

**Operational Review of the Juvenile Justice and
Abuse and Neglect Programs of the
Children and Family Services Department**

County of Wayne

Summary Findings

March 21, 2006



Operational Review Summary

Project Scope and Objectives

Plante & Moran, partnering with Alan Young and Associates, completed an independent and objective review of the Juvenile Services Division within the Department of Children and Family Services (CAFS), which includes the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) and network Care Management System (CMS) model for delinquent juveniles. The JAC service delivery system for Department of Human Services (DHS) abuse/neglect was also examined. This process was initiated as a continuous improvement effort within the County to assess management controls over the JAC/CMS model and Juvenile Agency Information System (JAIS). This project consisted of the following three (3) phases:

- Assessment of the Juvenile Assessment Center
- Operational Review of Juvenile Services and Best Practices Recommendations
- JAIS Information System Review

The purpose of this review was to examine the effectiveness of the new system established in 2000, and to provide suggestions for subsequent improvement.

Project Approach

The major steps associated with our project are outlined below:

1. Documentation Collection and Review

Reviewed existing Juvenile Services documentation to gain a comprehensive understanding of the JAC/CMS service delivery model.

2. Leadership/Stakeholder Interviews

Conducted interviews with staff from CAFS Juvenile Services, CAFS Finance Department, CAFS – IT, JAC, Michigan Department of Human Services, Third Judicial Circuit Court – Family Division (the Court), Clinic for Child Study, and other Juvenile Justice experts.

3. JAC Assessment

Plante & Moran interviewed key staff members within the Juvenile Assessment Center regarding organizational structure, service delivery process, audit process, billing and payment procedures, and management controls and oversight.

4. Juvenile Services Assessment

Plante & Moran interviewed key staff members within Juvenile Services regarding organizational structure, JAIS system, cost analysis, County payment procedures, audit process, and management controls and oversight.

5. Best Practice Research

Plante & Moran contacted local and national jurisdictions to identify comparative cost data and best practices in juvenile justice service delivery models.

6. JAIS Review

Conducted a review of the JAIS system to assess the following areas:

- Accuracy of Billing/Payment Process
- Appropriate Internal Controls
- JAIS System Security

7. Report Publication

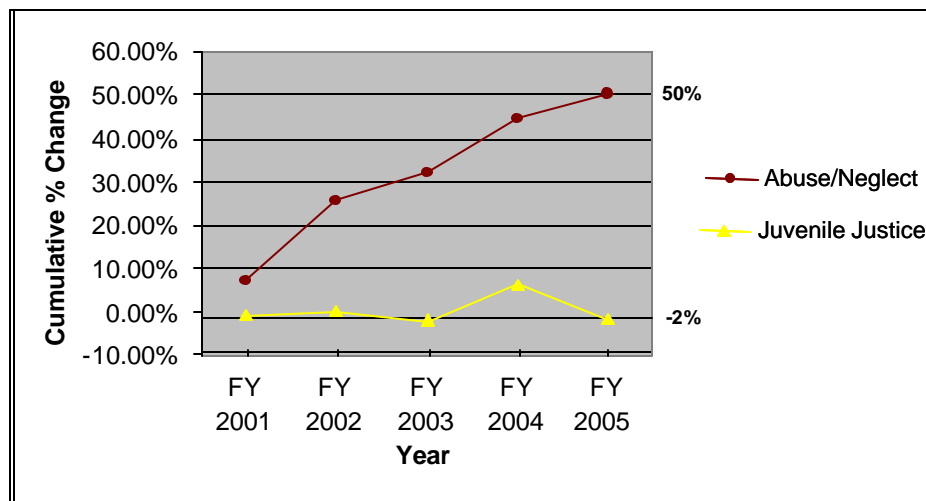
Provided management with final report of findings.

Major Findings

Overall, the project team found a core of dedicated and capable service delivery staff at the County and the JAC. The JAC/CMS service delivery model continues to evolve and improve since its implementation in 2000. During the past two years there have been many management control changes that have resulted in increased oversight and quality improvement measures within the County and the JAC.

- ◆ Since the inception of the JAC/CMS service delivery model in 2000, Wayne County CAFS has been effective in controlling and containing delinquent juvenile services costs.
 - Wayne County CAFS has been effective at controlling Juvenile Justice (delinquent) service costs. This is demonstrated by comparison to the parallel Abuse & Neglect system. Based on the expenditure trend data of costs shared by the State and Wayne County for Juvenile Justice and Abuse/Neglect cases including Title IV-E, Child Care Fund and State Ward Board & Care funds, overall program expenses for delinquent juveniles have stabilized with a net decrease of almost 2% in the past 5 years due to the ongoing utilization management and the close monitoring of CMS expenses, while Abuse/Neglect expenses have increased approximately 50% during the same period.

Child Care Fund (CCF) and State Ward Board & Care (SWBC) Expenditure Trends 2001 - 2005



- Currently more than half of the delinquent juveniles committed to CAFS are assigned to in-home services and very few of those are escalated to higher security levels due to additional violations vs. previously when an overwhelming majority of Wayne County delinquent juveniles were in out-of-home placements such as restrictive State Training Facilities.

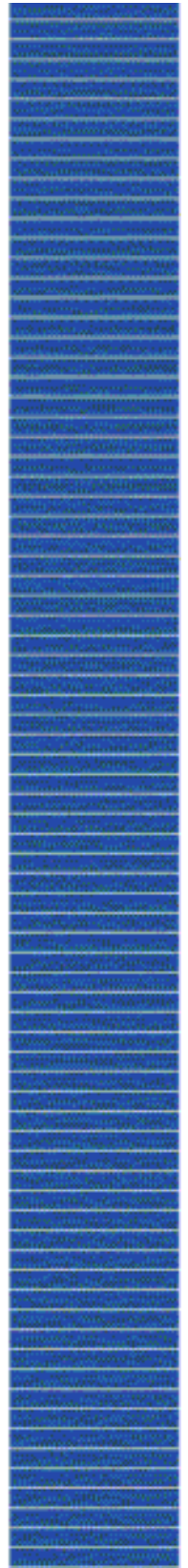
- ◆ The JAC/CMS service delivery model has been effective in increasing positive outcomes for delinquent juveniles in Wayne County.
 - The cumulative recidivism rate occurring within Wayne County for all delinquent juveniles terminated from a CMS as of 2004 was less than 5% (N= 1,900 juveniles tracked). There is also preliminary evidence of academic improvements and lower drug use. Post-release recidivism rates under the old model were more than 50% for some facilities.
- ◆ Wayne County CAFS is engaging in many commonly accepted best practices as identified by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) for the assessment and treatment of delinquent juveniles. Those include focusing on Community Based, In-home Treatment, standardized assessment methods, formal management systems and quality assurance processes, and enabling a formal information sharing system utilizing the JAIS computer system.
- ◆ Wayne County CAFS does have reporting challenges related to demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of its Juvenile Services Programs. The Department maintains a number of statistics, defined by funding source, each tracking costs and number of youth served differently. For example, if the Wayne County Commissioners inquire “what does it cost to treat the average delinquent juvenile?” it can, and typically does, receive several different numbers from CAFS.
- ◆ The current organizational limitations within CAFS – Juvenile Services allow for only 8 individuals that are 100% assigned to administer a \$100M Juvenile Justice system. Staff appear to be diligently working to meet the oversight needs of the Juvenile Services Division, however, staff limitations have impacted their ability to provide timely, consistent and standardized technical training to the JAC, CMS agencies and other providers.
- ◆ The youth that are the clientele of CAFS are wards of the Court. There appears to be limited data sharing between the Court and the JAC, despite the fact that both agencies use and require common information. Close collaboration between the Court, CAFS - Juvenile Services, and the JAC ensures the success of the JAC/CMS agency service delivery model. Each agency depends on timely and accurate feedback in order to fulfill their part of the process. During our interviews, we noted delays with court orders getting to the JAC, and a number of court processes that significantly impact the cost of delivering Juvenile Services for the County.
- ◆ The JAIS system appears to function as designed and provides appropriate control features. Over time, the use of the system has expanded, both in terms of user populations and programs monitored by JAIS. This evolution has led to a situation whereby it is difficult for the County to effectively manage security clearances of the various user communities.

Recommendations

- ◆ The JAC/CMS service delivery model implemented in 2000 appears to have been extremely successful at controlling costs, as well as reducing recidivism rates. CAFS, however, does not appear to have effectively communicated this fact. We strongly encourage CAFS to invest sufficient resources to develop a managerial accounting/reporting system to better align with common inquiries from the Wayne County Commissioners, managers within CAFS, County Administration, the public, news agencies and the Court. This would be a proactive measure, and a leading move among juvenile services agencies across the country, to restore/enhance public confidence in the efficacy and efficiency of CAFS's program.
- ◆ The JAC/CMS service delivery model has been very effective at controlling costs. We suggest that Wayne County examine the potential to include the Abuse/Neglect programming within this, or a similar system.
- ◆ Provide a minimum of 4.0 additional staff to the CAFS - Juvenile Services Division to provide enhanced management and oversight of the JAC and CMS organizations. These additional staff would provide the personnel necessary to enhance oversight of each agency and provide up-front, consistent training and technical assistance needed to address policy and procedural issues at the JAC and CMS agencies.
- ◆ Increase coordination with the Court to ensure appropriate processes are in place to efficiently process the court orders, which initiate the assessment and treatment process, and sharing information with other Court entities. Also, the County should engage in discussions with the Court to reevaluate the Court processes that have a significant impact on the costs of delivering delinquent juvenile services. This would include:
 - Reinstating coordination meetings between the County and appropriate Court staff.
 - Educating Court jurists on the options available to them via the JAC/CMS service delivery model and the repercussions/costs of different option choices.
 - Involving Court personnel in more of the policy development regarding the service delivery model and JAC oversight.
 - Ensuring that the court information system (JIS) and the JAIS system are both reflecting similar accurate and up-to-date data regarding the youth and explore the use of EDI technology to eliminate redundant data entry.
 - Implementing better processes to ensure court orders are processed efficiently with greater accuracy.

- Determining what assessment information is legally permissible to be shared between CAFS and the Clinic for Child Study and the mechanisms that can be used to share data.
 - Jointly work with the Court and the Clinic for Child Study to determine where the Clinic fits into the overall continuum of services for Wayne County
- ◆ CAFS should update access and security policies to more discretely define user groups based on user functionality within JAIS. Use of the JAIS system has evolved over the 5 years since inception, and the security policy should be correspondingly updated to reflect current usage patterns. The user group definitions for the JAIS system should be made more uniform. Each group should provide access to only specific business functions that are tied to an agency's business processes. This way, access can be controlled and a good segregation of duties can be maintained. We found no evidence of "phantom" users in this review, however, to ensure that this is the case we recommend that the County delete all user IDs and then reestablish them based on valid, current signed security agreements
 - ◆ Controls should be established to validate clients against an outside data source to eliminate security concerns over unintentional records existing in the JAIS system. We recommend that entry of a court order number be a required field before a CMS can be assigned. The court order number must also check for duplicates to ensure a client is not entered more than once for the same court order. In addition, a valid court order number list should be received from the Court on a monthly basis, so the JAIS entries can be validated against the court order numbers received from the County. A court order should also be scanned into JAIS so that users can view the actual court order language.

Given the proper support and focus, the implementation of these improvement recommendations can help move the Juvenile Services Division forward to an environment of increased cooperation and continuous improvement with the Court, the JAC, and CMS agencies, ultimately leading to increased efficiency, effectiveness, oversight and accountability on an organization-wide basis.



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