC youth are male, suggesting that DDAP selection procedures result in an overrepresentation of males. This may result from DDAP's intention to select high-risk youth into the Program. As males generally commit more serious offenses than females,^{xiii} they may have been targeted by DDAP selection procedures more frequently.

Additional data on DDAP youth describe the number and types of relationships youth had with their caregivers. Above and be

yond DDAP personnel, youth rely on caregivers to help them comply with the program

requirements, show up for court dates, and not reoffend. A majority of DDAP clients' caregivers were mothers only (50 percent), followed by grandparents (10.3 percent), both parents (8.2 percent), fathers only (8.2 percent), and other relative (7.2 percent). A legal guardian cared for only 1 percent of DDAP youth. Notably, almost 60 percent of youth had one parent as a caregiver, and relatives or guardians other than parents cared for almost 19 percent.

Racial Disproportionality

One of DDAP's primary goals is that at least 85% of their clients are minorities. The table above indicates that only 11 percent of DDAP clients were white, while 71 percent were black and 16 percent were Hispanic. Thus, 87 percent of all DDAP clients were minorities, and the Program achieved this goal. While this small number of minority clients does not necessarily indicate that racial disproportionality was reduced in the Youth Study Center, each minority placed in DDAP results in one less minority youth placed in the YSC.

Net Widening and Appropriate Referrals

To determine whether appropriate referrals were being made to DDAP, we examined the distribution of reasons for detention. Table II lists the various charges for DDAP clients (and compares them to the

charges for YSC youth). Because clients differed in the number of offenses for which they were arrested, with some clients arrested on up to nine charges, we chose to present the most serious offense as the primary offense.

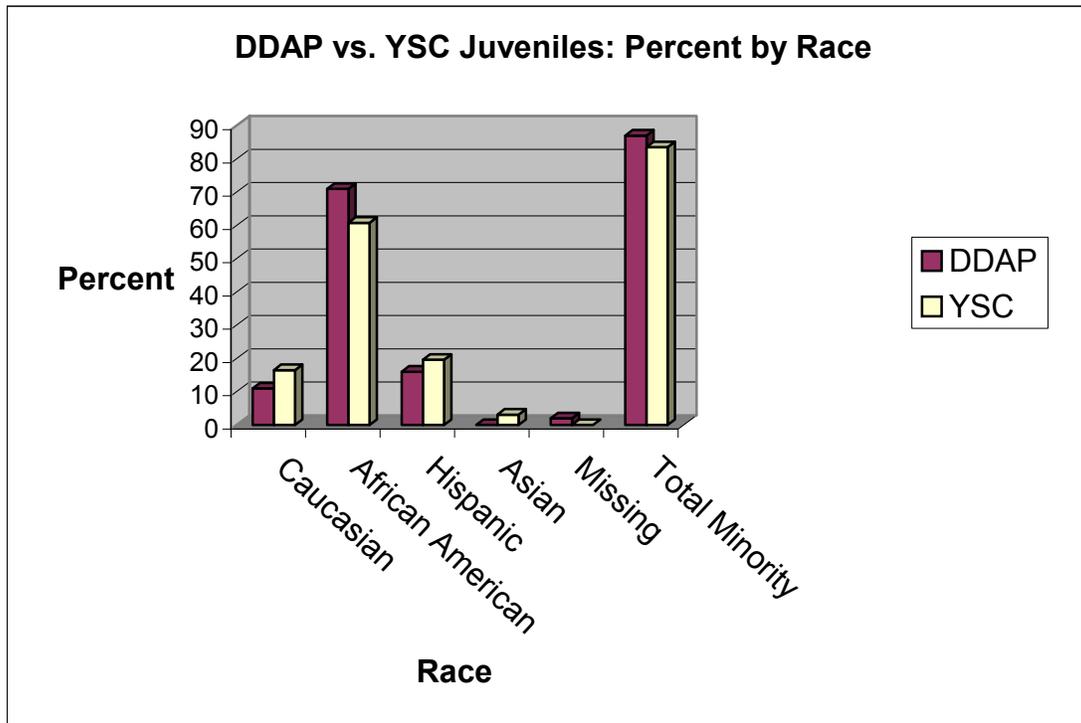


Table II: Offense Type of DDAP and YSC Juveniles

Offense Type	DDAP		YSC	
	N	%	N	%
Possession C/S	13	13.8	0	0
Possession C/S w/ Intent or Delivery C/S*	20	21.3	15	15.5
Simple Assault	6	6.4	2	2.1
Aggravated Assault*	9	9.6	13	13.4
Harassment	1	1.1	0	0
Rape*	4	4.3	3	3.1
Indecent Exposure	1	1.1	0	0
Sexual Assault*	1	1.1	0	0
Robbery*	9	9.6	3	3.1
Retail Theft	4	4.3	0	0
Auto Theft*	2	2.1	1	1.0
Burglary*	3	3.2	3	3.1
Criminal Trespassing*	2	2.1	0	0
Arson*	1	1.1	1	1.0
Theft- Receipt Stolen Prop*	4	4.3	0	0
Theft- Unlawful Taking Property*	2	2.1	10	10.3
Unlawful Use Car	1	1.1	2	2.1
Terroristic Threats	1	1.1	1	1.0
Escape	1	1.1	0	0
Possession Instrument Crime	1	1.1	1	1.0
Carrying Weapon School Property	2	2.1	0	0
Prostitution	1	1.1	0	0
Vandalism	5	5.3	0	0
Kidnap	0	0	1	1.0
Bench Warrant	0	0	19	19.6
Review**	0	0	22	22.7
Missing	3	3.1	0	0
TOTAL	97	100	97	100

*Felony Offense

**Review of commitment or status of juvenile because of failure to adjust to community-based or other program.

As the Table shows, DDAP and YSC youth committed similar types of offenses, the most common including delivery or possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver, aggravated assault, robbery, and theft.

An important goal of DDAP is to ensure that youth who would not otherwise be in any type of intensive supervision program while awaiting case disposition are not brought

into the program. One way to determine whether DDAP is selecting appropriate clients is to examine the number of youth admitted who are charged with felony, rather than misdemeanor, offenses. As the Table above indicates, 59 percent ($n=57$) of all DDAP offenses were felonies (compared to only 51 percent of YSC offenses). This suggests that DDAP clients are in detention status for serious crimes, which would otherwise have warranted Youth Study Center

placement. On the other hand, numerous referrals were made for two misdemeanor offenses—possession of controlled substance and simple assault. Although DDAP youth may have a lengthy criminal past, these data indicate that there may be some room for improvement in terms of net widening.

Through interviews with system officials, it became clear that the placement of youth charged with relatively minor offenses—although few in number—could result from the fact that system officials differed in their views about what constitutes an appropriate DDAP candidate. In interviews it was apparent that many officials are unclear about the philosophy behind the DDAP program, which is based on the premise that even the deepest end juveniles can be effectively supervised in the community. Almost all interviewees differed in their views about which type of juvenile is “appropriate” for the program.

Traditionally, most juvenile justice systems have relied on risk assessments and specific criteria to determine appropriate placements for detained juveniles. Consequently, the lowest risk juveniles are placed on community supervision, while the highest risk juveniles are housed in secure facilities. Although proponents of DDAP maintain that even the highest risk juveniles can be effectively monitored in the community, however, based upon the interviews with officials across all facets of the system, it appears that this philosophy is slow in taking hold. Officials seem to continue to buy into the traditional approach of standardized risk assessments to determine placement.

Accordingly, some officials do not understand the DDAP program philosophy, which targets the highest risk juveniles, and think the program would better serve lower risk juveniles. One comment expressed during an interview clearly pointed to this confusion:

DDAP may have better success trying to get kids out of the Community Based Shelter (CBS) System. I think it is a parameter of the grant however, that they can only work with the YSC kids. CBS kids are less serious offenders and lower risk.

Below are some other relevant comments from various officials within the juvenile justice system during face-to-face interviews.

It [DDAP] is not appropriate for people with a history of running away, or for habit-driven crimes such as child predators, serious drug offenders. The program is good for kids whose crimes are driven by greed.

The problem is that there is no clear way of defining what a ‘DDAP’ kid should look like. There is no strict criteria for ‘appropriate.’ I think there should be an assessment tool to determine appropriateness. The system actually needs an assessment tool in place.

If DDAP is looking to change the system, the referrals are good. DDAP won’t change the system this way however, and they won’t ever get some of the kids they refer out. There is a lack of understanding on the part of DDAP as to what is a good case to refer in this system. It appears that any child with a home is a candidate. The staff does not have the perspective of the lawyers.

One way DDAP staff could encourage officials to consider high-risk juveniles for DDAP placement is through better information sharing about the ways in which the juveniles perceived as the highest risk have been effectively monitored by program staff, by providing monthly progress reports to judges about the program’s overall success, or by sharing case studies or positive evaluations. This could help to provide context for officials about the array of juveniles who have been well served by the program in the past.

However, DDAP staff must couple information sharing with close collaboration among public defenders, probation, judges, and prosecutors to achieve consensus about

whether a given *individual* juvenile is perceived as appropriate for the program.

Court Appearances

DDAP clients were in the Program an average of 6 weeks (ranging from 1 to 19 weeks). The total number of weeks for all clients examined is 575. Although DDAP clients did not have weekly court appearances, only 4 (or 4%) of the 97 youth in the sample were reported to have missed a court date during their DDAP tenure. This low number suggests that DDAP staff are effectively ensuring their clients' appear-

ance at court, a major indicator of DDAP's success.

Final Case Status

To determine the extent to which DDAP clients were rearrested while on the Program, we examined final outcome data for all 97 youth, and compared these figures to YSC youth. Table III lists the various possible outcomes and the number and percentage of youth in each outcome category.

Table III: Final Outcome of DDAP and YSC Juveniles

Final Outcome	DDAP		YSC	
	N	%	N	%
Case Withdrawn/Dismissed	22	22.7	24	24.7
Probation	25	25.8	13	13.4
Placement Private Facility	11	11.3	13	13.4
Placement Public Facility	6	6.2	3	3.1
AWOL/Bench Warrant	13	13.4	0	0
Community Based Program/Other	4	4.1	44	45.4
Rearrested	6	6.2	n/a	n/a
Unknown	10	10.3	0	0
Total	97	100	97	100

As shown, only 6 DDAP youth (or 6.2 percent of the sample) were rearrested during program tenure. Although there is no comparable number for juveniles in other community programs or in the Youth Study Center (as they were incarcerated and thus unable to reoffend), this percentage is relatively low, suggesting that juveniles on DDAP on the whole, are not committing new offenses. Notably, a higher number of DDAP youth not controlling for seriousness of offense, were placed on probation in comparison to YSC youth. Conversely, a significantly low number of youth were placed into community based programs in comparison to YSC youth.

Of serious concern, the percentage of DDAP youth for whom a bench warrant was requested is relatively high ($n=13$, 13.4 percent of the sample). Although we do not know the reason for the requested bench warrant, (researchers located these data on the Client Inquiry Forms from the Family Court provided by the DDAP Program Director), this indicates that nearly 1 in 7 juveniles failed to comply with a court order during their time in the program. Notably, this high percentage of AWOL/bench warrants is inconsistent with the data on court appearances, which suggest that the clear majority of DDAP youth successfully attended all scheduled court appearances. This discrepancy warrants further consideration by DDAP program staff.

An additional concern has to do with the number of cases for which there is missing information on an outcome. Ten percent ($n=10$) of the youth had no reported outcome information. This information was missing from the client files and was not provided to the researchers by DDAP Program staff after repeated requests. This issue could be remedied through better maintenance of DDAP case files, which is necessary for accurate program accountability.

System Reform

One goal of DDAP is to demonstrate that community based services are an effective alternative to secure custody. In doing so, case managers must prove that secure confinement for many juveniles is unnecessary, and they could be much better served in a community setting.

Changing the culture of a system, however, to one that consistently relies on community-based measures as opposed to one that relies on secure confinement, is a difficult matter. Philadelphia is a city with numerous community alternatives, from electronic monitoring, home detention, community residential placements, to community supervision programs such as DDAP.

However, according to various interview participants in the city, although plenty of options exist, judges do not seem to use the program slots for juveniles in detention status. One interviewee commented, “judges are hesitant to place kids in open slots of existing [community] programs.” Another commented, “We need to look at why community-based alternatives in general are not being used.”

In a one-day snapshot from December 2001 of juvenile placements while in detention, out of 140 available electronic monitoring slots, only 57 were being used. Only five juveniles were on house arrest, and of the 50 available voice tracking slots, only 19 were being used.^{xiv} These data, along with the comments from various juvenile justice

officials, reinforces the challenge DDAP faces in working to change a system which does not utilize its community programs, to one that relies on community programs to monitor its juvenile offenders.

Some of the comments in the box below reflect the perceptions held by various system officials about DDAP’s ability to effect systemic change.

People [judges] believe that community based programs can be effective sometimes now. They [DDAP] can change perception, but they must have results to show.

The P.O.s are starting to buy into the program. The whole system is geared toward release. This is not a recent change. It has gotten more and more so, but this has always been the philosophy.... The basic system, at intake, is to see who can be released and who has to be held. Being the in-between prevailing middle man, we see that the DA wants everybody held, PD wants everybody released, and intake (probation) are the middle of the road.

If DDAP and other programs can keep kids from being picked up again, that is a big success. When a kid is picked up again, most judges don't think in terms of graduated sanctions, a higher level of community supervision, they tend to lock them up.

Juveniles’ Perception about the Program

In order to determine whether DDAP was implemented in such a way as to assist juveniles, researchers held a group session with clients. Juveniles provided valuable information about their experiences, and gave the program a human face.

Many of the participants reported that they respect the program because the case managers take them seriously and care about their welfare. They think the best part of the program is the respect the case managers give them and the way they treat them and their families with dignity. One former client discussed how a case manager encouraged him to go to school

and helped him to get into a GED program. He added that since he and his case manager are from the same community, he felt that he (the case manager) understood him, and could give him advice because “he knew where he was coming from.” Participants discussed their first encounter with case managers, reporting that, in alignment with program design, case managers came to visit them at home the same day they were ordered into the program from court, and continued to see them three times per day for the first week.

As a benefit, another client offered that being at home, instead of in a facility, has allowed her to get back into school and work on improving the tension with her mother.

Another client discussed how his case manager helped him to understand his legal rights and to build his confidence during court proceedings. The judge was so impressed with this youth’s behavior that he placed him on probation rather than sending him to boot camp, as he had previously threatened to do at his pretrial hearing.

These comments are just some of the comments that reflect the positive impact the DDAP program has made on the lives of the juveniles with whom the case managers work.

VI. Recommendations and Concluding Remarks

Since the mid-1980s, Philadelphia has been steadily increasing the availability of community-based programs for juvenile offenders. Interestingly, however, the Youth Study Center continues to be overpopulated. Comments from interviewees and findings from Family Court client program data suggest that the juvenile justice system is failing to use its available community slots. DDAP faces numerous challenges in a system such as this, where widespread net widening is likely occurring, resulting in an overcrowded juvenile detention facility, filled with

youth who could be better served in a community setting.

There are, however, a few innovations that DDAP should consider to enhance the program’s ability to integrate itself into the system and to work more effectively with clients.

First, DDAP program staff must forge a greater presence in the courtroom and within the juvenile justice system. As of Summer 2002, DDAP has created a court advocate position. The advocate spends each day in the courthouse coordinating with judges about program referrals. The Executive Director has also begun to send a monthly letter to the judges informing them of overall program statistics. DDAP staff should continue to inform court officials about the services and structure of the program through promotional materials, updates showing client successes, and reports documenting program efficacy.

Second, numerous interviewees commented that although successful in other respects, DDAP falls short on one of its goals: assuring the provision of quality, treatment oriented services. While DDAP program staff are very good at (re)enrolling clients in educational services and helping them secure employment, system officials would like to see DDAP staff place a greater emphasis on connecting clients with other support services (e.g., substance abuse, mental health, and family counseling programs) on a consistent basis. Because the time frame between placement in the program and discharge is often quite short (an average of 6 weeks), DDAP staff should consider the feasibility of placing clients into therapeutic programs within such a short window, and explore how to increase the frequency of therapeutic referrals. All parties should keep in mind the challenges associated with placement into services given the short time frame.

Lastly, it is highly recommended that The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice as-

sist DDAP in developing and implementing an electronic (or otherwise standardized) case management and recording system to better track client/case manager case notes, client inquiry sheets, and pertinent demographic information. This is necessary for audits and future evaluations, as well as for program accountability and documentation of the interactions between case managers and program clients. As it now stands, it is difficult to fully evaluate programmatic outcomes as a number of cases have missing data on important measures including final disposition and prior offenses. The Executive Director reported that as of August 2002, they have begun to implement this recommendation.

DDAP has shown impressive results in its first year, both in its attempts to target the highest risk youth, and to monitor them while they await case disposition. We found that the DDAP program was implemented in such a way as to be able to address key programmatic goals through intensive case management, collaboration with parents, judges, and schools, and a caring yet authoritative technique in working with clients. In following the recommendations above, DDAP should be able to forge greater successes in the coming years.

Appendix I: Assessment Interview Questions

1. Pre-DDAP, what was the policy for handling juvenile offenders?
2. What led to the need for DDAP in Philadelphia?
3. Do you use DDAP as an alternative to detention?
4. What is the process for referring a child to DDAP?
5. Are youth that were placed on DDAP prior to case disposition receiving different types of sentences for the same offenses as non-DDAP youth?
6. Do you see DDAP youth getting rearrested while they are in the program?
7. In your opinion, are the appropriate youth being referred to the program?
8. Is DDAP structured to have the ability to transform the culture of the juvenile justice system from one of detention to one of community placement?
9. Have you been able to integrate this type of community-based philosophy as a mainstream alternative to detention within your agency?
10. Do you think that DDAP is facilitating coordination among all public systems in which clients are involved?
11. What do you see as the successes and challenges DDAP has faced as a new program in Philadelphia?

Appendix II: Interview Respondents

Robert Listenbee, Chief, Public Defender Service, Juvenile Unit

Sandra Simkins, Deputy Chief, Public Defender Service, Juvenile Unit

Roberta Trombetta, Executive Director, Detention Diversion Advocacy Program

Judge Abram Frank Reynolds, Judge, Court of Common Pleas, First Judicial District of Pennsylvania (Family Court)

Steve Masciontonio, Court Administrative Officer, Juvenile Intake Unit, Family Court

Vanessa Williams Kane, Grant Manager, Department of Human Services

Robert Schwartz, Executive Director, Juvenile Law Center

Tim Roche, Executive Director, Justice Policy Institute

*Thank you to the DDAP clients and case managers who participated in the DDAP evaluation focus group.

Appendix III. Design Matrix: Detention Diversion Advocacy Program			
Outcome	Research Goal	Information Required	Source of Data
Racial Disproportionality	Determine the extent to which DDAP clients are racial minorities	Demographic data from DDAP case files	DDAP case files
Net Widening and Appropriate Referrals	Determine whether DDAP is contributing to bringing low-risk juveniles into the system who would have been diverted out of the system had the program not existed	Offense type and characteristics of DDAP clients Perception of DDAP referral process	Court records from the Department of Human Services Interviews with Family Court Judges, Public Defenders, Probation Officials, Youth Advocates, and Department of Human Services Staff
Court Appearances	Determine the extent to which DDAP clients fail to appear in court	Failure to appear records provided by DDAP	DDAP case files
Final Case Status	Determine the final outcome including re-offending of DDAP clients while they are on supervision	Juvenile History Inquiry and DDAP case files	DDAP case file data
System Reform	Determine the extent to which DDAP has contributed to transform the culture and practices of the Philadelphia Juvenile Justice System	The number of program referrals over time The perception of DDAP as an agent of change by juvenile justice system officials An historical account of collaboration between the DDAP program and the Family Court	DDAP case file data Interviews with Family Court Judges, Public Defenders, Probation Officials, Youth Advocates, and Department of Human Services Staff

ⁱ See also: Feldman, L., Schiraldi, V., & Males, M. (2001). "A Tale of Two Jurisdictions: Youth Crime and Detention Rates in Maryland & the District of Columbia," Washington, D.C.; Building Blocks for Youth.

ⁱⁱ Snyder, Howard M. & Sickmund, Melissa (1999). *Juvenile Offenders and Victims*, 1999 Report. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

ⁱⁱⁱ The San Francisco DDAP program is managed by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, a national organization that also oversees the Philadelphia DDAP program described in this report.

^{iv} Schwartz, Robert, M. "Litigation and Mediation Reduce Detention Center Overcrowding." *The Prison Journal*, Vol. LXXI, Spring-Summer 1991.

^v Testimony of Robert G. Schwartz, Executive Director, Juvenile Law Center before Philadelphia City

Council, Committee on Public Health, Human Services, and Recreation on the Condition of the Youth Study Center, June 22, 1994.

^{vi} Robert G. Schwartz, 1991.

^{vii} These concerns were expressed in various interviews with system officials between February and April 2002. It was previously detailed in Robert Schwartz's testimony before the Philadelphia City Council dated June 22, 1994.

^{viii} Robert G. Schwartz, June 1994.

^{ix} Welsh, Wayne N, Harris, Philip, W., and Patricia Jenkins. 1996. "Reducing Overrepresentation of Minorities in Juvenile Justice: Development of Community-Based Programs in Pennsylvania." *Crime & Delinquency*, Vol. 42, No. 1, January 1996: 76-98.

^x Ibid.

^{xi} Ibid.

^{xii} Michael Maltz. 1984. *Recidivism*. Orlando: Academic Press. Orlando, FL.

^{xiii} Chesney-Lind, Meda and Randall Sheldon 1998. *Girls, Delinquency and Juvenile Justice*. 2nd Ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

^{xiv} These numbers originated from the YSC count sheet distributed to juvenile justice officials on a daily basis in Philadelphia. The data were drawn from 12/28/01.