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## Lamoille Community Justice Project Program Evaluation

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Vermont Research Partnership  
at the  
James M. Jeffords Center

**Lamoille Community Justice Project**  
**PROGRAM EVALUATION**

**Distribution Copy**  
**Final Report of Findings**  
Fall 2009 – Summer 2010

August 20, 2010

by:  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Description of the Lamoille Community Justice Project (CJP) .....	1
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	2
Importance of Providing a Mentoring Relationship.....	2
Considering the Ecological Perspective .....	3
Promoting Well-Being / Building Resilience / Helping Children Succeed in School .....	3
Engaging in Community Programs / Providing Community Service .....	3
Importance of Trusting Relationships between Providers and Families .....	4
DATA COLLECTION AND FINDINGS .....	4
Interviews with CJP Leadership and Staff .....	4
Interviews with School Personnel .....	8
Outcome Data Analysis / Spring 2010 .....	10
SUMMARY .....	15
REFERENCES .....	16
APPENDIX A .....	18
APPENDIX B.....	19



## INTRODUCTION

This is a report of evaluation activities conducted by the Vermont Research Partnership (VRP) at the University of Vermont's James M. Jeffords Center for the Lamoille Valley Community Justice Project (CJP) during fall 2009 through summer 2010. Following a description of the CJP program is reporting of three components utilized in this mixed-method evaluation study: 1) a brief review of literature sources that inform practices for working with children of incarcerated parents; 2) interviews with CJP staff (three caseworkers) and leadership (CJP Co-Director and Manager); 3) interviews with school personnel who work with children served by CJP; and 4) quantitative analysis of outcomes for children in relation to school retention and avoidance of contact with the criminal justice system.

### **Description of the Lamoille Community Justice Project (CJP)**

CJP is a program within the Lamoille County Court Diversion Restorative Justice Programs, Inc., which operates as a non-profit, community-based agency located in Hyde Park, Vermont and is in its 29<sup>th</sup> year serving the Lamoille Valley region. The following description of CJP (aka CJP) is based on their "Frequently Asked Questions" document<sup>1</sup>:

*What is CJP?* The Community Justice Project is a prevention program for children of incarcerated parents. The primary program goal is to prevent children from repeating the cycle of corrections involvement as young adults.

*How does CJP work to improve outcomes for kids of incarcerated parents?*

Research shows that children who have *strong and stable family connections, do well in school, and are connected with their communities* are more likely to be successful as adults. CJP uses a case management model to help children and families achieve their family, school, and community goals.

*Who is eligible for CJP Services?* Children ages pre-birth to 12 who have a parent, step-parent or guardian who has been or is currently incarcerated.

*What do the Family Support Specialists do?* CJP Family Support Specialists (i.e. case workers) serve children and their parents or guardians through home visits and in school or community settings.

#### • Family Support

- Assist families in developing meaningful goals
- Refer families to appropriate services, including economic assistance, health resources, and parenting support
- Support the development of family strengths and traditions
- Identify and encourage the development of children's individual assets
- Instruct parents in all aspects of child safety
- Help children to access physical, dental, and mental health care services by identifying and eliminating barriers to care
- Assist parents and guardians in taking charge of their children's health
- When appropriate, help children to sustain and develop relationships with the incarcerated parent

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<sup>1</sup>(<http://www.lamoillecourtdiversion.org/about>; accessed February 10, 2010)

- School Success
  - Encourage children to access services related to academic and social success
  - Help parents to learn more about their children’s challenges and successes in school
  - Participate in team meetings and make connections between school services and the family goals
  - Model ways for parents to participate as informed, effective partners in their children’s education
  - Help children to form effective relationships with peers and adults
- Community Connections
  - Match each child with an adult mentor
  - Address barriers to participation in asset building activities such as sports or camp
  - Plan and facilitate group events geared toward the needs of children in the program (examples: flag football, summer reading program, girls’ group)
  - Assist children in giving back to their communities (example—walking the dogs at the animal local shelter, harvesting vegetables to donate to food shelves)

The CJP has been operating since 2002 and is Vermont’s sole provider of wrap-around case management services for youth of parents who either have been or are currently incarcerated. A grant from Vermont’s Agency of Human Services (AHS) has funded the program since inception. Currently, CJP leadership is concerned about the project’s on-going financial viability as AHS continues to experience budgetary constraints for the foreseeable future. The project was originally slated for budget rescissions in fiscal year 2011, but as of the close of the 2010 Legislative session funding to support CJP’s continued operation had been restored.

## REVIEW of the LITERATURE

Members of the research team completed a limited review of the literature related to healthy childhood development and “best-practices” that were used by caseworkers in the current CJP case management model. Literature in the areas of mentoring relationships, ecological perspective, child well-being, resilience, the role of school success, engagement in community programs and community service, and trusting relationships are included in this evaluation report to support and encourage on-going usage of these factors in the operating CJP case management model.

### **Importance of Providing a Mentoring Relationship**

Mentoring is one of the most popular social interventions in the United States with over three million mentoring pairs reported (Rhodes & Du Bois, 2008). Jekielek et al. (2002) found that mentoring relationships lead to children having better attitudes toward school, fewer absences, reductions in aggressive behaviors, drug usage and alcohol abuse, improved relationships with parents and an increased likelihood of going to college. Bauldrey (2006) studied high-risk youth and found that the longer the mentoring relationship, the greater the benefit. High-risk youth mentored for at least six months were 75% less likely to use marijuana, 69% less likely to show signs of depression, and 58% less likely to report being arrested. Johnson (1995) indicated that mentoring provides a developmental resource for children experiencing separation during their parent’s incarceration. In addition, mentoring programs have been shown to improve children’s

socio-emotional skills, and increase capacity for attachment, which leads to better outcomes in social and academic competence (Johnson, 2005; Rhodes, 2002).

Yet, there are risks associated with mentoring children whose parent(s) may be experiencing incarceration. For instance, Rhodes (2002) concluded that early terminations of mentoring relationships resulted in feelings of decreased self worth and academic self-confidence. Programming and services that establish mentoring relationships, therefore, may be advised to address the diverse and often changing living arrangements and environments that children experience before and after the incarceration of a parent (Johnson, 2005).

### **Considering the Ecological Perspective**

The ecological perspective provides a theoretical framework from which service providers can understand how their work with children across various settings (e.g. schools, community, etc.) is important. Bronfenbrenner (1979) asserts that relationships that include reciprocity, mutual positive regard and a balance of power will help people more easily move between environments and settings. Furthermore, a child's development is enhanced if he/she enters into a new situation with a person with whom they have had a previous and supportive relationship. Bronfenbrenner also suggests that having supportive people, as well as environments that provide an opportunity to practice the development of trusting relationships and skills across different settings, fosters longer term health and successful growth.

### **Promoting Well-Being / Building Resilience / Helping Children Succeed in School**

Caring adults outside of the family may play a significant role in providing a number of developmental assets that promote well-being (see Search Institute materials, <http://www.search-institute.org>). Resilience in children can also be cultivated by promoting protective factors, which are positive attributes in families and communities that increase the health and well-being of children and families. Educational resilience is the ability of children to overcome their challenging life circumstances and succeed in school. The protective factors that families, schools and communities can develop to increase resilience in children are: supportive adult relationships, opportunities for meaningful participation in school and the community, and high parent and teacher expectations. Partnerships between the school, family and the community are a source of protective factors that may develop educational resilience (Bernard, 1991). Research indicates that school-family-community partnerships connect families with others in the school and community and develop trust between schools and parents. Furthermore, parental involvement in school increases a child's chance of success in school and life (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

### **Engaging in Community Programs / Providing Community Service**

Studies indicate that participation in activities outside of school are associated with the development of positive identity, higher school achievement, positive relationships with adults, reduced dropout rates, decreased delinquency and more positive outcomes in adulthood (Eccles & Gootman, 2002). Furthermore, youth thrive when they have an opportunity to develop leadership skills and help others, which generally enhances their sense of belonging and feeling that they are making a useful contribution to their community (Scales, Benson, Leffert & Blyth, 2000). Finally, youth who are provided with the opportunity to participate in community service

projects and valued by communities as resources tend to be less involved with problem behaviors (Kurth-Schal, 1988).

### **Importance of Trusting Relationships between Providers and Families**

Finally, past issues with trust often play a role in collaborative relationships between parents and service providers. Trust or distrust can help or hinder the collaborative efforts of school, parents, and community (Epstein, 2001). Issues with trust can be isolating and minimize effective collaboration, further contributing to children's academic struggles (Forsyth et. al, 2006).

Research shows differing, but overlapping characteristics for establishing and enhancing trust, which includes providers that demonstrate a level of competence, provide consistent, honest and frequent communication, understand and have knowledge of the issues for the family, and hold one another accountable (Adams, Forsyth, & Mitchell, 2009).

## **DATA COLLECTION and FINDINGS**

Findings are reported for data collected from the following sources:

1. Interviews with CJP leadership and staff
2. Interviews with school personnel, and
3. Outcome data analysis, completed in Spring 2010

### **Interviews with CJP Leadership and Staff**

The research team conducted individual interviews with the Co-Director and project Manager, and the three CJP caseworkers during November and December 2009 utilizing a semi-structured interview format (see Appendix A for a list of interview questions). Emergent themes from the interviews include a description of the project's operating model, clients served, lack of duplication with the existing system of services, importance of collaboration, and limited availability of additional program supports to augment services beyond those provided in the current model. Caseworker interview data is presented in the aggregate and does not intend to identify the viewpoints of a specific member of the case management team.

#### *The Model: An interdisciplinary-interactive case management system*

The Lamoille Community Justice Project (CJP) is a prevention program for children with parents who are or have been incarcerated. The primary goal is to prevent children from becoming involved with the criminal justice system. The project uses a case management model and employs three caseworkers (two full-time equivalents). Referrals to CJP are made by staff from the following entities: Vermont's Agency of Human Services (AHS), Children's Integrated Services (e.g. Department of Children & Families, Economic Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Health), schools, physicians, mental health providers, and other community providers that serve children and families in the Lamoille Valley region. Self-referrals are also received and accepted by the project. Caseworkers commented that referrals to the program are based on the perception of a child's need for services, and do not occur simply as the result of a parent's entry or involvement with the criminal justice system.



CJP's design is an interdisciplinary case management model that uses a family centered / family systems approach in the delivery of its services. Caseworker skill sets are varied and include backgrounds in nursing, licensed clinical mental health counseling and social work. The variation in staff perspectives provides for a multi-disciplinary, strengths-based approach to case management practices. Caseworkers often consult with one another as a team, and share best practice guidelines from each of their three domains. They assure that each child in the family has a dedicated primary care physician and dental provider. Health maintenance periodicity schedules are followed in that regularly scheduled preventative health care services are accessed and delivered to those served.

A caseworker commented that while all children in a family may be enrolled in the project, one child is often the primary focus of case management services. The intensity of services varies among children and is fluid as needs change. CJP leadership indicates that every child enrolled does receive some level of assistance, with access to Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program services at the minimum. Further, the level of service provided is driven by the needs of the child and goals of the family, and reportedly often changes over time as family situations either become more difficult or stabilize.

CJP caseworkers invite other members of the service community to become members of a support team when one of their clients has a significant issue. Composition of the team is determined according to the presenting need, and may include physicians, social workers, school personnel, psychiatrists, and/or mental health providers from the local community.

Interaction and collaboration with schools and community supports is also a primary component of the project's design. Some school personnel become advocates for the children and seek to support alternative choices that result in positive social interactions and connections for the future. One such interaction occurred when a caseworker connected a student with a "hands on team" of teachers at a Lamoille middle school. It became clear to the caseworker and the team that within a period of months the student's behavior changed to become more positive and schoolwork improved. This child progressed from isolation from his/her peers to being "chosen" at school events.

Caseworkers work with every child to help him/her develop a sense of belonging in the community. This is often accomplished by engaging children in local activities and connecting them with mentoring opportunities. Additionally, attention to a child's health-related, physical environment and basic needs for food, shelter and safety are focuses for CJP caseworker staff. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the operant framework for decision making. Conflict resolution practices are used by some caseworkers to help stabilize familial environments.

In addition, CJP provides case management and support for parents of children enrolled in the program who have identified substance abuse as a barrier to being effective parents and providing a safe and stable home. CJP's nurse/case manager assists parents in accessing resources required to achieve and maintain treatment goals. Assistance may include helping a parent access residential treatment, coordinating services among medical and social service providers, and developing plans for successful community reentry following treatment. The nurse/case manager also provides leadership to staff and all case managers to help families

coordinate intensive outpatient treatment and provides information on community-based supports. Finally, CJP assists with care coordination for pregnant mothers who are currently abusing substances or receiving treatment.

Primary goals of the CJP and the case management services it offers include the following:

- Children of incarcerated parents do not enter the juvenile justice system;
- Parents become involved and select goals for their children that include positive behavior and school success;
- Children become aware of alternate paths to alternate futures; and
- Families become a known and respected part of the community in which they live.

### *Who is Served by CJP?*

The CJP serves approximately 65 – 70 children per year. 79 children were served during fiscal year 2010. Staff case load sizes range from 15 – 20 clients dependent upon case worker hourly schedules. The “Outcome Data Analysis” section of this report highlights a cohort of 147 children and youth that have been served by CJP for the period 2002 – April 2010<sup>2</sup>. This cohort serves as the baseline for reporting outcomes related to avoidance of the criminal justice system and school retention and graduation rates.

### *Non-Duplication with Existing System of Services*

CJP leadership and staff describe how their project does not work to duplicate existing services that are already available in the community. Leadership spoke about the fact that few services are accessible for school-aged children with risk factors, such as those children impacted by a parent who has or is currently incarcerated. While other programs may focus on particular problems, CJP takes a holistic, family-centered approach to the work they do with children and families. A caseworker talked about how s/he brought clients to the door of other services, but did not act to duplicate existing and available supports. Finally, CJP staff work to assist parents with substance abuse treatment goals. For instance, this is said to include assisting parents with access to treatment providers within the community. Support with transportation needs so that parents can attend treatment related appointments was also mentioned.

### *Importance of Collaboration*

CJP collaborates with pre-existing community programs and supports as a way of providing diverse opportunities for their clients, often matching a child’s particular interest with a program. A caseworker described collaborations with community partners as a way of connecting a child with his/her aspiration. One example includes a caseworker locating a horse camp for a child who loves animals. Another example included connecting a child with an interest in becoming a vet with volunteer work at the local humane society. The caseworkers further explained that these children would not have had the opportunity to participate in community programs without CJP’s assistance. Interestingly, it was reported that one family now regularly enrolls their child

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<sup>2</sup> Number of children included in cohort analysis (n= 147) is lower than total served since program inception (n = 314). This is due to the fact that cohort children received a more intense level of service and were supported by recordkeeping practices that enabled requisite tracking for evaluation purposes.

in community programs and supports, which demonstrates how CJP's work with children and families is able to promote positive skill development with parents.

### *Limited Availability of Supplemental Program Supports*

Interviews with staff revealed that there is limited availability of programming beyond the core case management model of service offered by CJP. Outside funding sources were leveraged to support additional programming such as the "Community of Mom's" therapeutic women's group for CJP parents. One-time funding for supplemental programs such as the Community of Mom's meant that not all mothers were able to participate in supports that were made available for a finite period of time. CJP leadership explained that supplemental programming, while desirable, was often not possible because of limited access to funding and in some instances, staffing levels that could support regular or ongoing groups. Also mentioned is the fact that programming is difficult to offer for those served in the outlying communities such as Hardwick and Waterville. Reported enhancements to the core model would require new and sustainable resources, an increase in staff, and a strategic focus on outcomes as specified in grant awards.

Examples of grant-funded, court diversion sponsored programs and supports for *children* that the CJP collaborates with include:

- Sprockids - a summer program
- Garden Club – where youth earn \$5 an hour for weeding
- Mentoring Programs
- Club Johnson – a program for high risk children in Johnson.

Examples of grant-funded, court diversion sponsored programs and supports for *parents* include:

- Johnson Community Meal Program - this is an alternative to work crew for women who need to complete community service hours in order to avoid returning to jail. An CJP caseworker occasionally attends this meal program as a way to engage with parents of existing clients, and to build trusting relationships with parents who may potentially enroll their children in the CJP;
- Community of Mom's - a one-time offering of a 20 week CJP group program to discover strengths, learn new ways to solve problems, make new friends, and gain new ideas for parenting and relationships.

Other examples of CJP or community sponsored supplemental programs currently or previously offered for *children* include:

- Books for Cooks – six week cooking and literacy-focused program
- You Have Options – healthy foods/anti-tobacco, 10 week program
- Summer Reading Program – sponsored by the local Rotary and Building Bright Futures.

As each of the above programs added value to the collaborative model of case management they also were not under the direct funding stream of the project and, as such pose a dilemma for the model. As services like the ones listed above are vulnerable to unreliable funding, the extent to which they are essential to CJP program success and the extent to which they principally add value are difficult to calculate.

## **Interviews with School Personnel**

In May and June 2010, members of the research team conducted four individual interviews, using a semi structured interview format, with school personnel who worked with children served by the CJP (see Appendix B for list of interview question). These individuals were counselors who worked directly with the CJP caseworkers and were chosen by the research team from a list provided by the project's manager. Participants were asked to describe their understanding of the goals of the CJP, the strengths of the project, the barriers faced by CJP, changes in the project's design or service offerings that might better support the children and families served, recommendations for additional resources, programming or activities that might improve outcomes, and what activities they would most like preserved. This section of the report is formatted using these themes to describe the findings.

### *Description of CJP and Project Goals*

All four participants stated that one of the goals of the project was to provide support for families, including mentors, academic support and assistance with truancy issues as well as activities which otherwise would not be accessible to them. Three of the four school personnel mentioned that the program serves children with a parent involved with the criminal justice system and one of the goals of the program is to prevent the student from becoming involved with the criminal justice system. Another goal identified was increasing a parent's ability to obtain services for their children.

### *Strengths*

All of the school personnel interviewed identified the CJP staff as a strength of the project. They were described as highly skilled, dedicated, supportive, trustworthy and knowledgeable. One participant stated that the CJP staff were one of the resources he/she could count on the most in the community. Another participant described the strength of the program as "personality driven" in that staff personalities rather than the program's design were responsible for CJP's success. The management style of the organization, to "take care of the people who work there", was also mentioned as a strength of the project.

Another strength identified by school personnel was the caseworker's ability to assist in the building of relationships between schools and families and breaking down the barriers that prevent many families from having a productive relationship with their child's teachers. Other strengths identified include the following: providing services that families desperately need, connecting with families who fear letting the "system" into their life, and offering youth desired programming.

### *Barriers*

All of the school personnel identified lack of funds as a barrier faced by the project. They described the community they served as having high needs with few resources. The connection between time and money was noted; if CJP had more money they would have more time for case management and additional programming. The level of poverty in the community was also identified as a barrier. Lastly, other barriers mentioned included a fear and reluctance of families

to make changes to their current situation, and family concerns that enrollment in the project could lead to further involvement with the judicial system.

### *Suggested Changes in the Program*

The following changes in the project's service offerings to better support the children served by CJP were suggested: increased capacity for new referrals, referrals and programming for older youth, and additional summer programming. In addition, addressing parents' needs was mentioned as a component to include in the design, including couple's counseling. One participant noted, "The parents can't give what they don't have." It was also suggested attempts be made to find individuals (non-professionals) whom families trust and partner with them in order to facilitate connections with service providers.

### *Recommendations for Additional Resources, Programming or Activities*

The school personnel suggested that the following programs or additional resources for existing programs might improve the outcomes for the children enrolled in the CJP: groups for girls, counseling, therapeutic camps, mentoring, summer programs and programs to build social development. Suggested programs for parents to improve outcomes for children enrolled in the CJP include: parenting classes, programs for fathers, home visits to improve parenting and wrap around services for parents. It was also suggested that a brochure be developed to describe CJP along with outreach to better inform the community about the experiences of incarcerated families.

### *What Works Well and Needs To Be Preserved*

School personnel listed the following aspects of the model and activities as the most important to preserve:

- case management,
- mentoring,
- medical and counseling referrals, and
- educational support including truancy

### *Factors that Emerged from Interviews with School Personnel*

The following factors emerged from the interviews with school personnel:

- CJP serves a high needs community with few resources  
One participant stated that there are always more people with needs than available services. Availability of programs to serve more children including older age groups was recommended.
- CJP staff are viewed as a strength of the project  
The school personnel interviewed all expressed their appreciation for the dedication of the CJP staff and their willingness to go to great lengths to ensure that a child is supported and a safety net is in place.
- CJP staff improves the ability for schools to connect and communicate with parents

The CJP staff breaks down barriers that prevent families from having a productive relationship with their child's teachers and help them build trust and positive connections with school personnel. This connection improves the school's ability to build a collaborative relationship with parents to support the child's education.

### **Outcome Data Analysis / Spring 2010**

The Lamoille Community Justice Program (CJP) preliminary outcome data suggests that the project supports positive outcomes for a large proportion of its children and youth. Using cross tabulation in the SPSS software program and tracking a cohort of 147 children and youth for the period 2002 – April 2010 indicates that only .10% (about a tenth of a percent of the population) has been adjudicated (see Table and Charts). By comparison, in 2008, according to statistics reported by Vermont to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, more than 2.3% of the comparable population became adjudicated statewide. Additional preliminary data suggest that the program also supports a reduction in the dropout rates for those children served by CJP. The program in Lamoille County costs approximately \$216,000 in total to administer (about \$143,000 in general fund dollars). The low rate of adjudication and reduction in dropout rates for these youth results in considerable projected savings for the State.

#### *Basis of Comparison*

Using the Lamoille County catchment area as a rough approximation of the total population base for the state, we can estimate the comparison for statewide statistics drawn from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) sources (OJJDP, 2008). Whereas the proportion for the entire state of adjudicated youth between the ages of 10 and 17 is about 2.3% (963/42000) for 2008; the proportion of adjudicated youth ages 10 and over who have been served by the LJCP in the Lamoille County catchment area is about .10% (6/5739). While percentages in these ranges are notoriously unstable, the ratios between the success rates (lack of adjudication) for the children and youth served by the CJP project and the rest of the state are significantly favorable for the CJP program.

Another way of looking at these data is to compare the Lamoille CJP population as an at-risk or high risk population with the state as a whole, and to understand the dropout rates related to adjudicated youth. In Vermont in 2008, between the ages of 10 and 17 there were approximately 42,000 children and youth. The state student population base is about 6,000 students per class. As each class moves through high school the graduation rate is about 80% statewide (meaning the dropout rate is about 20% or 1,200 students of a typical class in a given year). A Vermont Department of Corrections study of adjudicated youth in 2000 found that about 90% of adjudicated youth were dropouts. Thus, of the 963 adjudicated youth identified by the OJJDP in 2008 we would anticipate 867 of them to have been dropouts.

However, of the 147 children and youth served by CJP, which may be considered an at-risk or high risk population, preliminary data collected on a sample of ten youth in one high school area indicate that only one has dropped out of school (10%). Further, we might anticipate that of the 147 children and youth served by CJP, as a high or at-risk population, that adjudication rates and ensuing dropout rates would be much higher than preliminary data suggest.

## *Cost Savings Analysis*

What might this mean from a cost-saving point of view?

There are at least two indices of cost benefit that are worth considering for this at-risk population:

- Direct cost of incarceration or state maintenance of an individual child or youth, and
- Foregone income and contribution of the individual as a taxpayer, and tax burden (use of state resources) as the child moves through youth and adulthood.

### *Direct cost of incarceration*

The lowest of the State's estimates for the cost of incarceration is the out-of-state housing for convicted and sentenced persons, which according to 2009 Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) estimates is about \$23,728 per year. If the CJP cohort of children and youth (147) were to become adjudicated, say at a expected rate of 50% (74) and if only 20% of that number were incarcerated for at least two years, the cost to the state would be: 15 (youth) x \$23,728 x 2 (years) = \$711,840. Our court records, however, indicate that only 6 out of the 23 youth have been adjudicated (court docket). If all 6 of these individuals were convicted, sentenced and incarcerated for two years the total cost would be only \$284,736 or, \$427,104 less than we would have expected to pay as a State for just this one cohort of children and youth served by the CJP in Lamoille County.

### *Foregone income and contribution as a citizen*

There are many ways to estimate the cost of contact with the Criminal Justice System. Recently, the cost of dropping out of high school has become an index of such a cost, because children and youth who become adjudicated are almost always high school dropouts in Vermont (actual counts of this incidence by the DOC in 2000 found that over 90% of incarcerated youth were dropouts).

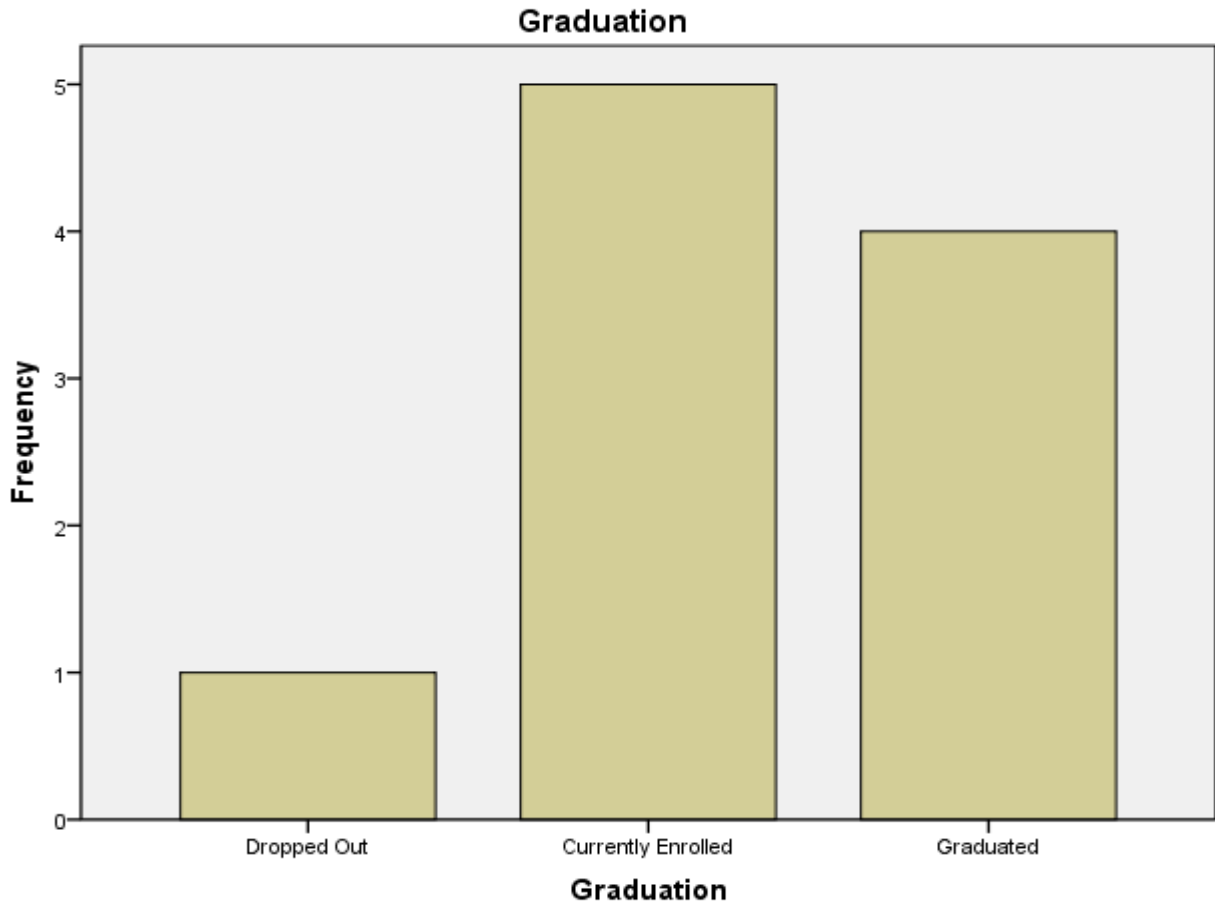
The lifetime estimates of lost income (cost of dropping out) are now estimated by one national study by Andrew Sum, et. al, (2009) at \$292,000.

*"The average high school dropout will cost taxpayers over \$292,000 in lower tax revenues, higher cash and in-kind transfer costs, and imposed incarceration costs relative to an average high school graduate." p. 4.*

Source: Sum, A., Khatiwada, I., McLaughlin, J., & Palmer, S. *The Consequences of Dropping Out of High School*. Center for Labor Market Studies Northeastern University Boston, Massachusetts October 2009.

Preliminary data from one high school in the CJP catchment area demonstrates that among 10 students who were enrolled as an age appropriate cohort from the project (16 years of age and higher), 9 out of the 10 have obtained favorable outcomes. Five students remain currently enrolled; four have graduated; and only one has dropped out. Therefore, the expected 20% dropout rate for a typical graduating class in Vermont has turned out to be about 10% for students who have received services through the CJP.

See below:



### *Summary of Cost Savings*

Again, using our base number of 147 at-risk or high risk children and youth for contact with the criminal justice system and subsequent adjudication and dropout rates as a basis for comparison, the difference between the lifetime loss in income for just these students (\$42,924,000.) and what we might expect with even 30% of our population of 147 as dropouts the savings would still be about \$12,848,000. (Note: the overall dropout rate for the Vermont population is about 20 percent, the estimate that 30 percent of the CJP population as an at-risk or high risk population that would be subject to dropout seems reasonable)



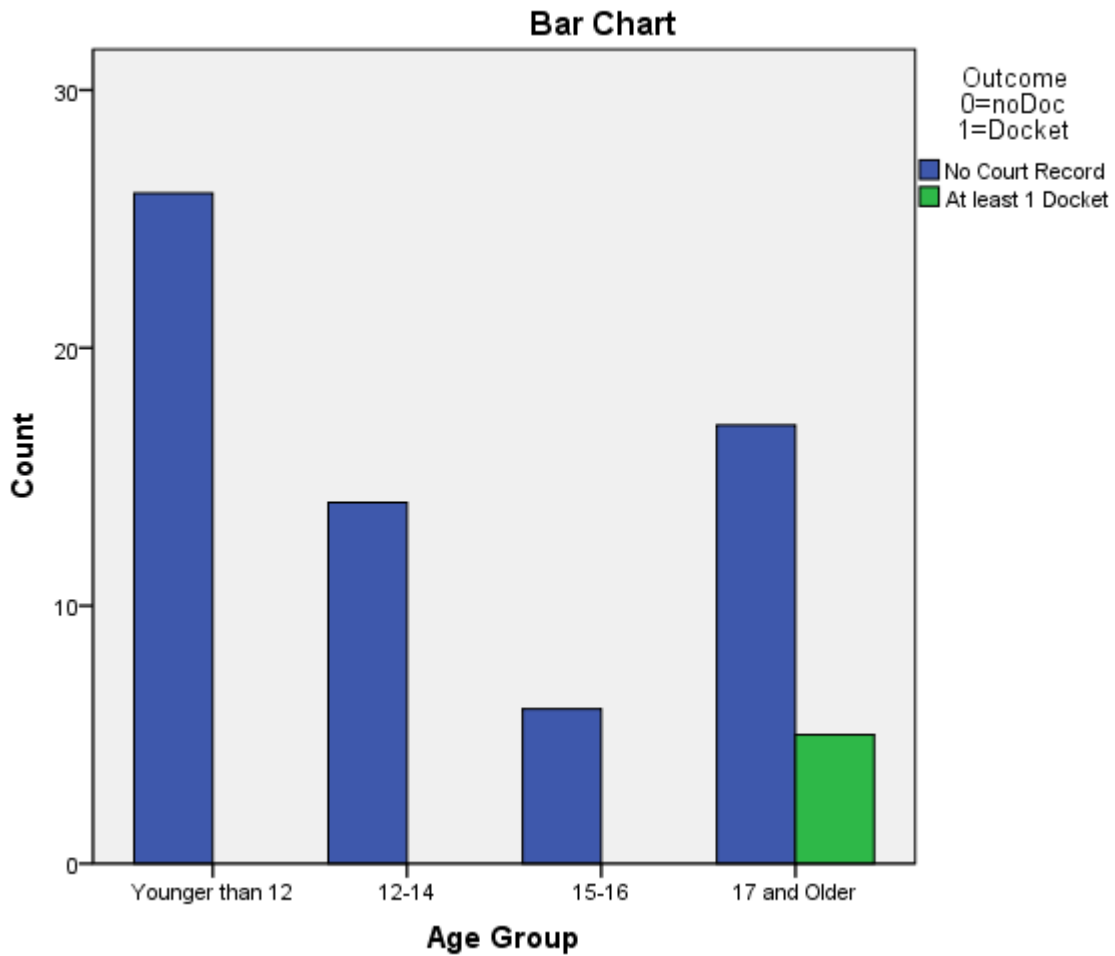
## CJP Tabulation of Court Records Spring 2010

**Age Group \* Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket Crosstabulation**

			Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket		Total
			No Court Record	At least 1 Docket	
Age Group	Younger than 12	Count	29	0	29
		% within Age Group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket	33.3%	.0%	31.2%
		% of Total	31.2%	.0%	31.2%
12-14		Count	27	0	27
		% within Age Group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket	31.0%	.0%	29.0%
		% of Total	29.0%	.0%	29.0%
15-16		Count	14	0	14
		% within Age Group	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
		% within Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket	16.1%	.0%	15.1%
		% of Total	15.1%	.0%	15.1%
17 and Older		Count	17	6	23
		% within Age Group	73.9%	26.1%	100.0%
		% within Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket	19.5%	100.0%	24.7%
		% of Total	18.3%	6.5%	24.7%
Total		Count	87	6	93
		% within Age Group	93.5%	6.5%	100.0%
		% within Outcome 0=noDoc 1=Docket	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	93.5%	6.5%	100.0%

Note: This is a subset of the total population of 147 children and youth. The only difference between the subset of 93 and the population of 147 is the absence of birthdates which are used in the tracking procedure.

**Docket Record of Youth in CJP Data Base  
By Age Group  
Spring 2010**



**Incidence Level of CJP Youth in Total Database Population**

Note: Total Population is 147 Children; 93 Children were grouped by birth date. Only 2 Children who had no birth date were listed as offenders.

**Outcome**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Court Record	87	93.5	93.5	93.5
At least 1 Docket	6	6.5	6.5	100.0

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## SUMMARY

When the interim report was issued by the research/evaluation team in February, 2010, it was received with interest by members of the Vermont Legislature, project leadership, and members of the Lamoille community. The uncommon finding that school dropouts were nearly non-existent among the cohort of students who were followed by the evaluation team indicated that the program had met with considerable success for target children. Review of the cases confirmed that the statistics recorded by the schools had considerable basis in the approach to interdisciplinary case management that has been employed by CJP over the past five of the program's eight year history.

In general, the results of this evaluation support the recommendation that CJP's design be adapted to new communities and to new projects that seek to link services for children of incarcerated and previously incarcerated parents with schools and social agencies that are attempting to enable the healthy development of families. Given CJP's interdisciplinary approach to case management and the practice of linking community resources to families through case workers, an important caveat to future program development is that there must be community services and supports available in order for this model to have maximum effect on the cost avoidance needed by communities and the State. A network of services and supports, which includes the school, would maximize the potential for positive results realized by the CJP to be replicated elsewhere.

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## APPENDIX A

### **List of Research Questions**

Lamoille Community Justice Project  
Interview Questions for Caseworkers  
Fall 2009

1. Please describe what you consider to be the goals of the project.
2. What successes do you believe highlight what the program is trying to accomplish?  
Please share some success stories.
3. What do you believe are the barriers to achieving success for you clients? Please share some stories with examples of these barriers.
4. In your mind, what changes in the program could help the families get better faster?
5. What additional resources, not part of the original design of the program, may increase the success of this program? You may want to think about the additional resources in the following categories:
  - Medical
  - Mental Health
  - Substance Abuse
  - Social Programs
  - Access (transportation)
  - Quality
  - Financial
6. Do you have any advice for us in interviewing parents, social service partners or school partners?
7. Are there particular questions we should be asking from your point of view?

## APPENDIX B

### **List of Research Questions**

Lamoille Community Justice Project  
Interview Questions for School Personnel  
Spring 2010

1. Please describe your understanding of the goals of the Lamoille Community Justice Project (CJP) project?
2. What do you believe are the strengths of the project?
3. What do you believe are the barriers faced by the project?
4. In your mind, what *changes in the project's design or service offerings* might better support the children and families served by CJP?
5. What *additional resources, programming or activities* do you think might improve the outcomes for the children enrolled in the CJP?
6. Please describe the current CJP programming or activities you would most like preserved?
7. What is working well in your relationship with CJP staff and partners?
8. What do you find challenging about your working relationship (s) with CJP staff and partners?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add?