

**Department of Juvenile Justice**  
**Human Research**  
**FY 2018**

**Minimum Standards**

On February 9, 2005, [6 VAC 35-170](#), *Minimum Standards for Research Involving Human Subjects or Records of the Department of Juvenile Justice*, adopted by the Board of Juvenile Justice, became effective. These standards include the establishment of a Human Research Review Committee and the conditions required for approval of external research proposals. Select sections of the standards are included below to provide an overview of the review process:

***6 VAC 35-170-130. Human Research Review Committee***

A. In accordance with § 32.1-162.19 of the Code of Virginia, the department shall establish a human research review committee composed of persons of various backgrounds, to ensure the competent, complete and professional review of human research activities conducted or proposed to be conducted or authorized by the department. No member of the committee shall be directly involved in the proposed human research or have administrative approval authority over the proposed research except in connection with his role on the committee.

***6 VAC 35-170-150. Committee review of human research proposals.***

In reviewing the human research proposal, the committee will consider the potential benefits and risks to the human subjects, and shall recommend approval only when the benefits outweigh the risks. In addition, the committee shall recommend approval only when:

1. The methodology is adequate for the proposed research;
2. The research, if non-therapeutic, presents no more than a minimal risk to the human subjects;
3. The rights and welfare of the human subjects are adequately protected;
4. Appropriate provisions have been made to get informed consent from the human subjects, as detailed in 6 VAC 35-170-160;
5. The researchers are appropriately qualified;
6. The criteria and means for selecting human subjects are valid and equitable; and
7. The research complies with the requirements set out in this regulation and in applicable department policies and procedures.

***6 VAC 35-170-50. Conditions for department approval of external research.***

A. The department will approve research projects only when it determines, in its sole discretion, that:

1. The department has sufficient financial resources and staff to support the research project, and that on balance the benefits of the research justify the department's involvement;
2. The proposed research will not interfere significantly with department programs or operations, particularly those of the operating units that would participate in the proposed research; and
3. The proposed research is compatible with the purposes and goals of the juvenile justice system and with the department's organization, operations, and resources.

**6 VAC 35-170-190. Committee reports required.**

A. In accordance with Code of Virginia § 66-10.1, the committee shall submit to the Governor, the General Assembly, and the director at least annually a report on human research projects approved by the committee, and the status of such research, including any significant deviations from the proposals as approved.

B. The committee shall also annually submit to the Board of Juvenile Justice the same report as required by paragraph A. The report to the board shall also include a summary of human research proposals that were not approved.

**Human Research Review Committee**

During FY 2018, the Department of Juvenile Justice's (DJJ) Human Research Review Committee (HRRC) was comprised of members from various backgrounds.

- Jessica Schneider, Chair – Research Manager, DJJ
- Robin Binford-Weaver, Ph.D. – Director, Behavioral Services Unit, DJJ
- Marilyn Brown – Director, Chesterfield Juvenile Detention
- Vince Butaitis – Director, 15<sup>th</sup> Court Service Unit, DJJ
- Will Egan – Policy Analyst, Virginia Commission on Youth
- Michael Favale – Administrative Hearings & Procedures Coordinator, DJJ
- Alan Hullette – Superintendent, Roanoke Valley Juvenile Detention Center
- Barbara Myers, Ph.D. – Emeritus Professor of Developmental Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Joan Neff, Ph.D. – Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Longwood University
- Deron Phipps – Director, Policy and Planning Unit, DJJ
- Rebecca Smith – Graduate Student, Virginia Commonwealth University
- Lara Todd – Education Administrative Hearings Specialist, DJJ

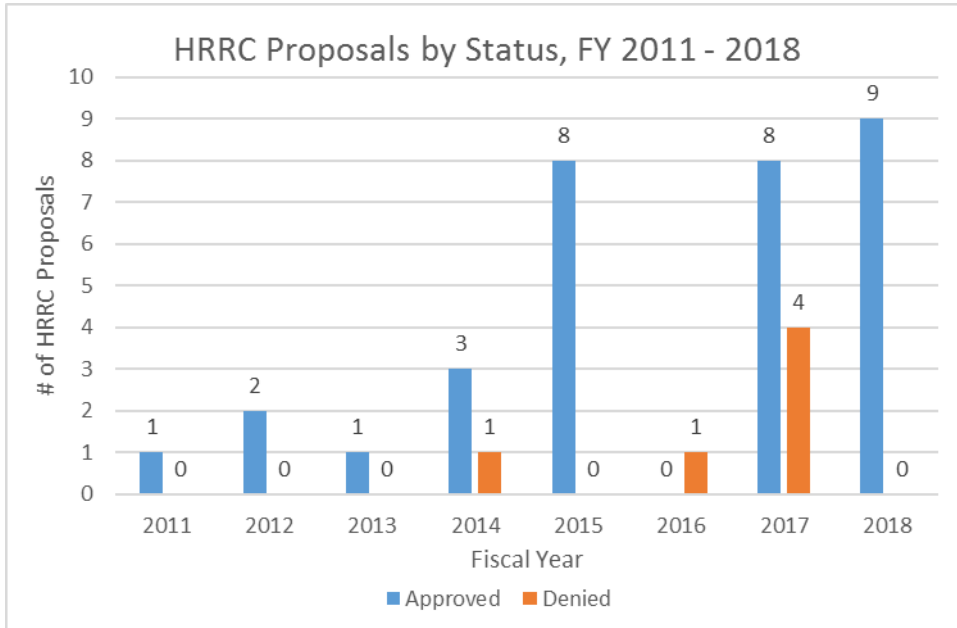
Dhara Amin, DJJ Research Analyst serves as the Coordinator of External Research.

In addition to reviewing the human subjects research studies as defined in the Minimum Standards, a sub-committee of the HRRC reviews research proposals involving de-identified case-specific data. The following report includes research projects involving either human subjects or de-identified case-specific data.

In accordance to § 32.1-162.19, *Human research review committees*, an executive summary of completed projects can be found in Appendix A.

**I. Research Proposals**

In fiscal year (FY) 2018, DJJ received eight research proposals, of which the HRRC and the Director approved six. Two projects were pending a review decision at the time of this report, and no proposals were denied.



\* The graph above represents the number of research proposals. Proposals were counted by the most recent submission date, including amendments.

\* There were two research proposals submitted in FY 2018 that were pending a review decision as of this writing. These studies are not included in the graph above.

**II. Active Studies**

In addition to the studies approved in FY 2018, 15 research studies approved in previous years remained active. The 24 active studies are summarized below:

***Evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) FY 2010 Second Chance Act Juvenile Offender Re-Entry Demonstration Projects***

Researcher: Akiva Liberman

Institution: Urban Institute

Approval Date: July 21, 2014 (first); May 5, 2015 (most recent)

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of five OJJDP FY 2010 *Second Chance Act* juvenile demonstration programs, including the Tidewater, Virginia Re-Entry Initiative. The researcher is conducting implementation and cost analyses through process evaluations of program materials, evaluations on the use of evidence-based practices, interviews with staff and stakeholders, and focus groups with program participants and their parents. The researcher is evaluating the impact of the program by conducting interviews with approximately 300 youth within 45 days of release from a juvenile correctional center and again within eight months of release. Outcome measures, including satisfaction levels, recidivism, and school data, are

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used to evaluate program impact and performance. As of July 2017, the researcher has surveyed 127 individuals and requested recidivism data from DJJ. OJJDP has granted the researcher an extension; therefore, the project, which was originally scheduled to end in October 2017, will conclude in August 2018.

***Development and Validation of an Actuarial Risk Assessment Tool for Juvenile Sex Offenders***

Researcher: KiDeuk Kim  
Institution: Urban Institute  
Approval Date: February 9, 2015

The purpose of the study is to develop and validate a risk assessment tool for juvenile sex offenders and to examine the effects of sex offender intervention services provided in the juvenile correctional centers (JCCs). The researcher has requested demographic, criminal history, treatment services, and Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) data from DJJ. Using this data, the researcher hopes to identify factors predictive of sexual offending among juvenile offenders and eventually develop a risk assessment. As of July 2018, the researcher has developed preliminary risk models to predict sexual recidivism among juveniles with a history of sexual offending. The researcher has also begun to explore ways to validate the risk models by using data from additional states.

***Case File Research on Disproportionate Minority Contact in Charlottesville***

Researchers: Gretchen Ellis, Dick Reppucci, Martha Carroll, Tammi Walker (student), and Todd Warner (student)  
Institution: City of Charlottesville, University of Virginia, and DJJ  
Approval Date: April 3, 2015 (first); January 12, 2016 (most recent)

The purpose of the study is to examine risk and protective factors among juveniles on probation as well as disproportionate minority contact in relation to probation violations in Charlottesville, Virginia. The study has since been expanded to examine disproportionality at other contact points, including intake, adjudication, disposition, detention, probation, commitment, parole, and discharge. Since the study's inception, the researchers have found significant disproportionality in the filing of probation violations. As of February 2017, the researchers have finished data collection and are in the process of analyzing and summarizing the data. In addition, the researchers have submitted a draft report to the Charlottesville Disproportionate Minority Contact Task Force. They anticipate finalizing the report after receiving feedback. The researchers have found that while the number of youth on probation has decreased in recent years in Charlottesville (and nationally), the number of Black youth placed on probation is high. Specially, while Black youth comprise only 41% of Charlottesville's youth population, 72% of youth placed on probation were Black. Furthermore, 82% of youth who received probation violations were Black.

***Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Medium- and High-Risk Juvenile Offenders: Practitioner-Researcher Partnership Project***

Researcher: KiDeuk Kim  
Institution: Urban Institute  
Approval Date: April 17, 2015

The purpose of the study is to examine the implementation and impact of two treatment modalities, Aggression Replacement Therapy and modified Dialectical Behavior Therapy, on committed juveniles' attitudes, behaviors, and recidivism. Juveniles designated as having an aggression

management treatment need are randomly assigned to participate in one of the two treatment modalities. Staff members providing treatment participate in interviews regarding their experiences and perceptions of the treatment modalities. As of March 2018, approximately 429 youth surveys have been collected. The researcher has also received and processed DJJ's administrative data. The National Institute of Justice has extended the grant to the end of 2018 in order complete the evaluation and analyses.

***Probation Violations Ending in Juvenile Detention***

Researchers: Katherine Williams, Courtney Porter, and Kimberly Meyer  
Institution: George Mason University and Fairfax Court Service Unit (CSU)  
Approval Date: June 16, 2015

The purpose of the study is to investigate probation officers' decision-making regarding violations of probation. In order to carry out this analysis, the researchers requested running records, offense histories, and detention information on all juveniles in the 19<sup>th</sup> CSU who received a violation of probation and no other criminal charges in FY 2014. The researchers have found that most of the juveniles with a probation violation and detention assessment had run away. This was also true for those with a probation violation, detention assessment, and detention order. The most common dispositions for these youth have been treatment, detention, and/or the probation period being extended.

***Juvenile Justice Decision-Making in Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) and Non-JDAI CSUs: A Multi-Site Evaluation***

Researchers: Scott Maggard and Allison Chappell  
Institution: Old Dominion University  
Approval Date: October 1, 2015

The purpose of the study is to examine juvenile justice decision-making in the context of the *Theory of Law* theoretical framework, which includes five aspects of social life: stratification, morphology, culture, organization, and alternative forms of social control. The researchers are using juveniles' YASI scores to measure the five aforementioned aspects of social life in order to understand disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system. DJJ provided additional data to the researchers on January 26, 2017. The researchers are currently working on four manuscripts based on the data that was provided.

***Examining Probation Outcomes and Changes in Risk***

Researchers: JoAnn Lee, Faye Taxman, and Mark Murphy  
Institution: George Mason University and DJJ  
Approval Date: March 7, 2016

The purpose of the study is to examine the effects of juveniles' risk-need profiles, changes in risk-need profiles, and services provided on juveniles' probation outcomes. Juveniles' risk-need profiles are based on YASI risk and protective scores and legal, family, and substance use domain scores. The researchers will examine probation outcomes in the form of recidivism data for one full year. Following a period of inactivity, the researchers reconnected with DJJ to obtain the data. DJJ delivered data to the researchers on July 20, 2017. The researchers have begun to analyze the data for youth who have complete full YASI assessments.

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***Neural Correlates of Adolescent Preferences and Perceptions of Risk***

Researchers: Brooks King-Casas and Nina Lauharatanahirun (student)

Institution: Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute

Approval Date: December 1, 2016

The purpose of the study is to examine how adolescents perceive risk and make decisions about risky behavior. The researchers are recruiting youth involved in any capacity with CSUs 23 and 23A. This sample will be compared to a sample of non-justice-involved youth of the same ages. Youth complete a series of psychological/behavioral questionnaires and undergo an fMRI by trained technicians. While receiving the fMRI, youth complete risk perception and risky decision-making tasks. The fMRI detects cerebral blood flow to different brain regions during these tasks. Physiological recordings such as respiratory, cardiac, and/or skin conductance activity may also be monitored during the fMRI. Youth who are not eligible to undergo an fMRI due to medical or psychological reasons complete all research activities outside of the fMRI machine. As of January 2018, five youth have participated and completed the study. Once the researchers reach their goal of 30 participants, they will begin preliminary analyses.

***FY 2014 Evaluation of the Office of Victims of Crime Vision21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth State Demonstration – Service Provider Survey***

Researchers: Sara Debus-Sherrill and Mary Spooner

Institution: ICF

Approval Date: January 19, 2017

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the implementation of Virginia's *Vision 21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth* project. In order to obtain baseline data regarding the nature of needs and services prior to the implementation of the Vision 21 project, the researchers are surveying child-serving frontline staff at CSUs 16 and 28. The researchers will administer these surveys again after the project has been fully implemented, which is anticipated for 2020. In order to collect data, the researchers email the online survey to a contact person at each pilot site. This email asks the contact person to share the survey with staff that provide direct services to children, youth, and families. The Service Provider Survey takes approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete and asks questions about the types of services provided by the organization, the demographics of the clients the organization serves, screening tools, interagency collaborations, and areas for improvement. As of December 2017, ICF has received three survey responses from CSU 16 and three responses from CSU 28.

***Toward a Pedagogy of Possibility: Justice System Involved Youth Read and Write Alternative Texts***

Researcher: Judith Dunkerly-Bean

Institution: Old Dominion University

Approval Date: March 20, 2017

The purpose of the study is to qualitatively examine how justice-involved youth living at the Tidewater Youth Services Crisis Center read, respond to, and create alternative texts, while also improving youths' reading and writing skills and motivations. In the present study, the researcher administers informal reading inventories to assess juveniles' reading level and interests and then assigns selected readings intended to improve reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. The researcher also provides reading support and intervention to youth as needed. The researcher and

juveniles then participate in group-based discussions about the reading. Finally, the juveniles respond to the text by creating their own alternative text, specifically a 'zine (magazine), or another self-selected representation of self-expression. The researcher focuses on helping juveniles improve written literacy proficiencies as well as developing their identities as writers. The researcher also administers reading inventories to obtain post-intervention data for those juveniles that remained at the Crisis Center for a sufficient amount of time to collect post-data. As of March 2018, staff at the Tidewater Youth Services Crisis Center have reported an increase in the amount of unprompted reading and writing by youth.

***Resident and Staff Perceptions of Safety and Engagement with the Community Treatment Model (CTM)***

Researchers: Sarah Jane Brubaker and Hayley Cleary

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University

Approval Date: March 23, 2017; amended July 14, 2017

The purpose of the study is to conduct an outcome evaluation of DJJ's CTM program in its two juvenile correctional centers. The researchers conducted focus groups with residents (grouped by housing unit) and staff (grouped by rank) to learn about their perceptions of safety and levels of engagement under the new CTM program. Questions focused on engagement, perceptions of safety, barriers to implementation, and any concerns residents or staff may have had. The researchers then utilized information gleaned from the focus groups to develop survey measures for residents and staff. The surveys allowed the researchers to quantify and expound on resident and staff perceptions of safety and levels of engagement. The researchers have found that over 90% of residents felt safe in the facility; however, staff reported feeling less safe than the residents did. Residents also reported finding utility in most of the CTM components, such as family engagement activities, social events/incentives, and staffs' emphasis on de-escalation and verbal conflict resolution. In addition, the residents strongly opposed maintaining behavioral isolation in their units and the practice of implementing group-wide sanctions for individual behavioral infractions.

***FY 2014 Evaluation of the Office of Victims of Crime Vision 21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth State Demonstration – Network Provider Survey***

Researchers: Sara Debus-Sherrill and Mary Spooner

Institution: ICF

Approval Date: March 27, 2017

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the implementation of *Virginia's Vision 21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth* project. In order to obtain baseline data regarding the nature of needs and services prior to the implementation of the Vision 21 project, the researchers send the Network Provider Survey to a primary point of contact at both CSU 16 and CSU 28. The primary point of contact (or designee) completes the survey, answering questions related to their agency's experience with the Vision 21 project (e.g., has your agency had regular meetings, do the benefits of participating in this project outweigh the drawbacks, does your agency provide/receive referrals from Vision 21 project partner agencies). This survey will be administered annually in order to examine changes in agency collaboration throughout the lifetime of the project. As of February 2018, ICF has received one survey response from CSU 16 and no responses from CSU 28.

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***Social and Psychological Predictors of Delinquency in Youth in the DJJ System***

Researchers: Aradhana Bela Sood and Mark Murphy

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University Health System and DJJ

Approval Date: May 18, 2017

The purpose of the study is to examine the demographic, social, and psychological characteristics that relate to juvenile delinquency and recidivism. The researchers are investigating the extent to which mentoring relationships mitigate and mental health issues exacerbate juvenile delinquency. The researchers are collecting data through case file reviews of committed juveniles and through data requests to DJJ. DJJ and the researchers are currently working to finalize and submit the data request. The researchers will use the provided data to develop predictive models of delinquency. As of May 2018, the researchers have collected data from 277 youth and are awaiting completed analyses from a statistician.

***Vision 21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth***

Researchers: Jared Keeley and Jenna Foster

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University

Approval Date: May 26, 2017; amended February 15, 2018

The purpose of the study is to pilot the Virginia Victimization Screen (VVS), a screening tool used to assess victimization, associated symptomatology, and protective factors, at CSUs 16 and 28. DJJ staff were selected by CSU directors to become VVS administrators. The VVS is utilized for all juveniles that are diverted or placed on probation with a moderate or high-risk YASI score. The VVS administrators also make referrals to appropriate partner agencies as needed. The researchers hope to validate this screening tool by requesting case specific, de-identified data from other standard screening tools (i.e., YASI, Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Instrument, Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire). In addition, VVS administrators meet with researchers for regular meetings that include ongoing technical assistance. During these meetings, the researchers invite DJJ staff to participate in pre- and post-surveys. The staff survey focuses on perceptions of cross-system collaborations. The first wave of the pilot program is complete and the second wave began in May 2018. The researchers have also submitted an amendment to include CSU 18 in the next wave.

***A Preliminary Analysis of Juvenile Length of Stay (LOS) and Recidivism***

Researcher: Patrick Lowery

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University

Approval Date: June 12, 2017

The purpose of the study is to evaluate what characteristics influence whether a juvenile is placed on probation, committed to DJJ with an indeterminate sentence, or committed to DJJ with a determinate/blended sentence, as well as his/her LOS. The study examines the relationship between LOS and placement type on recidivism. The study also gives special attention to differences in the outcome variables as they relate to the change in LOS Guidelines, which went into effect on October 15, 2015. To conduct this study, the researcher requested existing de-identified, case specific data for demographic information, most serious offense(s), placement decision, commitment type, LOS, YASI risk and protective scores, a subset of specific YASI items, and recidivism data. The researcher constructed a regression model to create a predicted LOS based on characteristics of the case and the juvenile, as well as a model to predict recidivism based on



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placement type, commitment type, and LOS. DJJ delivered data to the researcher on July 7, 2017. In preliminary analyses, the researcher has found that legal history factors seem to predict recidivism.

***Validation of Virginia's Juvenile Risk Assessment Instrument***

Researchers: Hayley Cleary and Jessica Schneider (student)

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University

Approval Date: July 6, 2017

The purpose of the study is to validate Virginia's juvenile risk assessment instrument, YASI. The researchers requested de-identified, case specific data for juveniles placed on probation or parole between FY 2014 and FY 2016 in order to assess the predictive validity, equity by sex and race, and usability of the instrument in case planning. The researchers hope to inform DJJ on the accuracy of the tool for Virginia's population and staff's utilization of the tool in selecting service priority areas. Jessica Schneider was recused from DJJ's processing, review, and approval of this study due to her roles of DJJ Research Manager and external student researcher. DJJ provided the data to the researchers on March 30, 2018.

***Juvenile Justice – Translational Research on Interventions for Adolescents in the Legal System (JJ-TRIALS) National Survey***

Researcher: Dr. Christy Scott

Institution: Chestnut Health Systems

Approval Date: November 1, 2017

The purpose of the study is to examine the needs and the availability of services for youth on community supervision. The researchers would like to survey nine court service units to gain insight into the current state of substance use, HIV and mental health screenings, assessment, prevention, and treatment for youth under community supervision. Furthermore, the study would like to determine how these services change over time. The first wave of this survey was administered in 2014-2015. For the next wave, the researcher will attempt to recruit the nine CSUs that participated in Wave 1. The survey consists of several different parts that must be completed by different individuals. For example, there are fact-based questions about available services which can be completed by anyone or combination of multiple individuals. There are also opinion-based questions, which the CSU director must complete. In addition, participating agencies will be entered into a drawing to win \$1,000 for their program. An excel sheet will be used to randomly select three winners. The winning agencies will be contacted to determine where their check should be sent. The study is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

***Multi-State Validation of Youth Risk and Needs Assessments***

Researchers: Zachary Hamilton

Institution: Washington State University

Approval Date: November 7, 2017

The purpose of the study is to first validate Virginia's juvenile risk assessment instrument, YASI, and then compare the tool's validity across multiple states who use the same or similar instruments. The researcher will differentially weight YASI fields and/or scores based on locality in order to improve the tool's predictability. To do so, the researcher is requesting de-identified, case specific data for all YASI items for juveniles placed on probation or released from direct care between FY 2013 and FY 2016, as well as demographic information, treatment information, and recidivism rates

at multiple follow-up periods. The researcher hopes this information will better inform DJJ and allow them to make adjustments to the scoring, initiate focused trainings, and better utilize YASI data for analysis and planning.

***Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Juvenile Drug Court Evaluation***

Researchers: Tara Kunkel

Institution: National Center for State Courts

Approval Date: November 28, 2017

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of drug court. To do so, the researcher will compare the outcomes of juveniles who completed drug court in Chesterfield or Colonial Heights against juvenile offenders who were released from probation supervision between FY 2008 and FY 2011. The researcher is requesting demographic information, YASI items related to drug and alcohol use, and YASI items related to legal history in order to match juveniles on probation with juveniles from drug court. After matching, the recidivism rates for each group will be compared. The results of this study will be used to make recommendations regarding the use of juvenile drug courts.

***Evaluation of a Comprehensive Community-Level Approach to Youth Violence***

Researchers: Saba Masho and Diane Bishop

Institution: Virginia Commonwealth University

Approval Date: November 28, 2017

The purpose of the study is part of a larger project aimed at learning more about youth violence in low-income neighborhoods of Richmond, Virginia. In the proposed study, the researchers will examine retrospective, de-identified data for juveniles between the ages of 10 and 24 who were associated with an intake case at CSU 13 between 2012 and 2016. The researchers are requesting data on intake decisions, juvenile demographics, offense information, DAI ranking, select YASI items, length of stay (if applicable), and recidivism rates. Since the researchers are interested in low-income neighborhoods of Richmond, such as Mosby Court, Gilpin Court, and Creighton Court, they are requesting individual block-level geographical data. The researchers will train DJJ Research Unit staff, free of charge, how to manually clean and geocode data. Then, DJJ staff can provide aggregate block-level data to the researchers.

***Understanding Youth Engagement in the Plea Process***

Researcher: Allison Redlich

Institution: George Mason University

Approval Date: February 1, 2018

The purpose of the study is to learn more about juveniles' engagement in the plea process by interviewing juvenile and adult offenders who accept a plea bargain. Juveniles are eligible to participate if they are 14 years of age or older, were originally charged with a felony, and they must have pleaded guilty to a crime within the past month. Prince William County Court Service Unit assists the researcher by notifying them when plea hearings occur for eligible juveniles (i.e., over age 14 and charged with a felony) so that the researcher can attend and recruit participants immediately after the hearing. After obtaining consent and assent, the researcher schedule interviews. For juveniles in the community, interviews will take place at a neutral location. For detained juveniles, the interviews take place in the detention center. Juveniles that participate

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receive a paper certificate, created by the researcher and \$25 cash for participation (\$10 for partial participation).

***Virginia Personal Responsibility Education Program Innovative Strategies (VPREIS)***

Researcher: Amanda Dainis

Institution: James Madison University

Approval Date: February 20, 2018; amended: September 18, 2018

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the *Vision to You* program, an evidence-based teen pregnancy program. The program's main outcomes include the following: (i) to reduce the frequency of sexual activity; (ii) reduce the number of sexual partners; and (iii) increase contraceptive use among participants. Another goal of this project is to increase knowledge related to healthy sexual practices. The program is collaborating with seven juvenile detention centers throughout the state. Eligible youths are asked if they would like to participate and the research staff collects parental consent information. Once the youth complete the online program, they have the opportunity to participate in three post-program surveys. Notably, youth can simply participate in the program or participate in the program and the surveys.

***Youth Photography Focus Group***

Researcher: Allison Chappell

Institution: Old Dominion University

Approval Date: May 10, 2018

The purpose of the study is to evaluate a new photography class offered to court-involved youth in collaboration with the Norfolk Court Service Unit, Norfolk Public Library, and Old Dominion University. The researcher is conducting a focus group for the participants enrolled the photography course in order to be evaluate the impact of a prosocial activity with engaged adults. In order to participate in the photography course, the youth must complete an application and a panel interview with the CSU and ODU staff. Using the Positive Youth Development model, the focus group questions aim to gather information regarding the participants' general attitude and outlook, their perceptions of the class, the library, their peers in the course, and the teacher. These questions assist the research team in developing future pre- and post-course surveys that will be distributed in later offerings of the photograph course. This project also serves as Mark Wood's (CSU #4 Parole Supervisor) JTI Capstone project.

***Third National Survey of Youth in Custody (NSYC-3)***

Researcher: David Cantor

Institution: Westat

Approval Date: June 14, 2018

The purpose of the study is to collect data for the National Survey of Youth in Custody, as required to meet the mandates of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). The two primary objectives of the survey are to: (i) identify facilities with the highest and lowest rates of victimization, and (ii) provide data for the development of national standards for preventing sexual victimization in correctional facilities. This will be the third (out of four) survey. The researchers' sample frame includes either state owned or operated facilities that hold at least 10 adjudicated youth (and the adjudicated youth comprise more than 25% of the total youth population in the facility) or contract facilities that house at least 10 adjudicated youth (including at least one state-place adjudicated

youth). DJJ and/or the selected detention centers will participate in the parental consent process in some form; however, in order to accommodate the selected facilities, the process and Westat's involvement may vary. Youth with parental consent who have been in the selected facility longer than four weeks will be invited to participate in the survey. The HRRC committee has voiced concern with the study's alternative questions, as they are sensitive in nature and may make some youth uncomfortable. However, the committee also recognizes the inconvenience of requesting that Westat change their entire survey instrument for one state.

### **III. Proposed / Pending Studies**

#### ***Process Evaluation of the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Regional Service Coordinator Model***

Researchers: Kelly Murphy  
Institution: Child Trends  
Approval Date: N/A

The purpose of the proposed study is to conduct an in-depth evaluation of DJJ's Regional Service Coordinator (RSC) model. The goal of this project is to provide feedback and recommendations to DJJ. It has three primary objectives: (i) conduct a process evaluation of the RSC model to understand the extent to which it is being implemented as intended; (ii) provide an initial assessment of the extent to which implementation of RSC model is associated with youth outcomes; and (iii) translate and disseminate findings to target audiences, such as DJJ, other systems that are interested in similar models, and stakeholders. This proposed evaluation would be conducted over a period of four years, including a pilot study in the first year. The evaluation would include focus groups of CSU and RSC staff, youth interviews, and a data request for administrative data.

#### ***Connection, Safety, Fairness, and Purpose: A Follow-Up Study***

Researchers: Ryan Shanahan  
Institution: Vera Institute  
Approval Date: N/A

The purpose of the proposed study is to provide a follow-up to the surveys administered by the researcher to committed juveniles in 2015. In the proposed study, the researcher would administer surveys related to connection, safety, fairness, and purpose to juveniles and staff in the juvenile correctional center. Residents would be asked to provide the contact information for a family member whom the researcher could contact and potentially recruit to participate in a phone interview. Once the surveys and interviews are complete, the researchers seek to conduct collaborative research meetings with residents and staff at the juvenile correctional center to discuss the findings and possible contributing factors for the findings.

### **IV. Denied Proposals**

No human research proposals were denied during this fiscal year.

**Appendix A: Executive Summaries of Completed Human Research Projects  
from the Researchers**

## **Case File Research on Disproportionate Minority Contact in Charlottesville**

### ***Purpose***

In a report completed in June of 2014, the DMC Task Force found significant disproportionality in the filing of probation violations, with 16 White youth and 95 Black youth charged with probation violations from 2010 to August 2013. The primary goal of this project is to analyze data related to the filing of probation violations in the City of Charlottesville in order to develop additional strategies to address DMC. This project also aims to analyze risk and protective factors for juveniles placed on probation to identify needs related to prevention and early intervention. The following central research questions were examined:

1. Is there racial disproportionality with respect to the number of probation violations received by youth placed on probation in 2013 and 2014?
2. Is there racial disparity with respect to the characteristics of probation violations received by youth placed on probation in 2013 and 2014?
3. Are there social history/contextual factors that distinguish those who receive probation violations from those who do not?

The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) defines racial disproportionality as one race being over- or under-represented when compared to the racial makeup of the whole community. Additionally, while there are many definitions for racial disparity, for the purpose of this report racial disparity occurs when similarly-situated youth and families experience different outcomes based on race. Research from the OJJDP indicates that the existence of disproportionate minority contact at various points in the juvenile justice system is a nationwide problem; the City of Charlottesville is no exception.

### ***Summary***

Despite limitations associated with a small sample size, we were able to analyze and make several conclusions about the juveniles who were placed on probation in Charlottesville in 2013 and 2014. Specifically, our data revealed the following:

- The majority of the youth placed on probation were Black and the majority of the youth receiving probation violations were also Black.
- For all youth placed on probation, the most common underlying charge type and severity for which youth were placed on probation was status offenses, while the most common offense for which juveniles received probation violations was education-related offenses.
- Youth whose underlying offense was categorized as a status offense tended to have fewer probation violations compared to youth whose underlying charge was either a misdemeanor or felony.
- In terms of contextual factors, exposure to violence in the home, gang affiliation, attending alternative schools, and having a moderate or high risk levels significantly increased the odds that juveniles received probation violations.

While we were able to confidently draw some conclusions about juveniles placed on probation, given the small sample size, we were not able to answer other questions with certainty, particularly those involving a comparison of Black and White youth. Additionally, in terms of contextual factors, our small sample size likely limited our ability to detect other factors significantly related to receiving probation violations.

***Recommendations/Next Steps:***

- 1) **Address DMC using targeted interventions.** While definitive conclusions cannot be made regarding whether juveniles in similar situations experience disparate outcomes based on race, these data might nevertheless be helpful with respect to identifying programs that may contribute to an overall reduction in the numbers of youth of any race that receive violations. For example, we found that violations of probation were most often classified as related to electronic monitoring/curfew, education, or substance abuse. It may be that employing interventions that have been shown to have a positive impact in these areas may contribute to a significant overall reduction in delinquency. Likewise, we found that all of the youth initially charged with assault received a probation violation. This finding should be investigated further to determine whether some issue or problem (such as poor impulse control or prior victimization) related to this crime can be identified and addressed in order to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.
- 2) **Investigate racial disparity that may occur before youth enter the system.** A discussion regarding how youth enter the juvenile justice system is beyond the scope of this report. However, given that significant DMC exists at the first point of entry into the juvenile justice system, efforts must be made to address these problems before they occur.
- 3) **Consider adopting and/or expanding trauma-informed care.** An overwhelming percentage of youth on probation reported having had adverse childhood experiences. This fact, combined with the known trends of underreporting of sensitive and traumatizing experiences, is a reflection of the difficulties likely experienced by the *majority* of youth who interact with the probation system. This finding suggests a need for trauma-informed care for probationers in our jurisdiction. The city of Charlottesville may wish to explore avenues by which its service providers could receive additional training on providing care and support that acknowledges the adverse experiences these youth have endured.
- 4) **Collect data consistently and uniformly.** While reviewing the paper files, we noticed discrepancies in the way that data were recorded over time and across people. With turnover and with multiple people working on the same files, it is important to ensure, with training and supervision, that data are collected and recorded in a similar fashion. Likewise, we found that the paper files kept by the probation department did not consistently contain information that would have been helpful for this research. For example, for a number of youth social histories, petitions, and probation start dates could not be found within the paper file. We realize record keeping, when it is not relevant or necessary to completing professional tasks, cannot always be prioritized. However, if data collection regarding DMC continues to be an important priority for the city of Charlottesville, then additional resources to help improve the data collection process should be employed.
- 5) **Be informed about the YASI.** There are ongoing debates about the accuracy and effectiveness of risk and needs assessment tools. Very recently, there have been studies that specifically examined the YASI (Jones, Brown, Robinson, & Frey, 2016; Kennealy, Skeem, & Hernandez, 2016). For example, the study by Kennealy and colleagues (2016) found that new practitioners' scores on the YASI were more consistent than those with more experience. This study suggests that continued training and monitoring of staff may be necessary for proper implementation of the tool.

**Juvenile Justice Decision-Making in Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) AND  
Non-JDAI CSUs: A Multi-Site Evaluation**

***Purpose***

We obtained data to examine differences in outcomes across JDAI and non-JDAI sites. At this point, we have worked with the data to produce one master's thesis, one published paper, and a couple of conference presentations. We have several papers in progress. Unfortunately, we have not yet addressed the primary research question (comparing JDAI and non-JDAI sites). We have investigated predictors of detention and adjudication in noncompliance cases, predictors of intake and adjudication decisions in delinquency cases, the impact of community characteristics (social disorganization) on juvenile justice outcomes, and gender differences in the impact of victimization and mental health on outcomes.

***Summary/Takeaways***

A few highlights: At the state level, we find consistent differences in detention outcomes across race and gender for both delinquency and noncompliance cases. Blacks are treated harshly compared to whites but being a minority did not increase likelihood of adjudication, which is consistent with some prior research on the topic. Girls are treated with leniency compared to boys at both intake and adjudication. For delinquency cases, older youth are more likely to be detained but this is not true for non-compliance cases. Overall, youth with good school performance and prosocial activities, including employment, are less likely to be detained. Preliminary findings indicate few differences across gender when examining victimization and mental health as it relates to processing.

***Recommendations/Next Steps***

We will continue to work with the data to complete the papers in progress and compare JDAI and non-JDAI sites.



## **Probation Violations Ending in Juvenile Detention Executive Summary**

**Purpose:** The main purpose of this research is to evaluate the use and prevalence of probation violations within the CSU. Specifically, this research will attempt to understand whether the disposition of one probation violation affects the timing and likelihood of getting another. In addition, interviews conducted as part of this project required participants to (1) identify turning points that they believed could get them out of the justice system and (2) consider whether probation violations had an impact on future delinquent activity.

**Summary/Takeaways:** Turning points that juvenile probationers believe will get them away from future crime primarily include developing prosocial relationships and cutting off antisocial ones, building skills (e.g., anger management, independent living skills), and maturing. Largely, the male juveniles interviewed credit placement in residential facilities with teaching them the skills they need to be successful as adults.

In terms of presence and timing of future probation violations, this study found no significant differences in presence or likelihood of future violations if the juvenile stayed under supervision. More specifically, there was no difference in timing, no matter whether the youth were detained, placed in residential facilities, ordered to outpatient treatment, or continued on standard probation. The only significant difference observed was for youth who were released from supervision, in which case 50% of the sample had another violation within 406 days, compared to less than 100 days for those who remained under any type of supervision.

**Recommendations/Next Steps:** The CSU and DJJ may wish to consider ideas from this work as they continue to examine and improve services. Recommendations fall within two main areas:

- 1) Since youth who are released from supervision typically continue longer without new violations, judges should continue to carefully consider which youth they retain under supervision. Many probation closure cases resulted from youth aging out of the system or exhausting services. This work is consistent with the literature, which shows that offenders under closer supervision are more likely to incur new charges.
- 2) Interviewees' proposed turning points out of delinquency provide perhaps the clearest vision for how services may change as a result of this research. Since youth seem to place a high value on learning skills – especially those necessary for independent living – it might be valuable to bring some of that conversation into probation, if not already there, or, perhaps, reintegrate it into schools. Alternately, if skill building is currently a focal point of probation, justice agencies should evaluate whether juvenile probationers are receiving the benefits of such programming. If not, changes may still be warranted, in light of the effectiveness of these programs and their potential importance, both for turning points and more broadly. By offering skill building opportunities earlier during supervision, probation officers may be able to create turning points for their clients before they go deeper into the system.

## **Resident and Staff Perceptions of Safety and Engagement with the CTM**

### ***Purpose:***

To examine resident and staff perceptions of safety and program engagement under the Community Treatment Model (CTM), conceptualized as 1) resident and staff feelings of safety in their new housing units and roles; 2) residents' perceptions of, and willingness to engage in, CTM programming; and 3) staff members' satisfaction with and support for CTM. Data were collected via 18 focus groups at Beaumont and Bon Air as well as surveys from 248 Bon Air participants (154 residents and 94 staff), representing all 17 Bon Air units and most direct care staff positions.

### ***Summary/Takeaways:***

#### *Resident perceptions of safety*

- Overall, residents felt very safe in their daily physical environments and reported positive perceptions of staff. They felt that gangs and fights were not a problem and staff respond quickly to incidents.

#### *Staff perceptions of safety*

- Overall, staff feel less safe than residents do, particularly in the school setting. Staff feelings of safety were related to removal of the lock unit and insufficient staffing ratios.

#### *Resident engagement with the Community Treatment Model*

- The vast majority of residents reported participating in core CTM activities, even though some activities are not enjoyable, and residents found utility in most CTM components.

#### *Staff engagement with the Community Treatment Model*

- Staff identified numerous benefits of CTM for their own jobs, including more and better interactions with residents and the opportunity to engage families. Staff felt that CTM is good for residents.

#### *Resident satisfaction with the Community Treatment Model*

- Residents reported enjoying social and relational aspects of CTM the most, but also questioned the appropriateness of the model for older residents, those with DOC sentences, and those who committed serious crimes.

#### *Staff satisfaction with the Community Treatment Model*

- Staff expressed a strong dissatisfaction with the CTM implementation process, including insufficient staffing, and a lack of accountability for resident behavior, and felt that staff morale was low, but they felt positively about CTM's relational aspects. Staff expressed a strong desire for more training and support.

### ***Recommendations/Next Steps:***

- More training for staff and more opportunities for staff to collaborate, communicate, and socialize with both intra-unit coworkers and inter-unit staff could promote cooperation and reduce conflict.
- Reconsider the removal of lock units and address safety in the school setting.
- Build on the model's successes related to positive relationships among youth, staff, and families by realigning priorities and investing resources into training and events that promote relationship building.
- Share report with residents and staff and schedule discussion sessions for researchers to share findings with and solicit feedback from residents and staff.