

Wayne County, MI

A Case Study...

Department of Community Justice, Juvenile Justice Services

The Vision: Create a system of care to effectively reduce and prevent crime by improving access to quality community-based services for children, youth, and families.

Introduction:

During the mid to late 1990s, Wayne County, Michigan was faced with escalating utilization and costs in out-of-home care, unacceptable escape rates and high recidivism of adjudicated delinquents in its court systems. A county study found that among young people charged with the most violent crimes, approximately 70% had not previously been involved with the system.

"The **Wayne County Department of Community Justice (WCDCJ)** was charged with creating a new human investment system for juvenile justice," said Jeriel Heard, Director.

"This system had very clear goals. We needed to be able to monitor each youth who comes into contact with the network of services we provide, and to benchmark our progress as a system."

Wayne County is the largest and most populous county in Michigan. Over 55% of the state's adjudicated juvenile offenders in out-of-home placement reside in Wayne County.

WCDCJ launched its new system of care for juvenile justice services in February of 2000 with primary funding from the state, county and federal grants from the Justice Department, Bureau of Assistance, and the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG).

WCDCJ is responsible for establishing and maintaining services for eligible juveniles including: comprehensive family-focused interventions, services to prevent delinquent behavior, services for juveniles and families to improve their overall quality of care, and a continuum of care, which includes in-home treatment, all levels of residential care, and reintegration support for a juvenile removed from his/her home.



“Our vision was to create a virtual wrap-around program where everyone involved in a child’s life: parents, teachers, caseworkers, the court, can keep each other apprised of the child’s progress toward achieving the goals set out in their case plan,” stated Jeriel Heard.

A Juvenile Assessment Center provides a single point of entry for each youth and a gateway for eligibility and access to services funded or administered by **WCDCJ**. At the heart of this system is a network of five care management organizations serving approximately 2,500 youth.

The Michigan Family Independence Agency has contracted with Wayne County to provide juvenile justice services to youth still committed as state wards.

The status of each juvenile is recorded by the Juvenile Assessment Center, and Care Management Organization case managers or contract provider on the *Juvenile Agency Information System (JAIS)*, engineered by *Global Vision Technologies, FAMCare®*, Software System.

Juvenile Agency Information System (JAIS)

The Juvenile Agency Information System (JAIS) is a flexible technology platform designed for three objectives:

1. Track youth in the system at all times.
2. Generate data reports for fiscal and program planning.
3. Integrate financing structures, including billing and payments with service structures.

The Care Management Organizations have facilitated dramatic reductions in use of secure detention and other out-of-home placements in the 2 years of the program’s implementation. WCDCJ has also seen a drop in drug use and recidivism as a result of the care management process.

“We have collective accountability for the youth in our system. We know that our fiscal resources are being used more effectively. The data we have seen thus far demonstrates that the youth and their families are benefiting from the focus on treatments and services that address their strengths and needs,” says Jeriel Heard, Director, Wayne County Department of Community Justice.

“JAIS is the vehicle which links information from all of our partners, including health and mental health services, state FIA, and Care Management Organizations, on behalf of the children and youth under our supervision,” says Daniel Chaney, WCDCJ Director of Juvenile Justice Services.

“We are in the process of collaborating with the courts and prosecutor’s office to bring them online with FAMCare® in the near future.”

Sources:

- Interview with **Daniel Chaney**, CDCJ Juvenile Justice Services, Director, April 2002
- Interview with **Jeriel Heard**, Director of Wayne County Department of Community Justice, April 2002.
- Interview with **Kandy James**, Former Information Systems Manager, Juvenile Agency Information Systems, Wayne County Department of Community Justice, March 2002
- Proscio, Tony. **Before It’s Too Late. A Report to the After-School Project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**, December 2001.
- **Wayne County FY 2002 Child Care Fund Plan**, Sec. V WCDCJ, Juvenile Justice Services System