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## The Case for Reform: Improving Community Safety Through Evidence Based Practices

### Research: What We Know

- Research tells us that:
  - Placement does not lower the likelihood of juvenile reoffending and may in fact increase the likelihood of committing a new crime for some offenders.
  - Longer lengths of stay in secure facilities does not increase public safety,
  - Targeting high risk offenders for correctional interventions maximizes recidivism reduction.
  - There are a number of community-based intervention strategies and program models that have been proven cost-efficient and are also effective to reduce juvenile reoffending.

## ADOLESCENT BRAIN RESEARCH

- Frontal lobe of brain filters emotion into logical responses is not developed until age 25.
- Kids are neurologically wired to do stupid things!
- Kids are still under neurological construction.
- Kids are being hard-wired and need positive influences such as school.



What's Wrong with this picture?

## Who Scares Us & Who Makes Us Mad?

Identifying the Steps to Improving the Local Juvenile Justice System

## So What is a Judge to Do?

## Step One: The Judicial Leadership Model

The juvenile court is the one place where all agencies serving children and youth intersect. The juvenile court is the common denominator of all child service agencies (Teske, 2011). With the juvenile court situated at the crossroads of juvenile justice, the juvenile court judge is placed in a unique role—as the traffic cop! (Teske & Huff, 2011)

## Who Convenes?

- Convening Power—the ability to bring stakeholders to the table;
- Legitimacy—the stakeholders perceive the convener to have authority, formal or informal, within the problem domain;
- Vision—the convener understands the problem domain and related issues to process stakeholder concerns and needs; and
- Stakeholder Knowledge—the convener can identify the stakeholders and possesses knowledge of each stakeholder role in the problem domain.— Gray, 1989

What is happening to your kids?

## Step Two: Collect Data

Data Driven Problem Solving

## "Houston-we have a problem"

- Large numbers of low-risk kids consume expensive juvenile justice resources and recidivism rates remain high.
  - YDC: 39% low-risk, 65% recidivism rate, \$91,126 per bed
  - Non-Secure Residential: 53% non-felony, 49% low-risk, 54% recidivism rate, \$28,955 per juvenile

	Total Population (2011)	% Non-felony (Misdemeanor or Status)	% Non-Violent Offense Types	% Low-Risk	Recidivism Rate (Released in 2007)	Cost
Out-of-Home Population	1,917	24%	58%	40%	64%	N/A
YDC Population	619	1%	39%	39%	65%	\$91,126 per bed
Designated Felons	607	0%	38%	39%	N/A	N/A
Non-Secure Residential Population	600	53%	70%	49%	54%	\$28,955 per juvenile
RYDC Population	698	20%	65%	34%	N/A	\$88,155 per bed

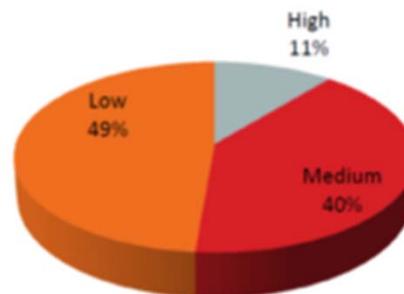
## Workgroup Findings

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### Out of Home: Non-secure Residential

- Non-Secure Residential
  - Group homes, emergency shelters, wilderness/ outdoor, therapeutic programs
  - Can be utilized as alternatives to detention, Short Term Programs, or residential placements
  - Private facilities include numerous non-secure residential placement locations
  - DJJ accesses over 300 beds, roughly 15% are for non secure detention

Risk levels of youth in non-secure residential treatment, 2011 (snapshot date)



Source: Risk levels adapted from Georgia Juvenile Corrections System Drivers Analysis presentation, September 5, 2012. [www.joverstatis.org](http://www.joverstatis.org)

### Out of Home Placement: Youth Development Campuses

- YDCs provide secure care, supervision and treatment services to youth who have been committed to the custody of DJJ
- YDCs provide youth services that include education, health and mental health services, food services, resident counseling, substance abuse units, vocational programming, and family visitation, among other services

Risk level of youth in YDC on snapshot date, 2011

Risk Level	Percentage
Low	38%
Medium	37%
High	25%

Source: Risk levels adapted from Georgia Juvenile Corrections System Drivers Analysis presentation, September 5, 2012

www.pewstatestudies.org

### Race/Ethnicity of Youth in System

**Out-of-Home**

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage
Afr Amer	69%
White	22%
Other	9%

n = 1,917

**Community**

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage
Afr Amer	58%
White	31%
Other	11%

n = 13,790

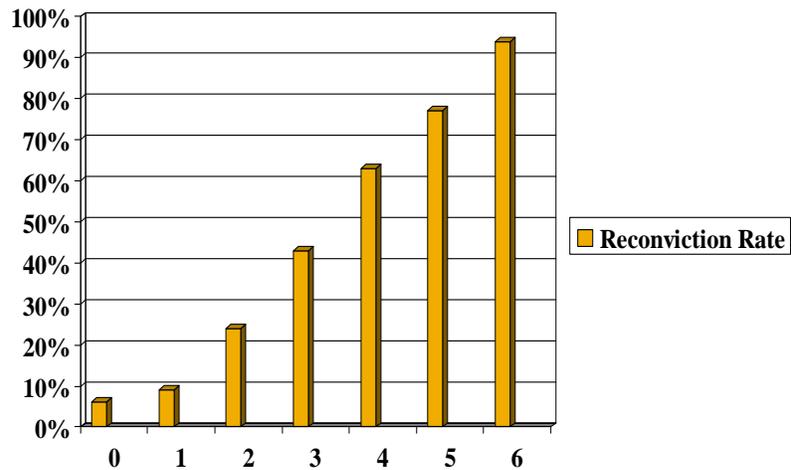
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What am I doing to that Kid—Is it working?

## **What Obligations Come with Signing an Order?**

## **Step Three: Target High Risk**

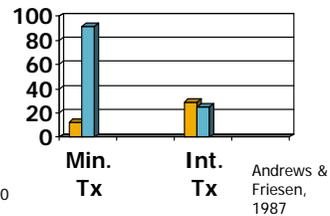
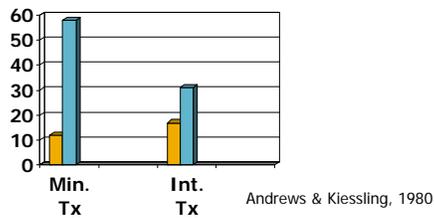
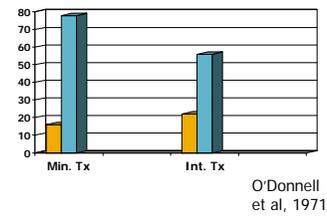
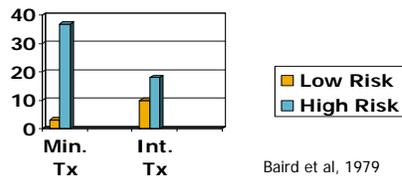
## Who Makes Us Mad & Who Scares Us: Predicting Risk



When an individual or system responds to an offender using a technique that exacerbates the risk to re-offend

## What is Hyper-recidivism?

## Match Levels of Treatment to the Risk Level of the Youth



The Criminogenic Needs Principle

## Step Four: Identifying the Causes of Delinquent Conduct

## What is Criminogenic?

- Cognition
- Peers
- School Connectedness
- Substance Abuse
- Poor/Weak Problem Solving Skills
- Family Function; AND
- What I believe should also be assessed---  
TRAUMA

**Traumatized people,  
traumatize people!**

[www.crimesolutions.gov](http://www.crimesolutions.gov)

## Step Five: Finding What Works, What's Promising, & What Doesn't Work

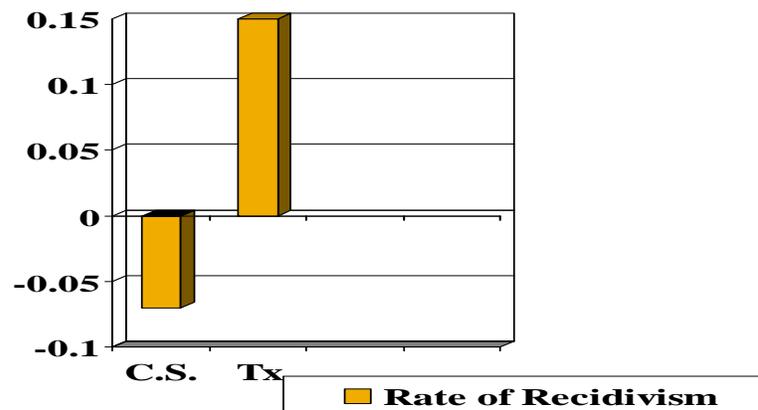
### Effective Program Characteristics

Risk Classification Instruments	Target Criminogenic Factors
Behavioral Approaches	Treat Based on Needs
Disrupt Criminal Networks	Provide Aftercare
Dosage: Occupy 40-70% of Juvenile's Time	Programs Last 3-9 months
Family Members Trained to Provide Support	Rewards & Punishers Used Effectively

## Ineffective Program Characteristics

Client Centered Counseling	Freudian Approaches	Programs that Bond Delinquents	Intense Group Interactions
Vague Unstructured Programs	Good Relationship with Offender	Fostering Positive Self-Regard	Self-Actualization
Medical Model	Targeting Low Risk Offenders	Punishing Smarter	No Concrete Assistance in Realizing Ambitions
Increasing Self-Esteem	Focus on Personal Complaints	Improve Neighborhood Wide Conditions	Intense Supervision w/o Tx

## Punishment vs. Treatment



## TYPES OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

- Cognitive Restructuring
- Multi-Systemic Therapy
- Functional Family Therapy
- Mentoring
- Role-Playing
- Concrete Problem-Solving
- Drug Treatment (Seven Challenges)
- Parenting/Family Centered Counseling
- After-School/Educational Programs
- Specialized Academic Programming
- Intensive Structured Skill Training

## WHAT DOES NOT WORK

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| ■ Talking Cures                | ■ Self Actualization Through Self-Discovery                                   |
| ■ Good relationship with Youth | ■ Targeting Low Risk Youth  |
| ■ Self-Esteem                  | ■ Improving Neighborhood Wide Conditions                                      |
| ■ Medical Model                | ■ Increasing Conventional Ambitions Without Assistance in Realizing Ambitions |
| ■ Punishing Smarter            | ■ DARE & other non-skill programs   |
| ■ Scared Straight              |   |
| ■ Nonbehavioral Approaches     |   |
| ■ Boot Camps                   |   |
| ■ OTP                          |   |

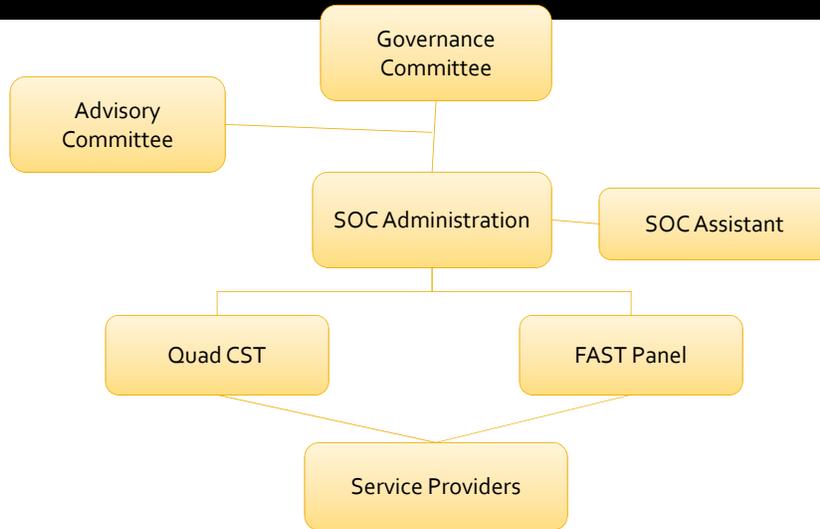
The Mechanics of Applied Juvenile Justice Best Practices

## Reform in Clayton County, GA

### A System Strained

- Prior to 2003, in Clayton County, there was a non-system
- A 1,248% increase in juvenile complaints
- Unmanageable caseloads
- High recidivism rates
- Graduation rates at an all-time low
- Recidivist rates at an all-time high

## CLAYTON COUNTY SYSTEM OF CARE



## FAST PANEL MEMBERS

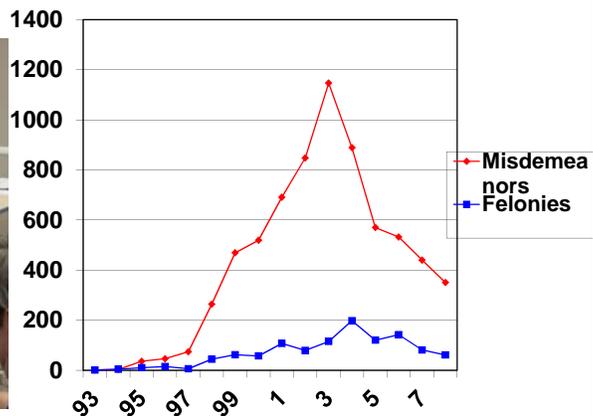


- School Social Worker
- School Psychologist
- Mental Health Counselor
- DFCS Caseworker
- DJJ Expeditor
- Victim Assistance
- Defense Bar
- Prosecutor
- Non-Profit Agencies
- Citizen Volunteers

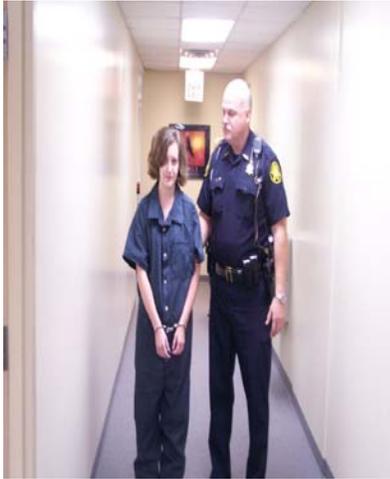
## DEVELOPED DETENTION ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS



## Stop Widening the Net: Reduce School Arrests



## Programs and Practices to Reduce Risk of Detention



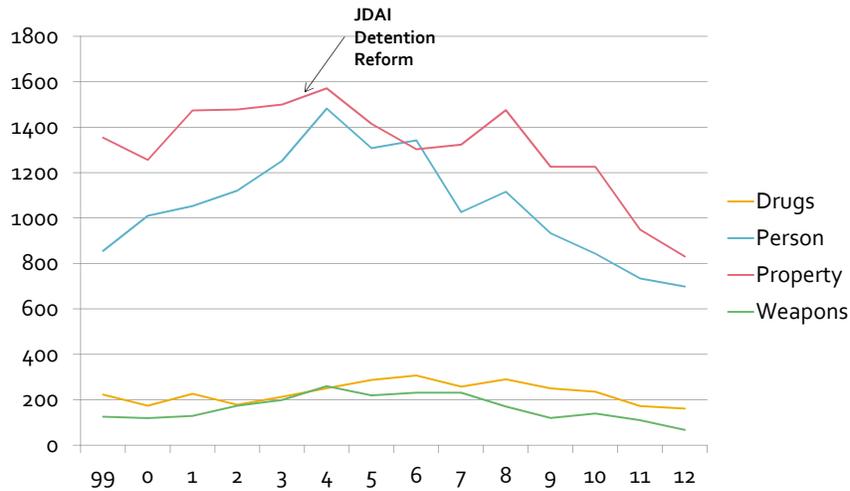
- FTA Locators
- Graduated Responses
- Graduated Rewards
- School Based Probation
- MST
- FFT
- Accountability Courts

## JDAI's Effect in Clayton County

2012 data as compared to the same measures in 2002

- 70% decrease in average daily detention population (ADP)
- 64% reduction in ADP of minority youth
- 43% reduction in average length of stay
- Felony re-arrest (prior to adjudication) of less than 1%
- 43% fewer commitments to state custody
- 40% fewer commitments of minority youth
- 67% reduction in formal petitions

## Clayton: Total Number of Offenses by Category



Change is Constant

## Georgia Reform: A Never-Ending Story

## Fiscal Incentives

### Recommendation 1: Implement a performance incentive structure similar to Ohio and Texas.

- Evidence-based community-based options can reduce recidivism, but too often, the quantity and quality of community-based options in Georgia is dependent upon location and funding.
- Ohio and Texas: Several states and local communities have aligned their fiscal relationship in ways that reward performance. For example, Ohio's RECLAIM program provides incentives to counties to develop and utilize community-based alternatives.
- This proposal would recommend that Georgia develop and implement a fiscal incentive structure similar to Ohio and Texas.
- Working group currently considering potential details of this proposal to determine its efficacy. This group will report back to the full Council.

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## Designated Felons

### Recommendation 2: Create a two-class system within the Designated Felony Act.

- Currently, the Designated Felony Act contains one dispositional structure for nearly 30 offenses ranging from murder to smash and grab burglary.
- In 2011, 39% of designated felons in a YDC were assessed as low-risk.
- Georgia pays \$91,126 per bed per year at a YDC. Despite these high costs, 65% of juveniles released from a YDC are re-adjudicated delinquent within three years.
- This proposal would revise the Designated Felony Act to create a two-class system that continues to allow for restrictive custody in all DF cases while taking into account both offense severity and risk level. The Council also suggests adjusting the dispositional sanctions for each class that corresponds to the degree of the offense and takes into account the risk level of offenders.

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## Status Offenders and Misdemeanants

**Recommendation 3:** Prohibit status offenders and some misdemeanants from being committed to secure residential facilities and reinvest savings into the community.

- 53% of juveniles in a non-secure residential facility were adjudicated for a misdemeanor (45%) or status offense (8%). In addition, there are additional post-adjudication misdemeanor and status offenders sitting in an RYDC awaiting a placement.
- Several states have recently implemented restrictions on the placement of misdemeanor and/or status offenders in state facilities, including Texas, Florida, Virginia and Alabama.
- This proposal would allow only juveniles who were adjudicated for a felony offense to be committed to state facilities, unless they met certain criteria.
- Reinvestment: In addition, the working group suggests that the Special Council recommend that half of the projected savings from this recommendation be reinvested back into communities through a grant program to the counties to support local, evidence-based interventions for these offenders.

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## School Related Offenses

**Recommendation 4:** Require juvenile courts to collect and track data regarding referrals to the juvenile justice system.

- Currently, there is no uniform mechanism for collecting and tracking referrals to the juvenile justice system. As a result, the state is not able to identify which cases result from school related offenses and assess the degree to which school-based incidents and referrals are key drivers into the system.
- This proposal would require the collection and tracking of this data in order to give the state the capacity to make more informed, data-driven decisions that can improve public safety.

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## Evidence Based Programs & Practices

- Recommendation 5: All re-directed funds to the local juvenile courts shall be used for evidence based programs and practices
- Judicial leadership—The local community is situated in the at the best vantage point to determine needs of the youth.

## Target High Risk Offenders

- Recommendation 6: Judges shall assess each and every youth considered for out of home placement (commitment) using a pre-disposition risk & needs assessment tool.
- The judge shall include in the findings and conclusions of the order the reasons for overriding the assessment tool.

Oversight & Implementation

**Georgia Criminal Justice  
Reform Commission**

**CBS EVENING NEWS:  
SECOND CHANCES**