

A RECLAIMING FUTURES
NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Moving Toward Equal Ground

ENGAGING THE CAPACITY OF YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE
TREATMENT SERVICES AND OUTCOMES IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

by

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RECLAIMING FUTURES

Communities helping teens
overcome drugs, alcohol and crime

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Moving Toward Equal Ground: Engaging the Capacity of Youth, Families, and Communities to Improve Treatment Services and Outcomes in the Juvenile Justice System

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Foreword

We cannot always build a future for our youth, but we can build the youth for our future. —FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

Reclaiming Futures is a new, comprehensive approach to helping youth caught in the cycle of drugs, alcohol, and crime. An initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Reclaiming Futures promotes new opportunities and standards of care in juvenile justice by bringing communities together to improve drug and alcohol treatment, expand and coordinate services, and find jobs and volunteer work for young people in trouble with the law.

Ten communities across the nation have been involved in developing and testing the Reclaiming Futures model. In each of these communities, families of youth in the system and community members who support them were part of the leadership team. These family and community members came together as Community Fellows to share experiences and learn from each other.

This publication is intended to share what we, the Community Fellows of Reclaiming Futures, have learned about the crucial role families and community members can play in improving the way we help teens in the juvenile justice system who are struggling with drug and alcohol use. Families and community members have the right to be involved in decisions affecting these adolescents. They provide positive social opportunities that keep teens away from drugs and alcohol. They also have the experience needed to help shape changes in the way youth are treated in the system.

This report makes the case for involving families and community members in the juvenile justice system. It then describes the Reclaiming Futures model, and how family and community

involvement is an essential part of each stage of the model. Several examples are given to show how this has been integrated in the 10 Reclaiming Futures sites.

If you are a parent or family member of a young person in the justice system, we hope this publication provides you with guidance and encouragement about your right to advocate for your teen and be involved in decisions affecting his or her future.

If you are a community member, we hope it inspires you to become a mentor or natural helper, to provide a job, or to create positive social opportunities for youth in the justice system who are working hard to overcome drugs and alcohol.

If you are a judge, we hope it reminds you of the importance of insisting that family and community members are involved in your courtroom and in the follow-up plans created to help young people make better choices in the future.

If you are a justice system or treatment professional, we hope it deepens your understanding of the commitment of families and communities and the crucial role they play in the treatment and follow-up plans for the youth under your care.

We recognize that every community has a unique set of challenges and relationships that will influence how families and communities interact with the services intended for youth. We respect those differences, and encourage readers to adapt these strategies to their unique situations. We also encourage you to contact any of us if you have questions or need encouragement as you work in your own communities

to encourage greater community engagement in the systems that serve youth and families.

In the past five years, we have learned much from each other. We also have learned from the youth and families we have had the privilege to know, who have shared with us their knowledge, their stories, and their passion. We can't thank them enough.

— THE COMMUNITY FELLOWS
OF RECLAIMING FUTURES

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SECTION ONE:

The Need for Change

YOUTH AREN'T GETTING THE HELP THEY NEED

In most communities across America today, youth who are brought into the juvenile justice system are not getting the help they need. This is especially true for those who are caught in the cycle of drugs, alcohol, and crime.

Law enforcement authorities make more than two million juvenile arrests each year, and many of these youth have drug or alcohol problems. Yet experts estimate the majority of young offenders with substance abuse problems do not have access to effective treatment programs.¹

What's more, the people who are most important to these adolescents and most invested in their lives—their families and members of their communities—are typically shut out of the system. Families often don't know how to advocate for drug and alcohol diversion and treatment programs for their teens. When they try, they encounter roadblocks along the way. Friends, neighbors, and volunteers who want to help often find it difficult to navigate bureaucracy, regulations, and resistance.

At the same time, many professionals involved in the courts, juvenile justice system, and treatment services want to involve families and communities but are unsure how to do it. They want to do what is best for the youth and recognize the importance of support from their families and others in their lives. But their systems are not organized in a way that ensures meaningful family and community engagement.

There is a better way. Reclaiming Futures is helping families learn to advocate for their youth, to help them get better drug and alcohol treatment and other services they need. The 10 communities who are piloting the Reclaiming Futures approach are also learning new ways to

connect youth with community members who serve as mentors, help them find jobs, keep them in school, and volunteer in their neighborhoods.

We can talk about doing interventions while the kids are at the front end of the system, where it's going to be relatively low cost and where we can get some treatment and services for these youth and families... Or we can wait until they go to our juvenile rehabilitation facilities and eventually into our adult facilities or into our adult mental health facilities. There's a cost to the community. Our kids are in trouble. We can either try to remedy it at the front end or remedy at the back end. We're still going to have to pay for it.

—HON. PATRICIA CLARK, Seattle, WA

FAMILIES FEEL SHUT OUT

When their children enter the juvenile justice system, most families don't know what to expect or where to turn. When the teen is using drugs and alcohol, the challenge is even greater. Most parents want to help their child break the cycle of drugs, alcohol, and crime. They want their son or daughter to get substance abuse treatment, and they want them to return to their family and community with hope for a rewarding and productive future.

Unfortunately, many people believe that “those parents don't care” or “that family is not capable.” These parents *do* care and want to be involved in decisions and treatment plans that affect their adolescent's future. However, unless shown the way and given the tools and supports they need, families will be less able to participate in the youth's care and to be involved in important decisions.

Here's what one parent who has struggled to help her son through the juvenile justice system has to say:

In most circumstances, parents are the most intricately involved people in their youth's life. Many parents have the desire, will, and hope to help their children achieve success. It is very frustrating that we are not valued and validated. It is not very empowering or encouraging when all you hear as a parent is, "What caused this?" "What are you doing about this?" Well, if we knew, don't you think that we would fix it?

Don't make us feel "blamed and ashamed," because we already feel that way. If the same system which is charged with helping youth and families empowered those same families by using the family's strengths, experience and expertise, more families would make progress and achieve greater success! That would improve everyone's success and decrease their stress level, and isn't that what we're after? We'd also have a group of parents far more willing to reach out to other parents, service providers, and agency personnel to help them be more successful. And *that* is meaningful family involvement.

Give parents back the power they need!!! Parents **MUST** be valued and validated! The mantra needs to be: Nothing about me, without me! We want to be a part of it all. We want to be included when decisions are made and strategies are discussed. We want to be part of the solution.

—MICHELLE DEMITCHELL, Marquette, MI

COMMUNITY MEMBERS WANT TO HELP

It is not just families that feel shut out. Most families have friends, neighbors, coaches, members of their church, and others who are willing to invest the time and energy to help these youth get back on track. The system must accommodate these natural helpers in a way that engages them consistently and effectively.

Others in the community may not know the youth or family, but still have time, resources, and opportunities to offer. These can include employers, youth groups, teachers, and volunteer organizations. The challenge is, they often aren't asked to help *these* youth, or they aren't provided the necessary support to make it possible. A bridge is needed between the organizational service system and the community.

Reaching Youth, One CEO at a Time

A retired CEO relocated to Southeastern Kentucky and opened a restaurant and rock-climbing business. He wanted to help young people in the community, but didn't know how. Then he learned about Reclaiming Futures from our Community Fellow there. He has since hired adolescents who were involved in the juvenile justice system to work in his restaurant. He also has agreed to offer college scholarships to several of them, and he is developing a wilderness program for at-risk youth that he intends to extend to other communities in the nation.

—PAM PILGRIM, Jackson, KY

Mentors Are Closer Than You Think

Call it coincidence. They call it fate. Leon trained to become a mentor for the 4C Coalition in Seattle, which helps young people make better life choices with the support of a caring adult. Shortly after he was trained, the 4C Coalition called and asked him to mentor Tyrone, a 16-year-old boy who had strayed into substance abuse and delinquency. Much to Leon's surprise, Tyrone was a boy he knew—the boy who literally lived next door.

Over the next few months, Leon, at age 71, took extraordinary steps to guide Tyrone to a healthier and more positive lifestyle. Leon taught him home repair and landscaping skills; he introduced Tyrone to his son and daughter, themselves successful adults. He even offered to let Tyrone stay at his house when times were rough. With Leon's support, Tyrone was able to graduate from the Daybreak Alcohol & Drug Treatment Center. He's back in school; after completing his education he wants to obtain a job that will help him be self-sufficient and continue his efforts to lead a positive and fulfilling life.

—HAZEL CAMERON, Seattle, WA

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- 1 For more information, see: Dennis ML, Dawud-Noursi S, Muck RD, and McDermeit M. 2002. "The need for developing and evaluating adolescent treatment models." In Stevens SJ and Morral AA (eds.) *Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment in the United States: Exemplary Models from a National Evaluation Study*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.

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SECTION TWO:

The Reclaiming Futures Model

MORE TREATMENT, BETTER TREATMENT, BEYOND TREATMENT

The Reclaiming Futures approach is simple enough:

1. Provide drug and alcohol treatment for young people in the juvenile justice system who need it.
2. Make certain the treatment they receive is the best, based on practices that are proven to work for adolescents and that involve the family.
3. Give young people and their families the community support they need to help the adolescent stay clean and sober and become a productive member of society.

But unfortunately, in most places, that's not the way it works. Systems are not set up to accommodate this approach. That's why Reclaiming Futures went further, developing a six-stage model that has been successful in breaking down many of the barriers to this approach in its 10 pilot communities. In these communities, families and community members are working with judges, justice, and treatment professionals to revamp how young people in the justice system receive the help they need.

The Reclaiming Futures model is much more than a new perspective on juvenile justice or drug treatment. It challenges the juvenile justice and treatment systems to open their doors to volunteers and community groups that are available to help reclaim young people and engage them in social opportunities and community support networks.

INVOLVING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE RECLAIMING FUTURES MODEL

The Reclaiming Futures model defines six steps in reforming the way adolescents with drug and alcohol problems move through the juvenile justice system. It is a system approach to treating youth in the justice system—that is, it lays out what justice and treatment professionals must do to improve services for substance-abusing adolescents.

The Community Fellows, made up of family members, service providers, and community volunteers in the 10 Reclaiming Futures pilot sites, support this approach. At the same time, we strongly believe that our communities need to change the juvenile justice system from an agency-driven model to a family-driven model. The Community Fellows have developed a set of guiding principles that parallel the six system steps. These principles are intended to ensure that as justice and treatment professionals work to reform the system, they include families and community members every step of the way.

Community is all about finding ways to exist in harmony—in common unity—with people, places, and things all around us. It's striking a balance between self-interest and commitment to the greater good while living within the moral and legal codes of society. Reclaiming Futures has given us pause to reflect on what we want our society to be, through the lens of youth and families caught up in crime and addiction. It offers us the choice to accept the way things are or to reclaim the future of our youth, their families, and our society.

—ALAN ROBICHAUD, Laconia, NH

Reclaiming Futures Model

Youth referred to the juvenile justice system for law violations



Youth eligible for treatment or supervision in the community



COORDINATED INDIVIDUALIZED RESPONSE

1 Initial Screening

If possible substance abuse is indicated, refer for Initial Assessment.

As soon as possible after being referred to the juvenile justice system, youth should be screened for possible substance abuse problems using a reputable screening tool.

.....

2 Initial Assessment

If substance abuse is indicated, refer for Service Coordination.

Youth with possible substance abuse problems should be assessed using a reputable tool to measure their use of alcohol and other drugs (AOD), individual and family risks, needs, and strengths. The primary purpose of an initial assessment is to measure the severity of AOD problems. A second purpose is to shape an informed service plan.

.....

3 Service Coordination

Intervention plans should be designed and coordinated by community teams that are family driven, span agency boundaries, and draw upon community-based resources. Intervention should include whatever mix of services is appropriate for each youth, perhaps including AOD treatment, educational and preventive services, involvement in pro-social activities, and the assistance of natural helpers known to the youth and his or her family.

4 Initiation

Service initiation is a critical moment in intervention. Consistent with the treatment standards of the Washington Circle Group (www.washingtoncircle.org), initiation is defined as at least one service contact within 14 days of a full assessment. Initiation can be measured for the entire intervention plan or for each component of the plan. Service initiation should be monitored whether or not the intervention plan includes formal AOD treatment.

5 Engagement

Youth and families must be effectively engaged in services. Engagement is defined as three successful service contacts within 30 days of a youths full assessment. Engagement can be measured for each service component or for all elements of the service plan taken as a whole. Engagement should be monitored whether or not the intervention plan includes formal AOD treatment.

6 Completion

Community coordination teams should specify how much of each service plan must be completed in order for the plan as a whole to be considered complete. As appropriate, completion of the service plan should involve the gradual withdrawal of agency-based services and the engagement of youth and families in community resources and natural helping relationships.

COMMUNITY-DIRECTED ENGAGEMENT

Process Measures

Of all youth identified with AOD problems at screening, how many get full assessments?

Of all youth identified with AOD problems at assessment, how many agree to complete an appropriate service plan?

Of all youth who agree to complete an appropriate service plan, how many initiate services as designed?

Of all youth who initiate a service plan, how many become fully engaged in services?

Of all youth engaged in services, how many complete the service plan as designed?

Outcome Measures

Of all youth identified with AOD problems at screening who do NOT get full assessments, how many are successful for at least one year?*

Of all youth who agree to a service plan but FAIL to initiate services as designed, how many are successful for at least one year?

Of all youth who initiate a service plan but FAIL to become fully engaged, how many are successful for at least one year?

Of all youth engaged in services who FAIL to complete the service plan, how many are successful for at least one year?

* Success may be defined in various ways, including the absence of new arrests or new court referrals, no new drug use, reduced drug use, no subsequent referrals for drug or alcohol treatment, or some combination of these measures.

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SECTION THREE:

Families and Community

Guiding Principles of the Reclaiming Futures Model

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT—

Stages 1 and 2, Initial Screening and Initial Assessment

- Families must be involved throughout the assessment process.
- Assessment instruments must be designed so that families can understand them.
- The assessment process must be streamlined to eliminate duplication for families (who get tired of answering the same question multiple times).
- Community members designated by the family also must be brought into the assessment process. The key question to ask is: Who is important to the young person? The key action then is: Make sure they are actively involved.
- The assessment must identify the circumstances, assets, needs, and interests of the youth and his or her family. This assessment drives the plan and supervision to be provided.
- The assessment process must be continuous and ongoing; assessments must be regularly updated and revised to reflect the young person's progress and any changes in circumstance. Also, remember that the initial assessment often does not extract the best information.
- Assessment information must be shared with those who need it.
- People who need the information often don't receive it. We understand the need for confidentiality, but believe it is too often applied to nonconfidential information that would be helpful to family and community members who are trying to help the youth. Also, if the family and youth wish to have information shared with others who can help, they have the right to do so, providing they sign a waiver.

DEVELOPING THE CARE PLAN—

Stage 3, Service Coordination

- Families must be included in developing the care plan; it must be a family-driven process.
- The care plan must be centered on the needs and strengths of the youth, not the needs of the system.
- All young people who need it must have access to quality drug and alcohol treatment as part of their care plan. Lack of services is not an acceptable excuse if we expect our youth and their families to seek help.
- The family and youth must be made aware of their right to bring an advocate of their own choosing to the planning process. The right to bring an advocate must be communicated to the family.
- The family and youth must be allowed to bring natural helpers and others from the community into the planning process, if they so choose.

HELPING YOUTH GET STARTED—

Stage 4, Initiation

- To ensure success, everyone needs to make sure the youth gets started with treatment and other services outlined in the plan.
- For the youth, that means making it to that first appointment, no matter how intimidating (or pointless) it may seem.
- For families and natural helpers, that could mean anything from coaching the youth beforehand to making sure he or she has transportation to the first appointment.
- If a youth doesn't attend the first appointment, professionals cannot walk away. They must reach out to the youth and family, find out why service was not initiated, and help them overcome the barriers that prevented it from happening.

KEEPING YOUTH ON TRACK—**Stage 5, Engagement**

- Youth, family members, and professionals must make a commitment to follow through on the care plan.
- At least one natural helper—someone outside the immediate family who is important to the youth—must be a part of every youth’s care plan. This can include a relative, coach, neighbor, teacher, friend’s parent, or other important adult who will encourage the youth to stay with treatment and attend community programs that are part of the care plan.
- Natural helpers, in order of impact on the young person’s life, can include:
 - A role model who is a key part of the young person’s life and has agreed to take an active role in helping them
 - A mentor who volunteers to help (often a stranger)
 - People that the adolescent interacts with in the community, although in a less structured way.
- As part of their care plan, each adolescent must have at least one significant prosocial opportunity—essentially, a community-based activity that will keep them engaged in positive development. This can include school, employment, recreational, social, and volunteer activities. These pro-social opportunities must reflect the youth’s interests and be meaningful, skill-building, and developmentally appropriate.
 - A breadth of opportunities must be available to address the needs and circumstances of a variety of youth, and individualized whenever possible.
 - Engagement in these activities must be frequent and consistent.
- The pro-social opportunity must be youth-centered and family-focused, providing opportunities to bring families together where possible.
- It is also important to give youth the opportunity to take accountability for their actions and give back to their community.
- Natural helpers must be engaged to help the youth be successful in pro-social opportunities. Natural helpers also can report back on how the youth is succeeding in these areas.

MAINTAINING SUCCESS—**Stage 6, Completion**

- Natural helping relationships should be facilitated and encouraged to remain in place over the long term.
- Pro-social opportunities should be meaningful and contribute to the youth’s long-term success.
- Pro-social opportunities must be considered part of a continuum, where the youth finds progressively stronger opportunities to succeed in the community. The continuum is: exposure > community service > skill development.
 - EXAMPLE: A bowling event leads to a volunteer connection, which leads to an internship opportunity.
 - The pro-social opportunity should help the youth gain independence and mastery.
- The opportunity should integrate selected youth with other adolescents who are not in the justice system.
- The justice system, working in concert with families and community, must reach out to parts of the community that don’t typically interact with court-involved youth and get them to engage in helping these youth be successful.

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SECTION FOUR:

Making It Happen

MAKING TREATMENT AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

In too many communities, there simply are not enough drug and alcohol treatment programs available for the youth who need them. This is unacceptable. Communities need to band together to insist on more and better drug and alcohol treatment for youth in need, particularly those in the juvenile justice system.

In addition to making treatment available for youth, we need to make sure it is accessible to them and their families. Transportation, cultural differences, and financial restraints are barriers for many families who want to get their kids to treatment and other services but are unable to do so. Facilities need to be sited in the communities where they are most needed.

PROVIDING TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To move from a system-driven to a family-driven model, training and technical assistance is critical. Training must be provided for families and community members so they learn how to advocate for youth, and to make sure the services they provide are integrated into the system.

Even more critical is training for professionals in the system, many of whom have learned to put the system before families. Many training opportunities are available² that teach best practices in

- Asset-based community development
- Strength-based practices in working with youth and families
- Motivational interviewing
- Family engagement
- Family leadership development
- Building community partnerships
- Cultural competency
- Creating a customer-service approach.

In Montgomery County, we designed a strategy to help ensure that the organizational culture within the court was open, receptive, respectful, and affirming for meaningful family and community engagement. Creating a customer-service-oriented, strength-based culture within the juvenile court system and beyond was key to our system change efforts. This happened informally and formally. Formally, we provided orientation about Reclaiming Futures and training in best practice models such as strengths-based case management. This training included family and community members along with cross-system professionals.

It was important that everyone who came in contact with a youth and his or her family—from the arresting officer on the street, to the prosecutor on the case, to the treatment counselor in the office, to the maintenance worker in the hall, and ultimately to the judge on the bench—had a common understanding about Reclaiming Futures and its strengths-based approach.

—CHARLOTTE McGUIRE, Montgomery County, OH

Everyone involved with a young person in the justice system needs to work hard to find common ground with people from different backgrounds. Some of the most common differences that require training and awareness include:

- Culture
- Language
- Race
- Socioeconomic differences
- Gender.

4

It is as critical for judges, juvenile justice professionals, clinicians, and other therapists to be cued into community assets as it is for youth to be connected to them. Why go mining for gold if you won't recognize it when you see it? Where do I dig? What tools do I need? When is it appropriate to pan versus blast my way through obstructions? How is it that we would expect system authorities to know the value of community connections for youth if they themselves aren't participants in it? We all need ongoing exposure to the resources that exist all around us everyday.

—JAIME MOLINA, Santa Cruz County, CA

DEVELOPING MEANINGFUL, POSITIVE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Creating jobs and other positive social opportunities for youth in the juvenile justice system can seem to be a daunting task. However, Reclaiming Futures communities have developed innovative, sustainable ways to engage the community in helping their youth.

The Community Fellows developed a process for connecting youth with pro-social opportunities.

- Identify the youth's interests and include them in the care plan.
- Conduct community mapping to identify partners and programs that provide pro-social opportunities. (See communityyouthmapping.org for more information.)
- Create partnerships with a group of community youth programs, faith communities, and businesses that agree to include adolescents in their programs and will work with case managers to connect them to these programs. This may include, on an ongoing basis:
 - Outreach
 - Follow-up
 - Convening
 - Planning and organizing.
- Train case managers to work with families and natural helpers to match the youth's interests with available programs, services, assets, and resources.

- Enlist community volunteers to serve as natural helpers who will follow the youth, the community program, and the case manager to help ensure success.

Reaching Out to the Faith Community

Enlisting members of the faith community is key to our success and to the sustainability of Reclaiming Futures in Montgomery County.

To approach the faith community in a respectful manner, we first went to the pastors. The pastors then allowed us to speak to their congregations. We have a faith-based initiative champion, Pastor Arthur McGuire, who is invaluable because he can talk the pastors' talk, walk the pastors' walk, and feel the pastors' heart. He is being assisted by Pastors Scott Davidson and Samuel Winston Jr.

Our judges convened town hall meetings around the county, inviting faith, business, and community leaders to hear about the critical need for natural helpers to work with youth in the justice system.

One of the recent presentations by the judges netted 75 volunteers from a local church. At my church, Pastor Samuel Winston Jr. held a "Reclaiming Futures Day," gearing the morning message and appeal toward Reclaiming Futures.

The momentum is awesome; it will sustain us. Programs come and go, but people who exercise their faith are committed to this mission because we believe reclaiming our youth is a mandate from God.³

—ROMA STEPHENS, Montgomery County, OH

BUILDING COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

Building community awareness and support is critical in helping youth overcome drugs, alcohol, and crime. A community that supports all youth is more likely to invest in programs and create pro-social opportunities for those who need it most. The public often doesn't understand the challenges faced by youth in the justice system and their families.

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Many of the communications programs underway in the 10 Reclaiming Futures pilot sites have created communication programs that build community support by sharing stories of young people’s struggle and success.

When people hear or read stories about a young person who confronted his or her problems and worked hard to overcome them, they begin to see that youth as a person rather than a statistic. Stories of successful adults who struggled can also create empathy and understanding among the public. (For an example, see the description of Multnomah County’s “When You Were 15” campaign in Section 5.)

A parallel strategy is to provide adults in the community with an opportunity to interact with justice-involved youth. Mentors and natural helpers don’t just happen—they often are born from simple interactions with youth. (For an example, see the description of Montgomery County’s Natural Helper program in Section 5.)

2 For more information, see: Asset-Based Community Development Institute at www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html, Search Institute at www.search-institute.org, and Family Support America at www.familysupportamerica.org.

3 Whereas Dayton’s initial outreach was to Christian churches in their community, a similar approach has been used successfully with a variety of faith-based groups in other communities.

SECTION FIVE:

Successful Programs

SOUTHEASTERN KENTUCKY—

Civic groups changing young lives

Before Reclaiming Futures, civic and service organizations were not engaged at all in helping young people, other than an occasional donation for a project. Since our community has been involved in Reclaiming Futures, the Women's Club is mentoring at-risk middle school girls. They have changed the rules for their scholarship pageant, allowing a girl in the juvenile justice system to compete for the first time (she finished runner-up). The members of the club are following through with involvement in this young girl's life.

The Women's Club also sponsors a Secret Pal program, which partners one of their members with a young girl who is at-risk and involved in juvenile justice. They mentor, go on outings, and purchase gifts for these young girls.

The Kiwanis Club is sponsoring and participating in Father-Kids night. This is a program that brings at-risk youth in the juvenile justice system together with their fathers to do positive things. The Masonic Lodge is hosting a Hooked on Fishing program for boys who are at risk and/or involved in juvenile justice.

—PAM PILGRIM, Jackson, KY

LACONIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE—

Youth connecting other youth

In Laconia, New Hampshire, young people involved with Reclaiming Futures helped identify services that are available to other youth through a project called Community Youth Mapping. A community liaison, working with the local drug court in Laconia, partnered with the Youth Center of the Lakes Region and the Community Response Coalition (CoRe) to

coordinate this process. The young people received training and a stipend for their time to gather information on resources in Belknap County. Utilizing a structured interview and survey tool, they inventoried what the area has to offer young people. The project employed two young people from the Laconia drug court. The adolescent conducting the mapping also had opportunities to participate in weekly field trips with the youth center.

—ALAN ROBICHAUD, Laconia, NH

PORTLAND, OREGON—

Remember "When You Were 15"?

In 2006, Multnomah County's Reclaiming Futures project designed a unique program to increase community understanding of the challenges faced by teens in the justice system who are struggling with alcohol and drugs, and to encourage adults to become a positive influence in their lives. In partnership with local mentoring agencies, Multnomah County created and launched the "When You Were 15" campaign to encourage local celebrities and everyday citizens to write stories about themselves at 15 and the adults who made a difference in their lives. The county then designed an outreach campaign, using these everyday stories to remind people that kids are kids—and everyone could use a little help along the way. As a result of the campaign, Reclaiming Futures teens are being connected with adults in mentoring relationships, and the "When You Were 15" campaign is being adopted by other communities. Visit www.whenyouwere15.org for more information.

—KYM CARMICHAEL, Multnomah County, OR

LAKOTA RESERVATION, SOUTH DAKOTA— Helping youth find their place

On the Lakota Indian Reservation in Rosebud, South Dakota, the community has established a new youth center where teens on the reservation can have positive social interactions with other teens and adult role models. In a community with virtually no other social outlets for adolescents, this project is helping those in the justice system steer away from alcohol and other drugs. The Lakota tribe also is involving tribal elders as role models for adolescents, showing them how the traditions of the past can keep them focused on the right path.

—TRAVIS EAGLE BEAR, Rosebud, SD

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA— Coalition connects youth with the community

The Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC) is a group of more than 50 youth serving organizations and interested individuals (youth and adults) that are committed to ensuring that all Anchorage young people thrive. AYDC works to increase protective factors and reduce substance abuse and other risk factors through the Search Institute's Developmental Assets Framework and other research-based prevention strategies. The work of the coalition is conducted through workgroups and collaborative projects.

From the beginning, AYDC was part of the planning for Reclaiming Futures. Today, through a nearly seamless partnership, AYDC has become the direct link for connecting Reclaiming Futures youth with mentors and opportunities for community involvement. AYDC also works to help the community better understand how well the vast majority of young people in Anchorage are thriving and contributing, and to recruit more opportunities for youth in community service, mentoring, and engagement.

In 2006, Anchorage was named by America's Promise as one of the top 100 cities in the United States for youth, with AYDC named as one of the key reasons for the honor.

—MICHAEL KEROSKY, Anchorage, AK

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA— Family-driven Wraparound Program

The Santa Cruz County site has integrated the Wraparound Program that is provided through a collaborative effort from Youth's Mental Health, Juvenile Probation, Human Resources Agency, and the Family Partnership Program. Wraparound is a family-driven approach that acknowledges the family as the experts in what is going on in their family. It encourages the adolescent and their family to take the lead in developing an action plan for their adolescent. The Wraparound model uses the support of extended family, local community, and professionals. The family is the most important part of the team. They are not only given the opportunity to voice their opinions, but they drive the decision because it will affect them. The Wraparound Program continues to help maintain young people who are at imminent risk for out-of-home placement, both at home and in their communities.

—JAIME MOLINA, Santa Cruz County, CA

DAYTON, OHIO— Connecting youth with adults who care

Montgomery County has established a highly successful training program for natural helpers—those people who can make a difference in a young person's life through day-to-day interactions. Although agency-delivered treatment remains a critical part of the services young people receive, Montgomery County has placed an increasing reliance on the role that mentors, the faith community, and neighbors can play in assisting youth and their families.

Daryl Williams, a mentor in the program, describes his experience this way: "I saw a young man that was, at the time, part of the system. But he wanted to change. And he was on his way. He just needed a little guidance and some assistance, so we were there just to try and show him some of the positive things that he was doing. And that kind of helped instill some trust, and he opened up with us. And after that, he was like part of the family."

—ROMA STEPHENS, Montgomery County, OH

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—**Bringing drug and alcohol treatment to youth**

Lawndale is a gang-involved community in South Chicago, surrounded by neighborhoods with rival gangs. In the past, Lawndale youth who were on probation had to risk their lives to travel outside their community, into rival gang territory, to receive drug and alcohol treatment. As a result, many refused to follow through on the terms of their probation and were thrown back into the justice system.

With the help of Reclaiming Futures, Cook County was able to establish a drug and alcohol treatment facility in the Lawndale neighborhood. Today, Lawndale youth can get the help they need in a safe environment. As a result, more youth are following through on their treatment plans.

—ZERRICK KEYES, Cook County, IL

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON—**The 4Cs**

Seattle's Clergy, Community, Children-Youth Coalition (the 4C Coalition) has been a core partner in the Seattle-King County Reclaiming Futures Project. The mission of the 4C Coalition is to build healthy communities and provide mentors to youth, community resources to the families, and a united voice to the community and government agencies to educate and effectively address youth and family issues.

The 4C Coalition, a 501(c)(3) faith-based organization created in 1999, is based in a diverse, densely populated suburban community south of Seattle. The 4C mentors work with youth involved in King County Superior Court, Juvenile Drug Court, and Treatment Court. The obstacles for youth involved with the justice system are great. When compounded by substance abuse, mental health, and poverty, the challenges can be overwhelming. The youth we mentor are 13 to 17 years old, face multiple challenges, and are greatly benefiting from the additional support of trained mentors. Mentors are recruited, screened, and trained; they make a one-year commitment. In concert with a coordinated package of evidence-based treatment, a trained mentor can provide the additional

support a youth and his or her family need to successfully complete treatment and replace crime and drug-related activities with pro-social activities.

More than 150 mentors have been trained since Reclaiming Futures was initiated. More than 60 mentors have been matched with young people. Because of the success of mentoring this population, King County Superior Court wrote the 4C Coalition into its annual budget. The 4C was also recognized by the White House Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives in Seattle, January 2007, and received the President's Volunteer Service Award. The 4C also received the Washington State Mentoring Partnership and Bank of America Mentoring Initiative. The success of the 4C in implementing best practices in mentoring has gained recognition since becoming a community partner with King County Reclaiming Futures.

—HAZEL CAMERON, King County, WA

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SECTION SIX:

In Closing

I'm in a state of shock and horror at the level of crisis my family is living in. I feel completely helpless. I've worked so hard over the last 18 years to prevent just these sorts of things from happening. I am getting an extreme amount of pressure from service providers to refer [my son] to juvenile court, but I refuse. My biggest fear is that there will come a time when I won't have a say. I cannot believe that they would pay to incarcerate him, but not pay for any treatment needs. It doesn't make any sense!

Even though there are days when I just want to give up, I won't because I know that if I do, there is absolutely no hope for [my children]. I wish I knew how to make a difference! I would like to find a way to tell my story and be able to make an impact on those who are in positions of power and who ultimately make these kinds of situations harder on families.

I say to them, come live a day in my shoes—or an hour, for that matter—and then talk to me about it. I'm tired of all the judgments, opinions, and remarks that people think they have a right to verbalize, when in fact, they have absolutely no idea what they are talking about.

—MICHELLE DeMITCHELL, Marquette, MI

To believe that systems alone can reclaim a young person's future, without the presence, participation, and partnership of families and communities, is to assume that families and communities can treat the abuse of substances and prevent behaviors that lead to court involvement without the benefit of supportive services. It is not possible. The sum of the parts creates and strengthens the whole. Each piece is critical to the success of reclaiming our youth.

When youth offend—drawing them and their families into the world of service systems—they become disempowered, stigmatized, and devalued. The processes involved with Reclaiming Futures give power, strength, and value back to them. It is through a family-driven model that systems will conform to the needs of individual youth. Public safety and justice notwithstanding, we must restore our youth to healthy, productive, and competent lifestyles. Reclaiming Futures must be performed in the context of a much greater community and its norms. To change the behaviors of our youth, we must redefine the value of families and community, creating an equal partnership with service systems. When one leg of the stool is weakened, the stool topples. Our youth are much more precious than that, and they deserve our attention and investment. Otherwise, this experiment would have been called Recycling Futures. That was then. This is now.

—ALAN ROBICHAUD, Laconia, NH

STORIES OF SUCCESSFUL YOUTH

When I first got into the court system I hated everything about it. Now that I'm older and better, I appreciate everyone for helping me and being able to let them in my life. I joined Project Weave with a thumbs up from the judge. I got attached and knew that this program was teaching me more than anything how to bring myself somewhere in life and become someone to help others choose to have a substance-free lifestyle.

—AMBER, Reclaiming Futures youth,
Marquette, MI

They sent me to treatment. Helped me to get hooked up with people that are going to help me to change my life, help me get into a house that is structured, help me find a job and stay in school. They hooked me up with good people that are going to help me instead of just going to jail where I'm going to get in more trouble.

—OLIVIA, Reclaiming Futures youth,
Seattle, WA

My success story is about Darryl, the young man I brought to Baltimore to participate in a Reclaiming Futures youth leadership caucus. When we got home from Baltimore, he was motivated to finish his probation and drug treatment successfully. He continued to work and go to school. Then suddenly, his behavior changed and he was fired from work, he stopped going to school, and he started drinking heavy. His team—Darryl, myself, his mother, and his former probation officer—went to work. Darryl enrolled in Job Corps and completed his GED. Soon, he will be completing his trade studies in electrical work. Darryl plans on moving to Indianapolis and finding a good job there once he finishes.

—RECLAIMING FUTURES STAFF MEMBER,
Chicago, IL

For 17-year-old Skyler of Santa Cruz County, success wasn't a second chance—it was his tenth chance. After many encounters with law enforcement, Skyler was finally placed in a group home for substance-use related arrests. Now, he is happy to report that he has been released from a group home with many positive prospects on the horizon. "The judges gave me ten chances, I swear," Skyler said. "Drug court really set my mind straight, and my parents never gave up on me. At some point all the different support systems came together for me." Skyler has become a peer educator, public speaker, and youth leader. He is affiliated with REAL (Reforming Education Advocating Leadership), a youth leadership group affiliated with the Community Restoration Project (CRP), a nonprofit organization. Skyler found his mentor through CRP and continues along a successful path, with plans for a formal education. His advice to young people in trouble: "Remember, there is always a tomorrow."

—RECLAIMING FUTURES STAFF MEMBER,
Santa Cruz, CA

Right now, I feel pretty good about my life, you know. I'd like to stay on track, finish out this school year, you know, and go to college. And hopefully graduate and get a good job.

—ANDREW, Reclaiming Futures youth, KY

When I was 15, I started doing meth. By the time I was 16, I was using meth every day... It was normal for me to disappear for long periods of time... My use got heavier than ever before. I was becoming a zombie. This time I could no longer close my eyes to what was going on around me. I called my caseworker and told her I was ready... It has taken me a long time to get over some of the things that have happened to me... As I look back over my journey, which is not over, I think about all the youth in treatment who aren't as lucky.

—TIFFINEY, Reclaiming Futures youth,
Portland, OR

I feel as though I have a lot of support from friends, my family, and other people in my community that will reinforce the things I have learned in drug court.

I'm a very open person, and I am quite close with all of my teachers. I talk to them about why my attitude has improved so much this year and about how I am no longer using drugs. I even became involved in a drug prevention group, which consists of police officers and faculty from my school concerned about drugs in the community.

—ANONYMOUS, Reclaiming Futures youth, NH

When I was 10 years old my Mom died. And then a few months after that, when I was 11, I had to stay with my grandparents for a year. And that's about when I started using drugs. The next year, by the time I was 12, I was into harder drugs: poppin' pills and stuff. I turned into an alcoholic. By the time I was 14, I was into crack cocaine and I wanted to get off of it and I didn't really know how to do it. So one day I decided to stop that. And after getting busted I got into the drug court program and I started counseling and since then I've been getting clean.

—JESSE, Reclaiming Futures youth, Dayton, OH

In addition to maintaining sobriety for over a year, Mark, a recent graduate of drug court in New Hampshire, is now mentoring youth entering drug court, providing them support as they begin their own path to recovery. He has maintained a job as a counselor at a local Boys & Girls Club and has become actively involved with two other local nonprofit organizations. Mark serves on a youth advisory committee for the Concord Substance Abuse Coalition (CSAC) and on a committee for the Concord Area Trust for Community Housing (CATCH). His mom, the judge, and the treatment team marvel at the progress Mark has made after several years of drug use.

—RECLAIMING FUTURES STAFF MEMBER,
NH

A girl entering our program confided that she had no source of support other than her grandmother, staff from Volunteers of America (VOA), and Reclaiming Futures. After talking with her about her life, we enlisted the support of her hairdresser, who she sees at least every two or three weeks. Together, her grandmother, hairdresser, VOA, and Reclaiming Futures worked with her to help her find a part-time job, catch up on her school work, maintain her probation, and complete her outpatient program. She is maintaining sobriety and exploring options at the University of Alaska. The wrap-around services and increased coordination helped her succeed.

—RECLAIMING FUTURES STAFF MEMBER,
Anchorage, AK

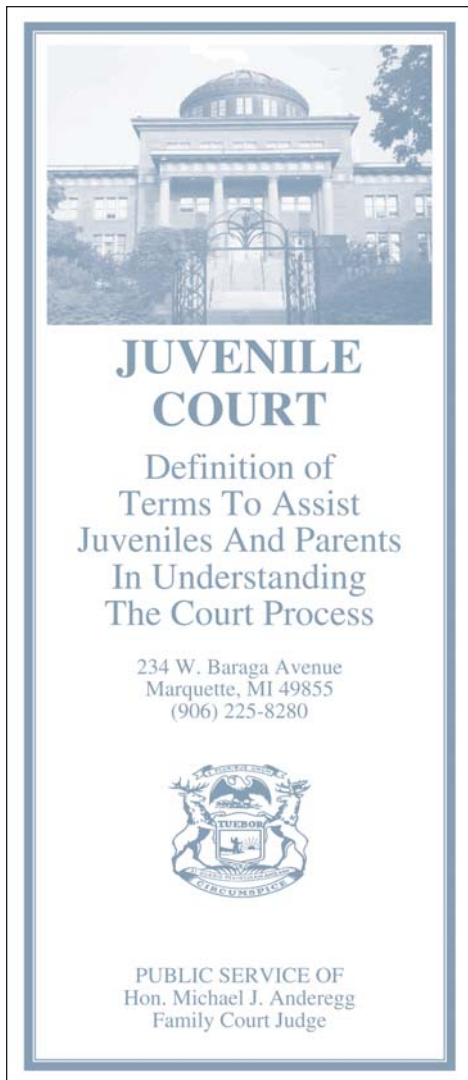
Appendix A

Strength-Based Bill of Rights for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

1. I have the right to be viewed as a person capable of changing, growing, and becoming positively connected to my community—no matter what types of delinquent behavior I have committed.
2. I have the right to participate in the selection of services that build on my strengths.
3. I have the right to contribute things I am good at and other strengths I have in all assessment and diagnostic processes.
4. I have the right to have my resistance viewed as a message that the wrong approach may be being used with me.
5. I have the right to learn from my mistakes and to have the support to learn that mistakes don't mean failure. I have the right to view past maladaptive or antisocial behaviors as a lack of skills that I can acquire to change my life for the better.
6. I have the right to experience success and to have the support to connect previous successes to future goals.
7. I have the right to have my culture included as a strength, and to services that honor and respect my cultural beliefs.
8. I have the right to have my gender issues recognized as a source of strength in my identity.
9. I have the right to be assured that all written and oral, formal and informal communications about me include my strengths as well as my needs.
10. I have the right to surpass any treatment goals that were set too low for me, or to have treatment goals that are different than those generally applied to youth in the juvenile justice system.
11. I have the right to be served by professionals who view youth positively, and who understand that motivating me is related to accessing my strengths successfully.
12. I have the right to have my family involved in my experience in the juvenile justice system in a way that acknowledges and supports our strengths as well as our needs. I have the right to stay connected to my family, no matter what types of challenges we face.
13. I have the right to be viewed and treated as more than a statistic, stereotype, risk score, diagnosis, label, or pathology unit.
14. I have the right to a future free of institutional or systems involvement, and to services that most centrally and positively focus on my successful transition from those institutions.
15. I have the right to service providers who coordinate their efforts and who share a united philosophy that the key to my success is through my strengths.
16. I have the right to exercise my developmental tasks as an adolescent—to try out new identities, to learn to be accountable, and to say I'm sorry for the harm I've caused others—all of which is made even more difficult if I'm labeled a "bad kid."
17. I have the right to be viewed and treated as a redeemable resource, a potential leader, and a success of the future.

—Developed by Laura Burney Nissen,
RECLAIMING FUTURES NATIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Appendix B



Juvenile Court: Definition of Terms to Assist Juveniles and Parents in Understanding the Court Process

DISCLAIMER

The information included in this brochure is a brief description of terms that may be heard during involvement with the juvenile court. It is meant solely to assist juveniles and their parents in understanding some of the language. It is in no way meant to give parties the exact legal definition of the law.

JUVENILE COURT TERMS

abstract: A document sent to the secretary of state notifying them of an adjudicated offense, which could impact a person's permanent driving record. An abstract may be issued even if the juvenile does not yet have a driver's license.

adjudicate: The process of having a legal matter settled by court proceedings.

adjudicatory hearing (trial): A hearing to determine whether the juvenile committed the offense charged in the petition.

authorized petition: When a judge or referee authorizes a petition in a court hearing, it does not mean that you have been found responsible for the charge. It just means that the court finds that there is enough information to proceed with the case.

burden of proof: The duty of the prosecuting attorney is to prove an allegation (charge) in court. The burden of proof in delinquency cases is proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

consent calendar: A term used for cases which are handled informally. A juvenile cannot be removed from home if his or her case is on the consent calendar.

co-respondent: Any other person who may be charged as a result of the same incident.

decision to prosecute: The prosecutor determines whether a particular person should be charged with a crime by reviewing the petition provided by the police. The petition is then submitted to the Juvenile Division.

dispositional hearing (sentencing): A final hearing to determine what action the court should take when a juvenile has been found responsible for an offense. Dispositional orders directed to a juvenile and his or her family are issued after the dispositional hearing.

diversion: The juvenile court may refer a juvenile to the Diversion Program as an alternative to formally authorizing the petition. The Diversion Program provides supervision of the juvenile, community service, restitution, and other services.

emancipation: A juvenile who is at least 16 years of age may ask the probate court to be released from the supervision and control of his or her parents. To be emancipated, the juvenile must show that he or she can support himself or herself and can use mature judgment.

expungement: To destroy a record of a juvenile offense(s):

- **status offenses:** These offenses will be taken off your juvenile record 28 days after your 17th birthday (diversion/informal files).
- **reportable offenses:** A process where you can apply with the court after age 24 requesting that your juvenile record not be made public.
- **traffic & ordinance offenses:** These offenses are never expunged.

NOTE: *Expungement laws are very complicated and although you may request that your record be non-public, it is not always a guarantee depending on the nature of the charges. It is your responsibility to request expungement if you want your record expunged.*

felony-level offense: A serious charge. Adults convicted of felonies may be punished by more than a year in prison.

incorrigibility: When a juvenile is repeatedly disobedient to his or her parent(s).

in-home detention: If a juvenile is placed on in-home detention, a court worker comes into the home at least an hour every day to monitor the juvenile's behavior. In-home detention is usually ordered for a period of 30 days.

intake process: The process used to determine whether a charge should be handled formally or informally.

jurisdiction: The court's authority to make orders regarding juveniles or their parents. Jurisdiction may be temporary (before adjudication) or regular (after adjudication).

misdemeanor charge: A charge that is less serious than a felony. An adult convicted of a misdemeanor may be fined or jailed for up to one year.

offer of proof: A statement which describes the evidence that would be presented at an adjudication hearing.

preliminary hearing: A formal review of a petition during which the judge or referee considers authorizing a petition and placing the case on the formal calendar. Temporary court orders are issued at the end of the preliminary hearing.

preliminary inquiry: An informal review by the court to determine the appropriate action the court should take regarding a petition.

petition: A document requesting the juvenile court to take action against a juvenile accused of a crime.

petitioner: The person or agency that is requesting that the juvenile court take jurisdiction over a juvenile.

pretrial conference: If a case is not resolved at a preliminary hearing, a prosecuting attorney, the juvenile's attorney, the probation officer, and the judge will meet to schedule a trial date and identify witnesses and evidence.

probably cause: A set of facts and circumstances that would persuade a person to believe that the juvenile has committed a specific crime.

probation: A period of time when a juvenile is under the supervision of the juvenile court.

probation officer: A juvenile court employee who supervises juveniles placed on probation.

prosecuting attorney: The lawyer who represents the people of the State of Michigan against a juvenile who has been charged with a delinquent offense.

referee: A juvenile court employee, designated by the probate judge to conduct hearings in juvenile court. A referee is also called a judicial officer or a jurist. The referee makes recommendations to the judge about what orders to enter.

reportable offenses: Any charge that requires fingerprints.

respondent: A person who is charged with committing an offense when he or she is less than 17 years old.

restitution: An amount of money that a juvenile or parent is required to pay to the victim for property loss or injuries caused by the crime. Restitution may also be assessed for lost wages.

status offense: An offense where a juvenile repeatedly disobeys parents, fails to attend school, or runs away from home. Status offense violations can only be committed by a juvenile, not an adult.

truancy: When a juvenile is repeatedly absent from school without good cause.

waiver hearing: Under certain circumstances, the juvenile court will hold a waiver hearing to determine if a 15 or 16 year old juvenile should be tried as an adult. If tried as an adult, the case is transferred to circuit court, and adult punishments may be imposed.

witness: Someone who offers evidence in court. Witnesses testify after taking an oath and may be questioned by opposing parties.

For a glossary of terms used in reference to alcohol- and drug-involved youth in the juvenile justice system and in the treatment community, see also the Reclaiming Futures document entitled *Key Terminology for Communities Developing Alcohol and Drug Treatment Programs in Partnership with the Juvenile Justice System*. You can access this document at www.reclaimingfutures.org, Resources, Publications, for viewing on screen, downloading, or printing.



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Reclaiming Futures is a new approach to helping teenagers caught in the cycle of drugs, alcohol and crime. A five-year, \$21-million national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Reclaiming Futures is housed in the Regional Research Institute for Human Services of the Graduate School of Social Work at Portland State University.

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