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DETENTION REFORM: A COST-SAVING APPROACH

“A single detention bed costs the public as much as \$1.5 million over a 20-year period.”

—EARL DUNLAP, CEO, NATIONAL JUVENILE DETENTION ASSOCIATION

**JUVENILE DETENTION
ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

While some youth need to be confined for public safety reasons, many communities spend millions of dollars detaining youth who could be safely supervised elsewhere. By helping ensure that the right youth—but only the right youth—are detained, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) helps communities reduce wasteful spending detaining non-violent youth, and frees up these funds for more effective public safety solutions.

JUVENILE DETENTION IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE, BUT LEAST EFFECTIVE WAY TO ACHIEVE PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS.

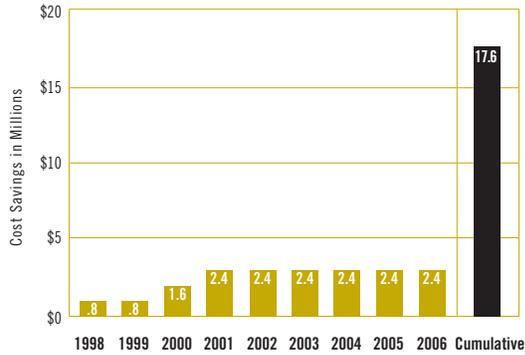
While costs vary from region to region, the price of detaining a young person can range from \$32,000 to \$65,000 annually, or even more in some places. Over time, these costs really add up: including construction, finance, and operating costs, a single detention bed can cost \$1.5 million over a 20-year period.

JDAI cuts costs by helping communities safely reduce detention populations, which enables them to close detention units or avoid the expense of new construction. Many JDAI sites have shifted money once spent on detention to other kinds of youth supervision programs and services, saving counties and states millions in confinement-related costs.

WITH FEWER YOUTH DETAINED, JDAI SITES HAVE CLOSED DETENTION UNITS AND SAVED MONEY.

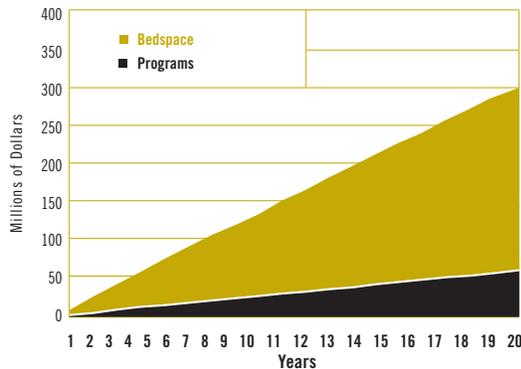
Because JDAI safely reduces the number of young people detained, many communities realize big savings by closing wings (or units) of detention centers. For example, because of decreased detention use, Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon, closed three 16-bed detention units between 1998 and 2001. Since then, it has saved \$2.4 million each year in detention

FIGURE 1
**JDAI MODEL SITE MULTNOMAH COUNTY REDEPLOYS
 \$17.6 MILLION DOLLARS**



Source: Multnomah County, Oregon, *JDAI Results Report*, 2006.

FIGURE 2
**OVER 20 YEARS, JDAI'S DETENTION ALTERNATIVES
 WILL SAVE COOK COUNTY ALMOST A QUARTER OF
 A BILLION DOLLARS IN DETENTION COSTS**



Source: Cook County, Illinois, *JDAI Results Report*, 2006.

operating costs, for a total of more than \$17 million in cumulative savings.

JDAI HELPS COMMUNITIES AVOID BUILDING BIGGER, MORE EXPENSIVE DETENTION CENTERS. By enabling communities with crowded facilities to reduce the inappropriate use of detention, JDAI helps avoid the costs of building bigger or additional detention centers. For example, before JDAI was introduced in Cook County (Chicago), Illinois, the county had authorized the construction of 200 new detention beds in response to chronic overcrowding. This new facility would have cost approximately \$300 million over 20 years. Instead, the county has spent approximately \$3 million annually on alternative-to-detention programs and related staffing. By safely reducing the number young people detained on any given day, JDAI reforms enabled the county to forego construction of the planned detention center. Over two decades, JDAI will save the county almost \$250 million.

JDAI SHIFTS PUBLIC SAFETY SPENDING FROM DETENTION TO COMMUNITY-BASED SUPERVISION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES. The tax dollars that communities save by reducing detention spending has been re-invested in other forms of youth supervision, services and interventions. In Pierce County (Tacoma), Washington, for example, JDAI reforms helped close a 50-bed detention unit and shifted approximately \$800,000 to support new community-based detention alternative programs for youth. In Bernalillo County (Albuquerque), New Mexico, JDAI helped the community close a wing of beds in a local juvenile detention center, and reinvested \$200,000 on detention alternatives so that youth are supervised safely in the community.

JDAI HELPS REDUCE THE NUMBER OF YOUTH SENT TO EXPENSIVE STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES. Sending a young person to a state correctional facility is expensive, and can cost taxpayers upwards of \$60,000 a year. While JDAI strategies are primarily

geared toward helping communities reduce the number of youth detained locally, many of the detention reform strategies help sites reduce the number of youth sent to state correctional facilities or other out-of-home placements. Cook, Santa Cruz, and Multnomah counties have seen the number of youth they send to state facilities decline by 50 percent or more, relying instead on community-based alternatives or interventions that have far better public safety track records than state lock-ups. Whether counties are saving funds they would have spent sending young people to expensive state placements, or whether states are saving money because counties are making better decisions, JDAI is helping save taxpayer dollars.

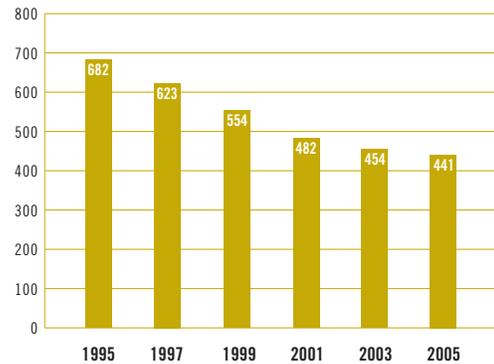
HOW DOES JDAI HELP COMMUNITIES SAVE MONEY?

1) JDAI INCREASES SYSTEM EFFICIENCY. By identifying where there are backlogs or delays in the system, detention reforms can be implemented to speed up case processing so that youth move through the system faster. These efficiencies reduce lengths of stay in detention and expand program resources.

2) JDAI DEVELOPS NON-SECURE ALTERNATIVES THAT ARE LESS EXPENSIVE THAN DETENTION BEDS. While detaining a young person can cost tens of thousands of dollars each year, JDAI sites develop a range of detention alternatives to supervise young people in the community and ensure their appearance in court. For example, while a day in detention in Cook County costs, on average, \$114 a day, many young people are now supervised in the community by a youth advocate for \$17 a day, or report nightly to a community center for intensive supervision and programming at a cost of \$35 a day. Over 90 percent of the young people in Cook County's detention alternatives remained arrest-free while in the programs.

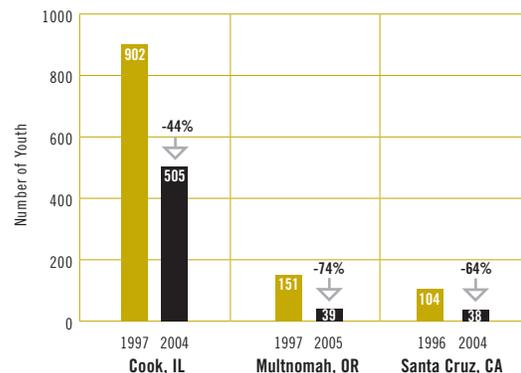
3) JDAI KEEPS YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF STATE JUVENILE FACILITIES. JDAI's core strategies, including data-driven decision-making, improved stakeholder

FIGURE 3
COOK COUNTY REDUCED THE AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION IN DETENTION



Source: Cook County, Illinois, *JDAI Results Report*, 2006.

FIGURE 4
JDAI SITES SAVE TAXPAYERS MONEY BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF YOUTH SENT TO STATE FACILITIES



Source: *JDAI Model Site Reports*, 2006.

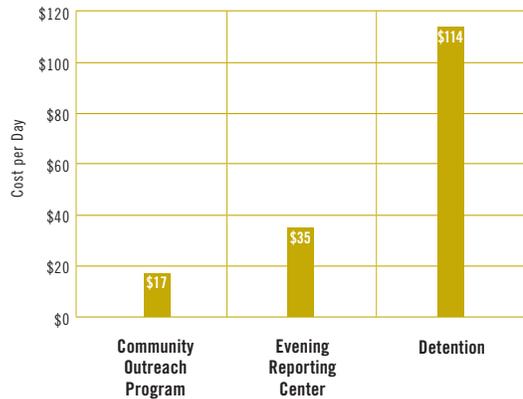
collaboration, and objective tools to identify the youth most at-risk of reoffending, have helped communities develop the skill set needed to reduce spending on state incarceration and other out-of-home placements. Thanks to JDAI, sites are making smarter placement decisions and relying more on proven community-based placements, all of which help save taxpayer dollars and keep more youth closer to home.

4) JDAI HELPS PUT YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE INTERVENTIONS. New research that contrasts the costs and benefits of various crime reduction strategies shows that juvenile detention does not provide a big return on the money invested. For example, researchers in Washington State have shown that for every dollar government invests in detaining a young person, about \$1.98 in “benefits” are generated through reduced crime and savings to taxpayers. In contrast, evidenced-based practices (interventions that are scientifically proven to cut juvenile recidivism) yield much bigger returns, saving upwards of \$6 to \$13 for every dollar the government invests in these kinds of services to youth and families. The more public safety resources that can be devoted to these kinds of interventions, the more taxpayers will save by avoiding crime.

For more information, see Holman, B., and J. Ziedenberg. 2006. The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities. Washington, D.C.: Justice Policy Institute.

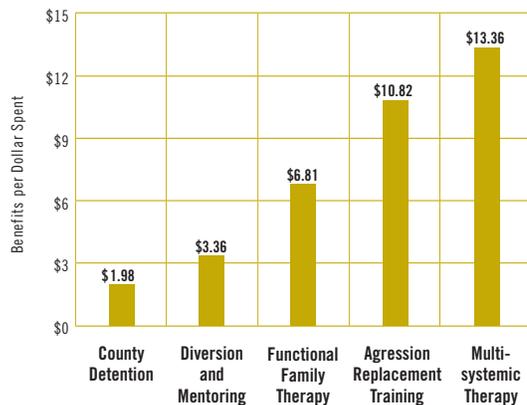
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FIGURE 5
COOK COUNTY (CHICAGO): JDAI’s DETENTION ALTERNATIVES HELP COMMUNITIES SAVE MONEY EVERY DAY



Source: Cook County, Illinois, *JDAI Results Report*, 2006.

FIGURE 6
COST EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS PER DOLLAR SPENT



Source: S. Aos. 2002. *The Juvenile Justice System in Washington State: Recommendations to Improve Cost-Effectiveness*. Olympia, Washington: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

2

DETENTION REFORM: AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGY

“The daily detention population in our facility has been greatly reduced but without a resultant compromise in community safety. In fact, just the opposite: we have the lowest rates of reoffense that we’ve ever had.”

—AMY HOLMES HEHN, MULTNOMAH COUNTY (PORTLAND, OREGON)
DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

JUVENILE DETENTION
ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is, first and foremost, dedicated to keeping communities safe. That’s why JDAI is focused on ensuring that the right youth—but only the right youth—are detained, and only for as long as needed. JDAI’s core strategies provide tools to help juvenile justice officials reduce crime while reserving scarce public safety resources for more effective ways to supervise young people.

JDAI’S PUBLIC SAFETY TRACK RECORD: FALLING CRIME RATES AND MORE YOUNG PEOPLE SUCCESSFULLY RETURNING TO COURT

1) FALLING CRIME RATES AND FALLING DETENTION POPULATIONS. While some youth may need to be detained to protect the public, two-thirds of those detained are held for non-violent crimes. Though experience and research have shown that most juveniles can be supervised in the community while awaiting their court date, some people worry that releasing them may drive up crime rates. In JDAI’s four model sites, however, where the average daily population in detention declined dramatically, juvenile arrests fell between 37 percent and 54 percent, drops similar or larger than the decreases experienced in the rest of the country. JDAI is showing every day that fewer young people can be detained without sacrificing public safety.

2) MORE YOUNG PEOPLE SUCCESSFULLY RETURN TO COURT. Juvenile detention is intended to ensure that young people return to court for their hearings and do not commit crimes while awaiting their court dates. Many systems, however, simply lack intermediate options between detaining a young person

“It’s easy enough to go along doing what you’re doing because of convenience, or because that’s how it’s always been done. But JDAI made us reevaluate what we were doing. We have started looking at detention as the last thing we consider.”

—ATLANTIC COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE JAMES JACKSON

or releasing them to the community until their court date. JDAI helps set up detention alternatives (including home confinement, evening reporting, and shelter care) that provide supervision in the community to reduce risks of reoffending and to ensure court appearance.

Prior to JDAI, a full 40 percent of youth in Cook County did not successfully return to court. But after successfully implementing JDAI strategies, 87 percent of youth in the county showed up for their court dates. In Multnomah and Santa Cruz counties, more than 90 percent of youth now make their court dates. By redirecting funds (previously spent on incarceration) to detention alternatives, these communities are able to release young people to effective forms of community supervision that keep them out of trouble pending their court dates.

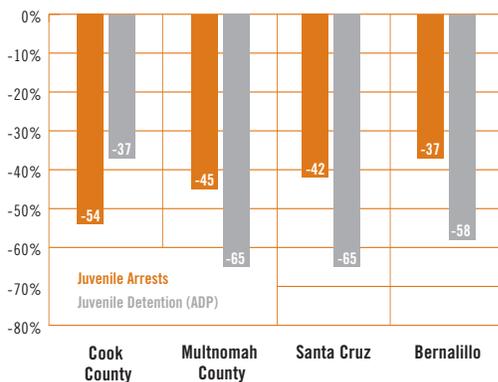
3) MORE YOUNG PEOPLE SENT TO INTERVENTIONS PROVEN TO CUT RECIDIVISM INSTEAD OF STATE YOUTH PRISONS.

As JDAI reforms kick into gear, and as sites become more successful in using the core strategies to detain fewer youth, they also improve the systems’ ability to send young people to interventions proven to reduce juvenile recidivism after the court disposes with their case. Instead of sending youth to costly state correctional facilities with high recidivism rates, JDAI’s data-driven and outcome-focused strategies have helped Multnomah, Cook, and Santa Cruz counties rely more on **evidenced-based practices** (interventions that are scientifically proven to cut juvenile recidivism) as post-disposition options.

WHY IS DETENTION REFORM AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGY?

JDAI’s core strategies, including a reliance on data, use of objective tools and instruments to identify the youth most likely to reoffend, alternatives to detention programs, and government and community collaboration, all help sites develop effective public safety policies.

FIGURE 1
JUVENILE CRIME AND DETENTION REDUCED IN JDAI MODEL SITES



**Note: crime declines are juvenile felony arrests in Santa Cruz (1996–2005) and Multnomah for (1994–2000); juvenile violent arrests in Cook (1993–2000); and juvenile arrests in Bernalillo (1999–2006). Detention declines occurred during the following timeframes in: Multnomah (1995–2002), Cook (1996–2002), Santa Cruz (1997–2005), and Bernalillo (1999–2004).

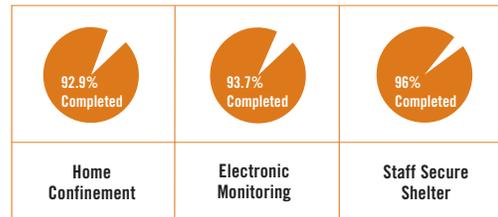
1) JDAI HELPS IDENTIFY THE YOUTH MOST LIKELY TO REOFFEND. JDAI relies on objective tools that measure the public safety risks posed by youth entering the system. Sites that successfully use these tools more accurately identify youth who need to be detained, and free up resources to spend on other ways to protect the public.

2) JDAI HELPS LAW ENFORCEMENT AND YOUTH SERVING SYSTEMS WORK TOGETHER. Juvenile justice systems are smarter and do better when prosecutors, police officers, child welfare workers, probation officers, and community organizations are all on the same page. JDAI brings these stakeholders to the same table to coordinate sound juvenile justice policies.

3) JDAI'S FOCUS ON DATA HELPS HOLD THE SYSTEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY RESULTS. In many jurisdictions, juvenile justice officials do not know if youth are reoffending frequently or not returning to court. By relying on accurate data, JDAI sites can monitor these basic public safety indicators and change policy to improve outcomes. Most important, JDAI's reliance on data allows policymakers to hold the system accountable for public safety outcomes.

4) JDAI HELPS COMMUNITIES DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES THAT ENHANCE SUPERVISION AND HELP YOUNG PEOPLE SUCCEED. In many places, judges and probation staff have only two options when faced with an arrested juvenile: outright release or lock-up. JDAI sites expand the range of options available, increasing opportunities to release young people under appropriate levels of supervision. These detention alternatives include home confinement, day or evening reporting centers, and shelter care. In Cook County, more than 90 percent of young people successfully remained arrest-free during their time in home confinement, electronic monitoring, and shelter care, and similar results have been seen in other JDAI sites.

FIGURE 2
IN COOK COUNTY (CHICAGO), ILLINOIS, MORE THAN 9 OUT OF 10 YOUNG PEOPLE REMAINED ARREST-FREE WHILE THEY WERE IN A JDAI DETENTION ALTERNATIVE

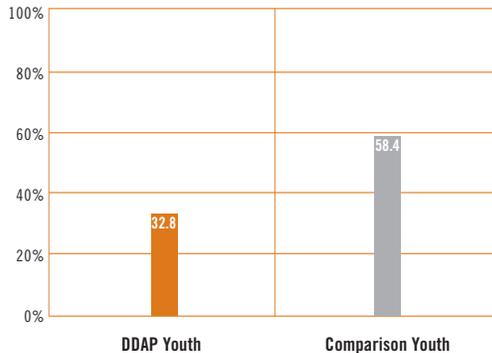


*Successful completion indicates that the minor remained arrest-free during the time of the program.

“We all know that crime is a symptom of something bigger—education, the economy, the kids’ situation at home. The question is, ‘How are you helping that child to break that cycle by putting him in jail?’ ”

—SGT. MELVIN GILBERT, A SUPERVISOR IN THE NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT’S JUVENILE DIVISION

FIGURE 3
SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER RECIDIVISM RATES FOR YOUTH
IN THE DETENTION DIVERSION ADVOCACY PROGRAM
(DDAP) IN SAN FRANCISCO



Source: *OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, September 1999.
The bulletin is entitled “Detention Diversion Advocacy:
An Evaluation” by Randall D. Shelden.

DETAINING MORE YOUNG PEOPLE DOES NOT NECESSARILY MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER

“If we unnecessarily detain younger and less-experienced offenders, we’re exposing them to other juvenile offenders who are fully engaged in criminal life.”

—Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Chief Judge David Bell

In the past decade, research by numerous groups has shown that overreliance on incarceration, including the inappropriate use of detention, can drive up youth recidivism and aggravate a community’s public safety problems. Some researchers have recently shown that communities that rely more heavily on imprisonment have higher crime rates than places that incarcerate far fewer people. How can this be?

1) BRINGING DELINQUENT YOUTH TOGETHER INCREASES THEIR CHANCES OF REOFFENDING. A growing body of research indicates that congregating delinquent youth creates a peer culture that prolongs and deepens youthful misbehavior. Nowhere are delinquent

youth brought together in greater numbers and density than in detention centers. So, when some communities make greater use of detention in an effort to curb juvenile crime, their practices may *increase* the likelihood that youth will reoffend.

2) DETENTION MAY PROLONG DELINQUENCY BY PRECLUDING NORMAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

Most law enforcement and juvenile justice personnel know that youth who engage in crime typically put their delinquency behind when they grow up. Research published by the U.S. Justice Department, for example, has shown that three-fourths of all youth who commit serious violent crimes during adolescence terminate their offending by age 21. In contrast, research shows that detaining large numbers of youth, particularly younger delinquents, may actually *prolong* delinquency that might otherwise end and can diminish the likelihood that young people will find a place in law-abiding society.

3) DETENTION ALTERNATIVES CAN STEER MORE YOUTH AWAY FROM REOFFENDING.

Several studies have shown that youth who are incarcerated are more likely to recidivate than youth who are supervised in a community-based setting, or not detained at all. One study of a detention alternative in San Francisco, for example, found that young people diverted from detention had about half the recidivism rate of young people who remained in confinement.

Also see, Holman, B., and J. Ziedenberg. 2006. The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and Other Secure Facilities. Washington, D.C.: The Justice Policy Institute.

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DETENTION REFORM: AN EFFECTIVE APPROACH TO REDUCE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN JUVENILE JUSTICE

“The absence of justice for minority youth in the juvenile justice system occurs not only in confinement but as early as the decision to make the initial arrest and it continues through the sentencing process.”

—U.S. CONGRESSMAN BOBBY SCOTT (D-VA), CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM, AND HOMELAND SECURITY

**JUVENILE DETENTION
ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE**

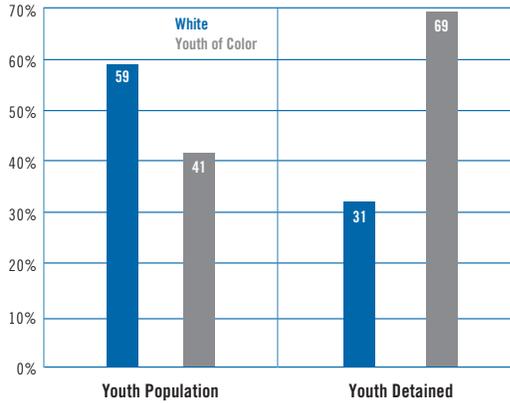
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Juvenile justice suffers from a serious crisis of legitimacy because of persistent racial and ethnic disparities in how youth are treated. When young people of color are detained at higher rates than white youth, perceptions of the system’s fairness and effectiveness are seriously undermined. But tarnished reputation isn’t the only cost borne by juvenile justice systems with disparate detention of youth of color. Since it can cost anywhere from \$30,000 to \$75,000 annually to detain a youth, the unnecessary and inappropriate detention of youth of color also results in wasteful spending. And, since detention can prolong delinquency and increase the likelihood of future offending, disparate treatment that results in unnecessary or inappropriate confinement can undermine public safety.

The U.S. Congress recognized the serious consequences of disparate treatment in the juvenile justice system more than twenty years ago, amending the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act to require states and localities to take steps to address “Disproportionate Minority Contact” (DMC), or risk losing federal funding. Unfortunately, despite twenty years of funding to reduce DMC, very few places have produced measurable reductions.

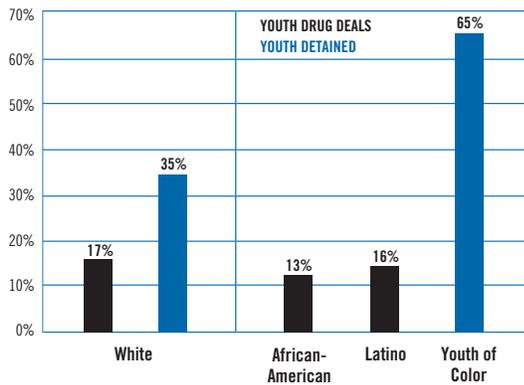
In recent years, however, a growing number of sites have demonstrated that it is possible to level the playing field and reduce the differential treatment of court-involved youth through the strategies of juvenile detention reform. The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is perhaps the only major reform initiative with measurable success in

FIGURE 1
YOUTH OF COLOR: 41 PERCENT OF U.S. YOUTH POPULATION; 69 PERCENT OF THE YOUTH DETAINED



Sources: **Population**—Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A., and Kang, W. (2008). *Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990–2007*. Available at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop; **Detention**—Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., and Puzzanchera, C. (2008). *Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement*. Available at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp.

FIGURE 2
YOUTH OF COLOR MAKE UP 65 PERCENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE DETAINED FOR DRUG OFFENSES WHILE YOUTH SELL DRUGS AT SIMILAR RATES



Sources: **Drug Use**—Snyder, H.N., and Sickmund, M. (2006). *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; **Drug Detention**—Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., and Kang, W. (2005). *Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement Databook*. Available at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/cjrp.

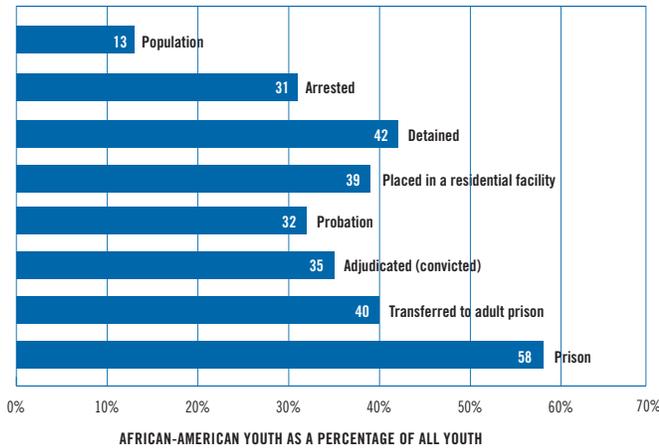
reducing DMC. By prioritizing the reduction of racial and ethnic disparities as a core detention reform strategy, JDAI sites have lowered the number of detained youth of color, reduced the higher odds of detention typically faced by African-American and Latino kids, and provided increased opportunities for their success through cost-effective, community-based interventions.

OVERREPRESENTATION OF YOUTH OF COLOR IN DETENTION IS NOT SIMPLY A FUNCTION OF DIFFERENT RATES OF OFFENDING

Obviously, certain young people need to be detained for public safety reasons, but research reveals that juvenile detention is not an equal opportunity program. Youth of color represent 41 percent of the overall U.S. youth population, but more than two-thirds of those detained. (See Figure 1.) In 2003, youth of color were detained at rates higher than white youth in 48 out of 50 states and the District of Columbia. The detained population’s rapid growth over the past two decades—it has essentially doubled—is due almost exclusively to vastly increased rates of detention for African-American and Latino youth that greatly exceed the growth in arrest rates for serious crimes by these youth.

The overrepresentation of youth of color in detention cannot be explained simply by differential rates of delinquency. For example, young people report engaging in illicit drug use, and report selling drugs at similar rates, but young people of color comprise nearly two-thirds of the youth detained for drug offenses. (See Figure 2.) Similarly, while African-American youth constitute approximately 28 percent of those arrested, they comprise 37 percent of those detained.

FIGURE 3
AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED THROUGH EVERY STAGE IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE PROCESS



Sources: **Population**—Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A., and Kang, W. (2008). *Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990–2007*. Available at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop; **Detained, Petitioned, Adjudicated, Transferred, Placed**—Sickmund, M., Sladky, A., and Kang, W. (2008). *Easy Access to Juvenile Court Statistics: 1985–2005*. Available at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezajcs; **Arrested**—FBI Uniform Crime Report. (2007). *Crime in the United States, 2007*, Table 43. Available at www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm; **Prison**—National Council on Crime and Delinquency. (2007). *And Justice for Some*. Washington, DC: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

In addition to youth of color facing higher rates of arrest and detention than similarly situated white youth, youth of color face harsher penalties for given crimes; and those discrepancies accumulate throughout the stages of the juvenile justice system. (See Figure 3.)

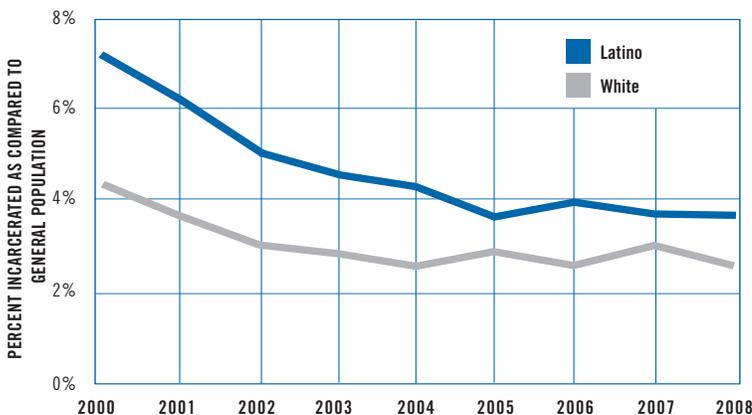
JDAI SITES HAVE ACHIEVED MEASURABLE SUCCESS IN REDUCING THE DISPROPORTIONATE DETENTION OF YOUTH OF COLOR

JDAI’s model sites have reduced disproportionate minority contact by a) lowering the proportion of youth of color in secure detention, b) evening the odds that young people of color are detained following arrest, and c) reducing the number of youth of color in detention.

JDAI HAS LOWERED THE ANNUAL RATE OF DETENTION FOR YOUTH OF COLOR.

The chart in Figure 4 illustrates the reduction in the annual rate in admissions to detention for Latino vs. white youth detained between 2000 and 2008 in Santa Cruz County, California. Although the number of court-aged Latino youth in the community increased by almost 20 percent, the numbers of Latino youth presented for booking and the annual rate of Latino youth detained in Santa Cruz County declined. After implementing the JDAI core strategies and using data to determine where disproportionality occurred in the system, Santa Cruz was able to adopt policy and practice changes that led to improvements in this area.

FIGURE 4
SANTA CRUZ: ANNUAL RATE OF ADMISSIONS TO DETENTION FOR WHITE VS. LATINO YOUTH, 2000–2008



Source: Santa Cruz youth population and bookings, 2008.

JDAI HAS REDUCED THE ODDS THAT ARRESTED YOUTH OF COLOR WILL BE DETAINED FOLLOWING ARREST.

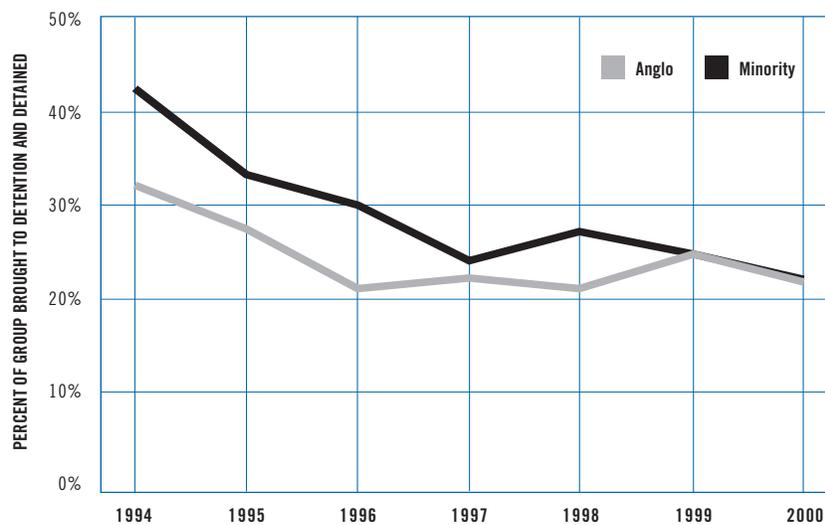
Through a variety of reforms, Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon, reduced the disparate odds of detention that youth of color faced following arrest. When JDAI began there in 1994, white youth picked up on delinquency charges were approximately one-third less likely to be detained than youth of color (32 percent of cases versus 42 percent). By 2000, however, both groups had the same likelihood of being detained (22 percent). (See Figure 5 below.) Multnomah also reduced disproportionality in its detention population: During the 1990s, when the number of youth detained in the county dropped from 96 to 33, the proportion of detained youth of color dropped from 73 percent to 50 percent.

JDAI HAS REDUCED THE NUMBER OF YOUTH OF COLOR IN DETENTION.

After implementing JDAI's core strategies, many sites achieve deep reductions in the overall number of youth of color detained, even though the disproportionate representation of youth of color, compared to their presence in the general population, may not have changed. This is common and predictable, especially in jurisdictions where youth of color make up a large percentage of the detained population.

In 1996 in Cook County (Chicago), Illinois, youth of color made up almost 93 percent of the detained population at the outset of JDAI (658 of 710 youth). By 2006, the average daily population in detention had been reduced to 426, of which 411 (96 percent) were youth of color. Overall, therefore, Cook County was detaining, on average, 247 fewer youth of color daily

FIGURE 5
MULTNOMAH COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY JUSTICE DETAIN RATE BY
ANGLO/MINORITY OVER TIME: 1994–2000



Source: Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, 2001.

because of detention reforms. Using these ADP figures to calculate rates of detention for Cook County's youth reveals that the overall likelihood that youth of color in Cook County are detained on any given day was reduced by 44 percent as a result of these reforms. (See Figure 6.)

HOW DOES JDAI HELP COMMUNITIES REDUCE DISPARITIES IN THE USE OF DETENTION?

From its inception, a sustained, intentional focus on reducing racial and ethnic disparities in detention has been one of JDAI's core strategies, making DMC reductions an explicit ambition for which stakeholders are held accountable. How do sites translate that ambition into changes in policy and practice? JDAI's core strategies all contribute to that end, especially if sites view them through the lens of racial equity.

JDAI'S RELIANCE ON DATA HELPS PINPOINT WHERE RACIALLY DISPARATE TREATMENT OCCURS IN THE SYSTEM, FOCUSES THE DISCUSSION ON FACTS, AND SHOWS WHERE IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE.

Since JDAI is a data-driven process, discussions about racial and ethnic disparities are more likely to be grounded in factual information that helps take the emotion out of exchanges about race and helps stakeholders focus on real problems and solutions. Effective data collection and analysis helped Santa Cruz realize that one of the practices driving DMC was underutilization of pre-trial diversion for Latinos. Multnomah County's data analyses identified ways to reduce the disparity in the odds of detention that youth of color faced. By using data effectively, communities can identify where changes need to happen, and document whether changes in policies and practices are having an impact to promote fairness.

FIGURE 6
COOK COUNTY'S DETENTION RATE FOR YOUTH OF COLOR DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY

	1996	2006	CHANGE
ADP YOUTH OF COLOR	658	411	-38%
YOUTH OF COLOR IN GENERAL POPULATION	350,221	389,382	+11%
DAILY DETENTION RATE	1.87/1,000	1.05/1,000	-44%

Source: Cook County, Illinois, Results Reports 2006.

JDAI'S RELIANCE ON OBJECTIVE DECISION-MAKING HELPS ELIMINATE BIAS THAT CAN RESULT IN DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT.

JDAI helps communities develop objective decision-making tools that can minimize the effects of individual or structural biases that contribute to racial and ethnic disproportionality in detention. In Multnomah County, for example, the committee developing that site's risk assessment instrument—a screening tool used to identify which youth can be safely released to the community based on objective factors correlated with risk—dropped the term “good family structure” from its criteria because it biased detention decisions against certain family arrangements, even though there was an appropriate adult capable of supervising a released youth. Similarly, Multnomah County developed a structured approach to responding to probation violations (a “sanctions grid” based upon the seriousness of the violation and the youth's risk of recidivism) that significantly reduced the idiosyncratic use of detention as a sanction by individual officers. By using objective instruments and structured decision-making tools, therefore, JDAI helps juvenile justice systems

to reduce the impact of subjective thinking and structural disadvantage.

JDAI PROMOTES THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN AGENCIES AND AMONG STAKEHOLDERS NEEDED TO REDUCE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN JUVENILE JUSTICE.

When agency leaders—as part of a JDAI coordinating body—officially declare that reducing racial disparities is a goal and responsibility of the group, the collaborative process empowers and compels all partners to focus on increasing fairness. JDAI collaborative bodies can provide safe places where participants can talk comfortably about race and strategies to reduce disparities. Collaboration also helps government agencies and the justice system bring diverse partners to the table, including community-based organizations, civil rights advocates, parents, and youth. In Cook County, JDAI helped usher in closer relationships between the juvenile probation department and organizations staffed and based in communities of color—a collaboration that resulted in a series of detention alternatives being sited in those neighborhoods.

JDAI CAN INCREASE A SYSTEM'S CULTURAL COMPETENCIES.

JDAI applies a “racial equity lens” to examine a system’s policies, practices, and programs in order to level the playing field for all youth and increase responsiveness to the particular needs and circumstances of youth, families, and neighborhoods of color. For example, after reviewing every stage of the process that leads to juveniles being detained, Santa Cruz found that the lack of Spanish-speaking staff at intake made it difficult to reunite youth with their families. Now, when Latino youth are brought to intake, their families receive calls from officers who speak Spanish, which promotes fairness

by minimizing the chances that language or cultural differences (rather than public safety risks) inappropriately influence the decision to release young people to community supervision.

JDAI'S INFLUENCE ON BROADER SYSTEM REFORMS MEANS THAT THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON REDUCING DISPARITY EXTENDS “BEYOND DETENTION.”

While JDAI is focused on changing policies and practices to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the use of detention, the initiative has been a powerful catalyst for broader juvenile justice reform efforts wherever it has been successfully implemented. Since launching JDAI, the initiative’s four “model sites” (Multnomah, Santa Cruz, Cook, and Bernalillo counties) have each dramatically reduced commitments to youth corrections facilities or other out-of-home placements. In Multnomah County, juvenile justice officials contracted with the “Communities of Color” program, a network of community-based organizations that provide culturally relevant case management, treatment, educational, and mentoring services to youth of color with serious behavior problems who are at risk of correctional placements. The program was a key part of reducing the number of African-American youth committed to state training schools from 55 in 1997 to 12 in 2005.

JDAI is an initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. To learn more about the Foundation's investments in this work, visit the Major Initiatives JDAI section at www.aecf.org. For access to JDAI's technical assistance help desk, visit www.jdaihelpdesk.org.

Also, see *Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform #8: Reducing Racial Disparities in Juvenile Detention*. (2002). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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