



Reinvesting in Youth

Feasibility Study Report

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Executive Summary

What if instead of sending a chronic juvenile delinquent away for six months to a state juvenile institution, at a cost of \$20,000 or \$25,000 (only to come home with a 50- to 70-percent chance of re-offending), we kept him at home, spent less than \$5,000 working with him and his family over four or five months, and cut the likelihood that he'd re-offend in half?

What if instead of sending an adolescent who chronically commits serious crimes to a group home or youth incarceration facility, we spent just a little more to place her into a specialized foster home for six to nine months, worked with her and coached her parents, and reduced the amount of time she can expect to be incarcerated by 75 days over the next two years?

What if we spent just \$1,500 on video-based parenting skills training and classroom-based social competence training for chronically disobedient elementary school children, and reduced problem behaviors dramatically (by 30 percent or better) in 95 percent of all cases, significantly reducing the number who will be arrested later as juveniles?

You can stop asking "what if." We can do all of these things.¹

The case for reform

These scenarios are possible if juvenile services in Seattle/King County undergo top-to-bottom change, from a system that today funnels most of its public funds into expensive, punitive "deep-end" measures aimed at a handful of youth, to one that tries to stop problems before they start through a combination of "front-end" targeted early intervention, prevention and programming that nurtures happy, stable kids.

Reinvesting in Youth believes the Seattle/King County community today isn't getting a high enough return from its investment in juvenile and youth services. Driven by widespread misperception that juvenile crime is on the rise (it has actually declined since the early '90s), the area directs most of its funds to detention and "after-the-crisis" measures. Nearly 60 percent of non-education, non-health care resources devoted to 12- to 18-year-olds is spent in the juvenile justice system, which serves fewer than 6 percent of the community's youth.²

¹Mendel, Richard A. *Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works - and What Doesn't*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2000

²Buchanan, Chelsea and Diana Dollar. *1998 Youth Services Expenditure and Revenue Financial Analysis for the "Reinvesting in Youth" Feasibility Study*. Seattle, WA: Seattle SafeFutures, September 2000. In 1999, it is estimated that 13,783 unduplicated youth ages 10-21 had some involvement in as offenders with the King County Juvenile Justice system (personal communication from Michael Gedeon, September 2000). Year 2000 population projections for King County show a total of 254,720 youth ages 10-21, resulting in 5.4% of youth have contact with the juvenile court for offender reasons.

The punitive approach not only eats up a lot of money; it fails to deter crime and may even exacerbate it by involving offenders prematurely in the juvenile and even adult justice systems. Minority youth are particularly likely to be detained or receive harsher penalties than their white counterparts.

Fortunately, many new approaches to child and youth behavior - emphasizing early intervention/prevention and measures aimed at building a child's character and resourcefulness - have been developed and proven to work over the past decade. A number of communities nationwide have begun shifting emphasis from the "deep end" to the "front end," with promising results. Prevention does work, if targeted at the right people under the right circumstances.

What it will take

No other region has undertaken reform of the scale and scope proposed under Reinvesting in Youth. In that regard, Seattle/King County is blazing a new trail. The region also lacks the circumstances that traditionally provoke radical change: severe overcrowding at detention facilities, for example, or legislative mandate.

But local political leaders are favorably disposed toward finding a better way. King County has already begun changing how business is conducted in the county's juvenile justice system through the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan process, which has managed to promote justice, protect the public, help youth in trouble make responsible choices - while reducing the current population in the county's detention center. Many children, youth and family initiatives are underway in the region which will both help advance Reinvesting in Youth and benefit from it.

As King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng wrote recently in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, "We can invest in childhood intervention now or pay much more for a criminal justice intervention later."

Contrary to popular belief, the general public also overwhelmingly supports preventive programs for young people. A telephone poll of King County voters conducted by Elway Research, Inc. in August 2000 showed 74 percent of those polled believed after-school programs and early childhood education programs like Head Start would have the biggest impact on reducing youth violence.

Reform is feasible, however, only if the following conditions can be met:

- **Policy:** The use of detention must be preserved for serious and violent offenders and those youth who have a demonstrable risk of flight. At the same time, judges must be provided alternative and effective community-based interventions and responses to misbehavior and truancy. Juvenile cases must move quickly through the court process. Efforts that reduce the

disproportionate treatment of minority youth must be expanded. Outside the courtroom, the many private and public agencies that deal with youth must work together to agree on goals and budgets beyond the current year. The region must also change its funding relationship with the state, to one that provides incentives for local juvenile service reforms and cost savings.

- **Steering committee and coordination:** All private and public entities involved in the effort must be brought together under one coordinating body, to set goals, integrate resources and solve problems. The coordinating body would determine specific desired outcomes, handle oversight and evaluation, generate and invest new resources, and provide continuity over election and budget cycles. It would also engage families, youth and various community stakeholders.
- **Financing:** Reform requires sufficient funding to jump start and maintain the reform effort. While eventually savings on the "deep end" can be reinvested in the "front end," the transition will require temporary investment in both. For illustration purposes only, we suggest the community consider that an amount of \$55 million in "transitional" funding may be needed over the first five years. The actual amount needed and the optimal time frame can only be determined after initial commitments by potential partners and additional analyses have been completed. Agencies must make better use of existing funding, and tap new sources such as philanthropy and federal/state grants. The reform effort also requires changes in budgeting (such as local agencies pooling or integrating portions of their budgets in a collective effort), as well as the funding relationship between the state and the region. Planning must begin immediately on how to sustain or responsibly phase out transitional funding.
- **Program:** Shifting spending toward the "front end" can only occur after ensuring more effective and less expensive options for youth who would otherwise be in detention or other institutional placements. The money must be spent on the right combination of intervention and prevention measures, along with programs that seek to build children's characters and strengthen the community that nurtures them. Finding the right mix requires consideration of goals (saving money, reducing recidivism, etc.), ages, risk levels, effects on minority youth, geographic distribution of services and whether to use local or imported, proven programs.
- **Evaluation:** Everyone involved in the effort needs to know what is working and what needs adjustment. An independent evaluation can measure whether resources are spent differently over time, if agencies are cooperating with each other and if youth are responding to new measures. Shared with the public, evaluation also helps establish credibility for reforms in the community.

Conclusion

Discussion of juvenile crime tends to focus either on public safety or programs that support youth, as though communities must choose between the two. The truth is, the present system fails to fully achieve either. With reform, it can achieve both.

Next steps

Moving forward will require a clear commitment from top elected officials and other community leaders; formation of a Steering Committee to keep the momentum alive, and further analysis and deliberations to craft a detailed implementation strategy.

Introduction

Study grew from new perspectives on local government youth budgets and opportunities

In late 1998 and early 1999, key leaders in the Seattle/King County area began talking about their growing awareness of the self-perpetuating cycle of building more and more detention and prison facilities -- leaving fewer resources to invest in preventive and early interventions for young people or to serve other important community purposes. The looming need for additional juvenile corrections facilities became a driving force in the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP). The JJOMP provided an intense, extended planning process that looked at the juvenile justice and youth-serving systems in King County and Seattle. It brought a spotlight on both problems and opportunities that had been overlooked. During the same time the City of Seattle, with federal support, concluded its strategic planning process for the SafeFutures Initiative. The City engaged the community in juvenile justice planning and focused on programs for hard to reach and/or overlooked youth populations.

The consensus among community leaders and key participants in those two efforts is that the juvenile justice and youth services systems are too heavily weighted toward highly expensive, restrictive interventions, with questionable effectiveness. Those involved in SafeFutures and the JJOMP coalesced around the idea of trying to transform these systems into ones that build on current research and a public view that values preventive and early approaches to avoiding costly outcomes. They wanted to look for smarter, more effective ways to use public resources, while continuing to protect public safety.

Discussions led to consideration of a multi-jurisdictional, public-private effort to transform the juvenile justice and youth serving systems in Seattle/King County - which came to be called Reinvesting in Youth. This was seen as an effort to make deep and lasting changes in policies, practices and approaches that would, over time, move the systems from being predominantly reactive and punitive to putting much more emphasis on assisting young people and their families before they got in trouble.

An unprecedented opportunity

The community leaders were able to describe the broad outlines of new systems that made smarter use of resources and got better results. They quickly embraced the opportunity to find out what it would take to bring about these changes. They acknowledged the potential challenges while seeing an opportunity to do something extraordinary.

The new system would be more preventive, would intervene earlier, would be more oriented towards youth development, positive opportunities and, when warranted, would offer treatment as well as punishment. It would build on individual and community strengths. The new system would reserve the use of secure facilities for the most serious offenders - those who represent a clear threat to the community. In a reformed system, the most expensive, out of home resources would be used less often and for shorter periods of time, and the funds saved, or costs avoided, would be reinvested in additional early, preventive services.

It was understood that the effort under consideration would require more than the addition of juvenile delinquency prevention or youth development programming -- what was under discussion would go well beyond tinkering with the system. Rather, the reforms envisioned would be built on a fundamental re-conceptualization of the juvenile justice system, seeing it as an integral part of a much broader, more integrated, community-owned effort to offer opportunity, support and guidance to youth, while at the same time protecting public safety. The reform envisioned was akin to the reshaping of aging services, in which long-ingrained patterns of institutionalization were replaced with structures, incentives, and funding streams that flipped the focus to earlier intervention and community-based alternatives that are more effective and less expensive.

Scope and methodology of the feasibility study

Recognizing that change of the magnitude suggested was unprecedented, King County Executive Ron Sims and Seattle Mayor Paul Schell officially endorsed a "feasibility study" around these concepts in May 1999. They sought information and ideas about how such a system transformation could work and whether other communities had tackled something similar.

The feasibility study was designed to respond to the following questions for the Seattle/King County area:

- Is it feasible to create and maintain a community-wide system of services that protects public safety, supports the positive development of youth, responds early and appropriately to youth misbehavior, and uses the community's resources well?
- What would it take, in terms of time, resources and actions to make these changes?
- What examples are there of comparable efforts elsewhere and what can be learned from those efforts?

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and Seattle SafeFutures provided funding for the study. A consulting and staff team conducted a financial analysis of current public spending on youth in Seattle/King County; reviewed local and national data, studies and reports; contacted several communities around the country for information about promising approaches and programs; commissioned a telephone survey of King County voters; and conducted interviews with ten key leaders in the community. Seattle Deputy Mayor Tom Byers and Presiding King County Juvenile Court Judge Laura Inveen served as co-chairs of a 40-member Advisory Group convened in March 2000 that has provided guidance for the study. The Advisory Group held four meetings and one half-day work session.

This report contains the authors' findings and recommendations, guided by, but not limited to, the assistance of the Advisory Group and other consultants and staff. The report is not intended as a detailed implementation plan. That type of plan should be the product of the creative interaction of the various levels of government, community voices, the non-profit sector and others working together to improve the well-being of Seattle/King County's youth.

Definition of "detention." In this report, we generally use the term "detention" to refer to the purposes for which youth in King County are confined in a secure juvenile justice facility. These purposes include being held upon arrest pending adjudication, while serving a sentence of 30 days or less, for violation of a sentence condition, and for contempt of court (the latter being the route by which truants, At-Risk Youth and Children in Need of Supervision find themselves in detention). (In some states, detention facilities are used only for holding youth pending a trial.)

How to use this report

The study provides an overview of what's not working well now, an overview of what a new system could look like, and a description of what it would take to change to the desired systems. It provides ideas and examples, as well as an assessment of the feasibility of executing the desired changes.

Readers seeking a general description of Reinvesting in Youth may find all they need in the executive summary. Those who are interested in participating in Reinvesting in Youth may want the depth of data provided in the full report. Readers who are familiar with the broad concepts of Reinvesting in Youth but who want to know more about how a particular component might work can turn to those sections.

Summary of findings

Overall, the authors believe that significant reform of the juvenile justice/youth services system in Seattle/King County is both warranted and achievable. The key success factors will be:

- Exceptional and sustained leadership of elected officials at the highest levels;
- The ability to obtain substantial funding for a transitional period of five to seven years; and
- Common goals and momentum among participants and stakeholders at all levels and of all types.
- Crafting of creative and powerful incentives for all partners.

We did not identify any constraints that would prohibit formation of the desired new system. It is, in a word, feasible.

Other key findings include:

- The juvenile justice/youth service system in King County is too heavily weighted towards expensive, restrictive interventions. As reported here, nearly 60 percent of non-education, non-health care resources devoted to youth ages 12 to 18 is spent in the juvenile justice system, which serves fewer than 6 percent of the community's youth.
- Change is possible, if strong political will is present. Significant changes can occur in the way the community responds to youth crime and other misbehavior, as witness the changes already being made in the use of King County's Juvenile Detention Center as a result of JJOMP work.
- Many political leaders in King County have signaled strong receptivity and support for the concepts of Reinvesting in Youth.

- Substantial research exists to support the idea that preventive approaches have positive, sustained impacts on children and youth and result in more productive behavior and reduced community costs.
- Communities comparable to Seattle/King County have successfully created inter-governmental and public-private partnerships to guide ambitious community change efforts targeted to children, youth and families.
- Communities nationwide are successfully implementing various components of the Reinvesting in Youth approach, although we did not find any community that was attempting anything of the scope and scale of Reinvesting in Youth. In that regard we are blazing a new trail.
- There is a need for a significant infusion of "transitional funds" to underwrite the costs of transforming the juvenile justice and youth serving systems.
- By a wide margin, King County voters support prevention efforts as the most effective way to reduce youth violence. They strongly believe these investments will avoid greater expenditures later on.

Chapter One:

Why Reform our Juvenile Justice and Youth-Serving Systems?

The underlying case for reform is the belief that the Seattle/King County community does not now get its money's worth for the investments it makes in youth. Too much of its public and private resources are devoted to expensive, restrictive, punitive interventions which neither protect public safety nor improve the lives of youth.

Despite the growing evidence that prevention works, despite public support for working with youth early to avoid problems later on, and despite lowered crime rates, most communities (including King County and Washington State) currently spend a disproportionate share of their resources on punishment and misguided efforts to "get the youth's attention" by harshly responding to criminal and non-criminal misbehavior.

We are spending astronomical amounts on a few young people, often too late to do much good. We are failing to take advantage of opportunities to spend a small amount on a large number of youth - at a point in their development where they and the community would reap tremendous benefits. Among the most visible and profound impacts of the reforms suggested here would be that the community shift expenditures from a too heavy dependence on after-the-fact measures to a more balanced portfolio of investments that stressed prevention.

Misperceptions about the prevalence of youth crime and violence

The current system has come about during a time when public debate about youth crime is often characterized by

- Assumptions that youth crime is on the rise.
- A media influence which tilts towards the sensational and negative.
- A political climate that suggests a "tough on crime" stance is popular.

In fact

- Youth crime has declined since the early 1990s.
- Public perception is not nearly so uninformed and punitive as some would suggest. Recent public opinion surveys, in fact, show overwhelming support for preventive approaches.
- The local political climate appears to support reform efforts.

The trend

A dramatic spike in youth violence in the late 1980s and early 1990s sounded alarm bells throughout the country. Detention facilities received more youth and more violent youth. Almost every state enacted legislation in the 1990s providing for increased punishment, resulting in more youth being transferred to the adult criminal justice system, or including juvenile convictions in adult "three strikes" laws.

Washington State in many ways followed the national trend of enacting laws designed to get tough on youth violence. Legislation enacted in 1994 transferred jurisdiction of 16- and 17-year-old youth charged with certain violent felonies to adult courts. In 1997, the State Legislature increased the range of offenses warranting transfer to adult courts and placement in adult correctional facilities. By this time, crime rates in Washington for juveniles were falling. The average daily population in state juvenile institutions increased by about 60 percent from 1990 to 1996. The rate of population growth in state juvenile institutions was four times greater than the state's juvenile (ages 10-17) population growth.³

The explosion in legislation was followed by a similar explosion in media coverage of juvenile crime. Crime jumped from sixth place among all issues on national TV news shows in 1991, to take first place in 1993, 1994, 1995, and 1997.⁴ Highly publicized and tragic events like the shootings at Columbine dominated community discussion.

In 1999 two-thirds of the public believed that juvenile crime was still rising.⁵

The truth

In fact, rates of violent crime, property crime, and overall index crimes in the United States have decreased every year since 1991. The rates of youth crime have also declined every year since 1993.

The causes of this crime rate drop are hotly debated. Cities like San Francisco (with a violent crime drop of 33 percent since 1995), which has focused crime control efforts on community involvement and diversion has seen a greater reduction of crime than New York City (violent crime reduction of 26 percent since 1995) - which attributes its crime rate drop to great law enforcement and

³Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, 1997. 1997 Juvenile Justice Report, Office of Juvenile Justice, Olympia, WA.

⁴Mendel, Richard A. Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works - and What Doesn't. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2000, citing False Images: The News Media and Juvenile Crime (1997 Annual Report), Washington DC: Coalition for Juvenile Justice, 1997, pp. 13-14.

⁵Mendel, supra, citing Schiraldi, Vincent, "Juvenile Crime is Decreasing - It's Media Coverage That's Soaring," Los Angeles Times, November 23, 1999.

getting tough on petty crimes to send a "no-tolerance" message. San Francisco has reduced its arrests, prosecutions and resultant incarceration rates while besting New York's violent crime reduction rate. No one can say for sure what is causing the decline in numbers, according to Dan Macallair of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice.⁶ Other theories range from the decline in the crack cocaine epidemic to the availability of abortions for women who believe they are not ready or able to adequately parent a child.

Whatever the reason for the drop, however, this much is certain: The "epidemic" in youth crime, which has spurred an explosion in legislation and media coverage, simply doesn't exist.

Juvenile Crime: The National Data

- Even at the height of the juvenile crime wave in the early 1990's, only about 5 percent of juveniles ages 10-17 were arrested each year, and less than 10 percent of these youth arrests were for violent offenses. Thus, fewer than one-half of one-percent of all youth were arrested in connection with a violent offense in any year.⁷
- By 1999, the juvenile homicide rate had declined by 68 percent from its 1993 high, bringing the rate to its lowest level since 1966.⁸
- The combined rates for all serious violent offenses (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) declined 32 percent from 1994-1998 for youth ages 15-17 and 27 percent for young people 14 and under.⁹
- At every stage of the juvenile justice process, minority youth - and African American youth in particular - are treated more harshly than white youth. African American youth constitute only 15 percent of the U.S. population ages 10 to 17, but they account for 26 percent of juvenile arrests nationwide and 45 percent of all youth held in juvenile detention.¹⁰

⁶Quoted in Cockburn, Alexander. "How can crime rate drop in a more-violent society," The Seattle Times, January 20, 2000.

⁷Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report. Pittsburgh, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice, 1999, n. 70, p. 51.

⁸ Sniffen, Michael J. " Teen murder rate drops, hits 33-year low," Seattle Times, 12-15-2000, p. A8.

⁹Mendel, Richard A. Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works - and What Doesn't. Washington DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2000, p. 31.

¹⁰Juvenile Offenders and Victims, supra, n. 70, p. 192.

Juvenile Crime: The Local Data

- After rises in the early 1990s, juvenile crime rates began falling in 1993-94. The crime rate in 1999 was at the lowest level in more than a decade. Yet, the average daily population in the county's juvenile detention facility rose from 119 in 1993 to 199 in 1998 - largely due to a gradual increase in the average length of stay in detention and an increase in use of detention for "Becca youth" (truants, At-Risk Youth and Children in Need of Services).¹¹
- In 1998, the juvenile violent offense arrest rate in Washington remained at a notably low rate, and is the next to lowest rate reported since 1984.¹²
- The population of youth in state Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration programs grew from approximately 750 in 1989 to almost 1,400 in 1997. In the last two years, JRA's population has stopped increasing and has decreased.¹³
- The vast majority of youth in King County are arrested and referred to Juvenile Court for property offenses. In 1996, only 5.1 percent of juveniles were arrested for Part I violent crimes (murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault).¹⁴

Public opinion and voter support extremely favorable towards prevention

One reason often cited for failing to invest more heavily in child and youth development, prevention and intervention is that the public strongly favors "get tough" policies over these types of expenditures. Local and national polling shows the contrary. Despite being battered with media images of violent youth, the public remains well disposed toward preventive policies for young people.

A telephone poll of King County voters conducted by Elway Research, Inc.¹⁵ on August 24-27, 2000 yielded the following results:

¹¹Christopher Murray and Associates. King County Phase II Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan. Seattle, WA, 2000.

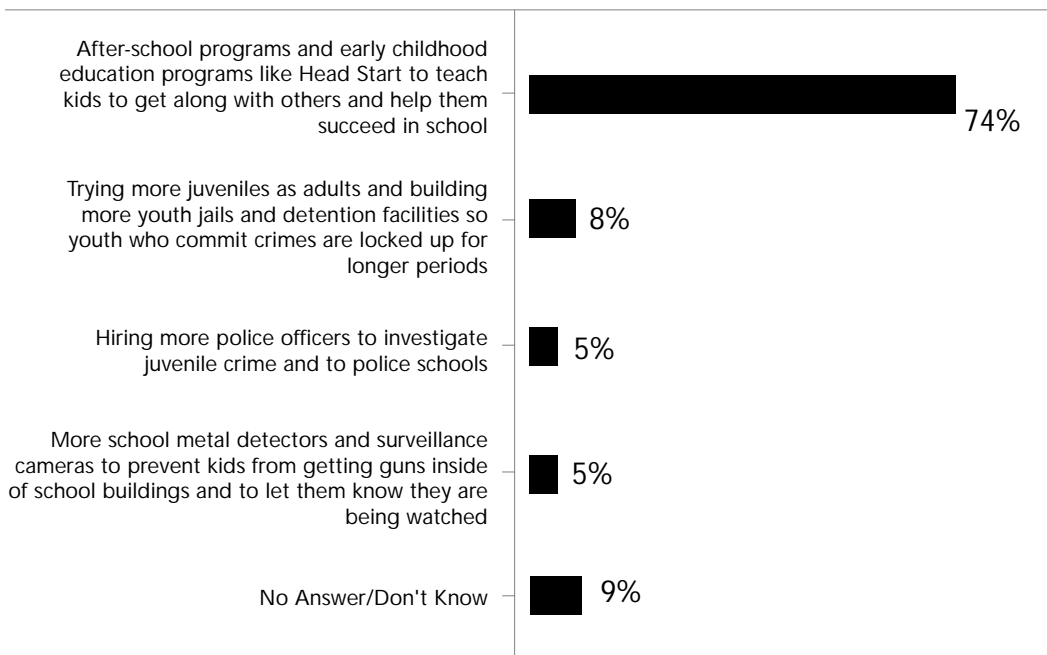
¹²Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. 1999 Juvenile Justice Report. Olympia, WA, 2000, p. xiii.

¹³1999 Juvenile Justice Report, supra, p.211.

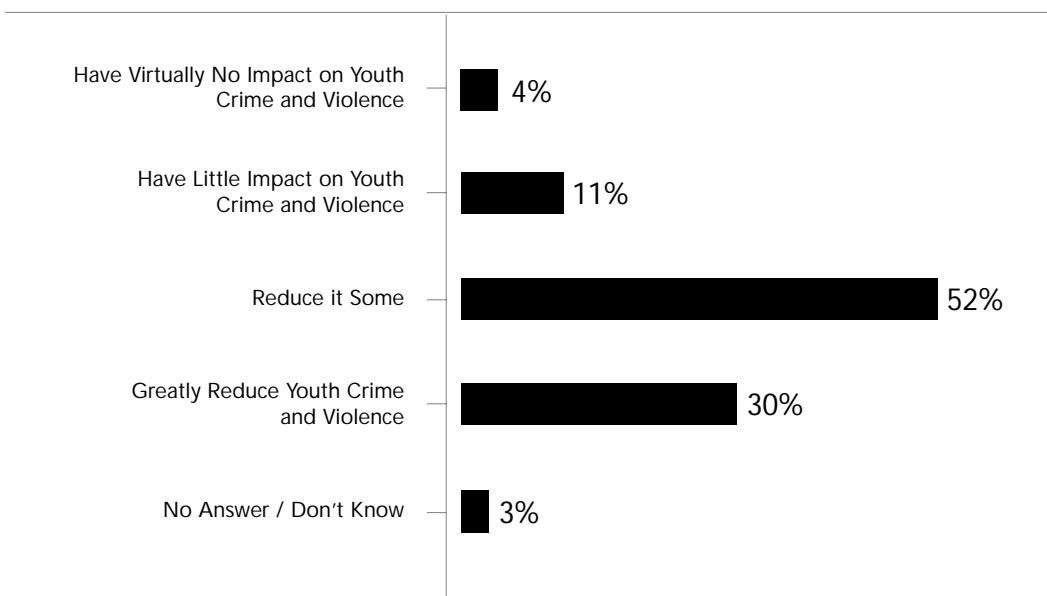
¹⁴Christopher Murray and Associates. King County Phase I Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan. Seattle, WA, 1998.

¹⁵Questions used in the poll were originally developed by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids and were used and modified slightly for the King County poll.

In your opinion, which one of these strategies would ultimately have the biggest impact in reducing youth violence both in and out of schools?

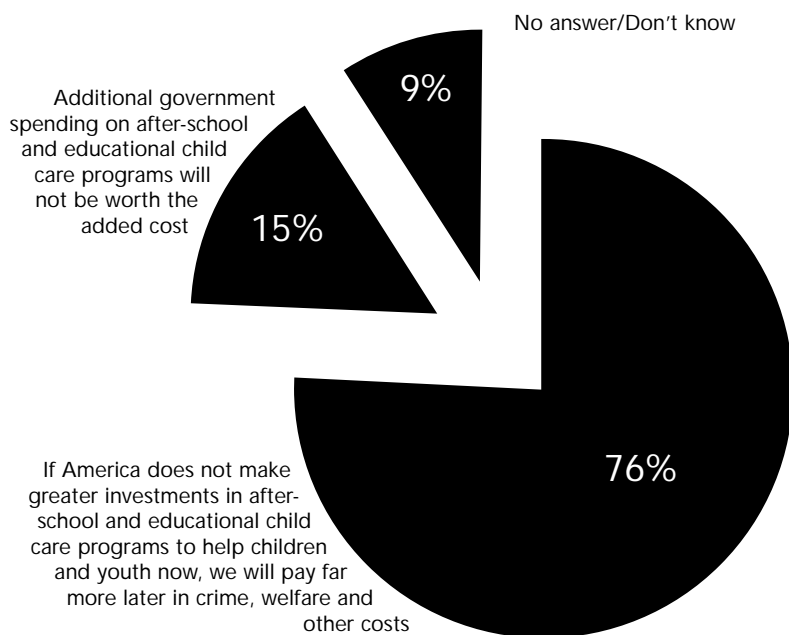


In your opinion, would expanding after-school programs and educational childcare programs like Head Start ...



These questions were written and paid for by the Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study Program, for which the City of Seattle Human Services Dept. is the fiscal agent. The sample consists of 400 registered voters in King County contacted between August 24-27, 2000. The margin of sampling error is +/-5%

Which of these statements comes closer to your view?



These questions were written and paid for by the Reinvesting in Youth Feasibility Study Program, for which the City of Seattle Human Services Dept. is the fiscal agent. The sample consists of 400 registered voters in King County contacted between August 24-27, 2000. The margin of sampling error is +/-5%

Regardless of whether they identified themselves as Republicans or Democrats, voters said they support the value of preventive programs, including after-school programs and early childhood education such as Head Start. Results of the polling of King County voters are generally consistent with a national survey of adults and a national and three statewide surveys of law enforcement leaders conducted by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national anti-crime organization of criminal justice leaders.

“ . . Policing and prosecution alone leave us stuck on a treadmill, with more kids becoming criminals to replace those we lock up.

The most powerful weapons in our anti-crime arsenal are the investments in children and youth that get them off to the right start and help them grow up with the skills and moral values to be good citizens instead of criminals . . . ”

- Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a national anti-crime organization led by more than 1,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, police association presidents, prosecutors, and survivors of violent crime

Local political climate is favorable

While state legislators have churned out more "get-tough" juvenile justice measures, elected officials in the Seattle/King County area have expressed strong support for investing in preventive and early intervention approaches as important ways to reduce youth violence and crime and protect public safety. Perhaps most notable was the commitment of King County Executive Ron Sims to avoid the cost of constructing and operating a major new juvenile detention facility, and the ways in which that commitment resulting in rethinking how business is conducted in the county's juvenile justice system. Through the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan process, many elected officials and community leaders found new ways to promote justice, protect the public, help youth in trouble make responsible choices - while reducing the current population in the county's detention center.

"I consider increasing juvenile prevention and intervention programs to be a wise investment in our youth and families – we can spend a little more now or spend a lot more later. Investing in well-targeted, proven prevention and intervention programs before children establish serious patterns of destructive or unlawful behavior eventually will save money in the juvenile and adult justice systems and build happier, more productive families and communities. By working in partnership, we can have a tremendous positive impact."

- Ron Sims, King County Executive

The legislation accepting the JJOMP recommendations contained this significant language -- and passage of the ordinance was accompanied by the support of an early skeptic:

". . . It is the policy of King County to emphasize prevention, intervention, and alternatives to the use of secure detention for juvenile offenders.

. . . The prevention of juvenile crime, and the intervention to ensure that juvenile offenders do not commit new crimes, is a much more effective and economical use of resources than building secure detention facilities."

- The King County Council, in its unanimous approval of Phase II of the Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (King County Ordinance 13916)

"Somewhat to my surprise, I'll be voting enthusiastically yes," Councilman Chris Vance (R-Auburn) said just before the vote [on King County's Juvenile Justice Operations Master Plan]. To Vance, the plan once seemed like risky, feel-good-liberal nonsense. He doubted experts who argued that the county could save money and discourage crime by locking fewer young people in its Juvenile Detention Center. Some doubts lingered Monday. "Is it risky? Yes," Vance said. "But what we're doing now as a society isn't working."

- David Quigg, The New Tribune. "County OKs New Juvenile System," August 8, 2000.

Other local elected officials expressed similar views:

"Raising our kids to a healthy, productive adulthood is the single most important job we have as a society. It begins at the beginning, with providing the support and guidance our youth need to find a positive role in the world. The expense is so much less early on than the cost of crime, incarceration, anger and despair. And the rewards to the community are so much greater."

- Paul Schell, Mayor of Seattle

"Police officers on the front lines in the fight against crime work every day to make sure dangerous criminals are behind bars. But by the time we do that, people have already been hurt. We have to start at the front end, and that means investing in early childhood development and youth programs that help kids get the right start in life so they never become involved in violence. We need to invest in America's most vulnerable kids, so they'll never become America's Most Wanted adults."

- Gil Kerlikowske, Chief, Seattle Police Department

"We can invest in childhood intervention now or pay much more for a criminal justice intervention later."

- King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng op-ed, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, August 23, 2000

The ten key informants interviewed for this project (see Appendix A for list of persons interviewed) stated a very high level of support, while acknowledging many challenges.

Some current spending is misdirected

Perhaps as a result of widespread misperceptions about juvenile crime, most funds spent on youth in King County are poured into expensive, punitive "anti-crime" measures addressed to a handful of young people. Moreover, for all the money spent on them, some of these measures may be ineffective to curb juvenile crime and may even exacerbate it.

Where the money goes

The Reinvesting in Youth feasibility study began with a financial analysis to examine how funds are spent within the youth services continuum of care. The feasibility study team attempted to gather financial data on all youth services for King County youth provided by the City of Seattle, King County, and State of Washington in Fiscal Year 1998 within certain parameters. We focused on all youth ages 12 to 18, not just "high risk" youth. Income support or welfare (TANF), public education, general Medicaid services, and general health care are not included.

Over a year was spent gathering and analyzing this data. Creating a "youth budget" required surveying jurisdictions and departments with widely differing ways of keeping their data. While precedents for a "youth budget" exist, and programmatic fiscal analyses like these have been undertaken in various parts of the nation, creation of such a budget is not a standardized process, and is a complex undertaking.

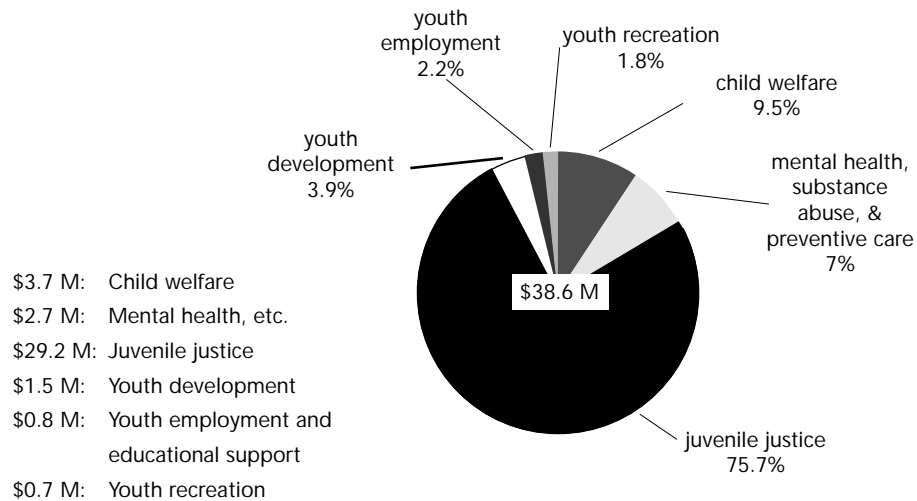
Once the basic data was collected, the study turned to the categorization of spending according to "function" and "investment continuum level," based on programs' goal or mission. The functional categories were designed to give a picture of type of services provided, i.e., recreation and juvenile justice. The investment continuum categories were designed to give a sense of spending on "front-end" through "deep-end" services-- "front-end," meaning actions that build strengths or prevent problems vs. "deep-end," meaning addressing problems during crisis or after all other options have failed. (See Appendix B for a detailed description of categories used.) These categories provide a better understanding of how services are directed to King County youth, a perspective that is often lost when spending is presented on a department-to-department basis.

This analysis cannot, and does not, attempt to provide an exact account of every dollar expended on youth services. The objective was to provide a reasonable estimation of funds spent on youth - one sufficient for purposes of the feasibility study.¹⁶

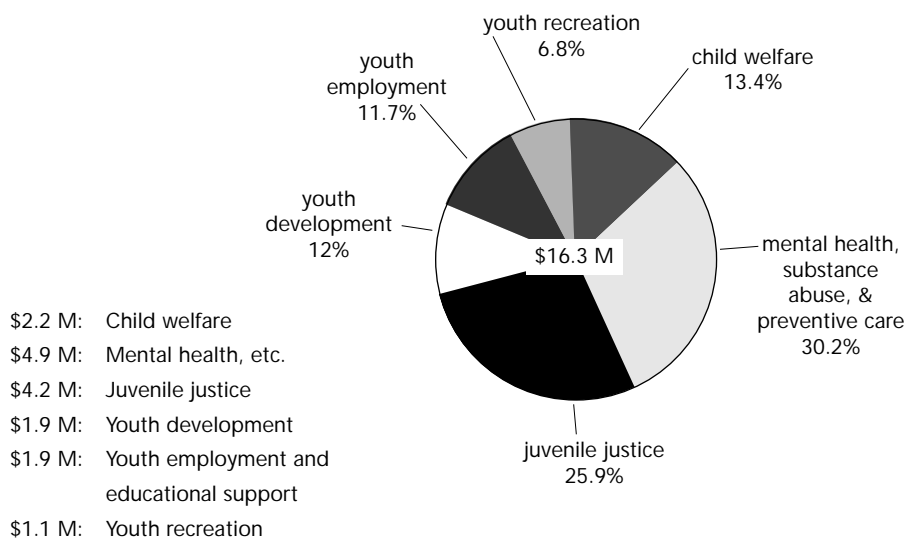
¹⁶Buchanan, Chelsea and Diana Dollar. 1998 Youth Services Expenditure and Revenue Financial Analysis for the "Reinvesting in Youth" Feasibility Study. Seattle, WA: Seattle SafeFutures, September 2000.

The analysis of 1998 youth expenditures for youth ages 12 to 18 by function yielded these results:¹⁷

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Function King County (County Funds Only)

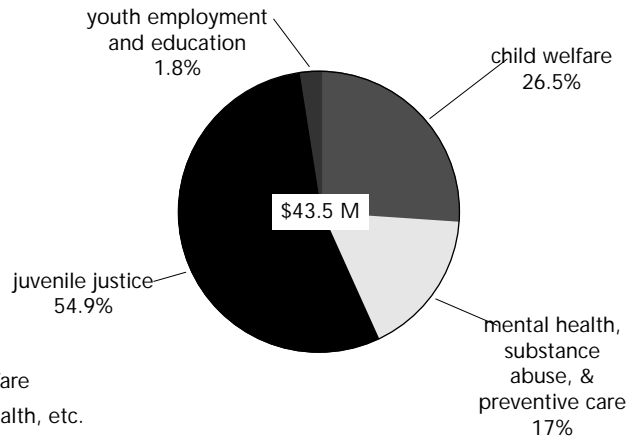


1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Function City of Seattle (City Funds Only)



¹⁷Buchanan, supra.

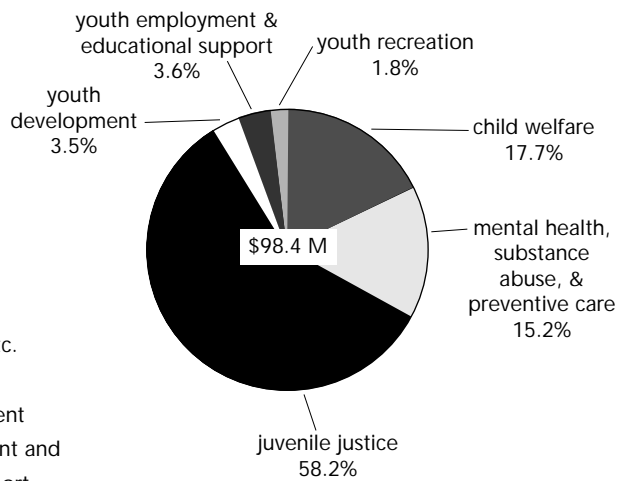
1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Function State of Washington (\$ for King County Youth)*



- \$11.5 M: Child welfare
- \$7.3 M: Mental health, etc.
- \$23.9 M: Juvenile justice
- \$0.8 M: Youth employment and educational support

* State may include some Federal Funds

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Function Total for Seattle, King County, State*

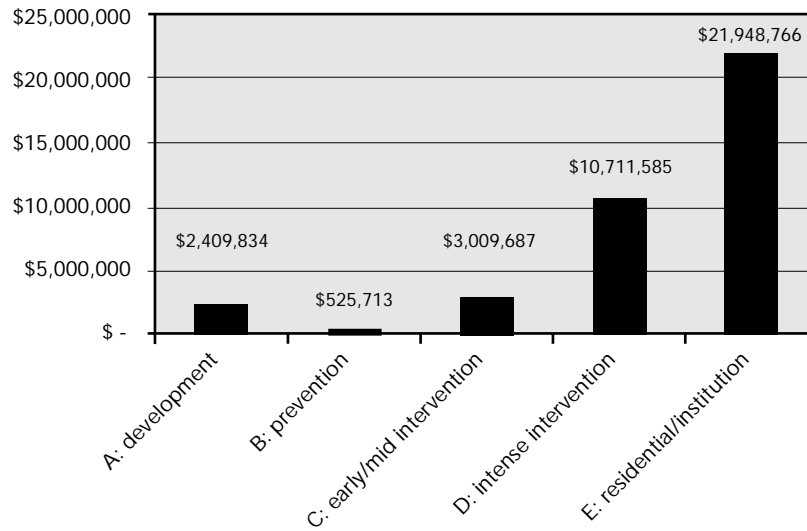


- \$17.4 M: Child welfare
- \$14.9 M: Mental health, etc.
- \$57.3 M: Juvenile justice
- \$3.4 M: Youth development
- \$3.5 M: Youth employment and educational support
- \$1.8 M: Youth recreation

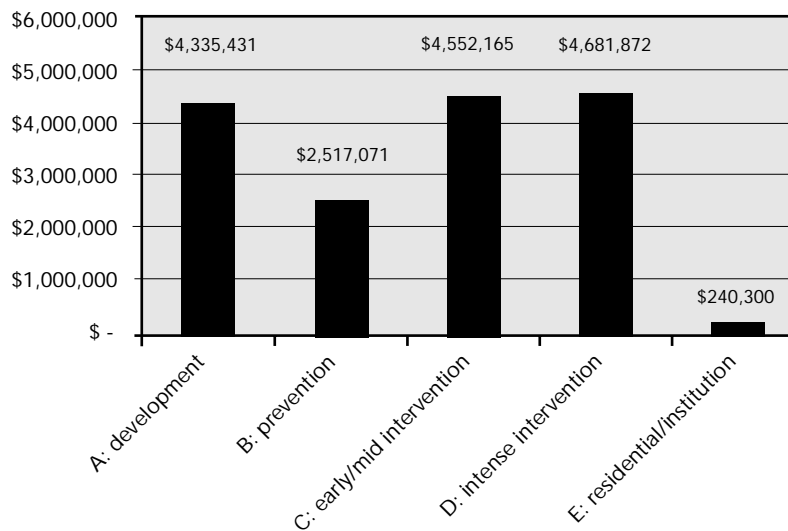
* City Funds Only + County Funds Only + State Funds
 (State may include some Federal Funds)

The analysis of 1998 youth expenditures for youth ages 12 to 18 by investment continuum levels yielded these results:¹⁸

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Investment Level
King County (County Funds Only)

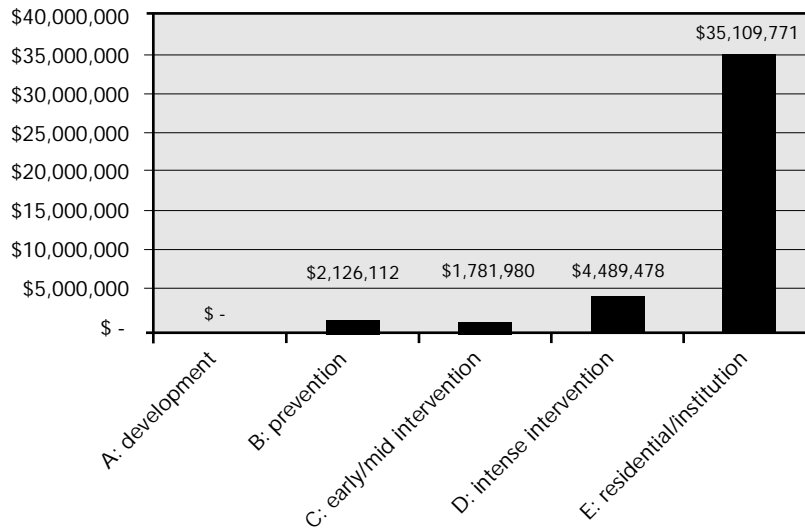


1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Investment Level
City of Seattle (City Funds Only)



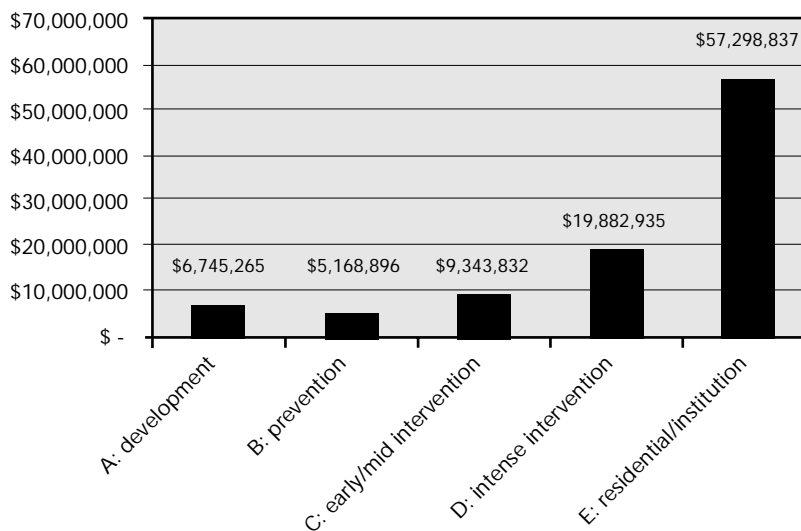
¹⁸Buchanan, supra.

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Investment Level State of Washington (\$ for King County Youth)*



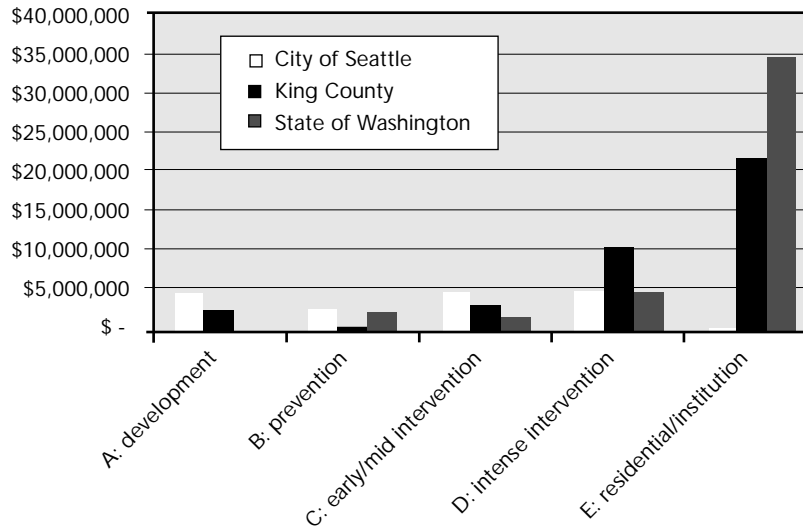
*State may include some Federal Funds

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Investment Level City of Seattle, King County, State*



* City Funds Only + County Funds Only + State Funds
(State may include some Federal Funds)

1998 Youth Services Expenditures By Investment Level Total for Seattle, King County, State*



* City Funds Only + County Funds Only + State Funds (State may include some Federal Funds)

The bottom line on these expenditure reports is that they bear out and document what many feared at the outset: public expenditures on youth are heavily tipped towards the "back-end" of the system, with nearly 60 percent of the community's resources spent in the juvenile justice system, for less than 6 percent of the youth.¹⁹

Rough estimates of additional youth expenditures. In addition to the detailed analysis of public funding, the study team also attempted to do a very rough estimate of the amount of other types of youth expenditures in King County that fit within the study parameters. These ballpark estimates indicated that suburban cities spend at least \$2 million a year;²⁰ that United Way allocates in the neighborhood of \$5 million a year;²¹ that individuals give around \$30,000,000;²² and that Washington State based foundations give around \$2.3 million a year²³ for King County youth ages 12 to 18 within the selected categories.

¹⁹In 1999, it is estimated that 13,783 unduplicated youth ages 10-21 had some involvement in as offenders with the King County Juvenile Justice system (personal communication from Michael Gedeon, September 2000). Year 2000 population projections for King County show a total of 254,720 youth ages 10-21, resulting in 5.4% of youth have contact with the juvenile court for offender reasons.

²⁰From various documents generated during the Regional Governance and Finance discussions among local governments in King County in 1997 and 1998; only partial data on youth expenditures was available.

²¹Rough estimation based on United Way of King County Agency Outcomes Strategies Report for fiscal year July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999.

²²Based on data on national household giving by amount and type of charity, applied to the number of King County households in 1998. National household giving data from Independent Sector: Giving and Volunteering in the United States, Findings from a National Survey, 1999.

Expensive measures overused

It is essential that truly dangerous youth be dealt with in ways that protect public safety, including being held in secure facilities. Determining which youth are truly dangerous involves objective assessments that rely on factors that prior research has shown to be correlated with the risk a youth poses. Those factors include the seriousness of the current offense, past record of offenses, whether the youth is currently on probation or has other cases pending, and prior experience in complying with court orders. These variables are given weighted values, with great weight given to whether current and past offenses have been violent or involve use of a weapon.²⁴

Many youth who have been sent to detention (both while awaiting trial and after being found guilty) are not dangerous. Some youth in detention have not even committed offenses - they are sent there because of family conflicts, truancy or because they need services.

Locking kids up may lead to more crime

Apart from being expensive, the overuse of detention and other harsh "deep-end" measures may create more dangers than they prevent.

For example, a recent study by researchers Donna Bishop and Charles Frazier showed that youths tried as adults, after serving their sentences, were rearrested twice as quickly and a third more frequently as compared to youths with similar backgrounds who were retained in the juvenile justice system. Of those who committed new crimes, the youth who had previously been tried as adults committed serious crimes at double the rate of those sent to juvenile court.²⁵

"Researcher Dr. Paul Gendreau in speaking to the (Ohio) Governor's Juvenile Crime Summit reminded leaders that attempting to solve most juvenile delinquency problems with the use of expensive incarceration is ineffective: 'On average, incarceration increases recidivism by about 4%. . . We also have data indicating that lower risk offenders are more adversely affected by prison.' We in Ohio needed to realize that we were investing hundreds of thousands of dollars in a process that could turn minor delinquents into criminals."

- Carol Rapp Zimmerman, Assistant Director,
Ohio Dept. of Youth Services RECLAIM Ohio Initiative

²³The Washington Foundation DataBook, April 2000, custom search October 26, 2000.

²⁴Annie E. Casey Foundation. "Controlling the Front Gates," Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform.

²⁵Juvenile Policy Institute, January 2000.

Findings from an analysis examining the effectiveness of delinquency outcome studies revealed that the best "treatment" programs showed the ability to reduce recidivism in the range of 10 to 20 percentage points compared to similar youth in a control group. "Treatment" included programs that provided some intervention or treatment that had as its aim the reduction, prevention, treatment, or remediation of delinquency. Treatment in public facilities, custodial institutions, and in the juvenile justice system were less effective than other alternatives - suggesting that treatment provided in community settings may be more effective. Programs emphasizing deterrence (those with a primary purpose of deterring the offender through sufficiently repugnant punishments, such as Scared Straight, short periods of incarceration to "shock" offenders into abandoning criminal activity, etc.) were estimated to increase recidivism.²⁶

The trends are also evident at the local level. As part of the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Planning process, a recidivism analysis was conducted on the 19,471 youth born between July 1, 1978 and June 30, 1981 who came in contact with the King County juvenile justice system before they turned 18. Not surprisingly, the more seriously a youth becomes involved with the juvenile justice system, the more likely it is that he or she will re-enter the system. The probability and frequency of additional referrals increases for youth who are convicted and for those who are admitted to detention. Of youth who had one conviction, 52.9 percent re-entered the juvenile justice system and accumulated an additional average of 2.57 convictions before reaching age 18. Of youth who were admitted to detention, 61.8 percent re-entered the system and accumulated an additional average of 3.13 convictions.²⁷

The use of new research and best practices for community-based interventions can lead to both a reduction in future criminal behavior and the overall number of youth in detention.

Youth of color disproportionately represented in juvenile justice system

A disproportionate number of minority youth are held in secure detention nationwide. The disproportionate confinement of minorities results from the complex interplay of many factors - some that occur long before a youth reaches the juvenile justice system. A report soon to be delivered to the Washington State Legislature asserts that youth of color disproportionately commit more crimes, although this does not account for all disproportionality problems.²⁸

²⁶Lipsey, Mark. Juvenile delinquency treatment: a meta-analytic inquiry into the variability of effects. In T. Cook, et al. (Eds.). Meta-analysis for explanation: a casebook. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992.

²⁷Christopher Murray and Associates. King County Phase II Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan Appendices, Appendix H: Juvenile Recidivism in King County, Seattle WA, 2000.

²⁸Hon. Laura Inveen, King County Superior Court, Juvenile Court Presiding Judge, personal correspondence, November 20, 2000.

Once a youth of color enters the juvenile justice system, disproportionality increases as a result of cumulative consequences of individual attitudes and decisions made at each point in the juvenile justice process - from the practices of police officers who make the first decision about releasing kids or presenting them to a detention center, to the assessments of probation officers, judges, and others who determine the risks posed by youth.²⁹ Large segments of minority communities feel disenfranchised by and distrust the justice system.

King County experiences racial disproportionality in its juvenile justice system, consistent with the experience of other areas around the country. In 1998, detention rates for all youth in King County were 27 per 1,000. For African-American youth, the detention rate was 132 per 1,000, while for white youth it was only 15.69 per 1,000. For all other youth, the rate was 35.48 per 1,000.³⁰ In 1998, African-American youth were 7.4 percent of the county population ages 10-17, but represented 22.7 percent of the youth referred to the prosecutor and 34.2 percent of the youth admitted to detention. In addition to higher admission rates, the average length of stay in detention is somewhat longer for youth of color, which increases their concentration in detention.

There is no clear consensus among researchers or others about the factors which contribute to disproportionality. As shown below, the range of factors that may come into play in communities around the country includes both those that may be attributed to bias and those that arise from other types of circumstances.

A number of initiatives are underway in King County to reduce disproportionality. Among them are:

- **Building Blocks:** King County is one of two sites in the country selected by the Youth Law Center in San Francisco for development, in conjunction with many community partners, of an in-depth understanding of what factors influence decisions to arrest youth or intervene initially and what happens afterwards.
- **Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan:** This plan places a high priority on addressing disproportionality in King County juvenile justice policies and programs.
- **Youth Disproportionality Subcommittee of Regional Law, Justice and Safety Committee:** This regional group created a youth disproportionality subcommittee in 2000, which has commissioned a study to determine how to improve the county's data collection on racial statistics to allow monitoring of performance.

²⁹The Annie E. Casey Foundation. "Juvenile Jailhouse Rocked," Advocasey, Winter 2000.

³⁰King County Department of Youth Services. 1998 Detentions by Health Planning Area and Race - Age 10-17. Data produced by request.

³¹Christopher Murray and Associates. King County Phase II Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan Appendices, Appendix I: Racial Disproportionality, Seattle, WA, 2000.

- Objective Detention Screening Standards: In March 1999, the King County Superior Court approved amended juvenile detention screening standards based on objective criteria.
- Outreach to and Services for Specific Ethnic Communities and for those for whom English is a Second Language: A variety of programs and approaches have been implemented to support youth and families from diverse cultures.

Many of these efforts are still in the early stages. Their importance is great: disproportionate detention of youth of color not only potentially contributes to the overall number of youth in costly detention settings who don't need to be there, but raises serious questions of real or perceived racial bias and fairness. Much remains to be learned and examined.

Factors Identified as Contributing to Disproportionality in Communities around the Country

Note: Numbers in parentheses refer to sources, which are listed in Appendix C.

- The ability or inability to avoid apprehension and arrest, leading to disproportionate referral of youth of color to the juvenile justice system. (4) (9)
- The availability of parental and legal support, leading to disproportionate detainment prior to adjudication. (4) (9) (10) (11)
- General demeanor of the juvenile. (9)
- Youth of color who are detained prior to adjudication are more likely than others to be charged with crimes. (1)
- Lower rates for youth of color than for white youth for diversion from criminal prosecution. (1)
- Poor school attendance is related to increased risk of detention. Courts may be detaining youth in a manner that inadvertently discriminates against youth doing poorly in school, a large proportion of whom may be youth of color. (4)
- Individual officer discretion and command discretion in the deployment of officers may contribute to differential rates of minority referral and arrest, above and beyond minority involvement in crime. (5) (12)
- Probation officers consistently portray black youths differently than white youths in their written court reports, more frequently attributing blacks' delinquency to negative attitudinal and personality traits. These attributions about youth shape assessments of the threat of future crime and sentence recommendations. (3)

- Few courts are examining formal and informal court rules and prosecutorial policies that previous research has shown to cause overrepresentation of youth of color in juvenile courts. (5)
- The minority threat to the hegemony of whites is likely to be greatest where the minority population is large. Thus, nonwhites will also experience especially high rates of imprisonment in areas where the percentage of minorities is highest. (6)
- Since 1980, the "war on drugs" has been the most significant factor contributing to the rise of the prison population and of the increased proportion of African Americans in prison. Most observers believe that this reflects both law enforcement priorities and the limited treatment resources available in many low-income communities. From 1985 to 1995, drug offenses accounted for 42% of the rise in the black prison population, compared to 26% for whites. (13)
- Though estimated to be only 15 percent of the drug-using population, blacks are 41 percent of those arrested on drug charges. Many experts blame it on the drug war's emphasis - the streets of the inner cities. (12)
- While there is no evidence that the enactment of mandatory minimum sentences was necessarily motivated by racial bias, in practice they have resulted in the imprisonment of more minorities, at least some of whom would have been appropriate candidates for a non-incarcerative sanctions under a different sentencing structure. (14)

A better way

Discussion of juvenile crime tends to focus either on public safety or programs that support youth, as though communities must choose between the two. The truth is, an optimal system achieves both.

Rather than seeing sharp divisions between the juvenile justice field and other systems that touch and shape adolescents - education, health, social services - we see value in conceptually and operationally linking and melding these fields and the programs they offer youth. In our view public safety is far more than catching criminals and locking them up. Rather, it is about reducing crime and victimization through increasing pro-social behavior. Seen through a new lens, recreation, education and work opportunities are all part of assuring public safety. Public safety is a job for many people and many systems, in addition to law enforcement. The programs described below illustrate the blending of disciplines and the resulting broad range of positive outcomes.

The Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentoring Program

The Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring program has demonstrated the ability to reduce many of the risk factors for bad outcomes for kids - by using the asset/protective factor of having a constant caring adult in the life of a kid. Compared to similar youth who did not have a Big Brother or Big Sister, youth in the program were:³²

- 46 percent less likely to initiate drug use (for minority youth, 70 percent less likely than other similar minority youth)
- 27 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use
- 32 percent less likely to hit someone
- 52 percent less likely to skip school
- 37 percent less likely to lie to a parent
- Showing small improvements in grades and scholastic competence

These results are also notable for that fact that mentors are not trained, paid professional staff.

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care Center

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) is a cost effective alternative to group or residential treatment, incarceration, and hospitalization for adolescents who have problems with chronic antisocial behavior, emotional disturbance, and delinquency. Community families are recruited, trained, and closely supervised to provide MTFC-placed adolescents with treatment and intensive supervision at home, in school, and in the community.³³

Targets: Teens with histories of chronic and severe criminal behavior at risk of incarceration.

Family therapy is provided for the youth's biological (or adoptive) family, with the ultimate goal of returning the youth back to the home. The parents are taught to use the structured system that is being used in the MTFC home.

Evaluations of MTFC have demonstrated that program youth compared to control group youth:

- Spent 60% fewer days incarcerated at 12 month follow-up;
- Had significantly fewer subsequent arrests;
- Had significantly less hard drug use in the follow-up period; and
- Quicker community placement from more restrictive settings (e.g., hospital, detention).

³²Tierney, Joseph et al. Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Executive Summary. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures, 1995.

³³Chamberlain, P., & Mihalic, S.F. (1998). Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Book Eight: Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.

Chapter Two: What A New System Could Look Like

A journey to the state-of-the-art in delinquency prevention and treatment

What if we could take a chronic juvenile delinquent - a kid who has been arrested five, six, ten times - and rather than sending him away for six months to juvenile incarceration facility for \$20,000 or \$25,000 (only to come home with a 50- to 70-percent chance of re-offending), instead keep him at home, spend less than \$5,000 working with him and his family over four or five months, and cut the likelihood that he'll re-offend in half?

What if we could take a chronic delinquent who commits serious crimes and is just too unmanageable to stay with her parents, and rather than sending her to a group home or youth juvenile institution, instead spent just a little more to place her into a specialized foster home for six to nine months, work with the child and coach her parents, and reduce the amount of time she can expect to be incarcerated by 75 days over the next two years?

What if we could spent just \$1,500 on a two-pronged program for chronically disobedient elementary school children - video-based parenting skills training and classroom-based social competence training for the child - and reduce problem behaviors dramatically (by 30 percent or better) in 95 percent of all cases, significantly reducing the number who will be arrested later as juveniles?

Well, you can stop asking "what if." We can do all of these things.³⁴

A different approach

In the last five to ten years, our knowledge about what works and why in reducing youth crime and violence and other bad outcomes has increased tremendously. We have significantly broadened our knowledge about the underlying causes of crime as well as of the developmental pathways leading to delinquency and crime. In addition, we have developed, field-tested, and validated several strategies that markedly improve success in reducing delinquent behavior - both lowering recidivism rates of adolescent offenders and preventing youth from engaging in delinquent behavior. We have identified a set of empirically proven best practices to guide delinquency prevention and juvenile justice systems.³⁵

³⁴Mendel, Richard A. *Less Hype, More Help: Reducing Juvenile Crime, What Works - and What Doesn't*. Washington DC: American Youth Policy Forum, 2000.

³⁵ibid.

In part, the new approach means using a more effective combination of support, treatment and sanctions when young people do get into trouble. A prompt and strict program of longer-term accountability in the community results in greater responsibility from youth and more meaningful sanctions, while protecting public safety in the short-term and over the long-term. For example, requiring a youth to perform an amount of meaningful community service and make restitution proportionate to his offense, with strong and supportive supervision, will teach more about the consequences of criminal behavior and how to make amends for it than sitting in a juvenile detention center for two or three days.

It also means going beyond the traditional approach of fixing problems once they arise. Reform must address youth's need for positive, ongoing relationships with both adults and other youth; for active involvement in community life; and for a variety of positive choices in how they spend non-school time. It aims to build strengths as well as reduce weaknesses.³⁶ It means shaping our youth policies by putting more focus on what we want to say "yes" to than on what we want to say "no" to.

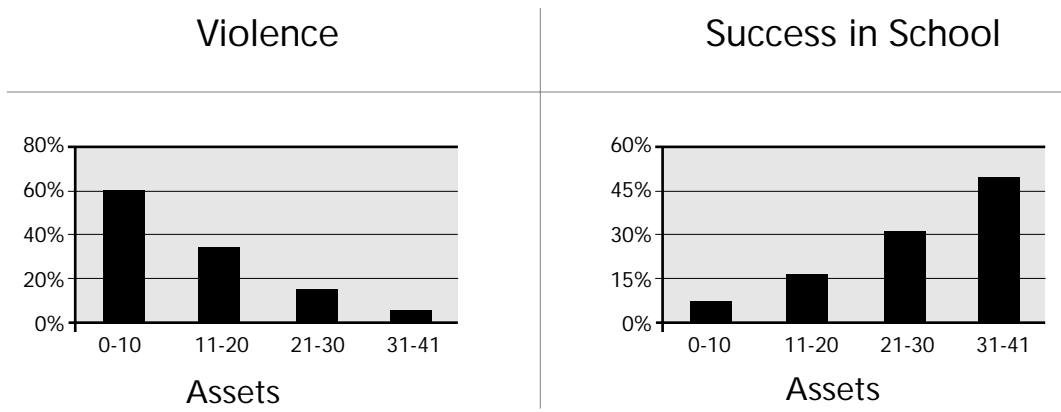
Search Institute³⁷ has compiled a set of 40 essential human development building blocks that all young people need to succeed. The more assets that children and youth acquire, the stronger and more resilient they become, and the more likely they are to lead productive adult lives. The charts on the next page show the relationship between the levels of assets young people have and their involvement in violent behaviors and succeeding in school.³⁸ The research on developmental assets indicates that families and communities who work together to purposefully build assets can reap significant triumphs over many other at-risk behaviors and encourage many thriving, positive behaviors.

This intervention and prevention must take place, moreover, in the context of a caring community. A paid professional, no matter how effective, cannot take the place of a loving aunt, attentive neighbors and teachers, or a close-knit church. Small acts of mentoring, day to day, help young people become capable, well-adjusted adults.

³⁶Public/Private Ventures. Youth Development: Issues, Challenges, and Directions, Fall 2000.

³⁷The asset model was developed by Search Institute, a non-profit research and evaluation organization in Minneapolis. Search Institute was founded in 1958. Its mission is to advance the well-being of adolescents and children by generating knowledge and promoting its application. Search Institute's national Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth initiative has mobilized more than 540 communities since 1996 under the asset building umbrella. Its research includes a synthesis of over 800 studies of child and adolescent behavior and the factors that influence it, and survey results from over 1,000,000 young people across the country - including Seattle, Bellevue, Mercer Island, Lake Washington School District, Bainbridge Island, and Snohomish County.

³⁸Search Institute. The Asset Approach: Giving Kids What They Need to Succeed. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 1997.



All of these approaches - formal prevention and intervention, asset/strength building and informal mentoring - are needed to help kids succeed.

Five years from now

Converting the present system into one that embraces this combination of approaches will mean top-to-bottom change. Five years from now, systems that serve youth in Seattle/King County could look very different.

- Instead of allowing youth services and juvenile services to be fragmented over various agencies and budgets, a new coordinating body would bring together public and private entities that serve youth in King County, suburban cities, school districts, Seattle, the State of Washington and others. Members of this body would jointly develop projects and integrate or pool portions of their budgets to meet long-term goals. Anybody's problems would be everybody's problems. Big decisions would be made in consultation.
- Instead of reacting to the latest crisis, leaders would set goals and measure outcomes to gauge whether goals were being met.
- The amount of public spending on youth going to "deep-end" measures would be down nearly a quarter from 1998 levels, to around 47 percent. Spending on "front-end" measures would meanwhile have risen from 1998 levels by half, to about 33 percent of total spending.
- Besides making more effective use of existing funds, the community would take tap new sources - philanthropy, federal/state grants and savings from a reduced need for "deep-end" measures.
- Most importantly, the community will be getting better results - lower crime and happier, more stable kids -- for the same amount of spending and maybe even less.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy and the RAND Criminal Justice Program found that programs that can deliver - at a reasonable cost - even modest reductions in future criminality can have an attractive economic bottom line. This economic analysis has to date focused only on a program's effects on criminality and its value to taxpayers and crime victims (only one aspect of its benefits).³⁹ The table below shows examples of specific programs found to reduce criminality- and to do so in a cost-effective way.⁴⁰ The studies on which the information on program effectiveness is based reported results using a variety of measures; each was an independent study and researchers were not following a standardized evaluation protocol. Benefits are defined as the dollar amount (discounted to present value) that taxpayers and crime victims are expected to receive in avoided downstream criminal justice and personal costs. There are a number of resources available that provide more information on these and other programs shown to reduce criminality and other bad outcomes.⁴¹

	Effectiveness	Felony Arrests Averted per Million Dollars Spent	Criminal Justice and Victim Benefits per Dollar of Cost
Nurse Home Visiting	Convictions reduced 81 percent	34	\$1.54
Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentoring	Crimes reduced 13 percent	193	\$2.12
Functional Family Therapy	Arrests reduced 50 percent	849	\$10.99
Multisystemic Therapy	Convictions reduced 85 percent	1037	\$13.45
Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care	Arrests reduced 61 percent	1743	\$22.58

The main lesson of research on programs designed to reduce criminality is that prevention works if it is provided to the right people under the right circumstances. Selecting and successfully implementing the right programs for the right populations is the real challenge for policymakers and program administrators.

³⁹Aos, Steve et. al. The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, May 1999; Greenwood, Peter W. et. al. Diverting Children from a Life of Crime: Measuring Costs and Benefits. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1998.

⁴⁰Greenwood, Peter W. Cost-Effective Violence Prevention Programs: A Guide to Current Knowledge and How to Use It, presentation materials at Seattle, WA, September 2000.

⁴¹Aos, supra; Greenwood, supra; Web site for Fight Crime: Invest In Kids at www.fightcrime.org ;

In five years, we could be doing business in a new way.

Old Way	New Way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County, cities, state and private planning alone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated/joint planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding pots are separate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ all resources to address common goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep end costs escalating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balanced expenditures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding based on crisis response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for early help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No system to measure overall progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on goals and outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by politics, anecdote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driven by data, research

Getting there could bring a wide range of potential benefits to those who may participate in Reinvesting in Youth, as shown on the following page. These benefits will provide important incentives for making the difficult changes called for by Reinvesting in Youth. The goal is to find win-win situations for all partners, so they are pulled positively toward a change that is in their self-interest as well as in the greater interest of the region.

In addition to cost savings or cost avoidance, partners may find increased public and media approval that carries over into other activities. Employees may become re-energized when they have new and more powerful tools for helping kids and families and see more widespread respect for their work. Schools may become more attractive to families and voters and better able to help students be qualified for the skilled jobs that local employers desperately want to fill.

Partners will need to identify their own and others' tangible and less tangible benefits. Particularly when making the changes feels daunting, it will be important to focus on why moving forward will pay off.

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, Blueprints for Violence Prevention at www.colorado.edu/cspv; Sherman, Lawrence et al. for the National Institute of Justice, Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising, date unknown but appears to be after 1996; report found at www.ncjrs.org/works/wholedoc.htm

Potential Benefits Of Reinvesting in Youth

Reduce juvenile justice costs

Reduce adult corrections costs

Reduce the number of youth in detention/ state facilities and of adults in jail/prison

Ensure public safety by targeting resources to lock up truly dangerous kids

Ensure safer neighborhoods and stronger kids and families

Use taxpayer/donor funds more effectively

Increase ability of county government to meet a full range of regional needs

Increase tools and options for law enforcement for avoiding overuse of the justice system

Possibly reduce law enforcement costs

Strengthening intergovernmental working relations in ways that may aid coordination in other areas later

Maximize opportunity for building more youth into productive adults, resulting in a more qualified and larger workforce

Reduce a range of bad outcomes for children and families that are paid for in part by this level of government

Obtain assistance from others to provide services and interventions for high risk youth

Reduce disruptive behavior of students

Increase academic performance

Increase safety in schools

Support large scale, deep change reform effort

Ability to tackle a fixable problem with a promising model and political leaders as partners

Cities (and King County where it has local government responsibilities)	King County Regional Government	School Districts	United Way	WA State Child Welfare	WA State Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration	WA State Dept. of Corrections	Private/ Public Funders
	✓				✓		
	✓					✓	
	✓				✓	✓	
✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
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Chapter Three:

What Would It Take To Change To A Better System?

We believe there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the desired reform is theoretically sound, can reduce criminal behavior and improve public safety. So, what would it take to transform the current system into the envisioned one?

Five pillars of reform

There are five major areas upon which successful reform rests: policy, coordination and decision-making, financing, programming, and evaluation. Implementation of these pillars depends on leadership from elected officials, substantial transitional funding for five to seven years, cooperation and agreement among all the parties involved in the effort, and innovative incentives.

It also depends on building upon and coordinating with the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Planning process and the many children, youth and family initiatives that are underway in the region. In most cases, those efforts will both help advance Reinvesting in Youth and benefit from it. Within each of the five areas of reform, we provide some context or background information specific to this topic, an explanation of why reform is needed, some examples locally and nationally of how the needed reform is being accomplished, a description of what it would take to achieve the needed reform in this area, and our assessment of the feasibility of implementing the needed reform.

Five Pillars of Reform

Policy	Coordination	Financing	Programming	Evaluation
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1. Policy

The following are a series of policy changes needed to support the Reinvesting In Youth agenda. It is important that these changes be made formally, legislated and acted on as stated policies, so that they will remain in force over time and last across the terms of individual elected officials and administrators. (Many of these changes are reflected in the adoption of the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan; however, these changes need to be formally embraced by all Reinvesting in Youth partners in firm and clear ways.)

- Continue/establish policies that preserve the use of detention for serious and dangerous juvenile offenders. Placement in detention is an over-used response to youth misbehavior. As the Annie E. Casey Foundation and other leaders in the field suggest⁴², policies should be established and enforced that focus the use of expensive detention resources to best protect public safety.
- Eliminate or severely restrict the use of detention as a response to truancy and contempt of court for At-Risk Youth and Children in Need of Supervision.
- Establish sufficient alternative resources and responses so that courts are not faced with a choice of either using detention as a treatment resource or ignoring significant youth misbehavior.
- Continue/enact those administrative changes necessary to ensure that youth are brought to court and their cases handled expeditiously. This should include establishing targets for disposition of juvenile justice cases, placing priority on youth in detention and regularly reviewing whether targets are being met.
- Promote and expand coordinated, community-based prevention and development efforts, built on proven programming, to reduce the long term demand on the juvenile justice system. Budgets of the various levels of government should focus not only on addressing current demand but also on longer term investments in the well-being of children, youth and families. Budget processes should be adopted that,
 - Capture reductions and cost avoidance in the deep end juvenile justice and youth services systems, as well as in adult corrections.
 - Plan for the use of resources beyond single year appropriations (see section below on Financing).
 - Encourage resource sharing across departments, levels of government and the public-private sectors.

⁴²Pathways To Juvenile Detention Reform, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Section 3, page 17.

- Initiate and respond to efforts to challenge every policy and program for children and youth to determine if there is any inadvertent or inherent bias because of race or ethnicity, and to remove any bias that is found.
- Consider the adoption of policies that alter the relationship between the State of Washington and local government. Substantial resources are invested in youth at the state level through child welfare and juvenile justice responsibilities, in a system not sufficiently tied to local efforts for youth. The potential and advantages of creating local incentives, cost-sharing and improved coordination of efforts should be thoroughly examined. Washington State and others have used these types of mechanisms to support change in a variety of systems. Although there are currently several programs under which state Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration funds flow to local jurisdictions for offender services, treatment and accountability, these are not designed to reward counties that reduce local and state costs while continuing to ensure public safety.

In Deschutes County, Oregon, the state gives the county the amount of funds the state would have spent (based on historical trends) on confining Deschutes County youth in state facilities. The county pays for each youth it sends to state facilities. If fewer youth are sent to the state than expected, for shorter times, savings accrue to the county and are invested in local juvenile justice programs and prevention and early intervention services.

The RECLAIM Ohio program (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to Incarceration of Minors) was created in 1993. Under this approach, counties receive a yearly allocation (from funds previously used for state juvenile institutions and facilities) from the state juvenile authority for the treatment of youthful offenders. The state, in turn, charges each county a daily rate for every day a youth spends in a state facility. Any funds remaining can be used by the county for community-based programs, as well as for prevention and diversion programs for unruly youth, juvenile traffic offenders and other youth at risk of becoming delinquent. Since inception, the percentage of youthful offenders committed to DYS has dropped from 22.5 percent to 17.5 percent of total youth adjudicated delinquent. In 1997, after paying for DYS commitments, counties were able to retain and use \$19.5 million for community based programs.⁴³

RECLAIM Ohio evolved from Governor George Voinovich's dedication to building families and investing in children. It is coupled with the Ohio Families and Children First Initiative, a collaborative effort among all state agencies concerned with family and children's issues to support local youth-serving programs.⁴⁴

⁴³RECLAIM Ohio: Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors and DYS Today - Fall '98 edition at www.state.oh.us/dys; and Zimmerman, Carol Rapp, RECLAIM Ohio: The business of reclaiming youthful offenders and public peace, undated paper.

⁴⁴Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Juvenile Justice Reform Initiatives in the States 1994-1996, Ohio: Sharing Responsibility for Administration of Juvenile Justice at www.ncjrs.org/ojjdp/reform

Reform in action

Below are examples of places where the types of significant policy changes described above have been enacted and implemented.

Community-based Programs Emphasizing Youth Accountability

Community Juvenile Accountability Act: Washington State

- Juvenile courts can receive a portion of \$6 million a year in state funding for community-based programs for moderate- to high-risk offenders that:
 - Use a standardized risk assessment tool to determine eligibility
 - Reduce risk factors associated with juvenile offending; and
 - Rely on strategies proven to work
 - Courts across the state chose two programs with demonstrated effectiveness: Functional Family Therapy and Aggression Replacement Training. Implementation began in January 1999.
 - An evaluation is under way to measure whether the programs cost-effectively reduce recidivism and crime rates in the state.
-

Reducing Detention Population⁴⁵ Advocacy Program (T-CAP): Tarrant County, TX

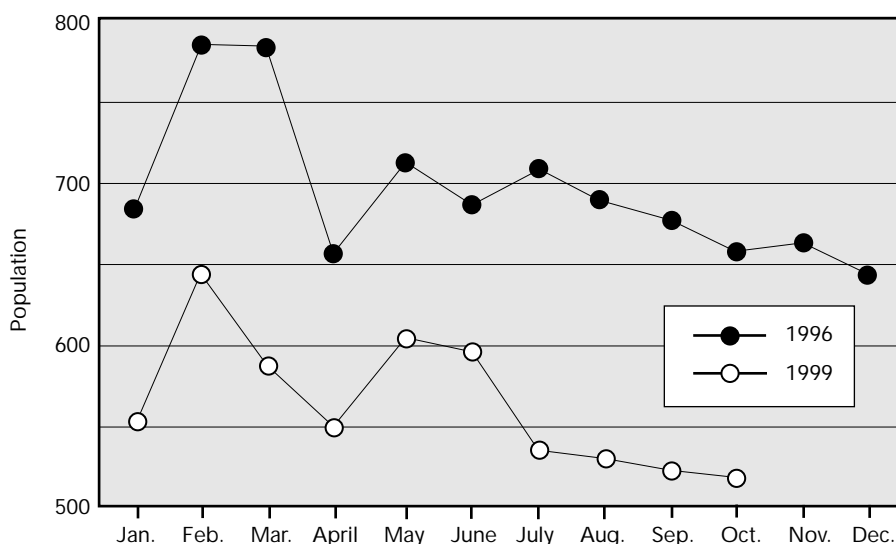
- Community-based alternatives to locking up chronic violent juvenile offenders
 - Youth are assigned an advocate/mentor who lives in the same community
 - " No Eject, No Reject" policy
 - Commitments to Texas Youth Commission sites from T-CAP neighborhoods reduced by nearly 50%
-

⁴⁵Telephone conversation with Carey Cockerell, Director of Tarrant County, TX Juvenile Services.

Reducing Detention Population⁴⁶ Temporary Detention Center: Cook County, IL

Strategies to reduce the average population:

- Six community-based evening reporting centers operate from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Weaves juvenile justice response into fabric of neighborhoods
- 92% of 3,800 youth served were arrest-free while involved in this program



Reducing Other Juvenile Justice System Costs: Truancy⁴⁷ Clark County, WA

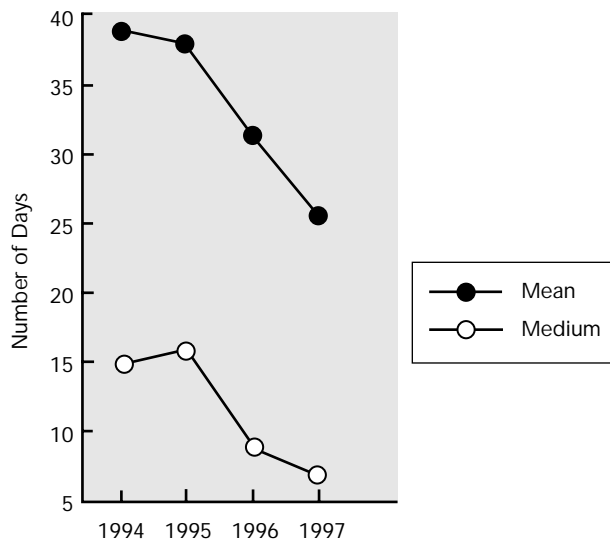
- Policy decision to not use secure detention for truancy
- 70% of Becca Bill funding is used for intervention for the 15-20% of truants who have continuing problems after first court visit
- Educational Service District works with school districts to design the program
- 90% improve; schools continue to work with remaining 10% rather than use court responses

⁴⁶Rust, Bill. "Juvenile Jailhouse Rocked, Reforming Detention in Chicago, Portland & Sacramento," AdvoCasey, Fall/Winter 1999, a publication of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, p.12.

⁴⁷Telephone conversation with Ernie Veach-White, Juvenile Court Administrator, Clark County, WA.

Reducing Other Juvenile Justice System Costs⁴⁸ Multnomah County, OR

- More efficient court processing
- Mean case processing time dropped from 39 days in 1994 to 26 days in 1997
- Median dropped from 15 days to 7 days



Feasibility

We believe it is probable that the partners to Reinvesting in Youth could enact most of the policy changes needed as the foundation for this system reform effort. Both the political climate and voter support appear strong, as evidenced by the King County Council's approval of a forward-thinking juvenile justice plan that encompasses many of these principles, the key informant interviews we have conducted, and the King County voter polling information.

Possible barriers include the occurrence of a major youth violence incident that sways public opinion and makes elected officials feel vulnerable to being labeled soft on crime; the inability to set aside differences among jurisdictions in other arenas to come together in this one; resistance at the state level to legislative changes needed to alter policy; and any lapse in strong leadership by key public officials advocating for Reinvesting in Youth.

⁴⁸Rust, Bill, "Juvenile Jailhouse Rocked, Reforming Detention in Chicago, Portland & Sacramento," AdvoCasey, Fall/Winter 1999, a publication of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, p.8.

2. Steering committee/coordination

The term "coordination" encompasses the direction, management, decision-making and accountability mechanisms needed to guide Reinvesting in Youth. Coordination and decision-making can occur either through formal groups or bodies or through written agreements and policies or a combination of both.

A new coordinating structure is needed because, as the systems are currently configured, no one jurisdiction or sector is responsible for the community's overall response to youth: the non-profit sector is deeply invested in prevention programming, recreation and other related activities; school districts focus primarily on basic education, but also address the health and social needs of youth; municipalities support prevention programming while at the same time providing police protection; the county is responsible for the court system, juvenile probation and the juvenile detention center; and finally the state government creates legislation, disperses funding, and operates the state and adult juvenile corrections system. Equally important, reform of the juvenile justice and youth-serving systems requires the involvement and voices of families, youth, neighborhoods, and other community groups.

As no one institution or stakeholder group represents the wide range of activities and venues devoted to youth, no single jurisdiction or sector can fundamentally reform the overall system. Indeed, to reform the system requires breaking down the artificial spheres of control, the barriers and divisions that now exist and that allow for only limited involvement of youth and families and only a partial understanding of or response to their needs. A fragmented system is not only unruly and expensive, it also assures that youth are pigeon-holed in the juvenile justice system and often fail to receive the needed mental health, substance abuse, academic assistance, and jobs, that youth not labeled delinquent can receive.

Reform in action

Several models of public and private coordination and decision-making frameworks exist locally. These include the Interlocal Agreements for the Area Agency on Aging, the Trade Development Alliance of Greater Seattle, and the Memorandum of Understanding for the Sound Families Program (the regional transitional housing initiative fueled by a generous contribution of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation).

We also found several examples of multi-party coordinating and decision-making bodies for youth issues around the country:

Youth Crime Prevention Council Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania

The Youth Crime Prevention Council is one of two critical coalitions in Allegheny County that have been working since 1994 to coordinate community-driven prevention efforts to reduce youth violence. YCPC is chaired by the U.S. Attorney and has an 8-member steering committee made up of public and private stakeholders, including the mayor, county commissioner, the media, the religious community and the private sector. It also has a 21-member action committee made up of a broad section of the community.

YCPC is the umbrella coordinating body for youth violence reduction efforts. It is recognized in Allegheny County as the coordinator and endorser for youth-supporting activities. YCPC has been a major force for coordination of the community's fragmented response to juvenile violence. The collaborative efforts of its membership have helped spur the development of a number of youth violence prevention efforts, including after-school programs in high-risk neighborhoods, sports leagues, and job creation and assistance programs. YCPC has also facilitated grant applications, attracted private funds, minimized duplication of efforts, and prevented isolated and uncoordinated efforts.

Local Investment Commission (LINC) Kansas City, Missouri

The Local Investment Commission (LINC) is a citizen board dedicated to improving the well-being of children and families in the Kansas City, Missouri region. Launched in 1992, LINC's membership includes elected officials, public agency staff, service provider organizations, the corporate sector and citizen leaders. The efforts are directed by a 36-member citizen commission which receives advice and support from a professional cabinet.

LINC's main focus is the creation of comprehensive neighborhood services in 16 targeted sites, which together include approximately 28 neighborhoods. Each of the 16 sites has carried out a planning process in which neighborhood residents agreed on the desired results they wanted to achieve and the strategies they believe will achieve those results. Site planning emphasizes not just formal human services, but more wide-ranging and creative strategies aimed at engaging neighborhood residents in the challenge of improving child and family well-being.

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board was established in 1985 through an agreement between the City of Minneapolis, Special School District #1, Park and Recreation Board, Public Library Board and the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The YCB is governed by a twelve member board of elected officials that includes the mayor, city council members, school board, county commissioners, parks and recreation, library juvenile division and the Minneapolis delegates to the Minnesota House and Senate.

The YCB serves as an advocate, catalyst and developer of comprehensive services and systems benefiting children, youth, and families. It aims to:

- Improve the ability of public agencies to promote the health, safety and education and development of the community's children and youth;
- Facilitate improved coordination and cooperation among youth-serving agencies and local governmental bodies;
- Identify and remedy conditions which hinder or prevent the community's youth from becoming healthy, productive members of society;
- Communicate accurate and timely information concerning issues facing children, youth, and families, and to coordinate community-wide responses to those issues.

Roles of a steering committee

We recommend that the top leaders of those organizations which commit to join Reinvesting in Youth form a "steering committee." The primary functions of a steering committee for Reinvesting in Youth would be:

- Articulate the principles that guide reinvestment effort
- Set goals and specific outcomes and publicly track progress
- Maintain a steady forward pace and momentum; develop strategies to reduce resistance
- Change the mix of community investments
- Generate and reinvest new financial resources
- Capture cost saving/avoidance
- Ensure sustainability of resources and reform efforts

- Engage families, youth, neighborhoods and other community groups in reform efforts
- Build a constituency that would outlive election and budget cycles
- Increase community awareness and participation
- Oversight, evaluation, monitoring

Once the partners strike a "reinvestment deal," it will be important to develop mechanisms and incentives to ensure adherence so that the whole group can ride out rough spots. A simple consensus model will likely not be strong enough to stay the course. Organizing documents should also spell out a process for resolving disputes, for selecting key staff, handling administrative and fiscal duties, and whether different partners' votes would be weighted equally or in some manner to reflect their investment level.

Membership; who would participate

We recommend a coordinating structure with three tiers:

- Investors
- Community advisors
- Implementers

"Investors" would be the top elected officials or organizational leaders of those organizations funding Reinvestment In Youth: They would comprise the steering committee and would include persons such as:

- The County Executive and a representative of the County Council
- The Mayor of Seattle and a representative of the Seattle City Council
- Elected officials from other municipalities in King County
- Elected or appointed criminal justice leaders, such as the sheriff, police chiefs, and prosecutors
- Superintendents or Board members for school districts
- Legislators and top executives for the State of Washington
- President or Board member of United Way
- Participating foundations

Community advisors could include:

- Family, youth and citizen representatives from neighborhoods - especially communities with unusually high use of juvenile justice services
- Selected department heads
- Representatives of the judiciary and law enforcement
- Representatives from local school districts
- Representatives of community-based organizations
- Other representatives of investors

The implementers would be an operations group of hands-on representatives of key constituencies, positioned to make recommendations to and carry out the directives of the investors.

The table on the following page illustrates how potential investors might be involved in policy, coordination and evaluation for Reinvesting in Youth.

Examples of Policy, Coordination and Evaluation Involvement Internal Adjustments

	Cities	King County	School Districts	WA State	United Way	Private/ Public Funders
Participate fully in coordinating and decision-making mechanisms	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Participate in coordinating mechanisms as a Community Advisor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Advocate with other funders/community leaders to endorse and participate in Reinvesting in Youth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Participate in joint planning for youth supports and services	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that staff at all levels receive information and encouragement to support the goals of Reinvesting in Youth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Advocate for changes in legislation, if needed, to fully implement Reinvesting in Youth	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cooperate/make available all financial/program records for evaluation and tracking of results	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Seek/respond to community input, ideas, leadership	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Feasibility

Within the scope of what we have been able to learn and observe, we believe it is probable that the partners to Reinvesting in Youth could agree on a coordination and decision-making mechanism for Reinvesting in Youth. There are local and national precedents for similar structures formed voluntarily out of mutual interest. Establishment of the coordinating and decision-making structure is likely to require approval of the legislative body of local jurisdictions. Who has the authority to approve the structure on behalf of other organizations will depend on their particular scheme of organizational authority. Again, the strong leadership that has already been demonstrated in King County on this issue can accelerate this process and facilitate getting over any bumps in the road.

Important considerations would be respecting the role of suburban cities and of families and youth, and developing efficient mechanisms for moving forward while including the perspective of all partners. Private funders may set limitations or parameters on the coordination and decision-making structure that protect their role and investment; these will also need to be balanced with the roles of other partners.

3. Financing

We are looking at two financing issues. The first is the need to raise/identify sufficient funds to jump start and maintain the reform effort as new efforts are being developed, new policies are put in place and, ultimately, youth benefit from programs and opportunities and make decisions that keep them out of trouble.

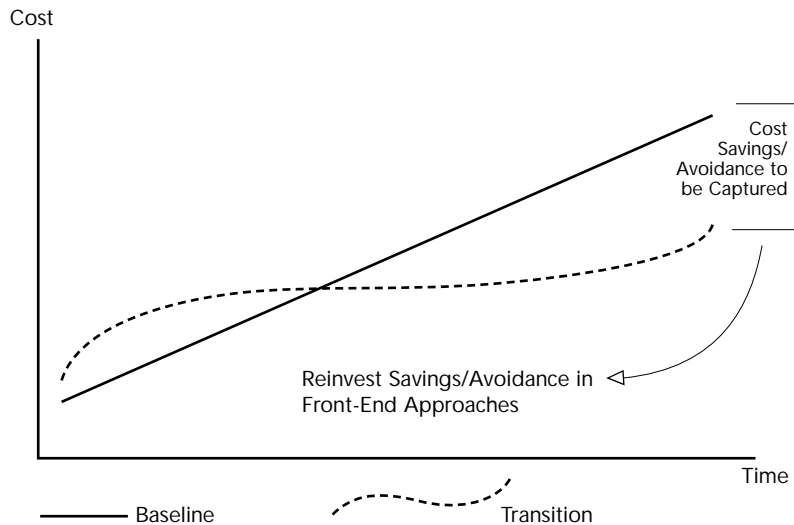
The second is the need to reform how services are financed - to move to a system that contains the funding flexibility needed to share resources between and among levels of government and the public and private sectors, to plan and allocate resources over a multi-year period, to capture and reinvest savings.

Raising and identifying sufficient funds

The Mechanics of Transition

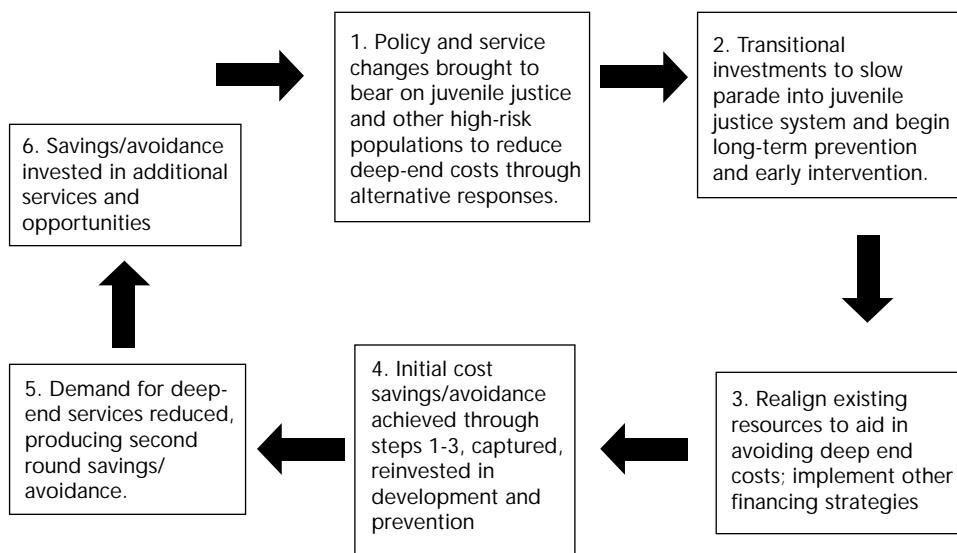
The reform proposal under consideration suggests that strategic investments can alter the trendline of increasing deep-end expenditures on youth. These investments can both move the system from one which is too heavily dependent on deep-end services to one which is more preventive and can eventually reduce or avoid public costs. The "turn the curve" graphic below is at the heart of the reform effort's strategy.

Cost Over Time of System Reform: Turning the Cost Curve



Another view of the reform process is depicted in what we call the "reinvestment loop." Again, the idea is to make new investments and the policy changes needed to increase the "front end" opportunities and services that would divert youth from criminal and other self destructive behaviors and to capture the savings and cost avoidance that would result and reinvest those savings/avoidance to produce even greater impact on youth and youth serving systems.

The Reinvestment Loop



The reinvestment loop is another way to look at the process of investing, changing the trendline of future deep-end expenditures, achieving savings and cost avoidance, and re-investing. A significant infusion of new funding is needed for a transitional period sufficient to slow the parade of youth into deep-end services and prime the pump for cost savings and cost avoidance. Current systems cannot simultaneously invest in the front end without relief in the deep end. Nor can they shift programming and staff without transition time.

The Need

Funding will be needed for two major categories of expenses:

1. Infrastructure (staff, consultants, evaluation, administrative expenses)
2. Programs and technical assistance to implement the desired system reform

Resources sufficient to match the complexity and sheer size of the proposed reform effort are needed in both categories. Trying to achieve this level of reform without sufficient resources will very likely yield shoddy results. Trying to cut corners on the quality and quantity of either human or program resources will undermine success.

For illustration purposes only, we suggest that an amount of \$55 million over five to seven years is a ballpark figure of the magnitude of funding needed. Over a five year period the youth expenditures in Seattle/King County will be in excess of \$500,000,000, so we are talking about an investment of about 10 percent of current expenditures to "turn the curve." See Appendix D for a sample budget. The actual amount needed and the optimal timeline can only be determined after initial commitments by potential partners and additional analyses have been completed.

We are NOT suggesting that public partners must generate \$55 million or so of new revenue in the next five to seven years. Rather, we are proposing that a public-private partnership using a variety of funding strategies be used to obtain the needed resources. We envision that private resources would be the largest source of funding during the transition period, with public resources gradually coming online to sustain Reinvesting in Youth after transitional funding expires.

Nor are we suggesting that Reinvesting in Youth can be fueled solely by capturing cost savings or factoring in cost avoidance. A "pure" reinvestment strategy might limit itself to this funding mechanism. While we consider the concepts of cost savings and cost avoidance as compelling and powerful ideas that underlie Reinvesting in Youth, as well as an important and attractive part of the funding mix, we acknowledge that on their own they are not sufficient nor entirely practical tools to support the magnitude of reform sought in a timely manner.

Reforming How Services Are Financed

While there is a significant amount of money spent on programming for youth in Seattle/King County, the funding now available is fragmented into relatively small, separate pieces - the funds are raised in different ways, administered by multiple entities, often designated for specific purposes, tied to inflexible policy positions and unavailable for long range, multi-year purposes. To make the kinds of changes envisioned, the community needs to shake current funding free, to pool and integrate a number of efforts and to take control of future spending.

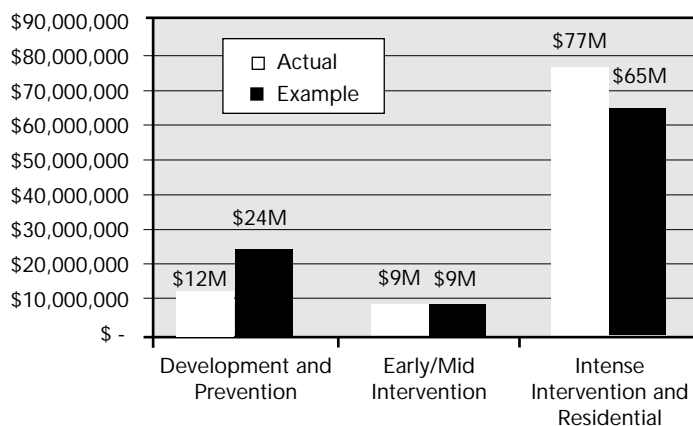
Most communities' youth service systems contain no long term financial investment plans for youth - instead systems are fragmented, budgets are annual and reactive, and financial discipline is mostly about staying within an annual budget allocation. We are suggesting an investment model that strategically invests transitional funds to make permanent changes in the nature and direction of future system financing. For this to work, the primary public and private funders supporting juvenile justice and other youth-directed services need vehicles and a process to jointly plan for the allocation of community resources.

Part of the planning process should be to set community level financial goals. Potential investors that commit to the principles of Reinvesting in Youth and enter into negotiations should set a specific financial goal that is both ambitious and attainable. An example of such a goal would be:

By 2005, increase percentage of community funds spent on development and prevention from the current level of 11 percent to a goal level of 25 percent

Such a goal would create a greater balance in youth services expenditures, but is not so drastic nor rapid as to cause unmanageable change dynamics.

Example: 1998 Shift from 11% to 25%



Reform in action

Around the country, at the local and state levels, leaders of various types of system reform have developed effective financing strategies to achieve their goals.

Hamilton County Family and Children First Council Hamilton County, Ohio (Cincinnati)

The Hamilton County Family and Children First Council is comprised of almost sixty agencies from the public and private sector that provide or fund services to children and families. Its focus at the state level is to plan for building a better service delivery system for families and children. All major agencies put three percent of their overall funding allocations into a pool to help implement the first strategic plan completed by the council. In addition, they pooled over \$8,000,000 into a managed care program for youth with multiple and severe needs.

Wisconsin Youth Aids

- Began in early 1980's Youth Aids has been the primary funding source for a whole range of juvenile justice services statewide
 - Prior to Youth Aids, counties had no financial stake in rate of placement of youth in state facilities
 - With Youth Aids, counties were able to build diversion and prevention resources and are keenly interested in keeping institutional costs down
-

Iowa De-categorization

- Processes established in Iowa to address imbalance in child welfare system
- In mid-1980s, out-of-home placements consumed 90% of child-welfare budget
- Only 10% spent on services to prevent placements
- Designed to reduce child-welfare system's reliance upon institutional, out-of-community, and out-of-home care
- De-categorization encouraged local development of a full range of preventive and treatment services

A variety of financing strategies and reforms

We believe that Reinvesting in Youth will need to develop a variety of financing strategies both during a transitional period and then on a permanent basis. We have generated the following list of options, realizing there may be others.

1. **Philanthropy.** We think Reinvesting in Youth carries the appeal of a large scale, deep change reform effort that could be attractive to major local or national foundations. Reinvesting in Youth addresses problems that are fixable, and offers the lure of a framework for success. A prerequisite to seeking such funding would be a demonstration of great commitment by major political leaders.
2. **Internal resources.** Each partner will need to make a demonstration of commitment to other partners and private funders. That commitment needs to include some reasonable financial contribution that will be part of a common pot to support the reform effort. The amount must be proportionate to partners' resources yet demonstrate a genuine investment. Not only will this be more compelling to private funders, it will increase the level of ownership and accountability that all partners must share to make this work.
3. **Federal and/or state grants.** The characteristics of Reinvesting in Youth make it a strong potential applicant for a variety of federal and state grants. It is underpinned by concepts sought in many major grants: collaboration, community involvement, strong planning, and data driven - with a strong emphasis on evaluation. Funding could be sought for both the systems change level as well as the program level.
4. **Capturing savings and cost avoidance.** As noted above, Reinvesting in Youth is grounded in a belief that investments in child and youth development and prevention/early intervention will cost less than criminal justice interventions or other after-the-crisis responses later on. We believe that non-crime related benefits (reduced substance abuse, greater educational achievement, reduced teen pregnancy, etc.) may be as great or greater - given that the risk factors associated with violence are to a large extent the same risk factors associated with a broad range of bad outcomes for youth. In other words, if we attack the underlying factors that make it more likely youth will engage in delinquent and violent behavior, we are likely to also have positive effects on other youth problem behaviors such as substance abuse, dropping out of school, and teen pregnancy. We believe that to be the case - while holding an awareness of the practical difficulties of tracking how this plays out for thousands of young people with a wide range of circumstances.

Too much adherence to trying to identify and capture every benefit created by a program could cause groups to get so bogged down in accounting and evaluation that they miss the big picture. Accurately measuring and capturing cost savings and cost avoidance are likely to be wildly expensive

and long-term. No one on a national level has been able to isolate and quantify cost savings and avoidance for the myriad positive contributions of programs such as quality after school program or effective stay-in-school efforts. We propose that investors review the available research to understand the cost-benefit analysis of various programs, commit a reasonable portion of their resources to programs proven to be effective, track and evaluate the portion of cost savings/avoidance that is practical, and factor additional cost savings/avoidance benefits into their negotiations with one another.

For example, the King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan suggests nearly \$4,000,000 per year in cost avoidance for efforts already begun. That figure reflects the estimated expenditures for building and operating a new major juvenile detention center that will be avoided by making fundamental changes in the existing juvenile justice system operations. The average daily detention center population has already dropped from 200 to 140 through such projects as using a new detention screening tool and avoiding the use of detention for youth who disobey court orders but who would not have been sent to detention for the underlying offense. We believe it would be worthwhile to also track a portion of cost savings/avoidance of other deep end costs, such as,

- state correctional programs
- county adult corrections
- mental health
- foster care
- law enforcement

5. Retargeting existing resources. By utilizing existing resources for child and youth development, recreation, prevention, and early intervention cities and community-based organizations could make a sizable contribution to reducing deep-end costs. In addition to differentially allocating new resources, there is an opportunity and a need to creatively re-deploy or re-tool existing resources and in so doing provide greater support for the efforts to hold deep end expenditures in check. For example, an already funded neighborhood based recreational program might be re-tooled to also be a community service site for youth in diversion programs. Or a school-based social service program might re-target its outreach to youth with truancy problems. City, County, or non-profit programs might be targeted to high priority neighborhoods, i.e. those with high rates of residential/institutional expenditures.

Re-deployment will not at first glance change the total level of expenditures but may increase the impact specific program interventions have on the overall distribution of and demand for resources. Examples of retargeting approaches include:

- Location - placement of or recruitment for services from locations where children most likely to need support are
- Target population - reach out to the young people with more risk factors and less protective factors
- Additional connections - link different programs and services to children and families so they get comprehensive rather than piecemeal help
- Programming added/facility use modified to avoid deep-end costs/after care package - use recreation staff and buildings for evening reporting centers or after-care services; change program portfolio to include proven strategies for reducing crime and other bad outcomes

6. Allocation of growth. Reinvesting in Youth partners could achieve a more balanced mix of investments simply by allocating new funding, generated by regional growth, to front-end services. Over time this shifts the portfolio towards development, prevention and earlier intervention, without severely disrupting deep-end services. It would also avoid early disruptions in partner services by concentrating change in the portion of youth spending that comes from gradual growth over time.

For example, the current juvenile justice/youth service pie for King County is estimated (1998 figures) at \$97,500,000. If annual growth is projected at 5 percent per year overall, the combined community budget in 2005 will be \$137,193,000. If new funding is allocated in equal parts (20 percent per category) this would shift the funding mix dramatically by 2005, as illustrated below:

Investment Level	1998	2005
Residential/Institutional	57.4 percent	46.7 percent
Intensive Intervention	20.7 percent	20.5 percent
Early Intervention	9.7 percent	12.6 percent
Prevention	5.3 percent	9.5 percent
Development	6.9 percent	10.6 percent

7. Maximizing federal revenues. Some communities have raised large sums by re-examining their claiming of federal funds and redesigning administrative and service system to maximize reimbursability. For example, some communities have been able to capture Medicaid, TANF (income assistance), and education funds by analyzing which of their services are eligible for federal matching amounts. Although this is not a certain source of funds, an examination of potential revenue is affordable and advisable.

8. Redirecting revenue streams. Redirecting revenue streams can take many forms, but here describes shifts in which level of government receives funding for what bundle of responsibilities and what incentives and disincentives are provided for desired shifts in activities. It is likely to require legislative action. It is partly a fundraising strategy and partly a policy reform. Redirecting revenue streams seeks to:

- Change incentives
- Create managed care-like dynamics
- Free money restricted to deep end for prevention

Effective characteristics of financing strategies

Within the financing strategies outlined above, it will be important to also build into them characteristics that further fuel the system reform, such as:

- Increased flexibility in use of resources
- Pooled funding
- Increased control at the local level
- Incentives to use less costly interventions - most importantly the opportunity to capture and use cost savings and cost avoidance
- Elements of managed care: capitation, performance incentives, etc.

Sustainability

If significant new funding is obtained for Reinvesting in Youth, investors will need to plan from the beginning how to sustain those investments that need to continue beyond the span of the transitional funds. Many of the financing strategies outlined above are designed to support that process. The new funding would provide breathing room for investors to implement several of the other financing strategies, realign current funding, and capture cost savings/avoidance to sustain the Reinvestment Loop over time.

Examples of partner involvement in financing strategies

The tables on the next two pages illustrate how potential investors might be involved in implementing the financing strategies outlined above. The first table shows activities that would be jointly carried out by the participating parties, while the second table lists things each partner could do internally to move toward the joint goals.

Examples of Financial and Program Involvement Partnership Activities

Commit an annual amount to demonstrate partnership

Work jointly with other investors to obtain private funding and state and federal grants

Participate in budget review to identify opportunities to claim greater amounts of federal and state funds; agree to commit a significant portion of newly identified revenue to Reinvesting in Youth

Advocate for other public funding, such as use of TANF underspend to support Reinvesting in Youth

Capture, and agree to reinvest a portion of, cost savings/avoidance attributable to Reinvesting in Youth

Participate in public-private partnership in resource allocation and program development for children and youth in the region

Help with early identification of high risk youth

Commit multi-year funding for transition period of 5-7 years

Structure grants to leverage investment and commitment of other partners; for example, provide incentives for:

- Local governments to shift some portion of existing resources to proven programs
- Providers to shift some portion of services to proven programs
- Local and state governments to re-target existing resources to meet goals of Reinvesting in Youth
- Partners to create and capture cost savings/avoidance for the benefit of overall Reinvesting in Kids

	Seattle	King County	Suburban Cities	School Districts	WA State	United Way	Private/ Public Funders
	✓	✓			✓	✓	
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓		✓	✓		
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	✓	✓			✓		
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	✓	✓	✓				✓
							✓

Examples of Financial and Program Involvement Internal Adjustments

	Seattle	King County	Suburban Cities	School Districts	WA State	United Way
Re-target existing resources across departments to provide strong support to the target populations identified for Reinvesting in Youth	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Realign portion of programming to services proven to reduce youth violence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Allocate growth in investment in youth in ways to support a balanced community investment plan	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Foster greater coordination between cities/county/school staff working directly with at-risk youth	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Provide assistance by law enforcement to provide early identification of high risk youth prior to criminal involvement	✓	✓	✓			
Contract with community-based organizations or others to serve youth in danger of dropping out of school; transfer basic education and other funds obtained from the state for those youth to the service provider so that the dollars follow the youth				✓		

Feasibility

Because most of the financing strategies cannot be realistically explored until after the distribution of this report and initial commitments by major political leaders, we are unable to assess the feasibility of any of the specific financing strategies or the package as a whole at this point. However, representatives of both King County and Seattle have indicated a strong commitment to retargeting some of their existing resources. Those representatives have also expressed an interest in jointly seeking private and public grants for Reinvesting in Youth.

Each of the financing strategies listed has been used by other communities for a variety of reform efforts. None are novel to this project, and we have only included those we believe are feasible and could likely yield positive results.

The most serious barrier will be the inability to generate substantial private funding sources for a transition period. We consider this element so important to success, that without such funding, we believe large scale reform is unlikely. Other barriers include reluctance or difficulty in engaging state agencies or the state legislature to participate in redirecting revenue streams and the sheer complexity of estimating and tracking cost savings and cost avoidance amounts on children and youth services.

Recent and pending statewide tax reduction initiatives may also play a role in feasibility. On one hand, they may force a serious look at runaway juvenile and adult incarceration expenses and potential solutions such as those offered by Reinvesting in Youth. On the other hand, they may make it more difficult to capture cost savings or cost avoidance as pressure increases to meet immediate state budget priorities.

4. Program: what should the investment portfolio look like?

The unique nature of Reinvesting in Youth (strong reliance on cost effective approaches, need to engage multiple partners outside their traditional roles, etc.) demands careful thought about initial investments and shifts in current investments by its partners.

We anticipate that the Steering Committee described in an earlier section, in conjunction with major funders providing transitional resources, would select the investment portfolio for new resources. In addition, the partners represented on the Steering Committee will likely need to or want to realign their existing investments in order to both achieve the desired reforms and to attract private and public funders.

Choosing the right approach

People working directly with young people, and those in policy and research positions, hold a variety of beliefs about how we can or should go about helping kids succeed and avoid "rotten outcomes." These beliefs underlie many of the financial and program design choices made about kids. Some of the broad conceptual beliefs include:

- Risk reduction. For the last 30 years, much of the focus of formal programs has been on reducing risk factors in young people and families. This risk-reduction approach has often incorporated the strengthening of protective factors as the means to reduce risks, in addition to techniques that directly attempt to lower the risk factors.
- Building assets/strengths. Recent research by the Search Institute in Minneapolis has synthesized a huge body of child and adolescent research to create a list of the factors believed to have the most influence on good and bad outcomes for youth. Search Institute advocates that families, communities, and formal services all work toward a positive picture of what youth need to succeed. If that occurs and youth have higher levels of assets, they are much less likely to engage in a wide range of negative behaviors and much more likely to engage in a variety of positive behaviors. Asset building seeks to increase positive outcomes as well as reduce negative ones.
- Combinations of risk reduction and asset building. Many researchers and practitioners believe a comprehensive approach to producing healthy, responsible, caring and competent youth includes both risk reduction and building strengths. They would focus approaches and services to better reach those children and youth most at risk of bad outcomes, while providing a solid foundation for all kids to have the types of caring relationships, opportunities, and recognition needed to thrive. They would also use strength-based approaches in working with young people with high levels of risk factors.

At a work session for the Advisory Group for Reinvesting in Youth, the following were selected as priority risk factors and assets/protective factors for the youth in King County:

Risk Factors	
Community	Extreme economic deprivation Low neighborhood attachment
Family	Inadequate parenting Abuse and neglect Family violence/family management problems
School	School problems - behavior, lack of attachment Academic failure
Individual	Physiological traits of individual (learning disabilities, ADHD, etc.) Early initiation of problem behavior
Assets/Protective Factors	
Support:	Family support School support Support from other caring adults

Identifying goals for the first five years

Programs also need to be selected based on the relative priority of goals set by the investors. Among those goals might be the ones listed below. We suggest prioritizing the goals in the order listed for the first five years of Reinvesting in Youth:

Proposed Goal	Rationale for Proposed Goal
<p>1. Stop the flow of youth into the juvenile justice system and other deep-end services by directing interventions to youth with high social risk factors who have minimally entered or are at high risk of entering the juvenile justice system or other deep-end services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most likely to produce cost savings/avoidance in the short term • One of easiest places to demonstrate success to build momentum and buy-in of existing and potential partners • Builds on the planning and recommendations of King County Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan • Would support the theory of working from the oldest and highest-risk youth first and then gradually moving to younger ages and lower immediate risks levels
<p>2. Prevent recidivism of youth in the juvenile justice system identified as being at high risk to be serious, chronic offenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can produce cost savings/avoidance in the short term• Desire not to give up on youth with serious problems • Desire not to give up on youth with serious problems • Realization that these youth will be coming back into their communities and can cause more harm
<p>3. Produce cost savings or cost avoidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to fulfill one of the main principles and premises of Reinvesting in Youth • These resources are needed to sustain this effort after transitional funding goes away
<p>4. Help medium-risk middle school youth through difficult transitions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth often begin or accelerate at-risk behaviors such as truancy, substance abuse, and minor criminal behaviors during middle school years
<p>5. Focus on elementary school years to screen high risk children and provide them and their parents with support and help</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems behaviors begin and are easy to spot at these ages • Schools can provide access to children and a setting for delivery of assistance

Proposed Goal	Rationale for Proposed Goal
6. Invest in very early preventive services for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers that also work with parents for families with high levels of risk factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These programs have the potential to avoid many costs and losses for children and families at many stages of the child's development • Need to begin early to invest at the very front end in order to relieve pressure on all parts of the system
7. Build strengths/developmental assets (the building blocks of what kids need to succeed) for all kids of all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to look at enhancing the overall level of support for pro-social behavior among all kids to provide a solid foundation for them • Can engage all types of adults and organizations in informal ways to support youth beyond funded formal programs

Agreeing on allocation for the first five years

Investors will also need to allocate their program funds according to a number of factors. For the first five years of Reinvesting in Youth, we recommend allocating new resources among children and youth of various ages and risk factors in proportions that look something like that shown in the table on the following page. Our recommended allocation is based mainly on the importance of showing public and private investors an ability to turn the cost curve within five to seven years. To do that, youth presently held in secure and residential programs must be treated in more effective and less costly intervention settings. There must first be an expansion and improvement in the quality and range of options available to youth arrested and committed to the formal system. Youth in the deep end of the system must have alternative interventions available at the start and throughout the reform process.

For the first five years of Reinvesting in Youth, we recommend allocating new resources among the geographic areas of the county in a way similar to that shown in the following table on Geographic Distribution. Our recommended allocation is based mainly on the extent to which specific communities contribute both raw numbers and rates of referrals and detention admissions to the current juvenile justice system. Again, we are making our recommendation in the context of the importance of showing public and private investors an ability to turn the cost curve within five to seven years.

Age and Risk Level of Children and Youth	% Allocation
Youth in the juvenile justice system identified as being at high risk to be serious, chronic offenders	20%
Youth with high social risk factors who are likely to become serious, chronic offenders and who have minimally entered or are at high risk of entering the juvenile justice system	60%
Middle-schoolers with medium level risk factors	20%
Children in elementary school with high risk factors and their parents	0%
Infants, toddlers, preschoolers with high risk factors and their parents	0%
All children and youth of all ages to build strengths /developmental assets	0%

Geographic Distribution	% Allocation
1. Spread geographically equally throughout King County	0%
2. Within jurisdictional boundaries of partners (such as suburban cities or school districts) to reflect their contribution and use of localized resources	20%
3. Targeted to communities that have the highest numbers and rates of criminal referral and detention, ⁴⁹ which include: Southeast Seattle Federal Way White Center/Skyway/Tukwila Kent Central Seattle Auburn Renton West Seattle Highline/Burien	80%

⁴⁹King County JJWAN. 1999 Detention Admissions by Health Planning Area and Race and 1999 Criminal Referrals by Health Planning Area and Race. Data produced by request.

Imported, proven vs. homegrown programs

Recent research provides a great deal more information about the types and models of programs that are effective for prevention, intervention and treatment of children and youth problems - as well as approaches that go beyond fixing problems to build strengths. Despite the availability of this information, almost all programs and services offered to children and youth in Seattle/King County (and around the country) are designed locally. The reasons for limited use of research-based programs range from lack of resources for the intense and multi-faceted approaches that are often most effective, to lack of awareness about new program models, to comfort and attachment to current programs, to lack of trained staff, and to concerns about the cultural relevancy of some models to the diverse populations in the Seattle/King County area.

Definitions. Researchers tend to classify programs into the following three categories:

Proven: Programs that meet a very high scientific standard of program effectiveness and have been successfully replicated in other sites.

Promising: Programs that have sound ideas and exhibit most of the following characteristics:

- Theoretically grounded
- Evidence based
- Multi-faceted
- Specifically targeted
- Usually a significant cost per client

Homegrown: Most programs operating in the country fall within this category. They were invented by a local program and are familiar and comfortable to those who operate them.

It is difficult to determine how effective local programs are compared to those that have the benefit of extensive, costly evaluation and experience in replication - because most local programs have little or no meaningful evaluation. Therefore, in choosing the desired mix of proven, promising and homegrown programs, investors will need to consider the extent to which local programs are based on sound theories of change, follow generally accepted best practices and have reasonable evidence of success. Investors may also want to begin more intensive evaluations of some of the more promising local programs to further determine their effectiveness.

We recommend that new transitional funding for Reinvesting in Youth be heavily invested in proven programs. We recommend that at least 65 percent of new investments be in proven programs, with the remainder split between promising and homegrown programs. Also, within the first five years of Reinvesting in Youth, we recommend that participating organizations ensure that at least a

third of their programs are proven models, implemented with the training and technical assistance of those who designed the models and help in their replication. We recommend that participating organizations continue to increase their proportion of proven programs over time, while evaluating those promising and homegrown programs that currently use large amounts of resources.

Reducing disproportionality

While program changes alone cannot eliminate unfavorable disproportionate treatment of youth of color in the juvenile justice and other youth-serving systems, any programs that are part of investors' portfolio need to both ensure they are not contributing to disproportionality and are working to reduce it.

Capacity building and technical assistance

Providers who expand current programs or begin new programs (either proven models or locally designed programs) are more likely to be successful if they receive support for their capacity-building efforts and technical assistance to implement proven programs to be replicated locally. Capacity-building assistance could include staff training, organizational development consultation, or assistance in resource development.

Diversification and getting the timing right

Once the priority of goals and target populations are determined, investors will need to decide what types of programs or approaches they believe are effective to reach the goals. The final selection should consider the available research on effective programs, the current availability of services, investors roles and responsibilities to different populations, and how families and communities view the attractiveness and usefulness of services. Investors would be wise to diversify their portfolio to reduce their risk of poor results, just as they would with a stock portfolio.

Investors will also need to determine the timing of investments during both the transitional period and beyond. Not all selected investments should begin at once, for a variety of reasons:

- Some programs should start first. As noted above, youth in the deep end of the system must have alternative interventions available at the start and throughout the reform process.
- We believe it is then important to focus program investments on those youth with high social risk factors who are likely to become serious, chronic offenders and who are minimally or almost involved in the juvenile

justice system -- in order to take the pressure off deep-end services and generate cost savings or cost avoidance. Selecting these youth for services involves a delicate balance between heading off serious and expensive problems and "net widening" - the practice of unnecessarily pulling youth into a system or services that ends up costing a lot and producing few positive effects --and potentially negative effects.

- Providers need time to add capacity. Adding new programs or expanding existing ones will likely require hiring and training new staff, finding additional program space, and recruiting participants.
- Planning for sustainment of funding needs to happen from the beginning. It may be important to gradually reduce the amount of private funds in the later years of a transitional period by either reducing the need for those funds or replacing them with ongoing funding. This would avoid a sudden drastic drop in resources at the end of the transitional period.

Reform in action

Examples of both proven and homegrown programs illustrate a variety of routes to reduce the pressure on juvenile detention facilities.

Multisystemic Therapy: Memphis, TN⁵⁰

- Goal: help families establish healthy structures, develop problem-solving strategies, and learn to make use of community resources
 - Services offered in the home
 - Works with all systems relevant to the youth and the youth's family
 - 80% of youth discharged in a 2 1/2 year period remained in the home
-

⁵⁰DeMuro, Paul. *Promising Juvenile Justice Prevention and Treatment Models*, unpublished manuscript, 1997, revised 1999.

Delinquency Prevention Project: Skagit County, WA⁵¹

- Goal: comprehensive effort to prevent and reduce delinquency from preschool to high school
 - Partnership: county and several school districts
 - screen all preschool to grade 6 children, identify problems, provide assistance
 - after school opportunities for K-6
 - weekly recreation for youth and families
 - Results: reductions in behaviors and risk factors; reversal in upward trend in juvenile arrest rates
-

Breakthrough for Families: Spokane, WA⁵²

- Alternatives to court involvement and secure confinement for runaways and at-risk youth
 - Teams to strengthen families include parents, youth, and 4-8 people who know family best
 - Average cost per year is \$2,164 vs. \$100/day in Spokane Juvenile Detention and \$52/day on electronic monitoring
 - 77% of youth live with a parent upon program exit compared to 49% at intake
-

⁵¹Governor's Juvenile Advisory Committee. *Skagit County, WA Delinquency Prevention Project Final Report*. Mt. Vernon, WA: Urban Policy Research, 1998.

⁵²Office of Juvenile Justice. *DSHS Monitoring Report Findings on "Breakthrough for Families."* Spokane, WA: Volunteers of America, 2000.

Below are two examples of "investment priorities" selected by groups interested in the use of prevention programs to reduce crime and violent behavior:

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Youth Violence Prevention Plan⁵³

Program supported by over 1,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and victims to:

- Shut down the "peak hours of crime" with after school programs
- Prevent child abuse with at-home coaching for at-risk parents
- Help working parents with access to quality preschool programs
- Get troubled kids back on track

Reinvestment Plan: Deschutes County, OR⁵⁴

Recommended Prevention Investments:

- Screening and intervention for all kindergarten children with behavioral challenges
- Parent training and education
- After school programs
- Home visits for families with newborn babies
- High school graduation incentives
- Substance abuse prevention
- Reading programs for kindergarten, 1st and 2nd graders

⁵³Fight Crime: Invest in Kids www.fightcrime.org

⁵⁴Deschutes County Community Justice, Deschutes County Commission on Children and Families, and the Deschutes County Prevention Office. *Deschutes County Community Youth Investment Project Reinvestments: Summary of Current Projects (2000/2001)*

Feasibility

Within the scope of what we have been able to learn and observe, we believe it is probable that the partners to Reinvesting in Youth could agree on an investment portfolio for this system reform effort. At a work session of the Advisory Group on November 1, 2000, there was substantial consensus around the goals and possible allocation of resources. National organizations such as Fight Crime: Invest in Kids and local groups such as in Deschutes County, Oregon have developed specific investment packages for similar purposes. In fact, one of the dangers we see is that partners may turn their attention too early to this more concrete topic - before putting in place the policy, financing and coordinating structure needed to see the investments pay off.

Implementing an agreed-upon portfolio could be a more formidable task. There would be dozens of organizations and hundreds of people involved. There is likely to be some controversy in the selection of providers, although this could be minimized by involving providers in discussions about the program mix and developing less competitive ways to select providers. Another idea would be to have a group representing both community members and experts on the effectiveness of youth programs conduct the selection process and make recommendations to the investment partners; a group such as the King County Children and Families Commission could serve as a model for this approach.

5. Evaluation and reporting of results

All investors in Reinvesting in Youth will need to know what is working and what needs adjustment on all levels. In addition to those internal customers, there is a great need and great value in reporting results publicly. Doing so creates accountability among investors and with the community. Both investors and the community will be best served by an independent evaluation performed by those who do not have any vested interest in the results. Partners can gain insights and strengthen overall evaluation efforts by coordinating with related ongoing evaluations.

For an initiative as complex as this one, an evaluation can serve purposes beyond the tracking of desired outcomes:

1. It can help all the different players be sure they develop and share the same definition of success. It can help them agree upon the benchmarks of progress that will be compelling for them in determining whether the initiative is moving in the right direction. Doing this up front saves inordinate time and heartache down the road.
2. Because we know how difficult changing organizational behavior can be and how vulnerable these change efforts can be to derailment, an evaluation can build in periodic outside observation and feedback that can be used to identify signs of drift and challenge the initiative to get back on track.
3. By building in public accountability, an evaluation can help to sustain the political support required to stay the course. This is not a two or three-year effort– it's a new way of doing business. An evaluation can be one of a number of mechanisms for reinforcing collective commitment to a sustained test of this new way of operating.

Evaluation must track many levels of change

Reinvesting In Youth's ambitions operate at several different levels– changing the behavior and life chances of individual youth, changing the way communities support youth, and changing the way different agencies spend their resources and work with each other. This means that an evaluation strategy for the initiative will also need to operate at different levels. We see three such levels, each with different research questions and corresponding evaluation strategies.

1. System level

Research questions:

- Are resources for youth spent differently over time?
- Does the pattern of resource allocation move away from deep end expenditures toward earlier and less costly alternatives?

To address these questions, an evaluator can track spending patterns starting with the baseline already established for the five levels of investment ranging from development through costs for residential and institutional care. Similarly, patterns of service use in the juvenile justice system can also be tracked—conviction and incarceration rates, length of stay in deep end services and so forth. At the system level, then, there will be indications of changes in big picture goals. But this assessment will not help much in explaining how or why what happened through Reinvesting in Youth made any contribution to this change. For that, we need to look at the administrative and program levels.

2. Organizational/administrative level (coordination and decision-making)

Research questions:

- Do all the players behave in new ways?
- Do they cooperate or collaborate in ways that make sense for youth?
- Do they articulate and then follow through on their commitments to certain collective goals?
- Are these changes evident at the community level?

The method to address these questions is process documentation in which an evaluator periodically interviews key players, observes changes, monitors progress in terms of interorganizational agreements, asks questions about changes in organizational culture and practices, etc.

3. Program level

Research questions:

- Do the individual programs that are funded under the reinvestment initiative make a difference?
- Do they produce the specific outcomes for the target group that were intended?

Methodology will depend in part on exactly what programs get funded for which youth (the portfolio mix). For example, investments may target youth already identified by the juvenile justice system, those identified as high risk and likely to enter the system, or those who are at risk but much farther from actually

showing up in the system anytime soon. Investments may be made in taking existing programs to scale, importing program models that have track records of providing cost savings, and/or to developing new programs that are responsive to particular local conditions but are as yet untested. Given what are always limited evaluation resources, it makes sense to do less evaluation for some of these choices and more rigorous evaluation for others.

Another variation at the program level is focusing on specific neighborhoods from which a significant proportion of incarcerated youth come, rather than targeting specific youth, or there could be some combination of individual and community level targeting. In this case, the evaluation strategy would also need to include indicators of neighborhood change.

Linking findings from all three levels

While none of these three levels of evaluation is simple - and there are always tradeoffs in costs and what can be learned at different levels of confidence - it is possible to address all three kinds of questions. However, a more complicated issue is the ability of an evaluator to put together the data collected at the administrative and program levels and link them in a definitive and causal way to changes at the system level. This is only partially achievable: an evaluation won't be able to prove without a doubt that the new resources invested at the program level and the new ways in which the agencies do business are directly and uniquely responsible for cost savings at the system level or for decreased rates of youth incarceration. However, an evaluator should be able to construct a logic model that can make a credible and compelling case for these relationships and can produce information that is helpful to the audiences that matter here (as opposed to an academic audience); that is, people who want to know how to get the biggest bang for their resources and for their communities.

Feasibility

It will be possible to evaluate the initiative in a way that is both useful and persuasive to key audiences, even if it means tracking information or undertaking analyses in a way or on a scale previously unattempted. Reinvesting in Youth faced similar challenges, and prevailed, when it put together a comprehensive King County "youth budget."

Expectations must also be realistic. When it comes to guiding children into adulthood, success may not always manifest itself in ways that can be precisely measured. No one on a national level has been able to isolate and quantify cost savings and avoidance for the myriad positive contributions of programs like after-school activities. We propose that investors devote a reasonable portion of their resources to making sure that programs are cost-effective and successful, rather than seek to quantify and track every possible indicator.

Conclusions

Enacting radical reform in Seattle/King County juvenile services will be challenging in many respects. The area lacks the circumstances that normally provoke such dramatic change - overcrowding at juvenile facilities, or legislative or executive mandates to change. There are also significant potential obstacles: Responsibilities for juvenile services are split between states and counties, while counties have no child protection/child welfare authority. There are many potential partners for such an effort, and some friction and distrust between political jurisdictions. Current funding sources are tightly categorical. Finally, Washington State's legislature plays a very strong role in determining sentencing for serious juvenile offenders, leaving limited room for alternatives without legislative change.

On balance, however, we believe the generally favorable public and political climate locally, the existence of community leaders able and willing to think outside their own boxes for the greater good, and the existence of substantial benefits for all partners can outweigh these complicating factors. This depends on the four factors we noted earlier: leadership from elected officials, substantial transitional funding for five to seven years, cooperation and agreement among all the parties involved in the effort, and innovative incentives.

We did not find any models around the country that reflect the size or complexity of the regional juvenile justice and youth service systems reforms that the Seattle/King County area is contemplating. We did, however, find examples of communities successfully using many of the concepts and components needed for such a reform. We found examples of successful efforts to reduce "deep-end" spending and invest more in front-end services in other topic areas. We found one example of a state (RECLAIM Ohio) and one example of a community (Deschutes County, Oregon) that are launching similar juvenile justice/children and youth services reforms on a more limited scale or with fewer players. We found examples of four counties in California which are working on a reinvestment strategy centered around a specific program model.⁵⁵ We found examples of change in other systems that demonstrate the ability to shift entrenched approaches.

We described for each pillar what it would take to effectively implement it. While not every one of these conditions must be met immediately or simultaneously to move forward, we believe that unless community leaders can commit to making these changes over a reasonable time period, it would not be wise to implement a major reform effort of this sort. In that case, it would be wiser to keep working on incremental changes rather than launch something bold that lacks enough firepower to succeed.

⁵⁵Comprehensive Integrated Services Reinvestment Project. *Capturing Cash for Kids: A Workbook for Reinvesting in Community Based Prevention Approaches for Children and Families, 2nd Ed.*. Sacramento, CA: Foundation Consortium, 1998.

However, it would be our hope that in a few years, those who step up to lead Reinvesting in Youth will be able to issue a statement of success on many fronts - as strong but even more broad than this one:

“ . . . RECLAIM Ohio has been a worthy experiment in a business too often driven by fear and the need for a quick political fix. It has been frightening to move from a safe, if under-funded bureaucracy, to a business which everyday must show the cost effectiveness of its operation. The success of RECLAIM lies not in its reduction of overcrowding or its increased community options or even in its lowered recidivism rates, but rather in the systems approach which it has fostered between state and local government and among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches in government.”

- Carol Rapp Zimmerman, Assistant Director,
Ohio Department of Youth Services

Next Steps

We see the Reinvesting In Youth agenda as difficult, but doable. Winds of positive change are blowing in juvenile justice and youth services in King County. Yet there is plenty of skepticism and many opportunities for resistance and sabotage. As history tells us, tremendous change can be created by strong leadership. A single-minded focus on reducing juvenile crime, lowering recidivism, improving cost-effectiveness, investing more up front, and fostering success among youth is the key ingredient. The rest is somewhat mechanical, despite the complexities of the mechanics.

Key leaders in the community - the groups we have designated as Investors in our coordination recommendations - need to determine whether they wish to commit to a long term, large scale youth system initiative and whether, in general, the agenda outlined here fits with their priorities and their sense of what is doable in Seattle/King County. This determination need not be an acceptance of all of the details and views presented here - the feasibility study is a discussion starter, not the last word. But the leaders need to agree that they are comfortable with and willing to commit to the basic directions and goals suggested for Reinvesting In Youth - creating a cross jurisdictional, public-private effort to move the system towards greater investments in front end services.

A number of important steps need to be taken to give life to Reinvesting In Youth. We recommend that these steps be taken in the order listed below.

What:	By When:
<p>1. Obtain clear commitment from top leaders in community (Mayors, County Executive, Councilmembers, President or Board Chair of United Way, Sheriff, Police Chiefs, Prosecutors, State Legislators and executive staff, School Superintendents or Board members, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequivocal support for the principles of Reinvesting in Youth • Will personally help get it organized and seek funding • Will be a spokesperson to the press and public • Will formally agree to policy changes • Will make some specific financial commitment of own resources • Will recruit other jurisdictions and organizations • Will help design effective steering committee structure 	<p>February 28, 2001</p>

- Will agree to track and capture cost avoidance/savings generated by Reinvesting in Youth and reinvest them according to joint plan
- Will realign internal investments within timeline agreed by all parties
- Will assign top-level, highly competent staff and make it clear this is a top priority
- Will continuously follow-up on progress; help get things back on track as needed

What:	By When:
<p>2. Form Steering Committee to keep momentum alive/develop implementation strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide joint future actions • Serve as forum for a strategy to approach funders • Keep gaining buy-in from other sectors and parties; involve stakeholders • Develop work plan to create implementation strategy • Design creative and powerful incentives and win-win situations for partners • Develop mechanisms to track and capture cost avoidance/savings generated by Reinvesting in Youth and reinvest them according to joint plan • Discuss financing strategies in addition to seeking large transitional funding (internal alignment, seeking federal and state grants, looking for additional federal reimbursement, etc.) • Develop advocacy/legislative agenda • Set priorities • Designate interim staff support 	<p>April 1, 2001 Hold first meeting of Steering Committee</p>

What:

3. Develop initial financing package

- Determine mix of financing strategies to be employed
- Obtain mutual commitments on how and when to commit and realign internal resources
- Seek substantial transitional funding
- Develop creative and powerful incentives to carry out financing package and get maximum leverage from outside funding

What:

4. Hire staff/consultants

- Hire high-level Executive Director with political and financial savvy and knowledge of systems reform
- Hire sufficient mid-level and administrative staff to support ED
- Hire evaluator
- Retain consultants to bring needed structure or expertise to development of implementation strategy

What:

5. Develop initial investment portfolio

- Determine overall approach
- Select target populations (age, risk levels, geographic areas)
- Collect information about existing services and gaps
- Involve families, youth and community members
- Select investments
- Develop budget and timeline

Appendix A

List of Persons Interviewed

Phil Bussey
Washington Roundtable

David Foster, Legislative Aide
King County Councilman Greg Nichols

Brian Gain, Presiding Judge
King County Superior Court

Carol Mauer, Coordinator
King County Children and Family Commission

Dave Reichert
King County Sheriff

Helen Sommers, Representative
Washington State Legislature

Pat Steel, Director
King County Office of Budget and Strategic Planning

Cheryl Stephani, Acting Assistant Secretary
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Kip Tokuda, Representative
Washington State Legislature

Richard Van Wagenen, Executive Policy Advisor
Governor's Executive Policy Office

Appendix B

Financial Analysis Categories

Functional Categories

Definitions and Program Examples

1. Child Welfare: services provide for basic needs or promote youth safety. Shelters, foster care, violence prevention education, school resource officers.
2. Mental Health, Substance Abuse, & Preventive Care
Counseling, drug use prevention, rehabilitation services, teen clinics, family planning.
3. Juvenile Justice: involving criminal investigation, detention, or legal/judicial services, or services provided to offenders during adjudication, detention, or as part of a sentence.
Juvenile police units, juvenile court, prosecution, and defense, substance abuse treatment for offenders.
4. Youth Development: enrichment activities or services designed to improve life skills.
Community service projects, arts programs, leadership skills workshops.
5. Youth Employment & Educational Support: services designed to improve employment/higher education opportunities.
High school internships, summer jobs programs, Upward Bound, GED prep courses.
6. Youth Recreation: services that offer out-of-school recreational activities for youth.
Youth parks activities, after-school recreation programs.

Investment Continuum Categories

Definitions and Program Examples:

- A. Development: Actions intended to build youth strengths, mastery, and skills.
Community service projects, recreation and arts programs, internships, tutoring to promote college attendance.
- B. Prevention: Actions intended to avoid, or reduce the risk of, specific negative experiences or conditions.
Education programs to prevent drug abuse and violence, recreation geared toward gang prevention.
- C. Early/Mid-Level Intervention: Actions in response to the emergence of negative behavior or conditions.
Counseling, resource and referral services, community development efforts, tutoring in response to academic difficulties.

D. Intense Intervention: Actions in response to ongoing or repeated problem behavior or negative circumstances.

Gang intervention programs, family reconciliation services, juvenile police units, legal services, outpatient mental health care, alternatives to secure detention, transition services provided to youth leaving institutions.

E. Residential/Institutional: Actions in response to behavior or circumstance considered wholly unacceptable, in which the most drastic community responses are required.

Shelters, residential care, foster care, inpatient counseling, involuntary commitment, secure detention, work camps.

Appendix C

Sources: Factors Identified as Contributing to Disproportionality in Communities around the Country

1. Juvenile Justice Racial Disproportionality Work Group; Report to the Washington State Legislature; December 1994
2. Racial Disproportionality In County Juvenile Facilities: Information Needs and Neglected Causes; A Report to the Washington State Legislature; December 1998
3. "Racial Disparities in Official Assessments of Juvenile Offenders: Attributional Stereotypes as Mediating Mechanisms." Bridges and Steen; American Sociological Review, Volume 63, Number 4, August 1998
4. Racial Disproportionality in the Juvenile Justice System; King County Final Report; Bridges and Engen; 1993
5. Racial Disproportionality in County Juvenile Facilities; Final Report; Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration, DSHS State of Washington; July 1995
6. "Crime, Social Structure and Criminal Punishment: White and Nonwhite Rates of Imprisonment." Social Problems, Vol.,34, No.4, October 1987; Bridges, Crutchfield and Simpson
7. Law, Social Standing and Racial Disparities in Imprisonment; Bridges and Crutchfield; 1988
8. "Disproportionate Minority Confinement: Lessons Learned From Five States." Juvenile Justice Bulletin; December, 1998
9. Huizinga, D. and Elliott, D. (1987). "Juvenile Offenders: Prevalence, Offender Incidence, and Arrest Rates by Race." 33 Crime and Delinquency 224-258.
10. Bishop, D. and Frazier, C. (1996). "Race Effects in Juvenile Justice Decision Making: Findings of a Statewide Analysis." 86 Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology 392-414.
11. Corley, C., Bynum, T. and Wordes, M. (1995). "Conceptions of Family and Juvenile Court Processes: A Qualitative Assessment." 18 Justice System Journal 157-172.
12. Selected Articles on Racial Disparity and the Criminal Justice System, The Sentencing Project.
13. Responding to Racial Disparities in Prison and Jail Populations, Council of State Governments, June, 1998, Marc Mauer, Assistant Director, The Sentencing Project.
14. Congressional Symposium on the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, September, 1997, Testimony of Marc Mauer Assistant Director , The Sentencing Project.

Appendix D

Reinvesting in Youth Budget - First Draft

Infrastructure

Executive Director	\$90,000
Mid level staff	60,000
Mid level staff	60,000
Grantwriter	50,000
Administrative support	30,000
Salaries	\$290,000
24 percent fringe	70,000
Total personnel	\$360,000
Office space, supplies, equipment, telephone, postage, publication of materials, miscellaneous meeting costs, etc.	\$85,000
Consultants, evaluation	200,000*
Estimated annual total	\$645,000

Expenditure area	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Infrastructure	\$645k	\$645k	\$645k	\$645k	\$645k	\$3.225 m
Program investments	\$8 m	\$12 m	\$15 m	\$8 m	\$3.8 m	\$46.8 m
Technical assistance	\$.5m	\$2m	\$1.5m	\$.5m	\$.5m	\$5 m
Total	\$9.145m	\$14.645m	\$17.145m	\$9.145m	\$4.945m	\$55.025 m

*This amount covers the system and organizational levels of evaluation, as well as the work to link findings from these two levels and from the program level. It does not include the cost of program level evaluation, since it is impossible to predict at this time what type of program investments will be made. Program evaluation costs may perhaps be set aside as a portion of the funding for each program.

Reinvesting in Youth

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