Preface by Michael J. Anderegg, Presiding Judge,
Family Division 25th Circuit Court
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Increasingly, the public and those who shape public policy are demanding accountability from public institutions. As the demands on public resources grow, it becomes more important to choose wisely how the available public resources will be spent.

Juvenile courts across the nation are feeling the effects of this trend, and are struggling to provide meaningful information about the work they do. Historically, the only commonly accepted measure of the success of a juvenile court was the rate at which its clients committed new offenses.

While preventing recidivism should be one of the primary goals for courts intervening in the lives of young offenders, a commission of a new offense gives us insufficient information about why the juvenile committed that offense might have prevented the new offense from occurring. Using recidivism as the only measure of success also ignores the possibility that other important goals may have been achieved even though another offense was committed. Furthermore, the definition of recidivism can be manipulated in ways that affect its significance.

In the past, juvenile court practitioners have relied on intuition to tell them what consequences should logically follow from a delinquent act, and reporting to the public by the juvenile justice system has focused on counting observable facts rather than setting meaningful goals and reporting on the progress toward accomplishing them.

In the same way that there is competition for public funding, there is competition for a finite amount of public attention. To the extent that courts have reported unimportant data, or too much data, the resource of public attention to the needs of juvenile courts has been squandered.

Fortunately, this situation is changing. A unique coalition of federal, state, and county agencies has partnered with researchers, practitioners, and academicians to demonstrate that we can do better.

Supported by a federal grant, staff from the American Prosecutors Research Institute, the National Center for Juvenile Justice, and Florida Atlantic University’s Community Justice Institute worked with four pilot jurisdictions to identify appropriate goals for juvenile justice system operations and develop a user-friendly method of reporting to the public on how well those goals were being achieved.

The hard work of practitioners in the pilot sites and others involved with the projects is now becoming available for general use. The experience in my jurisdiction is that this system can provide the public and policy makers with information that they are very eager to have, and that the performance measures system described in this report can be used as a starting point for important dialogues about a wide variety of juvenile justice issues.

Hon. Michael J. Anderegg
Judge Michael J. Anderegg has been a probate and juvenile court judge for almost 30 years. He is president of the Upper Peninsula Probate Judges Association and is a past president of the Michigan Probate Judges’ Association and of Children’s Charter, a statewide advocacy group. He served eight years as a trustee of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and received the President’s Award for distinguished service to that organization. Judge Anderegg is a graduate of Harvard University and the University of Michigan Law School.
This Special Project Bulletin presents a case for measuring and reporting juvenile justice system performance outcomes and a field-tested strategy for collecting and reporting juvenile justice outcome measures. The performance measures presented in the Bulletin are predicated on the goals and measurable objectives of balanced and restorative justice. The experiences of five disparate jurisdictions are used to illustrate that it is both possible and useful to measure juvenile justice system performance for individuals, agencies, and entire systems. Two states systems—Pennsylvania and South Carolina—and three county-level jurisdictions—Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Deschutes County, Oregon, and Marquette County, Michigan—are highlighted.

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Is Juvenile Justice Worth Measuring?

We are often reminded that anything worth doing is worth doing well. What is usually left unsaid is that anything worth doing is worth measuring. Otherwise you cannot really know if you are doing it well, not so well, or maybe not at all.

Is juvenile justice worth doing well? Most people would find it hard to argue that it is not. Most people, in fact, would be adamant that the juvenile justice system has an obligation to the community, taxpayers, victims of juvenile crime, and juvenile offenders themselves to do juvenile justice very well.

Unfortunately, juvenile justice systems tend not to measure performance. This is not to say that measurements are not taken. Most juvenile courts, probation departments, and service providers regularly produce data-filled reports on all sorts of things.

The problem is that whatever is being measured is usually something other than performance. Usually, what is measured has to do with inputs (e.g., funding, number of referrals to court), processes (e.g., time to process cases, case processing rates), or outputs (e.g., number of juveniles placed, number of contacts with probationers). While these data are important and useful, they do not necessarily provide measures of performance.

The purpose of this Special Project Bulletin is to present a case for measuring and reporting juvenile justice system performance outcomes and to present a field-tested strategy for collecting and reporting juvenile justice outcome measures. The experiences of five disparate jurisdictions are used to illustrate that it is both possible and useful to measure juvenile justice system performance for individuals, agencies, and entire systems.

The strategy described in the report is the result of wide ranging and multi-disciplinary development initiatives that have involved several organizations, including the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Center for Juvenile Justice, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, Florida Atlantic University’s Community Justice Institute, and American Prosecutor’s Research Institute. The juvenile justice performance measures strategy described herein has been field-tested in a number of state and local juvenile court agencies in several states, including Pennsylvania, Oregon, South Carolina, Illinois, and Michigan.

The collective experiences of these geographically diverse jurisdictions indicate that it is, indeed, worth taking the time to measure the performance of juvenile justice systems. Jurisdictions have used performance measures to document and celebrate successes, identify areas that are not so successful, develop strategies for improving those outcomes, and monitor and manage juvenile court activities and probation services.

What is Performance Measurement?

Organizations exist to do things. This fact begs two fundamental questions. What are they organized to do? And, how well do they do them? The first question has to do with performance, which is basically the act of doing something successfully. The second question has to do with establishing reference points against which success can be measured. Performance measurement, then, is the act of assessing an organization’s ability to do things, including measures of productivity (how much they do), effectiveness (how efficiently they do it), quality (how well they do it), and timeliness (how long it takes them to do it).

The performance measures described in this bulletin are the result of the collective efforts of many people in several jurisdictions to answer those questions and to develop a consistent, locally relevant process for measuring productivity, effectiveness, and quality of juvenile court service agencies.
(e.g., juvenile probation or community justice departments) charged with responsibility for supervising court-involved juveniles in the community or otherwise managing the cases of court-involved youth.

**Why Measure Performance?**

Very simply, we measure performance because we care. The purpose of performance measures is to provide feedback relative to what you set out to do. Measuring performance increases our chances of achieving our goals. Performance measures tell us where the organization is relative to its goals, how well the organization is doing, and point to things that can improve the organization’s effectiveness. Ultimately, we measure to improve the performance. Bazemore suggests three fundamental reasons for measuring performance of juvenile justice system activities:

1. **It is the right thing to do.** Juvenile justice activities are paid for with public funds and carried out for the public good. In a democratic society, the public should know about publicly funded activities. In short, the juvenile justice system owes it to taxpayers to tell them what they are getting for their money.

2. **There are practical considerations to measuring juvenile justice system performance.** Taxpayers are more likely to support and participate in juvenile justice system processes if they are kept informed. Performance measures help organizations run efficiently and effectively: they inform staff about what is important, establish practical priorities, and reinforce the mission, goals, and objectives of the juvenile justice system or agency. Performance measures may also direct practice, establish priorities, track progress, and prioritize and realign resources.

3. **Measuring performance provides empirical evidence of effectiveness and support theoretical explanations of cause and effect.** Specific performance measures make it possible to describe the successes or failures of the juvenile justice system in quantifiable terms. They also make it possible to relate those successes or failures to other theoretically linked outcomes in terms of predicting or explaining outcomes.

**Strategic Approaches to Developing Performance Measures**

Realizing that the time is right to develop and demonstrate a strategy for measuring performance of the juvenile justice system, the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) and the American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI) embarked on two separate, but closely linked, initiatives to

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**About Recidivism**

It is not entirely accurate to say that the juvenile justice system does not have a historical measure of performance. In fact, “[h]istorically recidivism rates—an offender’s return to crime after some intervention—have been the gauge by which community corrections has been evaluated.” The position taken by this *Special Projects Bulletin* is that, although recidivism is an important measure of system performance, it is not the only measure and, indeed, is not the most appropriate measure. Recidivism as the sole measure of system performance is problematic for a number of reasons, including the fact that the juvenile justice system is just one of many influences in a juvenile’s life; one that comes late in the game and realistically has limited time to affect individual offenders, their families, or their specific situations. As DiIulio points out:

> To evaluate the system’s performance chiefly in terms of recidivism is to exaggerate the system’s ability to affect the prevalence and severity of crime in society, to miss other important measures of the system’s day-to-day performance, and to obscure the role that citizens can and should play in promoting secure communities.

Although not minimizing the importance of recidivism, this bulletin focuses on intermediate outcomes that are more explicitly linked to the mission, goals, and objectives of the juvenile justice system.

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advance the cause of performance measures for juvenile justice. NCJJ, with direction and funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), developed a set of outcome measures and a data collection strategy designed to measure Pennsylvania’s system of balanced and restorative justice for juveniles. APRI, with funding from OJJDP, built on performance measures development initiatives in Pennsylvania and Deschutes County, Oregon to implement a national performance measures demonstration project.

The NCJJ juvenile justice system performance measures effort was part of a comprehensive evaluation of balanced and restorative justice in Pennsylvania. The performance measures were developed collaboratively with a statewide task force comprised of juvenile court judges, practitioners, evaluators, service providers, and planners. The already existing efforts of Allegheny County’s Juvenile Court to establish performance outcomes measured at the time of case closing were particularly valuable. The collaboration resulted in statewide consensus regarding appropriate performance measures and a strategy for collecting and reporting performance-based outcomes reflecting balanced and restorative justice goals.

The U.S. Congress awarded a grant to APRI to conduct a national project to demonstrate that it is both possible and valuable to measure the performance of juvenile justice systems to help them achieve common goals, including: reduction of juvenile crime, enhancing services to victims of juvenile crime, holding juvenile offenders accountable for the harm caused by their behavior.

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### Understanding Performance Measures: Some Important Terms

The business of measuring performance comes with its own vocabulary. Some important terms and their definitions are listed below.

- **Performance Measurement**: The act of assessing an organization’s ability to do things by measuring productivity, effectiveness, quality, and timeliness.

- **Performance Goal**: A target level of performance against which actual performance can be compared, expressed as a tangible, measurable objective.

- **Performance Indicator**: A particular value or characteristic used to measure an output or an outcome.

- **Inputs**: The resources applied by an agency to achieve outputs and outcomes.

- **Processes**: The activities designed to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

- **Outputs**: The goods and services produced by an organization and provided to the public or to other organizations.

- **Outcomes**: The results of the organization’s activities relative to its intended purpose.

- **Intermediate Outcomes**: Outcomes related to the immediate accomplishment of specific organizational objectives (i.e., short term outcomes).

- **Impact Outcomes**: Outcomes related to the accomplishment of broad organizational goals (i.e., long-term outcomes).

- **Validity**: The degree to which an indicator actually measures what it is supposed to measure.

- **Reliability**: An indication of the degree to which a measure is consistent and stable in measuring what it is intended.

- **Comprehensive**: The degree to which performance measures address all organizational objectives.

- **Accuracy**: The degree to which the data are accurate reflections of outputs and outcomes.
and helping juvenile court-involved youth to be competent, responsible, and productive. APRI collaborated with OJJDP’s Balanced and Restorative Project and NCJJ to build and field-test juvenile justice performance benchmark measures that can be implemented nationwide.

In the first year of the APRI project, four jurisdictions were selected to implement the juvenile justice system performance measures strategy and produce system-wide “report cards” for their jurisdictions. APRI and its partners were able to demonstrate that it is indeed possible and useful to measure performance and report outcomes of the juvenile justice system. Each of the original four jurisdictions successfully collected and processed outcome data and produced system-wide report cards. Three of the four jurisdictions continue to report outcomes annually. In the second year of the project, APRI provided training and technical assistance to eight additional jurisdictions representing seven states.

A Proven Strategy for Measuring Juvenile Justice Performance

Replication is the stamp of successful strategies. It is one thing to successfully implement a particular strategy in one place at a given time. It is quite another to successfully duplicate the same strategy in several places over an extended period of time. The core performance measures strategy described in this bulletin has been repeated in multiple and diverse jurisdictions for over three years.

While the strategy is flexible enough to match the unique characteristics of multiple jurisdictions, the six essential features remain constant across jurisdictions, including:

- Mission-based outcomes
- Unambiguous unit of analysis
- Consistent data collection instrument
- Reliable data collection agents
- Clear strategy for entering and processing data, and
- Regular and consistent dissemination of information generated by the data.

Mission-based outcome. A clear and unambiguous mission is a necessary prerequisite to measuring performance. For the purposes of this bulletin, juvenile justice performance measures will be predicated upon the balanced and restorative justice mission that emphasizes

| Measuring Balanced and Restorative Justice: Goals, Activities, and Outcomes |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| **Goal**                      | **Activities**                           | **Outcomes**                             |
| **Community Protection:**     | Implementation of a graduated system of  | No new offenses or serious violations of |
|                               | interventions, supervision, and, where   | conditions of probation committed while   |
|                               | necessary, secure placement of juvenile  | under supervision of the juvenile court.  |
|                               | offenders.                               |                                          |
| **Offender Accountability:**  | Activities designed to help offender     | Community service ordered / completed.    |
|                               | repair harm to individuals and community  | Restitution ordered / paid.              |
|                               | to the extent possible.                  | Participation / successful completion of  |
|                               |                                          | victim awareness classes.                |
| **Competency Development:**   | Activities designed to provide juveniles | Successful completion of educational,    |
|                               | with knowledge, tangible skills, and      | vocational, skill building, moral         |
|                               | increased capacity to live in their       | reasoning, and independent living        |
|                               | communities without supervision.          | programs / activities.                    |
community protection, offender accountability and competency development. The balanced and restorative justice mission is particularly useful for developing performance measures because it has been thoroughly researched, carefully articulated, and presents clear, unambiguous goals that suggest several logical objectives. In addition, the balanced and restorative justice model has been adopted fully or in part by over two-thirds of the United States.

The balanced and restorative justice mission mandates three primary goals for the juvenile justice system: community protection, offender accountability, and competency development. It is against these goals that the juvenile justice system will be measured. Outcomes are the tangible evidence that the objectives for each goal have been achieved.

Unambiguous unit of analysis. The individual case is the unit of analysis; it is what we are measuring. In this context, the case represents the sum total of juvenile court activity from the time the case is opened (i.e., with a disposition of informal probation, probation, placement, etc.) to the time the case is closed (i.e., with a formal court order ending juvenile court involvement). A case does not represent the totality of an individual’s involvement with the juvenile court.

Consistent data collection instrument. Simplicity and brevity are the hallmarks of an effective data collection instrument. The data collection instrument used by this strategy is a form, called the case closing form, completed at the time of case closing. The case closing form is brief, organized around mission-driven goals, and includes questions related to specific expected outcomes of the case (e.g., remaining crime free, completing community service, paying restitution, completing treatment or competency building activities). The data collection form should exhibit the following basic characteristics:

- Brief: Just one to three pages.
- Simple: Data are immediately available to data suppliers (i.e., probation officers); limited research or file reviews are required.
- Meaningful: Information collected has both immediate and long-term relevance to probation officers, supervisors, administrators, and judges.
- Provide immediate feedback: The case closing form should be capable of immediately reporting useful information to judges, juvenile court staff, prosecutors, and others.
- Generate valued outputs: Individual case closing reports are regularly reviewed by supervisor and judge; aggregate outcome reports reviewed by administrators, supervisors, and staff; outcomes used to secure funding; and “report cards” submitted to citizens.

The data collection form developed by NCJJ and the one adapted by APRI’s Performance Measures Project are consistent with the characteristics described above. For example, the APRI form, exhibited on page 7, is a one-page form designed to collect outcome data at case closing. Only a handful of questions are asked, and no extensive research or file reviews are necessary to answer the questions. The data collection form may double as a case closing summary form to make a recommendation regarding termination of the case to a judge.

Reliable data collection agents. Juvenile probation officers or active case managers serve as the data collectors. They are responsible for accurately and thoroughly completing the case closing forms. To increase accuracy and reliability of the data, juvenile probation officers or case managers are expected to complete the forms immediately upon termination of the case. It is further recommended that a supervisor review each form prior to data entry.

Clear strategy for entering and processing data. The ability to efficiently and accurately enter and process outcome data is central to the successful implementation of a strategy for measuring performance. This is accomplished best with an automated data processing system. Some jurisdictions use a stand-alone database developed specifically for entering, processing, and reporting juvenile justice performance measures. Other jurisdictions have modified larger system-wide management systems to include the performance measures and produce outcome reports.

Regular and consistent dissemination of information generated by the data. Several outcome reports were developed through this initiative, including system-wide “report cards” that provide information regarding specific benchmark outcomes for jurisdictions. Other output reports include summary outcome reports for individual juvenile probation officers, juvenile probation supervisors, and juvenile court judges. Reports may also be developed that describe outcomes by type of supervision (e.g., informal probation cases, probation cases, aftercare cases) and offender characteristics.
# Performance Measures for the Juvenile Justice System
## National Report Card Project: Case Closing Report Form

**Section 1: Identifying Information and Court Status**
- **Date of Report:**
- **Name of Juvenile:**
- **Unique ID:**
- **Census Tract / Zip Code:**
- **Date of Birth:**
- **Agent:**
- **Gender:**
  - [ ] Male
  - [ ] Female

- **Race:**
  - [ ] African American
  - [ ] Caucasian
  - [ ] Hispanic
  - [ ] Other

- **Date placed on supervision:**
- **Date case closed:**
- **At the time of case closing the case was assigned to:**
- **Judge:**
- **Probation officer:**
- **Supervisor:**

**Adjudication Status:**
- [ ] Delinquency Offense
- [ ] Status Offense

**Initial Supervision Status:**
- [ ] Pre-filing: (Specify)
- [ ] Post-filing: (Specify)
- [ ] Post-Adjudication: (Specify)

**Section 2: Law Abiding Behavior**

- **Were charges filed against the juvenile for committing a new offense while under juvenile court supervision?**
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

**Section 3: Resistance to drugs and alcohol**

- **Were drug / alcohol tests administered while under supervision?**
  - [ ] No
  - [ ] Yes, youth was tested ___ times

- **Result of drug / alcohol tests while under supervision:**
  - [ ] Tested negative ___ times.
  - [ ] Tested positive ___ times for

**Section 4: Restitution**

- **Was restitution ordered?**
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

- **Amount of restitution assigned / ordered:**
- **Restitution paid at time of case closing:**

**Section 5: Community Service**

- **Was community service assigned?**
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

- **Number of community service hours assigned / ordered:**
- **Community service hours completed at time of case closing:**

**Section 6: School Participation**

- **Was youth enrolled in school at time of case closing?**
  - [ ] No
  - [ ] Yes
- **If enrolled in school what is current grade or last grade completed:**
- **At the time of case closing, was youth within the mandatory attendance requirements established for his / her school district?**
  - [ ] No
  - [ ] Yes

- **If not enrolled in school, why? (Mark All That Apply):**
  - [ ] Graduated
  - [ ] Completed GED
  - [ ] Employed
  - [ ] Home schooled
  - [ ] Expelled
  - [ ] Dropped out
  - [ ] Other

**Section 7: Reason for Case Closing**

The case summarized in this report was closed because:

- [ ] Juvenile successfully completed court-ordered obligations
- [ ] The case was terminated as an unsuccessful completion

- **Reason for unsuccessful discharge:**

- **Other Reason (Please Specify):**

- **Supervision Status at Case Closing:**
  - [ ] Pre-filing: (Specify)
  - [ ] Post-filing: (Specify)
  - [ ] Post-Adjudication: (Specify)
Measuring Performance: Five Critical Elements

If you do something long enough and pay attention, you just might learn a thing or two. In truth, many lessons were learned while implementing performance measures strategies for juvenile justice in the participating jurisdictions. However, after culling through the collective experiences and learning moments, five critical elements emerged:

1) **Outcome measures must be mission-based**: Performance measures that are not mission-based may be based on any one of several non-systemic values, including the whim of agency administrators, the desires of program staff, the limitations of funding, or simply the tyranny of history. Things may get measured, but in the unlikely event that measurements are linked to the agency mission, it is purely by chance. More likely, however, is that nothing will get measured.

2) **The juvenile court experience can be measured**: One of the obstacles to developing juvenile justice system performance measures is that we have never really been sure exactly what it is that we are to measure. The juvenile court experience is commonly perceived as a means to an end and not as an end in-and-of-itself. However, juvenile justice systems are organized to do things. That means that the things they do can be measured. The trick is taking the time to identify what, precisely, they are organized to do, how they do it, and what we expect to happen.

3) **Intermediate outcomes are valuable**: We discussed the role of recidivism previously. The position taken by this paper is that recidivism is an important, yet limited, measure of juvenile court performance. However, it is not the only measure and, indeed, not the most relevant measure of juvenile justice system performance. Intermediate outcomes are directly related to what the juvenile court is trying to achieve (e.g., crime free supervision, completion of community service, payment of restitution, completion of skill building activities, progress in treatment). They are, thus, immediately and critically relevant to performance. In addition, they are readily available, easy to collect, and can be applied to a broad range of performance measures and organizational decision-making.

4) **Measure at time of case closing**: Data collection is, arguably, the most problematic feature of measuring performance. Many questions need to be answered. What data is to be collected? Who collects the data? How is it collected? And when is it collected? We have gone a long way toward answering the “what data” question; however, the questions of who, how, and when loom large. The position taken in this paper is that performance data should be collected by juvenile probation officers / caseworkers using a data collection form when the case is closed.

However, relying on juvenile probation officers to generate the raw data for measuring juvenile justice performance created a new role, new responsibilities, and new skill requirements for probation line staff and supervisors alike. Participating jurisdictions had to be aggressive and proactive in terms of preparing staff for their new roles. As a juvenile probation administrator in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania reported:

> Supervisors and POs had to be trained on the importance of completing the case-closing document accurately and submitting it in a timely manner. It was the job of administration to convince staff that the case closing would enable them to take credit for all their efforts.

5) **Use outcome data early, often, and in multiple ways**: Assuring the quality and accuracy of data is always an important consideration. It is especially important when that data is used to report on the performance of an agency or organization. The easiest and most efficient method for assuring the quality and accuracy of outcome data is to use the data early, often, and in multiple ways.

The first quality check occurs at case closing. Each data collection form should be reviewed by the juvenile probation officer’s or caseworker’s supervisor for accuracy and completeness prior to being sent forward for data entry. Data entry procedures should include standard quality assurance guidelines and strategies (e.g., limited points of data entry, well trained data entry staff, unambiguous data forms, clear and well designed data entry screens). Still, even with quality control safeguards in place, data collection and data entry mistakes are possible.
Measuring Juvenile Justice Performance: Results From Five Jurisdictions

It is easy to recommend that jurisdictions take the time, energy, and risks associated with developing performance measures for the juvenile justice system. It may be more difficult to accept that recommendation, particularly since there is such a limited track record in that regard. However, a track record does exist. The recent experience of a diverse array of jurisdictions across the country illustrate that it is possible, practical, and useful to measure the performance of juvenile justice systems. A brief description of five of those jurisdictions is offered here. The case studies include two states (Pennsylvania and South Carolina) and three local jurisdictions (Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; Deschutes County, Oregon; and Marquette County, Michigan).

State-wide Implementation

Pennsylvania and South Carolina are the only two states in the nation that have implemented statewide juvenile justice performance measures strategies. However, they took different approaches to developing and implementing performance measures.

Pennsylvania took the “long and grinding road.” Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system performance measures are the result of more than a decade of collaborative efforts to develop policies, programs, initiatives, and outcomes that support the State’s balanced and restorative mission.

South Carolina took the “educated consumer” approach and rapidly implemented the reliable, field-tested strategy offered by APRI. South Carolina’s juvenile justice system performance measures resulted from a mandate by the state Department of Juvenile Justice to measure a new way of doing business and the Department’s ability to adopt the outcome measures and quickly establish a system-wide process for collecting, processing, and reporting outcome data.

Pennsylvania: Responding to the Governor’s Request for Juvenile Justice Performance Measures

In the fall of 2003, Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell directed all state agencies to reexamine their respective program performance measures in conjunction with the 2004-2005 budget planning process, and to modify these measures and develop new measures that emphasize program efficiency and effectiveness. In response, the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission (JCJC), working with a committee of chief and deputy chief juvenile probation officers, proposed new statewide juvenile justice system outcome measures based on the data being collected in conjunction with the National Center for Juvenile Justice Intermediate Outcomes Project.

The initiative, which began on January 1, 2004, included the system outcome measures, means of data collection, and outcome report formats. The Governor’s Budget Office selected a subset of the performance measures for inclusion in Governor Rendell’s Executive Budget proposal for the JCJC, including: juvenile cases closed that received probation supervision or other services, the number completing supervision without a new offense, and percent employed or engaged in an educational/vocational activity at case closing.

From the beginning, we stressed that one of the benefits of the new purpose clause would be the possibility to develop system wide performance measures. A juvenile justice purpose clause based on balanced and restorative justice provides a carefully articulated mission and clear, measurable goals. A strong system wide commitment to this legislative mandate, and the leadership of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, particularly the chief juvenile probation officers who had been working with the National Center for Juvenile Justice, provided us with the foundation upon which we could develop outcome measures for Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system.

For the state fiscal year that Governor Rendell directed state agencies to improve program performance measurement, the JCJC was able to produce a statewide report regarding more than 17,000 juvenile court cases closed by Pennsylvania juvenile courts in 2004. The outcomes included in the JCJC report reflect the three primary goals of balanced...
and restorative juvenile justice — community protection, competency development, and accountability. The JCJC initiative focuses on critical juvenile justice “benchmark” measures. JCJC outcome data is submitted quarterly, and JCJC reports aggregate level data representing the combined benchmark measures for all of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties on an annual basis.

Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system is decentralized; each county in the state runs its own juvenile court and juvenile probation department. To establish state-wide performance measures, Pennsylvania relied on the clear articulation of its legislatively mandated balanced and restorative justice mission; the existing juvenile justice performance measures development work of the NCJJ in partnership with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) and county-level juvenile justice performance measure development initiatives; the influence of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission; and the leadership of the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers. Adaptations were made to the JCJC’s Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (PaJCMS) to collect and process data statewide.

A second report was published in 2006. That report describes outcomes for over 18,083 juvenile court cases closed during the period from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005. The JCJC outcome measures report provides a powerful tool for communicating the goals of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system and basic information regarding the capacity of juvenile courts and juvenile court professionals throughout the state to achieve the goals of the juvenile justice system.

### Selected Categories and Outcome Measures

**Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission**

**2006 Juvenile Justice System Outcome Measures Project¹**

18,083 Cases Closed in 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Measures</th>
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| **Community Supervision** | • 87.4% (15,801) of cases were closed without a new offense committed while under supervision.  
• 89.0% (16,101) of cases were closed without a serious (i.e., leading to a new adjudication or disposition) violation of probation while under supervision. |
| **Community Service**     | • 94% of the cases completed all of their assigned community service obligations.  
• 65.3% (11,816) of cases included community service obligations.  
• Over 536,000 hours of community service were completed. |
| **Restitution**           | • Over 85% of juveniles with restitution obligations paid in full.  
• 26.2% (4,729) of cases included restitution obligations.  
• Restitution in the amount of $2,362,067 was collected and dispersed to victims of juvenile crime. |
| **Competency Development**| • The vast majority (92%) of the juveniles assigned to participate in competency development activities successfully completed them.  
• 74.7% (13,404) of cases included requirements to attend or participate in one or more competency development activities. |
| **Victim Awareness**      | • 31.6% (5,706) of juveniles were directed/ordered to participate in a victim awareness curriculum / program while under supervision.  
• 95.8% (5,468) of juveniles successfully completed a victim awareness curriculum / program while under supervision. |

South Carolina: Using Performance Measures to Demonstrate a New Way of Doing Business

Unlike Pennsylvania, juvenile justice programs in South Carolina are administered centrally through the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). To develop its statewide juvenile justice report card, DJJ took advantage of the training workshops and technical assistance provided by APRI, the leadership and development efforts of DJJ staff and key system partners, the previously scheduled revisions to the system-wide management information system, and the centralized nature of DJJ, which facilitated statewide information. The juvenile justice report card produced by the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice demonstrates a “new way of doing business” predicated on the principles of balanced and restorative justice and agency accountability.

South Carolina was one of the four sites selected to participate in the APRI Juvenile Justice Performance Measures Project and released its first juvenile justice report card in November 2004. A second Report Card was released a year later. The DJJ Report Card provides citizens with information about DJJ and its services, and it introduces a new set of performance standards that focus on DJJ’s balanced and restorative practices. DJJ Director Bill Byars is unequivocal in his description of what the DJJ Report card means to South Carolina’s Department of Juvenile Justice.

### Selected Categories and Outcome Measures

**South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice**

**Outcomes for Selected Benchmark Measures**

6,190 Cases Closed in 2004

#### Diversion
- 4,800 cases diverted to community-based arbitration.
- 4% increase in diversions from previous year; 14% increase from 2000.

#### Victim Notification
- Over 13,000 victims notified regarding status of offender(s) related to their case.
- 23% increase in diversions from previous year.

#### Community Supervision
- 85% of the cases were closed without a new offense committed while under supervision.

#### Restitution
- Restitution ordered in 701 (11%) cases closed.
- $357,000 ordered.
- $223,000 paid (62%).

#### Community Service
- Community service ordered in 2,650 (43%) cases closed.
- 77,817 hours of community service ordered.
- 67,660 hours of community service completed (87%).

#### Enrollment in School / Vocational Training
- Juveniles were enrolled in school or vocational training at the time of case closure in 87% of cases closed.
For the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Report Card represents an unprecedented effort to offer citizens a forthright and honest appraisal of the performance both at DJJ and the larger juvenile justice system of South Carolina in serving the state’s juvenile population, crime victims, and communities.

The report card includes a short description and schematic drawing of South Carolina’s juvenile justice system and a summary of 19 basic outcomes designed to illustrate how the system is performing. The 2005 report card demonstrates a general trend of decreasing violent and serious crime in the state, a small decrease in referrals of juveniles to DJJ, and an increase in pre-trial detention rates for juveniles (even as serious juvenile crime rates decline).

The report also illustrates DJJ’s efforts toward serving the state’s juvenile crime victims and toward juvenile rehabilitation. While only 11% of the cases included an order to pay restitution, almost two-thirds of the restitution ordered was paid. The data also indicate improvements in victim satisfaction, juvenile education, and juvenile job training efforts. “We began issuing these report cards as part of an effort to let our customers, the citizens of South Carolina, know how they are being served through the juvenile justice system,” said DJJ Director Byars. “We are proud to continue this accountability for the second year.”

**County-Level Implementation**

Several local jurisdictions in a number of states have recently implemented initiatives to measure the performance of their juvenile justice systems. For example, over 15 counties in Pennsylvania are working with NCJJ and have initiated locally driven efforts to measure and report juvenile justice outcomes. In addition, over 20 jurisdictions representing several states have attended APRI performance measures workshops and initiated performance measures initiatives.

The experiences of three of these jurisdictions are presented in this *Special Project Bulletin*. Deschutes County (Oregon) and Allegheny County (Pennsylvania) are included because the concept of outcome-based performance measures was pioneered in these two very different counties on opposite ends of the country. Marquette County (Michigan) is included to demonstrate the efficacy of developing and implementing an effective performance measures strategy in a relatively short period of time and at very little cost.

**Deschutes County, Oregon: Using Performance Measures to Demonstrate Returns on Investments in Juvenile Justice**

The Deschutes County Department of Juvenile Community Justice in Bend, Oregon was the first juvenile court agency in the country to present an outcome-based report card to its community. The Department began collecting and reporting performance measures data in 1999 and presented its first report card in 2000. Since then, the report card has been printed annually and is disseminated to over 32,000 households in the county as an insert in the local newspaper, the *Bend Bulletin*. In recent years, an update on selected benchmarks is published and disseminated in the *Bulletin* every three months.

Judge Stephen B. Forte, a Circuit Court Judge in Deschutes County, is a driving force for juvenile justice performance measures in Deschutes County and nationally. Judge Forte believes that the County’s Juvenile Justice Report Cards educate and inform the public about the true mission and goals of juvenile justice in Deschutes County.

While the report card has been helpful in providing information to the public, it, more importantly, has provided the public information of what the juvenile justice system deems important to measure. This “education” about what is important to measure changes the focus of the community discussion. Rather than discussing issues related to how long or whether a juvenile is detained, (the proverbial “pound of flesh”), the public discussion turns toward how has the community been made whole from the conduct of the individual and what is the system doing to prevent the conduct/harm in the future.

Judge Forte contends that, because of this, the Report Cards have been instrumental in making the community better informed, more accountable, and stronger. “The report card has created an opportunity for the criminal justice system to advise the public what is important to measure. Ultimately, the public is better able to determine how well the…. system is working.”

Juvenile justice performance measures provide Deschutes County’s Juvenile Community Justice Department opportunities to demonstrate the return on the investment of the citizens of the county in its juvenile justice system. Deevy Holcomb, Program Development Specialist, reports that the responses from citizens in the community to measures of performance are usually positive.
and congratulatory. Citizens are also more likely to request information about the juvenile justice system because performance measures prompted a question or a request for help.

The performance measures also provide important information that is used to improve programs and services provided by the Department. For example, Ms. Holcomb reports that tracking performance measures for victim satisfaction and drug and alcohol use has resulted in some important changes in the way the Department approaches these issues.

First is that our victim satisfaction numbers consistently show us that we have lots of room for improvement. As a result, we have hired additional staff to focus on victim restoration and advocacy and we survey victims while their cases are being managed so as to provide immediate and individual attention to specific victim concerns while it is still relevant to their case. Secondly, the performance measures process has given us an empirical and longitudinal understanding of our

<table>
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<th>Selected Categories and Outcome Measures Report Card: Deschutes County (OR) Juvenile Community Justice Benchmark Outcomes 518 Cases Closed in 2004</th>
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**Diversion**
- 4,800 cases diverted.
- 4% increase in diversions from previous year.

**Victim Satisfaction**
- 50% of victims responding to Victim Satisfaction survey reported “highest satisfaction” with juvenile justice services.
- 78% of respondents reported mid-to upper-level satisfaction with juvenile justice services.

**Recidivism**
- 71% of the cases involved juveniles who did not have a new criminal referral within one year of case closure.
- Represents a steady increase from previous years: 56% in 2001; 63% in 2002; and 69% in 2003.

**Restitution**
- Restitution ordered in 117 (23%) cases closed.
- $45,997 in restitution was ordered; $42,234 of restitution owed was paid (92%).
- Restitution was paid in full in 88% of the cases.

**Community Service**
- 7,988 hours of community service ordered.
- 7,176 hours of community service completed (90%).
- All community service obligations were completed in 83% of the cases.

**Enrollment in School**
- Juveniles were enrolled in school, graduated, employed, or completed GED requirements in 78% of cases closed.

**Citizen Participation**
- Citizens volunteered almost 3,500 hours of their time to Juvenile Community Justice.
clients’ success rates at varying levels of drug and alcohol interventions - not simply anecdotal. The stronger [the] case we can make about the important role of drug and alcohol abuse in our clients’ delinquent behaviors the more we are able to advocate and raise resources for interventions that will work better.

However, Ms. Holcomb also warns that one should be prepared for citizens that have different expectations regarding “success thresholds.” While juvenile justice professionals “may understand a 85% restitution completion rate to be pretty successful. Citizens in the community may only wonder how 15% didn’t get paid.”
Allegheny County, PA: Using Performance Measures to Administer, Manage, and Plan

The Allegheny County (PA) Juvenile Probation Department has used outcome-based performance measures for several years to manage its day-to-day operations. The Department was one of the first juvenile justice agencies to document and measure performance of individual juvenile probation officers for each closed case and apply those outcome-based results to departmental administration, management, and planning.

While the Department has used performance measures from data collected at case closing for several years, it produced its first system-wide report card in 2003. The report card was unveiled during the county’s Juvenile Justice Week celebrations and juvenile court open house in October 2003. According to the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, the court’s first report card “would earn it honor roll status”:

Last year, the court closed the cases of, or freed from reform school or probation, 1,485 delinquents. Those youths paid 81 percent of the restitution they were ordered to give victims—a total of $138,980—and completed 97 percent of the community service they were sentenced to work—a total of 68,971 hours.16

Jim Rieland, Director of Probation Services in Allegheny County, believes “that unless the Department measures results, managers cannot really know if they are successful.” To illustrate, he asks three questions:

1. Is it important to know that the Court ordered $200,000 in restitution in 2005?
2. Is it important to know that delinquent youth paid $100,000 in restitution in 2005?
3. Is it important to know that a delinquent youth was ordered to pay $100 and that he paid the full amount by the time the case was closed?

To the first question, he answers—“Not really.” To the second question, he answers—“That is nice to know.” But to the third question, he responds—“Yes, because with that information, I can answer the first two questions and other, more relevant, questions.” The third question is important because it provides data that describe the volume and amount of restitution ordered, but it also answers questions about restitution payments on a case-by-case level. It tells us not
To the Citizens of Allegheny County:

Juvenile Court Report Card

Allegheny County Juvenile Court is pleased to present our third annual Report Card to the Citizens of Allegheny County.

Consistent with changes made to the Juvenile Act in 1995, Allegheny County Juvenile Court has made the collection of restitution a high priority. Youth are not only ordered by the Court to pay restitution to their victims, but they are expected to pay in full. Juvenile Court probation staff has collected $200,278 (up by $44,367 from 2003) from youth whose cases were closed in 2004. In conjunction with our Juvenile Justice System partners, we continue to develop unique and innovative ways to collect restitution for victims and their families.

As we celebrate Juvenile Justice Week in Allegheny County, we are proud of the strides we have made toward victim restoration through restitution.

James Rieland, Director

Amount of Restitution Paid in 2004

In 2004 case closing data identifies 575 youth who were ordered by the Court to pay restitution to their victims. 454 or 79% of these youth paid their restitution in full. Payment ranged from as much as $4900.00 to as little as $1.25. Allegheny County Juvenile Probation Officers have continued to creatively encourage juveniles to fulfill their restitution obligations.
only that restitution was owed and that restitution was paid, but it also tells us that an individual juvenile successfully met his or her restitution obligations.

Mr. Rieland provides a succinct description of the value of case-level outcomes: “They take away the guess work of managing the Department, allow us to analyze case specific outcomes, and make it possible for us to apply data-driven corrections to our operations.”

To get the word out, Allegheny County publishes a visually appealing Juvenile Court Report Card, posts it on the Department’s website, and distributes about 100,000 copies throughout the county by placing them as inserts in the local Penny Saver magazine (see page 16). In addition, administrators and supervisors use the outcome data for presentations to the public, preparing departmental budgets, managing staff, and program assessment and evaluation.

Marquette County, Michigan: Creating Public Awareness and Increasing Community Participation

Like most juvenile court service agencies, Marquette County’s Juvenile Division had no previous history of outcome-based performance measures. To change this situation, the county’s Juvenile Court Judge and Juvenile Division Director attended the second APRI Performance Measures workshop in January 2005. Within the space of one year the Division developed and implemented a strategy for measuring outcomes and produced its first ever performance-based report card. To accomplish this, the Division:

- Established a performance measures development committee, sent representatives to the APRI performance measures development workshop, and developed a detailed action plan.

- Sponsored a one-day workshop for Division staff on performance measures conducted by researchers from the National Center for Juvenile Justice and the Urban Institute.

- Actively included Division employees in the review and critique of the case closing form and database developed by the APRI. Staff adapted the form and database to reflect the unique characteristics and needs of Marquette County.

- Trained staff to complete the case closing form and submit data for entry and processing.

- Initiated procedures to enter and process data collected at case closing and produce outcome reports.

The performance measures initiative was a wide-ranging, inclusive, and collaborative effort. This fact was not lost on Liz Smith, Director of Marquette County’s Project Weave, who described the benefits of broad-based participation in the development of juvenile court performance measures.

Participation extended beyond juvenile court personnel and included school teachers and superintendents, law enforcement, prosecuting and defense attorneys, substance abuse and mental health therapists and supervisors, youth serving agencies, county data specialists, the mayor and county administrator. This created awareness of the importance to collect data and gained support for the case-closing project by community members.

Responses to the Juvenile Division’s Report Card have come from a wide array of sources and have been very positive. For example, Liz Smith noted the dual capacity of juvenile justice performance measures to increase community understanding of juvenile justice system and encourage public participation.

Through our juvenile justice report card, community members will better understand the strengths, needs and opportunities facing the juvenile court. The data and stories from offenders and victims may encourage individuals and groups to become involved in a youth’s life through mentoring, job coaching or community service projects.

Dr. Carole L. Touchinski, President and CEO of Strategic Solutions in Marquette, reviewed the Report Card prior to dissemination. She found the success rates illustrated by the report card to be “absolutely phenomenal” and encouraged that they be “celebrated.” Further, Dr. Touchinski recognized the Report Card as an important tool for informing and partnering with the community.
Steve Carmichael, a member of the Reclaiming Futures National Advisory Committee, after reviewing the report card, announced that it is “quite an accomplishment.”

It is such a valuable community tool and I hope it will be widely distributed and used. I think its use will attract new community partners and new support for the juvenile system.

Congratulations. I do know how difficult it is to track outcomes AND how valuable it can be. You folks deserve lots of credit for taking this on. You have lots to be proud of in these numbers.

## Selected Categories and Outcome Measures

### Marquette County (MI)

**Juvenile Court Benchmark Measures**

124 Cases Closed — July 2005 to December 2005

### Diversion
- 69 (56%) cases handled by the Court’s diversion program.
- 23% increase in diversions from previous year.

### Victim Notification
- Over 13,000 victims notified.

### Community Supervision
- 107 (86%) of the cases were closed without a new offense committed while under supervision.

### Restitution
- Restitution ordered in 18 (15%) cases closed.
- $10,376 ordered; $8,211 (77%) paid.
- 52% of cases paid restitution in full.

### Community Service
- Community service ordered in 44 (36%) cases closed.
- 12,033 hours of community service ordered; 1,717 hours of community service completed (85%).
- $8,843 is the estimated dollar value (at prevailing minimum wage) of community service.

### Enrollment in School
- Juveniles were enrolled in school at the time of case closure in 88% of the cases closed.

### Substance Abuse / Mental Health Screening
- Almost two-thirds (81) of the cases were screened for substance abuse or mental health problems.
- 11% (9) of the cases screened were referred for further assessment.
Family Division,  
25th Circuit Court  
State of Michigan  
County of Marquette

Juvenile Justice Report Card  
Case Closing Information  
Year Ending 2005

Presented By:  
Honorable Michael J. Anderegg

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Helping keep the community safe is one of the most important missions of the juvenile court. One way of measuring the court's impact is by looking at its recidivism rate. “Recidivists” are juveniles who commit new offenses after being referred to court.

A court’s recidivism rate can be affected by which offenders are tracked and by how long they are tracked. We have chosen to track new offenses for all offenders referred to court, and to track any new offense committed in our jurisdiction while that individual is still considered a juvenile under state law. We distinguish between those juveniles who commit a new offense while under court supervision (“recidivists”) and those who commit a new offense after being discharged from probation (“repeat offenders”). We also have compared the crime rate for juveniles in our county against the national rate for juvenile crime.

RECIDIVISM / REPEAT OFFENDERS

- 17 of 124 youths discharged during the reporting period had an additional charge authorized during their time under court supervision.
- An additional 9 youth were referred back to court after being discharged.
- The combination of these two numbers equals 26 of 124 or 20%.
- 78% of youths under supervision had no new law violation.

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

All youths referred to court are now being screened to determine if they have substance and/or mental health problems. 81 of 124 youths discharged in the second half of 2005 were screened. Of these, 9 were ordered for further assessments and 9 of the assessments were completed. 10 youth were also requested to have an assessment by their probation officer and 9 completed. Average time between the orders/request and assessments will be ascertained during our next report card.

19 referrals were made (some youth more than once) by the court for treatment. 14 discharged youths were engaged in outpatient treatment programs, and in 12 of 14 cases, treatment was considered successful. 6 individuals participated in treatment more than once while under court jurisdiction. 3 individuals participated in residential substance abuse treatment. 1 of 3 had a successful course of treatment. Of 12 individuals who were ordered to participate in random drug or alcohol screens, 9 saw a decrease in substance abuse as reflected by random screens.

MENTAL HEALTH

20 of the 124 individuals discharged July – December 2005 were identified by the screening instrument as having a mental health concern. 14 of these had a formal diagnosis. Of these, 9 had co-occurring diagnoses. This means they had both substance abuse and mental health problems. 5 individuals were participating in mental health treatment at the time of discharge.

SCHOOL/WORK

109 individuals were enrolled in school at the time of discharge from probation. Almost all of these were in a full-time education program. 11 individuals were working at the time of discharge. 10 of 11 were working part-time.

LIFE SKILLS

20 individuals were referred to at least 32 different programs designed to improve their life skills while on probation. 9 individuals completed such a program. 9 individuals were assigned a mentor while under court jurisdiction.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Probation officers rated the offender's family involvement as positive in 107 of 124 cases at the time of discharge. 101 juveniles were living at home; 5 were on independent living status.
Improving the Juvenile Justice System Through Performance Measures

The driving force behind the juvenile justice performance measures initiatives has been to develop broad, system-wide report cards designed to inform citizens and policy makers at the state and local level about the performance of the juvenile justice system in relation to outcomes that are directly linked to the juvenile justice system mission and the activities of juvenile justice agencies. Where used, these juvenile justice report cards have been very effective in terms of informing the public, celebrating system successes, identifying system weaknesses and resource needs, preparing budgets, and dealing with the media.

However, the jurisdictions engaged in measuring juvenile justice performance have identified additional uses for performance measures beyond the report card. They have applied reported outcomes to improving performance by addressing critical operational features, including: managing operations, staff oversight, planning and development, requesting resources, and assessment and evaluation.

Managing Operations. You cannot manage what you do not measure. This is one of the fundamental principles of effective management. Historically, the lack of valid, reliable, and timely measurements of the day-to-day operations of juvenile courts and probation departments has been a major obstacle to effective management of those operations. One of the driving forces in the performance measures initiatives described in this report has been to provide the juvenile justice system with measurements to facilitate management.

Juvenile probation administrators in Allegheny County routinely use case closing outcome data to manage the day-to-day operations of the probation department. For example, administrators use the supervisor’s output reports to conduct monthly reviews of progress toward goals. The output reports allow the administrators to use a common set of outcomes to determine how the department’s community-based district offices are performing in terms of community protection (e.g., juveniles re-offending while under supervision), accountability (e.g., completion of community service, payment of restitution), and competency development (e.g., school attendance, employment, successful completion of competency development or treatment services). Russell Carlino, an Assistant Administrator for Allegheny County Juvenile Probation, succinctly states the case for using performance measures to manage operations:

Performance measures replace the “gut feelings” we used to rely on about how successful (or unsuccessful) we are in this business. Identifying clear goals has focused the efforts of staff. Measuring results has allowed us to see where we’re doing well and where we need to improve.

Manage Staff. Most people, quite naturally, find the idea of measuring performance to be at least a little bit threatening. This has certainly been the case with juvenile justice performance measures. Line-staff has been particularly suspicious of the intent of the performance measures projects. It does not take a person long to ask—“If you are measuring my performance, won’t that reflect on how I am doing?” And the short answer is “yes.” The longer answer is “yes, and they will shine a bright light on your successes and show you how to improve where you have been less successful.” And what is wrong with that? The truth is, managers quickly see past the system-wide “report card” application and grasp the value of using performance measures to better manage their staff.

More to the point, experience indicated that staff apprehension quickly subsides as time passes and the outcomes are regularly reported and applied to day-to-day practice. Allegheny County’s Russell Carlino observed that probation officers and supervisors were initially apprehensive, “but now take pride in the numbers and look forward to reviewing them on a regular basis.”

In Deschutes County, the performance-based outcomes have been formally incorporated into staff work plans and added to the county-based performance review process. Juvenile probation officers in Deschutes County are rated against established standards in four mission-based categories: repair harm (e.g., Does staff person regularly consider victims’ needs and perspectives?), reduce risk (e.g., Does staff person address youth for substance abuse issues and refer to appropriate treatment?), build community (e.g., Does staff person assist volunteers with work projects?), and public safety (e.g., Does staff person effectively prioritize high risk youth and provide adequate supervision?).

Allegheny County’s Juvenile Probation Department distributes outcome reports to all supervisors at regularly scheduled supervisory conferences. It is believed that the outcome reports provide an effective management tool for supervisors and help creates healthy competition among staff. The probation supervisors compare
outcomes from one quarter to another and are able to assess their performance in the context of previous reports as well as against their peers. This process produces as many questions as it answers, including: why are some cases open longer than others, what can be done to reduce length of supervision, have all probation objectives been achieved?

Individual outcomes are also discussed in monthly meetings with line juvenile probation officers. This allows supervisors to reinforce probation goals while allowing juvenile probation officers opportunities to assess their performance on a case-by-case basis and compare that performance with others in their unit. The conferences also provide an excellent opportunity to ensure the data are correct.

**Resource Allocation.** Report cards tell you when and where you are doing well and when and where you are doing not so well. Rather than ignoring problems, looking for excuses, or hanging blame on others, many jurisdictions are using their performance outcomes to identify areas that need attention and allocating resources accordingly. For example, the first system-wide report card compiled by the Deschutes County Department of Juvenile Community Justice indicated a very low completion rate for drug and alcohol intervention. Dennis Maloney, then the Department Director, used that information to successfully request additional resources to address drug and alcohol problems among at-risk juveniles. In later years, he was able to demonstrate improvement in those outcomes.

South Carolina’s Report Card documented DJJ’s continuing struggle with recidivism of juveniles released from secure placement facilities, pointing to an “area that has to change” and focusing attention on things that must be adjusted to change that trend.18

We have some things to be proud of, such as an increase in our victim’s satisfaction results and improved education ratings and the number of awarded diplomas and GEDs. But we also have areas that need some work. We still need more community prevention, intensive probation programs, and local mentoring programs to help reach a lot of these kids before they end up in our facilities.

**Budgeting.** One of the driving forces behind Pennsylvania’s performance measures initiatives was to provide

### Allegheny County Benchmark Measures (1999 to 2002):

- “No New Offenses,” “Average Length of Supervision,” “Paid Restitution,” Completed Community Service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Cases Closed With No New Offenses</th>
<th>Average Length of Supervision (Months)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26% 25% 21% 9% 12% 20.6 19.2 17.4 19.2</td>
<td>30.2 28.0 26.8 20.8 19.2 17.4 15.0 12.8 10.0</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Cases Paid Restitution in Full</th>
<th>Percent of Community Service Hours Completed</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60% 66% 64% 74% 86% 96% 96% 99% 97%</td>
<td>95% 95% 91% 99% 97% 95% 95% 95% 95%</td>
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a mechanism to facilitate the state funds budget request process in each of the state’s 67 counties. Juvenile probation departments in Pennsylvania submit needs-based budgets to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. County officials are required to include a number of performance indicators with the budget requests. The outcomes reported through the performance measures project provided much of the requisite data.

The Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in Crawford County, Pennsylvania has, on a number of occasions, presented selected outcome data to his County Commissioners. The data were presented to educate the Commissioners regarding overall system effectiveness. They were also used to make the case for additional support for special initiatives addressing needs identified by the outcome data (e.g., remedial education programs).

**Evaluation and Assessment.** While juvenile justice performance measures are designed primarily to provide outcome data to monitor system progress, successes, and areas of need, the data are also very valuable in terms of assessing and evaluating individual programs. Because outcome data are collected from individual cases at the time of case closing, it is possible to use the outcomes to compare results over time, compare differential outcomes of a wide variety of population sub-sets, and assess the performance of specific programs. For example, the data from a wide array of jurisdictions demonstrates that the vast majority—85% and above—of court-involved juveniles do not re-offend while under the supervision of the court. But what of the 15% or so that do commit additional offenses while under supervision? What do the data say about them and what can we do to reduce, even further, the incidence of offending while under supervision?

Case-level outcome data can be used to answer these and the myriad other questions that are bound to be asked as time goes on. They allow us to explore trends over time and characteristics of the cases closed. The data can be organized around a wide range of characteristics, including: age, race, gender, offense, disposition, probation classification, home address, school district or school, among many others. For example, an analysis of almost 5,000 cases closed in 14 Pennsylvania counties in 2004 indicated that about 18% of the cases involved juveniles who re-offended while under supervision. Those juveniles were more likely to be older at the time of case closing, remain under court supervision for a substantially longer time, violate conditions of probation and receive probation sanctions. At the same time, they were less likely to pay restitution and complete community service.

**Summary**

In this *Special Project Bulletin*, the case was made for measuring and reporting juvenile justice system performance measures. Establishing performance measures for the juvenile justice system was the elusive goal for juvenile justice practitioners, planners, and researchers for much of the history of juvenile justice system. There are many reasons the goal has eluded us in the past. Probably first and foremost is that juvenile justice has traditionally meant many things to many people. It has been hard to pin down a broadly accepted and clearly articulated mission for juvenile justice. The performance measures in this *Bulletin* are predicated on the goals and objectives inherent in the balanced and restorative justice mission which has been clearly and carefully articulated and has gained broad acceptance in many jurisdictions throughout the nation.

The absence of appropriate technology has been another obstacle to measuring juvenile justice system performance. Throughout much of the history of the system, the data that was collected was recorded in individual case files, large complex logs, contact sheets, and manually maintained data cards. Outcome data were available, but they were highly inaccessible. Modern automated data processing technology makes it possible to collect, enter, process, report, and analyze vast amounts of data in an efficient and affordable manner.

A coherent strategy for measuring juvenile justice performance and reporting outcomes has also been missing. The projects described in this report were designed to develop, implement, test, and demonstrate a viable performance measures strategy for the juvenile justice system. The results of these multi-disciplinary initiatives have proven that it is both possible and useful to measure and report juvenile justice outcomes in several distinct jurisdictions. Further, the collective experiences of these jurisdictions have resulted in an ever-expanding list of applications for juvenile justice outcome measures.

Is this the last word in juvenile justice system performance measures? No, in fact, it is just the beginning. One of the things that became very clear through the process described in this *Special Project Bulletin* is that, as one answers questions, even more questions are brought to light—What about the juveniles who re-offend while under supervision? How do outcomes for girls differ
from those of boys? Are we doing enough for victims of juvenile crime? Do we have appropriate resources dedicated to education? Job training? Social skill development?

The point is that performance measures advance the conversation about what we are achieving, what we are not achieving, why it is not being achieved, and what we can do about it. This important point is not lost on South Carolina’s Bill Byers who states that performance-based outcomes “will inspire a continued dialog among juvenile justice professionals on the current state and the future of our vital juvenile justice system.”

As we address the new questions that are generated, we will naturally want to clarify our objectives, refine our outcome measures, enhance the quality of our data, and continue to improve operations. The end result of all of this is an inescapable conclusion that juvenile justice is worth measuring and that we have the method, the means, and the will to empirically demonstrate the value of juvenile justice.

For more information on implementing juvenile justice performance measure strategies contact:

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ENDNOTES


2 The National Center for Juvenile Justice, located in Pittsburgh, PA, is the research arm of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges—www.ncjj.org.

3 The American Prosecutors Research Institute, located in Alexandria, VA, is the research, training, and technical assistance affiliate of the National District Attorneys Association—www.ndaa-apri.org.

4 To document and assess Pennsylvania’s development and implementation of balanced and restorative justice, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency issued a grant to NCJJ to conduct a formative evaluation of the state’s balanced and restorative justice initiatives, culminating in system-wide performance measures and a strategy for measuring performance.


6 Allegheny County, Pennsylvania; Cook County, Illinois; Deschutes County, Oregon; and South Carolina.

7 Belknap County, NH; 5th Judicial District of MT; the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Flathead Reservation, MT; Kenosha County, WI; Maricopa County, AZ; and Marquette County, MI; Sacramento County, CA; and Tompkins County, NY.


10 A stand-alone database designed to allow jurisdictions without immediate access to automated information management systems to enter, process, and reports performance-based data was developed for NCJJ’s performance measures project for Pennsylvania and adapted by the APRI National Demonstration Project by David Evard, Juvenile Justice Planner, Allegheny County Juvenile Probation Department. Prototype standalone performance measures databases may be obtained from NCJJ or APRI.


12 The purpose of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system was fundamentally redefined in 1995 during a special legislative session that revised the mandates of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Act based on the principles balanced and restorative justice. Pennsylvania was the first state to enact such legislation.


14 Some of these pre-dated Pennsylvania’s statewide performance measures project, and continued on back page....
others continue to report outcomes quarterly to Pennsylvania’s JCJC while maintaining their own data collection, processing, and reporting strategies.


17 Project Weave is a community-based program designed to improve the quality of alcohol and drug treatment services available to youth in Marquette County’s juvenile justice system.