

State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services

Division of Juvenile Justice System Improvements Update Report



Frank H. Murkowski
Governor
State of Alaska

Karleen Jackson
Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services



Patty Ware
Director
Division of Juvenile Justice



The Mission of the Division is to:

- ★ Hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior
- ★ Promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities
- ★ Assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime

The Division follows a restorative justice model that supports public safety by holding juveniles accountable for their behavior.

The Division uses a variety of graduated incentives and sanctions with the expectation that juveniles must personally take part in restoring and repairing the harm caused to victims and communities as a result of their behavior.

The Division also works to prevent crime by supporting competency and skill development for juveniles so that they will have alternatives to law-breaking behavior.

Table of Contents

<i>Message from the Director</i>	3
<i>System Improvements</i>	4
Quality Assurance (QA): Changing How We Do Business:	4
<i>This year, the division is emphasizing four on-going initiatives:</i>	5
Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI)	5
The Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory	5
Performance Based Standards (PbS)	6
Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART)	7
<i>“How the System Works in Kids Lives”</i>	7
Two youth diverted to the community prior to court charges	7
Flowchart of Juvenile Justice Delivery System	8
Two youth that moved through in the state court system	10
<i>An Overview of the Division of Juvenile Justice</i>	12
Probation Services	12
Juvenile Detention and Treatment Facilities	13
<i>Summary</i>	15

Message from the Director

The work within the Division of Juvenile Justice over the past three years has emphasized improving our state's juvenile justice system through the adoption of research-based practices that have been demonstrated to be effective with youth. We have also embraced the adoption of data-driven approaches and the use of objective information to make individual case decisions and to guide system wide policy development and operations. The details of the many improvements within the DJJ system are once again highlighted in this year's report.

One of the critical goals that we hope this report accomplishes is to help you understand how each of the various system initiatives described on pages 5–7 translates into service improvements that will make a difference in the lives of young people in our state. As a government agency, DJJ must be accountable to Alaska's citizens and to a broad array of stakeholders. We must also, however, be accountable to the youth and families that we serve. Translating the work of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) staff into what happens in communities with real youth is another goal of this year's report.

Adoption of a proven risk and needs assessment process matters only to the extent that the data we obtain is then used to meaningfully direct the needed services to youth involved in our system. Likewise, data obtained from involvement in the national Performance Based Standards (PbS) quality assurance process for juvenile facilities is meaningful only if it translates into operational changes in our youth facilities that will ensure and/or improve safety, security, programming, health or mental health. Aggression Replacement Training, a newly adopted curriculum within DJJ, will work only when it is implemented with the youth for whom it was designed and in the exact same manner that the model requires. We have tried to take some of the work being done on these system improvements into the real world level by relating some sample youth stories to you, which I encourage you to read on pages 7–11. Ultimately, this is what really matters—that we are using the resources within DJJ to assist youth and families to succeed in the best way possible.



Patty Ware
Director

What is the system improvement plan?

In 2003, the Division of Juvenile Justice launched an effort to ensure that Alaska has a juvenile justice system that uses resources effectively and efficiently to achieve desirable outcomes. The intended result is a balanced, information-based juvenile justice agency where decisions are based on data collection and review. Some accomplishments:

- 1) Adoption of the Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI), a risk-based, structured decision-making tool to assist professional staff in determining whether to place youths in secure detention beds statewide.
- 2) Adoption of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), an internationally recognized and validated instrument for identifying those youth at high risk of re-offending and the case management they need to end their criminal behavior.
- 3) Participation in Performance Based Standards (PbS), a national, ongoing quality-assurance process to ensure the delivery of safe and effective services in juvenile facilities.
- 4) Implementation of Aggression Replacement Training (ART), a highly regarded curriculum proven to change behavior of youth demonstrating chronic aggressiveness.
- 5) Improved use of Treatment Units as a Statewide Resource. Consolidation of two treatment cottages at Anchorage's McLaughlin Youth Center and procedural changes around the state have allowed treatment beds to be managed as a statewide rather than regional resource.
- 6) Development of Non-Secure Detention Resources, such as non-secure shelters, foster care, and electronic monitoring for youth who do not pose a risk to the community that requires secure detention.
- 7) Enhancement of Transitional Services for youths making the difficult transition between long-term confinement and return to their home communities.

Why Improve an Already Good System?

- ★ Provide a balanced continuum of services;
- ★ Provide front-loaded” services;
- ★ Reduce reliance on locked institutional care;
- ★ Improve data-driven decision-making; and
- ★ Adopt evidence and research-based practices.

“Everything we do requires review and attention to ensure effective youth services and community safety.”

Patty Ware, Director



Ray Michaelson became the division’s first Quality Assurance Coordinator in Fall 2005. Mr. Michaelson has worked as a Juvenile Probation Officer and Superintendent of the Mat-Su Youth Facility.



System Improvements:

The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) has spent the past few years investing heavily in system improvements. These changes have focused on increasing our ability to use objective data to assist in making critical public safety decisions throughout all facets of the juvenile justice service system.

Quality Assurance (QA): Changing How We Do Business:

Quality assurance is the key to ensuring that desired outcomes are achieved. The success of the improvement initiatives described in this report relies on implementation of practices with rigorous attention to details through the building and maintenance of a quality assurance process.

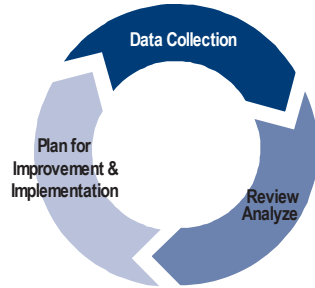
There is absolutely no question that basing policies and practices on data-driven and “proven” methods is the right thing to do. Research-based tools and approaches will increase the likelihood that youth will succeed by planning interventions based on thorough assessments and data. Facility programming based on nationally developed and recognized Performance Based Standards (PbS) will increase our attention to any identified deficit areas and ensure that these are addressed in a timely and ongoing manner.

These improvements are investments in our state’s future, with the desired long-term effect of improving outcomes for juveniles so that they do not commit new crimes, either as a young person or as an adult. Clearly, this also results in safer and healthier communities. Ultimately, reducing re-offense rates results in long-term savings to the state in a myriad of ways, including reduced crime and its accompanying costs and increased productivity from law-abiding and contributing young adults.

The DJJ system improvements to date have been accomplished primarily within the existing budget. This has been a significant challenge, as it has required a tremendous amount of extra effort, re-assignment of existing staff and “double-duty”, if not triple-duty, in many instances, in order to keep the initiatives on track. In the longer term, this approach to ongoing system quality is not sustainable. Implementation of research-based practices requires ongoing attention and action to ensure desired outcomes are achieved. The success of system improvements and initiatives relies on attention to ongoing quality assurance throughout the system.

Improvement processes typically involve a three-step process to produce verified results and continue the cycle of improvement:

- ★ Collect Data, Measure
- ★ Review and Analyze
- ★ Plan for Improvement (and repeat)



DJJ is incorporating this process into all facets of the changes it is making to the juvenile justice system and we are committed to sustainability of the initiatives and improvements we have implemented.

Many juvenile justice jurisdictions implement system improvements based on a mandate due to seriously deficient conditions of confinement in their facilities or lawsuits regarding various other system problems. Alaska’s system has not had these “crises”—the agency has approached the issue of improvement from a position of strength and ongoing attention to detail.

This year, the division is emphasizing four on-going initiatives:

Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI)

The DAI is a risk-based structured decision making assessment, used to assist Juvenile Probation Officers in:

- ★ **Focusing secure detention resources on those juveniles who present the highest risk to the community.**
 - » DAI ensures the appropriate use of costly detention services and allows money to be reinvested to community-based services to ensure adequate resources throughout the entire system.

- » DAI promotes community safety by using objective information to guide decision-making.
- ★ Ensuring lower-risk offenders are identified and have access to a broad range of community-based alternatives to detention.
 - » Youth needs are addressed in the most effective, least costly environment, while still ensuring community safety.
 - » Alaska’s use of detention as one component of a broad service continuum through the DAI is supported by national best-practice research on use of secure detention.
- ★ Promoting statewide standards when making the decision to place youth in secure detention, ensuring fairness in decisions across the state.

The implementation of the DAI began in November of 2003, and was automated this year into the divisions’ statewide Juvenile Offender Management Information System (JOMIS).

The Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI)

The YLS is a research validated, risk and need assessment tool that assists the division in making juvenile case decisions based on data. The YLS helps Juvenile Probation Officers (JPOs) determine DJJ’s level of involvement with the youth based on the offender’s level of risk as shown by YLS. The YLS also helps staff to target their interventions with youth based on identified risks and needs associated with criminal behavior.

The purpose of the YLS is to assess factors in a youth’s life that research indicates are linked to delinquent behavior, and to help juvenile probation staff design a case plan to address these factors.

- ★ Use of the YLS/CMI will allow for improved, data-driven decision making.

- ★ The YLS/CMI has six sections:
 - » Assessment of Risks and Needs
 - » Summary of Risks and Needs
 - » Assessment of Other Needs and Special Considerations
 - » Overall Assessment of the Youth’s General Risk/Need Level
 - » Contact Level
 - » Case Management Plan.

The YLS enables Juvenile Probation Officers to focus efforts on juveniles at higher risk to re-offend (recidivism) using a targeted and comprehensive approach to case planning and management. It provides the division with data to assist in making decisions regarding resource needs for youths, families, and communities and provides for more targeted intervention with youth.

The YLS/CMI can improve juvenile justice system decision-making early in the juvenile justice process, providing probation officers and facility staff with information about the youth that can be directly applied to determining appropriate interventions. This information will **help improve outcomes**, with the long-range goal of reducing re-offense rates by Alaska’s juveniles.

YLS began implementation in all facilities in February of 2004; probation began the use statewide in October of 2005. The YLS was automated starting in October 2005 into the divisions’ statewide Juvenile Offender Management Information System.

Performance Based Standards (PbS)

The purpose of PbS is to provide an ongoing quality assurance process to ensure the delivery of safe and effective services in juvenile facilities and to use on-

going data on a variety of critical outcome indicators to measure and, as necessary improve performance.

- ★ **PbS works by** requiring DJJ facility staff to collect and monitor data on a wide variety of outcome measures for both detention and treatment services. The PbS system also requires exit interviews of youth and random youth and staff “climate surveys”, which are designed to obtain feedback on a verity of indicators.

- ★ PbS standards address all facets of facility operations including:

- » Initial intake and screening
- » Facility programming
- » Safety, security, order
- » Health, mental health
- » Justice
- » Aftercare and reintegration.

- ★ All data is entered into the system’s web-based portal via computer. DJJ receives graphs and data on every outcome measure for all facilities, comparing information to the individual Alaska facility baseline and national field averages. Data, and improvement plans are reviewed for ongoing information and management process for quality improvement by DJJ managers, including facility superintendents, Deputy Directors and the Division Director. After the data is analyzed, individualized facility improvement plans are created, in response to the information gathered. This process is repeated each data collection cycle as part of the ongoing way in which we do business in our facilities.

Data collection for Alaska’s facilities began in October 2004. In October of 2005 DJJ completed the candidacy phase, becoming full members of PbS.

Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART)

Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is a 10-week, 30-hour skills training class provided to groups of 8 to 12 juvenile offenders three times per week. A juvenile offender will be eligible for ART if it is determined—from the results of a YLS assessment—that the youth has a moderate to high risk for re-offense and has a problem with aggression or lacks skills in pro-social functioning.

ART uses a structured repetitive learning curriculum, to teach participants to control impulsive and angry and behaviors and learn appropriate responses to situations. Guided group discussion is used in class to correct anti-social thinking that can get a youth into trouble.

- ★ Research by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy during an 18-month study, found a “16 to 24 percent reduction in felony recidivism rates” compared to the control group.

ART has been used in McLaughlin Youth Center, on a limited basis, for one and a half years. In November 2005, 24 staff was trained to lead ART groups; more DJJ staff will be trained in the Spring of 2006 as new trainers. Six to eight of the Fall 2005’s trainers will be trained as “trainers of trainers,” in Spring 2006, so the division has internal training capacity to build and maintain ART.

DJJ’s goal is to have ART available statewide, including community settings with youth on probation; it is an additional research proven intervention to increase youth success. ART development in Alaska may eventually include community-based providers delivering service to lower risk DJJ youth.

How the System Works in Kids Lives

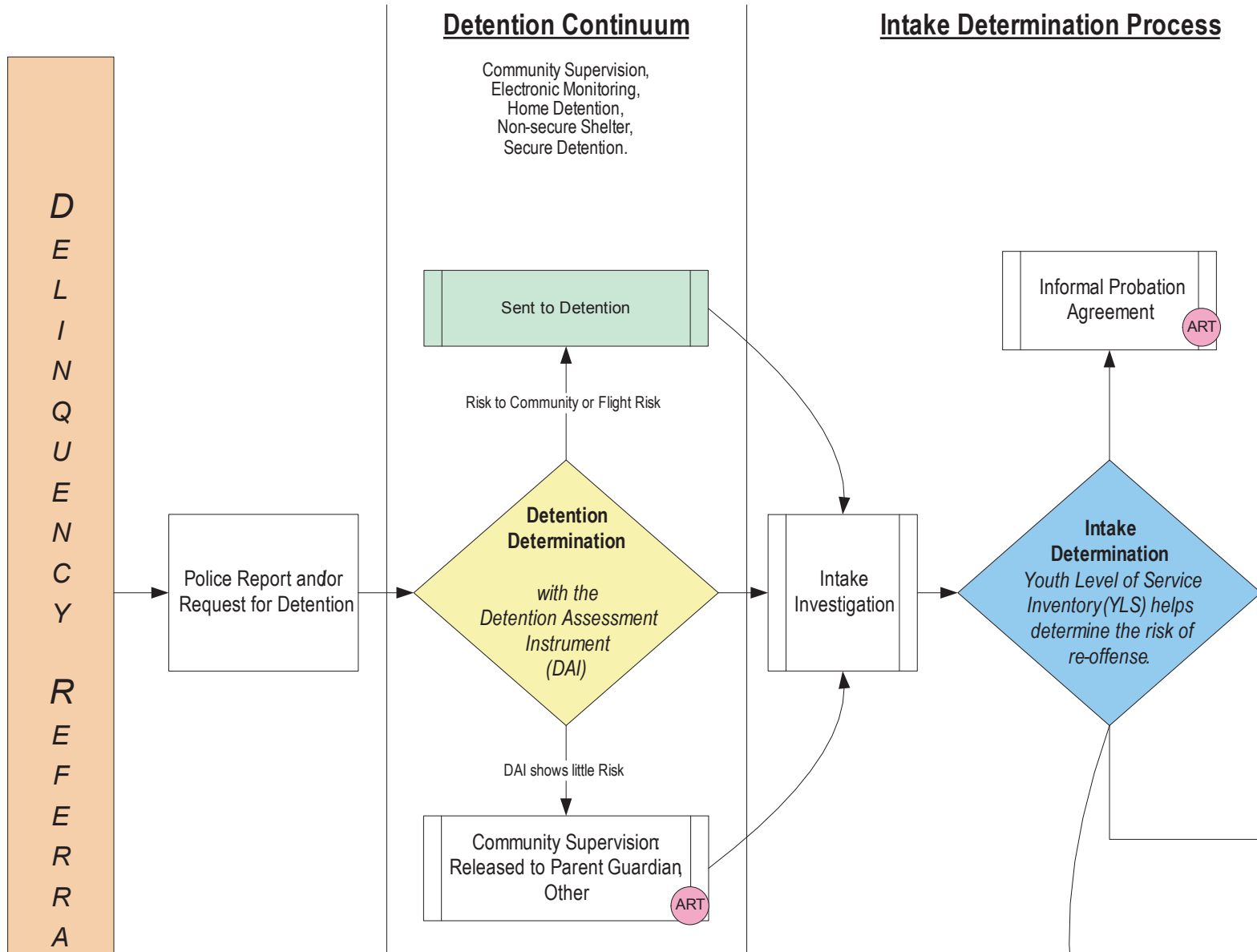
Two youth diverted to the community prior to court charges:

Johnny is 16 years old. This is the second time he has been accused of a crime; his prior case was referred to Youth Court. Johnny had not completed Youth Court and he had dropped out of school. His current charges are that he stole and damaged an all terrain vehicle, both misdemeanors. Johnny was released to his parents by police.

Upon receiving the police report, a Juvenile Probation Officer called Johnny’s mother and scheduled an office appointment with Johnny and mom. The office intake interview included a **Youth Level of Service Inventory (YLS)**. The YLS was done in response to DJJ policy to use it to assess the likelihood of re-offense. Johnny scored 10 on the YLS meaning he is at a moderate risk of re-offense. Johnny’s strengths reflected in the YLS were that he is involved in sports and there are no reports of alcohol or substance abuse.

Johnny fully admitted to the offenses and agreed to informal probation supervision, which will include performing 25-hours of community work service, and paying half of the restitution for damages suffered by the victim, \$500. Johnny was also required to re-enroll in school. The other youth involved in the crime will pay the other half of the damages. The Probation Officer assigned the case had office meetings with Johnny where they talked and the progress of community work service hours, restitution payments and school progress was monitored. Given Johnny’s strengths indicated in the YLS, and his successful return to school with good grades, he was not required to attend counseling or perform other requirements. Johnny successfully completed all of the conditions of his informal probation agreement within six months and was released.

Juvenile Justice - Service Delivery System



Key for: System Improvement Initiatives*



DAI is a risk-based assessment to assist Probation Officers in deciding to place youth in secure detention for the safety of the public or youth.



The YLS is a research validated, risk/needs tool for determining treatment needs and reducing recidivism.



PbS is used in locked juvenile facilities, to measure & monitor quality of care and improve services.



A.R.T. is a research based best practice is being introduced to community based services and facilities to teach youth skills to avoid re-offending.

* All 4 initiatives require Quality Assurance monitoring of individual and aggregate performance.

Joe is 16 years old, and was charged in May of 2005 with stealing a car – (a felony), theft and vandalism of camping gear, and being drunk during the crime. After police identified Joe as a suspect, a Juvenile Probation Officer contacted his parents and an interview was set-up with Joe, his father and the JPO. This was Joe’s 3rd incident of illegal behavior within two years, prompting the Probation Officer to perform a **YLS** to assess this persistent delinquent behavior. His **YLS** scored at 16, meaning he is at a “moderate” risk of re-offense. The **YLS** showed he was didn’t get along well with his parents at home, but did have good relations with an uncle and they and his dad, enjoyed working on cars together.

Joe has been placed on Informal Supervision by his probation Officer, with a restitution agreement for \$500. Joe’s father was moving out of state, and Joe was allowed to join him when his restitution was paid and Joe had completed the requirements of his informal probation agreement.

Two youth that moved through in the state court system:

Judy is 17 years old and was charged with assaulting her boyfriend, being drunk at the time and escaping from police. Judy’s **Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI)** score was 19.5. Youth who score more than 15 points are presumed to require secure detention.

Judy was brought to the DJJ detention facility by police where she was securely detained. As part of DJJ’s participation in the **Performance Based Standards (PbS)** project, the facility has identified both its strengths and areas for improvement. The data indicates that this facility performed well in the outcomes related to client safety. In the safety arena, the unit had lower rates of both resident and staff injury than the national field average (based on data from approximately 180 facility sites across the country). Injuries to youth and to staff during the three reporting periods have shown consistent improvement over the year and a half period measured, with the most recent data indicating no incidents of either youth or staff injury during the month measured. Results

of the youth climate surveys, administered to each youth on the unit, do indicate a small percentage of residents expressing that they “fear for their safety”. This increased slightly from the previous data collection period. Senior management and the **PbS** site coordinator will recommend this as a targeted goal for improvement in the facility improvement plan (FIP). The action steps will include recommendations to improve the resident orientation handbook and process and ensuring that staff are meeting with residents to explain facility rules and procedures related to safety, security and programming. These action steps and ongoing attention to these indicators will ensure that Judy is safe during her time as a resident on this unit, as well as assure the safety of future residents admitted to this facility.

At entry to the detention unit, a **YLS** was performed. The **YLS** scored at 8, meaning she is at a low risk of re-offense. Her **YLS** indicated the following: under “family/parenting” the **YLS** shows: her mom has difficulty controlling Judy’s behavior, and is a current drug/alcohol user. Judy has no contact with her dad. “Youth” issues identified for Judy by the **YLS** include: she engages in denial, she was sexually assaulted, she is physically aggressive—she assaulted a former boyfriend and has escaped from police. The **YLS** revealed that one of the strengths for Judy is a stable home environment. Judy is currently living with her grandparents and is doing well in their home.

Judy was charged in formal court. The court outcome was that the judge released her on a Conduct Agreement that included supervised probation. The adjudication (conviction) was put on hold (called “held in abeyance”) but the case can return to court if Judy does not maintain the conditions she agreed to in court. The **YLS** and other assessment tools indicated the need for substance abuse counseling, so Judy’s JPO referred her to outpatient substance abuse treatment. She will continue under Probation Supervision as ordered by the court. Based on her **YLS** score, her supervision level by her probation officer will be “low”, which means: at least one contact by her JPO per month, of which, at least one meeting will be face-to face per quarter, and there will be at least one parent contact per quarter.

Joanne is 18 years old. She and an older friend were charged with breaking into a home (burglary) when the residents were out and stealing several thousand dollars worth of property (theft). Both are felony charges. Joanne was 17 at the time she committed the offense, which is why she is still under DJJ authority even though she is now 18.

When the police report came, the JPO scheduled a meeting and a YLS was completed due to the seriousness of the charges and in anticipation of filing a petition to adjudicate in formal court. The YLS scored a 10, suggesting that Joanne has a “moderate” risk of re-offense. Joanne scored moderate risk/needs related to her “personality/behavior” and high related to her poor use of leisure time. In the area of behavior, Joanne blows up at home some of the time. In the leisure time domain she takes part in few activities, has no personal interests and spends time in a near by town, although her family doesn’t know what she does there. The tool also shows Joanne is uncooperative with parents, and was sexually abused by her dad. She displays poor problem solving skills, is depressed, and has low self-esteem.

The court adjudicated Joanne a delinquent. The court ordered Joanne to be placed on formal Probation Supervision and perform 40 hours of community work service, pay restitution in the amount stolen and follow other court-ordered conditions that relate to some of the behavioral deficits found by the YLS. Specifically, Joanne has a required curfew and must attend school in order to successfully complete probation. Her YLS score placed her in the moderate category for supervision by her Probation Officer. Moderate supervision means: she will meet with her JPO at least at least 3 times per month, two of which must be face-to-face. The JPO must also contact Joanne’s care provider at least once per month, as well as doing a home visit at least once a quarter.

After a series of probation violations of her curfew, her Probation Officer (PO) arrested her and she was placed in detention for the violations. Her **Detention Assessment Instrument (DAI)** score was 7. This is below the threshold for holding a youth in detention, but an override was approved because Joanne was deemed a flight risk, had refused an ankle bracelet and had

previously been kicked of her home for not following rules.

As part of DJJ’s participation in the **Performance Based Standards (PbS)** project, this detention unit site has identified areas of strengths and targeted areas for improvement. The data indicates that this detention site performed well in the critical outcomes related to security. Specifically, the security outcomes for this site indicate zero instances of: escape, drug contraband and weapons contraband for each of the three data collection cycles covering a year and half period. This is significantly lower than the national field average in these areas. In the health arena, **PbS** data has demonstrated the continued need for improvement in the unit’s ability to ensure that each resident has a health intake screening, suicide intake screening and mental health intake screening completed by a trained staff in one hour or less of being admitted to the unit. Over the three data collection cycles, the site has made continued progress in this area, improving the rate of completed screenings for residents in the three required intake screening areas of health, mental health and suicide. These important areas will continue as part of the site facility improvement plan until the facility has reached its targeted goal for several data collection cycles.

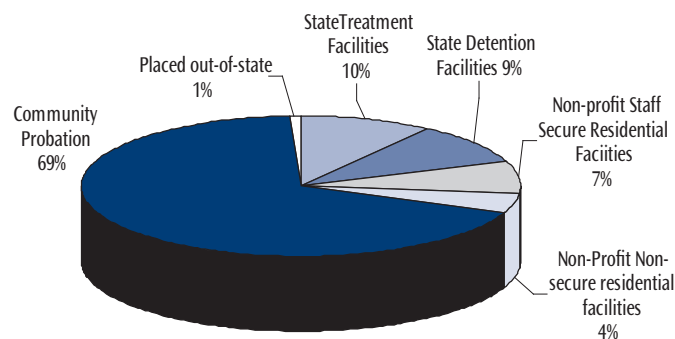
Health and mental health issues are a very high priority for all DJJ facility sites due to the very critical nature of these issues and their impact on the overall functioning and success of residents once they leave a secure unit. As Joanne’s story indicates, many of the youth admitted to DJJ facilities have high needs in this area and continued attention to these outcomes will ensure necessary services to improve likelihood of success.

In court, a psychological evaluation was ordered. Joanne remains in detention; her mental health evaluation resulted in a diagnosis of bi-polar disorder. Her probation officer is looking for an independent living program that can work effectively with a youth experiencing a serious mental illness while also teaching skills for making the transition to young adulthood. She will remain under court ordered Probation Supervision, while placed in the independent living program. The previous conditions ordered by the court still apply to Joanne.

An Overview of the Division of Juvenile Justice

The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) provides services to juveniles who commit a delinquent offense. The division responds to the needs of juvenile offenders in a manner that supports community safety; prevents repeated criminal behavior; works to restore the community and victims; and develops youth into productive citizens. Services are provided in the least restrictive setting that ensures community protection and promote the highest likelihood of success for the juvenile offender. As may be seen in the chart at left, the majority of juveniles are managed in a community setting.

How Are Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System Supervised?

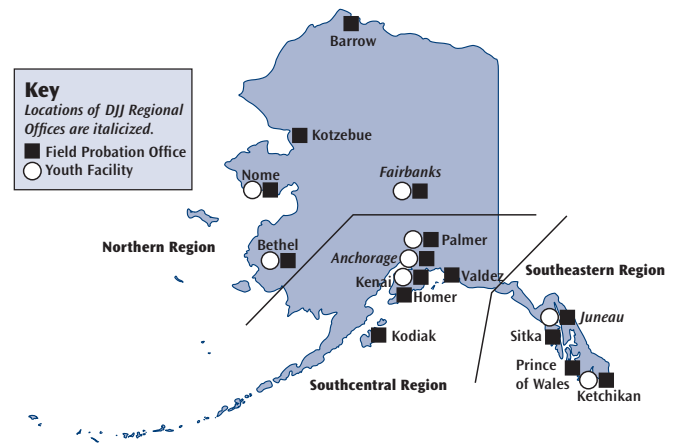


* In FY05, 3,972 juveniles were referred to the Division. On 2/4/2005 based on a 1-day count, 1,351 juveniles were in the Division's custody or supervision.

The division addresses juvenile crime through:

- ★ Short-term secure detention
- ★ Court-ordered institutional treatment; for juvenile offenders
- ★ Intake investigation, response and outcome
- ★ Probation supervision and monitoring in the community
- ★ Juvenile offender skill development
- ★ Youth Court peer intervention for low level offenders.

Locations of DJJ Offices and Facilities



Probation Services

A balanced and restorative justice approach to services and programming ensures that juvenile offenders take personal responsibility for repairing the harm caused to victims and communities by their delinquent behavior.

Juvenile Probation Officers (JPO's) are responsible for:

- ★ Receiving and reviewing police reports involving an offense by a juvenile.
- ★ Determining an appropriate course of action for a youth, which could include counseling with parents, referral to a youth court or other diversion program, or pursuing formal court proceedings. Probation officers base decisions on a variety of factors, such as the seriousness of the offense, age at time of offense, the youth's offense history, and the ability to address the delinquent behavior without formal court processing.
- ★ Assisting the youth and family in working with the public safety and legal system.
- ★ Contacting victims, involving them in the justice process and determining restitution.
- ★ Monitoring juvenile offenders to ensure they are held accountable, including payment of restitution and performance of community work service.
- ★ Pursuing formal court-ordered prosecution if this is necessary to protect the community and ensure compliance with conditions of probation.

- ★ Partnering with families, local agencies, and organizations to involve juvenile offenders in developing skills and reducing the likelihood of re-offense.

Alaska’s JPOs have important responsibilities and are required to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to make critical public safety decisions about youth who have committed crimes. They are expected to respond in a timely manner to juvenile crime, and to provide appropriate levels of supervision, intervention and support to offenders, their families, and those who have been impacted by their crimes.

These JPOs play a vital roll within the agency supporting community safety and ensuring that young people are held responsible in a timely manner when they break the law. JPOs monitor youth offenders when they are at home, in school and the community—this includes worksites, and residential placements. Juvenile offenders are held responsible for payment of restitution to victims and for performing community work service—these are just two small examples of the work done by probation staff. Alaska has 75 direct services (non-supervisory) JPOs located in 17 different communities in the state, supervising the vast majority of DJJ involved kids at any given time. These committed juvenile justice workers are a critical community-based, proactive resource whose goal is to reduce re-offense rates among juvenile offenders.

DJJ is continuing its efforts to enhance supervision, safety and accountability capabilities in the community to ensure a comprehensive and more cost-effective approach to juvenile crime. The division has implemented a research-based approach to managing juvenile cases through the adoption of the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) risk-need assessment process. This significant system change supports DJJ’s performance targets of reduction of juvenile crime and improvement in re-offense rates by using a risk-focused intervention to assist in the juvenile justice decision-making process. The use of the YLS/CMI will enable the agency to move toward public safety decision-making based on the use of a well-researched and validated approach to determining which youth are likely to pose a higher risk to re-offend. Such information will also

enable DJJ to more effectively intervene with juveniles and to more appropriately determine the use of resources based on data.

Research supports the need for a strong community-based service continuum in order to ensure that youth are served in the most appropriate environment based on their level of risk and need rather than defaulting to the most secure and costly resource of locked institutional care.

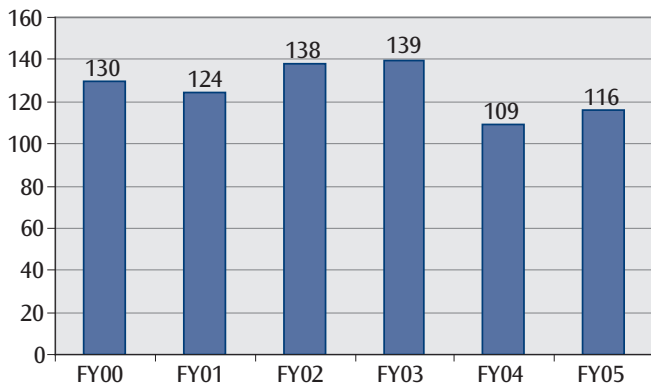
Juvenile Detention and Treatment Facilities

Youth facilities in Alaska perform two primary functions.

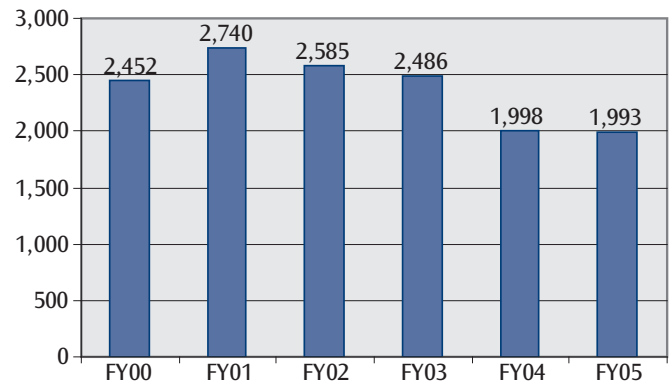
- ★ **Detention Units** are designed as short-term secure units for youth who are awaiting court hearings or other lesser restrictive placement options. Detention units in DJJ facilities serve an important function by providing secure confinement and basic services to alleged juvenile offenders while they are awaiting a decision on their case by the courts. Detention services provided include education, basic skills groups on topic areas such as daily life skills, substance abuse education, victim empathy, lifestyle choices, decision-making and anger management, recreational and daily life activities. There are 8 detention units in Alaska.

<i>Youth Facilities</i>	<i>Detention and Treatment Capacity</i>
McLaughlin Youth Center	160
Fairbanks Youth Facility	40
Johnson Youth Center	28
Bethel Youth Facility	19
Nome Youth Facility	14
Mat-Su Youth Facility	15
Ketchikan Youth Facility	10
Kenai Youth Facility	10
TOTAL	296

**Average Daily Population – DETENTION
Short Term**



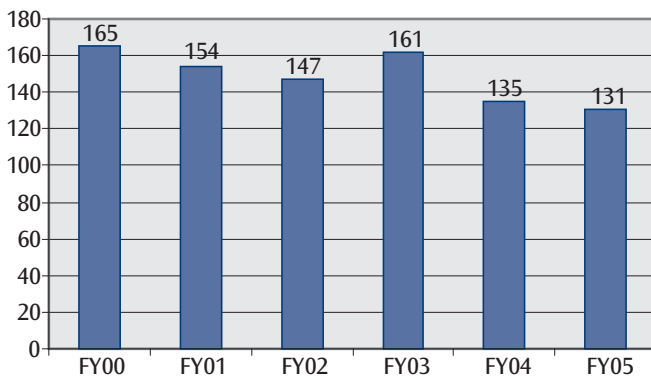
**ADMISSIONS – DETENTION
Short Term**



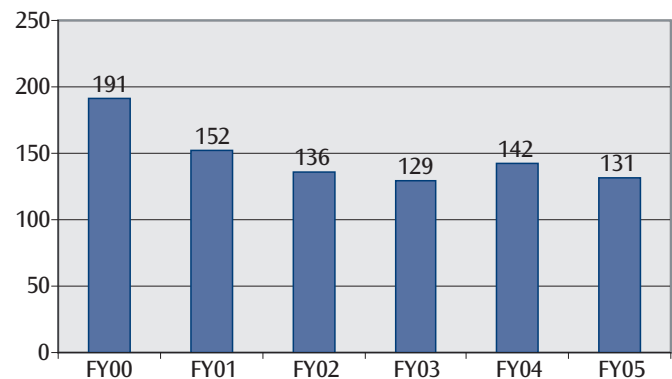
★ **Treatment Units** are designed for youth who have been ordered by the courts into long-term secure treatment due to the serious and/or chronic nature of their juvenile offenses. Youths in these units spend a significantly longer amount of time in a locked facility and receive a more comprehensive array of services targeted at reducing the likelihood of re-offense. Services are based on an individualized treatment plan targeting identified risk factors and include specialized areas such as sex offender treatment, substance abuse education and treatment, anger management and decision-making, vocational or independent living skill development, mental health services as necessary. All youths attend school on a full time basis while in the facility. There are 4 treatment units around the state in Bethel, Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau.

The division is continuing the process begun last fiscal year to have stand-alone detention facilities develop a continuum of detention services that will include some facility staff providing transitional, re-integration services in the community. The Mat-Su and Kenai detention facilities currently provide transition/re-integration services. Youth from those areas who have almost completed their long-term treatment at a Youth Facility return to their local detention center for their final three months of treatment to provide re-integration into their home community. This programming will expand to include Ketchikan and Nome. This is an innovative and fiscally prudent use of facility staff resources to ensure additional capacity to supervise juvenile offenders in the community. DJJ facilities this year have also undertaken a significant effort to improve their ability to deliver services to alleged or adjudicated juveniles in Alaska’s detention and treatment facilities through the implementation of a national quality assurance process known as Performance Based Standards (PbS).

**Average Daily Population – TREATMENT
Long Term**



**ADMISSIONS – TREATMENT
Long Term**



Summary

What I hope you have taken away from this reading is that DJJ is diligently pursuing continued refinements to our system so that youth lives will be better, so that we improve the likelihood that a young person will succeed, so that our communities are safer. The changes we are making are carried out by tremendously dedicated juvenile probation officers and facility juvenile justice officers. On their behalf, I ask you to join us in this continued important mission of our agency-- holding juveniles accountable for their offenses, promoting community safety and victim restoration, and providing skills to young people so that they do not re-offend.

We appreciate your ongoing interest in improving the lives of Alaska's youth and in working to make our state juvenile justice system even better than it is today.



Patty Ware
Director



This publication was produced by the Department of Health & Social Services, Division of Juvenile Justice to provide information about the Juvenile Justice system. It was printed at a cost of \$3.05 per copy in Juneau, Alaska. (AS 44.99.210)



*State of Alaska
Department of Health & Social Services
Division of Juvenile Justice
240 Main Street, Suite 701
P.O. Box 110635
Juneau, AK 99811-0635
Tel: (907) 465-2212
Fax: (907) 465-2333
Email: DJJ@health.state.ak.us
<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/djj/>*

January 2006