

**ALASKA JUVENILE JUSTICE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

2000 ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of the Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (AJJAC), I am pleased to present our 2000 Annual Report to the Governor and Legislature.

The federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 requires each state to establish an advisory group, appointed by a Governor. The AJJAC is Alaska's non-partisan advisory group which is comprised of volunteers throughout Alaska who have experience with youth and the juvenile justice system.

The AJJAC provides assistance and guidance to elected officials in meeting the federal core requirements and generates local citizen involvement and investment in the campaign to reduce and prevent youth crime and violence. The AJJAC also assists the Division of Juvenile Justice in allocating and distributing federal grant funds. **In FY01, the AJJAC distributed Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funds totaling \$831,500. This money helped 31 programs in over 100 communities throughout the state.**

The Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee strongly supports prevention and intervention programs. The following section entitled "Prevention Works" will hopefully give you a taste of some of the prevention/intervention programs we've supported and the positive effects they have had on youth. At the end of the report, you will find a complete listing of the programs we've funded, including the communities and amounts.

Vicki J. Blankenship, Chair

Prevention Works

We on the AJJAC are dedicated to the prevention of juvenile crime. Highlighted here are some of the projects that our board is currently funding. These programs are designed to identify at risk youth and to provide them with activities and adult mentors who provide a positive influence in their lives.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA GUIDANCE ASSOCIATION - YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

The Southeast Alaska Guidance Association (SAGA) serves a two-fold purpose. One segment, Serve Alaska Youth Corps, provides job training and experience for youth throughout Alaska. The second, Eagle Valley Center, reaches at risk youth in Southeast Alaska via wilderness experiences.

Last summer, 16-year-old Ryan took his first kayaking trip, scraped and painted a lighthouse, cleared a lot of brush, and saw parts of Southeast Alaska that he never dreamed of experiencing. Ryan was one of eight on a summer crew participating in the Alaska Youth Corps; a program designed to give youth paid summer work and a wilderness experience at the same time.

"It was a great time," Ryan said. "I learned a variety of jobs and at the same time discovered that I really like the outdoors. That was something I didn't know about myself before."

Ryan's mother saw positive changes in her son and strongly supports the program for other youth.

"Ryan gained a lot of maturity over the summer," she said. "He learned job skills, dependability, team work, and motivation. It was a wonderful experience for him. The staff is highly motivated and dedicated to the kids. They do a great job."

Ryan's most memorable and enjoyable project was on Sentinel Island where the crew spent ten days scraping and painting the lighthouse and digging an outhouse.

"We kayaked out to the island and I had never done that before," said Ryan. "It was around summer solstice and it was so much fun. We stayed in the lighthouse which was a neat experience."

Today Ryan is continuing his high school education and has a part time job.

Serve Alaska Youth Corps has been in place since 1986 and has provided work experience and education to over 1500 Alaskan youth. The program is designed to help them overcome delinquency risk factors such as personal alienation, dysfunctional families, poor school experience, and negative peer pressure. After recruitment, youth are split up on crews and placed on work sites at various locations throughout the state. This is paid work experience and includes working for the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, local Parks and Recreation, and the Department of Transportation. There are generally 8-10 crews working each season. Americorps supplies the youth with role models and mentors.

JUNEAU YOUTH SERVICES—CRISIS INTERVENTION

Juneau teens needing a ride home, a nonjudgmental adult to talk to, or maybe just some much needed food, have only to flag down or call the local Mobile Crisis Unit (MCU) van. All of this and much more is available to any teen on the streets of Alaska's capital city.

Ramona Winters, coordinator of the Mobile Crisis Unit, has been reaching out to youth on the streets of Juneau for several years. From about 10:00 A.M. until the wee hours of the morning a van patrols the Juneau area in search of kids who need help or are just hanging out on the streets. This is not a punitive function. The Mobile Crisis Unit provides transportation, food, council, family mediation, and whatever else is needed to supply shelter and promote personal safety.

"We are out to build up a rapport with these kids," said Winters "and we have. Sometimes they get in the van and tell us their life's story. I almost feel like it's a confessional."

One of the major components of the MCU is the mediation they do between parents and teens. Many have happy endings. Winters relates a problem between two groups of girls fighting and bullying each other at school. Mediation was set up with the girls and their parents. A contract was drawn up and there were no more incidents or fights.

Some of the youth contacted by the MCU are runaways whose parents are looking for them. There are daily briefings by the MCU staff at the police station to keep them posted on who to look for. The youth know that they will not be forced against their will to go with the MCU personnel but many do. The next step is mediation with parents to reunite them with their family or they go to Cornerstone, the local youth shelter. If they decide to remain on the street, the staff reports their whereabouts to police and parents.

"We tell the kids not to run from us," said Winters. "If they are running away from home we tell them to stop and get some food and tell us they're okay." This nonjudgmental atmosphere has proven to be very effective.

"We have kids flag the unit down," said Chuck Bennett, director of Juneau Youth Services. "They bring friends to us to get help. We are seen by the kids as advocates, not a threat. Friendships are formed between the workers and youth."

The MCU also provides an after-care component by checking up on kids to see how they're doing. "They may drop by the home," Bennett said. "They supply after-care and preventative intervention up front. They also get involved in treatment planning and working with families to work out solutions."

"The MCU provides a vital service to the parents and teens of Juneau," Winters said. "It is adults connecting with teens in a positive way. We have talked to, transported, and saved a lot of kids."

CHUGACHMUIT - CULTURE CAMP FOR VILLAGE YOUTH

Donna Malchoff, 22, director of the culture camp in Southcentral Alaska, has been involved with the program for most of its 12 years. She first participated as one of the youth who attended camp and now is an adult coordinator. She has found it to be invaluable to the youth of the villages.

"It is a good thing to get together with others in your region," Malchoff said. "Kids from the seven communities learn net-working, different leadership skills, and how to work together."

Five youth from each of the villages and their chaperones attend the camp each year. They receive training in the prevention of substance abuse, teen pregnancy and domestic violence. They also attend job and college fairs.

"Cultural aspects, such as traditional dances and the Native Youth Olympics are also stressed," Malchoff explained. "We do a variety of 'getting to know each other games' and try to give the kids an awareness of what's out there for them."

The camp has spawned a number of other projects in the villages, such as cultural heritage weeks, two community lock-ins a year, and proms.

"It was a wonderful experience for me as a youth," said Malchoff. "It made me feel less isolated and I realized that other kids were going through some of the same things I was. I've made friends from other villages and we learned to net-work while we were young. The program means a lot to me and I love working with youth."

MAT-SU YOUTH COURT

Seventeen-year-old Mat-Su senior, Shannon, has logged more court time than most third-year law students. Since her freshman year in high school, Shannon has been an active member of the Mat-Su Youth Court.

"It has been an enjoyable and rewarding experience for me," Shannon said. "I like working with my peers and the satisfaction of making a positive contribution to our community."

Shannon is one of 55 students from various schools and home schools in the Mat-Su Valley who have gone through training and passed a bar exam to become a member of the court. The youth court has been in existence since July of '96. In the year 2000 these students tried 152 cases.

Youth courts have been springing up all over Alaska in recent years and are making a big difference in how first-time offenders of misdemeanor crimes are handled. Lisa Albert-Konecky, Program Coordinator for the Mat-Su Youth Court says the days of getting away with these lesser crimes are over.

"There is an impact in our community," said Albert-Konecky. "Word is getting out that kids who want to get into trouble are going to pay the consequences."

Youth who get into trouble for the first time are given the opportunity to go through the youth court and have the offense cleaned from their record. Being defended, prosecuted, and judged by their peers has a positive impact on most who experience it.

"We did a three-year recidivism check," Albert-Konecky said, "and the rate was 17%. Included in those numbers were offenders over 18 who had come through the Youth Court."

According to Albert-Konecky, 50% of the cases that come before them are shoplifting cases. These are required to attend the Juvenile Anti-Shoplifting Program. All offenders are required to write an essay and do community service. Depending upon their age and offense, they may be sentenced to a tour of the Mat-Su pre-trial jail or to watch an adult arraignment. They are required to make restitution for any loss of money or property.

If the impact is great upon offenders, it is equally great upon those youth who make up the youth court. Members receive a half a credit for their first 90 hours of service (including training, preparation time, and hours in court) and additional half credits for every 120 hours contributed. They are also gaining valuable experience in real life situations.

"These students are learning a lot about the justice system," said Albert-Konecky. "They are learning about judgement and how to defend people even if they don't like them. They are also receiving unlimited exposure to the courtroom. Many are more comfortable in a courtroom than third year law students."

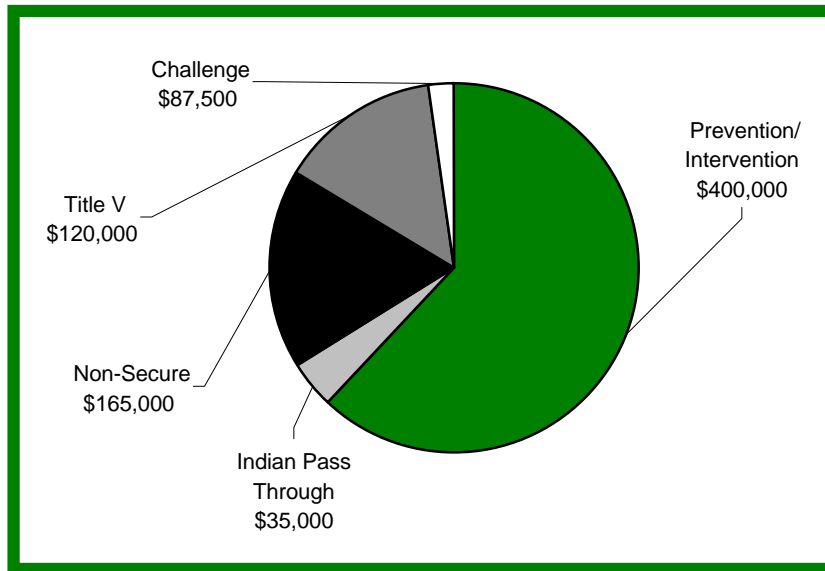
Shannon has one and a half credits and also works in a local law office as an administrative assistant, performing many legal duties as well as general secretarial work. "It definitely has impacted my life in a positive way," she said. "I feel that we are turning kids around and it is very rewarding work. In addition to that, we are also forming links with teens. We have formed the United Youth Courts of Alaska so we can integrate the youth courts around our state. We are networking to help each other, learn from each other, and coordinate resources so we can keep them going."

Recommendations for the Future

- The AJJAC highly recommends that the State Legislature and the Governor pass legislation that would require youth held in adult correctional facilities to appear in court within 24 hours. Current state law is not in compliance with federal law and therefore Alaska is in jeopardy of losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal money designated for prevention and intervention programs for youth in the State.
- The AJJAC recognizes that many youth in the juvenile justice system in Alaska are effected by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Effect (FAS/FAE). We recommend that youth in the juvenile justice system be assessed and receive treatment to meet their needs. The AJJAC also supports the development of group homes oriented to the needs of FAS/FAE youth and adults.
- The AJJAC believes all youth deserve to be treated fairly and is attempting to determine whether and where there may be a disproportionate number of minorities in the state juvenile justice system. The AJJAC recommends that an intervention plan be implemented through all levels of the juvenile justice system. This may include employing an internal Coordinator to oversee intervention and ongoing assessment of disproportionate minority overrepresentation within the juvenile justice system.
- The AJJAC meets at least twice a year with various groups of youth and parents who are involved in the juvenile justice system to get their input and ideas on the system. The AJJAC will prepare reports from these discussions and pass their findings on to the Division of Juvenile Justice. AJJAC recommends that the Division use this information in its planning efforts.
- The AJJAC recommends that the Governor, Legislature and the Division of Juvenile Justice use this committee as an ongoing resource on youth and juvenile justice issues.

PROGRAM FUNDING - FY2001

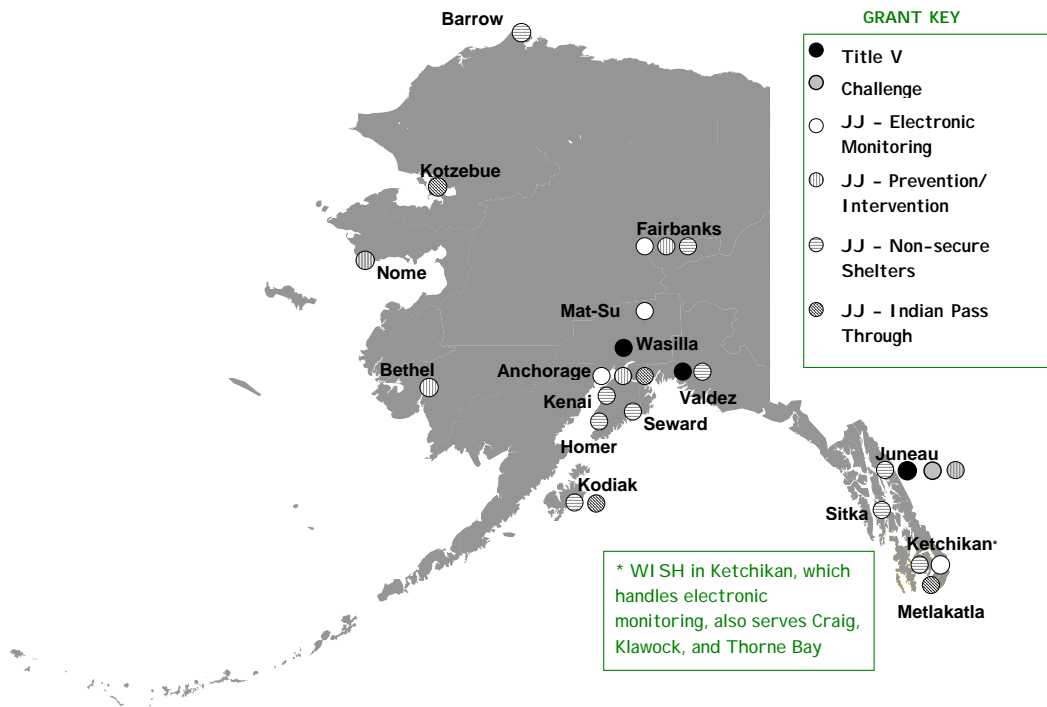
Alaska receives Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) grant funds in the following categories for distribution to different types of programs. Not all funds available were necessarily distributed. A complete list of JJDP-funded programs in Alaska in FY01 is included at the end of this report.



- **Title II Formula Grant Funds (including Prevention, Intervention, Non-Secure and Indian Pass Through monies)** - Title II of the JJDP Act provides grant funds based on the state's juvenile population. These funds must first be used to achieve and maintain compliance with the mandates of the JJDP Act by such means as establishment of non-secure shelters. Any remaining funds may be used for prevention and intervention programs. A portion of funds is set aside for Native tribes to support their youth programs.
- **Title II Challenge Activity Grant Funds** – AJJAC allocated Alaska's FY01 Challenge grant funds for a Female Offenders Program.
- **Title V Delinquency Prevention Grant Funds** - Title V of the JJDP Act provides grant funds to units of local government and tribes for delinquency prevention programs targeting the risk factors associated with delinquency.

Geographic Distribution of JJDP Grant Funds

The JJDP grant funds are distributed, through AJJAC, to programs throughout urban and rural Alaska as shown below.



AJJAC Membership Roster

Vicki Blankenship, Chair	Fairbanks	479-9511
Barbara Tyndall, Vice-Chair	Fairbanks	488-1433
Sue Lovekin, Secretary	Anchorage	269-0014
Lynn Bartlett	Juneau	465-3522
Tom Begich	Anchorage	261-4572
Jeff Budd	Sitka	747-4821
Bernard Gatewood	Fairbanks	457-5769
Michael Jeffery	Barrow	852-4800
Virgie King	Fairbanks	479-3977
Joe Murdy	Anchorage	248-4143
Barbara Murray	Juneau	586-9433
Joe Pruitt	Barrow	852-7591
Abad Senquiz, Jr.	Anchorage	278-0537
Christine Smith	Fairbanks	456-7794
Tukta "Pepsi" Souksi	Anchorage	338-3166
Renee Stevens	Juneau	789-5520
Jaime Zellhuber	Juneau	790-9329
Barbara Learmonth Juvenile Justice Specialist (Staff)	Juneau	465-3855

AJJAC Web Page:

www.hss.state.ak.us/djj

AJJAC Grantees - FY 2001

<u>Title V Grants</u>		
City and Borough of Juneau	SAGA Youth Employment Program	\$39,895
City of Valdez	Valdez Youth Court	36,334
City of Wasilla	Mat-Su Youth Court	40,000
<u>Challenge Grants</u>		
Juneau Youth Services	Female Offenders Program	\$19,318
<u>Formula (Electronic Monitoring)</u>		
Alaska Youth & Parent Foundation, Anchorage		\$173,644
Fairbanks Native Association		45,000
Kids Are People, Wasilla		50,000
Women in Safe Homes, Ketchikan		30,000
<u>Formula (Prevention/Intervention)</u>		
Alaska Youth & Parent Foundation, Anchorage	Youth Offender Employment	\$30,000
Big Brothers/Sisters of Anchorage	School-Based Mentoring	28,000
Juneau Youth Services	Mobile Crisis Unit	30,000
Juneau Youth Services	Alternatives to Suspension	19,156
Resource Center for Parents and Children, Fairbanks	Victim-offender Mediation	19,155
Nome Community Center	Juvenile Diversion Program	29,998
Southeast Alaska Guidance Association, Angoon, Haines, Kake, and Yakutat	Youth Employment	29,910
Tundra Women's Coalition, Bethel	Teens Acting Against Violence	29,998
<u>Formula (Non-Secure Shelters)</u>		
Fairbanks Native Association		\$26,890
Juneau Youth Services		15,000
Kenai Peninsula Community Care Center		50,000
Kodiak Youth Services		8,000
North Slope Borough		5,000

Formula (Non-Secure Shelters) continued

Residential Youth Care, Ketchikan	\$23,000
Valdez Counseling Center	6,000
Youth Advocates of Sitka	12,000

Formula (Indian Pass Through)

Association of Village Council Presidents, Yukon - Kuskokwim Delta	Crisis Counseling	\$10, 593
Chugachmiut	Youth Spirit Camp	3,275
Kawerak	Community Education	5,290
Kodiak Area Native Assoc.	Youth Spirit Camp	3,413
Maniilaq Association Family Resources	Youth Court (training)	4,791
Metlakatla Indian Community	Diversion Counseling	3,585
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Fairbanks	Youth Court (planning)	4,257

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