



Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice
Strategic Plan
2010 – 2013

Mission

The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.

Vision

OJJ is a quality system of care which embraces partnerships with families, communities and stakeholders to assist youth in redirecting their lives toward responsible citizenship.

Guiding Principles:

- Honesty** To be honest; do everything with integrity.
- Achievement** To be outcome-oriented in achieving results consistent with our mission.
- Versatility** To value, promote and support diversity and cultural competence.
- Ethical** To be ethical; to do the right thing, both legally and morally.
- Focused** To be focused on empowering people to succeed.
- Accountable** To be accountable for the effective and efficient management of resources.
- Informed** To be informed and guided in our decisions by appropriate and valid data.
- Team players** To be an effective and efficient team of professionals.
- Harmonious** To be inclusive – involve all parties, both external and internal, who need to be part of the process.

HAVE FAITH: Together we help change lives.

Each and every decision made by OJJ is based on our mission and guiding principles. Decisions are made in the best interest for the youth in our care. OJJ is dedicated to consistent provision of services to youth and families, assisting youth in setting goals, making healthy choices, building positive relationships and creating enrichment opportunities for self-growth. OJJ encourages and promotes a positive environment for youth to grow, learn, develop and become self-reliant.

| | |
|---|----|
| Message from Deputy Secretary | 3 |
| Louisiana’s Juvenile Justice System: A Historical Perspective | 4 |
| Reform Progress | 6 |
| State of the State | |
| Demographics and Trends | 7 |
| Secure Residential Facilities | 9 |
| Female Secure Residential Facility | 12 |
| Field Services | 13 |
| System Challenges | 14 |
| System Initiatives | |
| 1. Safety First | 16 |
| 2. Family Involvement | 17 |
| 3. Quality Services | 18 |
| 4. Community Partnerships | 19 |
| 5. Data Driven Outcomes | 20 |
| Measuring the System | 21 |
| Treatment Interventions | 22 |
| Building OJJ System | 23 |
| Timeline and Benchmarks | 24 |

Message from Deputy Secretary



Louisiana's Juvenile Justice System includes many stakeholders and professionals in the field. The Office of Juvenile Justice is one component of a larger system of care. This system represents a collaborative effort between youth, parents, judges, district attorneys, law enforcement, state agencies, local community providers, and advocates. All parties have a duty to ensure that the juvenile justice system balances quality and effective services to youth while ensuring public safety.

This plan outlines where the agency will be in the next few years and how we expect to get there. We created this plan with the assistance of District Attorneys, Juvenile Judges, community providers, parents, youth, staff, and other stakeholders. The activities are meaningful and the timeline is aggressive. Our staff work hard and we know that by working this plan, we will move juvenile justice reform forward.

OJJ has policy oversight and support responsibilities for state programs for youth who are adjudicated delinquent; as well as any youth and their families ruled in need of services by courts of juvenile jurisdiction. The agency is responsible for providing services to youth assigned to our care by the court, either for supervision or custody in residential placement, including secure care. The agency operates three, 24 hour, male secure facilities, contracts for one female secure facility, and manages probation, parole, and community services in 11 regional offices located throughout the state.

Our overarching outcome measures of success are ensuring that youth in our custody reintegrate successfully into their communities, and youth under supervision meet the requirements of probation or parole to continue on a path to success in their communities.

OJJ knows how to achieve these goals. Our staff consists of individuals who have many years of experience in juvenile justice, and expertise in implementing programs that address youth risk and needs. We must remember, however, that successful implementation takes time, and reform occurs in steps. Also, we must be practical and realize that unforeseeable environmental and fiscal events can impact the rate at which reform progresses.

This plan addresses our next steps in reform and in creating a model juvenile justice system for Louisiana. We look forward to working with the youth, families, stakeholders, and other state agencies to implement this plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary L. Livers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary L. Livers, Ph.D., MSW
Deputy Secretary

Louisiana's Juvenile Justice System—A Historical Perspective

In the 1990s Louisiana's Juvenile Justice System modeled the adult system which operated as a correctional, custodial model. In 1998, a federal lawsuit was filed alleging that the conditions and services in the secure care facilities did not meet constitutional standards. The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and the State of Louisiana entered into a settlement agreement to address educational services, medical and mental health services and conditions of confinement. In 2006, OJJ was found in full compliance and released from Federal oversight.

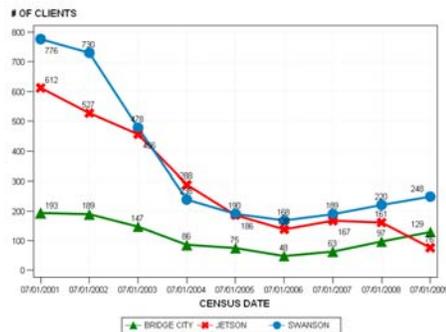
As a result, several improvements to secure care were implemented. These included:

- Measures to report, investigate and prevent abuse and excessive use of force on youth
- Creation of a behavior management system which offers incentives for good behavior and consequences for negative behavior
- Criteria for the screening, classification and placement of youth in secure care
- Improved living conditions and decreased dormitory populations
- Minimum staff-to-youth ratios providing for a safer environment for youth
- Minimum requirements for medical, mental health and dental services
- General, special, and vocational education services

The legislature implemented landmark reform legislation in 2003 and 2004 that provided for continued reform efforts. The legislation called for the separation and reorganization of OJJ from the Department of Public Safety and Corrections - much in the same manner as State Police. Since that time, OJJ has aggressively moved forward with continued reform efforts in all components of service delivery, most notably moving from a custodial corrections model to a treatment model.

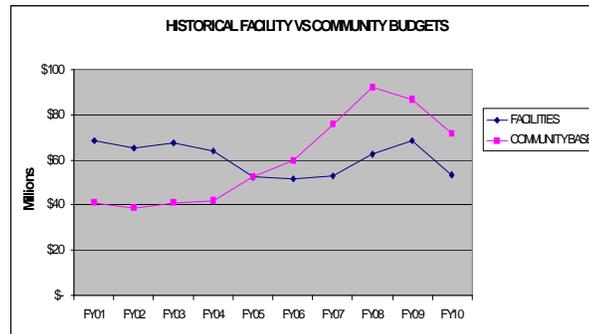
OJJ reduced the number of youth in secure care by 75% and has implemented a therapeutic milieu that focuses on treatment, positive peer support, and family involvement. The chart below demonstrates the reduction of youth in secure care based on physical location on the census date.

Number of Clients In Custody By Secure Male Facility By Census Date



Louisiana’s Juvenile Justice System—A Historical Perspective

As youth moved back into the community, the agency built community capacity to serve youth in the least restrictive environment and put processes in place to encourage providers to implement evidence based programming. The chart below shows the shift in the percentage of the agency budget directed toward community based options instead of facilities.

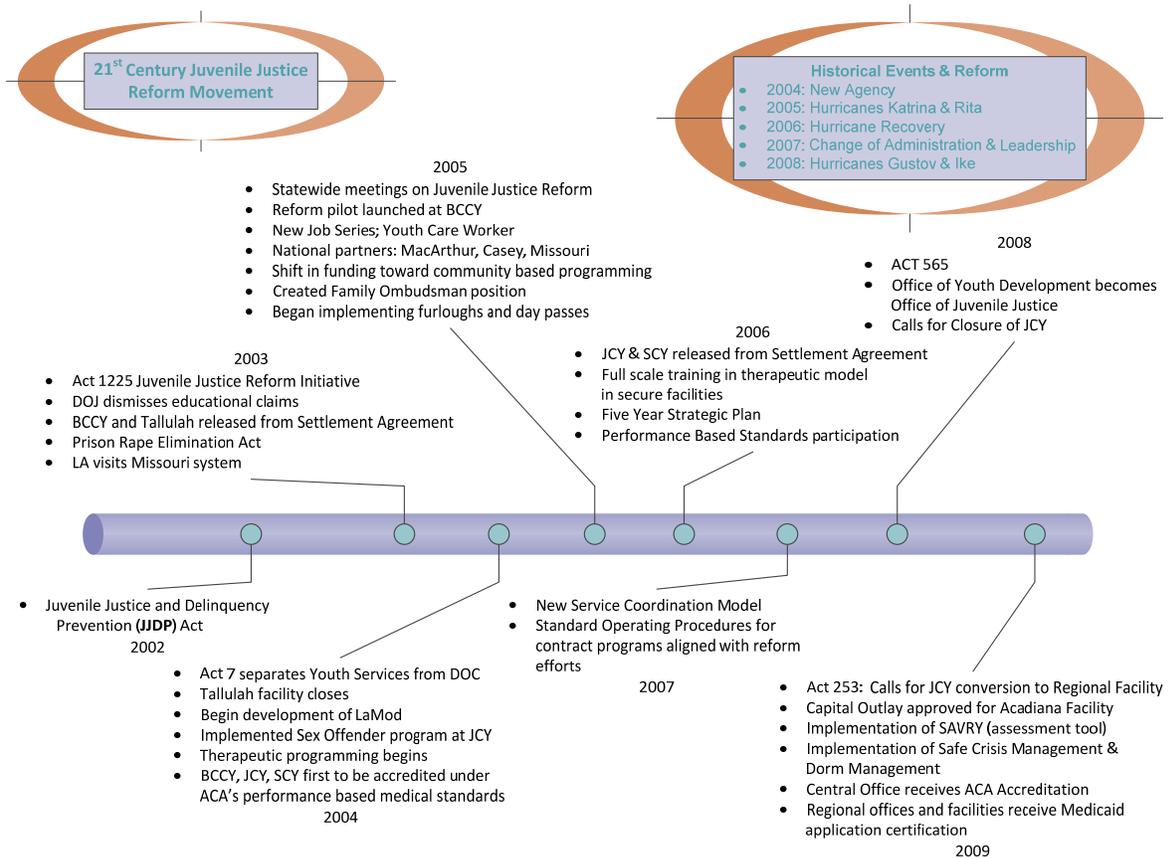


In the regional offices, OJJ has implemented service coordination, a method of operating that provides seamless case management for youth in the OJJ system. The agency has realized lower caseloads for Probation and Parole Officers to ensure focused services to youth and their families, and continues to partner with communities and local providers to build an adequate continuum of care for youth, inclusive of evidence based programs that demonstrate effective outcomes and a reduction in recidivism.

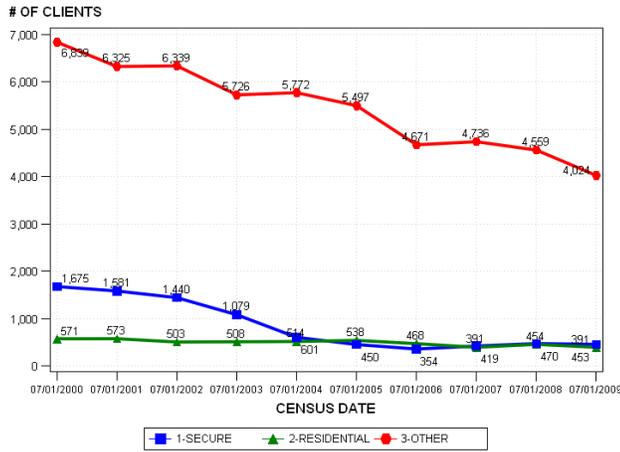
Simultaneously, over the last 5 years, OJJ built the infrastructure of the agency. The agency enlisted the support of our national partners, the Annie E. Casey and John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundations, to provide expertise in creating a successful juvenile justice system.

OJJ has realized many successes, including the ongoing implementation of a standard risk and needs assessment tool, service coordination for field services, a therapeutic milieu, and raising the minimum education requirements for direct service staff. The agency is moving toward regionalization of services and has successfully developed relationships with community stakeholders. This enhances coordination of services and reduces duplicative service delivery.

The chart below demonstrates the important reform activities in Louisiana from 2002 – 2009, giving perspective to OJJ’s next steps.

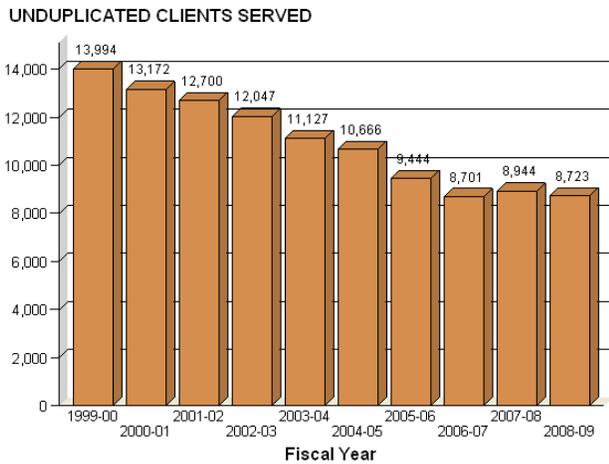


Demographics and Trends

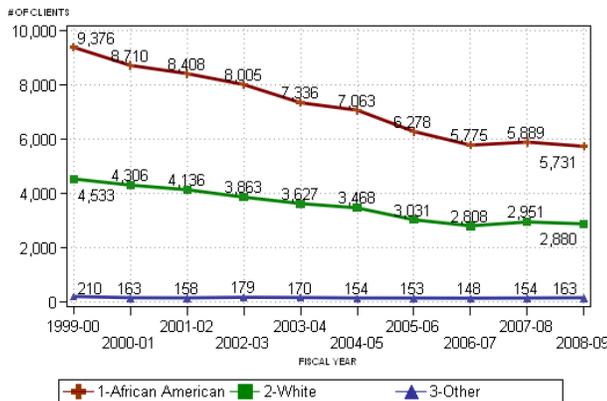


This chart shows a point in time census taken at the beginning of each fiscal year since 2000. It indicates the rate at which OJJ’s population has decreased overall by approximately 46% since the year 2000. The greatest decrease has been seen in the secure care population numbers. Since fiscal year 2000, OJJ’s secure care population has decreased by approximately 75%. The term “other” for purposes of this chart represents youth in any non-residential program, including home placement.

OJJ’s decrease in population is also demonstrated in this chart which displays the actual number of clients served per fiscal year. This chart captures “episodes” within the system. An episode is defined as an admission and discharge. Since fiscal year 2000, OJJ’s number of clients served has decreased by 38%.



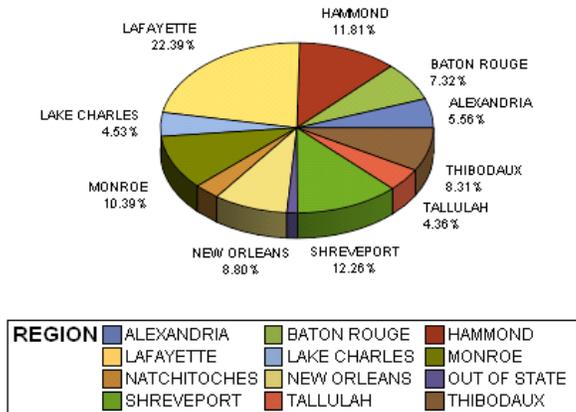
Racial Breakdown of Youth Served by Fiscal Year



This chart depicts the racial breakdown of youth served since fiscal year 2000.

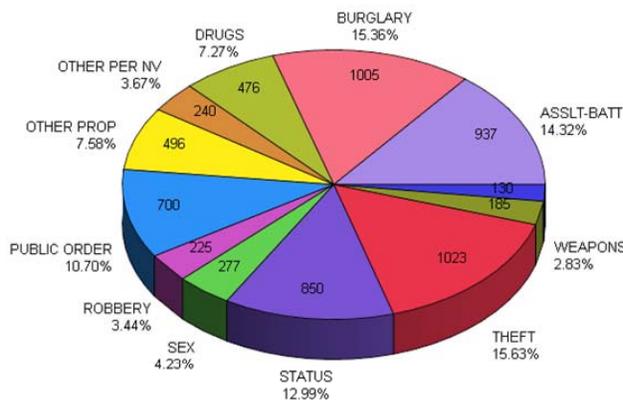
Active Youth by Region

This chart indicates a present day breakdown of all active youth in OJJ care by region of origin. The largest percentage of youth (22.39%) is from the Lafayette Region, followed by Shreveport (12.26%), and Hammond (11.81%). Historically, the Lafayette region has carried the majority of active youth. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, however, New Orleans held the second largest number.



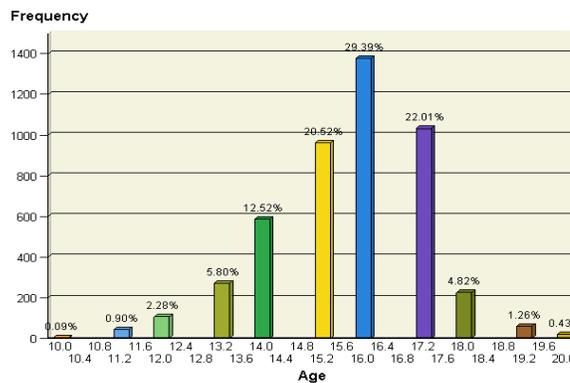
Active Youth by Offense Class for all Open Petitions

This chart depicts the offense class of the present day open petitions of all active youth within the OJJ system. The majority of open petitions are for Theft (15.63%), followed by Burglary (15.26%), and Assault/Battery (14.32%). In the past five years, these three offenses have accounted for the majority of OJJ petitions.



Active Youth by Age

Represented in this chart is a present day breakdown by age of all active youth within the OJJ system. Approximately 29% of all youth fall in the 16 year old age range, followed by 17 (22.01%), and 15 years of age (20.62%). For the past five years, the majority of active youth has fallen in the age range of 16-17 years old.



Therapeutic Model in Secure Residential Facilities

Louisiana has implemented a therapeutic model of treatment in its secure residential facilities. The Louisiana Model, or “LaMod,” is based on the Missouri model of residential treatment with added interventions to meet the needs of Louisiana’s youth. LaMod was strategically developed by an agency task force that worked closely with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Missouri Youth Services Institute. LaMod focuses on staff actively engaging youth; group processes; setting clear and frequent expectations; individualized treatment planning based on the assessed needs of youth; parental involvement; better lines of communication and extensive staff development.



Model components include:

- Home-like environment in housing units which encourage group treatment
 - Open housing units with youth in groups of 12-14 youth
 - Interactive approach to treatment between youth and staff
 - Comprehensive rehabilitative services
 - Educational services
- Positive peer supports – helping each other develop constructive solutions to problems
 - Family and community involvement
 - Professional treatment staff



OJJ is a young agency of only five years. The agency is just now seeing full implementation of LaMod and long term results are pending. It will be another two years before recidivism data reflects the impact of the therapeutic model on youth, as recidivism is measured three years after a youth leaves the system. However, the staff and visitors can see and feel the success of the model in our youth when they interact with them. The youth and staff are responding positively to the therapeutic approach and the culture of the operations are noticeably improved.

OJJ Secure Facilities

Bridge City Center for Youth is located in Bridge City near New Orleans. Bridge City was the first facility to implement LaMod; however, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused the evacuation of the facility and displaced many of the trained staff. When the facility reopened, OJJ faced challenges in finding staff and the area lacked professional services. Today, all staff are fully trained and LaMod is once again implemented. Pictured are students participating in the culinary arts program.



Capacity: 132 youth (12 youth per dorm)

General Population Housing Units: 8

Sex Offender Program Housing Units: 2

Services:

- Clinic-based sex offender treatment program
- Clinic-based substance abuse treatment
- Individual and group therapy
- Mental health treatment, including services for seriously mentally ill residents
- Vocational programs, including culinary arts
- Restorative justice programs in which offenders give back to the community such as working in food banks, veterans homes, washing fire trucks, etc.

Staff will measure the LaMod process by monitoring youth behavior. Staff will receive booster training to ensure fidelity of LaMod.

Jetson Center for Youth is located near Baton Rouge. Jetson is a large facility and was once home to over 600 youth, with dorm sizes of 40-50 youth. The facility was designated to close in June 2009. However, the Governor and Legislature recognized the potential for Jetson to downsize and become a smaller, regional facility. Through diligence, hard work, and commitment to the treatment model, Jetson remains open and has achieved full implementation of LaMod. Pictured below is staff removing razor wire from inside the facility.



Capacity: 99 youth (12 youth per dorm)

General Population Housing Units: 6

Behavior Management Program Housing Units: 2

Services:

- Clinic-based sex offender treatment program
- Individual and group therapy
- Behavior management specialized housing unit
- Mental health treatment; services for seriously mentally ill youth
- Residential and clinic-based substance abuse treatment programs
- Vocational programs, including small engine repair and C-Tech
- Restorative justice programs in which offenders give back to the community such as providing musical entertainment while visiting veterans and the elderly

Staff measure the LaMod process by monitoring youth behavior. Staff receive booster training to ensure fidelity of LaMod.

Swanson Center for Youth is located in Monroe. Swanson is the largest facility in the state and faces challenges to fully implement LaMod. As the other facilities were downsized, the capacity of Swanson was increased from 214 to 248 youth to meet the need for secure care beds. Housing unit sizes are a challenge for the implementation of LaMod. However, Swanson is turning the corner on these challenges by implementing innovative measures, such as additional training for staff and adapting the LaMod process. New leadership has brought new staffing patterns and a renewed commitment to reform. Security measures and unit management have been implemented; additional staff have been positioned during the movement of youth; and weekly team meetings occur to ensure that the needs of high-risk youth are being met.



Capacity: 248 youth (24 or less youth per dorm)

General Population Dorms: 10

Mental Health Treatment Unit Dorm: 1

Transitional Mental Health Treatment Unit Dorm: 1

Services:

- Clinic-based sex offender treatment
- Clinic-based substance abuse treatment
- Mental health treatment, including specialized services for seriously mentally ill youth
- Individual and group therapy

OJJ is actively seeking ways to decrease the population at the facility. LaMod will continue to be adapted to local needs. Staff will continue to receive booster training in LaMod.

Acadiana Center for Youth is in its planning phase. The development of this facility is a major step toward achieving regionalization of services. This facility will be located in the Acadiana region to serve youth from that area. This facility will be the first regional facility specifically designed to implement the therapeutic model. It is currently slated to open in 2013, depending on the capital outlay process and availability of funds.

Capacity: 72 youth

General Population Dorms:

Services:

- Substance abuse treatment
- Individual and group therapy
- Restorative Justice Programs

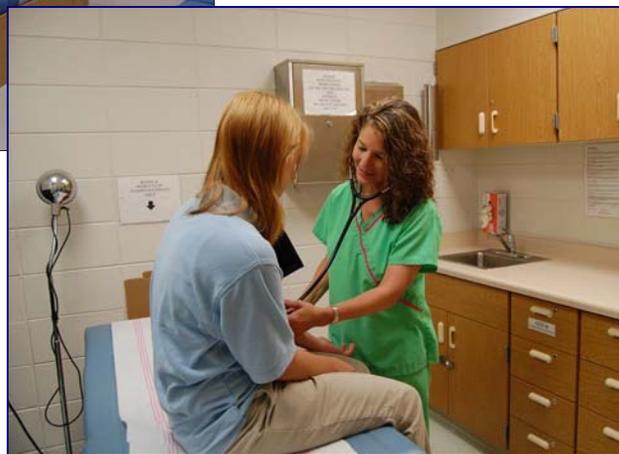
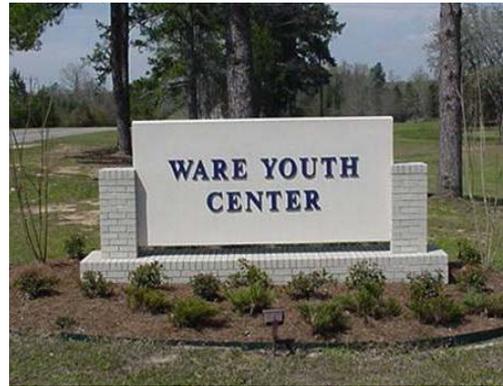
Ware Youth Center is a state of the art facility located in Coushatta in which OJJ contracts to provide services to female youth. The facility has adopted the LaMod treatment model, as well as OJJ's policies and procedures. OJJ provides training for the staff and technical assistance as needed. This positive partnership provides for the appropriate placement of girls in the least restrictive environment. Additionally, as this placement is in the northern part of the state, OJJ and Ware work together to ensure that youth from the southern region are engaged with their families to the greatest extent possible.

Capacity: 24 youth

General population dorms: 2

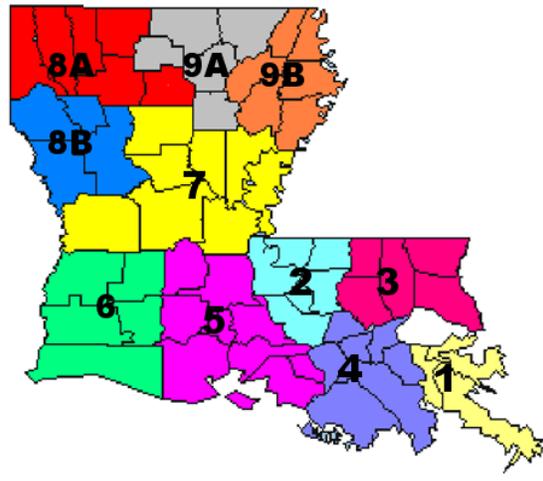
Services:

- Substance abuse treatment
- Mental health treatment, including services for seriously mentally ill youth
- Restorative Justice Programs
- Gender-specific programming, including workshops on parenting, relationships, etc.
- Vocational training, including Culinary Arts



OJJ provides supervision services to over 4000 youth annually. This includes probation and parole services.

OJJ Regional offices are located in New Orleans (1), Baton Rouge (2), Hammond (3), Thibodaux (4), Lafayette (5), Lake Charles (6), Alexandria (7), Shreveport (8A), Natchitoches (8B), Monroe (9A), and Tallulah (9B).



Probation and parole staff function under the service coordination model. This model promotes a seamless continuum of care in each Regional Service Area. The model streamlines the manner in which youth receive probation and parole services. Through partnerships with community providers, youth receive quality resources based on their identified needs. Service delivery to youth in their own region promotes family involvement, minimizes removal from the home, and increases the likelihood of successful reintegration when removal is necessary.

Probation and parole officers typically have caseload sizes aligned with the national average of 25-35 youth. These smaller caseloads allow officers to provide individualized services to youth and families. Social service personnel and education specialists act as a resource to the regional offices to assist probation and parole officers in making appropriate referrals, hosting parenting education classes, and assisting families to connect with services. The staff in the regional offices act as a team to ensure that youth and families achieve success as they move through the juvenile justice system.

In some regions across the state, a complete continuum of care is not available. When a youth has a need that cannot be met in their home region, he will be referred to the nearest appropriate service. When this occurs, OJJ works with the youth and family to foster rehabilitation and reintegration. OJJ continues to strive for a regionalized approach to providing services.

As OJJ continues to implement and refine programs that contribute to an effective juvenile justice model, the agency must overcome challenges that are common to reform efforts.

Regionalization

OJJ recognizes that providing services to youth in the least restrictive environment closest to home leads to better outcomes. The agency has developed three service regions shown to the right: Northern, Southwestern, and Southeastern.



OJJ continues to work with local partners and providers to assist in building a continuum of services in each region. When data for the statewide assessment tool are available, the agency will analyze youth risks and needs to identify what type of services are needed. This type of analysis will lead to a more complete continuum of services in the regions.

Female facility in southern region

Females in the custody of OJJ face a unique set of challenges. Historically, females have been housed at the male facilities and, in later years, at detention centers. In alignment with implementing the therapeutic model, the agency determined that in order to provide programming specifically designed for females, OJJ projected the need for two 24 bed regional facilities - one located in the north and one in the south of Louisiana. The addition of female specific facilities is a significant step forward in recognizing the unique needs of the female population by providing a safe environment and quality gender-specific programming. For the northern region, OJJ partnered with Ware Youth Center in Coushatta, in which funding was appropriated for that facility in 2006. OJJ continues to identify opportunities for a facility in the southern region contingent upon funding.

Coordinated System of Care

The child welfare and juvenile justice systems have historically operated separately, driven by divergent statutory mandates, funding appropriations, mission statements and service plans that dissuade collaboration, coordination and integration. Children within both systems often have complex behavioral needs. Currently, Louisiana provides for the needs of these children through a fragmented service delivery model that is not well coordinated. OJJ is working with DSS and DHH to develop a coordinated system of care for these youth to ensure timely provision of services and maximizing resources to keep youth out of the juvenile justice system.

System Challenges

Depopulation of Swanson Center for Youth

OJJ has successfully reduced the population at Bridge City Center for Youth and at Jetson Center for Youth in order to implement the treatment model. This model requires not more than 12-14 youth in each housing unit. Swanson Center for Youth is beginning to come into alignment with the treatment model, however, the large number of youth make implementation challenging. OJJ is aggressively seeking methods to depopulate Swanson Center for Youth so that full implementation can occur.

The staff regularly review the progress of youth in secure care to identify youth who may be able to be “stepped down” into a less restrictive appropriate environment, such as a community based group home. OJJ staff works with judges and district attorneys to explore and develop potential community options for the youth.

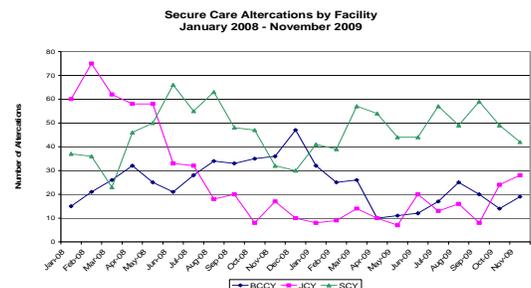
Additionally, in the upcoming year, OJJ will begin to see the benefits of statewide implementation of the SAVRY (Structured Assessment for Violence Risk in Youth) risk/needs instrument. This is an evidence based tool to assess a youth’s risk in the community. The professionals involved in determining a youth’s placement will make decisions based on a validated instrument, encouraging the least restrictive appropriate placement. This may reduce the number of youth found to be in need of secure care.

As noted earlier, OJJ is in the planning phase for the development of a secure facility in the Acadiana region. Simultaneously, the agency is investigating the feasibility of procuring two “moderate” secure facilities. “Moderate secure” is a level of care that is new to Louisiana. It provides for a less restrictive environment for youth whose risk level is moderate or medium. The length of stay may be shorter and youth will have limited access to the community. The focus is to eliminate behavior problems through treatment in the shortest time possible and to transition youth into the community with a reasonable probability of success.

Staff reviewing youth progress, the opening of the Acadiana facility, and the procurement of moderate secure facilities, work together to build a system leading to fewer youth being committed to secure care, allowing for a reduction in the number of youth placed in Swanson Center for Youth.

Level of Violence in Secure Facilities

Safety within OJJ facilities is a top priority. As reform efforts have been implemented, altercations between youth have shown decreases as well as increases at times. The chart shows the number of youth-on-youth altercations that have taken place at secure care facilities since January 2008. OJJ recognizes that when youth first enter secure care, violence is often the only manner in which some youth know how to resolve issues. As youth receive treatment, OJJ expects the intensity and frequency of the violent behavior to subside. OJJ has implemented a consistent and data driven process to measure the number of altercations that occur between youth. Staff can determine trends in time of day and locations of altercations. To ensure quality assurance, staff examine treatment notes of youth who are considered “frequent fighters,” confirming that youth are counseled timely and that any issues that contributed to the youth’s anger/victimization are dealt with appropriately. These combined interventions contribute to the safety of the youth and staff.



Initiative One: Safety First

Safety First means that OJJ values the safety of the youth placed in our care and the staff that provide services to them. This includes having a workforce focused on the rehabilitative needs of our youth. We believe that safety is the foundation and prerequisite for treatment. We promote a safe environment for our youth, families, and communities.

| Strategy | Activity | Measure of Success | Timeline |
|---|---|--|---------------|
| Promote safety of youth by providing appropriate services and treatment opportunities in the least restrictive environment. | Statewide implementation of Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) | Use of SAVRY data to better utilize agency resources to develop a more comprehensive system of care based on youth needs | February 2010 |
| Promote the safety of youth in residential treatment facilities by fostering a therapeutic environment | Full implementation of LaMod in secure residential facilities | Downward trend in violence at secure facilities | December 2010 |
| Promote the safety of youth by providing training to staff aligned with policies and procedures | Train staff in Safe Crisis Management, Motivational Interviewing, LaMod, and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) | All secure facility direct care staff and Probation and Parole staff trained; Youth are informed and aware of PREA | December 2010 |

Highlight: SAVRY (Structured Assessment for Violence Risk in Youth)

This is the assessment tool that will give the system professionals the information needed to make informed decisions about the treatment of youth. OJJ is piloting the SAVRY in four regions and expects statewide implementation early next year. This tool will lead to more appropriate placement of youth – getting the right youth in secure facilities and the right youth involved with community providers.

System Initiatives

Initiative Two: Family Involvement

At OJJ, we encourage and support productive family participation in rehabilitation for youth placed in our care. Our investment in youth and families today strengthens families tomorrow.

| Strategy | Activity | Measure of Success | Timeline |
|--|--|--|--------------------------|
| Promote family involvement by providing opportunities for visitation | Assess youth in residential treatment facilities during regular staffings for furloughs and home passes, or other appropriate visitation | Upward trend in the number of furloughs and home passes | July 2010 |
| Promote family involvement by encouraging family participation in treatment activities | Consider and identify opportunities during regular staffings to engage family in treatment activities | Upward trend in family participation in treatment activities | January 2011 |
| Promote family involvement through agency and staff communication | Host listening meetings in regions monthly with parents | Parental attendance at monthly meetings | January 2010 and ongoing |

Highlight: Family Orientation Video and Handbook

Family involvement is critical to a youth's success while they are in OJJ custody or under supervision. The system, however, can be intimidating and difficult to navigate without adequate information. Parents are provided with a Family Orientation Video and Handbook that gives them information about the system and the services the youth receive. OJJ staff strives to keep parents informed of youth progress and encourages involvement that will help their child succeed and reintegrate into the community.

Initiative Three: Quality Services

OJJ provides quality programs and appropriate services to meet the needs of the youth in our custody and under our supervision by utilizing programs that are evidence based and demonstrate best practices.

| Strategy | Activity | Measure of Success | Timeline |
|--|--|--|---------------|
| Promote quality services through partnerships with community providers | Modify RFP process to enhance requirements for evidence based and best practices programming | Increased percentage of youth receiving services from targeted providers | December 2010 |
| Promote quality services by encouraging the use of the therapeutic model | Train residential community providers in LaMod | Upward trend in community providers implementing LaMod | December 2010 |
| Promote quality services by implementing monitoring and evaluation tools based on youth outcomes for community providers | Develop enhanced tools; share and evaluate in coordination with community providers; train staff on implementation | Increased positive youth outcomes in the community | December 2010 |

Highlight: Quality Assurance

Through the agency’s quality assurance process, OJJ assesses performance and utilization regularly to ensure needs are being met efficiently. Quality assurance reviews are conducted at secure facilities semi-annually and at regional offices on an annual basis. These reviews examine quality of life issues for youth, safety and security issues, and compliance with ACA and PbS standards. OJJ generates an audit report and leadership reviews with the office and/or facility. Corrective action plans are then issued as a result of these reviews.

System Initiatives

Initiative Four: Community Partnership

OJJ collaborates with other agencies to provide effective and efficient service delivery. The agency also creates partnerships with communities that afford youth the opportunity to form productive relationships and make good choices.

| Strategy | Activity | Measure of Success | Timeline |
|--|--|--|---------------|
| Promote community partnerships by participating in the development of a coordinated system of care | Work with state agencies to maximize service delivery at earliest entry point | Downward trend in number of youth identified as families in need of services (FINS) entering the juvenile justice system | December 2010 |
| Promote community partnerships through coordination with schools | Work with local school districts to provide service delivery in place | Downward trend in number of referrals from schools | December 2010 |
| Promote community partnerships by building relationships with community service organizations, with specific emphasis on faith-based organizations | Develop opportunities for participation in restorative justice and faith-based programs for youth under supervision and in custody | Increased number of youth participating in restorative justice activities | December 2010 |

Highlight: Re-entry Initiative

OJJ is enhancing re-entry opportunities that will assist youth in successfully transitioning from custody back into their community. The agency is building partnerships with private corporations who welcome youth into training programs that will ultimately lead to employment opportunities upon leaving OJJ custody.

Initiative Five: Data Driven Outcomes

OJJ makes informed decisions based on accurate data and analysis. We support advances in information technology to improve data resources and information sharing internally and externally.

| Strategy | Activity | Measure of Success | Timeline |
|---|---|--|---------------|
| Promote data driven outcomes through analysis of community based programs | Implement quality assurance tool for community based programs | Qualitative data collected and analyzed | December 2010 |
| Promote data driven outcomes through analysis of need in specific geographic areas | Perform analysis of youth by region of origin and service delivery opportunities | Identification of targeted high risk areas | December 2010 |
| Promote data driven outcomes by continued participation in <i>Performance-based Standards</i> | Participate in <i>Performance-based Standards</i> directed by the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators | Increased levels of achievement for each secure residential facility | December 2010 |

Highlight: Performance-based Standards (PbS)

As part of the agency’s continuous quality improvement services, OJJ participates in PbS. This is a system for agencies to identify, monitor, and improve conditions and treatment services provided to incarcerated youths using national standards and outcome measures. It is used as an internal management system to measure improvement over time and includes 105 outcome measures in the areas of safety, order, security, health and mental health services, programming and others. Data collected is used to assist staff in identifying both challenges and successful methods of operation.

Recidivism

Success of a juvenile justice system is typically measured by the rate at which youth return to that system – the recidivism rate. A low rate presumes that a youth did not return to the criminal justice system and that the interventions provided yielded positive results.

There is not, however, a nationally recognized “good” recidivism rate. This is due to the fact that states differ in the composition of their system and the population included in the calculation. Some states may only treat youth up to age 17; some treat youth to the age of 21. Some systems serve youth with mental health issues; others may not. Louisiana includes youth that received supervision services; some states only include youth in secure care. These factors make state-to-state comparison difficult, as it can lead to a misrepresentation of programmatic success.

How does Louisiana know if we are being successful?

We know we are being successful in striving to improve Louisiana’s rate by implementing practices and programs proven to have positive outcomes for youth.

Louisiana measures recidivism by including all youth who return to OJJ custody as well as those who enter the custody of the Louisiana Department of Corrections (adult system). The chart below demonstrates OJJ’s recidivism rate over a calendar year.

LOUISIANA OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE RECIDIVISM ANALYSIS INCLUDING ADULT DATA

| CALENDAR YEAR | 1 Year | 2 Year | 3 Year | # OF DISCHARGES |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| 2000 | 14.50% | 23.40% | 29.80% | 6,023 |
| 2001 | 14.10% | 23.50% | 29.50% | 5,650 |
| 2002 | 13.70% | 22.50% | 28.80% | 5,872 |
| 2003 | 14.40% | 23.70% | 29.40% | 5,714 |
| 2004 | 14.50% | 23.60% | 28.40% | 5,338 |
| 2005 | 14.40% | 22.20% | 27.70% | 5,361 |
| 2006 | 15.00% | 23.70% | N/A | 4,300 |
| 2007 | 15.60% | N/A | N/A | 4,179 |
| 2008 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 4,446 |

Rates have fluctuated from year to year since 2000, realizing a 2% reduction when measuring youth three years after exiting the system. While this may seem to be only a minor reduction, it should be noted that Hurricanes Katrina and Rita impacted progress, community based services were not expanded until 2006, and full implementation of the therapeutic model is still in progress. Additionally, Louisiana's recidivism rate is not only impacted by services that OJJ provides, but also on the strength of communities and other agency services. OJJ anticipates improvement from year to year as evidence based programs are implemented in communities and the therapeutic model is implemented statewide in residential care.

Treatment Interventions that Work

OJJ incorporates elements of the latest studies and literature regarding reducing recidivism into staff training and program implementation. Experts recommend that a system have three major components to be successful in reducing recidivism. First, a system must incorporate a validated assessment tool to measure youth risks and needs. These risks and needs must then be addressed by targeting specific crime producing needs, or criminogenic factors. These factors include anti-social peer associations, anti-social personality traits, substance abuse, lack of problem solving skills, values and beliefs, and others. Focusing on these issues related to the assessed risks and needs can have a substantial impact on reducing a youth's likelihood to reoffend.

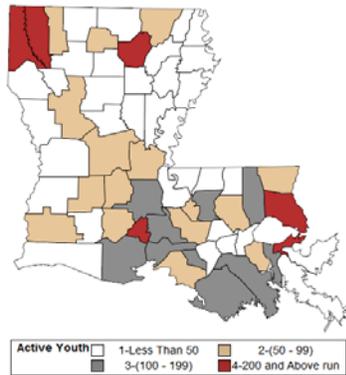
Second, the youth should be placed in the least restrictive environment. Studies have proven and experts agree that placement of a youth at a custody level more restrictive than warranted can cause more harm than good to the youth. It has been shown that high risk youth benefit from longer and more intensive treatment, but low risk youth do not benefit. Placing a low risk youth in an intensive treatment setting results in a waste of resources and little change in behavior, and may even have a detrimental effect. This is due to the disruption of the youth's pro-social networks such as school, family, and employment—the very networks that are used to identify the youth as low risk.

Finally, experts agree that implementation of evidence based programming is essential to reducing recidivism. Focusing resources on programming that has been proven effective is good practice. These programs have well trained staff, monitor youth effectively, assist youth with additional needs, and ensure fidelity through an effective quality assurance process.

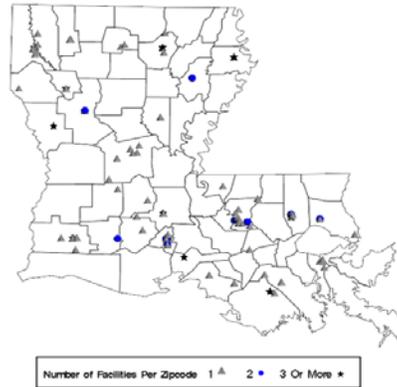
OJJ considers these three elements integral to building a model juvenile justice system. OJJ is working toward statewide implementation of a standardized assessment instrument, the SAVRY, that will provide the information needed to determine least restrictive placement options. The agency is working with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to establish evidence based practice outcome measures in contracts for community providers.

Building the OJJ System

To determine next steps, OJJ must analyze the current point in reform efforts by considering the region of origin of youth in the system and the location of facilities and community service providers.



December 2009 Youth Density



December 2009 Continuum of Services

The above charts demonstrate the location and frequency of services available throughout the state. More services are available where a higher density of youth is present.

OJJ has implemented reform measures to build an ideal system and has outlined the next steps to ensure achievement of that ideal system in the timeline on the next page.

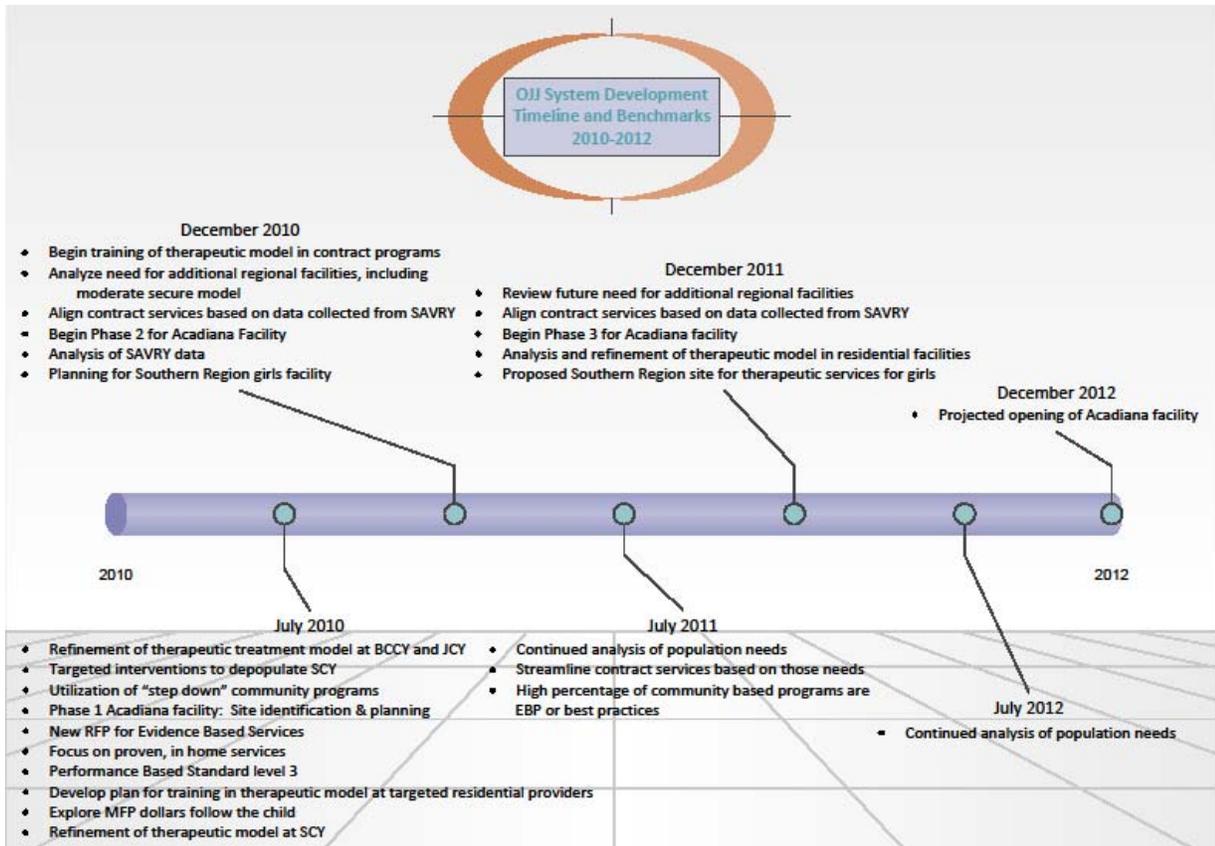
An ideal system consists of the following major components:

- Regionalized secure, moderate secure, and non-secure residential services utilizing the therapeutic model
- Evidence based community services
- Effective quality assurance program for residential and community based services
- Well qualified and trained staff



The map to the right demonstrates OJJ's movement toward three regional service areas. OJJ's timeline shows the steps to developing a continuum of services based on real data collected through a consistent assessment instrument (SAVRY).

Below is a working timeline with benchmarks and milestones that outline OJJ’s plan for the next steps in reform.



American Correctional Association (ACA)

The American Correctional Association (ACA) is a professional organization whose mission is to improve the justice system. ACA believes that the principles of humanity, justice, protection, opportunity, knowledge, competence and accountability are essential to the foundation of sound corrections policy and effective public protection.

OJJ currently utilizes ACA standards as the tool to measure quality of services in the regional offices and Central Office. ACA standards guide administrators in development of plans to upgrade juvenile programs and procedures in accordance with nationally recognized benchmarks. The practice necessary to meet high standards of performance and to achieve accreditation is now well established.

The Field Services (Probation & Parole) section has been accredited with the ACA since 1994. Central Office achieved accreditation in 2009 under the Standards for the Administration of Correctional Agencies. The secure facilities are currently preparing for accreditation under the Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities with an expectation of achievement in 2010.