Douglas County

JUVENILE ASSESSMENT CENTER (JAC)

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The Douglas County Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) is dedicated to improving the lives of juveniles by helping to strengthen and support children and families who are involved, or at risk of becoming involved with the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Assessment Center believes each juvenile should be supported based on individual risks and needs.
The Douglas County Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) provides the cornerstone of evidence-based practices for juvenile justice youth service: screening and assessment. The JAC serves as the focal point for comprehensive assessment for youth coming to the attention of the Douglas County Attorney’s Office (DCAO). The JAC provides to the DCAO recommendations for the most efficient and effective interventions and supervision levels for each youth.

The JAC strives to divert all eligible youth from formal processing, while recommending interventions to prevent further law violations, and enhance productive growth of young citizens. The JAC utilizes evidence-based principles such as the risk/need principle by making targeted referrals, based on screening and assessment, and referring to service providers in the community utilizing evidence-based principles, as well as monitoring utilization and effectiveness of each of these services.

JAC Purpose
Intervene as early, effectively and often as possible to disrupt the juvenile’s progress as a law violator.

Assessments and interventions are grounded in research and evidence-based.

Assessment results drive the justice system's response to the juvenile.

Match the juvenile's needs with support/treatment/supervision, which diminishes the likelihood of re-offense.
**Douglas County Attorney’s Office (DCAO) - JAC Referral Process**

DCAO Reviews all Police Reports/Citations and Truancy/Status Referrals

- No Further Action
- Youth is referred to JAC for Assessment
- Case is filed in Juvenile Court

Youth is Assessed for Risks/Needs and Screened for Behavioral Health Concerns

- Youth referred to services based upon individual assessment
  - Traditional case management by JAC Staff
    - Successful completion
    - Lack of compliance/failure to complete case plan
  - Youth's Assessment Interview & Scores indicate they cannot be safely or effectively served without Court intervention
- Youth does not attend assessment or refuses voluntary participation.

**DCAO Reviews all Police Reports/Citations and Truancy/Status Referrals**
4 Target Groups served at JAC

- Youth with delinquency charges
- Youth with truancy referrals
- Dually-involved youth (Youth Impact)
- Status referrals
Youth coming to the JAC for Assessment due to delinquency charges
Top 3 Offenses Committed by Juveniles in Douglas County

- Theft by Shoplifting
- Disorderly Conduct/ Assault
- Alcohol/Drug Related
Assessment & Screening

Why Assess?

- By assessing and targeting juvenile criminogenic needs, we can reduce the likelihood of recidivism (law breaking behavior).
- Interventions must be very focused and target the needs that are related to risk.
Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) gauges a youth’s propensity to re-offend, based on interview information and collateral information from parents, police reports, schools, co-defendants, counselors, etc. Sub-scales include:

1. Prior and Current Offenses/ Dispositions
2. Family Circumstances/ Parenting
3. Education/ Employment
4. Peer Relations
5. Substance Abuse
6. Leisure and Recreation
7. Personality/Behavior
8. Attitudes/Orientations
2015 YLS Results

- Low, 675, 66%
- Moderate, 330, 33%
- High, 11, 1%
Risk Factors For Douglas County Youth Assessed at JAC

- Use of Leisure Time
- Peer Relations
- Education

- These factors have been the top three most prevalent risk factors (moderate and high scores) every year since the inception of the JAC and assessment opportunities for youth (2004)

- We are also seeing a rise in the moderate risk area for:

- Substance Use (surpassed Leisure Time for the 1st time in 2012 = due to law change; increase in 16-17 year olds formerly kept in County
- Personality/ Behavior – rise in moderate risk category
2015 YLS Results

Prior and Current Offenses: 990
Family Circumstance: 885
Education: 502
Peer Relations: 598
Substance Abuse: 462
Leisure/Rec: 576
Personality/Belief: 493
Attitudes/Orientation: 744

Low | Moderate | High
Diagnostic Predictive Scale (DPS)

Developed by the Center for Mental Health in Juvenile Justice at Columbia University. The DPS is a behavioral health screening instrument which is self-administered via computer.

It screens “present”, “possible”, or “absent” across the following DSM-IV Diagnostic areas:

- Anxiety Disorders
  - Social Phobia
  - Separation Anxiety
  - Agoraphobia
  - Panic Disorder
  - Generalized Anxiety
  - Specific Phobia
  - Obsessions/Compulsions
  - PTSD
- Eating Disorder
- Impairment
- Affective Disorders
  - Major Depressive
  - Manic Episode
- Disruptive Disorders
  - ADHD
  - Oppositional Disorder
  - Conduct Disorder
- Substance Use
  - Alcohol Abuse/Dependence
  - Marijuana Abuse/Dependence
  - Other Substance Abuse/Dependence
- Suicide Ideation/ Attempt
2015 DPS Results

- Social Phobia
- Agranphobia
- Specific Phobia
- General Anxiety
- Separation Anxiety
- Obsession
- Mania
- Depression
- Panic Attacks
- PTSD

Legend:
- Pink = Present
- Red = Possible
General Behavioral Health Screening (DPS) Results

- Over 50% of all youth screened at the JAC require some level of Behavioral Health intervention
- Approximately 100 youth each year report suicidal ideation or attempt(s)
Diversion Case Plans: Services and Intervention Types

- After School Programs
- Anger Management
- Apology Letters
- Chemical Dependency Evaluations
- Chemical Dependency Treatment
- Community Coaching
- Community Service
- Counseling
- Culture-Specific Programming
- Day Reporting
- Decision Making Classes
- Driving Related Classes
- Drug and Alcohol Classes
- Drug and Alcohol Testing
- Education Supports (credit recovery/G.E.D./etc.)
- Emergency Crisis Response
- Emergency Foster Care Respite
- Essay Assignments
- Evening Reporting

- Family Engagement
- Fire Starter Programming
- Gang Intervention
- Gender Specific Programming
- Grief & Loss Programming
- Intensive Family Preservation
- Mediation (Victim/Offender)
- Mentoring
- Monitoring
- Parenting Classes
- Psychological Evaluations
- Recreational Activities
- School-based Activities
- Shelter Services
- Skill-based Programming
- Tutoring
- Tracker
- Truancy Specific Programming
- Victim Empathy Classes
- Wrap-Around Services
Clients Served by the JAC for delinquency issues - 2015

- 1210 youth referred for assessment
- 56% Male – 44% Female
- Age range is 8-18 years old
- 845 Youth received a Warning Letter or completed Diversion Successfully in 2015 (cases were not filed in Court)
Recidivism for youth served by the JAC for delinquency matters in 2014:

- Warning Letters = 15
  - Of 132 (11%)
- Successful Diversions = 130
  - Of 653 (19%)
- Unsuccessful Diversions = 53
  - Of 126 (42%)

As of January 2016
2015 Special Populations

- **Truancy** –
  - 402 Referrals sent to DCAO – 1st Semester 2015-2016 school year; received by Dec 31, 2015

- **Youth Impact (Dual-Status/Crossover)**
  - 185 youth identified as Youth Impact in 2015
  - 134 Team Eligible (51 Court-involved)

- **Status**
  - 112 families contacted the DCAO between April 1, 2015 – Dec 31, 2015 (JAC began taking these cases in April 2015)
Total JAC Referrals - 2015

- Delinquency charges - 1210
  > 5 Specialists
- Truancy referrals - 402
  > 2 Specialists
- Youth Impact - 134
  > 1 Specialist
- Status referrals - 112
  > 1 Specialist

2015 Total 1858

Projected 2016 = 2200
2015 Trends:

- More referrals – due to law changes and work with DCAO / system reform
  - Case Load averages increased from 200 > 250
- Increased collaboration within the JJ system to meet youth needs – DCAO, Public Defender, Probation, and Child Protective Services
- More complex youth / family issues – due to increases in potentially higher risk referrals and status/truancy referrals
- Ability to serve more youth at the diversionary level due to grant funded services
- Serving higher-risk youth increases time and intensity of case management
System-Community Connection

- The JAC plays an integral role regarding juvenile services and communication in the Omaha Metro/ Douglas County area. The JAC actively utilizes the opportunity as a unique agency to provide links between the systems and service providing, public and private agencies.
- The JAC also provides important information and data to other agencies in order to increase opportunities and services for youth in the area.
- The JAC activities and collaborations work to improve juvenile justice systems functioning and efficiency.
- The JAC actively participates in the Operation Youth Success (OYS) Collective Impact Juvenile Justice System Reform efforts and the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).