Juvenile Justice Diversion Programs

A Study of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs in Florida

Submitted to the Eckerd Family Foundation

by

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July 31, 2008

Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida

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Executive Summary

Civil Citation and Teen Court programs are two of many juvenile diversion options funded in Florida and elsewhere in the United States. The juvenile justice system nationally continues to emphasize front-end programs that divert youth from deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system with the concomitant risks of exposure to negative role modeling, victimization, and stigmatization. Diversion is not, however, for all youth. Youth that repeatedly offend, commit violent crimes, and exhibit characterological deficits (e.g. sociopathy or psychopathy) which increase risk of offending and are not easily treated continue to be adjudicated through the juvenile justice system and sentenced to probation, detention and residential treatment.

For youth deemed appropriate for these programs as determined by the arresting officer, consequences will be swift while evading the stigma of a juvenile record. In addition, the courts benefit from smaller caseloads. Communities profit from a reduction in recidivism and increased community service performed by offending minors. Youth have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes by adjudication from peers, as is the case when Teen Court programs are utilized. For Civil Citation programs, they learn by serving the community and being held accountable by caring adults. Both programs provide an opportunity for identification of underlying problems addressed through referral to community-based programs (e.g. mental health counseling) or, in some cases provided within the program itself.

This research effort focused on the current operationalization of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs as well as establishing guidelines for starting Civil Citation programs in communities that are planning to begin a program. To accomplish this, the research team utilized information from 45 programs in 29 counties in Florida that included 12 Civil Citation programs, 19 Teen Court programs and 14 other programs or agencies (e.g. State Attorney's Office, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, Circuit Courts). In addition, white papers, reports, and published literature were reviewed. Information was obtained via both qualitative (interviews, document review) and quantitative (completion of a study survey) methods. Thus, complimentary data sources, data collection, and analytic methods were used in the course of this project.

Specific objectives targeted in this research included the following areas:

- Description of policies and statutes affecting Civil Citation and Teen Court programs

- Description of Juvenile Assessment Centers and their influence on Civil Citation and Teen Court programs

- Current operationalization of Civil Citation programs in Florida

- Current operationalization of Teen Court programs in Florida

- Startup and implementation guidelines of a Civil Citation program

- Recommendations

The main results for each objective will be discussed separately in this executive summary.

Policy, Civil Citation, and Teen Court

Juvenile justice policy in Florida operates under the key principles of offender accountability, community protection, and competency development. Of these, respondents relate competency development most with increased hope for a better life and attainment of necessary skills for youth. Hope and skill attainment are necessary for recidivism prevention. However, competency development receives the least focus by Civil Citation and Teen Court programs in general, increasing the chances for recidivism.

Policy and procedure development at the programmatic level is limited for the majority of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs. There are examples of programs with well-developed policies and guiding procedures that increase fidelity to the respective program models, but these are few. Further, some Civil Citation programs are relying on the statute as the procedural policy document and some Teen Court programs are utilizing the bylaws of their state association as the basis program policy. Careful analysis of both these documents finds them inadequate as policy and procedural documents at the program level.

Juvenile Assessment Centers, Civil Citation, and Teen Court

The relationship between Civil Citation programs and Juvenile Assessment Centers varies substantially by site. Some individuals involved with the Civil Citation programs described their relationship as non-existent because the youth involved with Civil Citation programs do not go to a Juvenile Assessment Center. They are diverted into the community. Others describe a more dependent relationship. For instance, the Miami-Dade Civil Citation program is embedded in the Juvenile Assessment Center. In Leon County, the Civil Citation program is housed in the Juvenile Assessment Center and there is considerable communication. When a Juvenile Assessment Center is aware of or involved with a Civil Citation program there is considerable support and respect for the diversion effort.

The relationship between Teen Court programs and Juvenile Assessment Centers are as varied as those between Civil Citation programs and Juvenile Assessment Centers. Some Teen Court representatives report either no Juvenile Assessment Center in their area at all or "not much interaction" between the two, while others reported much higher levels of communication. One Teen Court representative reports not getting any referrals at all from the Juvenile Assessment Center, while another states they do get referrals from the Juvenile Assessment Center stating, "that's where it all starts." "[It is] in the same building. They assess the teen for Teen Court." The level of interaction between Juvenile Assessment Centers and Teen Court or Civil Citation programs depends on how the programs have evolved from the initiation of the diversion program and appear not to alter appreciably over time.

Operationalization of Civil Citation Programs in Florida

Civil Citation programs are funded either through a Florida Department of Juvenile Justice grant, county juvenile justice dollars, the county Sheriff's Department budget, or through multiple funding sources at a community-based social service agency. The average range of funding per Civil Citation program is $113,000 to $137,000. The majority of programs have one full time

employee though one program reports six employees working in various capacities. The average number of youth processed through a Civil Citation program is 503 with a substantial range of 40 to 1,600 youth.

Programs vary on whether they allow first or second time misdemeanants in their program, though the statute appears to imply that second time misdemeanants are eligible. For many programs, location and law enforcement priorities have shaped which offenses are covered by civil citations. For programs mainly in middle schools and high schools, this equates with affray, assault, disruption of a school function, and disorderly conduct. On the other hand, a program that has the majority of their referrals due to shoplifting has naturally become specialized in petty retail theft. When analyzed, offenses clustered into seven categories: Theft/Taking Property, Other Property Related, Substance Related, Disruptive Behavior, Violent/Threatening Offenses, Traffic/Driving Related, and Other. The largest individual offense is petty retail theft (20.86%). However, the violent/threatening cluster is the largest category of offenses diverted to Civil Citation (29.64%).

The assessment process for Civil Citation programs varies in rigor. Some programs report no assessment completed with the focus of the program on satisfying community service hours and other sanctions levied. Other programs, usually through the efforts of the local Juvenile Assessment Center or through a clinical team approach for community-based social service agencies, have extensive assessment procedures that guide sanction assignments and service referrals (e.g. mental health counseling). Programs housed in law enforcement are less likely to have a comprehensive assessment process. This should not be construed as a criticism of law enforcement based programs. Law enforcement programs have a different expectation of their programs and youth focusing more on the offense and restitution for the offense.

The main sanction for Civil Citation is community service, with an average of 23.3 hours assigned per youth with the average low of 12.5 hours and high of 43.5 hours. There are four general strategies for provision of community service hours: Youth generated with advice from program staff, a list of placements provided for the youth to follow-up on, community service group activities in parks or other locations, and home-based community service for younger or special need youth. Community service is not the only sanction in Civil Citation programs and a considerable list of additional sanctions has emerged. For instance, group mentoring, 'giving back' reports, school attendance, and apology letters are often assigned.

Youth are referred often to services when an assessment detects a specific need. For instance, services attempting to increase the chance of keeping the child from falling into the trap of recidivism include attending help sessions on social skills, anger management, mandated involvement in mentoring programs, and attending resistance skills development groups. The most available services are counseling related (mental health, substance abuse, family) and the least are restorative justice related. Whether services are provided in-house or offered via a referral will affect the success of the service provision and, to a degree, the program. Referred services are less likely to be completed than those provided by the program. For the majority of Civil Citation programs, success of service delivery is based on completing the service, not knowledge gain or behavioral change, for the majority of the Civil Citation programs. Thus, there is limited assessment of service impact, only compliance.

There are multiple barriers influencing success of Civil Citation programs. Five categories of potential barriers were identified in the proposal for this project and analysis of data confirmed this early perception. The barrier categories include the following issues:

- *Policy barriers.* The zero tolerance policy was the most cited policy barrier addressed by program staff. Zero tolerance in schools was addressed as a barrier because the original intent of the law, for some respondents, has evolved to include nearly any offense. Training, and lots of it, was the primary solution cited by program staff to address zero tolerance. In most cases, the trainer most likely to convince law enforcement of how zero tolerance policy has evolved into potentially unfair law enforcement practices and the further link to Civil Citation as a viable alternative to arrest was law enforcement personnel themselves.

- *Implementation barriers.* Three implementation areas were noted consistently as problematic for Civil Citation programs. These include law enforcement and school personnel mindset (punitive versus change oriented), lack of stable community service locations, and extensive paperwork in some jurisdictions. Open and direct communication with partners was suggested as the primary solution to barriers. Finding the time to help partners feel valued was often difficult but respondents indicated that it was a priority.

- *Youth related barriers.* Two types of youth related barriers were uncovered. The first is youth noncompliance and the second is accepting youth into the program that have, unbeknownst until intake, extensive psychological and/or psychosocial impairments. Youth related noncompliance was a source of frustration for several respondents. Suggestions for addressing the problem included expending extra time assisting the youth and probing for the reasons behind their noncompliance; enlisting the aid of the parents, finding an alternative to some of the community service hours if the reasons for noncompliance are legitimate; and pointing out the consequences of further noncompliance.

- *Family/Caregiver related barriers.* Family related issues raised during interviews include disinterested or over involved parents that may have a criminal history, other family members with a criminal history (negative role modeling) and pragmatic issues such as lack of transportation. While caretaker barriers can be quite disruptive in successful completion of a Civil Citation program, their detection hinges on having an assessment sensitive enough to detect their presence. Case managers and other line staff in Civil Citation programs are addressing issues of parental disinterest by spending time building rapport with the parents and by emphasizing the positive aspects of civil citation versus juvenile adjudication. Messages of support and explanation of Civil Citation program benefits delivered to parents appear to be relatively consistent across programs.

- *Community related barriers.* Only half of the programs identified community barriers to success. This was less than expected and leaves the question unanswered whether the participants understand what potential community related barriers are. In many areas where the programs operate, there is extensive poverty, discrimination, lack of community recreation resources and other community issues. A suggestion that emerged from the literature and not the direct study was the recognition and training of ecologic understanding of family/community issues for diversion programs in general. Youth

criminal activity requires opportunities and justification by the youth that often stem from negative family and community issues more prevalent in disadvantaged areas. At this time, there is no information on whether Civil Citation programs would value or support this type of training.

Restorative justice is a useful organizing concept and theory of change for Civil Citation programs. Only three programs have components that directly address restorative justice in the form of 'giving back' reports or restorative justice conferences that bring the victim, offender, and their families together to discuss sanctions and to offer apologies. Another concept used to organize program delivery for some CC programs is disproportionate minority contact (DMC).

The extent that DMC was a focus was due, in part, to the demographic makeup of the community in which the program was surveyed. None of the respondents believed that minority youth had the same opportunities and resources as majority youth. For respondents that commented on DMC, there was agreement that there must be systematic changes in how youth are perceived, approached, referred, and assisted in order to develop an identity that does not internalize criminal offenses as a viable alternative to acting within societal norms and laws.

The majority of programs are using recidivism as the only outcome to measure program success. Recidivism is operationalized by checking the Juvenile Justice Information System for additional charges for each youth after program completion. Recidivism levels range from 3 to 17 percent. However, the measurement of recidivism is inconsistent with respect to interval across Civil Citation programs. Intervals range from 3 to 12 months with only a few programs checking at multiple time points. Programs should begin to check consistently at 3-month intervals and minimally to 12 months. Some programs are using additional indicators or outcomes beyond recidivism. However, many of these are not true outcomes as some are indicators of youth participation in the program rather than changes in the youth's knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior. There is a large deficit of evaluation skill and usage across Civil Citation programs.

Operationalization of Teen Court Programs in Florida

There was less qualitative and more quantitative information available for assessment of Teen Court operationalization. A brief overview of results from Teen Court data analysis begins with comments on budget and staff. The average annual budget for a Teen Court program is $119,300 with a range of $25,000 to $500,000, although the half-million dollar budget addresses complimentary programs as well and that could not be broken out for Teen Court alone. Approximately two full time staff work with each program though the range is extreme (0 to 7).

Teen Court programs have a degree of flexibility when deciding on what type and level of criminal offences are eligible for their program. The statue does not define specific covered offenses and from the limited data, it appears that the programs that have been established longer are taking offenses that are more serious. Interviews and documents indicate that some Teen Court programs are limited to first time misdemeanor offenders while others will take felony cases, some directly or others with an agreement with the State Attorney's Office.

When considering offenses, retail/petty theft (24.9%) is the most frequent offense referred to Teen Court. Possession of marijuana (15.42%) is the second most frequent offense.

Theft/taking property is the most frequent category of offenses (29.39%). Not surprising, the category of substance related offenses is second most frequent but only slightly behind the first at 24.38 percent of all offenses referred.

The majority of interview respondents report that the Juvenile Assessment Center completes an initial assessment that may include a psychosocial or biopsychosocial assessment, the PACT or similar instrument for assessing risk, family interactions, substance abuse history, disqualifying information (weapon charges and sex offenses were mentioned by one participant as excluding entry into that program), and urinalysis. Two programs stated directly that they do not complete an assessment separate from the Juvenile Assessment Center. Parent assessment of youth behavior, history, and emotional stability should be included in more Teen Court assessment packages. This provides a counterbalance to information obtained from the youth.

Teen Courts have developed a long list of sanctions beyond community service. Unique to this program, and part of each Teen Court interviewed, is the return to court to participate in jury duty as a mandatory sanction. This is not universal as one respondent mentioned one county where it is not mandatory. Several sites place limits on community service hours and nights of jury duty for the level of offense but they must be levied as sanctions unless extenuating circumstances makes this impossible. Much like Civil Citation, Teen Court programs will dispense with mandatory sanctions if issues of transportation or health require.

Community service remains the backbone of sanctions for Teen Court. However, several programs suggested that community service locations are approved that will "… send them to something they're good at to improve others lives." This is another example of restorative justice practices. However, not all Teen Court representatives made this claim and it is likely an easier task to manage in an urban location. Consistently, arranging steady community service sites was cited as a principal barrier to program implementation.

Service assessment and referral is similar to Civil Citation programs. However, there are some notable services being developed as potential alternatives for youth manifesting specific issues. For instance, in one jurisdiction the Teen Court is spearheading the development of Camp ExRAYD (Exam Reality about Your Decision). This is an additional 18 hours of mandated activities for youth charged with a substance abuse crime or that test positive at intake as well as specified aftercare. This includes a jail tour, follow-up counseling, and six months of aftercare. A separate county is replicating this effort. Another program developed specifically for the offender population is Shock Education that provides tours to numerous facilities such as emergency rooms to expose the youth to the negative consequences of poor choices. This is not a 'scared straight' effort, which has proven ineffective, but is exposure with education, discussion, and also an opportunity to experience careers that a youth might aspire to in the helping professions.

Finally, discussions of barriers are not substantively different from Civil Citation programs and will not be repeated.

Starting a Civil Citation Program

Twenty guidelines emerged from the data that support Civil Citation program startup. These are presented in abbreviated form, with some combined, and should be followed more or less in the order presented.

1. Determine optimal funding needed, complete the steps to obtain funding, and begin planning for sustainability immediately.

2. Plan for multiple meetings with key stakeholders to gain support and budget time accordingly to meet funding deadlines.

3. Contact the State Attorney's Office, Chief Judge of the Circuit Court, local law enforcement agencies, the Public Defender's Office, the District School Board, in that order, to gain support and sign memorandums of understanding. Follow this with communication with community service providers and referral agencies for special needs and establish partnership agreements. Negotiate the role of the State Attorney's Office as specifically as possible. They have the largest impact on startup policy and procedures.

4. Focus on the benefits of Civil Citation to law enforcement (e.g. immediate consequences, admission of guilt, elimination of case dismissal, and no time in court) when discussing their participation. When in doubt, start with school resource officers. Data from respondents identify this group as more responsive.

5. Talk to state and local juvenile justice organizations and school system officials to identify key individuals in the juvenile justice system, school system and community service stakeholder groups. Maintain local juvenile justice and school district personnel on the steering committee.

6. As soon as feasible, develop a coherent process and measurement tool to increase understanding of the potential problems and their frequency in the target population. Administer this tool to key stakeholder groups. Use this information to identify key service provision and community service provider stakeholders.

7. Develop a theory of change. Remember to include professionals with the requisite background knowledge of the population and of diversion. Include individuals with experience in evaluation and program development.

8. Establish a functional system of policies and procedures to guide early implementation of the program. Do not postpone this task as negative procedural habits could start and be difficult to reverse.

9. Develop a cohesive intake and monitoring process (e.g. acceptance of referrals, scheduling of intake/assessment, necessary forms, sanction, referral processes, and discharge protocols).

10. Ensure that the assessment process is comprehensive enough to detect high risk youth and to address underlying problems that will interfere with successful completion of the program.

11. Develop a list of possible sanctioning choices that will benefit and not simply punish the youth. Maintain contact with community service and service providers and make sure

that they are maintained as stable partners through consistent contact even if their use as a referral agency is sporadic.

12. Develop an evaluation plan, logic model, and data management system. Assume that you will be asked to prove the worth of the program or pursue additional funding opportunities as they arise.

Recommendations

The final portion of this summary will address recommendations that emerged from the data and are supported by multiple data points, are consistent with the analytic method, and are supported in the literature base. Recommendations are clustered into two categories. The first are recommendations that will affect Civil Citation, Teen Court and by extension, diversion in general. These global recommendations will improve the value of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs through validating and improving efficacy. They will also improve operationalization of the programs. The second category is a set of recommendations that will improve the operational capacity of Civil Citation and/or Teen Court programs as they are currently implemented in Florida.

Global Recommendations

1. **Improve the Evaluation Capacity of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs**

   Currently, Civil Citation and Teen Court programs alike have a great deal of anecdotal information that suggests that these programs work. Further, Teen Court programs have legitimate peer reviewed studies that support their position, though these are not specific to Florida. Civil Citation currently has minimal peer reviewed literature supporting it. It is recommended that there be an investment made for increasing the evaluation capacity of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs (e.g. fundamentals of program evaluation, basic methods, selection of measurement tools, development of a logic model). This could be either a standalone effort or in conjunction with Global Recommendation 2 below. Further, current efforts are generally descriptive and do not link the program to recidivism or other outcomes. In other words, there is not a strong scientific evidence base to support the impact of the program.

2. **Complete a State Level Evaluation of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs**

   There are multiple reasons for conducting a statewide evaluation of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs, including the following:

   - If completed, while also addressing evaluation capacity (Global Recommendation 1), it leaves in place a capability for continued evaluation that is easily translatable to evidence-based practices for new programs as they are established.

   - Data from multiple programs can be pooled to establish a state level effect size for Civil Citation and/or Teen Court programs. Simultaneously, individual effect sizes can be computed and compared with variables that contribute to an increased or decreased effect size. This would allow the identification of individual factors that contribute to or diminish the success of the program.

- The use of the same or similar data collection procedures and establishment of identical or at least highly similar outcomes across sites will allow the comparison of programs across outcomes and can better test the effect of demographics, population density, and other variables in hierarchical ecologic models. These are complex analyses that require specific minimum sample sizes be met to ensure validity and a state level evaluation would ensure this. Practically, this methodology would allow a more in depth investigation of single variables as well as grouping of variables to identify drivers of success within programs.

3. **Complete a State Level Cost-Benefit Analysis of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs**

   There are currently no Florida based and almost no cost-benefit studies of Civil Citation and Teen Court programs out of state. Indeed, only Washington State has any data minimally relevant to Florida. A cost-benefit analysis is suggested over a cost-effectiveness study because the results, in dollars versus, for instance, number of events avoided, are more easily understood and accepted by policy makers. An important consideration is that cost-benefit analyses are usually performed on programs with proven efficacy. Teen court has preliminary data supporting efficacy where as Civil Citation only has limited performance data. It is recommended that a sound base for program efficacy be established before conducting a cost-benefit analysis on either program.

Program Recommendations

1. **Establish Comprehensive Policies and Procedures Early in the Life Span of a Program**

   Policies influence practice and good policy will often support good practices. Having a clear idea of the procedures for operating a program consistently increases the chance that the program will be successful or will be implemented as designed, allowing evaluation of the program to detect barriers.

2. **Utilize a Re-offending Risk Assessment**

   Recidivism is the primary targeted outcome linked to Civil Citation and Teen Court programs, and is likely to remain so, yet many programs are not using a risk assessment for reoffending at program entry to better identify youth at higher risk for recidivism and thus targeting additional resources.

3. **Develop a Theory of Change**

   A theory of change should be developed in the context of an evaluation plan and logic model to gain the full benefit of the direction that a theory of change brings. However, a theory of change can guide operationalization and service delivery, not just evaluation and significantly improve program outcomes.

4. **Develop and Assess Outcomes Other than Recidivism**

   Currently there are few programs adopting outcomes other than recidivism. Programs should develop a list of viable outcomes that will help focus the use of resources and can

be operationalized as a limited logic model without embracing a complete evaluation plan if capacity for evaluation is limited.

5. **Assessing Change over Time**

   Related to Recommendation 4 is the use of surveys to investigate program satisfaction, perception of the program through the eyes of youth and family, program fidelity, improved empathy of the youth, increased knowledge, the desire to re-offend, and many other possible concepts. These, as well as more specific program outcomes, can all be measured at the beginning and end of the program as well as further out in time to assess stability of change. Multiple measurements of the program will establish program impact over time, a necessity to establish worth and provide initial evidence of program efficacy.

6. **Increase Contact with Other Civil Citation Programs**

   This recommendation is specific to Civil Citation programs. Individuals in Civil Citation programs uniformly agreed that the lack of communication with other Civil Citation programs needs to change. All programs agreed that more frequent conversation at least with programs geographically close to them would be useful. Most programs recommended an annual or bi-annual meeting with frequent electronic communication with many or all other Civil Citation programs.

7. **Increase Recognition and Planned Interventions for Program Barriers**

   Barriers (policy, youth, family, implementation, and community) affect programs to varying degrees. There appears to be little proactive planning and targeted intervention for barriers. It would be useful if the programs and their stakeholders had an open dialogue on barriers facing Civil Citation and Teen Court programs and then brainstorming ideas to address the barriers followed by concrete action steps. Engaging stakeholders is essential.

8. **Increase Program Operationalization of the Three Guiding Principles Driving Florida Juvenile Justice Practice**

   A balanced diversion program will provide a reasonable emphasis on offender accountability, community protection, and competency development. The majority of programs have devoted limited resources to competency development compared to the other two principles. Interestingly, these programs also view changes in skills and hope for youth as the predominant link with the choice not to re-offend. Competency development is most closely related to change in skills and hope.

9. **Increase Sustainability Planning and Implementation**

   Programs are often started with minimal support and understanding of how to operationalize the program. This puts undue stress on the program staff, which is often a single individual, and encourages a myopic focus on the here-and-now. Sustainability planning should begin in the first year and be maintained throughout the life of the program.

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10. Increase Linkages with Service Providers

The final recommendation is to work to increase the number of agencies that are willing to provide a wider range of services. Program staff are assessing more specialty needs in youth populations and it must be remembered that budget and funding problems are affecting all sectors of service providers. Programs should proactively review their service delivery partner list, re-establish contact with any that have been neglected, openly discuss their stability, and seek additional partners for those areas that appear less stable.

Juvenile Justice Diversion Programs:
A Study of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs in Florida

Introduction

Civil Citation (CC) and Teen Court (TC) programs are two of many juvenile justice diversion options funded in Florida and elsewhere in the United States. The juvenile justice system nationally continues to emphasize front-end programs that divert youth from deeper penetration into the juvenile justice system with the concomitant risks of exposure to negative role modeling, victimization, and stigmatization. Diversion is not, however, for all youth. Youth that repeatedly offend, commit violent crimes and exhibit characterological deficits (e.g. sociopathy or psychopathy) which increase risk of offending and are not easily treated continue to be adjudicated through the juvenile justice system and sentenced to probation, detention and residential treatment.

For youth deemed appropriate for these programs, as determined by the arresting officer, consequences will be swift while evading the stigma of a juvenile record. In addition, the courts benefit from smaller caseloads. Communities profit from a reduction in recidivism and increased community service performed by offending minors. Youth have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes by adjudication from peers, as is the case when TC programs are utilized. In CC programs, they learn by serving the community and being held accountable by caring adults. Both programs provide an opportunity for identification of underlying problems addressed through referral to community-based programs, (e.g. mental health counseling), or provided services within the program itself, in some cases.

Purpose, Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this report is to describe the results of a research effort targeting CC and TC programs in Florida. Several goals and objectives were identified that helped focus this effort. The overall goal was to gain a clearer understanding of the state of CC and TC programs in Florida with an additional focus of how Juvenile Assessment Centers (JAC) influence these programs. This includes understanding how CC and TC programs are conceptualized, operationalized, and maintained over time. A secondary goal was to formalize the inductive knowledge base of multiple stakeholders and program personnel into a template of guidelines that would assist other communities in beginning CC programs. A template for TC programs was considered redundant, as there are already TC programs in 57 of 67 Florida counties and a state level association to assist these programs. Specific objectives targeted for research included:

- Description of policies and statutes affecting CC and TC programs
- Description of JACs and their influence on CC and TC programs
- Current operationalization of C programs in Florida
- Current operationalization of TC programs in Florida

- Startup and implementation of a CC program

- Recommendations

Methods

A mixed method approach was taken to give voice to both inductive qualitative data from multiple professionals in the field of juvenile diversion as well as more objective information taken from survey and program data and the research literature. Thus, complimentary data sources, data collection, and analytic methods were used in the course of this project. Information for analysis included interview data, observational data, program information, reports and white papers, peer reviewed documents and quantitative data from a survey sent to multiple CC and TC programs. Qualitative data included two stages of phone interviews with multiple respondents around the state and observations made at the Leon County TC and JAC. Stage 1 interviews targeted respondents that managed or provided direct services to youth in CC or TC programs. Twenty-one program coordinators, agency directors and other individuals with similar program relationships were interviewed. Stage 2 respondents included judges, state attorneys, JAC administrators, the principal investigator of the University of South Florida evaluation of the Hillsborough County CC program, and other individuals of interest. The purpose of Stage 2 interviews was to understand more fully the contextual, historical, supportive, and obstructive elements to diversion programs in general and for CC and TC programs in particular. Sixteen Stage 2 and JAC interviews were conducted. The average time for all interviews was 63 minutes. Stage 1 interviews averaged 84 minutes while Stage 2 averaged 24 minutes. A complete list of all individuals contacted, interviewed, and that completed the study survey is contained in the Appendix of the report. Copies of the interview forms used in Stages 1 and 2, and the study survey are included in the Appendix of the report as well.

Interview subjects were selected via purposeful sampling. An initial list of known CC and TC programs were contacted and interviewed. They were asked to identify other CC or TC programs. The Florida Association of Teen Courts was instrumental in finding accurate contact information for their members. However, not all Florida TC programs are members of the Florida Association of Teen Courts and contacts were made with individual circuit courts to locate non-affiliated TCs. Thus, of TCs interviewed, approximately half were members of the association. CC programs were more difficult to locate and in some cases did not respond to any e-mail or telephone contacts. Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) district delinquency prevention specialists were instrumental in providing accurate contact information for CC programs in their district.

Twelve CC and 19 TC programs were successfully contacted and provided one or more types of information. Table 1 summarizes information and programs by county. The three columns under the Programs heading include CC, TC and other programs or agencies, (e.g. circuit courts or state attorney offices). Interviews were broken into Stage 1, Stage 2 and JAC categories. The Survey column summarizes which counties returned a survey sent to the CC and TC programs with accurate contact information. The final column indicates the number of program related documents forwarded by programs that chose to do so. Forty-five programs or agencies were successfully contacted in 29 counties. Thirty-seven interviews were completed and 26 surveys were returned. Finally, 61 documents from CC and TC programs were reviewed in this effort.

Documents forwarded included, as examples, quarterly reports, copies of memorandums of understanding, policies and procedures, data pulls, and other relevant information.

#	County	Programs			Interviews			Survey	Program Documents
		CC	TC	Other	Stage 1	Stage 2	JAC		
1	Alachua		1					1	
2	Baker		1					1	
3	Broward	2			2			2	6
4	Calhoun		1					1	
5	Charlotte			1					3
6	Clay		1					1	
7	Collier	1			1			1	3
8	Duval			1		1			
9	Escambia	1	1	3	3	3	1	2	6
10	Hendry	1			1				6
11	Hernando		1						1
12	Hillsborough	1	1	2	3	4		1	5
13	Jackson		1					1	
14	Lake		1		1			1	3
15	Lee	1			1				8
16	Leon	1	1		3			2	9
17	Manatee		1	1		1		1	
18	Marion		1					1	
19	Miami-Dade	1		1	1			1	6
20	Nassau		1					1	
21	Orange	1	1	1	2		1	2	2
22	Palm Beach		1	1			1	1	1
23	Pinellas		1					1	
24	Polk			1		2	1		
25	Sarasota		1	1	1				
26	Seminole			1			1		
27	St. Lucie	2			2			2	2
28	Sumter		1					1	
29	Suwannee		1					1	
	Total	**12**	**19**	**14**	**21**	**11**	**5**	**26**	**61**

Table 1: Program and Data Source Information

There were two primary barriers to contacting CC and TC personnel.

1. It was difficult to obtain more than a cursory response from the majority of state, county, and agency contacts during the recent legislative session. In some cases, prospective respondents suggested or directly stated that there was considerable concern about the

impact of budget negotiations on individual programs. In many instances, the person of interest was in Tallahassee seeking contact with legislative staff and was unavailable until after the session.

2. Lack of adequate contact information for CC programs especially hindered data collection. For instance, contact information from the FDJJ for CC programs was approximately 80 percent incorrect. A combination of web searches and reliance on contact information from JACs, district prevention specialists and similar programs in other communities filled the gaps but required additional expenditure of time.

The Diversion Study Survey was created to support the interview information, program documents generously forwarded by participating programs, peer reviewed articles, and other publications that contributed to this report. Survey sections targeted allowable offenses, assessments completed at youth intake, services provided or referred, availability of specific community services and resources, community service hours, budgets, numbers served, and perception of barriers. Ten surveys were completed from 12 sent to CC programs (83.3%). For TC programs, 16 were returned of 57 sent (28.1%). This lower percentage can be in part attributed to early confusion regarding the purpose of the project as understood by TCs contacted. During an interview with a TC coordinator, the interviewee stated that TC staffs in the state were perpetuating a rumor that the purpose of the study was to create a rival TC organization. How this misconception began remains unclear. Considerable effort was expended to counter this rumor and provide the factual basis for the report. This was partially successful though there were still several TC representatives that did not respond to contacts. However, since the survey was descriptive with one survey per program, obtaining data from slightly more than one-quarter of the states programs is considered representative for the purpose of this report.

Overview of Civil Citation and Teen Court Programs in Florida

The structure of the remainder of this report transitions from the global to the proximate. First, a brief discussion of the three guiding principles of the current Florida policy for juvenile justice is followed by a discussion of the Blueprint Commission Report (BCR) and how CC and TC programs have interpreted and responded to it. Next is a discussion of JACs, which includes discussion of their daily operations and other areas of interest as well as their relationship to CC and TC programs. The JAC, when present in a community, is the centerpiece of juvenile justice activity. The conceptual operationalization of CC programs from the perspective of current policy and the CC statute is followed by an in-depth description of CC 'in reality.' Similar information is provided for TC programs before guidelines for starting a CC program are provided. The report ends with a comprehensive set of recommendations.

Florida Policy – Three Guiding Principles

The three guiding principles of Florida juvenile justice policy include offender accountability, community protection, and competency development (FDJJ Office of Probation and Community Corrections Handbook (PCCH, p 8)). Ideally, these are equally weighted in the development and implementation of diversion and other juvenile justice programs. However, both the peer reviewed literature and documentation referencing the Florida juvenile justice system prior to 2001 emphasizes community protection and accountability in the form of punishment rather than accountability to the victim or competency development. Starting in approximately 2001 the

discussion of rehabilitation began to gain momentum. Competency development and accountability are key components of restorative approaches to juvenile justice. The use of a restorative approach, sometimes referred to as restorative justice, is discussed here for three reasons. First, it was a point of interest in several of the interviews for this study and directly mentioned as a practice or intervention in three of the CC programs (programs 2, 6, and 11 in Table 1). Second, it is a theoretical framework advanced in the BCR (BCR, p 17) and mentioned as a potential strategy in BCR Recommendations 1, 21, 31, 32, 34, and 51. Finally, it appears to be a leading theory that binds together the three guiding principles that the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (FDJJ) operates under and the BCR advances. Though restorative approaches were a point of inquiry prior to 2004 in the peer reviewed literature (Blechman, Hile and Fishman, 2001; Muck, Zempolich, Titus, et al., 2001), the majority of writings on the modern concept of restorative justice practices gained mainstream status starting in 2004 (Achilles, 2004; Drewery, 2004; Williams-Hays & Nugent, 2004; Liebman, 2007; Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2007).

Restorative justice as it pertains to CC and TC is independently explained when discussing each program type below. What became apparent from analysis of the data for this study is that the three principles are incorporated in differing degrees by both CC and TC programs, but without clear articulation or direct awareness of their influence on the offending youth, his or her family, the victims, and the community. All programs focus more or less directly on offender accountability through required community service hours. Community protection and competency development are less directly addressed and are often assumed a product of successful completion of the program instead of processes worthy of examination in their own right. When services for skill development are available and utilized, (e.g. anger management courses), the impact of these services are, with some positive exceptions, not assessed for their impact on youth change but only for whether the service was completed.

Offender Accountability

According to the PCCH (p. 8) the offending youth is held responsible not only for their actions but for repairing and restoring the loss to the victim and to the community. This parallels the principles of restorative justice that involve addressing the harm of a criminal act on the victim, the community, and the perpetrator (Gilbert & Settles, 2007; Liebmann, 2007, Rodriguez, 2007). Restorative justice programs come in many forms, for example victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, and others. CC and TC have not been routinely listed as restorative justice programs but were addressed, as noted above, as restorative justice related in some of the interviews conducted for this project. In most CC and TC programs reviewed, accountability to the system and to the law enforcement agency are primary, not the community or victim.

Community Protection

The principle of public safety is considered as important as youth accountability and development of competencies, (PCCH, p 8). In addition, any intervention targeting community protection should be as cost effective as possible and safe communities are considered a right of the public. The majority of CC programs noted the expectation of community protection directly or obliquely. Participants interviewed that directly discussed community protection were far more likely to be housed in juvenile justice and law enforcement organizations. In addition, these programs were likely to have direct service staff that were sheriff's deputies or other law

enforcement staff. Those that addressed competency development were more likely to be housed and staffed by social service professionals.

Competency Development

In order to maintain offending youth in the community and to lower recidivism, the youth must be given opportunities and assistance to develop skills that will lead to life success (PCCH, p. 8). This includes increasing empathy for the victim as well as pragmatic life skills. Restorative justice also speaks to this principle. A focus on restorative justice includes reintegration of the offender into the community through, for example, provision of educational support, job training, counseling, and other service needs identified during the assessment process. Analysis of interview data indicated that competency development is considered synonymous with services identified in preliminary assessment of the youth and then delivered to the youth to offset the identified deficit.

Exposure to the Blueprint Commission Report and Participant Opinions

Due to the likelihood of the BCR driving policy in Florida for the foreseeable future, interview participants were asked about their exposure to and knowledge of the BCR. Individuals in the management hierarchy of the participating programs, both CC and TC, were more likely to be knowledgeable of the BCR. Some individuals responsible for day-to-day operations of their program had not heard of the report and requested copies, which were forwarded electronically. The participants with less BCR knowledge staffed CC programs through non-FDJJ related facilities and were less likely to be regularly exposed to FDJJ policies and practices. There were some specific opinions and differences between CC and TC programs regarding the BCR. Opinions expressed by CC programs included the following items.

1. The need for increased attention to mental health and substance issues as well as treatment for referred youth has been realized in CC programs for a long time. The focus on these issues in the BCR is welcome.

2. Several CC respondents welcomed the focus on prevention, diversion, and the burgeoning issue of female delinquency and they were gratified that this may now become policy with a movement away from incarceration and residential treatment except when indicated through evidence-based assessments.

3. Concern was voiced that local Juvenile Justice Councils (JJC) will be given control of funds. This will require, according to respondents, what is in reality a group of volunteers to be bonded, insured, and have to write and disseminate RFP's in order to disperse funds. Considering the lack of administrative and clerical support, the concern is that there will be insufficient expertise as well as the displacement of service delivery dollars to support the administrative needs of the JJC if the funding issue is realized.

Opinions expressed by TC programs included the following items:

1. The BCR is considered, in general, a good effort. It was disheartening to some TC representatives that the Secretary for the FDJJ was replaced and that the budget became an intense and worrisome issue at the same time the BCR was released. However, some stated that it, "sounded like a FDJJ" document there was hope for real change. One

respondent stopped reading the document when the report appeared to blame the schools for the delinquency problem.

2. Overall, TC representatives are less concerned and informed regarding the BCR. As one stated, they are more insulated from the effects of the BCR in two ways. First, they have a steadier form of funding than other diversion programs and, second, they have been established for a longer period of time, with documented success.

Juvenile Assessment Centers

Florida has 20 JACs, according to information provided by the FDJJ. JACs provide a central location, primarily open 24 hours, where officers may transport youth for detention screening before they enter the juvenile justice system. JACs assist officers in making efficient use of their time and provide assessment services for youth once they are brought to a central location (Probation & Community Corrections Handbook Juvenile Assessment Centers (PCCH-JAC), 2005).

Lee County reports on its Web site that, "prior to the JACs opening, law enforcement officers were responsible for supervising an arrested, non-detained youth until they could transfer them to the custody of their parents. " The Web site goes on to state, "that [the process] sometimes took hours. The average time that a law enforcement officer now spends dropping off an arrested youth at the JAC and getting back on the road is six minutes" (http://www.swfljac.org/LE.htm).

Services provided by the JAC include screening for substance abuse and physical and mental health, needs assessment, risk assessment, diagnostic testing, and truancy programming. Other services that are determined to be appropriate to a specific community may also be implemented (PCCH-JAC, 2005). Preliminary suicide risk, substance abuse and mental health screening, and physical health (visual) screening are all mandatory for any youth under the custody of a JAC. These screenings are required to be specific enough to identify potential problem areas the youth may be facing to assist in providing a proper referral for services.

Juvenile Assessment Center Workflow

Once dropped off by the officer, the child is taken to the "secure area" to be fingerprinted and given an initial screening. During this initial screening process, staff determine whether the child will be released or taken to the detention center. Additionally, most JACs will use the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) to determine whether referral for further services is necessary (Juvenile and Family Justice, 2007; Olson, 2007). After the intake screening, human service associates are brought in if necessary to perform mental health or substance abuse screenings including the Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities (TASC), which is a "case management model developed in the United States in response to a growing understanding of the relationship between drugs and crime (http://www.uab.edu/uabsap/tasc/index.php?page=tasc_history.htm)."

Three types of detention are possible: Secure Detention, Non-secure detention, and Home Detention Care. Secure detention is a locked facility for juveniles only. With non-secure detention, the youth is taken to a community-based residence under contract with the FDJJ. For home detention care, the youth is typically released to their home with a parent or guardian

although it may also include other physically non-restrictive environments (http://www.nccd-crc.org/nccd/pubs/2005_fla_reform_JDet.pdf).

During this process, the JAC will recommend services, including but not limited to, mental health and substance abuse counseling. After assessment completion, the youth is seen by an intake worker or probation officer and recommended services are incorporated into a pre-dispositional report that is part of their probation program. If the youth is not on probation, the pre-disposition report becomes part of a court order[1]. If the youth needs services, such as anger management or drug counseling the court can mandate them.

Call Centers

Alternatively, in the absence of a JAC, some counties use a call center, which is a location the officer can call to determine whether the youth will be detained. The law enforcement officer calls in and obtains a pre-screen decision to see whether the youth should be detained. If it is determined, that detention is necessary the officer brings the youth to the detention center. The possibility for home detention and outright release still exist in these circumstances. In the case of Escambia County, which formerly used a JAC, but now operates under a call center system due to budget cuts, the youth is brought to the detention center, which is where the call center is located in what used to be the JAC. Although the detention center and call center are located in the same building, the youth is under the custody of the detention center, not the call center.

JACs and call centers each have advantages. The call centers do not have the responsibility of monitoring the youth because they are not technically brought to the call center, as they are when a JAC is used. Additionally one former employee of a JAC whose county now uses a call center believes with the call center "you cut down referrals from schools, [for] some of the minor stuff."

With a JAC, the youth are brought to a central location where more in-depth information can be obtained, such as addresses, parent contacts, and other information the JACs screen for, without being brought to a detention center. Additionally, according to the same person, "this information tends to be more accurate."

Juvenile Assessment Center's Referral Procedures

Reports put the number of youth assessed at a JAC between 4,000 and 9,000 per year, depending on population density, poverty prevalence, family stability, and other issues. Once assessed a youth is sometimes referred to diversion or other programs. These include, Man Up, IDDS (Intensive Delinquency Diversion Service), TC, CC, Drug Court, the YES Program (Youth Educational Shoplifting), the PRIDE Program (Promoting Resilient Integrity Decision Making and Excellence), ORT (Operational Right Track), and PAY (Prosecution Alternative for Youth). Youth are also referred to mentoring programs, mental health facilities for further evaluation, substance abuse counseling, doctors, dentists and eye specialists, anger management, and family counseling. JACs do not do all of the referring. JAC employees cite juvenile probation officer's and state attorneys as those who also make referrals. One JAC employee reported that "all first time offenders, and probably 60 percent overall," are referred to some type of diversion program.

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[1] It is important to note that the court may also issue a court order for a youth on probation.

Some diversion programs are housed within a JAC. An example is the CC program in Miami-Dade that is embedded in its JAC along with its IDDS program, which is under the JAC via a contract. Of JACs interviewed, two report having an IDDS program, another having a TC program, and one having the Man Up program, housed within their JAC.

After a referral is made, follow up is performed by either a contract provider, TASC supervisor, or a probation officer to see if the youth has followed through with the recommended services. Follow through on recommendations for services by youth and family are voluntary. JAC staff track attendance and compliance but cannot mandate services or penalize if they are not accepted by the family.

Juvenile Assessment Center's Relationship with Diversion Programs

Civil Citation

The relationship between CC programs and JACs varies substantially by site. Some individuals involved with the CC program described their relationship as non-existent because the youth involved with CC programs do not go to a JAC. Others describe the relationship differently. As mentioned earlier the Miami-Dade CC program is embedded in the JAC. In Leon County, the CC program is a component of the JAC. There are other connections between the two programs in different parts of the state. One member of a JAC truancy unit is on loan to the Sheriff's Office CC program. In Collier County, there is a very close relationship between the two programs. The Hendry County CC representative describes the positive relationship between the CC and JAC programs:

> "[We] have a fantastic relationship with the JAC. In fact, the deputy is housed in the JAC here in Lee County and I attend the executive committee in Collier County. The JACs are a great place to build relationships with other providers, increase awareness and to get resources to law enforcement. Successful programs would want to have some JAC relationships." (Hendry CC)

Teen Court

The relationship between TC programs and JACs are as varied as those between CC programs and JACs. Some TC representatives report no JAC in their area at all or "not much interaction" between the two, while others report much higher levels of interaction. One TC representative reports not getting any referrals at all from JACs, while others do receive referrals. Another example of differences is one TC representative reporting little interaction because TC is pre-arrest, while another reports that "that's where it all starts. [It's] in the same building. They assess the teen for TC," and still another reporting that there is "not much interaction" because the youth has "already been to the JAC." This seems to imply there is no standard operating procedure between the TC and the JAC. An example of the potential behind collaboration of these two programs was found when speaking with a TC representative in Leon County. The TC representative stated that they "attend a weekly staffing with JAC…and will discuss medical, psychiatric, [and] substance abuse, [but that they] do not document, but use the information to target a more holistic approach to dealing with the kids." She also explained that they "cross check all arrested youth with dependency action," because "approximately 25 families have issues in multiple courts currently."

Diversion in General

When comparing responses between what types of relationship JACs felt they had with diversion programs and their view of an ideal relationship, very little difference was noted. Responses were highly consistent varying only slightly from "good" to "very good" to "excellent." Respondents reported the relationship as 'where it needs to be'. Referrals are made by JACs to diversion programs and information is shared between the two. In one county, the TC program provides training for the JAC so they are aware of who qualifies for the program. Another county has bi-monthly meetings to discuss youth who have come through the JAC. In total, there was only one respondent who reported no relationship between the two, stating, "They didn't have a diversion program connected to their JAC, there was no real association between the two." All other respondents had very positive responses about the relationship between the JAC and diversion programs.

Civil Citation Programs in Florida

Policy and Statute

Dating back to 1996, then Florida Statute 985.301[2] established a process whereby officers could issue juveniles a civil citation as an alternative to bringing a youth into the custody of the FDJJ. Crimes for which a civil citation could be issued were, and still are, limited to non-serious delinquent acts. The intent behind the statute was to create swift and appropriate consequences for these acts. Many individuals working in CC programs believe that the growth in the use of civil citations was a direct response to the 'zero tolerance' policy becoming distorted and excessive. For instance, initially, a number of school resource officers did not embrace the idea of civil citation, feeling "zero tolerance was zero tolerance," according to a State Attorney Office representative. Others found zero tolerance was "going haywire, for example throwing paper towels," as a CC representative stated. Even those who supported zero tolerance felt it was "an accurate response to juveniles in trouble, in [the] school system for serious offenses. [Zero tolerance is] not accurate or functional for misdemeanors and other less serious offenses," as another CC representative reported. In general, CC representatives reported law enforcement began to embrace the program as an alternative to zero tolerance policies. Also, as one law enforcement officer stated, "[zero tolerance is] not usually a problem, [because it is] up to the deputies to determine if a civil citation is appropriate or not."

The CC program in Florida serves multiple purposes. One is keeping youth out of the system. By allowing officers to issue a civil citation rather than detaining youth, juveniles gain an opportunity to learn from their mistake without entering detention or standing trial. This often helps, as one CC representative put it, "good kids that made a bad decision." Youth receiving either a first or a second misdemeanor are eligible, with the officer having authority at their discretion, to either issue the citation or make the arrest.

Another purpose behind the CC program is dissuading first and second time offenders from committing crimes in the future. Youth are allowed to enter the program and may be required to complete up to 50 community service hours, participate in intervention services, urinalysis monitoring, and/or substance abuse and mental health treatment services in lieu of facing charges. By providing the youth these opportunities as an alternative to arrest, they are able to

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[2] Currently F.S. 985.12

pay their debt to society without obtaining a criminal record in the process. Additionally, there is a quicker association between the crime and the consequences since the youth enters a CC program in a much shorter time than required to process them through detention and the court system. A representative from the State Attorney's Office stated, "Civil citation is an immediate consequence in lieu of a long wait or dismissal."

One other purpose of the program is decreasing the number of cases going through the juvenile justice system by diverting youth who have committed non-serious delinquent acts away from the detention centers and courts. Along with decreasing the number of cases in the court system, school resource officers increase efficiency with regard to the use of their time. Many citations are administered inside schools so school resource officers benefit by having the ability to issue a civil citation rather than take a youth into custody. A representative of the State Attorney's Office explains,

> "[We are] talking about school safety, [for example if there are] two kids in a fight, if the school resource officer takes two hours to [go to] the JAC, they have to leave the campus, now they [just] write a civil citation. [It also means] less paperwork to law enforcement, they don't have to come to court to testify, neither do the school personnel. The best part is that the consequences are immediate, [it is] much more effective."

It is important to note that the CC program, while predominantly used in the school system, is not limited to it. One state attorney stated that his county is "not limiting it to school resource officers, [they are] going to the streets."

The youth receiving the citation is responsible for reporting to the community service performance monitor within 7 working days after the date the citation was issued and completing their assigned community service hours at a rate of not less than 5 hours per week. According to the statute, if the child "fails to report timely for a work assignment, complete a work assignment, or comply with assigned intervention services within the prescribed time, or if the juvenile commits a third or subsequent misdemeanor," the 'arresting' officer must report to a probation officer that the child has committed a delinquent act and the probation officer is then responsible for performing a preliminary determination in compliance with Florida Statute 985.145.

The officer, at the time of issuance of the citation, must advise the youth of their option to refuse the citation, at which point they will be referred to the intake office of the local JAC. The child may also refuse the option of the citation at any point during and up until the completion of their work assignment.

Civil Citation 'In Reality'

In the section above, the discussion of Florida Statute 985.12 outlined how CC was broadly conceptualized as a program at the community level. This section will demonstrate that there is considerable variance in how CC is operationalized among the programs sampled. Some programs have stayed close to the statute and view the statute as the policy and practice document for their program. Other programs have branched considerably and, though they stay within the spirit of the statute, have identified what they consider gaps in practice left open by the statute and have been innovative in addressing these gaps.

Synthesis of Operational Information of Twelve Civil Citation Programs

This section uses data from interviews and documents (qualitative) and survey data (quantitative) to address key areas of CC programs. The information will be broken into several sub-sections to aid in clarity. First, information on policies and procedures will be discussed. Next, budget, staffing, and number of youth served will be contrasted. A discussion of the pragmatics of program delivery from assessment to what constitutes completion and discharge will follow. Separate sections will be used to discuss operational points of interest that influence how the program is delivered as well as a comprehensive discussion of the barriers that CC programs face. Finally, a brief section on the interface of restorative justice and CC programs will be followed by a discussion of data management and evaluation efforts, completing CC 'in reality'.

Program Policies and Procedures

CC programs were asked to discuss written policies and procedures during the Stage 1 interview process and were asked to forward any documents they were willing to share. Some programs that are in their first year are still developing policy statements and are relying on the statute for initial guidance. Some respondents are finding that the statute is not specific enough, which has resulted in problems in operationalizing the program. CC programs hosted in law enforcement and community-based not-for-profit locations were the most likely to have developed comprehensive policies and procedures. The policies and procedures provided by study respondents were of two types. The first are policies that supported the hosting agency but lacked operational detail for the CC program itself. The other type of policy specifically addressed the CC program. Analysis of study data indicates that programs that have articulated policies and procedures specific to CC are experiencing fewer barriers to their program and are more confident that their program is on target for meeting their goals and objectives.

The following are common sections or statements in CC policies and procedures forwarded to the research team. The items presented here are specific to CC programs and are considered the most useful for guiding the operationalization of the program.

1. The purpose and scope of the policies and procedures are sufficient to provide guidelines for operating the CC program in the particular jurisdiction.
2. There is a clear statement of eligibility information on which youth can be issued a civil citation.
    a. A list of eligible offenses exists with a caveat on whether other offenses may be eligible on a case by case basis.
    b. There is clarity about whether civil citations are allowed only for first time offenders.
    c. An admission of guilt is required from the offending youth before the civil citation can be issued.
    d. Offending youth must be provided the option to refuse the civil citation and be arrested by the officer.
    e. The identity of the offending youth must be verified. It must be stated whether the use of a right thumbprint can be used, if picture ID is not available.

3. The victim must be notified of the issuance of a civil citation.

4. The parent or guardian must be notified concerning the issuance of a civil citation. If the parent is not available to sign the civil citation, the officer can enter a N/A on the form, providing the parent agrees over the phone.

5. The officer must communicate to the youth and parent that this is not an arrest, and that there will not be a juvenile record attached to the citation if the youth successfully completes the program.

6. Copies of the civil citation must be forwarded to those indicated in statute and others deemed important by the jurisdiction.

7. The offending youth must be assigned community service hours, not to exceed 50, and provided assistance in finding a community service site.

8. The offending youth will be assigned other sanctions or services as deemed reasonable and necessary (e.g. anger management or family counseling).

9. The length of time to complete sanctions must be communicated to the offending youth as well as any provisions for additional time that may be allowed.

Budget, Staffing, Youth Served

There is moderate variance in current CC program budgets. The majority of programs surveyed is or has been funded through FDJJ for a three-year demonstration. Some programs (e.g. Collier and Leon counties) are funded by county or private dollars. Table 2 provides the breakdown of the budgets, staff, and youth served for the ten programs supplying data. In some cases, the budget numbers provided by the program included all diversion information and a subsequent discussion extrapolated a reasonable estimate for the cost of CC programs only. Table 2 reflects the current budget, what would be considered optimal for current demands, and the projected budget that would be required in two years assuming steady growth of the program over that time. Additionally, Table 2 includes current number of full and part time staff as well as numbers served in the last year, or segment of the year if the program has not been open a full 12 months, and the estimated number of youth to be served for next year.

Program 1 has the largest current budget and is unique compared to the other programs. This program provides considerable services to CC youth and have multiple diversion programs as well as mental health, substance abuse, and family counseling programs that CC youth are eligible for and would be referred to if the assessment indicates a need. The mean program budget without program 1 is $113,630, closer to the median and probably a better representation of the average budget for CC programs.

There was considerable commentary on budgets, impact of the current crisis in the Florida budget, and its potential effect on future CC program success. For instance, one program will not fill two available CC positions and the program will be expected to maintain capacity with two full time staff instead of three full time and one part time staff. Another interviewee indicated that three programs have already been cut due to budget issues that directly impact diversion efforts. These include a family domestic violence diversion program, a substance abuse treatment program linked to teen drug court and a female adolescent diversion program.

Diversion programs embedded in JACs are at somewhat less risk but there is still concern among the programs embedded in JACs. Similarly, some programs are funded through county dollars, are strongly championed by the sheriff's offices, and will be able to continue at their present level. All programs believe that they are understaffed and underfunded to varying degrees.

Table 2: Civil Citation Budget, Projected Budget, Staffing and Youth Served							
Program #	Current Annual Budget	Optimal Current Annual Budget	Two-Year Projected Optimal Budget	Full Time Staff	Part Time Staff	Served Annually	Projected Number to be Served Next Year
Program 1	$300,000	$500,000	$1,000,000	2	3	550	1,300
Program 2	$150,000	$200,000	$250,000	1	0	150	200
Program 3	$100,000	$175,000	$175,000	1	0	600	600
Program 4				2	0	362	400
Program 5	$200,000	$210,000	$240,000	6	0	1,092	1,600
Program 6				1	0	32	40
Program 7	$89,032			1	6	163	190
Program 8	$100,000	$100,000	$133,000	1	0	200	
Program 9	$56,380	$500,000	$800,000	1	0	62	75
Program 10	$100,000					103	125
Mean	**$136,927**	**$280,833**	**$433,000**	**1.78**	**1.00**	**331**	**503**
Median	**$100,000**	**$205,000**	**$245,000**	**1.00**	**0.00**	**181**	**200**

In some cases, there are aspects of programs that will be cut due to funding issues, often components that support the program. For example, the loss of dollars will cause one Sheriff's Office not to provide deputies for Saturday community service outings that helped to streamline the community service process. Because of the loss of the Sheriff provided community service detail, the program representative interviewed indicated that it would be difficult to fill the gap with community locations because the county is mostly rural. This has created concern whether the program will continue its success and may impact the desire of deputies to write citations. Finally, several programs report operating at a deficit, especially if they are engaged in providing services beyond monitoring and assisting in community service hours.

Another budget related issue is the number and educational level of staff assigned to CC programs. Cost increases with the level of staff that is associated with the CC program. For instance, according to a Hillsborough County source:

> "…we are using master's level positions and doing some short term crisis care with families with significant family medical issues - brittle diabetics, dialysis, cardiovascular. [We] have to be very selective on whom to help with limited resources. One and a half [staff are] paid by grant - one FTE master's and one part time assistant [but there are also] one full time and parts of two administrative assistants [working with CC that are not covered in the grant]."

This is not uncommon and programs are finding it necessary to carefully select what can be done beyond the basics of CC programs in order to be flexible in meeting the needs of the population,

while remaining cognizant of budgetary and personnel limitations. Not surprisingly, CC programs administered through community-based social service agencies have staff with higher levels of educational attainment and are more apt to provide a wider range of services. Both professional expertise and in-house service delivery significantly increase the cost of a CC program. This is illustrated through the discussion of staff assigned to a CC program with both the largest budget and with the largest deficit between the current and optional budget (Table 2),

> "The staff members designated to perform evaluations/assessments have the following qualifications: [The] licensed clinical social worker possesses more than nine (9) years of experience and supervises the assessment process for each youth. [The] counselors have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Psychology or a related field, but the majority of staff possesses a Master's degree in Psychology, Social Work, or Counseling, and has at least three (3) years experience with the population. Only those staff who exhibit the sensitivity, compassion, and experience in working with this population will be considered for employment under the expansion of the existing program (Broward County CC Representative)."

Offenses and Offender Level

Though the CC statute appears to offer the opportunity for a youth committing a second misdemeanor to be eligible for a civil citation, not all programs allow second time misdemeanants in their program. Nine programs responded to the question regarding level of offense that is admissible into their program. Six programs admit only first time misdemeanants, enforcing a tighter standard than the statute calls for; one admits first and second time misdemeanants, and two programs will admit even a third time misdemeanant under special circumstances, going beyond the statute. Three CC programs will not accept misdemeanor drug offenses into their programs. This has been consistent for two and recently changed to no drug offenses in the third. There was not a clear indication from any program why substance offenses were not included. One program suggested that political reasons were at the core of the decision.

> "Law enforcement has to understand that it is easier to write the citation than do anything else. Each county has different requirements. Some take substance abuse and some don't. That's where it gets political. Have to have the state attorney and chief law enforcement officer agree on the misdemeanor offenses that will be sent to CC (CC respondent)."

For many programs, location and law enforcement priorities have shaped which offenses are covered by civil citations. For many programs that are mainly in middle schools and high schools, this equates with affray, assault, disruption of a school function and disorderly conduct. On the other hand, a program that has the majority of their referrals due to shoplifting has naturally become specialized in petty retail theft.

> "We target retail theft (shoplifting) with an assessment, test, and dual DVD presentation that takes approximately 5-6 hours to complete. The exam focuses on attitude and beliefs and not on knowledge gain. We order more when needed. It costs $32.00 per youth but we do not charge the parents or youth. Retail theft is the largest single category of referrals to the CC program. We concentrate on why the theft was done, the attitudes toward theft, and understanding the consequences to the youth and the public (CC respondent)."

Each program that returned a survey, 10 CC programs, indicated the offenses that they would allow in their program and the approximate percentage of the total each offense represents. Table 3 illustrates the number and percent of programs that accept specific charges into the CC program. All programs accept disruption of a school function, disorderly conduct, and trespassing. The majority of programs accept affray, assault and battery charges (violence charges) and nearly all surveyed accept misdemeanor substance related charges. Only a limited number accept, for instance, firearm and traffic offenses. However, other programs may accept these charges but chose not to write them in under 'other.'

Table 3: Number and Percent of Civil Citation Programs that Accept Specific Charges					
	Yes*			**Yes***	
Offenses	**n**	**%**	**Offenses**	**n**	**%**
Disruption of School Function	10	100.0	Breach of Peace	6	60.0
Disorderly Conduct	10	100.0	Resisting Arrest	5	50.0
Trespassing	10	100.0	Grand Theft	4	40.0
Retail/Petty Theft	9	90.0	Weapon in a School	4	40.0
Criminal Mischief	9	90.0	Domestic Violence Related	4	40.0
Affray	9	90.0	Other	4	40.0
Assault	9	90.0	Forgery	3	30.0
Battery (including felony)	9	90.0	Firearm Related**	2	20.0
Loitering and Prowling	8	80.0	False Fire Alarm**	1	10.0
Possession of Alcohol	8	80.0	Other Substance Related**	1	10.0
Possession of Marijuana	8	80.0	Stalking or Harassing**	1	10.0
Possession of Paraphernalia	8	80.0	Traffic Related**	1	10.0
Vandalism	6	60.0			

* = number and percent of programs (total n = 10) that will accept the charge in their program
** = offenses not included in the original list but written in under 'other' by programs.

Table 4 presents the percentage of total charges across programs for each charge individually and when categorized. The offenses were clustered into seven categories: Theft/Taking Property, Other Property Related, Substance Related, Disruptive Behavior, Violent/Threatening Offenses, Traffic/Driving Related, and Other. The largest individual offense is petty retail theft (20.86%). However, the violent/threatening cluster is the largest category of offenses (29.64%). The list is comprehensive with only 0.54 percent of charges listed under 'other.'

Program Life and Length of Time Allowed in Program

Data was collected on how long the program has been in operation (longevity) and on how long a youth is allowed to complete the program (time allowed in program). These apparently disparate points of interest are discussed together here because of an interesting trend noted.

Table 4: Aggregated Percent of Offenses Committed by Youth in Civil Citation Programs Individually and by Category

Offenses	% of All Charges	Offenses	% of All Charges
Category 1: Theft/Taking Property	**21.87**	**Category 4: Disruptive Behavior**	**15.56**
Retail/Petit Theft	20.86	Disruption of School Function	8.64
Grand Theft	0.93	Disorderly Conduct	5.99
Forgery	0.08	Resisting Arrest	0.62
Burglary**	0.00	Breach of Peace	0.31
Category 2: Other Property Related	**13.31**	**Category 5: Violent or Threatening Offenses**	**29.64**
Criminal Mischief	7.08	Battery (including felony)	15.88
Trespassing	3.58	Domestic Violence Related	5.99
Loitering and Prowling	1.63	Affray	5.21
Vandalism	0.86	Assault	2.02
False Fire Alarm**	0.16	Weapon in a School	0.23
Truancy**	0.00	Firearm Related**	0.23
Category 3: Substance Related	**18.91**	Stalking or Harassing**	0.08
Possession of Marijuana	12.06	**Category 6: Traffic/Driving Related****	**0.08**
Possession of Paraphernalia	3.35	Includes no valid driver's license, driving while license suspended, leaving scene of accident, traffic violations and criminal traffic charges	
Possession of Alcohol	3.42	**Category 7: Other****	**0.54**
Other Substance Related**	0.08		

* = percent of programs (n = 10) that will accept the charge into their program
** = offenses not included in the original list but written in under 'other' by programs.

First, out of eleven programs supplying the information on program longevity three programs have operated for a year or less, three for two years, one for four years, three for five years and one for six or more years. The maximum time allowed to youth to complete the program ranged from 14 to 90 days with an average maximum of 49 days. Of those programs that provided data on time spent in program, those that have operated longer, four years or more, all grant longer periods of time to complete the program. Further cross analysis of data suggests three reasons why this trend exists. First, the longer-lived programs either provide or refer to a larger array of services, suggesting that the youth is followed longer to monitor service delivery. Second, programs that have been in existence longer are serving larger numbers of youth but have approximately the same level of staff when compared. Thus, sheer volume of referrals and the required assessment, tracking, and discharge procedures requires more time per youth with limited staffing. Third, programs that are run by law enforcement agencies and personnel tend, in general, to anticipate less time in their program for youth. Of the three shortest stays in

program, 14 days and two at 21 days, two are law enforcement setting programs. Law enforcement personnel interviewed cited the rapid consequence and ownership of responsibility as the key reason for their supporting the use of civil citation. They expect that the youth will be quickly and adequately consequented and will complete their sanctions in the shortest time possible as a form of restitution for their offense.

Program Flow

The program flow for CC programs is relatively similar across sites. Each program interviewed was asked to comment on how a youth gets into and out of the CC program. The following is a synthesis of the flow as described by the twelve participating CC programs. The following sub-sections will discuss the flow of a CC program, loosely in temporal order: Offense and Referral, Intake and Assessment, Involving the Parent, Assigning Sanctions, Provision of Services, Completion, and Discharge. This section is a description of what is currently happening in CC programs.

Offense and Referral

Prior to referral to the CC program, an officer must witness an offense that they have the option to refer to the CC program, arrest the youth, or choose a separate option (e.g. do nothing, call a parent). If a CC referral is the option chosen the officer should first check the FDJJ database to ensure that the youth is eligible for the CC program under the guidelines consistent with their jurisdiction (e.g. whether the youth has a history of charges in the past that would preclude the CC option). The officer then explains all options to the youth. The youth has the option to accept or refuse a CC referral. If they accept the referral to the CC program, the officer will fill out the civil citation and present it to the youth. The youth's signature accompanies or replaces a verbal admission of guilt. If the CC is operated through a JAC or other agency that processes civil citations, the officer or a surrogate calls the parent(s) and informs them of the offense, the admission of guilt, and the conditions of the civil citation. If present, parent(s) are asked to sign the civil citation as well but this is not consistent across programs. The officer provides a copy of the civil citation to FDJJ, the State Attorney's Office, the juvenile and his or her parent(s), and the victim.

Once issued a civil citation, the youth has seven working days to contact the CC professional. Some jurisdictions report that because they are aware of the youth and expecting a call, they will call the youth on or just before the seventh day if they have not heard from them to remind them of their obligation. There was some discussion of enabling in some of the interviews but the consensus was to assist at this early stage to demonstrate interest and concern to the youth to defuse later negative choices of the youth when working to complete the program.

Intake and Assessment

A key difference among CC programs is the extent of their assessment process when completing the intake for a youth in their program. Once the initial contact is made and the youth arrives for the intake/assessment, several options emerge. First, in almost all cases, the parent(s) are expected to attend the session with the child. The extent of additional contacts with the youth and/or family will depend on the focus of the program and its expectations. More clinically based programs may offer parenting classes as part of their program, family counseling, or other

services for the youth and family. For example, Leon County CC has the following expectation based on the results of the PACT risk assessment…

> "Parents/guardians are required to attend the assessment with the child. The assessment includes a risk prediction. Low and moderate risk are usually not seen again face-to-face though there is consistent phone contact and tracking of completion of sanctions. Those who score as high risk are seen again for additional assessment and possible intervention."

Interviewees in Stage 1 mentioned a number of potential assessments. As the goal of the interview was not a complete discovery of assessments completed, the follow-up survey data quantified the types of assessments completed by each program. Table 5 provides the summary frequencies for assessments. Assessments completed range from nine programs assessing for previous criminal history of the youth to only four programs completing a psychosocial, a urinalysis (drug screening), or gaining any awareness of family criminal history.

One of the most comprehensive assessments is completed by the Harmony Development Center (HDC) in Broward County. The interviewee stated the following:

> "Each of the clients referred to the program receives an in-depth evaluation/assessment session as part of their initial contact with HDC. Each evaluation/assessment incorporates one or more of the following measurement tools: Bio-psychosocial; FDJJ Risk Factor Assessment; Becker Anger Inventory; Becker Anxiety Inventory; Becker Disruptive Inventory; the Crime Impact Survey; Drug Knowledge Test; tests geared solely towards measuring familial relationships; and the POSIT Test, currently used by the Children's Services Council in Broward County. Where applicable, the examinations/assessments are given as both pre- and post-test evaluations. In working with delinquent youth, HDC has found that the BANI and BDBI, and Drug Knowledge Quiz are especially useful (CC respondent)."

Table 5: Frequency of Assessments Completed by Civil Citation Programs			
	Yes		**Yes**
Assessment	**n**	**Assessment**	**n**
Previous criminal history of the youth	9	Parent completed assessment of youth	6
Psychosocial or Biopsychosocial	4	Family relationships	5
Risk factor assessment	7	Family criminal history	4
Disruptive behavior/conduct issues	7	Family substance abuse/mental health history	5
Anger	6	Current family or youth stressors	6
Depression	5	Peer associations	7
Suicidality	5	Youth history of child maltreatment	5
Anxiety	5	Academic achievement (grades, GPA)	7
Youth substance abuse history	7	School variables (e.g. referrals, attendance)	8
Urinalysis	4	Youth talents and skills	6
Note: Total n = 10			

During the interview process, several programs stated that they did not do a thorough assessment due to resource issues, training of staff, and the philosophy of the program. Programs that are run through law enforcement focus on the offense and paying back the community via community service. These programs are not bereft of assessments but do tend to complete fewer assessments overall. Table 6 compares the frequencies of assessments of each type across law enforcement based and community-based programs. In all cases except urinalysis, a higher percentage of community based programs complete the specified assessments. Fully seventeen of twenty assessment types are completed by at least 80 percent of community based programs whereas no assessment type is completed by all law enforcement based programs and only one, previous criminal history of youth, is completed by 80 percent. This should not be construed as a criticism of law enforcement based programs. Law enforcement based programs have a different expectation of their program and youth and do, as noted, focus more on the offense and restitution for the offense. In some law enforcement jurisdictions that are administering the CC

Table 6: Frequencies of Assessments in Civil Citation Programs Segmented by Location of Program

Assessment	Law Enforcement Based Program		Community Based Program	
	n	%	n	%
Previous criminal history of the youth	4	80.0	5	100.0
Psychosocial or Biopsychosocial	0	0.0	4	80.0
Risk factor assessment	3	60.0	5	100.0
Disruptive behavior/conduct issues	3	60.0	4	80.0
Anger	2	40.0	4	80.0
Depression	1	20.0	4	80.0
Suicidality	1	20.0	4	80.0
Anxiety	1	20.0	4	80.0
Youth substance abuse history	3	60.0	4	80.0
Urinalysis	2	40.0	2	40.0
Parent completed assessment of youth	2	40.0	4	80.0
Family relationships	1	20.0	4	80.0
Family criminal history	1	20.0	3	60.0
Family substance abuse/mental health history	1	20.0	4	80.0
Current family or youth stressors	1	20.0	5	100.0
Peer associations	3	60.0	4	80.0
Youth history of child maltreatment	2	40.0	3	60.0
Academic achievement (grades, GPA)	3	60.0	4	80.0
School variables (e.g. referrals, attendance)	3	60.0	5	80.0
Youth talents and skills	2	40.0	4	80.0
Note: Law enforcement based n = 5; Community based n = 5				

program, for instance in Collier County, there are several diversion programs that are providing services simultaneously and utilize the same assessment process to encourage comparison.

An analysis that would address the utility of more comprehensive assessments would include testing the number and types of assessments, their linkage with services, and their effect on program and youth outcomes (e.g. recidivism). Unfortunately, such an analysis could not be completed due to lack of sufficient and reliable data to compare recidivism to assessments and services. In addition, recidivism is not tracked comparably across programs and some of the newer programs have yet to begin tracking recidivism at all.

Involving the Parent

Parental involvement is mandatory for all CC programs reviewed for this report. Parents are a great source of support as well as a potential barrier to success for an offending youth. The potential for negative impact is discussed in the barriers section below. According to several respondents, there are key messages to impart to parents. These include the following:

1. (If applicable) It is important for parents to sign the citation in order to reinforce support for the youth.

2. It is important for parents to accompany their children and to support both taking responsibility and following through on sanctions.

3. (If applicable) An assessment will be completed to understand better the needs of your youth and this will be an opportunity to address problems to prevent similar behavior in the future.

4. Civil citation is a good alternative to minimize exposure to more experienced juvenile offenders who might reinforce negative choices.

5. Successful completion of civil citation allows the youth to avoid a juvenile record and its potential impact on employment, military service, or higher education.

6. (If applicable) There are options for parents to get help in parenting and communication with their child if they choose to attend. For example, one of the CC representatives offered this in the interview…

   "The majority of parents are supportive. We meet soon after and some are initially adversarial. The first contact is the school resource officer informing them of a program for the youth. They usually feel that the *Guiding Good Choices (GGC)* program is something against them. The GGC - used in other programs, out of substance abuse, sees that the more involved parent increases chances of success. Some parents are asking for assistance from the beginning."

Assigning Sanctions

Community service is the sanction most associated with a civil citation. Sanctions are defined as a task or product that a youth is expected to complete in order to successfully exit the CC program. This is contrasted with services that are assigned or contracted with the youth and family to build competency and are covered in a subsequent section.

Florida Statute 985.12 allows officers to assign up to 50 hours of community service when issuing a civil citation. Table 7 displays the least, most, and average hours assigned by each program as well as the number of days that a youth is in a program before they begin community service hours. However, there is concern that the programs that listed 20 or 30 days (column three) did not understand the question making this result potentially invalid. When examining the maximum hours assigned, one program reports assigning more than the maximum 50 hours allowed by statute. The circumstances behind this deviation are not known. The minimum hours assigned, on average, are 12.5 per youth. The maximum average is 43.5 hours. The average assigned across all programs is 23.3 hours.

Table 7: Community Service Hours Assigned in Civil Citation Programs					
County	Site	Days Before Hours Commence	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Broward	Harmony Development Center	10	30	60	30
Collier	Collier Sheriff's Office	7	15	50	30
Hillsborough	Success 4 Kids and Families	7	10	20	10
Leon	Disc Village, Inc.	30	10	50	25
Miami-Dade	MD Juvenile Services Dept	10	10	40	25
Orange	FDJJ Circuit 9	15	10	50	20
St. Lucie	Port St. Lucie Police Dept	20	0	25	13
St. Lucie	C19 Civil Citation Program	30	10	50	20
Broward	Broward's Civil Citation	14	20	50	20
Escambia	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of NW FL	7	10	40	40
Average		15.0	12.50	43.5	23.3

Community service appears to be an expectation of the statute though the interview process revealed some exceptions. These exceptions go beyond the scope, but probably remain within the intent of the statute. A notable exception was the report that a youth with severe mental health issues did not have to complete any community service hours. The state attorney in the reporting county agreed with this assessment and the severe mental health issue was determined using evidenced-based tools as opposed to making a determination by use of a psychosocial. While the statute fails to mention this situation, it does not prohibit it. Interview data suggests community service hours is the cornerstone of CC sanctions across all participating programs. An additional exception was noted in a quarterly report forwarded by a CC participating site:

> "A new sanction was piloted during April in which children receiving citations would attend classes at either 'High School 1' or 'Technical School' instead of serving community service hours at a non-profit site. Of the citations that were successfully completed for April, six of those children attended class [at one of the two alternatives]."

Developing successful community service alternatives are central to program success as well as acceptance from local law enforcement. There are four general strategies of community service provision for youth.

1. The youth are expected to find their own location and they are given suggested types of locations but not actual locations.

2. Youth are provided a list of placements that have been cultivated by the CC program. The youth are able to choose from this list and go off list if needed.

3. Community service group activities are planned in parks, schools, or other locations, including car washes for a charity, with oversight by school or law enforcement personnel.

4. For cases where transportation or other issues exist, some children complete additional chores at home under supervision of parents.

These community service locations are not mutually exclusive and a program may combine some or all of the options depending on how available community service locations are in their jurisdiction. In all cases, the youth are expected to bring a sign-in sheet with them to have a supervisor verify their hours. The minimum expectation is five (5) hours a week until completed. Some programs are generating creative alternatives for community service that offers options for competency development. For example, one CC interviewee stated the following:

> "There has been good collaboration with the school system - at two of the high schools they had a two week course were the kids would go to the high schools and they did some clean up and had some curriculum about thinking before acting, that type of thing - they are hoping to do this next year and make this the main option (going to the Saturday class) - trade off is that the class is 6 hours and the sanction is 10 - so if you go through this you get the 4 free hours. They know the school psychologist and social worker loved how it went (CC respondent)."

The following list is a compilation of community service placement locations or activities provided by one or more of the participating programs.

- Park and recreation departments
- Churches
- Schools
- County and city government
- Soup kitchen
- Animal shelter
- Veterinarian's office
- Goodwill
- Graffiti cleanup
- Beach cleanup
- Assisting the elderly

Community service is only one type of sanction, though the primary one, provided to CC youth. In some programs, the sanctions are levied, consistent with the statute, by the law enforcement officer with the cooperation of the youth and parents. In other cases, the civil citation is an entry into a program and the CC case manager assigns sanctions after the assessment process is completed. It should be noted that some programs consider drug education groups and jail tours as services and not sanctions. The following is a list of other sanctions that one or more CC programs provide and/or monitors.

- Apology letter
- Curfew
- Drug education groups*
- Drug test (with parental agreement)
- Essay
- Following rules at home
- Giving back report
- Group mentoring

- Home chores
- Jail tours*
- Restitution
- School attendance
- Workbooks on relevant topics (juvenile justice, shoplifting)
- Written learning assignment

Sanctions are considered in the spirit of restorative justice for most of the programs. There is the desire that the youth 'pays back' for their offense but there is the hope that sanctions will also contribute to building competency in the youth and an empathic understanding of the victim and their impact on the victim. For instance, one law enforcement officer whose duty is to administer the CC program stated:

> "I often have them do a Giving Back report. There are different learning projects for theft, battery, criminal mischief, etc., which are assigned typically for shoplifting. They can write a 300-500 word essay on theft, or do a poster board and explain it to me and will also write an apology letter to the store and their parents. I want them to focus the letter for the parent on apology and appreciation for what they have and they will follow rules at home and increase chores at home as a consequence."

Provision of Services

In addition to community service, F.S. 985.12 allows officers in participating counties to "require participation in intervention services appropriate to identified needs of the juvenile." The statute puts no limitation on the types of intervention services a youth may be required to perform. This has lead to a wide variety of enforcement by counties for this part of the statute.

Services are considered separate from sanctions because services are meant to increase the capacity of the youth. For instance, services attempting to increase the chance of keeping the child from falling into the trap of recidivism include attending help sessions on social skills and anger management, mandated involvement in mentoring programs, and attending social skills development groups. There are also special treatment programs for those youth requiring them. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, alcohol and drug education groups, watching narcotics presentations, mental health counseling, jail tours, and anti-shop lifting programs. A unique form of service has parents attend a Guiding Good Choices workshop, mentioned previously, geared towards increasing parental involvement. The intent is to have the parent become more involved in the situation with the hope that their involvement will increase the chance of success for the offending youth. The county using this program reported, "Some [parents] are initially adversarial," but "the majority, are supportive."

Services were explored with each of the programs interviewed. There was sufficient diversity and concern voiced by interview participants regarding service provision that the follow-up

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survey directly addressed the issue of service availability in jurisdictions, willingness of community service providers to accept referrals from CC programs, and the extent that services are provided by the CC program or are referred out to another program. Table 8 summarizes the number, means and standard deviations of service availability and willingness to accept referrals across the CC programs that returned surveys sent to them (n = 10). Thus, only five programs indicate case management and restorative justice related services available to refer to while fully nine of ten have mental health, substance abuse, and family counseling services available for referral. For each service, the person completing the survey was asked to select many (3), some (2), little (1), or none (0). These were totaled and averaged for those that responded. The same system was used for willingness to accept referrals with a change in range (yes (2), some (1), and no (0)). Drug education is the most available resource across CC programs (m = 2.57, s.d. = 0.55). Family counseling and social skills assistance are also prevalent. The least plentiful resources include options for tours of jails, employment locations, and similar sites (m = 1.38, s.d. = 0.79). Parent support groups and trauma related counseling are also limited. Considering the potential for abuse in youth that act out and the challenges many of their parents experience this is an absence of available services that is concerning.

Table 8: Availability and Willingness to Accept Referrals in Civil Citation Program Jurisdictions

Service	Availability			Willingness		
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.
Case management	5	1.60	0.55	5	1.60	0.89
Counseling – Mental health	9	1.89	0.54	9	1.89	0.35
Counseling – Substance abuse	9	1.89	0.54	9	2.00	0.00
Counseling – Family	9	2.11	0.46	9	2.00	0.00
Counseling – Trauma related	8	1.50	0.54	8	1.88	0.38
Counseling – Domestic violence	6	1.83	0.71	6	2.00	0.00
Social skills assistance	7	2.00	0.75	7	1.71	0.41
Drug education	7	2.57	0.55	7	2.00	0.00
Juvenile Justice education	6	1.67	1.14	5	2.00	0.00
Restorative Justice related	5	1.60	0.58	5	1.80	0.00
Parenting assistance/training	7	1.57	0.82	7	1.86	0.00
Parent support groups	7	1.43	0.82	7	1.86	0.00
Mentoring	7	1.71	0.49	7	2.00	0.00
Tour related (criminal justice, employment, etc.)	8	1.38	0.79	8	1.63	0.79

Availability = the degree services are available across CC jurisdictions (max score = 3.0)
Willingness = Willingness of community based programs to accept CC youth referrals (max score = 2.0)
'n' is based on a maximum of 10 CC programs endorsing a particular service

According to interview data, whether services are provided in-house or offered via a referral will affect the success of the service provision and, to a degree, the program. Referred services are less likely to be followed through on than those provided in the program. Success, noted earlier,

of service delivery is based on completing the service, not knowledge gain or behavioral change for the majority of the CC programs. Services offered in-house allow closer monitoring and support for compliance than a service referred out. However, it is also important, as some interviewees pointed out, to stay with the strengths of the program and not to overextend to the point of becoming a social service agency, unless, of course, the CC program is already part of a social service agency. Table 9 provides the number of programs that provide each service in-house as well as services that are referred out. As expected considering the purpose of CC programs, case management and restitution monitoring are more likely to be provided in-house. Victim impact and didactic services are equally likely to be in-house as referred. All other services are more likely to be referred out than provided in-house.

Table 9: Number of Services Provided In-house Across Programs and Referred Out					
Service	**In-house**	**Referred**		**In-house**	**Referred**
	n	**n**			
Case management	9	4	Restorative Justice – other	4	5
Counseling – Mental health	1	9	Intervention – Retail theft	4	5
Counseling – Substance abuse	2	9	Intervention – Domestic Violence	2	5
Counseling – Family	2	9	Restitution monitoring	6	1
Counseling – Trauma related	1	9	Parenting classes	2	8
Group – social skills	4	7	Parent support group	2	6
Group – retail theft	4	6	Gender specific services	2	7
Group – victim impact	5	5	Mentoring	4	5
Group – drug education	5	6	Didactic (e.g. work books)	4	4
Restorative Justice Conference	3	5	Tours (prisons, etc.)	2	5
Total n = 10. Sum of In-House and Referred columns may exceed 10 if a program both provides the service in-house and refers out					

The link between assessment and service provision or referral cannot be overemphasized. The earlier emphasis on assessments was in part due to the general social service understanding that an appropriate link between need and service is based on an assessment that objectively identifies this link. Interview data emphasized services are essential for competency development that is reflected in resilience, resistance to negative peer influence and development of positive self-worth that allows the youth to view their future in non-offending activities and goals. Probably the most comprehensive service delivery and referral system is HDC in Broward County. The philosophy, expectations, and comments on services for HDC are captured in the following quotes:

"As part of a holistic approach to treatment of the family, and in addition to individual and group counseling activities, each of the referred offending youth participates in community service and restorative justice activities…   The CC program provides community projects every weekend. Youth have been attending community services projects at City of Lauderhill, Living Word Fellowship Church, and Broward County, as a set up and clean up at local community center projects, clean up at the local golf course, clean up at local parks in the City of Lauderhill, help to set up and clean up at the Holyday event (sports Park), attending Washington Mutual Carriers in Banking activities, participating in the National Guard Drug Reduce Program, Black Hero's Show, Unite-A-Fest, etc.   Through individual and family counseling, and supportive services, CC participants are recognizing the horizon of opportunities in regard to leading a productive life as an adult (program information)."

"Youth are linked with community services and encouraged to be connected to their community and to take advantage of available supports. They are not disconnected from current contacts that are wholesome and bring a schedule for church groups, basketball team practices, job schedules, etc. CC scheduling and completion works around and actively encourages these types of activities (interview transcript)."

A service that has become central to the Escambia County CC program is mentoring. This program provides mentoring in lieu of twelve community service hours and is mandatory for all CC participants. However, though four programs state they offer mentoring in-house, this is the only program that uses group mentoring and works to link the youth with a community mentor upon discharge. Mentoring also includes homework assistance during the prescribed hours. This program has specific rules to engage in mentoring which adds prestige and seriousness to the process. The policy is reproduced below and is considered an exemplar of service related policies providing a balance of information and structure.

1. "Youth must arrive on time; Group Mentoring will begin promptly at 5:00 pm.

2. Parent/Guardian must escort youth into Group Mentoring to sign in.

3. All cell phones and pagers must remain on SILENT throughout Group Mentoring.

4. If a cell phone/pager is made visible, or makes noise during group mentoring, the devise will be taken up by the case manager.

5. Youth will be allowed to make emergency phone calls in regards to transportation, etc., upon asking permission. However, transportation should be arranged ahead of time.

6. Youth must be released to a parent/guardian and sign out at the end of a group mentoring session.

7. Youth will be allowed to miss ONE scheduled group mentoring session due to illness or a family emergency. However, the case manager must be called ahead of time for these arrangements to be made.

8. If youth must miss a group mentoring session, the session must be rescheduled within a reasonable amount of time by the case manager, for youth to complete group mentoring requirements.

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9. The case manager must be notified of any issues that may arise while a youth is attending group mentoring (copy of policy)."

Completion and Discharge

Completion and discharge procedures and expectations are consistent across programs. For all programs, the offending youth must complete community service hours and any other expectations within a specified time frame. Recalling the section titled Program Life and Length of Time in Program (page 16); the length of time available to complete sanctions varies across programs from 14 to 90 days. However, with reasonable circumstances, the majority of programs will give additional days and provide extra assistance to ensure that a youth is successful. Ultimate success is based on recidivism.

The degree that the child is made aware of the consequences of failure varies somewhat between programs. Most programs make a point of informing the youth at intake of the consequences of not following through with program requirements. Other programs have policies that are more stringent. For instance, one program stated the following when interviewed…

> "We hold the 'A' form [arrest form] and hold the release agreement form with a 50-day court date; in the event they don't successfully complete they have a court date. We enter information into the Juvenile Justice Information System under diversion. This allows us to track those that do not complete successfully. We do positive identification to make sure the youth is really who they say they are. If unsuccessful - the A form and release agreement, the services, and all else is forwarded to the police officer and the State Attorney's Office."

This concludes the outline and discussion of program flow. Next is a description of additional operational points of interest that were addressed through interviews and on the study survey. These data points were quantified via the survey when analysis of the qualitative data made it apparent that these were points of interest and even concern for at least half of the programs interviewed.

Operational Points of Interest

The concept of restorative justice was discussed in the interview process as the most cohesive theory for diversion related programs currently researched. The first item in Table 10 addresses whether restorative justice plays an active part in the day-to-day operation of the program. Though fully nine of ten programs agreed or somewhat agreed the language used in interviews does not, in general, support the result in the table. Restorative justice would add a theory of change component to CC programs that appears to be missing and would enhance the philosophy and delivery of the program. Programs with a theory of change clearly articulated have a higher probability of establishing and meeting relevant outcomes. This is discussed further in the section on how to start a CC program.

The policy document of one program gives an adequate definition of restorative justice: "Restorative Justice: a response to crime that focuses on restoring the losses suffered by victims, holding offenders accountable for the harm they have caused, and building peace within communities." Three programs use practices that are consistent with the restorative justice literature to some degree. The first program references a quote on page 24 in which the youth

uses poster boards or an essay to describe the effect of their crime. The leader of that program is moving towards having these presentations in a group format so other youth can benefit from the insight and evaluate their shared impact on their victims. This is in the spirit of restorative justice. The other two programs are more directly involved with restorative justice. The first program stated the following in the interview:

> "We meet with parents during assessment and attempt to schedule the restorative justice conference in 2-3 weeks. We give a minimum of 20 hours and maximum of 50 community service hours and this is decided at the restorative justice conference. We ask everyone at the conference how many hours, and the client has input too. We operate a conference in order to help the offender make amends. This can be monetary or community service hours. At the conference the youth meets with the victim, another person, student, or school (administration representative), the SRO [school resource officer] sits in on meetings, and majority of parents show up. The restorative justice conference came from another program – a community justice program - in the county, another diversion program, and we are using it here (CC interview)."

Table 10: Additional Operational and Programmatic Points of Interest					
	Frequency				
Item	**Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Little or No Agreement**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
The concept of restorative justice plays an active part in the day-to-day operation of the program.	6	3	1	2.50	0.71
Disproportionate minority contact is an area of focus for the program.	6	3	1	2.50	0.71
Youth sent to the program are not adjudicated and will have no record if they successfully complete the program.	7	3	0	2.70	0.48
There is concern about competition with other diversion programs and my program.	0	2	8	1.20	0.42
My program has adequate support by key community stakeholders (e.g. law enforcement, state attorney).	8	1	1	2.70	0.68
I have a clear idea of the amount of resources saved when a youth successfully completes the program compared to a youth that is processed through juvenile court.	8	1	1	2.70	0.68

The third program addresses the concept of restorative justice in their program literature and makes it a requirement for all CC youth. This program introduces restorative justice very early in the process, similar to the program noted above, and embeds it even more in a system of interventions for each CC youth. A quote from the program documentation emphasizes restorative justice conferences:

> "Offender participation requires daily participation in the F.O.C.U.S (Families on Commitment for Understanding and Solution) Youth Program. Restorative justice conferences [are] where offenders are aware and held accountable for the harm they have caused to the victims, families, and communities, and community service projects which serve to broaden the learning experience of the offender by providing forums where they can apply their skills, time and energy, in a manner that aids the community (CC program documentation)."

Disproportionate minority contacts (DMC) were identified as an area of focus for the majority of CC programs. Out of 10 CC programs that returned follow-up surveys, three fully agreed that this was an important focus of their program, three somewhat agreed and one did not agree. The extent that DMC was a focus was due to, in part, the demographic makeup of the community in which the program was surveyed. However, there is a misinterpretation of DMC amongst some CC programs. Specifically, the objective of the focus on DMC is seen as gaining racial and ethnic equity among youth referred to juvenile justice services, from prevention through incarceration. The focus is equity based on population demographics (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2007; U.S. Department of Juvenile Justice, 1996). Smaller proportions of youth in a community should not represent larger proportions in the juvenile justice system. However, as one participant cogently argued, equity based on population demographics may run the risk of assuming a "level playing field in which all youth have the same chances and possibility of becoming part of the juvenile justice system. The underlying causes need to be addressed for true equity." For instance, one program stated the following:

> "Youth involved in our program include all SES, race, religion, etc. There is a perception amongst the African-American community that they are NOT allowed entrance to CC. This is untrue and the data supports that approximately 50 percent of kids referred are minority (CC interview)."

The problem with this quote is that the minority population makes up much less than 50 percent of the general population, unintentionally violating the essence of DMC. None of the respondents believed that youth of color had the same opportunities and resources as majority youth. For respondents that commented on DMC, there was agreement that there must be systematic changes in how youth are perceived, approached, referred, and assisted in order to develop an identity that does not accept criminal offenses as a viable alternative to acting within societal norms and laws.

Item three in Table 9 addresses whether youth sent to the program are not adjudicated and will have no record if they successfully complete the program. This was asked because a portion of CC and TC programs described incidences where a youth that had gone through their program had come back from one to a few years later needing a letter stating they had successfully completed the program and the circumstances for entry. Examples include a case in which the youth was attempting to enter a branch of the military service and was found to have a juvenile record and the same for a youth entering a university. In these examples, the program was able to assist the youth but there was concern from all parties that entering the data into the Juvenile Justice Information System, as a requirement for state grant dollars, may not include protecting youth from having their confidentiality compromised.

The final item discussed in this section addressed whether competition with other diversion programs exists. The last two items are discussed in relevant sections below. The idea for addressing competition came from two sources. The first is the concern from TC programs that the purpose of this study was to create a rival TC association. The second was also generated via TC, in this case during an interview. The TC representative stated that they would not welcome a CC program in their county as they have the county adequately covered via TC. What is unique about this TC program is that they receive direct referrals from law enforcement to TC, much like CC programs in other jurisdictions. The ability of a street or school resource officer to refer directly to TC reduces the involvement of the State Attorney's Office. The State Attorney's Office is more involved in TC referrals compared to CC referrals. This will be more fully described in the discussion of TCs. For CC programs, only two of ten programs somewhat agreed that this is a concern while eight indicated no concern.

Barriers and Solutions in Active Civil Citations Programs

Successful programs identify barriers that impede success and find ways to eliminate or circumvent them. Barriers were addressed in the interview process, through a review of program documents, and in survey questions. Five categories of potential barriers were identified in the proposal for this project and analysis of data was found to be consistent with this early perception. The barriers are grouped in the following categories:

- *Policy barriers*. These include a focus on 'zero tolerance' policies that force youth further into the juvenile justice system than is reasonable or prudent for specific offenses.

- *Implementation barriers*. The barriers include lack of adequate funding, lack of community service sites, limited support from law enforcement, and others.

- *Youth related barriers*. These include mental health or substance abuse issues sufficient to alter the capacity for internalizing a program or intervention. For example, conduct disorder or psychopathic tendencies, negative attitudes, self-esteem or similar issues.

- *Family/Caregiver related barriers*. These include family violence or negative role modeling, parental mental health or substance abuse issues, parental resistance to having their child in a CC program, and pragmatic issues such as transportation.

- *Community related barriers*. These include lack of recreational facilities, other neighborhood supports, unsafe streets, and discrimination.

The degree that each barrier category is perceived to be influencing program success varies. Before discussing each category in turn, a brief comment is necessary about the current budget crisis and its perceived impact on CC programs. The budget crisis, though not a prepared question for the interviews, emerged as an issue in over half of the interviews, prompting its inclusion in the survey. The first item in Table 11 addresses the state budget issue. Eight of ten programs demonstrate some level of agreement that the current budget crisis has had a noticeable impact on their program. The two with little to no agreement, in other words they do not perceive the current budget crisis as a barrier, are funded through the county Sheriff's Office and have ongoing and steady support. A further look at Table 11 finds that the budget crisis is the most endorsed problem area.

Table 11: Perceptions of Barriers Affecting Civil Citation Programs					
	Frequency				
Item	**Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Little or No Agreement**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
The current budget crisis in Florida has had a noticeable impact on the program.	5	3	2	2.30	0.82
There are policy barriers (e.g. zero tolerance) impacting program success.	1	5	4	1.70	0.68
There are implementation barriers (e.g. community service sites or inadequate training) impacting program success.	3	3	4	2.10	0.74
There are youth related barriers (e.g. conduct problems, negative attitudes, self-esteem) impacting program success.	3	5	2	2.10	0.74
There are family related barriers (e.g. negative role modeling, substance abuse, inadequate resources) impacting program success.	3	5	2	2.10	0.74
There are community related barriers (e.g. unsafe streets, lack of recreational facilities) impacting program success.	1	4	5	1.60	0.70

Policy Barriers

The zero tolerance policy was the most cited policy barrier addressed by program staff. Zero tolerance in schools was addressed as a barrier because the original intent of the law, for some respondents, has evolved to include nearly any offense. In addition, there were differences noted between school resource officers and street police. Most participants felt that the support of school resource officers was mandatory for avoiding misuse of zero tolerance and increasing program success. When school resource officers bought into the program, the referrals would be steady and the program successful. Street officers, without the continual interaction with the youth and often called to take charge of a situation, were less inclined to flexibility according to interview data. Item 2 in Table 10 addresses policy barriers and the number of programs citing policy barriers is lower compared to the majority of barrier categories.

Addressing Policy Barriers

Training, and lots of it, was the primary solution cited by program staff to address zero tolerance. In most cases, the trainer most likely to convince law enforcement of how zero tolerance policy has evolved into potentially unfair law enforcement practices and the further link to CC as a viable alternative to arrest was law enforcement personnel themselves. An additional solution is more actively supporting the Blueprint Commission Report with its emphasis on moving away from zero tolerance.

Implementation Barriers

Three implementation areas were consistently noted as problematic for CC programs. These include law enforcement and school personnel mindset, community service locations, and extensive paperwork in some jurisdictions. Data from Table 10, item 3, supports implementation barriers as an issue for the majority of participants with six of ten programs citing agreement that implementation barriers impact their program.

Law Enforcement and School System Personnel Mindset

Law enforcement mindset is different from zero tolerance noted in the policy barrier section above. The mindset of concern is one of punitive versus competency development. Street based officers were cited by several participants as having more of a mindset issue than school resource officers have. The same mindset issues were noted by some participants in school personnel as well. The following quote addresses both law enforcement and school based mindset issues:

> "Some law enforcement use [CC] more than others - some officers still believe that you have to put everyone in jail instead of solving a problem, though this is not always the case, for instance, one officer in [city name] writes all the time because they want to solve the problem. The level of punishment can be a turn off too, for instance getting 10 hours of community service may turn some officers off so I don't let them know. School folk may hold the law enforcement attitude of punishment versus diversion, they were brought up on scared straight tactics that don't work (CC respondent)."

It is clear from the quote that arrest is not viewed as a resolution to what is perceived as an underlying problem but simply a response to the offending behavior. Further analysis of transcript data reinforced that the majority of CC program representatives view the problem for youth offending as ecologic. Community, school-based, socioeconomic status, familial issues, poor role modeling, and negative peer influences as well as poor choices and possible pathology in some youth sets the stage for offending. Having the youth serve time in detention does not address the multifaceted causation of juvenile offending.

Community Service Locations

Although there were numerous sites listed where community service could be performed, a number of CC representatives report locating community service sites as a problem. Statements included, "getting community service sites, the most difficult and time consuming part of the job," "finding a place for community service is difficult," "[we are] seeing community service partners drop down and dwindle to almost nothing," and "[our] biggest problem is community service." A major concern for community service sites was potential liability on the part of sites, which added to CC coordinators difficulty in locating sites for youth. The liability coverage in these cases is the responsibility of the community service agency, which often leads to the community service agency only accepting certain ages and offenses. Many companies are especially unwilling to accept young children, sometimes as young as nine years of age, because of additional liability concerns. In most cases, these children end up doing work at home or in a faith based setting.

Community service supervision by CC personnel or law enforcement personnel is cost prohibitive. In some counties, the Sheriff's Office pays overtime for deputies that are willing to

supervise youth on Saturday. Budget cuts are threatening this and rural counties are concerned about the prospect of locating sites without deputy coverage. The choice is sometimes presented to CC staff to penalize the youth for missing a scheduled community service due to parental lack of reliable transportation. Most programs are choosing not to punish a youth for a parent-generated problem, but this leads to inequitable treatment of youth.

Extensive Paperwork

It is unclear why paperwork is considered an issue in a minority of the CC jurisdictions included in this report. Further, the CC programs making these statements imply that the FDJJ, as a funding source, wants the additional information kept, for instance witness statements, to be able to track unsuccessful cases. The capture and maintenance of additional information was not universally stated by FDJJ funded CC programs. The following quote exemplifies the issue:

> "The paperwork for the civil citation is comprehensive enough to be annoying. We're trying to build up the program but there is a lot of the work the officers are doing that is the same as an arrest and they are discouraged. There are multiple papers (e.g. witness statements, arrest affidavit, etc.) that are all still being filled out. If only the civil citation had to be done, then they would be more inclined (CC respondent)."

For some programs, the sheer number of referrals and limited staff lead to excessive amounts of paperwork and tracking instruments being used for many youth at one time. As one representative stated, "…the whole program is turning into churning out paperwork."

Addressing Implementation Barriers

Law Enforcement and School System Personnel Mindset

Suggestions for addressing law enforcement and school system mindset issues focus again on proper training of community partners. Clear messages are mandatory for law enforcement personnel while emphasizing the CC program goals and their consistency with the goals of law enforcement. Messages to include in training to help minimize mindset barriers include the following:

- A more immediate consequence is generated that reduces waiting for prosecution

- Admission of guilt immediately, eliminating dismissals

- More expeditious processing of a youth for a civil citation and generally much less paperwork (with some exceptions noted in a small number of jurisdictions)

- Ability for law enforcement and school system personnel to return to normal duties in a shorter time frame (e.g. being back on road patrol or not having to leave the school)

- No time required for court testimony

- Increased rapport with the youth without eliminating youth responsibility or consequence

- Increased probability that the parent will be involved and supportive instead of angry and sabotaging

- Positive evidence of CC programs improving recidivism (evidence is preliminary).

Community Service Locations

A few CC coordinators have found solutions to some of the problems listed. One stated, "They have had difficulty with children 12 and under, because community service agencies don't want the liability," he continued, "this is where the churches have helped." Another county has taken the approach that if a community service project or agency cannot be located, they will allow a parent to bring the youth to a park and clean up an area. Others have echoed these statements, "[we] found throughout the years doing this at parks, school systems, etc. welcome CC [youth] with open arms, [because of the] free labor," and "school is a big place to serve community service hours."

For those programs not utilizing group community service outings supervised by law enforcement or school system personnel, the challenge remains to create multiple stable sources of community service partners. Interview respondents report that this process takes a large percentage of their time. There were limited but noteworthy suggestions on how to develop these partnerships. The data supports consistent contact so the site feels valued, asking for feedback on problems and suggestions on how to improve the benefit for the sites, and some form of occasional recognition (e.g. mention in a newsletter), be utilized to maintain stable relationships.

Extensive Paperwork

There were no suggestions on how to deal with extensive paperwork. It was earlier noted that this is not consistent across programs. Further information is needed to describe fully what differentiates programs with and without paperwork complaints.

<u>*Youth Related Barriers*</u>

Two types of youth related barriers were uncovered. The first is youth noncompliance and the second is accepting youth into the program that have, unbeknownst until intake, extensive psychological and/or psychosocial impairments. Quantitative data, referring again to Table 10, supports the interview data indicating youth revealed barriers. Fully eight of ten programs experience youth related barriers.

Youth related noncompliance was discussed frequently in the context of not completing community service hours. This crosses into family/parental barriers where the parents impede completion of sanctions or services. In this context, we address only youth generated noncompliance. Respondents were not specific regarding the reasons that a youth may be noncompliant. The data suggests that this might be due to a pattern of oppositional behavior but may also be because the youth is either ashamed or simply indifferent, as they believe that there will be no further consequence if they fail to follow through.

Some youth become involved with the juvenile justice system and have moderate to severe psychological issues. In fact, one study suggests that fully 70 percent of youth in the juvenile justice system, referring more to downstream services with harsher sanctions, are behaviorally or psychiatrically compromised (Forgays & DeMilio, 2005). Larger CC programs in more urban settings reported this problem more often. At this time, there was no attempt to quantify the extent of this problem.

Addressing Youth Related Barriers

Youth related noncompliance was a source of frustration for several respondents. Suggestions for addressing the problem included expending extra time assisting the youth and probing for the reasons behind their noncompliance, enlisting the aid of the parents, finding an alternative to some of the community service hours if the reasons for noncompliance are legitimate, and pointing out the consequences of further noncompliance. One agency suggested that approximately 20 percent of youth will have problems being compliant for various reasons and this is a large enough segment to warrant the use of alternative program plans.

The Hillsborough CC program has the benefit of multiple diversion programs and will refer to parental and shock programs through their network of available diversion programs. There was not sufficient time to explore these programs but they provide extensive case management and other assistance. If youth do not complete their community service in 21 days, they are sent to the more intensive diversion programs. Further "…if parents indicate that they cannot complete the community service hours due to normal transportation, work or other issues, then they will be referred to the diversion program outright"

Referring the youth and/or family to appropriate services and using creative means to ensure some sanctions are completed were suggestions to deal with youth with behavioral, social, and psychiatric issues. Consistently, the interview data suggests that the underlying condition become the focus of intervention until sanctions can be met or while sanctions are moderated. There is a belief, especially among the social service housed CC programs, that extensive problems are a causal component of the illegal behavior and prevention of recidivism requires attention to these underlying issues.

Family/Caretaker Related Barriers

Table 10, item 5, provides the data for indication of family/caretaker related barriers. Identical to youth and implementation barriers, eight of ten programs are experiencing some level and type of family/caretaker related barrier. Family related issues raised during interviews include disinterested or over involved parents that may have a criminal history, other family members with a criminal history (negative role modeling) and pragmatic issues such as lack of transportation. While caretaker barriers can be quite disruptive in successful completion of a CC program, their detection hinges on having an assessment sensitive enough to detect their presence. In many cases, this would require a thoughtful probing of issues during the intake process as well as the structure of a biopsychosocial or similar tool that specifically inquires into these areas. At this time, there is no data support for assuming that parental issues are sufficiently frequent and disruptive enough to warrant increasing cost and necessary professional expertise for a more in-depth assessment.

The most common parental issues are pragmatic factors coupled with some parental anger. For instance, one interviewee stated that they experience "…parents arguing that they didn't do the crime so why do they have to drive around and do this." Transportation, conflict with parental work, parents not receiving annual time or other compensation for taking time to transport their child are further examples of pragmatic barriers influencing parental support of CC youth.

Addressing Family Related Barriers

Case managers and other line staff in CC programs are addressing issues of parental disinterest by spending time building rapport with the parents and by emphasizing the positive aspects of civil citation versus juvenile adjudication. Messages of support and explanation of CC program benefits delivered to parents appear to be relatively consistent across programs. However, other than some programs attempting to identify negative family role models and parental criminal justice and substance abuse histories, there were no solutions offered on how to target an intervention in these circumstances.

In order to offset issues of transportation, several CC programs mentioned their willingness to complete the paperwork and basics of an intake/assessment in the family home. This includes in one example going after hours to avoid parental loss of work. Several of the programs are in rural areas with fewer options for public transportation. In some cases, the CC representative has access to a state or county vehicle that lowers personal cost for doing a home visit. This is not uniform across programs and it would require additional data to assess the cost effectiveness and personal costs of home visits as part of a CC program.

Community Barriers

Only half of the programs endorsed community barriers to success (Table 10, item six). This also leaves the question unanswered whether the participants understand what potential community related barriers are. In many areas where the programs operate, there is extensive poverty, discrimination, lack of community recreation resources and other issues. However, it is difficult to understand a community level phenomenon on individual youth, which is the required focus for CC providers. Indeed, there are no examples from the interviews that directly address community level issues.

A potential barrier that is related to community is the lack of communication between CC programs. There is acknowledgement that other programs exist but no statewide organization, meetings, or contacts. For many programs interviewed, there was frank astonishment at the number of other CC programs out there and a great curiosity about whether they are experiencing the same successes and problems. Programs, for instance the Leon County CC program, have been approached by other counties to support them in beginning a CC program. Once the new program is established, additional contact is minimal or nonexistent.

Addressing Community Barriers

A suggestion that emerged from the literature and not the direct study was the recognition and training of ecologic understanding of family/community issues for diversion programs in general (Liebman, 2007). Youth criminal activity requires reasons and opportunities that are more prevalent in disadvantaged areas. At this time, there is no information on whether CC programs would value or support this type of training.

Effort should be made to encourage at least routine communication between CC programs in the same and adjacent circuits. All CC programs interviewed have agreed that more consistent contact, sharing of ideas and possibly supporting resources, and the establishment of a statewide organization is necessary, especially in today's budgetary climate. A corollary to this issue is the

limited assistance provided to CC programs at the state level. The FDJJ delinquency prevention specialists are highly valued by the CC programs but, at one per district, are too few and assist many other programs than CC programs.

Outcomes, Evaluation and Data Management

Outcomes

The majority of programs are using recidivism as the only outcome to measure program success. Recidivism is operationalized by checking the Juvenile Justice Information System for new charges after program completion. Noted earlier, recidivism is not being checked by many programs in their first year. Recidivism is measured at different points in time for different programs. Most programs measure at six months and consider this the primary outcome. Other programs measure more frequently with HDC in Broward County measuring at 3-month intervals through the first year of post program completion. The non-recidivism levels range from 83 percent to 97 percent. The executive director of HDC generously provided examples of quarterly reports. Excerpts from the reports indicate that there are consistent recidivism levels at six and nine months. Careful attention to their data has led HDC to inquire internally into why at 10-months they are at 3 percent recidivism and at 12-months, they increase to 12%. Careful attention to the data allowed them to detect this issue and begin an investigation. Most programs realize that there are multiple variables that may affect recidivism, for instance the affect of substance abuse/mental health problems on recidivism (Sullivan, Veysey, Hamilton, Grillo, 2007), and that most programs are not equipped with sufficient evaluation capacity to investigate. Assistance in development of outcomes was noted as a priority by multiple CC programs.

Some programs are using additional indicators or outcomes beyond recidivism already. For instance, the Escambia CC program uses the following indicators as well as recidivism:

> "75% of youth will complete community service hours
> 75% will complete an apology letter
> 80% will increase self-confidence, responsible behavior, and personal growth through increasing respect, caring, talking with parents or program personnel, resisting peer pressure, etc. (Evaluate via the AIM - Agency Information Management System)
> 75% will complete 12 hours of group mentoring"

It should be noted that the above indicators are not all true outcomes as some are indicators of youth participation in the program rather than changes in the youth's knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior.

The goals and objectives structure are more targeted and articulated in the HDC program. Examples of two goals with their objectives are provided from an HDC report:

> "Goal #1: Reduce law violation in juveniles.
>
>> Objective 1: 85% of the participants will successfully complete all requirements of program

Objective 2: 75% of youth who complete the program will demonstrate a 10% improvement in their awareness of the immediate and long-term impact of crime on victims.

Objective 3: 90% of all youth referred to the program by the state attorney or the Lauderhill Police Department will not be referred by law enforcement for a subsequent law violation during the minimum 90-day program participation.

Goal #2: Increase pro-social bonding

Objective 1: 85% of the participants will be involved in community special events.
Objective 2: 25% of participants will be enrolled in sports activities.
Objective 3: 85% of participants will participate in after-school/weekend activities."

These examples indicate that there is thought and effort beyond recidivism. However, there is little consistency across programs and the majority of programs, as noted, are focused only on recidivism. It is encouraging that the majority of programs understands the limitations of recidivism and is open to ideas for additional goals, objectives, indicators, and evaluation assistance.

Evaluation

Evaluation efforts are minimal to non-existent in most programs. Some programs use data collected to identify trends in youth served, what charges the youth enters the program with and other descriptive information. Only Hillsborough County is working with an experienced outside evaluator to measure program impact on youth. The principle investigator of the evaluation was interviewed as a Stage 2 interview respondent for this project. The evaluation is in its preliminary stages and there was minimal detail that could be shared at this time. Example statements from the interview include:

"We are evaluating a primarily school-based program. We would like to look eventually at school-based offenses, academic outcomes, and problem behaviors in school. My notion would be to make sure that there is funding for extended follow-up periods. One of the limitations is not having a long follow-up period for program impact. We would like to get them [the youth involved in the program] past the immediate follow-up period. Preliminary recidivism is important but the hope is that they will not be more fully involved in juvenile justice as youth and criminal justice systems as adults (Hillsborough Principal Investigator interview)."

Other programs are setting goals and utilizing data to consider offenses of concern, how to deal with special population needs, and on when and how to expand their program. For instance, the Lee County representative shared a matrix of goals and indicators, part of which is reproduced in the next page. This example of utilization of data to assist in decision-making is heartening and fortunately not unique to this program. However, several programs discuss their evaluation and data efforts as "…feeling our way through the dark." Increasing evaluation capacity is an important consideration for CC programs.

Outcome	Status
Within one year, reduce the number of misdemeanor referrals of minority youth in the 33916 zip code from a baseline of 236 for the year 2004-2005 by 60.	In our grant we made mention of a partnership with the Community Policing substation in 33916. However, the substation opened later than we expected, being the last week of March 2007. Working with Captain Johnson of the Lee County Sheriff's Office, we have decided to expand the program by accepting retail thefts from the Fort Myers Police Department.
Decrease by 30% the number of circuit youth placed in secure detention for domestic violence charges by the end of the first year of the grant.	According to the data supplied by the Lee County JAC (Lee, Charlotte, Hendry and Glades Counties). There were 73 simple assault domestic violence battery arrests for this quarter of which 36% (27) were released to a parent, guardian, shelter or other approved placement and offenders did not spend time in the detention facility. Another 30% (22) were only in secure detention overnight. There has been a rise in the number of children who are spending the night in a secure detention facility. The number of children being released to the shelter has decreased in the past two quarters according to the statistics kept at the JAC. The quarter ending September 2007- 56% of our children arrested for domestic violence battery were placed in a shelter or alternative placement. The quarter ending December 2007 that number deceased to 27%. This quarter only 5% (4) of the children arrested for domestic violence were admitted into the shelter.

Evaluation of program process and impact needs to be supplemented with attention to the cost benefit of CC programs. Virtually every interviewee stated that the need for cost benefit analysis was great. When asked about their understanding of the costs and benefits of CC programs very few had access to data or the understanding of how to create a system to capture the needed information. One program forwarded a spreadsheet that suggested that the cost-benefit ratio for CC programs based on costs from a Washington State study was $4.36 dollars saved for each dollar spent on civil citation. However, using another states cost package provides an estimate that should be followed up by a Florida based cost-benefit analysis. Further, though respondents were convinced that their programs were cost effective, they could not provide additional examples. This interview data is contradicted by item 6 in Table 10 (page 29) that is reproduced here:

> "I have a clear idea of the amount of resources saved when a youth successfully completes the program compared to a youth that is processed through juvenile court."

Nine out of ten respondents indicated agreement for the statement yet only one program was able to provide any information, and this was not specific to their program.

Data Management

With the exception of the larger, better supported and, in some cases, programs with greater longevity, there is a marked lack of an internal information management system. The majority

of smaller programs use printed spreadsheets and hand entered and calculated data to track open and closed participants in regards to recidivism.

> "There is no electronic data system. There is hand tracking, lots of use of logs, and other manual efforts. All information, demographic, etc. is tracked this way. Recidivism is tracked by pulling face sheets and running the name through the Juvenile Justice Information System at the 6-month interval. If no new charges, then the youth is successful for the recidivism outcome (CC respondent)."

Different data points are captured across programs. The more comprehensive the data collected the greater the ability to identify and track trends and problems, according to respondents. Some programs are proactively deciding on data that will help them in future budget negotiations and grant applications.

> "…collecting the child's information, the citation information, zip codes, biggest minority zip code is the biggest benefactor of the citation program, completion status, referrals by month, gender, age, race/ethnicity, schools the citation is issued from… We meet monthly on who is referring and who is not - those not referring, the school resource officer and administration take care of the program in-house. The children are not any different (CC respondent)."

Several participants interviewed were concerned over the lack of appropriate data supporting their belief in their success, mostly because they felt they were quite successful but lacked the ability to gather and interpret the evidence of their own program past recidivism. Due to the state budget issues, the CC programs are feeling more vulnerable and want to be able to justify themselves if budget cuts are threatened. Several programs voiced discontent with FDJJ and their ability to provide relevant and useful data back to them in a timely manner. The following quote reinforces this concern and details are hidden to maintain anonymity:

> "Any kind of program you need to plant a seed, show the need, gather data - we have a hard time in Florida of easy access data, i.e., [Name] County has the [blank] highest juvenile perpetrated domestic violence - it is roughly around [blank] a month, not a huge problem but worrisome, - we can't go to FDJJ's Web site to find that number - that is silly - they work with grants and you can't apply for a grant unless you tell a funder here is where we were, where we are, were we are going….and you need to show them the numbers - this information needs to be readily accessible - people call them to find the numbers because they can't do it themselves (CC respondent)."

This completes the description of this sample of CC programs as they are operating currently in Florida. The following section presents a discussion of TC programs in Florida. Subsections include a discussion of applicable TC statutes and TC 'in reality'.

Teen Courts in Florida

Discussion of Applicable Teen Court Statutes

Florida Statute 985.125 allows a law enforcement agency or school district to establish a pre-arrest or post-arrest diversion program, including TC programs. Part of the program requirements may require the youth to surrender his or her driver's license or to refrain from applying for a driver's license for a time not to exceed 90 days. If the requirements of the

program are not met, the state attorney may notify the Department of Highway and Motor Vehicles that the youth's driver's license is to be suspended, not to exceed 90 days. The diversion program may provide the youth the opportunity to have expunction of their non-judicial arrest record pursuant to F.S. 943.0582.

A TC may be run by a nonprofit, law enforcement agency, court administrator, clerk of court, or any other similar agency authorized by the board of commissioners, according to F.S. 938.19. In counties that have a TC, the board of commissioners may adopt a mandatory court cost by incorporating by reference the provisions of FS 938.19 in a county ordinance, notwithstanding F.S. 318.12. These funds are collected by the clerk of the circuit court of the particular county and deposited into an account that is designated for the operation and administration of the county TC on a monthly basis. Any person in circuit or county court who pleads "guilty or nolo contendere to, or is convicted of, regardless of adjudication, or adjudicated delinquent for a violation of a criminal law, a delinquent act, or a municipal or county ordinance, or who pays a fine or civil penalty for any violation of chapter 316" is assessed a sum of $3 as a court cost. In addition "any person whose adjudication is withheld under F.S. 318.14(9) or (10)" is assessed the cost. This cost is used to fund the TC programs and is not deducted from any fine or civil penalty imposed. It is not assessed for violation of any state law or municipal or county ordinance that relates to the parking of vehicles, with the notable exception of violations of handicap parking laws. It is the responsibility of the TC to account for the funds they receive under FS 938.19 and to report them to the board of commissioners by August 1 of every year. Any TC receiving court costs under this statute may not receive court costs collected under F.S. 939.185(1)(a)4.

Florida Statute 939.185 provides in part, for a board of county commissioners to adopt by ordinance additional court costs, not exceeding $65, which are imposed by the court on any person who "pleads guilty or nolo contendere to, or is found guilty of, or adjudicated delinquent for, any felony, misdemeanor, delinquent act, or criminal traffic offense" under Florida law. These funds are allocated partially for the funding of TCs, JACs and other juvenile alternative programs. According to the statute, "twenty-five percent of the amount collected shall be used as determined by the board of county commissioners to support TC programs, except as provided in F.S. 938.19(7), JACs, and other juvenile alternative programs."

Teen Courts 'In Reality'

TC programs were started in Florida through the effort and vision of a handful of concerned citizens and Judge Paul Logan in Sarasota starting in 1988 and were established in 1990. Today they are the most visible and prevalent diversion program in Florida. The key change agents of TCs programs are admission of guilt publicly before peers, acceptance of a sentence from one's peers, and positive reengagement with a peer group (e.g., serving on a Teen Court jury) (Forgays & DeMillio, 2005).

Synthesis of Operational Information of 19 Teen Court Programs

This section uses data from interviews and documents (qualitative) and survey data (quantitative) to address key areas of TC programs. However, because of the miscommunication during initial contact with TC programs (see Methods section) the number of Stage 1 program level interviews with TC program staff were less than half completed for CC programs (six versus fifteen). Thus,

the depth of qualitative information is reduced. On the other hand, sixteen programs versus ten CC programs completed the survey adding additional richness to the quantitative data. The information will be broken into several sub-sections and will follow the same pattern as the discussion of CC programs with minor exceptions. First, information on policies and procedures will be discussed. Next, budget, staffing, and number of youth served will be analyzed as well as offender level and offenses eligible for TC programs. This is followed by a discussion of the pragmatics of program delivery from assessment to completion and discharge. Separate sections will be used to discuss operational points of interest that influence how the program is delivered as well as a comprehensive discussion of the barriers that TC programs face. The final section addresses data management and evaluation efforts, completing TC 'in reality.'

Program Policies and Procedures

Interview data with TC program staff did not reveal any significant information regarding program policy and procedures. Those that commented stated that they had some basic policies in place. Others stated that they relied on the bylaws from the Florida Association of Teen Courts. We were unable to access the bylaws on the Web site but one of the programs generously forwarded them for our review. Staff emphasized that they followed "…the generally accepted teen court guidelines." Other comments from program staff included the need to update information in policy manuals because they no longer reflected the reality of the current program.

There is some concern about TC programs that said they were using the state association bylaws as their program bylaws because after perusal of the state association bylaws it became apparent that these are not working policies or procedures for an active TC but are as advertised, bylaws for an association. The assumption is that programs have or will be developing working policies that relate to the administration of TC programs.

Sarasota generously forwarded procedural manuals on volunteer and teen attorney information. The teen attorney procedure manual covers court etiquette, dress code, cross-examination, redirect, degrees of crimes, a glossary, and other necessary information. An excerpt is appended from the 'closing arguments' section of the manual. This is typical of the writing level and information in the manual and it includes directions in plain language for the bulk of the passage.

> "As a representative of the State, the prosecutor has specific responsibilities. The prosecutor must argue the case. He/She may discuss evidence, the defendant, and the defendant's credibility. He/She may discuss the duties of the jury, the importance of the case, and anything else that is relevant. However, the prosecution must not express personal beliefs as to the guilt of the defendant. The prosecutor may not act as a juror, witness, or mentor. The prosecutor should make a recommendation to the jury that is appropriate and in the State's interest (Sarasota Teen Court attorney manual, page 10)."

Budget, Staffing, Youth Served

Funding of TC programs is consistent across jurisdictions. The $3.00 court cost mentioned in the TC Statute section above provides a steady if not always sufficient source of income to fund the TC. One county representative stated that the entire cost of the court is paid "…through the county." Whether this was referencing the statutory funding source is unknown. One

interviewee stated that the increase in gasoline prices had lowered the number of drivers and hence the number of traffic citations, a key source of the $3.00 court cost, and that the loss of income was becoming noticeable.

Table 12 summarizes budget data for the 19 programs that provided survey and/or interview data. Slightly more than half of the programs offered their annual budget figure while less than a third provided information on optimal and projected budget needs. Due to insufficient information, only the current budget will be addressed. The average annual budget for a TC program is $119,300 with a range of $25,000 to $500,000. Approximately two full time staff works with each program though the range is extreme (0 to 7). There are numerous volunteers in TC programs that are not represented in Table 12. One program states that they have over 200 regular volunteers that act as jurors and in other court roles. A representative requirement to be a volunteer includes:

> "Must be between the ages of 10 and 17
> Must be in good academic standing
> Must abide by the rules of the program
> Must sign and respect the "Oath of Confidentiality"
> Must demonstrate maturity and sensitivity (copied from TC document)"

Table 12: Teen Court Budget, Projected Budget, Staffing and Youth Served							
Program #	**Current Annual Budget**	**Optimal Current Annual Budget**	**Two-Year Projected Optimal Budget**	**Full Time Staff**	**Part Time Staff**	**Served Annually**	**Projected Next Year to be Served**
Program 1	$45,000	$45,000	$45,000	0	2	35	40
Program 2	$100,000	$150,000	$165,000	2	1	279	325
Program 3				1	2	320	400
Program 4	$100,000	$100,000	$150,000	2	0	250	300
Program 5				3	1	148	200
Program 6				3	0	673	620
Program 7				2	0	280	325
Program 8				4	0	1,413	1,600
Program 9	$500,000			7	0	5,200	5,400
Program 10				7	0	2,900	3,000
Program 11	$130,000			1	0		
Program 12	$165,000			3	0	517	450
Program 13	$40,000			1	0	82	100
Program 14	$25,000	$40,000	$50,000	0	2	60	60
Program 15	$40,000			1	0	75	100
Program 16	$48,000	$75,000	$75,000	1	1	75	100
Mean	**$119,300**	**$82,000**	**$178,000**	**2.16**	**0.72**	**625**	**731**
Median	**$74,000**	**$75,000**	**$150,000**	**1.00**	**0.00**	**250**	**313**

There is a very large range of youth served annually (35 to 5,200) with the mean number served of 625. All programs are estimating approximately the same number of youth for next year.

Offenses and Offender Level

Teen courts have a degree of flexibility when deciding on what level of crime they will admit into their program. It is not specified in statute and from the limited data, it appears that the programs that have been established longer are taking offenses that are more serious. Interviews and documents indicate that some TCs are limited to first time misdemeanor offenders while others will take felony cases, some directly or others with an agreement with the State Attorney's Office.

> "We do a lot of drug cases in our teen court. We'll also take offenders twice into teen court for drug offenses if they would benefit from drug courses. We've never been limited to kids without priors. We'll also take felonies if referred by the State Attorney's Office or juvenile court but only after arraignment. We cannot take a felony directly from a law enforcement officer but we do have direct referral to our program like other diversion programs (TC respondent)."

> "We will take 3rd degree felonies, stretching the limit for the sex program - some of them would be 2nd degree felonies if charged but instead are diverted to us. We're not limiting ourselves to 1st time offenders. We began to take other cases when they lost the JASC [Juvenile Alternative Sanctions Coordinator] in our district. We'll also take drug offenses. In fact, we'll take just about any offense. If there is a reason then we'll work something out (TC respondent)."

Table 13 displays the number and percentage for each program that will accept a specific offense. Four offenses (retail/petty theft, disruption of a school function, criminal mischief, and possession of alcohol) are admissible to all programs. Only stalking/harassing, burglary, truancy and other substance related offenses are allowed in one or three programs. This assertion must be taken with caution as these might be admitted in other programs but were not written in and thus could not be counted.

Aggregated percentages of charges individually and categorized are presented in Table 14. Retail/petty theft (24.9%) is the most frequent offense referred to TC. Possession of marijuana (15.42%) is the second most frequent offense. Theft/taking property is the most frequent category of offenses (29.39%) with retail/petty theft contributing the majority to that category. Not surprising, the category of substance related offenses is the second most frequent but only slightly behind the leader at 24.38 percent. Though the purpose of this report is not to compare CC with TC programs, differences will be mentioned for illustrative purposes when of interest. As a reminder the top offending categories for CC programs are violent/threatening offenses followed by retail/petty theft, with substance offenses third most frequent. Violent/threatening offenses are third most frequent for TC programs. Thus, the top three categories are the same for TC and CC programs, but in different order. There is insufficient data for speculation but it would be interesting to trace how TC evolved to include a higher frequency of substance related offenses and CC violence related offenses.

Table 13: Number and Percent of Teen Court Programs that Accept Specific Charges

Offenses	Yes*		Offenses	Yes*	
	n	%		n	%
Retail/Petty Theft	16	100.0	Affray	14	87.5
Disruption of School Function	16	100.0	Breach of Peace	13	81.3
Criminal Mischief	16	100.0	Grand Theft	13	81.3
Possession of Alcohol	16	100.0	Assault	12	75.0
Disorderly Conduct	15	93.8	Weapon in a School	12	75.0
Resisting Arrest	15	93.8	Domestic Violence Related	12	75.0
Trespassing	15	93.8	Forgery	10	62.5
Loitering and Prowling	15	93.8	Stalking or Harassing**	3	18.8
Vandalism	15	93.8	Burglary**	3	18.8
Battery (including felony)	15	93.8	Truancy**	1	6.3
Possession of Marijuana	15	93.8	Other Substance Related**	1	6.3
Possession of Paraphernalia	15	93.8			

* = number and percent of programs (total n = 16) that will accept the charge in their program
** = offenses not included in the original list but written in under 'other' by programs.

Program Flow

The program flow for TC programs is markedly similar across sites. Each program interviewed was asked to comment on how a youth gets into and out of the TC program. The following is a synthesis of the flow as described by the six TC program respondents interviewed as well as program documentation and surveys. The following sub-sections will follow the flow of a TC program, loosely in temporal order: Offense and Referral, Intake and Assessment, Involving the Parent, Assigning Sanctions, Provision of Services, Completion, and Discharge.

Offense and Referral

Due to limited interview data, it is not possible to draw conclusions regarding the referral process to TC. The data reflects three referral pathways. Which pathway is more common is unclear, nor is it known if there are other pathways than the three discussed here. The first pathway is referral to TC via the State Attorney's Office. Of the programs supplying this information, this is the most common pathway. A youth either in school or from a street encounter is charged. This may or may not include a trip to the JAC. The State Attorney's Office may recommend TC and the youth is adjudicated to the TC via the court. The youth attends TC with his or her parent and the process described next takes place. A corollary to this referral source is a referral from traffic court to TC. The TC percentage of traffic cases is considerably higher than CC programs. The other type of referral is direct referral from a school resource officer or street deputy to the TC. The traffic citation (not to be confused with a civil citation) in at least one jurisdiction interviewed has teen court as an alternative. The officer checks the TC box on the traffic citation and the youth is expected to attend the TC as soon as possible. Advocates of this direct referral approach feel that this combines the positive aspects of teen review and censure that is unique to TC with the direct referral ability of CC programs. They go on to emphasize that with

Offense	% of All Charges	Offense	% of All Charges
Table 14: Aggregated Percent of Offenses Committed by Youth in Teen Court Programs Individually and by Category			
Offense	**% of All Charges**	**Offense**	**% of All Charges**
Category 1: Theft/Taking Property	**29.39**	**Category 4: Disruptive Behavior**	**11.05**
Retail/Petit Theft	24.90	Disruption of School Function	4.30
Grand Theft	3.61	Disorderly Conduct	2.97
Forgery	0.41	Resisting Arrest	2.09
Burglary**	0.47	Breach of Peace	1.69
Category 2: Other Property Related	**11.98**	**Category 5: Violent/Threatening Offenses**	**17.22**
Criminal Mischief	5.93	Battery (including felony)	8.84
Trespassing	2.91	Domestic Violence Related	0.81
Loitering and Prowling	0.81	Affray	3.32
Vandalism	1.75	Assault	2.56
False Fire Alarm**	0.00	Weapon in a School	1.34
Truancy**	0.58	Stalking or Harassing**	0.35
Category 3: Substance Related	**24.38**	**Category 6: Traffic/Driving Related****	**5.88**
Possession of Marijuana	15.42	Includes no valid driver's license, driving while license suspended, leaving scene of accident, traffic violations and criminal traffic charges	
Possession of Paraphernalia	5.12	**Category 7: Other****	**0.76**
Possession of Alcohol	3.84		

* = number and percent of programs (total n = 16) that will accept the charge in their program
** = offenses not included in the original list but written in under 'other' by programs.

TC being strongly established in many counties (57 counties have their own TC), that direct referral would improve utilization of a proven program. The final referral path mentioned in program documentation downloaded from TC Web sites is the FDJJ. It is unclear if these are direct referrals to TC or if they are recommendations to the State Attorney's Office and court that are then funneled to TC.

Intake and Assessment

The majority of interview respondents report that the JAC completes an initial assessment that may include a psychosocial or biopsychosocial, the PACT instrument for assessing risk, family interactions, substance abuse history, disqualifying information (weapon charges and sex offenses were mentioned by one participant as excluding entry into that program), and urinalysis. Two programs stated directly that they do not complete an assessment separate from the JAC. Table 15 summarizes assessment information from the 16 TC programs that returned the study survey. Thirteen of 20 assessments are completed by at least 80 percent the respondents. The

assessment information that TC has to assist in rulings of sanctions and services as well as case management is consistently high across programs.

Assessing the content and use of assessments was not possible for this project. Still, there are recommendations for service assessment. Parent assessment of youth behavior, history, and emotional stability should be included in more TC assessment packages. This provides a counterbalance to information obtained from the youth. An alternative would be to ensure that parents offer insight into psychosocial assessments as they are being completed. In a similar vein, an assessment targeting re-offending risk, currently used by 50 percent of programs, should be included in all programs. The literature supports that risk assessments (e.g. the PACT), are valid in detecting risk (Juvenile and Family Justice, Winter, 2007). Examining success across risk levels could result in needed but heretofore unknown change opportunities. Finally, an evaluation of the utilization of assessment information across programs would be beneficial. With the current data, it was impossible to detect how this information is transmitted into a court setting and thus to what realistic use it is put. Is it used only for screening into the program? If so, then a rich array of information is being underutilized.

Table 15: Frequency of Assessments Completed by Teen Court Programs					
	Yes			**Yes**	
Assessment	**n**	**%**	**Assessment**	**n**	**%**
Previous criminal history of the youth	16	100.0	Parent completed assessment of youth	4	25.0
Psychosocial or Biopsychosocial	8	50.0	Family relationships	14	87.5
Risk factor assessment	13	81.3	Family criminal history	10	62.5
Disruptive behavior/conduct issues	16	100.0	Family substance abuse/mental health history	11	68.8
Anger	16	100.0	Current family or youth stressors	15	93.8
Depression	14	87.5	Peer associations	16	100.0
Suicidality	14	87.5	Youth history of child maltreatment	11	68.8
Anxiety	13	81.3	Academic achievement (grades, GPA)	16	100.0
Youth substance abuse history	16	100.0	School variables (e.g. referrals, attendance)	16	100.0
Urinalysis	12	75.0	Youth talents and skills	11	68.8
Note: Total n = 16					

Engaging the Parent

Respondents to interviews stated they were careful to limit the burden on parents. Parents have a mandatory responsibility of attending the TC session with their child. It is unknown but suspected that parents are expected to be present at the JAC during processing and assessment and must at least provide transportation when the youth is released. Taken together this is a substantial burden on parents who often do not have paid time off or other employment bonuses.

Interview respondents report minimal disruption from parents during the interview process with the main complaint being transportation to the hearing and community service. Teen court representatives attempt to make allies of the parent through concentrating on the positive that can come from the experience. They also "…try to help parents with their individual circumstances, make them feel that they are not to blame, and be an ally." The following list of statements to parents was compiled from interview data and program documents:

- Taking responsibility for their actions

- Encouraging positive behavior while future offending is discouraged

- Recognizing that the youth are being confronted and judged by peers, who often have a powerful influence over behavior

- Supporting giving back for what they did

- Valuing youth's participation on juries and learning to help others like they were helped

- Supporting the consequence but not choosing it, that way your child is less angry with you

- Calling upon us for support when youth are not doing what they were sentenced to do

Assigning Sanctions

Teen courts have developed a long list of sanctions beyond community service. Unique to this program, and part of each TC interviewed, is the return to court to participate in jury duty as a mandatory sanction. This is not universal as one respondent mentioned one county where it is not mandatory. Several sites place limits on community service hours and nights of jury duty for the level of offense but they must be levied as sanctions unless extenuating circumstances makes this impossible. Much like CCs, TCs will dispense with mandatory sanctions if issues of transportation or health require. Further, offenders can volunteer to come to more court sessions and receive specialized training for other court roles.

> "Returning youth who have been to teen court as an offender, or a youth who is volunteering for community service, yes, we do have many none sentenced participants, go through training for clerk, attorney, or bailiff roles. They can serve their time out during the sanction period not just as a juror only but we encourage them to come back and participate in some other role as well. Our goal is to give them the experience during their sanction time (TC respondent)."

Indeed, one program reports that 50 percent of their youth come back to volunteer. It is difficult to decide whether jury duty and subsequent training is a sanction or a service. It certainly operates within the vision of restorative justice. One program respondent stated, "Two student defendants have become attorneys and come back to TC and serve once a month each."

According to the president of the Florida Teen Court Association:

> "All teen court programs have [as possible sanctions] community service hours and jury duty. The youth must be in school, follow directions at home, write letters of apology [parents, victim or both], write essays, obey a curfew, they should not be around co-

defendants or victims, go on jail tours, and take shoplifting classes if that is their reason to be in court."

A sample of additional sanctions that have been used by TC, and in many cases were generated by creative youth juries, include…

- Make restitution (usually ordered through the State Attorney's Office and made part of TC sanctions)

- Present an open court apology to their own parent

- Watch certain movies and write essays (e.g. Cinderella Man) for petty theft, particularly for younger offenders

- View the truth about drinking video - with questions at the end

- Attend anger management classes

- Take tours to facilities where young people work (e.g. a computer graphics company) for kids that like to be on the computer

- Identify GED and vocational schools, go visit them and bring a report back to the case manager

- Go to [regional university] and do a tour

- Take an online quiz developed specifically for the program for certain offenses

- Take a tour of the [name] academy, a level 6 FDJJ facility with an assignment to complete and also meet with youth that are graduating and ask questions both ways - parents can go with them if they would like

Community Service

Community service remains the backbone of sanctions for TC. However, several programs suggested that community service locations are approved that will "… send them to something they're good at to improve others lives." This is another example of being in line with restorative justice practices. However, not all TC representatives made this claim and it is likely an easier task to manage in a more urban location. Consistently, arranging steady community service sites was cited as a principal barrier to program implementation.

> "Staff makes contact to make sure that the youth started and are continuing with their community service hours. Community service agencies want to stick with adult volunteers. We have a difficult time in finding a good partner to do hours. We only have 13 agencies that will commit to do hours with teens that are court ordered (TC respondent)."

Sites where youth can complete community service hours that were discussed by respondents is nearly identical with the list cited earlier in the discussion of CC programs and will not be repeated here. Table 16 summarizes the least number of hours, the most, and the average number assigned by participating TC programs. As can be seen, there is no maximum number established by law for TC programs. The average maximum of 80.33 hours is partially inflated due to Alachua and Marion counties contributions. When removing these counties, the average

drops to approximately 64 hours. The average across programs is 36.07 hours, nearly 13 hours more than CC programs.

County	Site	Days Before CS Hours Commence	Least	Most	Average
Calhoun	Calhoun County Teen Court	60	10	35	25
Clay	Teen Court of Clay County	30	8	75	35
Escambia	Escambia County TC	10	30	60	35
Lake	Lake County TC	30	20	50	30
Manatee	Manatee County TC	14	10	75	30
Marion	Marion County Teen Court		40	150	70
Orange	Orange County Teen Court	30	15	100	45
Palm Beach	Palm Beach County Youth Court	7	25	100	35
Pinellas	6th Circuit Court Juvenile Arbitration Teen Court Programs	7	10	50	25
Sumter	Sumter County Teen Court	30	10	50	40
Alachua	Alachua Teen Court	30	30	230	51
Jackson	Jackson County Teen Court	7	10	100	55
Suwannee	Suwannee County Teen Court	20	10	40	20
Nassau	Nassau County Teen Court	7	10	50	25
Baker	Baker County Teen Court	30	10	40	20
Average		**22.29**	**16.53**	**80.33**	**36.07**

Table 16: Community Service Hours Assigned by Teen Court Programs

Provision of Services

Referral to services for problem areas detected during assessment, or at the request of a parent, is similar to the practice in CC programs. Insufficient data exists to compare the practices but the larger number of assessments completed as part of the TC intake process suggests that more information is gathered to make evidence-informed decisions and this might lead to a greater frequency of service referrals. A targeted evaluation would be required to answer this question as well as to assess impact of services on future behavior. In addition, several programs stated that they do not wait for the court appearance to assign treatment needs if detected. In some cases, services are assigned before a court appearance and the peer court members are not aware of the referral, as an additional layer of confidentiality.

There are some notable services being developed as potential alternatives for youth manifesting specific issues. For instance, in one jurisdiction the TC is spearheading the development of Camp ExRAYD (Exam Reality about Your Decision). This is an additional 18 hours of mandated activities for youth charged with a substance abuse crime or that test positive at intake as well as specified aftercare. This includes a jail tour, follow-up counseling, and six months of aftercare. A separate county is replicating this effort. Another program developed specifically for the offender population is Shock Education that provides tours to numerous facilities such as

emergency rooms to expose the youth to the negative consequences of poor choices by young people. This is not a 'scared straight' effort, which has proven ineffective, but is exposure with education, discussion, and also an opportunity to experience careers that a youth might aspire to in the helping professions.

Services are assigned in order to address a detected problem or to teach a message of value. As one respondent states, "…if the case manager sees the offense was one where the youth is a follower then a drug education assignment is given that emphasizes leadership and independent thought." Table 17 summarizes information on the availability of services in the TC areas surveyed and the willingness of providers to see TC youth when referred. Mental health, substance abuse, and family counseling as well as drug education providers are the most numerous services available. The least available are, somewhat surprisingly, parent support groups, mentoring programs, and restorative justice related programs. These are sharply lower than resources noted by CC programs residing in the same counties. A possible explanation is that the awareness of parent support groups is diminished due to this service reported as being provided in-house by all TC programs surveyed (Table 17). This does not account, however, for mentoring and restorative justice programs. Both CC and TC programs might benefit from sharing information on service availability in their communities. Willingness to accept referrals was also considerably lower than CC programs. The reader will note that availability and willingness move parallel across services. Perhaps a lack of willingness is interpreted as unavailable by some respondents.

Table 17: Availability and Willingness to Accept Referrals in Teen Court Program Jurisdictions

Service	Availability			Willingness		
	n	Mean	S.D.	n	Mean	S.D.
Case management	11	1.55	1.37	7	1.57	0.79
Counseling – Mental health	13	2.15	0.69	12	1.67	0.65
Counseling – Substance abuse	13	2.00	0.71	12	1.83	0.58
Counseling – Family	13	2.15	0.80	12	1.83	0.58
Counseling – Trauma related	12	1.58	0.52	11	1.64	0.67
Counseling – Domestic violence	13	1.69	0.63	12	1.75	0.45
Social skills assistance	12	1.50	1.00	9	1.67	0.50
Drug education	13	2.08	0.64	11	1.73	0.65
Juvenile Justice education	11	1.55	1.21	8	1.50	0.93
Restorative Justice related	11	1.09	1.22	7	1.00	1.00
Parenting assistance/training	13	1.38	0.87	12	1.42	0.79
Parent support groups	11	0.82	0.98	7	1.00	0.82
Mentoring	12	0.92	0.79	9	1.00	0.71
Tour related (criminal justice, employment, etc.)	12	1.33	1.23	9	1.44	0.88

Availability = the degree services are available across TC jurisdictions (max score = 3.0)
Willingness = Willingness of community based programs to accept TC youth referrals (max score = 2.0)
'n' is based on a maximum of 16 TC programs endorsing a particular service

Services related to sanctions (e.g. restitution), or the potential underlying issues of poor role modeling and parenting issues (e.g. parenting classes and support groups) are the most likely to be supplied in-house (Table 18). Considering that the majority of these programs are administered in court settings, it is somewhat surprising that some counseling services and other specialized programs are provided in-house. One program has a girls support group, provides alcohol and marijuana education groups for substance offenders and has a Certified Addictions Professional (CAP) on staff that they are hoping to increase to full time and to build a more intense substance abuse program around. According to another respondent:

> "We provide our Shock Education Program, a psychoeducational type of program for kids that are high risk. We take referrals from families as well, for kids at risk but not yet in trouble, a prevention effort, with a concurrent parent support group. We're unique because we also have a program for pre-file sex cases that won't, in all likelihood, be prosecuted - 60-80 sex cases per year, mostly in families that are reluctant to prosecute, getting them in counseling, etc., when they would have walked away (TC respondent)."

Table 18: Service Provision for Teen Court Program Jurisdictions				
Service	**In-House**		**Referred Out**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Case management	15	93.8	1	6.3
Counseling – Mental health	2	12.5	14	87.5
Counseling – Substance abuse	2	12.5	15	93.8
Counseling – Family	1	6.3	12	75.0
Counseling – Trauma related	1	6.3	9	56.3
Group – social skills	7	43.8	6	37.5
Group – retail theft	8	50.0	5	31.3
Group – victim impact	5	31.3	5	31.1
Group – drug education	7	43.8	11	68.8
Restorative Justice Conference	3	18.8	2	12.5
Restorative Justice – other	4	25.0	3	18.8
Intervention – Retail theft	7	43.8	5	31.3
Intervention – Domestic violence	2	12.5	11	68.8
Restitution monitoring	15	93.8	16	100.0
Parenting classes	16	100.0	9	56.3
Parent support group	16	100.0	9	56.3
Gender specific services	1	6.3	6	37.5
Mentoring	5	31.3	9	56.3
Didactic (e.g. work books)	10	62.5	2	12.5
Tours (prisons, etc.)	7	43.8	4	25.0

In-House = Service provided on site by TC affiliated staff
Referred Out = Services are referred out to community providers
Total n = 16. Sum of In-House and Referred columns may exceed 16 if a program provides the service in-house and refers out

The blending of specialized services targeting the etiology of problematic and illegal behavior in the context of juvenile justice programs is entirely consistent with the vision and purpose of restorative justice. In part, this may be due to the longer life span of TC programs compared to the majority of CC programs. TC programs interviewed have been in existence from 10 to 19 years. Despite this longevity, TC programs, like CC programs, do not appear to be operating from a clear and coherent theory of change, individually or collectively. The benefits of a theory of change were discussed in an earlier section and apply equally to TC programs. This point will be emphasized further in the discussion of TC outcomes and evaluation.

Completion and Discharge

There was minimal specific information provided regarding completion and discharge. Programs vary in how long youth have to complete sanctions and become involved in services. The range for programs that responded to the question was three months to six months. This is longer than most CC programs though the reasoning for longer time frames was not indicated. Youth are expected to complete all sanctions before discharge but TC programs are as flexible as CC programs and allow additional time for reasonable excuses. No TC program discussed any follow-up data collection for satisfaction or impact post program completion but this cannot be generalized to all TC programs.

Operational Points of Interest

Restorative justice was discussed in interviews and was assessed in program documents forwarded for this research effort. Of 15 programs that responded to the restorative justice question (Table 19, item 1), 11 of them (73.3%) agreed or somewhat agreed that restorative justice plays an active role in the day-to-day operation of the program. This is supported by the qualitative interview data. One TC program uses restorative justice conferences through the local Neighborhood Accountability Board (NAB). The respondent states:

> "Victim's have always been invited to come to arbitration and interviews and we also invite them to come to teen court and have had some instances where there was an interesting hearing with the restorative justice component. We want the victims and the defendants, and their families, to come together and have a dialogue. We want to train the court to help youth realize what is restorative versus punitive. Previously even the simple things that aren't truly restorative justice, for example, a 'saying no' contract, informing the victim what has happened, were not being done."

This same program has developed 'junior varsity' TCs for younger juries and defendants. In addition, a 'peer teen court' has recently been developed for cases that are more sensitive (e.g. a child in foster care or a child that has mental health issues and not appropriate for general teen court). Restorative justice is more directly engaged to provide a sensitive environment while holding the youth accountable and at the same time providing sanctions and understanding at a level that is appropriate for the youth. The peer teen court is:

> "Put in a smaller setting - sitting around a table with the peer group, with 4-5 students that volunteered, victims and defendant parents, and [the youth] were asked very sensitive questions. A sanction that came out of one session for some boys that said very racially rude and provocative statements and said a lot of extremely derogatory things about woman was to have them examine and write on what has happened to women and

minorities in the U.S. We are very concerned if the youth is fragile and it makes sense to protect them. Unfortunately, this has gone from once a week to once a month due to manpower but we want to do it more. I view this a lot like what happens in NAB (TC respondent)."

Table 19: Additional Operational and Programmatic Points of Interest for Teen Court Programs					
		Frequency			
Item	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Little or No Agreement	Mean	S.D.
1. The concept of Restorative Justice plays an active part in the day-to-day operation of the program.	8	3	4	2.27	0.88
2. Disproportionate minority contact is an area of focus for the program.	2	4	8	1.57	0.76
3. Youth sent to the program are not adjudicated and will have no record if they successfully complete the program.	12	1	3	2.56	0.81
4. There is concern about competition with other diversion programs and my program.	1	2	13	1.25	0.58
5. My program has adequate support by key community stakeholders (e.g. law enforcement, state attorney).	14	1	1	2.81	0.54
6. I have a clear idea of the amount of resources saved when a youth successfully completes the program compared to a youth that is processed through juvenile court.	11	5	0	2.69	0.48

Disproportionate minority contacts (DMC) were identified as an area of focus for approximately half of TC programs, though this only met the strongest level of agreement for two programs (Table 19). Only one program discussed DMC before being asked. This appears to indicate that TC programs feel that they provide unbiased services and that they can little effect the policies in the streets or schools that funnel youth into their program.

> "Some kids are referred to the TC program due to not following through on CC is because of poverty and communication issues and this is a DMC issue for many. We are following through to see what kinds of kids are coming to our program and need the assistance to prevent further issues and problems. Do they have dependency issues, previous suspensions from school, parents involved in the CJ system or on supervision – for example, we had a mom call from her work when we talked to her probation officer. She called right away but wouldn't give us the time of day before that. (TC respondent)."

Item 3 in Table 19 addresses whether youth sent to the program are not adjudicated and will have no record if they successfully complete the program. As a reminder, this was asked because a portion of CC and TC programs described incidences where a youth that had gone through their program had come back from one to a few years later needing a letter stating they had successfully completed the program and the circumstances for entry. This question was expected to garner less agreement than indicated (13 programs indicated agreement). That TC representatives are not concerned is heartening.

Competition with other diversion programs was an issue of agreement for three of the program respondents (Table 19, item 4). This is a different question than what delayed contact with TC programs (i.e. concern that this effort was to create a rival TC organization). Concern over competition with other diversion programs, though existing to some extent, is not a serious issue of concern among TC programs surveyed.

Support from stakeholders, Table 19, item 5, was of little to no concern for all TC programs except one. Key stakeholders listed by programs interviewed include:

- Board of County Commissioners
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- State Attorney's Office
- Sheriff's Office and Other Law Enforcement
- Clerk of the Court
- Private Attorneys
- Public Defender's Office

Missing from the list of key stakeholders are service providers, community service organizations and the school system. This is not meant to imply that TC program staff are unconcerned about support and educational organizations. Similar to CC programs, these are not thought of automatically as stakeholders since they are not linked with referrals or general operations (e.g. the State Attorney's Office as well as private attorneys and public defenders as sources of adult judges for TC sessions). Respondents were more likely to discuss services in the context of service provision within their own programs than community-based referrals.

There is not sufficient data to comment on the tracking of service referrals or what level of contact with service providers is maintained post court appearance. Respondents agreed that steady sources of community service are difficult to maintain. It is recommended that TC programs follow the recommendations earlier to CC programs for maintaining community service and provider services with partnering agencies. This includes consistent contact so the program or site feels valued, asking for feedback for problems and suggestions on how to improve the benefit for the programs, and some form of occasional recognition (e.g. mention in a newsletter). School systems are a main source of youth volunteers as well as providing pertinent educational information on student offenders in TC programs. The comments regarding relationships with schools were positive but limited.

The last item from Table 19 references respondents having a clear idea of the amount of resources saved when a youth successfully completes the program compared to a youth that is processed further through the juvenile system. All respondents agreed with this statement to some degree. However, when asked, only one respondent gave a clear savings estimate of $5,000 per youth for not going deeper into the system. How this number was generated is unknown. There is an apparent lack of ability to clearly state cost savings associated with the operation of TC programs.

Barriers and Solutions in Active Teen Court Programs

The Florida budget crisis is perceived as affecting 11 of 16 programs (Table 20, item 1). This item is tied with the perception of family/caregiver barriers for having the most impact on TC programs. Unfortunately, the limited number of interviews prevents a more in-depth analysis of barriers. The following comments will offer what can be clearly stated from the data, sparse though it is. However, what can be garnered from the qualitative data is wholly consistent with the data in Table 20.

Response to the question of *policy barriers* reveals a polarized response with a few individuals agreeing there are policy barriers that they experience and the majority not experiencing them to any appreciable degree (Table 20, item 2). One comment on the effect of zero tolerance in school provides the only evidence of what a concern might be. Many of the TC representatives discussed their involvement and influence with policy bodies and this may be in part why policy is less of a problem. Finally, "…artificial funding streams," as coined by a TC respondent, creates issues about sufficient funding. The respondent states that the FDJJ pays for Intensive Delinquency Prevention with monies that should be available to more diversion programs. This increases the burden of sustainability for programs that are not eligible.

Table 20: Perceptions of Barriers Affecting Teen Court Programs					
	Frequency				
Item	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Little or No Agreement	Mean	S.D.
7. The current budget crisis in Florida has had a noticeable impact on the program.	9	2	5	2.25	0.93
8. There are policy barriers (e.g. zero tolerance, impacting program success).	3	0	13	1.38	0.81
9. There are implementation barriers (e.g. budget constraints or inadequate training) impacting program success.	2	4	10	1.50	0.73
10. There are youth related barriers (e.g. conduct problems, negative attitudes, self-esteem) impacting program success.	5	7	4	2.06	0.77
11. There are family related barriers (e.g. negative role modeling, substance abuse, inadequate resources) .impacting program success.	6	8	2	2.25	0.68
12. There are community related barriers (e.g. unsafe streets, lack of recreational facilities) impacting program success.	3	8	5	1.88	0.72

Even fewer individuals have as strong a reaction to *implementation barriers* though in total six of ten indicated some level of agreement with this type of barrier (Table 20, item 3). As addressed earlier, the most frequently cited barrier is finding and maintaining community service sites. Another implementation barrier is having sufficient adult judge volunteers (the Adult Judge Model) to hold the court in the preferred model. Some TC programs are opting for a model that uses a youth as judge (the Youth Judge Model) as well as all the other court roles, but this model has not gained as much popularity. Additionally, one of the TC programs interviewed uses a jury as both the judge and the jury. This Peer Jury Model (Harrison, Maupin & Mays, 2001) is used at that site because they have only been able to obtain the assistance of one volunteer attorney one time a month. The degree of variance is surprising as other programs report having so many attorney and judge volunteers that, though they are holding multiple sessions a week, each volunteer is needed only once per month.

Twelve of sixteen programs are experiencing *youth related barriers* (Table 20, item 4). Not finishing sanctions levied during the court process was the most often cited issue. The most difficult group is youth that show for all their mandatory juries but do not follow through on other sanctions. This is a youth invested in the process of judging others but not being judged. There were no concrete suggestions on how to handle this issue. Actually, the large number

experiencing youth related issues is not reflected in the qualitative data and is probably a response to the lower number of interviews completed.

The fourth type of barrier, *family related barriers*, was present in 14 of 16 programs (Table 20, item 5). Respondents cited transportation issues, loss of work, anger at the youth for committing the offense and obligating the parents time, as well as anger at the court and system for what was considered wrongful or excessive prosecution to a parent. Earlier in the engaging parents section a list of positive messages to offer parents was outlined. However, they do not address the pragmatic concern of loss of work and transportation issues. The only suggestion by respondents was to delay an appearance until the court time was more convenient for the parent. There was no mention of home visits or other responses available to CC programs primarily because this is literally a peer group intervention. One respondent mentioned attempting to access dollars from a case management budget and another suggested that a FDJJ worker had transported a mother and her youth at one time. Clearly, the most bothersome issue for the respondents was the parent that did not feel that their child was being treated fairly. This in nearly all cases results in the youth not completing their sanctions and not taking the process seriously.

The final barrier category is *community related barriers* such as poverty and support for violating the law (Table 20, item 6). Although 11 of 18 agreed at some level that these were issues for their program, only three fully agreed. However, except for mention of poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and lack of safe community recreation areas there was no elaboration of this as a barrier and no solutions were offered. Community level barriers are often difficult to understand for both causation and solution. They are often just accepted as something to work within that is immutable.

The following section details guidelines for starting a CC program. The description is reduced to a template that provides one example on how to establish a CC program. As the template has not been tested, it is important to consider this fact when utilizing it and any users need to remain flexible to the challenges of the context in which they use the document.

Starting a Civil Citation Program

Considerable effort was made in the interview process to understand better the 'how to' of starting a CC program. Respondents were asked to comment on crucial startup processes, stakeholders, supports, offenses, services, program flow, barriers, evaluation, and data management. In addition, documentation regarding operation of diversion programs was accessed when available. The reporting of this data in the form of operational guidelines constitutes the bulk of this section.

There are multiple decision points in starting a CC program. One area that will not be considered in this section is the political climate of communities and the state. Though likely important, the interview process did not engage in this discussion. However, programs should be aware of spikes in juvenile crime and other occurrences that put juvenile justice on the political and public radar and gauge the degree that this influences the desire for diversion programming. A community should establish whether a CC program would be of benefit to their community via a preliminary needs assessment. For the purposes of this document, the assumption is that a CC program has been deemed useful and necessary for the community via a needs assessment or

other process. Many communities already complete needs assessments and the process is sufficiently complex that any brief comments in this report would not give the process its due.

A natural corollary to the decision to establish a CC program would be to decide where the funding would be obtained, whether via a grant process through the FDJJ, local funds or other sources. Funding a CC program is covered next. Other areas covered in this section include considering and engaging stakeholders, theory of change, startup information and processes, policies and procedures, provision for service referrals and delivery, outcomes, evaluation and data management.

Funding

An initial consideration for a community when deciding on starting a CC program is to establish the funding requirements and sources that will be needed to begin and maintain the program. Data considered valid from Table 2, page 14, was used to provide the average funding level and optimal funding level if a program was to begin in the near future. These numbers are not a suggestion on what the funding level should be but can be viewed as an initial estimate to begin the process. Since data regarding costs and expenditures were not requested, there is no ability to describe the reality of funding beyond these raw numbers. When estimating the current average expenditure for a CC program, programs 2-10 from Table 2 were averaged from programs contributing data (mean = $113,630). The optimal expenditure column accesses what the program believes would be required to comfortably provide for current program requirements, in other words if there were sufficient funds to cover current needs without financial stress. Programs 2-8 were used for this estimate ($137,000). Programs 1 and 9 were not included because the estimates appeared to be inflated when compared to the other programs. Thus, an estimated annual budget of $113,630 to $137,000 is the estimated range for year one of a CC program.

Ideally, as a program continues to evolve, it is important to secure other sources of funding, whether through county tax dollars or other sources. Examples of other sources include Federal Title II DMC (disproportionate minority contact) funds, foundation monies, and federal grants through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). One CC program stands out for diversification of current funding sources, providing for financial stability and sustainability. These include the following sources:

- Children's Services Council
- Grant from FDJJ
- Grant from County Human Services
- United Way

- City Funding
- Children's Opportunity Group - materials and tasks

GUIDELINE 1:   *Determine optimal required funding and compare to available funds. Establish whether a FDJJ starter grant is the most reasonable funding choice (it probably is according to study respondents). Begin to seek funds for post grant sustainability in the first year of operation.*

Considering and Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholder support, both initial and ongoing, is essential for CC program success. However, as one respondent stated, "[there was] difficulty in finding time to meet with all the required parties when wanting to start the CC program." Time engaging with stakeholders was one of the most cited issues with beginning a CC program. Those interested in starting a CC program, and expecting to use FDJJ startup funding for their first three years, should heed this warning. Grant money via the FDJJ is specifically mentioned because there is considerable documentation including memorandums of understanding with law enforcement, state attorneys, and the chief judge of the circuit court, among others, that needs to be included in the initial grant application. The programs surveyed for this report indicate that only one program does not feel that they have adequate stakeholder support (Table 9, page 26). This is promising since stakeholder support, by the admission of respondents, is essential not only for program success but for program survival.

GUIDELINE 2: Assume multiple meetings with multiple stakeholders to have the required documentation for an FDJJ grant and to gain mandatory stakeholder support. Budget time accordingly to meet grant deadlines.

Stakeholders can be categorized as mandatory and optional. The use of the term 'optional' to refer to stakeholders only reflects that they are not mandated and is not a reflection of their value to the success of a CC program. Mandatory stakeholders include individuals named in the statute that are required to approve and support the program. These include the chief judge of the circuit court, the state attorney, the public defender, and the head of each law enforcement agency that will be involved. Examples of optional stakeholders include the district school system, principals of target schools (especially if the school resource officer will be counted on for referrals, or the program is completely school-based) service organizations, and key community service organizations.

Respondents suggested the order in which to contact stakeholders basing it on their experiences of program development. The following list in Guideline 3 reports out stakeholder data regarding contacting stakeholders. Following this is a brief discussion of both mandatory and optional stakeholders that synthesizes information from program documents and interviews.

GUIDELINE 3: Utilize the following pattern of contacts and advice on topics when planning and executing stakeholder contacts. Before meeting with mandatory stakeholders prepare a list of potential charges that will be eligible for the program. This was recommended by the respondents, because this appeared to be one of the most time consuming points of negotiation. A list of charges based on data will accelerate the process. The list in Table 3 (page 16) can be used to justify choices by frequency and type. The list should not be viewed as complete and inflexible. Law enforcement values discretion as well as structure so allow for a balance.

1. *Develop initial lists of responsibilities that each stakeholder will be accountable for and use them to discuss key points in memorandums of understanding at initial meetings with mandatory and optional stakeholders. For example, how active a role with the State Attorney's Office have or how many training contacts will be required for different stakeholder groups?*

2. *The first organization to contact was tied between the chief judge and the state attorney. Both have veto power and it was suggested that the respective experiences and previous support for diversion be considered when making this decision. Set meetings with the State Attorney's Office and the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court.*

3. *Obtain preliminary agreement from the judge and state attorney.*

4. *Contact the local Sheriff's department and/or other law -enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction in the proposed catchment area for the CC program. Discuss law -enforcement responsibilities and benefits for establishing a CC program.*

5. *Obtain preliminary agreement from the law enforcement departments.*

6. *Contact the Public Defender's Office and discuss the CC program.*

7. *Obtain preliminary agreement from the Public Defender's Office.*

8. *Write and have signed interagency agreements or memorandums of understanding with mandatory stakeholders before meeting with optional stakeholders.*

9. *Contact service agencies and potential locations for community service. Explain the program and ask for their support to receive referrals. Having copies of letters of support from the chief judge, the state attorney, the lead public defender and law enforcement agencies adds weight to the request and should be used as needed.*

Mandatory Stakeholders

The *Chief Judge of the Circuit Court* was not mentioned to any extent by program personnel. However, data from stage two interviews indicate that judges are very involved in diversion but at least for those interviewed for this study are more involved with TC than CC. One individual did not believe that the judge was required for CC approval as "…this is diversion and the idea is to keep them out of sight of the judge and that part of the system." It does appear from interview data that judges play less direct a role in day-to-day operations of CC programs but remain supportive of diversion in general.

The *State Attorney's Office* plays a more direct role in the majority of CC programs. The level of involvement varies by program. In one program, the state attorney "…wants an original copy of every citation written. If a child violates then they follow up." By statute, the *State*

Attorney's Office is sent a copy of the civil citation but it depends on the jurisdiction to decide whether the *State Attorney's Office* is notified directly by the program or the local law enforcement is notified and they forward the information to the *State Attorney's Office* if the youth is unsuccessful. This information should be contained within the memorandum of understanding and later placed in a policy document. For instance,

> "The *State Attorney's Office* also agrees to protect public safety by making appropriate decisions to prosecute those children who fail to comply with the program guidelines. The *State Attorney's Office* agrees to assist in the seeking of community sites for children to complete the required community service and counseling (CC document)."

In some jurisdictions, the *State Attorney's Office* is needed to alter sanctions mandated by statute.

> "That's a big piece for the state attorney - they are big on sanctions. If the child with severe mental health issues cannot complete community service hours, the *State Attorney's Office* is contacted for agreement. The state attorney will usually agree as our position is based on evidence-based tools. That adds clout (CC respondent)."

As these examples indicate, it is important to consider the role of the *State Attorney's Office* when negotiating the development of the program. The *State Attorney's Office* must be comfortable as they are a required signatory but they have a degree of flexibility on which issues they wish to be involved in. It is recommended that this be worked through as thoroughly as possible before program onset as part of the workflow and evaluation components of the program.

GUIDELINE 4: Negotiate the role of the State Attorney's Office as explicitly as possible. Arrange for bi-monthly meetings for the first six months of the program and then once a quarter for the second half of the first year. Be prepared to discuss referrals, offenses, and process outcomes based on an initial evaluation plan. Use this time to renegotiate the role of the State Attorney's Office, if necessary, based on the reality of the program being delivered in the community.

The *Public Defender's Office (PDO)*, like the judge, was not emphasized to the same degree as the SAO for their involvement with the CC program. Only two organizations mentioned the public defender as routinely supportive and as recipients of quarterly reports and other program documents. As a diversion program with direct referral from law enforcement, the need of a public defender would indicate that the youth was no longer eligible for CC and thus not relevant to this discussion. However, the PDO is not ignored by successful CC programs. The PDO is usually staffed with experienced staff that is aware of community organizations and other stakeholders necessary for CC program success.

GUIDELINE 5: Do not discount the Public Defender's Office. Keep the office in the information loop by copying them on reports and updates. Maintain the Public Defender's Office on the steering committee and use their knowledge and resources for program improvement.

Law enforcement is unanimously viewed as the lynchpin for success. Convincing a department to become involved with a CC program from the administrative level appears to be less problematic than convincing street officers and school resource officers to write citations and commit to the program. Several programs began in the schools and were able to get school resource officer's support. This is recommended by these programs as the easiest way to develop the program since school related offenses at times offer the school resource officer multiple opportunities to write citations. In addition, there appears to be less overt problems with the punitive mindset in a school setting. This is not universal as some programs that are utilized more for retail theft as well as street issues began in the community, not in the schools. However, the majority of these programs is in law enforcement settings had the benefit of a law enforcement professional as champion.

After sufficient program development, training of officers in the program should begin as soon as possible after the program so that major program changes requiring retraining are not an issue. Respondents suggested that training should be conducted by or at least with law enforcement personnel. After the program is established and law enforcement begins to see the benefits, then civilian trainers can be introduced as needed. The training should focus on the 'how to' for CC activities (e.g. writing the citation, forwarding copies, specifying or suggesting (depending on how the program is set up) community service and other sanctions, and any other tasks the street officer or school resource officer must complete). Furthermore, strongly emphasizing the positive reasons for the diversion program should be given equal weight. The list of suggestions for benefits appealing to law enforcement from the previous section are reproduced here as Guideline 6.

GUIDELINE 6: Benefits for law enforcement in having a CC program in the jurisdiction

- *A more immediate consequence is generated that reduces waiting for prosecution*

- *The youth admits guilt immediately, eliminating dismissals*

- *Processing of a youth is faster for CC and the paperwork is generally much less (with some exceptions noted in a small number of jurisdictions)*

- *Ability to return to normal duties in a shorter time frame (e.g. being back on road patrol or not having to leave the school)*

- *Time is not taken by court testimony*

- *Increases rapport with the youth without forsaking youth responsibility or consequence*

- *As this is for first or second time offenders, this is not releasing or coddling habitual offenders that may require a more strict response*

- *Increases the probability that the parent will be involved and supportive instead of angry and sabotaging*

A couple of program staff and Stage 2 interview staff were concerned that law enforcement officers may not be appropriate for CC positions. The concern had enough support from the data to warrant a brief discussion on this point but this should not be construed as a universal position. The concern has to do with rapport and with the possibility that a youth may not discuss either previous criminal history or possible mental health issues (e.g. suicidality). Objectively, the position more than the person could reinforce this perception. It is recommended that law enforcement officers have a clear understanding of their role and for the agency to be transparent and willing to engage in self-evaluation to minimize the possibility of missing vital health and history information.

The interaction of law enforcement with JACs, if they are the location for the CC program, which is true for part of this sample, should be clearly articulated in policy and procedure development. The following quote is taken from an interview from a large CC program. Note the flexibility the respondent mentions regarding the ability to refer to CC from the JAC and from the field. Though probably not for all programs, this does present an alternative that utilizes the assessment capability of the JAC as well as the diversion capacity of CC and increases the likelihood that the majority of eligible youth are admitted to CC.

> "[The] school board police started a CC program in the past and it was more sanction oriented. When it was started it was very small, a total of [only] nine children before implementing the program in JAC. The JAC was then able to refer to CC as well as the school board police. It really took them [law enforcement] to get the word out. Police to other police, not social service folk. This helped in marketing the program. They can refer to CC from the JAC AND the field. The forms are faxed over to the CC coordinator when completed. To be successful we had to be flexible and practical (CC respondent)."

GUIDELINE 7: When in doubt, start with the school resource officers, move next to a community-based high prevalence offense (e.g. retail theft), and then move the program to offenses on the street. However, be flexible and respond to support as it is received and do not limit the personnel that can write citations unless resistance is encountered. Base the choice of who writes citations also on the expected size of the program and funding levels. Use the experience, success, and voice of law enforcement personnel to promote the program to new groups of officers as the program expands and to either assist in or conduct training in CC procedures and requirements. The JAC should be considered another stakeholder and its role in the CC program, as a potential assessment location or referral agent to CC, should be clearly stated.

Optional Stakeholders

Optional stakeholder categories include local juvenile justice representatives, the school system (district offices and individual schools), service organizations, and community service organizations. These stakeholders are considered optional only in the sense that they are not required by statute to provide a letter of agreement for the program to become operational. All partners discussed next are important for startup and continued success.

Local *juvenile justice* and other state and county professionals that understand diversion, prevention, and juvenile justice (e.g. delinquency prevention specialists) are essential for

understanding the landscape in which the CC program will be embedded. Careful attention to their input regarding service organizations and potential community service partners is suggested. In addition, exploring the type of communication (e.g. phone, e-mail) as well as how to approach organizations and individuals from their experience can be beneficial.

> **GUIDELINE 8***: Talk to state and local juvenile justice organizations to identify key informants in the juvenile justice, service, and community service stakeholder groups. Meet with juvenile justice and related professionals, ask about current diversion and prevention services, communication preferences, and suggested questions to ask the other stakeholder groups.*

The *school system* is a key stakeholder for CC programs. Multiple respondents described school resource officers as a primary referring source and they visited schools to inform the administration and counseling departments of the program to garner support. Schools are involved in CC for three purposes. The first, and most obvious, is that they are a referral source. Second, several CC programs use schools as community service sites. This is particularly true when the offense is committed on school grounds. Returning to the school to complete community service hours is consistent with restorative justice principals. Third, the youth's attendance and grades are tracked by some CC programs to monitor a prescribed sanction or as an indicator of program impact.

> "School system personnel are supportive of the CC program. Schools are aware that the child is in a diversion program, though we share information with them only through reports, not information on individual youth. All monthly reports are shared with all partners, including the school system. The school provides school reports for all CC youth as part of our outcome tracking (CC respondent)."

District offices in school systems are best described as aware of CC in most programs interviewed. In only a few cases is there routine direct contact with district staff. Most programs felt that regular contact was not meaningful since the important relationship is with the individual schools. In some cases, the relationship is almost exclusively with the school resource officer.

> "Our contact is with individual school resource officers and their entity at the Sheriff's department. I'm not sure if the school system, school or district level, even knows about the CC program (CC respondent)."

> "We have a good relationship with the assistant superintendents in the counties we work with. We sent letters to every school in all districts to let them know that the program exists. We meet with representatives/school resource officers of each school at least every 3-months and we talk to teachers and deans as needed. When an arrest is made on campus, the principal has to be notified - each year this data is accumulated (CC respondent)."

Individual schools are contacted from routinely to rarely, depending on the preference and need of the CC program. Not surprisingly greater frequency is found with school resource officer dependent referral sources. One problem is that limited staff in CC programs makes finding the time to liaison with schools difficult. The importance of the relationship motivates extra effort from CC staff. Training of school staff on the purpose of CC programs and to offset the often

reflexive desire for suspension or expulsion as a consequence is essential. School personnel are often locked into school related punishment and feel that this is a natural consequence to school-based behavior. Many of the points used to train law enforcement on the benefits of the program from a juvenile justice perspective are equally valid for school personnel.

> *GUIDELINE 9: Make time to meet with a district representative of the local school system to discuss the program, the desired involvement of schools, and to include a district representative as a recipient of program reports if they desire. Also, inquire if a district level representative would be interested in being on the steering committee if one is formed. Meet with the administration of individual schools to explain the program and to request each school individually be a community service location. Utilize the relationship with the school resource officer to encourage the administration to value and support the program.*

Though only mentioned in passing in two interviews, the training and promotion of CC programs to *service delivery personnel* is likely more essential than verbalized. Services, as described in the Civil Citation 'In Reality' section include mentoring, counseling, parenting assistance, and many other services. Depending on the scope of the vision articulated during program planning (see Theory of Change section below), the possibility of having the need to refer a youth for specialized services or even planning to provide them in-house requires forethought and planned contacts. It is strongly recommended that an abridged needs assessment or other investigative resource targeting potential service areas be completed by talking with the other stakeholder groups described above around the question 'what can we expect for and from the youth referred to this program?' If the expectation is youth with family and parental issues, substance abuse or addiction, or other prevalent problem areas then early targeting and contact with service provider agencies is needed. Asking them to provide a letter of support that does not obligate service delivery but agrees to be a referral source based on the service provider assessment of need and suitability will increase the accessibility, and thus often the effectiveness, of a cadre of service providers.

> *GUIDELINE 10: As soon as feasible, develop a coherent process and measurement tool to increase understanding of the potential problems and their frequency in the youth population. Administer this tool to key stakeholder groups. Use this information to identify key service provision and community service provider stakeholders. When discussing partnerships and letters of support with service and community service organizations remember to emphasize the positive aspects of civil citation (e.g. restorative justice, first time misdemeanants - not habitual offenders, free labor) and an honest assessment of the level of support they can expect from the CC program. Also, remember to ask them for other organizations that they would recommend contacting as providers often have a better understanding of other organizations than outside systems do.*

Described earlier, one of the key barriers for program success is a dearth of *community service organizations*. The only other occurrence that can truly disrupt a new program is lack of law enforcement support and referrals. Similar to service delivery agencies, it is important to begin cultivating potential community service sites as soon as possible. The assumption for all optional stakeholder contacts is that the mandated contacts have been cemented and that funding is secured. The area most likely to raise resistance is the liability issues noted earlier, especially

for younger offenders, and the issue of offenses by the youth. New programs would profit from creating a standard message regarding the youth that would be referred and then maintaining contact and support with community service sites as mentioned on page 35.

Theory of Change

A theory of change, in simplest terms, is all the building blocks required to meet long-term program goals. A theory of change serves multiple purposes. First, it demands articulation of underlying assumptions that can then be measured and tested. For example, one assumption of a CC program might be that engagement in the program has a preventative affect on future delinquent acts. Specifically, that engagement and successful completion of the program is protective against recidivism. This example is used because this is the singular consistent outcome across current programs but is not embedded in a theory of change by any of the programs and thus it often appears to be given only cursory attention. Another assumption might be that the process of giving back to the community via community service will increase engagement with positive community outlets. Data points could be developed to track this as well as a streamlined follow-up system to detect significant changes in youth engaged in the CC program. Second, a theory of change alters the focus from what to do each day by adding what the program hopes to accomplish. Resources are targeted with greater precision when attempting to meet the now and the later. Third, a theory of change concisely communicates the pathway from intervention to change. Finally, a theory of change merges program delivery and evaluation with the data system to manage this in optimal fashion.

A full description of the complexities of theory of change is beyond the scope of this report. There are multiple resources available to help develop a theory of change. A theory of change is started by meeting with stakeholders and describing the assumptions, purpose, initial goals, and objectives of the program. Both programmatic and evaluation information is considered to ensure consistency between these two key task areas. The theory of change is further considered and debated until both conceptual and task level road maps of understanding are completed. Engaging in a theory of change discussion does take time and some investment of resources. However, what it provides for clarity of purpose and function cannot be underestimated. Further, linking to the concept of funding, it often provides the program information and supporting data required for future granting opportunities, enhancing sustainability.

A final aspect of theory of change is to consider designing an initial logic model that will focus the processes, tasks, and tools necessary for meeting outcomes. This is described in more detail in the final sub-section targeting evaluation. The logic model is a more practical roadmap that is set within the conceptual based theory of change.

GUIDELINE 11: When developing a theory of change, remember to include professionals with the requisite background knowledge of the population and of diversion. Include individuals with experience in evaluation and program development. Development of a theory of change will require some preparation and a minimum of two meetings, most likely more. Examples of some points that might require exploration, energy, and agreement include…

- *Assumptions of the program*

- *Vision of the program*

- *Goals and outcomes of the program*

- *Sanctions other than community service*

- *Minimum community service hours (if one is desired)*

- *Exceptions to community service*

- *Qualification for program entry*

- *Criteria for successful completion*

- *A beginning logic model based on discussions of theory of change*

Startup Information and Processes

By this point, the assumption is that a program has been established, stakeholders are engaged (though this is an ongoing process), and a theory of change has been successfully generated, though consistently open for revision. If the FDJJ grant is the funding source, several respondents suggested that the two-day training is something that should not be missed. They received a CD with documents that they were able to use successfully, most with only slight modifications, which expedited the process of building a transparent system of documentation. In addition to establishing a system of documentation there are several tasks that require attention, often simultaneously. These include developing policies and procedures, intake and monitoring progress, provisions for service referrals, assessment, provisions for completion of community service hours and other sanctions, finalization of outcomes, a data management system and a plan for evaluation.

Policies and Procedures

Noted in the description of current CC programs, the majority of younger programs have not developed written policies and procedures. If discussions with stakeholders have been productive, in addition to the development of a theory of change, the basic framework for a policy and procedure manual will likely exist. The outline of target areas for a program policy was listed in the discussion of Civil Citation 'In Reality' and is reproduced here as Guideline 12 with some additional points included for increased comprehensiveness. Programs in their first year directly stated that they do not have established procedures but are using the statute to provide basic guidelines. This is viewed as a mistake since the statute provides guidelines only for the basics of eligibility, community service maximum hours that can be levied, and a discussion of referring youth to services if a need is detected.

GUIDELINE 12: Establish a functional system of policies and procedures to guide early implementation of the program. Do not postpone this task as negative procedural habits could begin and be difficult to reverse. Below are suggested topics for inclusion in a comprehensive policy statement. Florida Statute 985.12 should be read in conjunction with this guideline.

- *Purpose and scope of the policy (e.g. to provide guidelines for operating the CC program in the particular jurisdiction)*

- *Eligibility information on which youth can be issued a civil citation*
  - *A list of eligible offenses in the jurisdiction as well as a caveat on whether other offenses can be eligible on a case by case basis*
  - *Previous arrest history – is the youth eligible for a civil citation for a first time misdemeanor only or for first and second time misdemeanors (note: felony offenders are not eligible for a CC as stated in the statute)*
  - *Mandatory statement of the youth admitting guilt*
  - *Law enforcement agencies eligible to write the citation (All participating agencies must sign a memorandum of understanding.)*

- *Explicit statement to each youth concerning the Option to refuse the citation and be arrested by the officer*

- *Refusal of the citation by the youth at any time prior to completion of the CC program*

- *Referral of the youth refusing a citation at any point in time*

- *Verification of the offender's identity (use of right thumbprint if no picture ID available)*

- *Notification of the victim that a citation has been issued*

- *Notification of parent that a citation has been issued (The parent must sign the civil citation if present though it is noted that the signature line of the citation can be filled with an N/A by the officer if the parent is not present but agrees over the phone.)*

- *Notification to the youth and parent that this is not an arrest and that there will be no juvenile record attached to the citation if the youth successfully completes the program*

- *Forwarding of copies of the citation to those obligated by statute and others deemed important by the jurisdiction*

- *Implementation of an assessment procedure, incorporating copies of assessment tools*

- *Assignment of community service hours, not to exceed 50, and some provision to assist in finding or providing a community service site*

- *Assignment of other services/sanctions as deemed reasonable and necessary (e.g. anger management or family counseling)*

- *Implementation of procedures for tracking service referrals, community service hours, and additional sanctions*

- *Implementation of guidelines for data entry, management and the frequency and content of reporting*

- *The length of time to complete sanctions and any provisions for additional time allowed*

Guideline 12 provides multiple points of forethought and development of policies and procedures but should not be viewed as comprehensive enough to prevent thinking through each component of a program and deciding how to document, operationalize, monitor, and assess its effectiveness. For example, it is important to develop internal processes for forwarding copies of the citation to the required parties, tracking logs for community services and other sanctions, contact logs for parent, community service, and service provider communication. These and other points might be considered in the context of a comprehensive evaluation plan discussed shortly.

Intake and Monitoring Progress

Guideline 13 is a synthesis of the basic steps for intake, assessment, and sanctioning as indicated by CC program respondents. This is not a comprehensive list but is provided as a starting point to conceptualize the day-to-day process of admitting new youth and tracking the progress of all youth across time.

GUIDELINE 13: Intake and Monitoring Processes

- *Verify eligibility by checking for priors*

- *Accept the referral into the program*

- *Schedule an intake/assessment and remind parents that they are required to attend if this is consistent with program policy*

- *Mention briefly at initial phone contact and explain in detail before youth and parent sign into the program whether restorative justice conferences or other in-house services that require time to set up and impact choice of sanction, community service hours, or other requirements exist*

- *Sign all paperwork and go over general program requirements*

- *Complete the assessment, score and evaluate for risk level and additional service needs*

- *Inform the youth and parent of the minimum contact schedule with the CC program required for success (should be specified in procedure manual)*

- *Emphasize follow through on all referrals*

- *Utilize data tracking system to monitor progress and to indicate when sanctions or services are completed.*

Assessment

An assessment process should be established, outlined as a procedure as noted above, and provided to each youth and parent with minimal deviation. Changes in assessment procedures are certainly justified if evidence suggests that a needed assessment area is missing or if a more sensitive tool is located to replace a current tool. Some assessments are considered more critical than others with the population generally referred to CC programs. Guideline 14 provides a recommendation of a minimal assessment package for CC programs. This is in part speculation generated by extrapolating from the qualitative data and is not a direct result of a specific interview or survey question. Thus, this guideline should be considered in that context.

GUIDELINE 14: List of minimum assessment areas for a CC program assessment. The final two suggestions (*) would be useful but are not suggested unless the required expertise and funding to support them are available.

- *Previous criminal history of the youth*

- *An assessment of risk for future criminal activity (e.g. PACT or some other tool)*

- *Suicidal ideation and depression*

- *Anger management issues*

- *Youth substance abuse history*

- *Family relationships*

- *Current family or youth stressors*

- *Peer associations*

- *Academic achievement*

- *School attendance*

- *Youth talent and skills*

- **A parent survey that allows them to assess the youth would be useful for comparing with youth responses*

- **Pyschosocial/Biopsychosocial – these assessments would incorporate much of this list*

Provision for Services

The assessment should be comprehensive enough to evaluate for services that are available in the community. If additional assessment for psychiatric, behavioral, medical, or other reasons is detected then a referral should be made. A referral to services should be made if the assessment detects a service related need. If a list of providers has been generated then the process agreed upon for referral to the appropriate service should be followed. Indeed, some program staff indicated that the parent would often report what is needed and directly ask for a referral. If this happens then the wish should be honored and assisted. However, according to respondents, there are two issues to consider. The parent may have a source for service provision in mind that they would prefer. If so, a suggested procedure is that the CC program staff accepts this option and asks the parent, and the youth if of a reasonable age (e.g. 14 or older), whether they would mind signing a release so that program staff can contact the provider in order to monitor service attendance only. This point should be stressed for mental health or substance related services especially. If the service is part of the CC agreement then the staff needs to have access to the service for attendance monitoring. The level of attendance will be set by the provider and the data required from the service provider might be as simple as stating that the youth and family never followed through with the referral, continues to attend as directed, has failed to attend as directed, or has been discharged. The release should state this explicitly. The second issue is the refusal by the parent or youth to attend an outside service. It has been suggested via interview data that the service needs to be documented but that no attempt at coercion be made. Civil

citation is a voluntary program targeting an offense and is not a social service provision program. Refusal to attend services should not be used as a reason to revoke the CC program as an option and refer back to the State Attorney's Office.

GUIDELINE 15: Key points for provision of services

- *Generate or use an already established release of information to track attendance with referred services (It is important to maintain youth and family confidentiality if they are following through on services.)*

- *Refer to specialty assessments if a problem area is detected but the referral tool lacks sufficient rigor for confidence from program staff*

- *Continue to maintain contact with service provision sites even if they are infrequently used (Make them feel valued and part of the CC program team.)*

- *Allow the use of a parental alternative service location and ask the parent to sign a release in order to track attendance only*

- *Note parent or youth refusal of service in the case file and data system but do not coerce contact (Stay within the mission of the CC program.)*

Provisions for Sanctions

Sanctions can take many forms. Community service is the most common sanction and is discussed next. Guideline 16 reproduces possible sanctions listed in Civil Citation 'In Reality used by current CC programs.

GUIDELINE 16: List of possible sanctions in addition to community service for use in new CC programs

- *Apology letter*
- *Curfew*
- *Drug education groups*
- *Drug test (with parental agreement)*
- *Essay*
- *Following rules at home*
- *The 'giving back report'*
- *Home chores*
- *Jail tours*
- *Restitution*
- *School attendance*
- *Workbooks on relevant topics (juvenile justice, shoplifting)*
- *Written learning assignment*

Community Service

It is important for programs, especially programs that are newly established, not to consider being all things to all youth. Focusing first on sanctions and especially on community service is recommended. If the suggestions for finding and forging agreements with community service locations are followed, then the CC program should have some options for assigning or helping to locate community service locations when referrals begin to be accepted. Relationships between community service providers and the CC program should be established early and monitored often. However, there will be parental transportation and other issues that will make community service difficult for some youth. Using alternative sanctions to community service is a possibility as is using home based community service. An option noted by some respondents was to use extended family homes or neighbors as alternative sites. This requires more stringent monitoring as these sites are also more likely not to hold the youth to the assigned hours.

For sanctions and services, having adequate tracking systems and maintaining them should be part of the early planning for the program. Monitoring does not have to be complex but this is critical information for being able to describe program participants with enough detail to improve service and sanction delivery if needed.

GUIDELINE 17: Start very early cultivating community service locations. In fact, begin during the process of developing the program with mandatory stakeholders as community service locations may have useful advice. Explore early the possibility of law enforcement support for group community service activities as well as the use of schools, parks, and other recreational areas as consistent community service locations. Finally, once established, maintain consistent contact with community service locations and support them adequately.

Outcomes, Evaluation and Data Management

Any evaluation process should be part of the conceptualization of the program from the start. In the discussion of current CC program practices, evaluation and data management were noted as inadequately developed to be of any real use in the majority of programs contacted. New programs will have to look past recidivism to additional outcomes and track processes to evaluate efficiencies. Beginning this process early will result in usable data much earlier than current CC programs are obtaining and will allow for early sustainability planning as the data for pursuit of grants or persuading county government is more readily at hand.

The evaluation design should include measuring process, product, and impact. An example of process points includes the number of youth referred, that attend an initial assessment, that assess high on risk level, that are referred to services, and that are assigned specific sanctions. Products measured might include the number of youth that complete the program, that complete their community service hours in specific time frames, and that complete a service need detected at assessment and referred to specialty services. Measuring impact is somewhat more involved but is the only way to state objectively that the program is having an impact on the youth other than completing sanctions and services. Did the program impact the youth in some fundamental way that will prevent further offenses? It is important that these additional outcomes to measure impact be measureable. Recidivism, as noted, is the one consistent outcome that is measured in

CC programs. However, there is currently no analysis that states that being successful in the CC program caused the youth not to recidivate.

Evaluation is a complex science so programs should consider enlisting an outside evaluation team at least for training in the fundamentals. This should include training in logic model development though there are several online sources that adequately walk an interested party through the basics. Development of coherent outcomes usually takes some thought and revision. Examples of other possible outcomes, some used by current CC programs and others created as examples, are contained in Guideline 18.

GUIDELINE 18: Examples of process and product indicators and short-term outcomes

Process Indicator

- *300 youth will be referred to the CC program this fiscal year*
- *6 high schools will be eligible as community service locations by mid-fiscal year*
- *CC program staff will conduct 6 training sessions for law enforcement and school personnel during the 3-month startup and training period*

Product Indicator

- *95% of youth will attend an initial intake/assessment after accepting a CC from a law enforcement officer*
- *90% of youth that score high on a risk assessment will attend a follow-up assessment session*
- *75% of youth will complete community service hours*
- *75% of youth will attend initial intake session for a service referral*
- *75% of youth will complete a survey examining what they learned in the program*

Short-Term Outcome

- *80% of youth will improve their knowledge of negative peer resistance*
- *80% of youth will link their non-recidivism status to participation in the CC program at a 6-month post discharge survey*
- *50% of youth referred to family counseling services will report an increase in positive family interactions and will verbalize that the counseling was at least partially responsible for this new pattern of behavior*

Certain requirements for an evaluation plan and logic model can be quickly illustrated (Guideline 19). In addition, the CC program must decide on how they will collect and use data. A functional data management system collects information that will be useful to the program. Normally it is wasteful to collect information that is entered in two separate locations. For instance, the information entered into the Juvenile Justice Information System should be as independent as possible to avoid double entry. However, there was some frustration noted by respondents that the Juvenile Justice Information System data is difficult to access. If true, it

might be a wiser course to have duplicate data for ease of accessibility and to monitor program outcomes.

GUIDELINE 19: *When developing an evaluation plan and logic model the following should be considered. This is not a comprehensive list but is offered to stimulate thought and discussion on this vital task of establishing whether the CC program is successful and <u>why</u> it is successful.*

- *Learn the basics of evaluation and measurement. There are several online sources available if the budget does not allow for training*

- *Draft a basic evaluation plan that compliments the developing program material*

- *Utilize the subject knowledge and expertise of stakeholders to decide on initial objectives for measurements*

- *Conceptualize and create initial process, product and short-term outcomes while ensuring that they are measurable*

- *Decide on how often measurements will be taken*

- *Select or develop measurement tools that provide the best chance of gathering the required data and that is within the skill set of the CC program staff*

- *Decide on a data system (e.g., paper, Excel, Access, or Web-based)*

- *Write protocols for data entry and develop a basic database report structure*

The data management system for current CC programs ranges from pen and paper to Microsoft Access databases. It is important for a program to utilize the system they are most comfortable with but it is also important to take advantage of the functionality of modern database software. It would be a wise investment for at least one program staff (which is the total staff for a program in many instances) to have access to an information systems individual or to receive some basic training. A data collection system should include specific types of information. These are highlighted in Guideline 20 on the following page.

GUIDELINE 20: Minimum data system information

- *Contact information*
- *Referral information*
- *Demographic information on youth (and family members if desired and considered necessary)*
- *School attendance*
- *School behavior history (e.g. number of suspensions, reasons for suspensions)*
- *Academic achievement (e.g. grades or GPA) if desired*
- *Juvenile justice information – current and past*
- *Results/data from assessments*
- *List of all sanctions with time frames*
- *Scoring of sanctions that might require it (e.g. an essay) if desired*
- *Indicators when sanctions are completed*
- *Community service hours completed*
- *List of all service referrals and time frames for monitoring attendance*
- *Process indicators*
- *Product indicators*
- *Short-term outcomes*
- *Long-term outcomes*

This ends the discussion on how to start a CC program. The information was provided in a chronological fashion and it is believed that new communities can easily follow the guidelines and quickly access local help when needed to begin a CC program using this guide.

Recommendations

An inductive mixed-method analytic process was used in this effort to provide an in-depth understanding of the current operational capacity of CC and TC programs in Florida. The wide range of programs contacted, interviews with supporting organizations, and the use of the constant comparison method in analysis resulted in the following recommendations that are fully 'data-emergent' (Badam & Sense, 2005). Data-emergent indicates that all conclusions, or in this case recommendations, are supported by multiple data points, are consistent with the analytic method and are supported by the literature base.

Recommendations are clustered into two categories. The first are recommendations that will affect CC, TC and, by extension, diversion in general. These global recommendations will improve the value of CC and TC programs through validating and improving efficacy.

Secondarily, they will improve program operations. The second category is a set of recommendations that will improve the operational capacity of CC and/or TC programs as they

are implemented in Florida. They can be implemented without the more involved multi-program methods required to complete the global recommendations.

Global Recommendations

1. **Improve the Evaluation Capacity of CC and TC programs**

   Currently, CC and TC programs alike have a great deal of anecdotal information that suggests that these programs work. Although TC programs have legitimate peer reviewed studies that support their position, these studies are not specific to Florida. Civil citation currently has minimal peer reviewed literature supporting it. Indeed, the majority of information stating that CC works is in various textbooks and is itself anecdotal (Elrod & Ryder, 2005). There is not a lack of interest in studying CC programs but a lack of coherent information to analyze, at least in Florida. This information does not exist because there is little effort expended in evaluation and limited program expertise for analyzing and drawing conclusions from the data when it does exist. This is not a condemnation of CC or TC programs. Their primary task is to apply the model and deliver quality services. However, in today's budget atmosphere TC and especially CC programs must be able to justify the resources they utilize. Investigation into the evaluation capacity in this effort found little in the way of formal evaluation, minimal use of logic models, and limited outcomes. Only one county is involved with an outside evaluation team. Recidivism is the only outcome for many of the programs. Further, current efforts are generally descriptive and do not link the program to recidivism or other outcomes. In other words, there is not a strong scientific evidence base to support the impact of the program.

   It is recommended that there be an investment made for increasing the evaluation capacity of CC and TC programs. This could be done either as a single effort or in conjunction with Global Recommendation 2 below. Evaluation capacity development could in part include training on the following elements:

   - The fundamentals of program evaluation

   - Basic evaluation methods

   - Development of a program logic model

   - Generating coherent process, product, and short-term outcomes

   - Selecting appropriate and valid measurement tools

   - Establishing relevant data points

   - Developing or updating a data management system

2. **Complete a State Level Evaluation of CC and TC programs**

   An evaluation of CC and TC programs at the state level is recommended as a key step in establishing a sufficient evidence base for several reasons. First, from what was found in the literature, it appears that a statewide evaluation has not been completed in Florida or other states. Although Florida is seen as a leader in diversion in general and TC in particular, there remains a lack of evidence supporting success, as noted above. A state

level evaluation would reinforce Florida's status as a diversion leader. If a choice needs to be made, then CC programs are the most in need of a state level evaluation as they are less established and more at risk when budget issues arise. Second, having both program level and combined data across programs is valuable information for informed policy and funding decisions. The positive performance on recidivism suggests that both CC and TC programs would benefit from further evidence that they are effective. Finally, all CC and TC programs interviewed recognized this area as a point of improvement and stated they would be interested in an evaluation being completed as well as development of internal capacity.

There are multiple reasons for conducting a statewide evaluation of CC and TC programs, including the following items:

- If completed while also addressing evaluation capacity (global recommendation 1) it leaves in place a capability for continued evaluation that is easily translatable to new programs as they are established.

- Data from multiple programs can be pooled to establish a state level effect size for CC and/or TC programs. Simultaneously, individual effect sizes can be computed and compared for variables that contribute to an increased or decreased effect size.

- The use of the same or similar data collection procedures and establishment of identical or at least highly similar outcomes across sites will allow the comparison of programs across outcomes and can better test the effect of demographics, population density, and other variables in hierarchical ecologic models, i.e. multilevel modeling. These are complex analyses that require specific minimum sample sizes be met to ensure validity and a state level evaluation would ensure this.

3. **Complete a State Level Cost-Benefit Analysis of CC and TC programs**

There are currently no Florida based and almost no cost-benefit studies of CC and TC programs out of state. Indeed, only Washington State has any data minimally relevant to Florida. A cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is suggested over a cost-effectiveness study because the results, in dollars versus, for instance, number of events avoided, are more easily understood and accepted by policy makers.

Additional reasoning supporting this recommendation is the near absolute lack of information by CC and TC programs regarding how much money they are saving their community by having a CC or TC program and avoiding the costs of juvenile court, probation, and detention. Some programs were able to estimate savings (see 'Teen Court in Reality' section) but no program had evidence to support their claim. An important consideration is that CBAs are usually performed on programs with proven efficacy. Teen court has preliminary data supporting efficacy where as CC only has limited performance data. It is recommended that a sound base for program efficacy be established before conducting a CBA on either program.

Examples of the benefits of a CBA for CC and/or TC programs include the following:

- Comparison of results across programs and between types of programs or policies

- Evidence to clarify an emotionally or politically charged outcome

- Comparison of programs with significant non-health benefits

- Support for the implementation of new CC or TC programs

Program Recommendations

1. **Establish Comprehensive Policies and Procedures Early in the Life Span of a Program**

    Reliance on either the statute (for CC programs) or the state association bylaws (for TC programs) as policy documents does not support program operationalization to the extent needed. Policies influence practice and good policy will often support good practices. Having a clear idea of the procedures for applying a program consistently increases the chance that the program will be successful or will be implemented as designed, allowing evaluation of the program to detect barriers.

    Some programs are currently using reasonable policies specific to the CC or TC program. Guideline 12 in the Starting a Civil Citation Program section (page 70) provides additional support for developing CC guidelines. There was insufficient policy information from TCs to provide similar assistance. Civil citation programs that have been established but still lack a solid policy and procedures manual can also utilize this information to assist in filling this gap.

2. **Utilize a Reoffending Risk Assessment**

    Recidivism is the primary outcome linked to CC and TC programs, and is likely to remain so, yet many programs are not using a risk assessment for reoffending at program entry to better identity youth at higher risk for recidivism and thus targeting additional resources. If nonuse of a risk assessment has an effect on program success, it will likely be in the direction of more, not less, recidivism. Thus, programs not using the PACT or a similar evidence-based tool should be encouraged to do so.

    A risk assessment, like most other survey based tools, requires minimal training in administration and scoring. The majority of surveys come with clear cutpoints that indicate level of risk and are easily interpreted. An additional benefit for the use of validated instruments is it increases comparability between programs on risk levels and associated factors. One program actively stated that the decision had been made by the JAC not to use the PACT. Programs should have the freedom to choose a risk assessment that fits their budget, expertise, and overall goals.

3. **Develop a Theory of Change**

    A theory of change should be developed in the context of an evaluation plan and logic model to gain the full benefit of the direction that a theory of change brings. However, a theory of change can guide operationalization and service delivery, not just evaluation. Stated earlier, restorative justice provides an organizing theory that is consistent with CC

and TC programs. The programs interviewed that utilize a restorative justice component tend to include more key stakeholders in the life of the youth and seek consensus from these individuals. Further, they may encourage greater participation from the youth, increasing ownership of responsibility and more creatively repaying the victim and community. It is recommended that restorative justice or some other relevant theory of change be adopted by each program to help further their goals and begin the process of developing more consistent program information.

4. Develop and Assess Outcomes Other than Recidivism

Currently there are few programs adopting outcomes other than recidivism. This too is a task best accomplished in the context of a systematic evaluation plan. However, creating a list of viable process, product and short-term outcomes as well as long-term outcomes to measure program impact can help focus the use of resources. These can be operationalized as a limited logic model without more fully embracing a complete evaluation plan. Several programs have started this process through adopting other outcomes (e.g. clinical, behavioral, academic) beyond recidivism. Recidivism is undeniably a useful outcome. It is risky, however, to measure a program's success completely by this outcome, especially since there is relatively little scientifically derived impact information supporting the link between involvement in a TC or CC program and a reduction in recidivism. It would be difficult for any program sampled for this project to demonstrate that their program was causally linked with a lack of reoffending using current evaluation and data practices.

5. Assessing Stability of Change over Time

In a related fashion to recommendation 4 is the use of surveys to investigate program satisfaction, perception of the program through the eyes of youth and family, program fidelity, improved empathy of the youth, increased knowledge, the desire to re-offend and many other possible concepts. These, as well as more specific program outcomes, can all be measured at the beginning and end of the program as well as further out in time to assess stability of change. At this time, recidivism is measured usually at 6-months post program with very few going out to 12 months. Programs would benefit from measuring more consistently and further out. This can require additional resources that the program needs to utilize with care. However, the benefits could be worth the risk. For instance, one program noted that at nine months recidivism was only 2 percent but increased to 12 percent in month ten. Though they are exploring the reason for this phenomenon, the careful measurement detected the trend and their knowledge of their program and community has allowed them to hypothesize possible explanations, several of which are being tested by them.

6. Increase Contact with Other CC Programs

This recommendation is specific to CC programs. Individuals in CC programs uniformly agreed that the near or complete lack of communication with other CC programs needs to change. All programs agreed that more frequent conversation at least with programs geographically close would be useful. Most programs recommended an annual or bi-annual meeting with frequent electronic communication with other CC programs as well.

Some suggested forming an organization for CC programs similar to the Florida Teen Court Association but with the recognition that CC has some time before they are as organized and numerous as TC programs. Morale for some respondents did not appear high and communication to discuss problems and successes with other programs and to gain wisdom from the programs that have been established for several years would be beneficial.

7. **Increase Recognition and Planned Interventions for Program Barriers**

Barriers (policy, youth, family, implementation, and community) affect programs to varying degrees. There appears to be little proactive planning and targeted intervention of barriers. This analysis was not sensitive enough to detect if there is a lack of resources, necessary skills, support, or some combination of these that limits investigation and response to barriers. This should not be interpreted as disinterest on the part of programs as they did identify barriers their programs face. Nevertheless, it would be useful if the programs and their stakeholders had an open dialogue on barriers facing CC and TC programs and then brainstorming ideas to address the barriers followed by concrete action steps. Engaging stakeholders is essential. Many of these barriers are common across programs though how they manifest may be slightly different. Implementation barriers are the only type of barrier that is likely to have the majority of the causation contained in the program or at least can be influenced by the program. Youth, policy, family, and community barriers will require mobilization of other resources and stakeholders to provide assistance or advice.

8. **Increase Program Operationalization of the Three Guiding Principles Driving FDJJ Practice**

A balanced diversion program will provide a reasonable emphasis on offender accountability, community protection, and competency development. The majority of programs have devoted limited resources to competency development compared to the other two principles. Interestingly, these programs also view changes in skills and hope for youth as the predominant link with the choice to not re-offend. Competency development is most closely related to change in skills and hope. Hope and skill attainment must be considered in the context of barriers as well, but can clearly be affected through learning appropriate academic, behavioral, and emotional skills (e.g. anger management). Further, CC and TC programs will be more closely in line with State policy and thus less apt to be viewed as out of touch with the direction the State is taking. It is recommended that programs increase the balance of the three principles as it is reasonable to expect a balanced program to be more sustainable and to have a wider range of stable service providers, the topics of the final two recommendations.

9. **Increase Sustainability Planning and Implementation**

Programs are often started with minimal support and knowledge of how to operationalize the program. This puts undue stress on the program staff, which is often a single individual, and encourages a myopic focus to the here-and-now. Sustainability planning should be started in the first year and maintained throughout the life of the program. Many programs that start their life via an FDJJ grant are falsely reassured by the three-

year grant. Inevitably, at least for this sample, they learn that the grant is a nice start but does not provide for all program needs and the more the program attempts to meet additional service needs of the youth population the less the grant covers. Many find themselves having to make hard decisions. Unfortunately, the decision is rarely to begin seeking new funding immediately. Thus, sustainability is a present and future problem for CC and TC programs.

Program staff would benefit from improving the documentation of program success in order to have the necessary information available for seeking additional funds, either via a granting agency or through working with county government or other local avenues. Discussions with stakeholders and other CC or TC programs on the steps taken toward sustainability would accelerate the process. Mentioned in an earlier section, there is likely to be some program closures due to budget issues, removing a learning opportunity needed by community youth. Program staff must start planning for the program to continue as time allows as soon as some level of program comfort has been attained.

10. Increase Linkages with Service Providers

The final recommendation is to work to increase the number of agencies that are willing to provide a wider range of services. Program staff are assessing more specialty needs in youth populations and it must be remembered that budget and funding problems are affecting all sectors of service providers. Stable providers today may become unstable or absent tomorrow. The programs where this topic was part of the interview were often a bit shaken when they realized that theirs was not the only program at risk. Programs with stable service delivery, either in-house or referred, often had done nothing to cultivate new service partners in quite some time. This also applies to sanction partners that provide jail tours, drug education programs and other sanctions. Programs should proactively review their service delivery partner list, re-establish contact with any that have been neglected, openly discuss their stability, and seek additional partners for those areas that appear less stable.

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Appendices

Diversion Study Contacts			
Civil Citation			
Contact	**Position**	**County(s)**	**Organization**
Esther Jonassaint	Community Justice, Civil Citation Coordinator	Broward	Broward Sheriff's Office
Myrian Campo-Goldman	Executive Director	Broward	Harmony Development Center, Inc.
Deborah Mueller	Civil Citation Coordinator	Clay	4th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
Gregg Miller	Referral Reduction Coordinator	Collier, Lee, Hendry, Charlotte	State Attorney's Office
Commander Beth Jones	Prevention Officer, Civil Citation	Collier	Collier County Sheriff
Jay Plotkin	Assistant State Attorney	Duval	4th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
Charles Griffin	Civil Citation Coordinator	Duval	4th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
Paula Shell	Executive Director	Escambia	Big Brothers/Big sisters of northwest Florida
Bonnie Livingston	Civil Citation Coordinator and Case Manager	Escambia	Big Brothers/Big sisters of northwest Florida
Clara Reynolds	Executive Director	Hillsborough	Success 4 Life and Kids
John Mayo	Assistant Director	Hillsborough	Success 4 Life and Kids
Deputy Scott Thompson	Civil Citation Coordinator	Lee	Lee County Sheriff Department
Tom Wylder	Case Manager	Leon	Disc Village Civil Citation
Lisa Sherry	Coordinator	Leon	Disc Village Civil Citation
Wansley Walters	Executive Director	Miami-Dade	Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department
Cathy Burgos	Clinical Director	Miami-Dade	Miami-Dade Juvenile Services Department
Nakia Manning	Civil Citation Coordinator	Orange	Orange County Sheriff Department
Jennifer Romelien	Civil Citation Coordinator	St. Lucie	
Teen Court			
Contact	**Position**	**County(s)**	**Organization**
Jason Holthus	Coordinator	Alachua	Alachua County Teen Court
	Executive Director	Baker	Baker County Teen Court
Gene Morris	Probation Officer	Calhoun	Calhoun Count Teen Court
Deborah Mueller		Clay	Teen Court of Clay County
Carol Fritsch	Teen Court Coordinator	Collier	20th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida
Mitzie McGavic	Director, Teen Court	Desoto	Clerk of Court, Desoto County
Inger Barnes	Teen Court Coordinator	Escambia	1st Judicial Circuit Court
Janet Gilbert	Family Court Manager	Escambia	1st Judicial Circuit Court
Lara Karas	Teen Court Coordinator	Hillsborough	Hillsborough Teen Court
Sylvia Henry	Director	Jackson	Jackson County Teen Court

Teen Court			
Contact	**Position**	**County(s)**	**Organization**
Stephanie Glass	President	Lake County	Florida Association of Teen Courts
Maggie Geraci	Director	Leon	Leon County Teen Court
Lou Gregory	Supervisor	Manatee	Manatee County Teen Court
Ralph Warner	Teen Court Coordinator	Marion	Marion County Teen Court
Thomas Griffin	Coordinator	Nassau	Nassau County Teen Court
David Medvec	Teen Court Coordinator	Orange	Orange County Teen Court
James Cummings	Major	Palm Beach	Palm Beach County Teen Court
Thomas Toy	Teen Court Coordinator	Pinellas	Sixth Circuit Juvenile Arbitration Teen Court
Katie Self	Executive Director	Sarasota	Sarasota Teen Court
Mona Stalvey	Assistant Director	Suwannee	Suwannee County Teen Court
Margaret Roth		Sumter	Sumter County Teen Court
State of Florida or Other			
Contact	**Position**	**County(s)**	**Organization**
Lydia Breaux-Davis Marie Boswell Mary Jo Marjennhoff Becky Linn Mary Ellen Murphy Paula Friedrich Audrey (Pat) McGhee C.J. Dublin	Delinquency Prevention Specialist	Multiple Counties	FDJJ
Katherine Jackowski	Prevention Data Analyst	State	FDJJ
Jay Plotkin	Chief Assistant State Attorney	Clay, Duval, Nassau	State Attorney Office
Judge Goodman	Circuit Judge	Escambia	1st Judicial Court
Margie Anders	Assistant State Attorney	Escambia	State Attorney Office
Rhonda Ray	Public Information Officer	Escambia	Escambia Sheriff Department
William Dupont	Previously of Escambia JAC	Escambia	Escambia JAC
Elvin Martinez	State Attorney	Hillsborough	State Attorneys Office
Patricia Pieri	Chief of Juvenile Division	Hillsborough	State Attorney Office
Dr. Chris Sullivan	Associate Professor	Hillsborough	University of South Florida
Judge Paul Logan	Circuit Judge	Manatee	12th Circuit Court
Jill Wells		Orange	Orange County JAC
Feirman Johnson		Palm Beach	Palm Beach JAC
Judge Durrance	Circuit Judge	Polk	10th Circuit Court
Mary Carrier	Judicial Assistant	Polk	10th Circuit Court
Lisa Goldman		Polk	Polk County JAC
Mark Rheder		Seminole	Seminole County JAC

Diversion Study

Stage 1 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

(Type notes into form, save under name of interviewee)

Name:	Position/Title:
Program Name:	County(s):
Agency:	
Annual Budget:	Annual Served:
Yeas in Operation:	Cost to Participants:
Program Staff:	

Agency Related

Funding Source(s):

Law Enforcement Agencies Involved:

How often do you have meetings or contacts with various Law Enforcement agencies?
    Are their specific individuals assigned to CC from Law Enforcement?

What administrative support is necessary to meet program goals/outcomes?

Cost Savings Information:

    Estimated cost if the youth was adjudicated through the system:

Blueprint comments:

What is the relationship of your program(s) to the JAC?:

What policies and procedures are in place? (**COPIES**)

Barriers to Success:
    Policy Barriers (e.g. Zero Tolerance)
    Implementation Barriers (e.g. lack of support, not following the model)
    What has been done to overcome barriers?

How do you handle assignment and tracking of community service?

    Are there other routine sanctions?

Startup, Stakeholders and Maintenance:

Who are the key stakeholders that support the continuation of your program?

What are the necessary resources to begin and maintain a program?

Who/what was essential for program startup?
        How did you identify individuals/resources?
        How did you obtain support?
        What documents needed to be generated and signed, i.e. a MOU? (**COPIES**)
        Was there a particular order you would recommend contacting key individuals?

Who are your current community supports?
        How do you maintain their support?

What is the relationship with the County School System?
        Is there a CSS liaison? If so, who is it?
        How much contact does your program have with the school when a child is in the program?
        Is the school informed when a child successfully or unsuccessfully completes?

What is your relationship and contact with other CC/TC programs?

<u>Assessments, Process and Outcomes</u>:

What assessments are completed upon enrollment?

What are your program outcomes?
        Who determines the outcomes?
        How do you track your key outcomes?

What is the process of going through and making it out of CC or TC?

What do you do to establish parental rapport and maintain it?

How is your program evaluated?

What data tracking systems, electronic or otherwise, do you use?

Diversion Study

Stage 2 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

(Type notes into form, save under name of interviewee)

Name:
Position/Title:
County:
Agency:

1. What are the key barriers facing the startup and maintenance of diversion programs in Florida? (IF THEY ARE NOT SURE, ASK THEM TO SPECULATE)

    a. What would you suggest as solutions to these barriers?

2. How can individuals in your career and position help to begin and maintain diversion programs?   (PROMPT if needed: Development of policy, communication with community groups, local and state governments, assisting with fundraising)

3. Who would be the key stakeholders essential for development and maintenance of diversion programs?

4. What is the benefit of diversion programs to the justice system? (PROMPT: If they mention cost savings ask them for any evidence they are aware of)

5. What are the benefits of diversion programs to the community?

6. Do you believe that there are adequate diversion opportunities in your jurisdiction or catchment area?

7. How aware are you of civil citation and teen court programs in particular?

8. Do you have direct involvement with civil citation or teen court programs, and if so what is your involvement?

Diversion Study

Juvenile Assessment Center Interview Guide

(Type notes into form, save under name of interviewee)

A. Assessment Services
   1. What assessment services are provided by the JAC?
      a. Are the youth placed in detention from the JAC?
      b. After someone is assessed is there a referral procedure?
      c. What type of referrals might you make?
      d. If a referral is made, what type of follow-up takes place after the referral?

B. Description of JAC clients
   1. How would you describe the 'typical JAC client'?
   2. How would you describe the differences between youth with a one time JAC assessment and a youth with two or more assessments?
      a. Prompt if needed: family, offense, school, peer group, substance abuse, mental health issues, socioeconomic status
   3. How many youth are assessed annually at the JAC?
   4. What percentage of youth are assessed by the JAC more than once?

C. Interaction between JAC and Diversion Programs
   1. Are diversion programs housed in the JAC?
      a. If so, what programs are housed there?
   2. What percentage of the kids that come to a JAC are referred to a diversion program?
      a. What diversion programs do you refer to? (DO NOT PROMPT TC OR CC)
   3. How would you describe the relationship between diversion programs and JAC's?
      a. What type of relationship do you think a diversion program should have with a JAC?

D. Policies
   1. Do you have guiding policies for your Center?
      a. If YES, can you send an electronic or hard copy?

Diversion Study Survey

Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida
Principal Investigator: Gary Walby, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., M.S.
Secondary Investigator: Brian Blatt, J.D., M.S.W.(c)

NAME:	DATE:
Organization:	Position/Title:

Thank you for taking the time to fill this survey out. Please enter your name and other information above and then answer all questions. Start by saving the document to your computer. Answer the questions by typing in responses. When completed, please return the survey as an e-mail attachment. All responses will be reported in aggregated form and not independently.

Question 1: In the table below, please first indicate whether each of the following offenses is eligible for your program by placing an "X" in the Yes column. Next, **only for those where you indicated YES**, place the frequency percentage in the Frequency column. For instance, if Affray is an offense that a youth can be referred to your program for and this accounts for 17% of the youth referred, place a 17 in the Frequency column. It is understood that some youth are referred for multiple offenses and it is not expected that the Frequency column will add to 100%.   Also, if your program has been operating less than a year then consider 'annual' to be time in operation. Please utilize the 'Other' option(s) (if applicable) in the Offenses column for offenses not listed and provide a frequency for those as well.

Offenses	YES Will Allow in Program	Annual Frequency %
Affray		
Assault		
Battery (simple)		
Breach of Peace		
Criminal Mischief		
Disorderly Conduct		
Disruption of School Function		
Domestic Violence Related		
Forgery		
Grand Theft		
Loitering and Prowling		
Possession of Alcohol by person under 21 years of age		

Offenses	YES Will Allow in Program	Annual Frequency %
Possession of Marijuana less than 20 gms		
Possession of Paraphernalia		
Resisting Arrest		
Retail/Petit Theft		
Trespassing		
Vandalism		
Weapon on a school ground		
Other:		
Other:		

Question 2: Please indicate with an 'X' in the YES column whether you OR a referring agency or source **specifically assesses** for the areas listed. **Specifically assess is defined as an explicit instrument, set of questions, or procedure used consistently with each youth referred to your program**. Consistently also could mean when a response from a youth or family member triggers a more intensive assessment into a potential problem area.

Assessment Area or Tool	YES	Assessment Area or Tool	YES
Previous criminal history of the youth		Family relationships	
Psychosocial or Biopsychosocial		Family criminal history	
Risk factor assessment		Family substance abuse/mental health history	
Disruptive behavior/conduct issues		Current family or youth stressors	
Anger		Peer associations	
Depression		Youth history of child maltreatment	
Suicidality		Academic achievement (grades, GPA)	
Anxiety		School variables (e.g. referrals, attendance)	
Youth substance abuse history		Youth talents and skills	
Urinalysis		Other:	
Parent completed assessment of youth		Other:	

Question 3: Please place an 'X' next to each service that you either provide for In-House (agency staff, deputies, etc.) or that you Refer Out to one or more community providers. If both In-House and Refer Out are applicable, please place an 'X' in both spaces.

	In-House	Referred Out		In-House	Referred Out
Case management			Intervention – Domestic violence		
Counseling – Mental health			Restitution monitoring		
Counseling – Substance abuse			Parenting classes		
Counseling – Family			Parent support group		
Counseling – Trauma related			Gender specific services		
Group – social skills			Mentoring		
Group – retail theft			Didactic (e.g. work books)		
Group – victim impact			Tours (prisons, etc.)		
Group – drug education			Other:		
Restorative Justice Conference			Other:		
Restorative Justice – other			Other:		
Intervention – Retail theft			Other:		

Questions 4-5: Please indicate in the following table **the degree you consider Community Referral Services to be present** in your jurisdiction/catchment area **and that are willing to accept referrals from your program**. Referrals are defined as organizations outside of your working organization or department that are trained to provide the services listed. If your organization provides these services do NOT indicate them in this table. This question is to ascertain levels of community, not organizational, support available. **Please place an 'X' in ONE choice under "present in jurisdiction" followed by ONE choice under "willingness to accept referrals' per line.**

	Present in Jurisdiction				Willing to Accept Referrals		
	Many	**Some**	**Little**	**None**	**Yes**	**Some**	**No**
Case management							
Counseling – Mental health							
Counseling – Substance abuse							
Counseling – Family							
Counseling – Trauma related							
Counseling – Domestic violence							
Social skills assistance							
Drug education							

	Present in Jurisdiction				Willing to Accept Referrals		
	Many	**Some**	**Little**	**None**	**Yes**	**Some**	**No**
Juvenile Justice education							
Restorative Justice related							
Parenting assistance/training							
Parent support groups							
Mentoring							
Tour related (criminal justice, employment, etc.)							
Other:							

Community Service Related

Question 6: Please indicate the average time in days before a youth completes their first hour of community service from the day they receive the civil citation or referral to teen court _____.

Question 7: In the last six months, what is the range of community service hours assigned?

    Least_____   Most_____

Question 8: In the last six months, what is the average number of community service hours assigned? _____

Question 9: Please use the following matrix to complete the final questions. Place an 'X' in the cell that best indicates **the level of agreement** with each question.

Question Text	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Little to No Agreement
The concept of Restorative Justice plays an active part in the day-to-day operation of the program.			
Disproportionate minority contact is an area of focus for the program.			
The current budget crisis in Florida has had a noticeable impact on the program.			
Youth sent to the program are not adjudicated and will have no record if they successfully complete the program.			
There are <u>policy barriers</u> (e.g. zero tolerance) impacting program success.			

Question Text	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Little to No Agreement
There are <u>implementation barriers</u> (e.g. budget constraints or inadequate training) impacting program success.			
There are <u>youth related barriers</u> (e.g. conduct problems, negative attitudes, self-esteem) impacting program success.			
There are <u>family related barriers</u> (e.g. negative role modeling, substance abuse, inadequate resources) impacting program success.			
There are <u>community related barriers</u> (e.g. unsafe streets, lack of recreational facilities) impacting program success.			
There is concern about competition with other diversion programs and my program.			
My program has adequate support by key community stakeholders (e.g. law-enforcement, state attorney).			
I have a clear idea of the amount of resources saved when a youth successfully completes the program compared to a youth that is processed through juvenile court.			

Question 10: This question targets staff, funding, and youth served. Please respond to each question in the matrix. Please answer all budget questions in thousands (e.g. $100 = $100,000).

What is the number of fulltime and part-time employees in your program?	#FT	#PT
What is your annual budget?	$	
What is your estimated annual **optimal** budget range to meet current needs?	$ To $	
What is your estimated annual **optimal** budget range to meet **projected** needs one to two years from now?	$ To $	
How many youth were served in the last year?	#	
How many youth would you **anticipate** serving over the next year?	#	