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# Addressing the Needs of Multi-System Youth: Strengthening the Connection between Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice

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**Cover Art:**

*The cover art represents youth who straddle between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. This group, known as crossover youth, tend to be underserved as they move between these two systems. Research on this group of youth has led to a better understanding of the factors associated with their system experience.*

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# Foreword

It has often been said that the youth known to both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems—often referred to as crossover or dually-involved youth—tend to go undetected, following a stealth-like pathway between these two systems. As a group of children and youth suffering from the effects of childhood trauma, they are often underserved as they move from one system to another, experiencing the consequences of too little cross-systems coordination in developing case plans that will best serve them. It is a population about which too little was known in relation to the factors that impacted their system experience. Fortunately these factors, also referenced as covariates, have been the target of investigation by researchers working to better understand the trajectory many crossover youth follow into adulthood. As a result, we now know much more about their characteristics as a population and the factors associated with their crossing over.

For example, a disproportionate number of crossover youth are female and children of color, and the population as a whole generally requires a more intense array of services and supports than other youth known to each system individually. While the exact number of crossover youth may vary across jurisdictions, research has established that youth who have been maltreated are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior and become involved in the juvenile justice system. In addition, type of placement, movement in placement, and unstable education experiences all contribute to crossing over. A recent study by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago has also increased our knowledge about one segment of this population, finding that approximately 10% of all youth who leave the juvenile justice system in Illinois enter placement in the foster care system within one year after their release (Cusick, Goerge, and Bell, 2009).

As leaders of organizations that have created a focus on crossover youth in their work, we find these advances in research and this greater understanding of the population as a whole a welcome development. At the

Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute and Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps (RFK), we have attempted to shine light on this population. The result has been a better understanding of how systems can both prevent crossing over and if it occurs, respond in a stronger, more appropriate manner.

This work has taken place in two distinct iterations. The first was the work of the Systems Integration Initiative (SII) launched at the Child Welfare League of America in 2000 through the support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (now continued at RFK with the ongoing support of the foundation), followed by the development of the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) by CJJR in partnership with Casey Family Programs in 2009. Both initiatives remain in operation today and work hand in hand in a number of jurisdictions. They each bring strengths to the crossover body of work.

The SII introduced a structure that supports the kind of cross-system efforts involving the child welfare, juvenile justice, and related systems that crossover youth need to achieve more positive outcomes. As the authors of this paper describe, often it is structural barriers—such as a clear statement of understanding concerning the sharing of information, assessment processes, and joint case management—that block the kind of progress we would otherwise see on behalf of crossover youth. Through the use of a four-phase planning process, the SII assists jurisdictions in overcoming these types of structural barriers, while developing and improving integration and coordination of services. Finding the collective commitment to overcome these barriers and institutionalize the changes that facilitate this new way of doing business has been one of the greatest contributions of the SII.

The CYPM was developed to further address the needs and issues that crossover youth present through changes in policy and practice. A product of the synthesis of

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the growing body of research on crossover youth and the approaches tested in CJJR's Breakthrough Series Collaborative from 2008 to 2009, the CYPM presents a broad array of practice elements across five practice areas that are each connected to the covariates referenced above. The CYPM seeks to reduce the number of youth who cross over between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, the number of youth entering and reentering care, and the length of stay in out-of-home care. It also is designed to reduce the disproportionate representation of youth of color in each system, but very specifically in the crossover population. It does so by bringing to this body of work values and standards; evidence-based policies, practices, and procedures; and quality assurance processes. In short, it provides a template for how states can immediately improve how they serve crossover youth and rapidly impact outcomes. Perhaps most importantly, it introduces an evaluative component to its implementation that provides for the measurement of both system and population indicators.

Because the two efforts developed somewhat independently of one another, many practitioners have treated the SII and CYPM as two completely separate initiatives. As can be seen from the descriptions above, however, they are actually quite complementary, with the CYPM building on the structural foundation that the SII provides. One of the primary purposes of this paper is to make clear the alignment between the SII and CYPM and bring them together as one comprehensive unit that better the delivery of services for crossover youth. Once the stakeholder and issue-related work groups contemplated by the SII are established and have begun their work, the CYPM utilizes the approach of a practice model that has been found to be more effective than other models in implementing and sustaining change. This is a product of the road map a practice model provides of what practices should look like—from case opening to case closure—and what values and principles will support the changes in culture that leaders need to make in their organizations to sustain the effort. It is also strengthened by the involvement of staff from all levels of the agency in planning and executing the work. Together, therefore, the SII and CYPM create a very dynamic and comprehensive approach to addressing crossover youth-related issues.

This paper is designed to accomplish two additional goals. First, the paper provides an update on the growing body of research on crossover or dually-involved youth. We know a great deal more about these youth today than we did even a few short years ago, and that knowledge base is helping us to improve the policies and practices that affect them. This paper reviews the research, including that being done concerning implementation of the CYPM.

Second, the paper introduces into the work on crossover youth the use of Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA) as a measurement and management tool. One of the significant challenges to multi-system reform is the measurement of the work being done by the “collective.” How we assign and measure individual and collective responsibility for the system and population changes we desire is at the heart of RBA. As members of a coordinated, multi-system effort, each partner is given a set of responsibilities for which that individual is responsible, but which also contribute to the outcomes achieved by the collective as a whole. RBA helps us define what each partner is responsible for in helping us achieve our collective goals and how we will measure each individual's performance. It is expected that this will help to avoid the “blame game” over why we might not be achieving our desired outcomes and help to create a collective responsibility for how we will achieve better outcomes for crossover youth.

When work related to the SII and CYPM began at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there was an expectation by those leading the two efforts that we were poised to move beyond the mere understanding of the fact that the crossover youth population existed, to the next stage of developing and implementing the structures, policies, and practices that better serve this population of youth—and thereby interrupt the negative trajectory these youth follow in their lives. No doubt the work that is underway in numerous jurisdictions across the country has made this expectation a reality. Indeed, from the West Coast, where this work has taken hold in Los Angeles County, Portland, Oregon, and King County, Washington, to the Midwest and the East, where meaningful work is underway in Sioux City, Iowa, Hamilton County, Ohio, and Polk and Miami-

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Dade counties in Florida, countless youth are benefiting from this groundbreaking work. Children and youth are being better served by child welfare systems that are reducing out-of-home placements, lowering movements in placement, and providing more stable and positive education experiences. And when crossing over does occur, these youth are experiencing a more coherent and better coordinated multi-system response from the child welfare and juvenile justice agencies and their related system partners. Yet, as the experiences of SII and CYPM shed new light on the crossover population and multi-system reform, we believe there is a need to deepen and spread this work even more.

It is our hope that this paper captures these advances and paints the hopeful picture we see in furthering this body of work. We thank the MacArthur Foundation for

its generous support of this paper and the authors for their outstanding vision in creating it. We also thank the countless individuals in the communities that have implemented the SII and CYPM across the country. It is their willingness to undertake this groundbreaking work that has made this paper possible and has improved outcomes for the youth who come in contact with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

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# I. Introduction

It has been known for quite some time that children involved in the child welfare system are at risk of “crossing over” to the juvenile justice system and, inversely, that many juvenile justice-involved youth later become involved in the child welfare system. These youth are commonly referred to as crossover youth. The accumulation of research on this population has given us greater understanding of their characteristics, of the pathway they took to become crossover youth, and of the practices professionals can employ to improve their outcomes. Despite these advances in our knowledge, jurisdictions around the United States, and arguably around the world, continue to face challenges in adequately meeting the needs of this difficult-to-serve population. As a result, several reform efforts have been developed to guide jurisdictions in their efforts to improve the way they serve crossover youth.

The purpose of this paper is to provide communities with a consolidated framework for serving crossover youth that incorporates the most up-to-date research, lessons from ongoing reform efforts, and an innovative collaborative management structure. To accomplish this task, the paper begins with a summary of the research on crossover youth, including their characteristics and system experiences. The paper then explores the systemic factors that contribute to ineffective service delivery for this population, followed by a review of two major crossover youth reform initiatives in the United States—the Systems Integration Initiative (SII) and the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM). The final section presents the next frontier of this work by providing a comprehensive array of the best practices needed to improve outcomes for this population and describing Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA), an innovative management structure that can be used to align the work of a variety of stakeholders around a common, community-wide effort for crossover youth.

This introduction serves to briefly orient the reader to what we know about crossover youth, the challenges in serving this population, the current reform efforts underway, and the Results-Based Accountability™ framework. These

topics are elaborated upon further in subsequent sections. The stage is then set for the presentation of a new frontier of this work—a more cohesive and robust framework regarding how systems can undertake reforms to improve the lives of crossover youth.

## Overview of Crossover Youth

Though not fully understood, the relationship between child maltreatment (i.e., abuse and/or neglect) and delinquency is well established.<sup>1</sup> Recognition of this relationship, however, has not equated with implementation of coordinated practice across the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, leaving many youth to fall into the crack that separates the two systems. At least one obstacle to improving the care of crossover youth is the absence of a clear definition of who these youth are and how they can be identified.

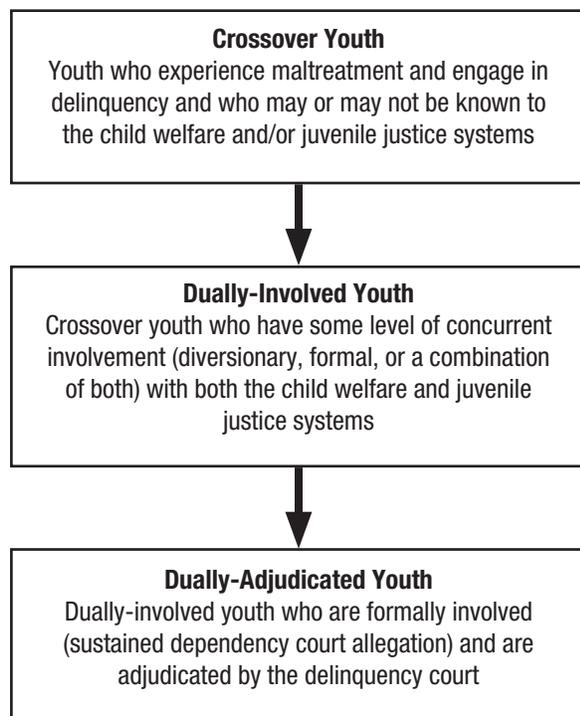
Many terms are currently used to refer to children who are involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, including (but not limited to) “crossover youth,” “dual-status youth,” “dual-jurisdiction youth,” and “dually-adjudicated youth.” At first glance, multiple terms are not problematic, but as we learn more about youth who experience maltreatment and delinquency, the need for clear definitions becomes apparent. Herz, Ryan, and Bilchik (2010; see also Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010) offer three terms and corresponding definitions to help categorize youth who experience different levels of system involvement. *Crossover youth* is the term used to define any youth who has experienced maltreatment and who has also engaged in delinquency regardless of system involvement. Crossover youth, in other words, experience maltreatment and delinquency, but they may or may not enter the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems. *Dually-involved youth* represent a subgroup of

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<sup>1</sup> A review of this research is beyond the scope of this overview. Readers are encouraged to reference Herz and Ryan (2008); Petro (2006); Wiig, Widom, and Tuell (2003); Jonson-Reid (1998); and Widom (1989) for a more extensive discussion of this literature.

crossover youth who are concurrently known to both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems at some level. Their contact may be preventative (i.e., having a voluntary case in child welfare and/or receiving informal diversion in juvenile justice), formal (i.e., having substantiated allegations for abuse and/or neglect or being adjudicated delinquent in the delinquency court), or a combination of both. *Dually-adjudicated youth*, a subgroup of dually-involved youth, includes youth who entered both systems, were formally processed by both systems, and are under the formal care and control of them. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these definitions.

**Figure 1:** Terminology



In addition to defining the level of involvement for crossover youth, it is critically important to identify the pathway on which a youth becomes known to systems (Herz, Ryan, and Bilchik, 2010; Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010). Although most of the research in this area has focused on the relationship between maltreatment and subsequent delinquency, at least three additional pathways

exist. Figure 2 depicts the four dominant pathways that characterize when and how dually-involved youth are identified by systems. The first pathway involves a youth who has an open child welfare case and subsequently gets arrested for delinquency, entering the delinquency system at some level. The second pathway is similar to the first except the child welfare case was closed prior to the time of the delinquency. In the third pathway, the youth is a victim of maltreatment, but the maltreatment has not come to the attention of the child welfare system. In the process of investigating the charge, the delinquency system identifies the maltreatment and initiates child welfare system involvement. The fourth pathway occurs when a youth is placed in a correctional facility, and upon release from the facility, there is no safe home for him/her to return to. Consequently, the delinquency system initiates a referral to child welfare to prepare for the youth's release.

Jurisdictions often find it difficult to identify dually-involved youth, regardless of pathway, because information is rarely shared across systems. Thus, data on dually-involved youth typically require special research projects that match cohorts of youth from one system to another. Using data from such projects, we know much more about youth who fall into pathway 1 than the other pathways (Halemba and Siegel, 2011; Saeteurn and Swain, 2009; Herz and Ryan, 2008; Halemba et al., 2004; Kelley, Thornberry, and Smith, 1997). Among these youth:

- A disproportionate number are children of color as compared to the general population, child welfare population, and juvenile justice population.
- A majority are male; however, the proportion of females is greater than in general delinquency populations (ranging from one-third to just under one-half female, compared to 20–25% in the general delinquency population).
- A majority have special education issues, problems at school, and mental health and/or drug use problems.
- A significant portion have witnessed domestic violence and have parents who have a history of criminal justice system involvement, mental health problems, and/or substance abuse problems.
- Many are in the care or custody of the child welfare system for long periods of time, entering the system

**Figure 2: An Overview of Pathways Leading to Identification as a Dually-Involved Youth**

	<b>Starting Point</b>	<b>Occurrence</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Pathway 1</b>	Youth has an open child welfare case	→ Youth is arrested	→ Youth enters the delinquency system
<b>Pathway 2</b>	Youth is arrested	→ Youth has a previously closed child welfare case	→ Referral is made to child welfare
<b>Pathway 3</b>	Youth is arrested—no previous contact with child welfare	→ Upon investigation, maltreatment is discovered	→ Referral is made to child welfare
<b>Pathway 4</b>	Youth is arrested, adjudicated, and placed in a correctional placement	→ Time in correctional placement ends, but there is no safe home to return to	→ Referral to child welfare

as young children and remaining in care into adolescence.

- A substantial majority experience an out-of-home placement, and the number of placement changes is high for many of these youth.
- Many are living in a group home at the time of arrest
- Delinquency charges are for both property and violent offenses, but most of these youth commit more violent offenses than the general delinquency population, and these charges tend to be for assault (misdemeanor or felony).
- Their ages fall, on average, between 14 and 16 years old, but their first offense typically occurs at a younger age than youth in the general delinquency population.
- At the time of arrest, between a quarter and one-half of these youth are placed in pre-adjudication detention.
- Many have had prior contacts for other types of criminal charges and/or status offenses.

(See section II for a more detailed review of the research related to dually-involved youth.)

We know much less about youth who enter the delinquency system and are subsequently referred to

the child welfare system (pathways 2, 3, and 4), but a study by Cusick, Goerge, and Bell (2009) documents the existence of pathway 4. Cusick et al. examined eight cohorts of correctional exits in Illinois (statewide) and Chicago specifically between 1996 and 2003 and found that 9% of correctional exits statewide and 10% of correctional exits in Chicago had a placement with child welfare within one year of the exit date.

## Challenges to Serving Dually-Involved Youth

Dually-involved youth are a high-need population that requires systems to work together in a different way if we are to help them realize improved outcomes. Unfortunately, experience has shown that changing entrenched system policies and practices can be difficult and accompanied by a number of challenges.

As section III explores in more depth, there is often a lack of structural relationships and understanding among the agencies that dually-involved youth touch. In some places, there is no mechanism for interaction between staff of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and in others, there is simply no acknowledgment that joint cases even exist. Further, there is commonly a lack of coordination among the various attorneys representing the youth and their parents and

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a lack of continuity among the judges who hear their cases. Beyond child welfare and juvenile justice, collaboration among the education, mental health, and substance abuse systems is also often quite tenuous for this population of youth.

Further, information-sharing challenges are often encountered among these various agencies due to complex legal rules, different record-keeping procedures, the limits of current technology, and other factors that make it difficult for everyone involved in a particular child's case to be fully informed about the child's background and current situation. Moreover, there are rarely any policy imperatives that require systems to work together, resulting in a lack of motivation to address the challenges faced.

In addition to—and in part because of—these structural challenges, there are often case management and fiscal inefficiencies that result in poor service delivery for the dually-involved youth population. Often, there is no coordinated response to the identification of these youth and to the assessment of their needs and risks. As a result, service delivery among systems can be duplicative or contradictory, and opportunities to prevent further system penetration can be lost. Moreover, when the systems fail to collaboratively engage families or to establish a joint permanency goal for a youth, the long-term outcomes for dually-involved youth suffer.

## Current Multi-System Reform Initiatives

Understanding of the characteristics of crossover youth, the way in which dually-involved youth become known to systems, and common barriers to serving this population laid the groundwork for several multi-system reform efforts, particularly the Systems Integration Initiative and the Crossover Youth Practice Model. As stated above, the purpose of this paper is to present a new frontier to this work that builds on these efforts. Both of these initiatives are described briefly below and then elaborated upon further in section IV to give the reader an understanding of the efforts upon which the new frontier is based.

### Systems Integration Initiative

The SII began at the Child Welfare League of America with the support of a grant from the John D. and Catherine T.

MacArthur Foundation, and continues today at the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps. SII helps jurisdictions improve the way they serve dually-involved youth by focusing on the connections between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and the development of a multi-system approach to policy and program development and service delivery.

A strong element of the foundation for the work in systems integration has been the research on crossover youth. Other pieces of work that influenced the foundation for SII include (1) the experiences and findings based on work with very young offenders with histories in the child welfare system in Hennepin and Ramsey counties in Minnesota, and (2) the collaborative efforts associated with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's development of its Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders for effective prevention and intervention programming. Also integral to the foundation of SII has been the presence of federal laws since 2002 and 2003 that specifically support—and in some instances require—collaboration between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Building on these research, legal, and policy foundations and responding to the increasing interest shown by state and local jurisdictions in addressing the relationship between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, Wiig and Tuell developed a guide for the process of multi-system reform. Their *Guidebook for Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System Coordination and Integration: A Framework for Improved Outcomes* (2004, rev. 2008) describes a four-phase planning process to help jurisdictions with their integration and coordination planning, including not only the child welfare and juvenile justice systems but three additional and critically related systems: education, mental health, and substance abuse. See sidebar, "The Four Phases of SII," for a summary of the four phases that frame this reform approach.

Working through this four-phase planning process leads to a coordinated and integrated juvenile justice and child welfare system characterized by:

- Interagency agreements that institutionalize collaboration
- Integrated management information systems

- Blended funding and flexible programming for children and families crossing both systems
- Policy and program development that emphasizes prevention and early intervention
- Reliance on evidence-based practices
- Results-Based Accountability™, including a system for performance and outcome measures
- Statutory and other policy frameworks that support systemic change

Many jurisdictions across the country have worked with the systems integration framework outlined in the *Guidebook* to address their populations of dually-involved youth. There are excellent examples of these jurisdictions putting the framework into practice, beginning with the structural foundations of leadership, governance, and management, and culminating in specific action strategies, including shared caseloads, integrated information systems, cross-program teams, consolidated governance structures, and integrated funding streams. The jurisdictions undertaking this work have also developed tools to institutionalize the framework, including memoranda of understanding, articulated goals and outcomes, and newly designed information- and data-sharing systems. The infrastructure, tools, and action strategies to serve dually-involved youth are described later in this paper.

## Crossover Youth Practice Model

Similar to the SII, the CYPM was developed in response to both the growing research on dually-involved youth and the desire of systems to find ways to address the high level of need this population of youth presents. The CYPM was developed and released by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform in 2010. The CYPM creates a nexus between crossover youth research and best practices by building on the lessons learned through a Center for Juvenile Justice Reform project that engaged numerous sites around the country to test small multi-system reforms and take successful reforms to scale (Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010).<sup>2</sup> While SII focuses on the

<sup>2</sup> This project was titled the *Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Integration Breakthrough Series Collaborative*. The project was supported by Casey Family Programs and conducted by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University.

## The Four Phases of SII

### Phase 1: Mobilization and Advocacy

- Assessment of political and environmental readiness for systems reform
- Identification of and commitment to strategic goals and objectives of the collaboration
- Identification of and commitment to addressing potential barriers to teamwork

### Phase 2: Study and Analysis

- Data Collection, Management, and Performance Measurement (e.g., establishment of a governance structure for data collection, identification of necessary aggregate data reports, development of procedures for use of reports, and consideration of development of an integrated information-sharing system)
- Resource Inventory and Assessment (e.g., inventory of program and fiscal resources and common screening and assessment instruments, identification of key decision points and decision makers, review of best practices or evidence-based strategies, and identification of the potential for blending funds)
- Legal and Policy Analysis and Information Sharing (e.g., examination of statutory, regulatory, formal, and informal policies, procedures, and protocols; clarification of laws, regulations, and policies that impact systems collaboration and information sharing; and identification of data-sharing impediments and capacity to share information)

### Phase 3: Action Strategy Development

- Identification of priorities for all program, service, and administrative components
- Development of priorities for an action agenda
- Development of funding mechanisms necessary to support integrated approaches

### Phase 4: Implementation

- Agreement on timelines, phasing, milestones, and task assignments
- Outcome evaluation with incremental measurement

*From: Guidebook for Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System Coordination and Integration: A Framework for Improved Outcomes (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008)*

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structural foundations needed for the coordination and integration of the child welfare and juvenile justice system, the Crossover Youth Practice Model focuses on specific practice improvements. Specifically, the CYPM provides a mechanism for agencies to strengthen their organizational structure as contemplated by the SII, as well as to implement or improve practices that directly affect the outcomes for crossover youth.

When the CYPM was released by the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform in the spring of 2010, with the support of Casey Family Programs, the model was initially implemented in 11 jurisdictions.<sup>3</sup> By the end of the year, the number of jurisdictions involved in implementation of the practice model increased to 13. As of this writing, the CYPM is being implemented in 25 jurisdictions across the country.<sup>4</sup>

The overarching goals of the CYPM are to:

1. Reduce the number of youth placed in out-of-home care
2. Reduce the use of congregate care
3. Reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color, particularly in the dually-involved youth population
4. Reduce the number of youth crossing over and becoming dually involved

Implementation of the model seeks to achieve the following system improvements:

- Ensure greater uniformity in the mission and vision of child welfare and juvenile justice agencies
- Develop specific policies and changes in practices related to serving dually-involved youth
- Improve cross-systems engagement related to case management functions
- Increase the use of cross-systems data to track population trends and inform decision making on all levels of the involved agencies

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<sup>3</sup> Note that while Casey Family Programs funded 11 sites, the state of Florida supported CYPM implementation in two additional sites in September 2010. Please see appendix A for a complete list of CYPM sites.

<sup>4</sup> Eleven of the 25 jurisdictions have been receiving a less intense version of technical assistance to aid with model implementation.

- Conduct cross-systems trainings to improve agency knowledge about other system functions and process
- Create a mechanism that provides continuous quality improvement across the two systems

The practice model is structured to address three key areas (or phases) that align with the trajectory youth follow as they become dually involved with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. In their entirety, the phases consist of five practice areas. The phased approach, with a heavy practice orientation, allows sites to stagger the work of implementation by building on the work done in each preceding phase.

#### **Phase I**

##### ***Practice Area 1: Arrest, Identification, and Detention***

This part of the CYPM focuses on impacting the situations and practices in child welfare that increase the likelihood that a youth in child welfare has some level of contact with law enforcement. This practice area also addresses the need to improve the timely identification of youth at the point of crossing over. Further, it considers the overrepresentation of dually-involved youth in detention and ways to decrease this pattern.

##### ***Practice Area 2: Decision Making Regarding Charging***

When a youth enters the juvenile justice system, the charging decision presents a critical opportunity for interventions to be provided that would potentially prevent the youth from entering the system more formally and deeply. Therefore, this area of the practice model describes specific strategies for improving the charging process and creates a mechanism for communication among those persons responsible for making the charging decision. These practices are designed to ensure that greater consideration is given to the child welfare history and individual context of each youth as diversion and charging decisions are being made.

#### **Phase II**

##### ***Practice Area 3: Case Assignment, Joint Assessment, and Case Planning***

This area of the CYPM focuses on the partnership between child welfare and juvenile justice in the assessment and case-planning process. It recognizes the critical role that families play in planning for an array of services to meet

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the specific needs of their youth and family. Further, it addresses the need to consolidate, or at a minimum better coordinate, the development of case plans—creating a more coherent approach to the case-planning process. This extends to the presentation of these case plans to the court as part of the case dispositional process.

### **Phase III**

#### ***Practice Area 4: Coordinated Case Supervision and Ongoing Assessment of Progress***

This part of the CYPM addresses the need for continued partnership between child welfare and juvenile justice throughout the time the case is open in both systems. It includes the need to jointly assess on a routine basis the efficacy of services provided to the youth and the family and the importance of revising case plans to improve youth and family outcomes and reflect the changing dynamics in families. This level of ongoing assessment builds on the initial assessment process completed in practice area 3.

#### ***Practice Area 5: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition, and Case Closure***

This practice area emphasizes the importance of addressing the permanency options for youth who have crossed over from one system to the other. The CYPM stresses the need to ensure that youth have caring and committed adults in their lives. This practice area also seeks to ensure that both youth and families are connected to supportive services that will assist them in being successful as the young person transitions to adulthood.

## **Next Frontier**

Clearly, the SII and CYPM are complementary reform efforts, with the SII focusing heavily on the infrastructure needed to allow for multi-system collaboration and policy reform, and the CYPM focusing on the specific practices that systems can employ to better meet the needs of their dually-involved youth population. Both efforts have historically worked toward the same goal, just approaching the work with a slightly different focus. The next frontier of this work imagines combining the core elements of both of these reform efforts and using a cohesive management structure so that systems have a comprehensive strategy when seeking to improve outcomes for crossover youth.

This next frontier, in essence the next generation of work being encouraged in this area, is described in greater detail in the concluding section of this paper.

However, the next frontier must be accompanied by improved methods of measuring the cross-systems work it entails. In this regard, the paper introduces a methodology that complements the two reform efforts presented. Called Results-Based Accountability™, this management tool is described in depth in the last section of this Introduction. We devote this level of detail to RBA at this point in the paper so the reader gains a solid grasp of the approach it advocates for measuring the types of cross-systems effort required to address the needs of crossover youth—both on a systemic and programmatic level. We hope that this discussion will enable the reader to look at the research on crossover youth, and on SII and CYPM, through the RBA lens and thereby better understand its importance in holding ourselves and our partners—individually and collectively—responsible for the outcomes we are seeking to achieve. This discussion lays the foundation for later sections of the paper, which delve more deeply into how RBA can be applied to crossover youth reform efforts.

## **Results-Based Accountability™**

RBA starts from the premise that trying hard is not good enough.<sup>5</sup> RBA explicitly links the investment of resources to the achievement of measurable improvements for communities and customers. To achieve measurable improvements, RBA aligns—in agencies, service systems, and communities—the decision making and accountability of multiple stakeholders around a shared result. In the process, RBA helps make decision making transparent, thereby enhancing collaboration and innovation. Especially when applied to strategic planning, budgeting, and program management, RBA can help to address fragmentation among the systems that serve dually-involved youth. Most importantly, RBA can improve the impact achieved by systems on the youth they serve.

### **Population versus Performance Accountability**

In dynamic environments, like those in which child welfare and juvenile justice systems operate, the concept

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<sup>5</sup> RBA was developed by Mark Friedman, author of *Trying Hard is Not Good Enough: Producing Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities* (2005).

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of “accountability” rarely translates, in practice, to multiple stakeholders rigorously aligning their actions to achieve measurable improvements for populations in their community. The challenge in part is that such environments involve everything from single programs to incredibly complex communities. For this reason, the RBA framework distinguishes accountability for the qualities of life we want in our communities (“population accountability”) from accountability for the performance of programs, agencies, and, of particular relevance to this paper, service systems (“performance accountability”). *Population accountability* concerns whole populations in a geographic area—e.g., all people in the United States, all senior citizens in Iowa, all youth in Philadelphia—without regard to whether they are getting service from anyone or not. From this perspective, a relevant “population” would be all youth 12 to 17 years of age, which as a group would include youth who are not served by either the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. Quality-of-life conditions for youth might include that they succeed in school, that they are safe in their homes and communities, or that they are law-abiding citizens. Therefore, population accountability is, by definition, bigger than any one program, agency, or service system. It is even bigger than government. No one agency, service system, or government can by itself achieve quality-of-life conditions for all youth.

*Performance accountability*, by contrast, concerns how well programs, agencies, and service systems are run. Performance accountability focuses on the well-being of the individuals served, such as dually-involved youth, as distinct from whole populations. Performance accountability is applicable to the smallest and largest programs, to agencies, and to systems working in partnership, such as the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

The following RBA terms and concepts will help to further explore these distinctions and the RBA framework:

- **Results** (or Population Results): The quality-of-life conditions we want for a population in a community, such as children, adults, or families
- **Indicators**: Measures that tell if we are achieving these quality-of-life conditions
- **Performance Measures**: Measures that tell if programs, agencies, and service systems are working

In addition, to distinguish accountability for effort from accountability for impact in programs, agencies, and service systems, RBA classifies performance measures into three common sense categories:

1. How much did we do?
  - How many people did we serve?
  - What services did we provide and how much?
2. How well did we do it?
  - What was the quality of our service delivery?
3. Is anyone better off?
  - To what extent did we achieve the desired impact on the customers and clients we served?

With these RBA terms, we can summarize a key implication of the distinction between population and performance accountability: the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, of course, cannot be solely accountable for results (and corresponding indicators) such as “All Youth Succeed in School” (as measured, for example, by graduation rates for youth 12 to 17 years of age).<sup>6</sup> A broader community-wide effort is needed to achieve these results. Correspondingly, the indicators for these results should not be used as performance measures for the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Performance measures should instead concern the specific efforts of a system and the youth a system serves. An example of a performance measure is “Percent of dually-involved youth served by program X who achieve permanency.”

### **Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, Baselines, and Results-Based Return on Investment**

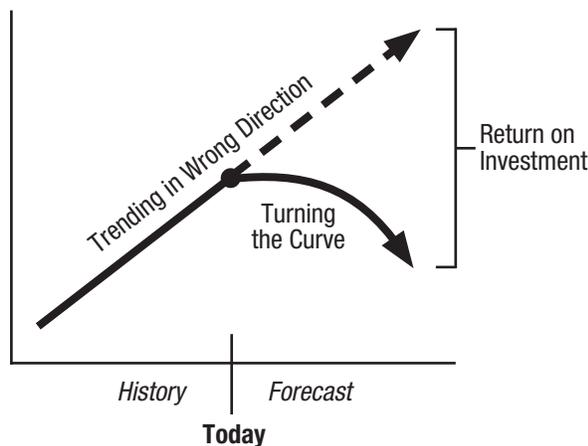
While population accountability and performance accountability are distinguished in the RBA framework, they share in common a systematic approach to decision making called Turn-the-Curve Thinking™. Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ begins with an “end” represented by the data for either an indicator or a performance measure graphed as a baseline. The baseline includes both historic data, as well as a forecast for the future for a particular measure. The resulting data points are referred to as

<sup>6</sup> *This paper concerns the performance of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in serving dually-involved youth. For this reason, the discussion of RBA in this paper will primarily concern performance accountability as opposed to population accountability.*

“the curve.” Beginning with the curve for an indicator or a performance measure, the decision-making process is then organized to systematically determine the best strategies to “turn the curve”—that is, to change the direction (or accelerate, if the curve is headed in the right direction) of the forecasted trend.

By starting with the curve of an indicator or a performance measure, Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ also frames decision making in terms of a results-based return on investment. The investments are the resources expended to improve a quality-of-life condition for a population in a community (for example, high school graduation for crossover youth) or to achieve a desired benefit for the customers of a program, agency, or system (for example, percent of dually-involved youth who achieve permanency). The results-based return on investment is the quality-of-life condition or benefit achieved—that is, the turn of the curve (see figure 3).

**Figure 3:** Turning the Curve—The Results-Based Return on Investment



Beginning with ends, Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ consists of systematically asking and answering each of the following questions:

1. What ends do we want?
2. How are we doing (what’s the historic and forecasted trend or “curve” for the indicator or performance measure)?
3. What is the story behind the curve?

4. Who are the partners who may have a role to play in turning the curve?
5. What would work to turn the curve?
6. What do we propose to do to turn the curve?

This set of questions can be asked and answered at any level of decision making—within programs and agencies and in interagency, intergovernmental, and cross-sector partnerships. Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ is, in other words, a template or “fractal” pattern that repeats itself at all levels, across the spectrum of population and performance accountability.

Figure 4 shows the application of Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ to performance management.

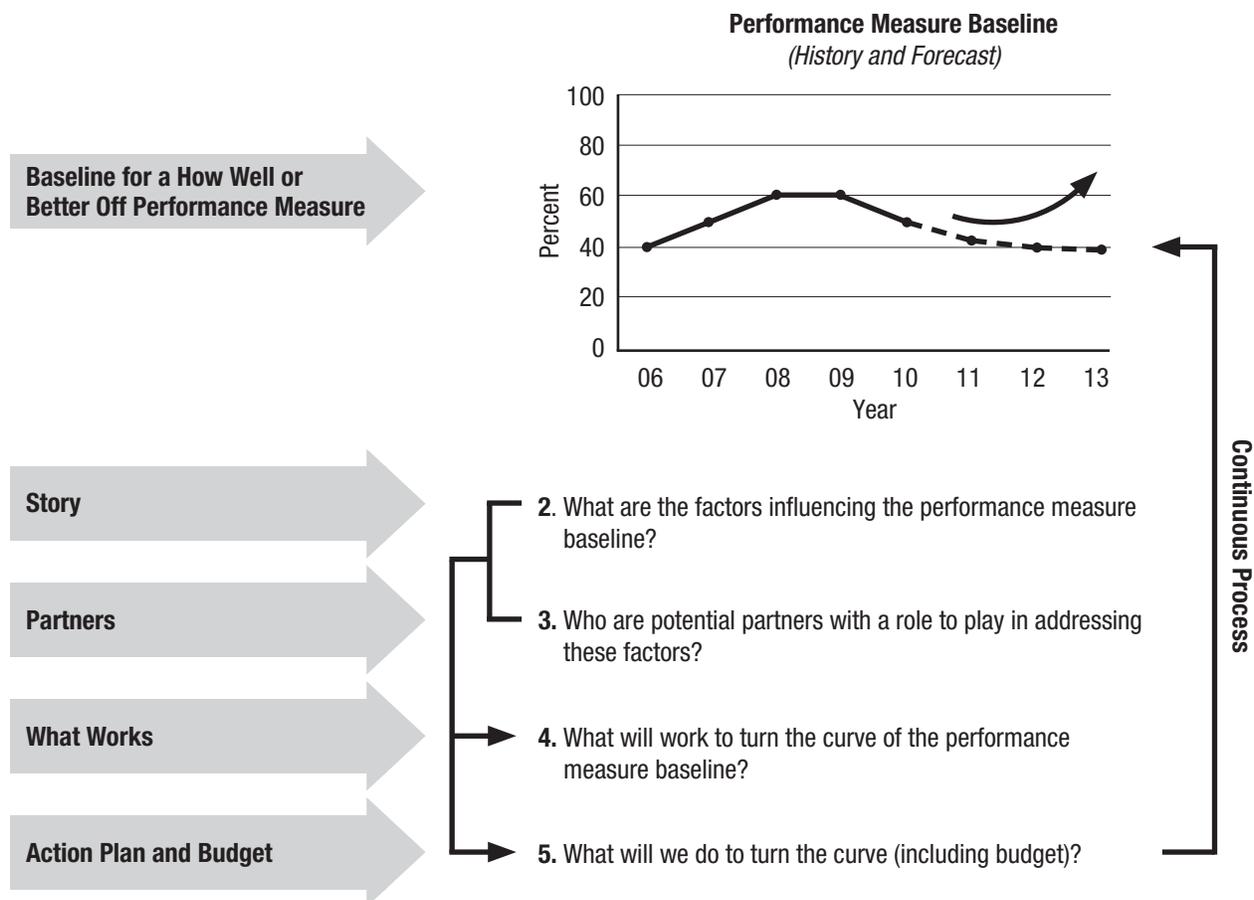
This template is not just for singular planning events. Rather, it is a tool for ongoing decision making and reporting, including:

- Tracking and forecasting indicator and performance data on a regular basis
- Capturing new information about factors that are influencing the curve currently as well as factors that may impact the curve in the future
- Identifying new strategies and best practices as well as potential new partners who may have a role to play in turning the curve
- Setting or changing the action plan on a timely basis and in accordance with analysis of the factors influencing the curve

Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ has at its heart this principle: the ends are fixed, the means are not. In accordance with this principle, RBA makes explicit a hierarchy of accountability that begins with the quality-of-life conditions we want in our communities (population results). Once selected, the desired quality-of-life condition is a constant; however, the means by which to improve that quality-of-life condition can and should change as needed as circumstances change in the community, whether that “community” be a neighborhood, state, country, or the world. From this perspective, no program, agency, or service system is an end unto itself; each is a means to achieving the quality-of-life conditions we want in our communities.

**Figure 4:** Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ Applied to Performance Management

1. How well is the program, agency, or system performing, as measured by a How Well or Better Off performance measure?



Within a service system, like the child welfare or juvenile justice system, there is also a hierarchy: no program or agency is an end unto itself; each is a means to achieving the collective impact that the system seeks to achieve for its customers.

The antithesis to this principle is decision making that begins with the means—typically programs—and works “forward” to the ends. This kind of “backward” (or “program-centric”) decision making leads to fragmentation and, often, to programs being perpetuated

regardless of whether they are what is needed to achieve either a quality-of-life condition in a community or the desired impact a child welfare or juvenile justice system seeks for the youth it serves.

By framing decision making in a child welfare or juvenile justice system in terms of an ends-to-means hierarchy that transcends individual programs and agencies, RBA makes possible decisions that might not make sense if made in the context of individual programs or agencies. For example, if a juvenile justice system is experiencing

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a greater than usual number of youth with drug addiction problems, it would make sense for funds from other areas to be redirected to substance abuse treatment to address this need. This could mean that money may be moved from a mentoring program (perhaps from a different agency in the system) to substance abuse programming, even though the mentoring program is well managed. It is possible that mentoring is simply not what is needed in this particular community at this time, even though it performs beautifully. In a program-centric decision-making framework, without the larger perspective provided by the ends-to-means hierarchy of RBA, this kind of decision might not be conceivable. Indeed, from a program-centric perspective, the leaders of the mentoring program (and the agency within which it resides) might well be perceived as failures for the decreased funding of a well-managed program on their watch. RBA instead allows programs and agencies to see beyond their silos and make decisions that are good for the community, but that may not necessarily be good for their particular program or agency.

### **Joint Accountability**

As noted above, RBA provides a framework within which multiple stakeholders can align their decision making and accountability. Key to this alignment is the concept of joint accountability, an approach to decision making in which stakeholders (1) share accountability for achieving a larger purpose and, because of their shared accountability, (2) willingly subordinate their direct personal interests in order to achieve that larger purpose. Day-to-day examples of joint accountability include:

- Two parents jointly accountable for the well-being of their children
- Members of a team jointly accountable for winning in athletic competitions
- Members of a military unit jointly accountable for achieving a military objective

In each case, two or more individuals work together for a greater purpose that none of them could achieve individually. The working relationships among individuals who share joint accountability are shaped, qualitatively, by the commitment each has made to the greater purpose and by the interdependence of each one on the others for achieving that purpose.

Singular accountability, by contrast, is about the performance of one's personal direct responsibilities. Singular accountability is necessary, but it is not the same as joint accountability. Examples of singular accountability include:

- One parent is the primary earner while the other serves as the primary caretaker.
- One member of a team is primarily a playmaker and another a scorer.
- One member of a military unit is a sharpshooter, another a radio operator, and another a medic.

Certainly, singular accountability is a necessary component of any working relationship built on joint accountability. And, in these examples, one would typically expect to find at least some semblance of joint accountability for the greater purpose—ensuring the well-being of the child, winning the athletic competition, or achieving the military objective.

The fact, however, that a working relationship consists of defined roles and singular accountability for the performance of those roles does not, inherently, mean that joint accountability is shared. And, indeed, in some working relationships singular accountability alone may be perfectly adequate. In a factory assembly line, the performance of each worker of his/her clearly defined role may suffice for the success of the enterprise. In these kinds of scenarios, with management by command and control, the “powers that be” are responsible for ensuring that all the pieces work together. As long as each unit performs its prescribed role, the system works. Each unit needs only to function as a link in a factory-like assembly line. The scope of each manager's accountability and, by necessity, discretion, is limited to the performance of his/her organizational unit. Decision making is efficient. Unit managers focus only on that for which they have singular accountability; it is neither useful nor productive for them to focus on or take accountability for the bigger picture.

What sounds simple and efficient in an assembly line, however, is unfeasible when a system must perform in a world of rapid change and dynamic interdependencies, like the world within which the child welfare and juvenile justice systems must perform. In these environments,

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command-and-control bureaucracies are notoriously slow to adapt and respond because the discretion of managers and staff is limited by an abundance of rules, processes, and procedures. Those managers who are focused on improving the impact on those they serve are confronted by a culture that places a higher value on accountability for following the rules and not making mistakes. By limiting the accountability and discretion of managers to their organizational units, command-and-control management actually fosters fragmentation, or “stove-piped management.” Managers have no reason to see beyond their own borders and will make decisions that are rational locally (such as seeking to hoard resources for their programs) even if such decisions are irrational for the larger system.

The dynamic environments of child welfare and juvenile justice require that managers have the discretion to respond to challenges and change. To align and integrate efforts across their systems, however, managers cannot be limited in their exercise of discretion to the narrow confines of the accountability they hold singularly for their own organizational units. They must also operate within a larger context in which they share accountability jointly with other stakeholders for larger ends. RBA provides a framework for managing with both joint and sole accountability at all levels within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and in the larger context of the communities in which they serve.

For example, within a program, staff members can share joint accountability for the desired impact of the program on the program’s clients or customers, as well as sole accountability for performing their different roles in the program. Within a multi-agency service system, programs and agencies can share joint accountability for the desired impact of the system on its customers, such as “Dually-involved youth are placed in congregate settings less often and achieve permanency,” as well as sole accountability for the performance of their programs and agencies. In a community, multiple stakeholders, including (but not limited to) government and nonprofits, can share joint

accountability for achieving population results—like “Youth 12 to 17 years of age succeed in school” or “Youth 12 to 17 years of age are safe in their homes and communities.” At the same time, each stakeholder has sole accountability for performing its role within the community-wide effort.

### **Transparency**

In RBA, the questions that frame Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ foster transparency because stakeholders must make explicit the reasoning and the data they are using to reach their decisions. By showing the steps in their thinking process, partners invite scrutiny by others in the interest of making the best possible decisions.

Transparent Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ is essential to any successful collaboration. Decisions are stronger when partners surface and challenge their implicit beliefs and assumptions and engage in constructive dialogue about alternatives that, in turn, drive innovation. With such transparency, collaborations develop a deeper, shared understanding of their collective undertaking, which in turn builds trust, accountability, and the ability to improve desired population results in their communities. It is in this way that RBA fits so well with the implementation of policies and practices that constitute a community’s strategy to improve outcomes for crossover youth.

### **Conclusion**

As stated previously, the purpose of this paper is to bring together the elements of the SII and CYPM so they can be part of a cohesive strategy in jurisdictions seeking to positively impact dually-involved youth in the future. Section V presents these key elements and then offers a framework for how jurisdictions can use RBA to manage the variety of strategies that must be performed by a multitude of partners to truly improve outcomes for crossover youth. It is our hope that this framework helps communities approach this issue in a thoughtful and strategic way so that we can better serve this population and ensure they can succeed.

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## II. Understanding the Unique Experiences of Dually-Involved Youth

As described in the Introduction, dually-involved youth are youth who are involved at some level with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. We currently know a significant amount about their characteristics (see the Introduction for a more detailed discussion of their characteristics), but until recently, research related to crossover youth primarily focused on the relationship between maltreatment and delinquency (i.e., does maltreatment increase the likelihood of delinquency). This body of research is now expanding to examine the conditions under which maltreatment and delinquency may be related, the prevalence of dually-involved youth, and their experiences in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Taken together, this literature begins to tell the story of dually-involved youth, setting the stage for improving practice within and across the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. In this section, we summarize what is known in the literature about the experiences of dually-involved youth.

### How Many Dually-Involved Youth Are There?

Few would argue the existence of dually-involved youth in any jurisdiction across the nation; yet, few are able to identify dually-involved youth in a systematic way, and even fewer attempt to serve these youth in ways that match their unique experiences. The amount of research documenting the prevalence of crossover youth and dually-involved youth is still sparse, although some studies increasingly provide some insight into this issue. Not surprisingly, prevalence estimates are more commonly reported for dually-involved youth (i.e., youth with some level of system contact) than crossover youth without system contact, and those estimates can vary widely based on the methodological approach taken in a particular study. At least three methodological differences should be noted prior to reviewing the results of this literature. First, these studies measure prevalence from

two different starting points. Some studies examine how many youth in child welfare populations cross into delinquency, while other studies document the percentage of youth in the juvenile justice system with current or previous child welfare contact. Second, these studies examine a variety of age groups (e.g., in examining child welfare populations) and decision points (e.g., different stages in juvenile justice processing). Finally, most of these studies report prevalence rates using official data, but in a few cases, self-report data from youth are used. Despite these differences and the impact they have on developing consistent estimates, these studies collectively serve as a basis for understanding the extent to which youth are crossing between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

### Child Welfare as the Starting Point

Widom (2003) reviewed three key studies to examine the relationship between maltreatment and delinquency using official data. These studies reported arrest rates for maltreated youth ranging from 13.7% to 21.6% for any arrest, and 5.3% to 8.8% for a violent crime arrest. In 2004, Johnson, Ereth, and Wagner examined the arrest rate for a cohort of 7- to 14-year-olds in New Mexico's protective services division in 1999 and found that 13.9% of these youth had an arrest within a four-year time period. Additionally, they found that certain youth were more likely to be arrested than others: (1) youth 10 and older had an arrest rate of 20% compared to 5.5% for younger youth less than 10 years old; (2) males had higher rates than females (17.3% compared to 10.9%); and (3) family risk factors and the number of incidents with protective services increased the likelihood of arrest regardless of age and gender. A more recent study conducted by Bogie et al. (2011) underscores the importance of considering the risk to recidivate. Using data from Los Angeles County, Bogie et al. reported an arrest rate of 7.1% for 7- to 15-year-olds with open child

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welfare cases between April and December 2005 over a three-year period. After classifying these youth into low, moderate, and high “risk to offend” categories, however, the researchers found that arrest rates varied widely across risk levels—specifically, the arrest rate for low-risk youth was only 1.6%, in contrast to an arrest rate of 23.5% for high-risk youth.

Self-report measures for maltreatment and delinquency also provide key insights into the prevalence of crossing over into delinquency. Kelley, Thornberry, and Smith (1997) examined delinquency rates for maltreated youth using self-report data for maltreatment and both self-report and official report data for delinquency. The rates were noticeably higher than those found with official data alone. Using official delinquency reports, Kelley et al. reported an arrest rate of 45% for maltreated youth, but the rates were higher in the self-report data, ranging from 42% for serious delinquency to 79% for general delinquency.

### **Juvenile Justice as the Starting Point**

Prevalence estimates for juvenile justice-involved cases with maltreatment histories or open child welfare cases vary across studies but are generally similar to the patterns reported above (see “Child Welfare as the Starting Point”). The differences often reflect methodological differences. In this case, both the particular stage examined in the juvenile justice process and the types of data used contribute to variation in prevalence estimates.

Several studies provide general prevalence estimates of dually-involved youth within juvenile justice populations. A recent study using data from King County, Washington, found that 67% of juvenile justice cases had some type of child welfare history (Halemba and Siegel, 2011). Yet in another recent study conducted in Missouri, Dannerbeck and Yan (2011) examined all youth with at least one status or delinquency referral and at least one risk assessment recorded between 2002 and 2009 (N=79,766 youth), and found that 17% had a child maltreatment history on either Division of Family Service or juvenile court records. Using administrative data from Los Angeles County, Ryan et al. (2007) examined all first-time offenders between 2002 and 2005 and found that 7% of these cases had open child welfare cases at the time of arrest

(see also Ryan, 2010). Although these estimates are not consistent across sites, two additional studies may help illuminate the source of the inconsistency. Using data from Arizona, for example, Halemba et al. (2004) examined the prevalence of dual involvement by different stages in the juvenile justice system. They reported lower levels of dual involvement for youth receiving diversion (1%), but higher levels of dual involvement as involvement in the juvenile justice system deepened—for example, 7% of probation cases and 42% of probation placement cases had an open child welfare case. Similarly, Cusick, Goerge, and Bell (2009) examined eight cohorts of correctional exits between 1996 and 2003, and found that 65% of those exiting from correctional placements had been involved in the child welfare system prior to their entry into the correctional placement. Taken together, the results indicate that dual-system involvement may be greater in the stages of the juvenile justice system that represent deeper penetration.

Similar or higher estimates of maltreatment are documented among juvenile justice populations when self-reports of maltreatment are considered. Dannerbeck and Yan (2011), for instance, pointed out that their estimate based on official accounts of maltreatment may be low due to underreporting. Based on a previous report published by one of the authors (Dannerbeck, 2004, as cited in Dannerbeck and Yan, 2011), 61% of delinquent youth in Missouri self-reported having been abused or neglected. Similarly, Garland, Hough, and Landsverk (2001) interviewed youth in various public sector agencies, including youth who were involved in the juvenile justice system. Of these youth, 45.2% reported experiencing moderate amounts of maltreatment, and 22.6% reported severe levels of maltreatment. Similarly, Swain et al. (2006) interviewed 1,829 youth newly detained after an arrest between 1995 and 1998. Although only 16.3% had a court record of maltreatment, 82.7% of the youth reported some level of maltreatment, and 9.4% reported high levels of maltreatment.

### **Can Crossing Over Be Prevented?**

A review of crossover prevalence rates raises the question of whether crossing over from maltreatment to delinquency can be prevented, particularly when maltreated youth are known to the child welfare system. In

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other words, is it possible for the child welfare system to identify youth who are at risk for committing delinquency and intervene before delinquency occurs? In theory, the answer to this question is yes, but in practice, prevention requires practitioners in the child welfare system to (1) know what factors increase the likelihood of delinquency, and (2) measure those factors among their populations in a consistent way. Few child welfare systems across the nation have developed targeted prevention projects that screen for a youth's risk for delinquency, often because the factors that increase the risk for delinquency have not been clearly defined in the literature.

Although the literature establishing maltreatment as a risk factor for delinquency is sizable, less attention has been given to what characteristics among maltreated youth increase individual probabilities to commit delinquency. In other words, not all children who experience maltreatment become delinquent, so what are the factors that mediate the impact of maltreatment on delinquency? Research examining this issue is not as large as that focused on establishing a relationship, but it is growing. From this research, it appears that a number of characteristics may increase the likelihood of delinquency among maltreated youth.

### **The Impact of Maltreatment across Type and Duration**

Research is mixed with regard to which type of maltreatment may lead to delinquency or violence more often (see, for example, Yun, Ball, and Lim, 2011), but in a review of several studies, Maas, Herrenkohl, and Sousa (2008) concluded that (1) physical abuse appears to be the most consistent predictor of violence, and (2) compounded abuse and increased severity of abuse raise the likelihood of violence. In considering offending more generally, neglect appears to be a strong and consistent predictor (Jonson-Reid and Barth, 2000a; Smith, Ireland, and Thornberry, 2005). Looking at maltreatment from a developmental perspective, Smith, Ireland, and Thornberry (2005) found that youth who experience maltreatment in early childhood only are less likely to offend than youth who experience maltreatment only in adolescence or persistently from early childhood into adolescence (see also Thornberry, Ireland, and Smith, 2001; and Ireland, Smith, and Thornberry, 2002).

### **Out-of-Home Placement Experiences**

Research in this area explores both the impact of type of placement as well as the number of placements (i.e., placement stability or instability). Ryan et al. (2008) as well as others have shown that group home placements increase the likelihood of delinquency. Additionally, in the first study examining kinship care placements and delinquency, Ryan et al. (2010) found that kinship placements increased the likelihood of delinquency for African-American and Caucasian males but decreased the likelihood of delinquency for Hispanic males and females. Although placement type may matter in predicting delinquency, Widom and Maxfield (2001) found that placement instability had more negative consequences for offending than simply being placed in an out-of-home placement (see also Ryan and Testa, 2005; and Jonson-Reid and Barth, 2000b).

### **Ecological Context**

Several studies argue that the relationship between maltreatment and delinquency must be considered within an ecological model. In other words, the relationship between maltreatment and delinquency should be studied within the various contexts in which the youth functions, including the family, school, and community environments (Dannerbeck and Yan, 2011; Crooks et al., 2007; Verrechhia et al., 2010; Jonson-Reid, 1998). Within this literature, there is some indication that positive attachments to others and safe school environments reduce the likelihood of delinquency among maltreated youth (Ryan, Testa, and Zhai, 2008; Crooks et al., 2007; Benda and Corwyn, 2002).

As the research in this area continues to grow, child welfare agencies will be able to develop and implement screening tools to identify which youth are more at risk for committing delinquency and change their trajectories through services directed at reducing key risk factors. To this end, Los Angeles County, California, recently commissioned a study to identify which factors make some youth more at risk for delinquency than others. Using data collected through the Structured Decision-Making process, Bogie et al. (2011) applied the following factors to assess level of risk (i.e., low, moderate, or high) for delinquency:

- Number of prior investigation(s) for abuse or neglect
- Number of prior child welfare services
- Number of prior injuries to any child in the home resulting from child abuse and/or neglect
- Number of times child was placed in a group home as a result of investigation that led to current case
- Child's age at the time of child welfare referral that led to current case
- Child's gender
- Child's substance use and/or abuse
- Child's academic difficulty
- Child's past or current delinquency
- Child's mental health or behavioral issue (any child in the home)

Placement into typologies was then validated by looking at the percentage of youth in each category who were arrested within the next three years. The results showed that high-risk offenders were more likely to be arrested than moderate- and low-risk offenders. The next step in this process is to develop and implement a process to consistently screen youth and to provide appropriate interventions to those found at greater risk for delinquency. Los Angeles County is currently building a pilot for such a process in four of its regional areas.

## What Happens to a Dually-Involved Youth in the Juvenile Justice System?

Prevention plays a critical role in addressing the needs of youth at risk of crossing over between systems, but when prevention efforts are unsuccessful, a youth enters the juvenile justice system. We now look at the literature as it relates to the experiences of dually-involved and dually-adjudicated youth.

Differential and disparate treatment are important concepts in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (Georgetown University, 2008). In juvenile justice processing, differential treatment (e.g., two offenders

receiving different treatment) is justified if the legal characteristics of the offense and the offender are different (e.g., seriousness of the offense and prior criminal record). A youth charged with a more serious offense and with more prior offenses in his history will typically receive different treatment than a youth who looks similar in other ways because the risk to public safety is greater based on legal factors. Differential treatment becomes problematic, however, when disparate treatment occurs.

Disparate treatment is when similarly situated youth receive different treatment based on nonlegal factors such as race and gender. Concerns related to race and gender disparities exist within both the child welfare and justice systems generally because such disparities significantly contribute to overrepresentation (in the case of race/ethnicity) and unequal treatment. Both Swain et al. (2006) and Lau et al. (2003) examined maltreatment rates by race/ethnicity and found that African-American youth were more likely to have a court record of maltreatment even though their rate of maltreatment was equal to or lower than that of Caucasian youth. These same concerns exist when considering dually-involved youth. As indicated in the Introduction, children of color, particularly African-American youth, are overrepresented at similar or greater rates in the dually-involved population (pathway 1) compared to child welfare and delinquency populations. This issue is underscored by recent research by Ryan et al. (2007) and Ryan (2010). In Ryan et al. (2007), 7% of all first-time offenders in Los Angeles County between 2002 and 2005 had a child welfare history; however, 14% of African-American first-time offenders during this time had a child welfare history. Ryan (2010) continued to examine the contribution of child welfare to overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system in four areas: Peoria, Illinois; DuPage County, Illinois; Alleghany County, Pennsylvania; and Washington State. In virtually all areas across all decision points examined, Ryan found African-American rates of child maltreatment to be higher than the overall rate for youth in the delinquency system, leading him to conclude that child welfare is a significant source of disproportionate minority contact in juvenile justice. Although we do not have similar research for gender yet, we consistently see a larger proportion of females in the dually-involved population than in the general delinquency population—typically, females represent 20–25% of delinquency cases, but in dually-involved populations,

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they represent anywhere from one-third to one-half of the cases. To date, no research examines these issues directly.

In addition to concerns of disparate treatment across race and gender, dually-involved youth may face disparate treatment because of their involvement in the child welfare system. Research examining the treatment of dually-involved youth in the delinquency system is small, but the findings are consistent: dually-involved youth appear to receive different treatment than their counterparts who are not involved in child welfare, even when controlling for other factors. For instance, Conger and Ross (2009) examined detention decisions in New York City and found that dually-involved youth were more likely to be detained than youth without child welfare involvement (see also Conger and Ross, 2006 and 2001), and Ryan et al. (2008) found that dually-involved youth in Los Angeles County were less likely to receive “home on probation” and more likely to be placed in a group home setting than youth without an open child welfare case. Although delinquency system decisionmakers may perceive dually-involved youth as higher risk than their counterparts without child welfare histories (Morris and Freundlich, 2004), there is mixed evidence as to whether they pose greater risk based on criminogenic need.<sup>7</sup> Herz et al. (2009) assessed risk levels for dually-involved youth in Los Angeles and found similar distributions of low-, moderate-, and high-risk offenders as compared to those reported for general delinquency populations—i.e., most offenders fell into the low-risk category, fewer in the moderate-risk category, and fewest in the high-risk category. However, Dannerbeck and Yan (2011) compared the characteristics of crossover youth to noncrossover youth in the delinquency system to determine whether risk factors differed across these two groups and whether those risk factors predicted future engagement in violent crime. Crossover youth in this study had significantly higher rates of key risk factors, particularly related to criminogenic needs (e.g., mental health problems, learning disorders and academic performance, and family characteristics). Many of these factors, in turn, were related to future violent offending.

The need for more research in this area is substantial. We need to understand how and why crossing over increases the overrepresentation of minority youth, particularly

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<sup>7</sup> *Criminogenic is defined as producing or leading to crime or criminality.*

African-American youth, and increases the representation of females compared to general delinquency populations. In addition, research needs to more carefully consider how the situational context (i.e., the circumstances that define a dually-involved youth simply because of his/her involvement in the child welfare system) may increase the likelihood of delinquency as well as facilitate deeper penetration of the juvenile justice system for these youth.

## Outcomes for Dually-Involved Youth

In general, research related to outcomes for youth exiting the foster care system is not encouraging. These youth often struggle with substance abuse problems, mental health problems, unemployment, homelessness, and crime (see Courtney et al., 2010). Studies that examine dually-involved youth specifically indicate even more dire outcomes for youth who penetrate both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.<sup>8</sup>

A key outcome measure for dually-involved and dually-adjudicated youth is recidivism (i.e., a new arrest). In their examination of eight cohorts of correctional exits between 1996 and 2003, Cusick, Goerge, and Bell (2009) compared exits in the “uninvolved” group (those who had no system involvement prior to their entry into correctional placement) to the “marginally served” group, which contained youth with previous child welfare involvement, and found that the recidivism rate for the “marginally-involved” group (51%) was higher than the “uninvolved” group (42%). Halembe and Siegel (2011) also found high rates of recidivism for dually-adjudicated youth in their recent prevalence study in King County, Washington. Youth with no history of child welfare involvement were less likely to recidivate within six months than those with legal activity and placement by the child welfare system (17% compared to 42%), and after two years, these percentages grew to 34% and 70%, respectively.

The findings reported in long-term adulthood studies also report discouraging results for dually-involved youth. Widom and Maxfield (2001) tracked maltreated youth and

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<sup>8</sup> See generally results from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Adverse Childhood Experiences Study at <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/>.

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a matched group of nonmaltreated youth for 25 years (see also Widom and Maxfield, 1996). Over the course of time, maltreatment increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59% and as an adult by 28% (p. 1). Similarly, Coleman et al. (2008) tracked New York State delinquents into adulthood and found childhood maltreatment to be associated with an increased risk of developing adult antisocial behavior and of becoming an adult perpetrator of abuse/neglect regardless of gender. Finally, a recently released study by Culhane, Metraux, and Moreno (2011) compared young adult outcomes across youth involved in (1) the child welfare system only, (2) the probation system only, and (3) both the child welfare and probation systems in Los Angeles County. The findings are astounding. Compared to youth involved only in child welfare or probation, the dually-involved youth were more likely to have adult criminal justice involvement, to be on public

welfare, to access health services, and to access mental health and substance abuse services. In sum, the dually-involved youth in this study were two to three times more likely to access three or more service systems within four and eight years of turning 18. Additionally, they were less likely to be consistently employed, and they earned less during this time (Culhane, Metraux, and Moreno, 2011).

In sum, the growing body of literature offers substantial insight into the experiences of crossover youth, particularly dually-involved youth. These findings point to the need for more research, but they beg the question of what goes wrong for these youth. Section III attempts to describe the story behind these trends, focusing on the critical features absent across the child welfare and juvenile justice systems as well as on the ways in which these systems fail to adequately address the needs of dually-involved youth.

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## III. The Story Behind the Trends

From a systems perspective, poor outcomes for dually-involved youth are arguably related to the absence or ineffective implementation of certain features that enhance the handling of their cases. The absence of an infrastructure to facilitate communication and collaboration across the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is perhaps the most significant problem underlying the ineffective handling of dually-involved youth. In most jurisdictions, the two systems are housed in separate agencies, but even when they are joined into one agency, each system has distinct mandates, goals, and work processes. The lack of understanding of the differences as well as of the similarities among agencies makes it difficult for the two systems to work together. The biggest variance between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems rests in each system's view of the young person and whose interest the agency seeks to serve. In the juvenile justice system, the young person is often seen as a perpetrator or someone who puts society at risk, and historically, the services provided seek to remediate the delinquent behavior. On the other hand, the child welfare system views the young person as a victim and works to nurture and protect him or her. This difference in views often translates into the organizational culture—affecting how an agency functions, how youth and families are engaged, and how services are provided. The reality is that dually-involved youth need to be protected and their behavior needs to change so that they do not harm others. At issue is not how we label the youth—as “victim” or “perpetrator”—but how we serve the youth both to protect them and effect behavioral change.

In many jurisdictions, not only are there no forums for cross-training to directly address this issue, but there simply is no avenue for agency personnel in the two systems to routinely interact in relation to cases they have in common. This, in turn, results in a lack of data to inform practice, both for individual case decision making and for the use of aggregate data to assess and improve practices. In too many places in the country, there still is no acknowledgement of the existence of joint cases, and

there are no regular reports describing the characteristics, handling, and outcomes for dually-involved youth.

Information-sharing barriers often prevent the two systems from planning for dually-involved youth in a coordinated fashion that addresses a youth's individual needs. These barriers include not only lack of knowledge about the other system—its values and its goals—but also a variety of legal and policy issues that govern how information can or cannot be shared, all of which is compounded by complex record-keeping systems and the limitations of technology. For example, a case in one system may be handled by multiple workers, with case information detailed in multiple files and no audit system to regularly verify the contents. When caseworkers are asked if they have ever picked up a file only to learn that the information in it is untrue, too often their responses are affirmative. Further complicating the issue is that the technology itself may be a challenge to effective information sharing. The information-sharing systems across multiple disciplines simply may not have the capacity to interface so that information that needs to be shared can be readily accessed.

The lack of structural relationships and of understanding between systems manifests in a daily lack of coordination and collaboration, which produces several negative consequences, including the following:

- Lost prevention opportunities
- No coordinated response to identification
- Lack of coordinated engagement with the court and legal system
- Ineffective service delivery
- Lack of engagement of the educational and behavioral health systems
- Failure to recognize the impact of trauma on behavior
- Failure to engage families

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- Inadequate attention to permanency and effective transition into adulthood

These issues are explored below and are based on the literature and on lessons learned from crossover youth reform efforts, including the Systems Integration Initiative and Crossover Youth Practice Model.

## Lost Prevention Opportunities

Dually-involved youth are placed unnecessarily on trajectories further into the juvenile justice system because both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems fail to look carefully at how they can serve these youth in the least restrictive setting using the assets of both systems. This is particularly troubling when there is a failure to recognize that the access to particular services that these youth need may be more readily available to youth in some systems than in other systems, even though the need is the same. For example, unaddressed substance abuse and mental health needs are lost opportunities to prevent youth from progressing further into the juvenile justice system. Failure to focus on education, employment, prosocial activities, and family relationships is also a lost prevention opportunity.

## No Coordinated Response to Identification

The identification of dually-involved youth and the response to them may depend on the point of entry. We know that youth enter the juvenile justice system all too often because the child welfare system is not equipped to divert them from juvenile justice involvement when their behavior is troublesome. For example, it is common for group homes to call law enforcement when a youth acts out—resulting in a delinquency charge even though the situation could have been handled informally if the facility personnel were specially trained. Moreover, the reality is that some child welfare agency personnel are frustrated by behavior problems and are tempted to “dump” youth into the juvenile justice system.

## Lack of Coordinated Engagement with the Court and Legal System

The court processes that impact youth outcomes include different attorneys, separate court hearings, and conflicting

perceptions of what’s in the best interest of the youth. In a dependency hearing, a vast array of attorneys represent the best interest of various parties to the case. They include the state’s attorney (representing the child welfare agency), a guardian ad litem (representing the youth),<sup>9</sup> and potentially an individual attorney representing each parent. If the youth is in the process of being adopted or placed in the custody of a third party, that person may have legal representation as well. These parties attempt to work collaboratively with the assigned family court judge to achieve permanency for the youth. In a delinquency case, a state’s attorney is appointed to represent the juvenile justice system, and another attorney is appointed to represent the youth. These parties generally have a tenuous relationship, as they are often working to achieve very different outcomes. In the case of dually-involved youth, the aforementioned attorneys for the dependency and delinquency case are usually not the same person, nor is counsel from each case required to work together. The lack of communication creates a void in the presentation of information that could drastically shape the outcome of each case. In many instances, there is a lack of continuity in the presiding judge. As a result, families do not receive any level of continuity in the court process. The historical lack of communication among legal parties and lack of continuity in judicial officers often result in families being given conflicting court orders and having to attend multiple court hearings (that are not held at a time conducive to family participation). This creates an intense burden of time on the youth and family. To the degree that the delinquency and dependency systems have a conflicting perception of the best interest of the youth, the need for court processes to be more aligned is intensified.

## Ineffective Service Delivery

Once youth are in multiple systems, they risk being subject to multiple processes by multiple agencies with little or no coordination to achieve optimal case plans. Assessments are duplicated, little or no attention is given to the integration of findings from the various assessments, and case plans may be duplicative or even contradictory. This lack of a coordinated response is not only unproductive in terms of addressing the youths’ needs and criminogenic factors, but it can push youth

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<sup>9</sup> Use of guardians ad litem varies in each jurisdiction. In some states they are licensed attorneys; in other states they are community volunteers. However, in each instance they represent the best interest of the youth.

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further into the juvenile justice system when they fail to meet the requirements of contradictory case plans.

For a variety of reasons, the barriers to sharing information across systems have been significant. Although some of these reasons are rooted in law and policy, more often than not, the lack of information sharing stems from myths about what individuals can and cannot share. This is especially true of assessments. When assessment information is not shared, redundant assessment processes occur. Families and youth are expected to answer the same questions on multiple forms, during multiple assessment meetings. Multiple jurisdictions have expressed concerns that the integrity of the assessment information may be jeopardized due to redundancies in the process. Equally as complex is the fact that families involved in multiple systems often have to struggle with co-existing and often conflicting case plans. When integrated, a jointly crafted case plan can meet families' needs as well as system requirements. When crafted independently, these co-existing plans may require families to participate in an extensive array of disconnected services, ultimately setting youth and their families up for failure.

Service delivery to this population of youth is expensive and made all the more so by the duplication of services and absence of auditing to identify ineffective, repeated, or failed services. Too often, when the case files of these youth are reviewed closely, failed intervention approaches and programs have been repeated. Because the two systems do not work closely together in their assessment and case-planning processes, they can miss opportunities to access services in one system or the other as well as opportunities to pool both fiscal and human resources to better address dually-involved youth.

## **Lack of Engagement of the Educational and Behavioral Health Systems**

As indicated in the Introduction, dually-involved youth have high rates of academic risk factors, mental health problems, and substance abuse. Therefore, while collaboration between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is necessary, that collaboration should extend to the education, mental health, and substance

abuse systems as well. In particular, the mental health and substance abuse systems—though having no authority to remove young people—can exert a fair amount of power on the lives of their consumers as they are able to place youth in out-of-home treatment settings. Therefore, engagement of these systems when mental health and substance abuse issues are present is key.

The education system is the one system that touches—and carries some responsibility for—the lives of all young people. Therefore, the question is not whether educators should be involved in planning for crossover youth, but rather whom to involve and at what stage in the process. A Los Angeles study that looked at crossover youth data from 2004 found that 76% of the youth were enrolled in school but 50% were not attending regularly, were exhibiting behavior problems, or were not performing well (Herz and Ryan, 2008). Another study found that high school students who changed schools once were less likely to graduate, even when other variables that affect high school completion were controlled (Rumberger et al., 1999). These and many other studies have long highlighted the need for continuity of care to ensure that youth have education stability. A strong education is the one thing these systems can provide that will help youth to become self-sufficient adults. The tragedy is that, historically, ensuring educational stability has played a back seat to addressing the crisis of the moment for many of these youth.

## **Failure to Recognize the Impact of Trauma on Behavior**

A trauma-informed casework practice model recognizes the unique impact of trauma on a young person's life and the ways in which practice can be more effective when applied through a "trauma lens," just as practice is more effective when applied through a cultural lens or with an understanding of child development (Chadwick Center for Children and Families, 2011). Failure to understand behavior through the lens of trauma leads to flawed interventions that most often miss the central issues facing the young person.

## **Failure to Engage Families**

Although the commitment to fully engage families in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is growing, both

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systems have work to do to get to the point where families are full partners in the process. When either system fails to fully engage families, the quality of services is affected—including the assessment, case plan, court process, ongoing case management, and inevitably the outcome of the case. This is evidenced in both subtle and not-so-subtle ways. In some systems multi-disciplinary teams drive case planning. This designated team of professionals meets to discuss the family and youth without either the families or youth being invited into the process. This makes a statement that systems are more knowledgeable than families and do not trust families enough to be fully transparent with the team's concerns. Moreover, it is common practice among child welfare and juvenile justice agencies for social workers and probation officers to create a case plan and then bring it to the family for review and adoption. This process, done to “save time” or “just to get the ball rolling,” fails to acknowledge the imbalance of power that exists between families and the child-serving system representatives. Even if family members believe that certain services would be helpful, they may have significant fears about sharing their feelings, not wanting to appear to be “resistant” or “noncompliant,” for example—words often used to describe families. Thus, the family's lack of involvement often results in case plans that are not successful.

## **Inadequate Attention to Permanency and Effective Transition into Adulthood**

Historically, the child welfare system has had a different focus than the juvenile justice system. Even though youth involved in the care of the child welfare system often experience poor outcomes, the system as a whole maintains a focus on permanency. All youth who enter into the dependency system are given a permanency goal at the point of adjudication. That permanency goal serves as the driver for all case-planning and case management services provided to the youth and family. In contrast, due to the nature of the circumstances by

which a youth becomes involved with the juvenile justice system, the focus of that system's case is retribution and accountability. The focus of each system affects how agency personnel serve the family and what outcomes they seek for the youth. In its effort to achieve permanency, the child welfare system works with the youth and family with the understanding that the youth is part of a larger unit. In contrast, the juvenile justice system typically works with the youth only. This lack of a joint focus on permanency and a successful transition into adulthood impacts both the short- and long-term outcomes for youth. The findings of Widom and Maxfield (2001) stress the importance of achieving permanency for crossover youth, which includes providing and monitoring appropriate services that assist youth in attaining stability in their lives and reaching closure with both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

## **Conclusion**

Compounding all of these issues is the absence of policy imperatives that require the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to work together. A lack of motivation along with an absence of political will means that there are no incentives to address the lack of structural relationships and understanding. Only a few state and local governments have enacted legislation or written directives to ensure that these two systems work together on behalf of dually-involved youth. In most cases, actions to coordinate or integrate the systems take place because of a high-profile case failure or the advent of new leadership educated in the many failures that take place on a daily basis for this population. Moreover, the absence of public policy in this arena has meant that there is no accountability for outcomes for these youth. The lack of public knowledge about dually-involved youth has meant that there is also no strong public sentiment to act on behalf of this population. Section IV reviews two national system reform efforts that have been working to address these barriers: the Systems Integration Initiative and the Crossover Youth Practice Model.

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## IV. Methodologies Addressing the Systemic Factors Impacting Dually-Involved Youth

Over the past several years, two major initiatives have been developed to address the systemic factors impacting dually-involved youth. The first—the Systems Integration Initiative (SII)—provides an impetus for jurisdictions to begin thinking about the need to plan for this population. The initiative calls for an examination of how these youth are being handled and the development of an infrastructure (policies, protocols, and programs) for the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to work together to better serve the youth and improve their outcomes. The second initiative is the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM), which provides a prescriptive set of practices to be put in place, directing how practitioners can address the needs of these youth as they move through the case process. The CYPM is accompanied by a data collection effort that ties changes in practices to the desired outcomes. These two initiatives are described below to set the stage for the last section of the paper, which presents the next frontier of multi-system reform, based on combining the strengths of both of these efforts into a set of policy imperatives.

### Systems Integration Initiative

#### Background

In 2000, the SII began at the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) with the support of a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and it continues today with the support of the foundation under the auspices of the Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Corps. When SII began, policymakers were just beginning to recognize the relationship between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency, but little in the way of resources was devoted to address that relationship in practice. The focus of SII was on the connections between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and on the development of a multi-system approach to policy and program development and service delivery. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Raise the level of awareness about the connection between child maltreatment and juvenile delinquency and the unique needs of youth in the juvenile justice system who have suffered abuse and/or neglect
- Advance the development and implementation of best practices and policies that address the needs of maltreated youth who become involved in the juvenile justice system, prevent their further system penetration, and improve outcomes
- Monitor, analyze, and promote sound public policy and legislation to improve multi-system collaboration and coordination, creating further infrastructure to support efforts to address this population

SII’s efforts to advance these goals have been concentrated on data development and dissemination, publication of materials to guide practitioners, technical assistance, and the presentation of symposia.

#### Foundations for SII Development

The research on children involved in both systems provided a strong foundation for the SII. One early work, Widom and Maxfield’s *Update on the “Cycle of Violence,”* was used extensively in the development of SII. This publication reported a prospective study concluding that childhood abuse and neglect increased the odds of future delinquency and adult criminality overall by 29% (Widom and Maxfield, 2001). This early research was highlighted among several other studies with similar findings in one of CWLA’s systems integration publications, *Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: From Research to Effective Program, Practice, and Systemic Solutions* (Wiig, Widom, and Tuell, 2003). That publication was designed to persuade practitioners to undertake systems integration work. It did so by reporting a combination of the research on the incidence of multi-system youth with the research on programs that had been effective in reducing child

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maltreatment and juvenile delinquency. Other studies followed, among them the extensive works of Denise Herz and Joseph Ryan referenced in other parts of this paper, all presenting a compelling case for addressing the needs of dually-involved youth in a manner that would reduce the likelihood of them penetrating further into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Another piece of work that influenced the foundation for the SII was a project in Hennepin County, Minnesota, based in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office. With the support of dedicated funding from the Minnesota legislature, a study was undertaken of children younger than the age of 10 who had committed delinquent acts. The findings illustrated that the majority of this population of children came out of the public child welfare system and that most of them had either a parent with a criminal history or a sibling with a delinquent history. The overall histories of the families of these children illustrated that most of the families were involved in multiple systems due to the various problems they were experiencing related to mental health, substance abuse, housing, education, and household income (Wiig and Lahti-Johnson, 1995). The identification of this population was seen as a crime prevention opportunity, and the implications for systems coordination and integration were apparent. Part of the strategy to serve this population was to create a multi-disciplinary team whose members would work together across systems to address the underlying problems that continued to place these children at risk for future delinquency. The results of this strategy were presented in an evaluation report that found that children who had a minimum of 18 months in the program had fewer and less severe subsequent offenses and less involvement with child protection compared to a similar group of delinquent children (Decker and Owen, 2000). The effort in Hennepin County was replicated and enhanced in Ramsey County, Minnesota, under the program name All Children Excel (ACE). ACE was for the same population: children younger than the age of 10 who were at risk for child maltreatment and delinquency. It was approved as a promising program for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Model Programs Guide in 2006. A summary of program findings follows:

*A comprehensive evaluation conducted in 2006 showed that engaging and stabilizing high-*

*risk children takes three years before health development gains have a meaningful impact. By age 13, 30.5% of participants in the ACE program have re-offended, compared with nearly 83% of children at a similar risk level who did not receive ACE services. An earlier 2004 evaluation showed that after a 4½-year period, 65% of ACE participants had no further police contact and 86% had not been charged with a subsequent offence. Among intervention participants, 60% displayed no disruptive behavior at school, attended classes regularly, and got passing grades. (All Children Excel, 2012)*

Also influencing the development of the SII was OJJDP's publication, *A Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders: Program Summary* (Wilson and Howell, 1993). For serious and chronic juvenile offenders, the literature recognized that risks were found in many domains, including the family, the community, the school, the peer group, and the individual. These findings suggested that effective prevention and intervention programming must use multiple strategies to reduce multiple risk factors. Paramount to effective implementation of the strategies was a recognition that agencies that traditionally administered categorical funds would need to collaborate in reducing a variety of risks at multiple levels if a risk-focused prevention approach were to succeed. The Model Programs Guide and accompanying support tools and resources called for collaborative interventions on the part of all the human service systems—juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, health care, education, and community agencies and institutions. The lessons learned from these collaborative efforts also served as a strong foundation for the development of the SII.

## Law

The legal imperatives set out in federal law were another critical part of the foundation for the SII. First, in 2002, amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP 107-273) were signed into law. These amendments broadened the act by adding funding to juvenile delinquency prevention and the treatment of juvenile offenders and youth at risk of becoming juvenile

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offenders who are victims of child abuse and neglect or who have experienced violence. The legislation also contained specific requirements for the states related to the coordination of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. The law required that child welfare records be incorporated into the juvenile justice records for purposes of dispositional planning, and required that juvenile offenders whose placements were funded by Title IV-E Foster Care receive the protections of a case plan and a case plan review. Second, corresponding amendments were made to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 2003. They included adding to the list of purposes for state grants supporting or enhancing interagency collaboration between the child protection system and the juvenile justice system for improved delivery of services and treatment, including methods for continuity of treatment plan and services as children transition between systems. This legislation also contained a new requirement that annual state data reports document the number of children under the care of the state child protection system who are transferred into the custody of the state juvenile justice system. Despite the existence of these legal requirements in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, however, the legislative intent has not been realized in many jurisdictions in the country.

## **The Four Phases of the Systems Integration Initiative**

Building on the research, legal, and policy foundations of the SII and on the increasing interest of state and local jurisdictions wishing to address the relationship between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, Wiig and Tuell developed a publication to guide the process. Titled *Guidebook for Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System Coordination and Integration: A Framework for Improved Outcomes*, the guidebook describes a four-phase planning process to help jurisdictions with their integration and coordination planning, including not only the child welfare and juvenile justice systems but three critically related systems: education, mental health, and substance abuse (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). The four phases of this process are (1) Mobilization and Advocacy, (2) Study and Analysis, (3) Action Strategy, and (4) Implementation.

The four-phase planning process and its corresponding structure are critical in the quest to achieve systems

integration and coordination and thereby improve outcomes for dually-involved youth. Without a clear planning process and structure, the efforts will not be as clearly focused, the current practices not carefully analyzed, and the proposed solutions not carefully articulated. A committee structure has been used successfully in many jurisdictions where systems integration work has been undertaken over the years. It consists of an executive committee that manages and provides broad oversight of the work and three subcommittees that oversee the various tasks that are undertaken in Phase 2: Study and Analysis, namely, (1) Data Collection, Management, and Performance Measurement Subcommittee; (2) Legal and Policy Analysis and Information Sharing Subcommittee; and (3) Resource Inventory and Assessment Subcommittee (see sidebar, “Committee Structure”). As each subcommittee undertakes its examination of issues, it documents the questions posed and records its analysis and proposed solutions. The resulting policies and protocols are formalized and provide for an institutionalized change in the agencies’ operations and practices. Without this intentional process, the danger is that people may spend too much time discussing problems without taking action. Following is a description of the four phases of SII and their purposes.

### **Phase 1: Mobilization and Advocacy**

The first phase of the planning process, mobilization and advocacy, assists jurisdictions to consider what structural foundations exist or need to be created to support their systems integration work. It encourages policymakers to develop a road map of goals and outcomes so that it is clear to all why they are undertaking this work.

#### ***Structural Foundations***

Leadership, governance, management, and sustainability are key supports to systems integration work. Leadership will come from the individuals charged with carrying out the work and from the constituent groups they represent. Jurisdictions are encouraged to identify the characteristics they are looking for in their leaders and to decide what constituencies are going to be involved. It is critical that the leaders and constituent groups possess the political will to carry out this work and achieve the desired goals and outcomes.

Governance of this work should be formalized through executive orders, charter agreements, or memoranda

## ***SII in Action*—Committee Structure**

The four-phase planning process for systems integration has been successfully facilitated in several jurisdictions throughout the country through a committee and subcommittee structure. An Executive Committee articulates goals and objectives, identifies the universe of issues for review, provides the governance and decision-making authority, and oversees or manages the work of three—and possibly more—subcommittees. The functions of the three subcommittees include the following tasks.

### **Data Collection, Management, and Performance Measurement Subcommittee**

This subcommittee identifies the questions to be answered and determines the data elements to be collected to support integration and coordination planning. The subcommittee makes decisions about data and information management and other integrated information systems issues. It also analyzes and determines what data will be used to measure the performance of the two systems and their efforts at coordination and integration.

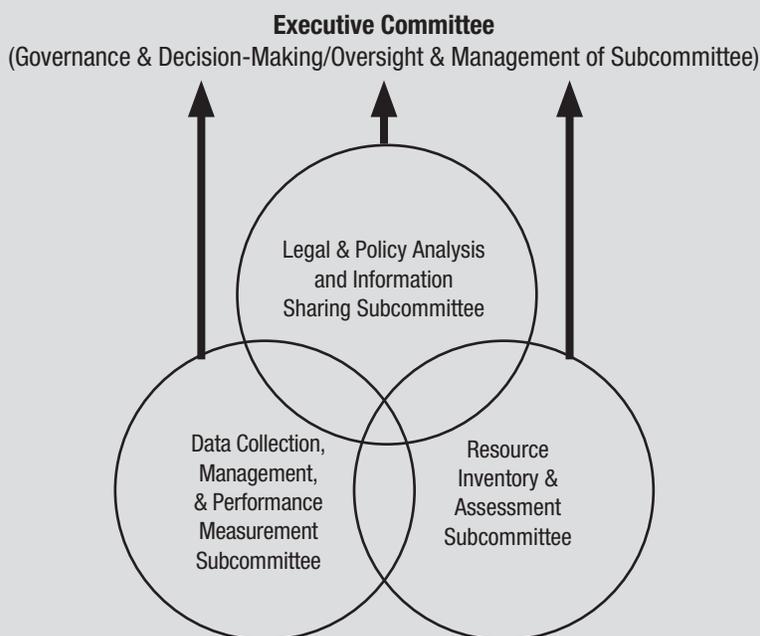
### **Legal and Policy Analysis and Information Sharing Subcommittee**

This subcommittee examines how laws, regulations, and formal and informal policies impact the ability of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to collaborate on behalf of the youth and families served by these systems. The subcommittee also examines legal requirements for information sharing and policy decisions regarding confidentiality issues.

### **Resource Inventory and Assessment Subcommittee**

This subcommittee compiles an inventory of programs and services; conducts a comparative analysis of missions, mandates, and policies; identifies best practices locally and nationally; determines the use of assessment instruments; reviews and analyzes the funding stream that supports programs and services; and initiates training for personnel in both systems.

### **Systems Integration Committee Structure**



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of understanding. The initiative must have a clear management structure to support the reform/change process through all of its phases that takes into consideration staffing and funding, working teams and committees, and public and internal communication strategies (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). Finally, part of the structural foundation is the building of sustainability from the outset. A good example of a structure that was created to sustain systems integration is described in the sidebar, “King County’s Uniting for Youth.”

### **Goals and Outcomes**

Process goals should be established, including “descriptions of the activities that will take place, timelines, who will be involved, benchmarks for achievement of certain results, and how the activities and results of the initiative will be communicated” (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, p. 5). Careful consideration should be given to the development of both child and system outcomes so that it is clear to all why this work is being undertaken and what the various stakeholders can hope to achieve through their involvement. For example, some of the desired system outcomes might be better use of scarce resources, decreased overlap or duplication of services, improved access to and collection and use of data to inform best practices, blended funding, and increased opportunities for prevention. Examples of specific child outcomes are discussed in relation to the CYPM in this paper (see below), and Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA) provides a corollary to the SII’s imperative that both system and child measures be developed. Section V discusses how jurisdictions can use RBA to develop performance measures to hold their efforts accountable.

### **Phase 2: Study and Analysis**

The second phase of the systems integration planning process, study and analysis, includes three distinct but equally important arenas: data development; legal and policy analysis and information sharing; and inventory of resources, best practices, assessment, and training. This phase is labor intensive, and its results will guide the development of action strategies to implement systems integration and coordination.

#### **Data Development**

The development of data to support systems integration and coordination provides the system stakeholders and

## ***SII in Action—*** **King County’s Uniting for Youth**

Operating under the umbrella collaborative titled Uniting for Youth, King County, Washington, has a mature set of processes and products to support its systems integration work. Included are:

- A charter describing SII, the agencies involved, and their respective responsibilities
- An information-sharing resource guide to direct practitioners in their sharing of personally identifiable case information
- Multiple protocols for case handling
- PathNet, a collaborative model of regionally driven multi-system service delivery that focuses on the reengagement of delinquent youth who have disengaged from school; PathNet has resulted in passage of a law creating a statewide reengagement system for all disengaged youth
- A family and community involvement strategy that helps deliver high-quality, responsive, and effective services to children and families
- A study of the prevalence and characteristics of their multi-system youth, *Doorways to Delinquency: Multi-System Involvement of Delinquent Youth in King County (Seattle, WA)* (published as Halemba and Siegel, 2011)

the broader community with knowledge about why reform is needed and how it might best be accomplished. Data development begins with the questions that need to be answered about the target population and proceeds to determine what data are being collected and what data need to be collected. The questions may include the following:

- What is the number and percentage of children who have transferred from one system to the other annually for the past 10 years?
- At what points and under what circumstances do children transfer from one system to the other?

- What children and families simultaneously use the child welfare and juvenile justice systems?
- What are the characteristics—such as demographics, mental health issues, substance abuse history, and residence—of the children and families who have been involved with both systems?
- What services have agencies provided to these children and families?
- What does it cost to serve or provide treatment services to children in each system, as well as both systems? (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, p. 21)

In addition to the data that are developed from the answers to the above questions, jurisdictions should determine what national and local data exist to inform their decisions about strategies to address the population of dually-involved youth. Combining that data with the data that is generated by answering the above questions can be used to determine what data elements should become a fixed part of a jurisdiction’s system integration efforts to inform program and policy development and to conduct program evaluations and performance measurement.

Data development efforts in King County, Washington, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are excellent examples of systems integration and coordination. The *Doorways to Delinquency: Multi-System Involvement of Delinquent Youth in King County (Seattle, WA)* prevalence study documenting the child welfare history of youth referred to the Juvenile Court on delinquency matters provides guidance to King County policymakers in their policy and program development (published as Halemba and Siegel, 2011). The data from this study suggest that intervention efforts need to begin earlier with cross-system youth, that some of the traditional diversion options used currently are not as effective as they need to be, and that screening protocols may need to be augmented to more effectively identify and intervene with this population.

The U.S. Virgin Islands, as part of its systems integration efforts, produced a data profile of dual-jurisdiction youth with detailed information from multiple systems. It is a point-in-time approach to data collection that resulted in a strengths and needs profile for 347 unduplicated youth. The profile includes service history, family

situation, offense profile, behavioral health involvement, and educational assessment (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). These data are invaluable for policymakers making decisions about programs and policies for this target population.

Finally, the development of data is needed to conduct performance measurement and program evaluation. As jurisdictions develop their strategies and programs to improve the integration and coordination of services across multiple systems, they will need to incorporate desired outcomes and measures of effectiveness in their planning processes. These will include performance measures to determine whether the practice strategies and programs are performing as intended and are having the intended effect on the success of the target population. To accomplish this, jurisdictions will need to determine exactly what data elements are needed and establish corresponding data collection systems. Examples of performance measures are provided in section V (see sidebars, “Performance Measures for a Partnership Focused on Case Management” and “Performance Measures for a Team Implementing SII Governance and Management Structures”).

#### **Legal and Policy Analysis and Information Sharing**

*Legal and policy analysis.* The legal mandates under which each system must operate, including how funding is allocated for specific programs and services, as well as the actual operation of court processes are all issues for legal and policy analysis to consider in support of systems integration and coordination efforts. Direction for the analysis and the questions that must be answered are set out in phase 2 in the systems integration and coordination guidebook (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008) and in a separate guide for legal and policy analysis (Heldman, 2006), which builds on the experiences of several jurisdictions to improve cross-system policies and practices. These guides outline a process for jurisdictions to examine their legal, policy, and procedural mandates in order to identify the changes needed to improve coordination of initial decision making, case management, and service delivery. Heldman describes a number of themes common among jurisdictions that have undertaken this effort:

- How information-sharing and confidentiality concerns can impact coordinated case management and

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service delivery as well as efficient and effective court processes

- How specific state statutes define the goals, practices, and procedures of the state’s child-serving systems and how these provisions impact the ability of agencies to work together
- Whether agency mandates are clear, communicated to staff, and met by the agencies, including whether it is understood which system is responsible for the legal and physical custody of a child involved in both child welfare and juvenile justice
- Whether and how court practices impact the ability of agencies to effectively serve clients, and whether the court is supporting or can support interagency strategies
- How resources are allocated between child welfare and juvenile justice systems and the extent to which resource allocation impacts systems integration
- What legal issues surround the development of information management systems (Heldman, 2006, p. 11)

Having completed an examination of their legal, policy, and procedural mandates, many jurisdictions find that they need to reconcile—or at least educate each other’s system about—conflicting mandates. The primary results of this examination, however, are the development and implementation of new policies and practices that make collaboration between the systems possible as they undertake decision making, case management, and service delivery for dually-involved youth. See sidebar, “South Dakota,” for a description of the results of one state’s legal and policy analysis.

*Information sharing.* Information sharing is an integral part of systems integration and coordination work. In order to carry out effective programming, solid case planning, and informed decision making for dually-involved youth, individually identifiable case information must be shared across systems. This presents challenges in the form of information-sharing barriers—whether they be real or imagined—such as legal prohibitions, confidentiality requirements, technology and other storage considerations, and thoughtful contemplation of what

information each system partner really needs to know. The reality is that information-sharing challenges are always present because laws change, personnel turn over, and other local contextual factors vary. The critical challenge for policymakers is maintaining the balance between the need-to-know information that will result in better decisions for youth and the need to protect the privacy of individuals and avoid unnecessary self-incrimination. A special set of questions designed to guide the response to this challenge is provided in the systems integration guidebook in the section titled “Questions and Best Practices for the Requestor of Information” (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, pp. 53–54).

Several jurisdictions have made significant headway in their information-sharing efforts by developing legislative initiatives, information-sharing agreements, and information-sharing guides. To improve the manner in which records are shared across systems, South Dakota developed legislation (HB 1059, passed into law in the 2007 legislative session), which focuses on key decision points in the delinquency court process. Building on the requirements of the JJDPA amendments of 2002 discussed previously, this legislation ensures that child protection records are incorporated into juvenile

### ***SII in Action—South Dakota***

The state of South Dakota undertook a legal and policy analysis to support the drafting of legislation to improve information sharing across systems at key decision points in the juvenile justice system. The process included:

- Development of a guiding document: South Dakota Codified Laws Regarding Confidentiality and Information Sharing
- Enactment of a reform statute regarding information sharing across systems (SDCL § 26-8A-13.1)
- Promulgation of procedures developed by Child Protective Services to govern information sharing under the new law (Tuell, 2008)

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court proceedings to improve case planning and case management (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, p. 80).

An information-sharing agreement developed in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, sets out the specific information that is to be shared across systems at various points in the case flow process and the corresponding laws that govern that sharing. It details the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties to the agreement in relation to the cross-system sharing of information and the resolution of any conflicts that might arise. The agreement was endorsed by the local Children and Youth Planning Board and the signatories included the Juvenile Court, Truancy Assessment and Service Center, Families in Need of Services, Juvenile Drug Court, Parish of Jefferson Department of Juvenile Services, Probation Department, Detention Center, District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Diversion Program, Human Services Authority, Sheriff's Office, School Board, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, and Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (see sidebar, "Jefferson Parish, Louisiana").

Three jurisdictions have developed information-sharing resource guides of their own. Originally conceived by King County in 2006 and revised in 2009 (Uniting for Youth, 2009), this information-sharing resource guide was subsequently replicated with modifications to reflect the contextual factors in two other jurisdictions—the

### ***SII in Action—*** **Jefferson Parish, Louisiana**

The SII leadership team in Jefferson Parish developed a planning process, outline, and annual plan for the local Children and Youth Planning Board, an entity consisting of multiple agencies charged with the assessment and planning of services across systems. An information-sharing agreement was developed to govern the multiple agencies that must work together to share information for case decision making, case planning, and case management. The agreement was developed, in part, from a template in the Models for Change Information-Sharing Tool Kit (Wiig et al., 2008), a resource for multi-system work.

state of Arizona (Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission, 2008) and Clark County, Washington (see sidebar, "Arizona"). The guides are designed for practitioners from each of the agencies that come in contact with dually-involved youth, including juvenile probation, children's services, detention services, juvenile corrections, mental health, chemical health, education, court-appointed special advocates, and law enforcement. The guides provide specific direction to practitioners as to what information they can and cannot share along with corresponding laws and other policies. They also provide specific resources, including an overview of state and federal laws on information sharing and confidentiality.

### ***Inventory of Resources, Best Practices, Assessment, and Training***

As systems consider how they are going to work together to improve outcomes for dually-involved youth, they need to conduct inventories of the resources, best practices,

### ***SII in Action—Arizona***

The Governor's Office for Children, Families, and Youth developed a Blueprint: Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems Integration Initiative to guide its multi-system reform effort. The blueprint includes the following elements:

- Letter of agreement and corresponding training curriculum to support jurisdictions' cross-system efforts
- Information-sharing guide that both protects confidentiality and dispels common myths that restrict the flow of important information
- Methods to find and organize data across systems to appropriately serve youth and families and to evaluate the effectiveness of efforts on their behalf
- Recommendations to prevent penetration of youth deeper into the child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice systems (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008)

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and assessment processes available in their systems, as well as provide corresponding training to all involved personnel (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008).

*Resources.* As jurisdictions consider their resources, they should identify and compare organizational missions, mandates, and policies, as well as common and dissimilar components of case processing and management. Jurisdictions should also conduct a comprehensive inventory of programs across systems, identifying the agencies, program descriptions, target populations, services provided, funding sources, and any existing partnerships or agreements that help to serve their objectives in systems integration and coordination. The systems involved in this resource inventory should include, at a minimum, juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse, and education. Programs and services can be charted on a grid, to aid in the analysis, identifying current “ownership” of services, gaps, and collaborations (see appendix B for a sample resource inventory).

The Clark County, Washington, Models for Change work in multi-system collaboration and coordination is an excellent example of the conduct of a resource inventory (see sidebar, “Clark County”). The Clark County Models for Change Steering Committee produced a service referral directory, which involved both the juvenile court and the education service district as partners (Washington Models for Change, 2011). The directory describes the various programs and their target population(s) and lists contact information for mentor programs, chemical dependency treatment, mental health programs, health resources, support programs and other services (e.g., YWCA), and alternative schools by district or agency. The referral directory enhances the county’s efforts to keep kids in school and out of the juvenile justice system.

*Best practices.* To ensure that a jurisdiction is using best practices to address its dually-involved youth, policymakers should compare best practices nationally to the local continuum of programming to identify what is most promising (see sidebar, “Illinois”). Guidance for the analysis of effective programming when working across systems was provided in one of the first publications that laid the foundation for multi-system integration and coordination work, *Understanding Child Maltreatment and Juvenile Delinquency: From Research to Effective Program*,

## ***SII in Action—*** **Clark County, Washington**

The Clark County Models for Change Steering Committee developed an information-sharing guide modeled after the King County, Washington, guide, but tailored to the operations and contextual factors specific to the handling of cases in their jurisdiction. The committee also created a detailed map of the truancy process designed to assist agencies in their interactions about and case planning for truant youths. A supplementary resource guide describes existing resources and informs the referral process.

*Practice, and Systemic Solutions* (Wiig, Widom, and Tuell, 2003). After a review of programming for child abuse and delinquency prevention and intervention, this publication concluded that effective programming must address the following elements:

- Entire context of child and family functioning
- Parent support
- Parent education
- Behavior skills development for both parent and child
- Improved parent-child interaction
- Quality individualized assessment of the child
- Risk factors and needs
- Risk factors targeted at the child, family, neighborhood, and peer levels
- Integration of school services with those provided by the juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health systems
- Multi-modal approach
- Community support
- Activities directed to long-term outcomes for children (e.g., reduction in exposure to abuse, neglect, and violence in the home; reduction in delinquent behavior;

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school success; and social competency) (Wiig, Widom, and Tuell, 2003, pp. 26–27)

*Assessment.* To further their capacity to assess the needs of dually-involved youth in a comprehensive process, jurisdictions should conduct an inventory of assessment instruments across the involved systems. The purpose of this inventory is to identify duplication of effort, strengthen the effective use of assessments in assigning programs and services, and identify opportunities to develop tools in common as well as opportunities to create new assessment technologies (see appendix C for a sample assessment inventory). The questions to be asked are:

- What decisions are the tools to guide or facilitate?
- What population or problem is the target of their use?
- What tools do both systems use?
- Do the data collected by different tools from each system overlap?
- How are the assessment tools used?
  - To classify children?
  - To conduct individualized assessments?

## ***SII in Action—Illinois***

**DuPage County.** DuPage County developed a protocol to define predetention/removal and predispositional practice for dually-involved children and youth within the DuPage County Juvenile Probation and Court Services. The protocol successfully institutionalized a pilot effort in one referring placement facility, where the goal was to enhance coordination between agencies and reduce the removal from placement into detention of those youth who have a known history of substantiated abuse and/or neglect.

**Peoria County.** Working collaboratively, the Peoria Juvenile Justice Council and the Children’s Home Association of Illinois created a protocol for the diversion of youth charged with domestic violence and battery offenses from formal court involvement. The diversion provides a safer, more effective solution than short-term incarceration, which has no connection to services upon subsequent release.

- To make dispositional recommendations to the court?
- To plan for services? (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008)

Two jurisdictions found ways to increase the effective use of assessments with this population. To do this, both jurisdictions focused on the assessment process in addition to the assessment instruments themselves. In King County, Washington, the leaders of the multi-system work realized that many of the instruments used by the various systems were required by specific mandates, and thus the instruments could not be consolidated. Therefore, the focus shifted to the assessment process, with representatives from multiple agencies brought together in one meeting to share their existing assessments. The agencies could also bring the various system workers to one setting with the family so that they could conduct multiple assessments or follow up immediately, thus saving the family from having to attend multiple meetings, each one held at a different time and different location.

In Los Angeles County, California, the multi-disciplinary team for dually-involved youth created an opportunity for the various system workers to join in one forum to conduct the assessment with the family, drawing on material from multiple assessments. This process was the genesis for the development of some very sophisticated assessment tools for dually-involved youth, tools that identify youth in terms of both risk and need and tie the results of the assessment directly to the programs and services that best address each individual youth’s criminogenic risk factors and needs (see sidebar, “Los Angeles County, California”).

*Training.* Finally, a word about training in relation to resources, best practices, and assessment is in order. None of the efforts described in this section or any of the others in phase 2 is going to be very useful if they are not accompanied by training. Personnel at all levels of the organization need to be trained in the research, program, and policy developments that result from a phase 2 study and analysis. Personnel should be incorporated into both planning and debriefing meetings of the results to increase their commitment to system integration efforts. Staff should have the advantage of specific training curricula developed to acquaint them with the other systems’

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## ***SII in Action—*** **Los Angeles County, California**

In response to state legislation, the SII Executive Committee and subcommittees developed and implemented a cross-system protocol designed to improve outcomes for dual-status youth. The protocol includes the following elements:

- A multi-system assessment process that assesses the strengths, treatment needs, and risks of dually-involved youth, resulting in a plan tailored to each individual
- A multi-disciplinary team that conducts assessments, develops case plans, and provides case management; the team, which is comprised of children’s services, probation, mental health, and education, consults with the youth, his/her parents, and attorneys
- A pilot test of a system protocol and multi-disciplinary approach that can set the stage for subsequent countywide implementation (Tuell, 2008)

operations and the new components for cross-system case management. A carefully crafted training plan will also need to accompany the action strategy (phase 3) and implementation (phase 4) described in the following pages. No matter how sound the proposed changes in policy and practice, if the corresponding training is not in place, success may be illusory.

### **Phase 3: Action Strategy**

Having completed phases 1 and 2, jurisdictions should be poised to decide with some specificity their action strategy. The mobilization and advocacy activity should have brought the needed leadership group and stakeholders to the table to embrace common goals and objectives. The study and analysis activity should have brought to the surface the information necessary to make decisions using data and resources in relation to the target population.

The systems integration guidebook provides detailed directions for the action plan. Its 13 steps remind the reader of all the work that has been done to bring information in specified areas to the surface and all the possibilities that might exist for moving forward. The guidebook directs the leadership group to “consider how they are going to manage expectations, respond to potential problems, maintain partnerships, make decisions, and sustain support for implementation” (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, pp. 61–64). Finally, the guidebook points out the potential components for an action strategy focused on dually-involved youth, drawing from the operational and administrative strategies recommended by an earlier publication (Ragan, 2003, p. 3). The potential components include:

- Shared caseloads
- Integrated information systems
- Consolidated governance structures
- Integrated funding streams
- Cross-program teams
- Promotion of dual jurisdiction
- Funding incentives for multiple systems working together
- An audit system to identify duplicate and repeat interventions (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008, p. 63)

Some of these potential components for an action strategy are also reflected in the Crossover Youth Practice Model, the next methodology described in this section.

### **Phase 4: Implementation**

Implementation of the action strategy should have clear leadership, management, administrative support, evaluation, and reporting (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). The leadership group needs to manage the change process, with special consideration given to how the changes are going to affect the organizations involved and their clientele. The group also needs to engage agency personnel to gain their commitment to the changes, and designate organizational structures to support the change process. The organizational structure may include committees or teams, but either way, members should have been part of developing the system reforms from the beginning.

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Management of the implementation process should be concentrated on alignment of the action strategy with the system and child outcomes that were set out at the beginning. The implementation process should also use planning tools that lay out responsibilities and timelines in specific work plans. Administrative support for the action strategy should be characterized by policies, protocols, and procedures that have been formalized in practice manuals, carefully constructed information-sharing and data collection systems, ongoing orientation and training of personnel, and opportunities to celebrate milestones of success. Finally, an evaluation plan should be developed for the action strategy and the initiative as a whole, and a scheme of reports should be institutionalized to keep the involved systems and the public informed about the strategy's results and achievements (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). The Results-Based Accountability™ framework and the data collection effort that is an integral part of the CYPM, both discussed in subsequent sections of this paper, are examples of tools for management of implementation efforts.

### ***Systems Integration Checklist***

The following checklist was developed to summarize the work that builds the framework for systems integration:

- Key stakeholders are identified, engaged in the development and ongoing review of the initiative, and kept informed through periodic reports.
- Key leaders are driving the effort, cross-system teams or committees are in place, and governance has been formalized.
- The questions about multi-system youth have been developed, local sources of data identified, state and national databases reviewed, and the mechanism for ongoing data collection to support performance measurement is in place.
- A clear statement of the problem or need is articulated and embraced, the target population(s) has been specified, and the desired system and child outcomes have been identified.
- An inventory of assessment tools has been compiled, and opportunities to consolidate tools and/or the assessment process have been identified.

- An inventory of resources, including programs and services, has been compiled and analyzed against standards of best practice, and opportunities to share resources and blend funds have been identified.
- A legal and policy analysis has taken place to highlight the legal mandates, funding, court processes, and other policies that serve as supports or barriers to systems integration, and any needed policy changes have been identified.
- An analysis to determine the capacity to share information across agencies has been conducted, and information-sharing agreements are in place.
- A set of strategies for handling multi-system youth has been developed and examined for potential application, and corresponding policies, protocols, and training have been established for the strategies employed.
- A communications strategy has been developed, and a schedule of interagency and public reporting has been established.

## **Crossover Youth Practice Model**

The Crossover Youth Practice Model builds on the structural foundations of the SII by presenting a standard of practice that reflects how the courts, social workers, and probation officers should work together on a daily basis to improve outcomes for the crossover youth population. While the CYPM uses the term “crossover” more generally in its reference to this population, the vast majority of its attention is focused on dually-involved youth. The CYPM is a phased approach that aligns with the trajectory youth follow as they become dually involved with the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. This staggered approach to implementation provides a template for how jurisdictions can immediately impact how they serve dually-involved youth and rapidly improve outcomes. Throughout each phase the CYPM offers practice guidance that is based on core values and standards; promising evidence-based policies, practices, and procedures; and quality assurance processes. The model is governed by principles that ensure the family voice is at the forefront

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of every level of decision making, including assessment, planning, and case plan review.

## Principles

The CYPM is rooted in a set of foundational principles and values. The following principles reflect the overarching values that guide all the policies, programs, practices, services, and supports conducted within the practice model:

- We serve every child individually based on that child’s history and experiences, seeking to achieve a sense of normalcy for all youth on a daily basis.
- We believe the most advantageous place for youth to grow up is in their own family. We seek to ensure that all youth are provided a safe, nurturing, and permanent family environment and community. When immediate family is not available, other viable extended family and community resources will be identified.
- We believe that youth and families have strengths and that systems must learn about and use those strengths in order to effectively meet their needs. We ensure that these strengths are being utilized to address the entire context of youth and family functioning.
- We ensure authentic, intentional, and meaningful involvement of youth and families in policy and practice development and in service planning and delivery.
- We use an integrated approach involving juvenile justice, the courts, child welfare, education, and behavioral health, in the belief that partnerships are the best way to meet the needs of dually-involved youth and their families.
- Our practices guarantee fair and equitable treatment for all youth and families regardless of race, ethnicity, or national origin. Service delivery honors and respects the values and beliefs of all families.
- We actively seek to reduce racial disproportionality and eliminate disparities within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

- We provide opportunities for professional development and ensure adequate supervision for all staff. This is essential for ensuring workforce efficacy.
- We ensure that policy and practice decisions are based on reliable data and evidence.
- When out-of-home placement is necessary, we believe it should be time limited, in the least restrictive environment with appropriate supports, with a focus on youth permanence.

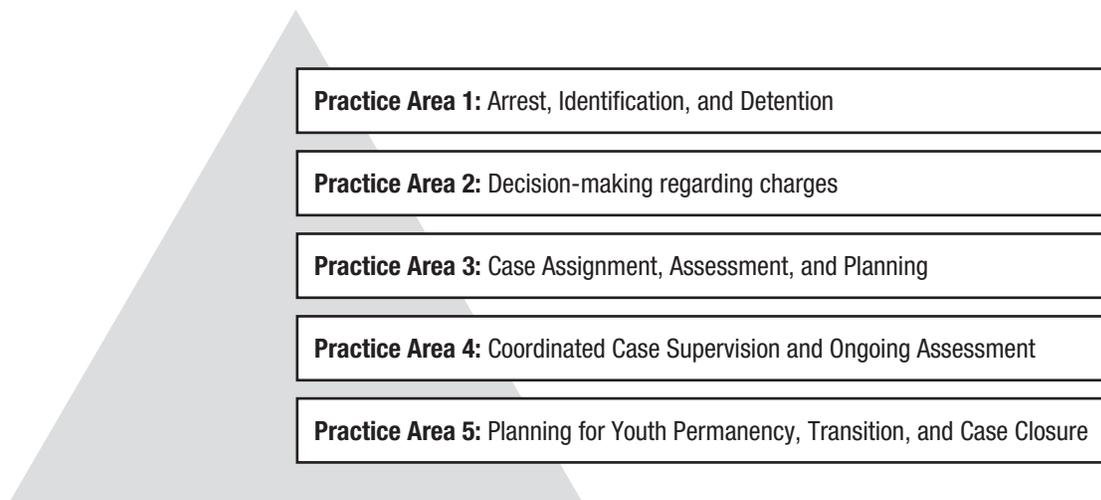
## Practice Areas

The CYPM was constructed to correspond with the experiences a youth encounters when he/she crosses over from the child welfare to the juvenile justice system, while also providing guidance when youth follow other pathways (see the Introduction for an explanation of the four pathways dually-involved youth follow). The model is structured into three phases and five practice areas that reflect the predominant trajectory dually-involved youth experience (see figure 5).

- Phase I
  - Practice Area 1: Arrest, Identification, and Detention
  - Practice Area 2: Decision Making Regarding Charges
- Phase II
  - Practice Area 3: Case Assignment, Joint Assessment, and Case Planning
- Phase III
  - Practice Area 4: Coordinated Case Supervision and Ongoing Assessment
  - Practice Area 5: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition, and Case Closure

Although the CYPM addresses many of the infrastructure-building activities that are reflected in the SII (for instance, data collection and analysis, creation of a memorandum of understanding on information sharing, and governance of the effort), the primary focus is on the policy and practice elements needed to achieve better outcomes for crossover youth. This section describes each practice area of the CYPM in more depth and highlights examples of site-based work that have been implemented as a result of the model.

**Figure 5:** The Five Practice Areas of CYPM



## Phase I

### ***Practice Area 1: Arrest, Identification, and Detention***

**Arrest.** It is vital to prevent arrest from occurring whenever possible. Although the CYPM begins at the point a youth is arrested, the model actually encourages jurisdictions to explore practices within the child welfare system and the schools that propel youth into the juvenile justice system. Many of the jurisdictions involved in the CYPM focus on trying to stop an arrest before it occurs unless arrest is required to ensure community safety. These efforts primarily involve engaging school systems and group care providers, the settings where a large number of these arrests occur.<sup>10</sup> (See sidebars, “Engaging School Systems” and “Engaging Group Care Providers,” for examples of how two CYPM jurisdictions engaged these partners.)

**Identification and detention.** Once a youth known to the child welfare system is arrested, it is essential to identify that youth immediately. Early identification presents an opportunity to assess the youth’s needs, understand why the arrest occurred, and divert the youth from formal

<sup>10</sup> A study conducted in Los Angeles sampled youth in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services from 2002 and 2005. The study found that the two greatest risk factors for subsequent delinquency were living in congregate care and running away from placement. Youth who had experienced at least one congregate care placement were twice as likely to be arrested than youth who were placed only in a foster home (Ryan et al., 2008).

entry into the juvenile justice system. The CYPM calls for dually-involved youth to be identified immediately whenever a youth is taken to an intake center or detention facility for screening. For youth referred to the juvenile justice system through another mechanism, identification of their involvement in child welfare should occur during the standard juvenile intake process or when the case is otherwise reviewed for charging.

It is imperative that jurisdictions have protocols and information-sharing agreements in place to ensure that juvenile justice representatives—including detention staff—are able to determine if a youth who has been arrested is involved in the child welfare system. This can be done through many avenues, including granting limited access to the child welfare information system or assigning a child welfare liaison to work directly with juvenile justice personnel on such matters.

If a youth is confirmed as having an active case in the child welfare system, the juvenile justice caseworker should immediately notify the assigned child welfare social worker about the youth’s status and other information relevant to the delinquency case. One of the ways to reduce the disproportionate number of dually-involved youth who are detained is to rapidly engage the foster family in the case-planning process. In many instances, foster families are

not notified in a timely manner that a youth in their home has been arrested. When that notification does occur, the families often reject taking the young person back into their home—perhaps because of fear, anger, frustration, or lack of information about the delinquent act. By contacting foster families at the point of identification and engaging them in a conversation about the incident, it may be possible to influence them to allow the youth back into their home. By making a concerted effort to reach out to the foster family and committing to partner with them, system personnel may be able to prevent or reduce the youth's penetration into the juvenile justice system.

If a youth must stay in detention, the detention staff and ultimately the juvenile justice caseworker should receive information related to the youth's child welfare case. This will help the staff to better meet the needs of the youth while in detention. For example, to ensure that dually-involved youth who are detained receive specialized assessment and support, the Los Angeles County Probation Department created the Elite Family Unit, which is staffed with individuals who have expertise in both child welfare and juvenile justice. Using validated tools such as Structured Decision Making and the Youth Level of Service Inventory, unit caseworkers provide assessment information that is particularly helpful to the multi-disciplinary team, which meets prior to the delinquency court hearing.

Additionally, both the child welfare social worker and the juvenile justice caseworker should be required to attend the minor's court hearings for the duration of their delinquency and dependency cases. While this may be challenging, it ensures that the youth knows that the social worker is still involved and committed to him/her. For example, Charleston County, South Carolina, has implemented a practice of identifying youth who are involved in the child welfare system and who subsequently are arrested and detained within 12 hours of the detainment. The juvenile intake worker and child welfare social worker are notified immediately and conduct an informal staffing where they make recommendations for the detention hearing. Both workers attend the detention hearing and subsequent dependency and delinquency hearings until either or both cases are closed.

**Practice Area 2: Decision Making Regarding Charging**  
This practice area addresses the process used to decide if

## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Engaging School Systems**

Because schools are one of the places where arrest often occurs, several CYPM jurisdictions focus directly on changing the school environment. In Miami-Dade County, Florida, the CYPM leadership team identified the top 11 high schools with the greatest concentration of dependent youth. These “hot spots” became the primary focus of efforts to reduce youth from crossing over from child welfare to juvenile justice, and staff representatives from the Miami-Dade public schools played an active role on the team.

Analysis of school arrests determined that some serious incidents required an arrest per statute, but that many less serious incidents could be handled by a School Resource Officer (SRO) who could provide assistance and a referral for intervention. SROs were then hired by the school system, which allowed school personnel to make immediate inroads into law enforcement practices. Changes in Miami-Dade included the following:

- The school system now works with the child welfare agency to grant SROs access to data that identifies a youth's involvement in the child welfare system.
- SROs are trained to use a variety of techniques when responding to youth behavior issues. The training emphasizes that SROs operate from a basis of trust and foster positive relationships with students, their parents, and the community at large. The focus is on developing special investigative skills, such as observing and assessing student-peer relationships and interactions outside the structured classroom setting; considering a corrective rather than a punitive approach to student behaviors; mentoring and advising students; and ultimately diffusing potentially explosive situations based on the rapport the SRO has built with students.

By providing the SROs with personal, academic, and social background information on students, these school officers now make informed decisions about the best course of action that will both benefit the youth and ensure the safety of the school environment.

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## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Engaging Group Care Providers**

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Research suggests that group or congregate care is another place where targeted intervention may prevent youth from crossing over. By changing the attitudes and practices of group care providers, jurisdictions can bring down arrest rates and stop youth from crossing over. The Polk County, Florida, CYPM leadership team launched a significant effort to change the way their group and congregate care providers viewed the behavior of youth in their care. The team began by identifying the group care providers who had the most arrests and engaged them in facilitated discussions about the arrest data. These conversations subsequently expanded to include all providers in Polk County. Having the data in front of them allowed the parties to enter more quickly into a thoughtful discussion about what the data meant and to explore how current practices could be improved. This approach minimized defensiveness and created a collective approach to addressing the problem.

The CYPM team also encouraged providers to explore how using a trauma-informed care approach could enhance their ability to work positively with youth. All providers were invited to an all-day meeting where they were shown the video documentary *Healing Teen: Trauma and Recovery*. This powerful story of the impact of trauma on one young life provided the backdrop for a discussion on how trauma-informed care could moderate arrests. As a result of this conversation and additional training on trauma-informed care, group home providers have made a commitment to resolve conflicts using alternative options rather than calling law enforcement.

charges on a dually-involved youth should move forward. The decision to charge a youth is made shortly after a youth has been arrested, and in an even more expedited manner when a youth has been detained. Possible outcomes in this process include dropping the charges, offering diversion as an alternative to formal juvenile

## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Court Processes to Support Diversion**

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In an effort to achieve greater efficiencies in court processes and enhance case decision making, the CYPM leadership team in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, implemented several diversion mechanisms, including the Crossover Court. This court serves youth involved in the child welfare system who have been arrested. The intent is to divert youth currently involved in the child welfare system from the formal delinquency process, ensure that a single judge has information from both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to inform decision making, and create a single court process for youth and their families. Administrative Judge Kevin M. Dougherty is working with the district attorney's office on this effort, and together, they have diverted nearly 900 youth offenders from the formal adjudication process.

justice processing, petitioning the charge formally to the juvenile court, or filing or requesting to file the case in adult court. To date, research on crossover youth has not addressed the charging process. Consequently, how dually-involved youth are charged and how this process compares to nondually-involved youth remain unknown (Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010).

Prior to the charging decision, it is critical that there be an opportunity for the youth, his/her family, the child welfare social worker, the juvenile justice intake worker, attorneys assigned to the case, school personnel, and other service providers to come together and explore diverting the youth from the juvenile justice system. The CYPM requires the convening of a team to consider the nature of the offense, the situational context in which the incident occurred, the attitude and emotional status of the youth, educational status of the youth, dynamics operating within the family, and the input of staff and providers currently involved in serving the youth and family. These perspectives are brought together to ultimately make a recommendation and/or determination that both serves the best interests of the youth and ensures public safety. Additionally, these

convenings provide opportunities to place the youth's behavior in the context of his/her current and past life experiences. Contextual explanations are significant because they can prevent exaggerated perceptions of risk by juvenile justice personnel (Conger and Ross, 2009). This form of meeting (which can variously be referred to as a multi-disciplinary team meeting, family meeting, or dually-involved youth case staffing) has been effective in advancing early and comprehensive information sharing, engaging the family in the decision-making process, identifying the need for additional assessment information, and ensuring that joint recommendations are submitted to the court. Working across systems can be challenging for the workers (including the attorneys), and confusing for the youth and family, so one key to a successful working relationship is to commit to transparency, emphasize the sharing of information, and respect the need for all voices to be heard during the team process.

Interventions such as these have the ability to prevent a dually-involved youth from formally entering the juvenile justice system. In numerous CYPM sites, youth are being referred to diversion who would not have been considered eligible in the past because of the perception that there was no responsible caregiver to ensure compliance or that the youth needed to be held accountable for his/her actions in a more significant manner, or because the probation system was not viewing the behavior of the youth within the context of past life experiences. Additionally, in some instances alternative programming is being offered by the child welfare system, such as providing substance abuse treatment or coordinating with the school to provide counseling during the academic day (see sidebar, "Court Processes to Support Diversion").

## Phase II

### **Practice Area 3: Case Assignment, Joint Assessment, and Case Planning**

*Case assignment.* Even if great efforts are made to divert dually-involved youth from formally entering the juvenile justice system, inevitably some youth will be adjudicated delinquent. As mentioned previously, research confirms that this population of youth receives harsher processing outcomes when compared to delinquent youth with no history or current association with the child welfare system (Ryan et al., 2007). To offset the potentially inequitable treatment of dually-involved youth, Siegel and Lord (2004)

## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Collaborative Court Approaches**

### **Dedicated Dockets**

All dually-involved youth cases are heard by a designated court and court personnel, including a judge, public defender, and prosecutor. The child welfare social worker and juvenile justice caseworker are required to attend all court hearings throughout the minor's delinquency and dependency cases.

### **One Family/One Judge**

A single judge hears both the dependency and delinquency issues for all children and youth within a family. Continuity of counsel for both dependency and delinquency cases is often required.

### **Pre-court Coordination**

A team of individuals serving the youth and family comes together prior to the court process and develops a single set of recommendations to address both dependency and delinquency issues, including a single case plan to adequately meet the needs of the youth and family.

identified case assignment and case flow management as promising practices to ensure the continuity of judicial officers in the various court hearings and the appropriate levels of information sharing between dependency and delinquency judges. The CYPM recommends use of one of the following approaches to support this level of coordination: dedicated dockets, one family/one judge, or pre-court coordination (see sidebar, "Collaborative Court Approaches").

*Joint assessment.* The CYPM calls upon sites to create a joint assessment process in which a discussion of agency information and assessment outcomes takes place among the youth, their parents/caregivers, juvenile justice caseworker, child welfare social worker, education representative, behavioral health representative, and any additional providers or family supports deemed appropriate. This assessment process serves as the foundation for effective case planning (Stewart, Lutz, and Herz, 2010).

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Youth and families involved in the child welfare system undergo many assessments, including a safety assessment (such as Structured Decision Making or Action for Child Protections' Safety Assessment Model); a family functional assessment; child well-being assessments, which assess achievement of developmental milestones, educational status, emotional stability, and similar measures for every child in the family; and specialized assessments as needed for educational, behavioral health, substance abuse, and/or medical issues. As part of the CYPM, this information is shared early in the process—through multi-disciplinary team and family meetings—to inform the charging decision, court recommendations, and case plan.

When juveniles enter the juvenile justice system, most receive some form of risk-level assessment, with points assigned for each risk factor to produce a total risk score. For example, the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument used in many jurisdictions examines and generates scores for each of 10 domains, including legal history, family, school, community and peers, alcohol and drugs, mental health, aggression, pro- and antisocial attitudes, social and cognitive skills, employment and free time. This assessment is used throughout the life of the case as the basis for a number of decisions.

Given the extensive and sometimes mandatory nature of the assessments completed on youth and their families, jurisdictions involved in implementing the CYPM can build on existing assessments rather than create new joint assessment tools. Many jurisdictions determine that more effective sharing of information already being compiled is a much more efficient use of time and resources—and does not require modification of existing validated assessment instruments used within either system. This sharing of assessment information became defined as the joint assessment process and has been built into the CYPM protocols in many jurisdictions (see sidebar, “Joint Assessments”).

To address the issue of redundancy, several jurisdictions—including Los Angeles County, California, and Multnomah County, Oregon—conducted an analysis of all of the assessments families were exposed to within each system. Using a spreadsheet, they documented the name of the assessment, when it occurred, who was

involved (the youth, the family, or both), the purpose of the assessment, and what was done with the results. The sheer volume and the redundancy of the assessments was a significant learning experience. In many CYPM jurisdictions, this type of analysis results in a reduction in the number of assessments that families are required to complete and ensures greater utilization of them across systems (see sidebar, “Improving Assessments”).

*Coordinated case planning.* The intent of the case plan is to guide service delivery to achieve the goals identified during the initial case staffing (that is, the multi-disciplinary team, family meeting, or dually-involved youth case staffing) and ordered by the court. Case plans provide the basis for understanding when the work has been completed so that child welfare or juvenile justice involvement is no longer required. Conversely, case plans also provide the basis for deciding that sufficient change has not occurred and that more extensive intervention or a different type of intervention may be necessary. Case plans should be focused, time limited, behaviorally specific, attainable, relevant, understandable to all,

## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Joint Assessments**

Woodbury County, Iowa, developed a front-end joint assessment process for all identified crossover youth. The process requires that upon identification of a crossover youth, the juvenile justice case manager meet with the child welfare social worker, the youth, and the family to complete the short-form Iowa Delinquency Assessment Tool. This is an evidence-based risk and needs assessment tool that assesses a youth's risk level, recommends appropriate services, and evaluates the effectiveness of current services being provided. Following completion of the assessment, the team—which includes probation officers, child welfare social workers, representatives from other agencies involved with the family, and family members—determines collaboratively the best course of action and sends its recommendations to the family court judge for consideration.

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## ***CYPM in Action— Improving Assessments***

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Multi-disciplinary team members in Circuit 10 in Florida actively share information generated by the child welfare, juvenile justice, educational, and behavioral health systems. However, during their information-sharing sessions, the team determined that although a tremendous amount of assessment information had been compiled, it did not actually lead the team to draw conclusions about potential behaviors youth might exhibit based on their history and experiences. As a result, the behavioral health provider in the area augmented the behavioral health assessment with a predictive analysis of the impact of youth experiences and trauma on behavior that providers might anticipate. Social workers, probation officers, and group care providers found this change very helpful when working to design service plans and better understand the origin of and appropriate response to troublesome youth behavior.

and agreed to by the parent(s). Interventions should be precisely focused on helping parents and/or caregivers improve their parenting skills and on helping the youth change his/her risk-taking behaviors.

Some jurisdictions implementing the CYPM first thought that they would design an integrated “single” case plan. However, they soon came to the conclusion that this was not the most effective use of time, partially because some local, state, or federal requirements prevent such an integrated plan. Instead, jurisdictions determined that the goal should not be to develop a new single case plan, but rather to thoroughly integrate the learning from the various assessments completed by each system. As a result, the case plans—though written on separate system-specific tools—reflect a common direction and an intentional use of services to achieve common youth and family goals. (See sidebar, “Using Continuous Quality Improvement to Strengthen Case Plans” to learn how one jurisdiction plans to reconcile recommendations made by the multi-disciplinary team to the content of individual case plans.)

## ***CYPM in Action— Using Continuous Quality Improvement to Strengthen Case Plans***

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Miami-Dade County, Florida, is developing a continuous quality improvement (CQI) tool to use during case file reviews. One question under examination is whether the content of the case plan mirrors recommendations made by the multi-disciplinary team. It is hoped that rigorous application of the CQI process will ensure that the thoughtful recommendations of the multi-disciplinary team continue to serve as the basis for case plan activities.

### **Phase III**

#### ***Practice Area 4: Coordinated Case Supervision and Ongoing Assessment of Progress***

*Coordinated case supervision.* The goal of coordinated case supervision is to reduce the likelihood of reoffending and improve the overall well-being of crossover youth. Coordinating case supervision for dually-involved youth is essential for both systems to appropriately serve the youth and family. Coordinating supervision ensures that workers maintain routine communication, coordinate services, and update the case plan as necessary. Research by Siegel and Lord (2004) names several practices specific to enhancing coordinated case supervision, including specialized case management and supervision units, multi-disciplinary team case management, special qualifications and/or training for case managers, and the use of child protective services liaisons and/or probation liaisons. (See sidebar, “Staffing to Support Collaborative Case Management,” for information on how two CYPM sites are staffing their dually-involved youth cases.)

Although the premise of coordinated case supervision is well understood, operationalizing it presents several challenges. To ensure it is effective, jurisdictions must develop a formal agreement (for example, a memorandum of understanding) that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency. This agreement must also

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## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Staffing to Support Collaborative Case Management**

To support coordinated case supervision, Hamilton County, Ohio, and Charleston County, South Carolina, have assigned a small group of probation and child welfare workers to manage all crossover youth cases. Specially trained on the issues surrounding this population of youth, these workers fully understand the collaborative nature in which the two systems should be working in order to achieve better outcomes.

address issues surrounding confidentiality and procedures for mediating conflict (Wiig and Tuell, 2004, rev. 2008). Agencies must ensure that a determination is made as to who will serve as the lead worker and which agency will have primary responsibility for each case. Additionally, coordinated case supervision does not just imply coordination among the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, but also implies coordination with all the other systems with which the youth and family are working, as well as with family members themselves.

A key factor in effective case supervision is assessing for and accessing the most appropriate services and placement resources for youth. Because improved case assessment and planning can result in the identification of otherwise unidentified needs, the challenge of identifying available resources in multiple systems to meet those needs must be addressed. For this reason, CYPM sites are expected to take an inventory of the resources that are available across systems so that a wide range of services can be accessed in a more transparent manner than in the past.

*Ongoing assessment.* During the time that services are provided to a young person and his/her family, many changes may occur that affect the efficacy of services being provided. Therefore, an ongoing assessment of the youth's needs and of the effectiveness of services in meeting those needs is necessary. An ongoing assessment process allows for changes in case planning

## ***CYPM in Action—*** **Ongoing Assessments**

Broward County (Circuit 17) in Florida has significantly improved the quality of service utilization by enhancing its ongoing assessment process. The multi-disciplinary team frequently reviews services to make sure they are meeting the needs of crossover youth. The review process includes a meeting with providers to check that the focus of the interventions is clear and that case plans are modified as often as required, resulting in maximum impact.

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*“If you don't have anybody that believes in you, how do you believe in yourself? That's one of the biggest things that we deal with. Nobody cares if they succeed, so they think, ‘Well, why do I care if I succeed?’ which is sad.”*

—Young Person Aging Out of Foster Care, age 22

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to occur sooner rather than later. An ongoing assessment can also be used to assess the performance of service providers in meeting youth and family needs. (See sidebar, “Ongoing Assessments,” to learn how one jurisdiction is using ongoing assessments to strengthen its service delivery.)

Ongoing assessments can occur via a case-staffing process such as a multi-disciplinary team or family team structure. At a minimum, a formal process for ongoing assessment should be conducted prior to each court hearing to ensure that judicial rulings are made with the most up-to-date information and recommendations.

### **Practice Area 5: Planning for Youth Permanency, Transition, and Case Closure**

The CYPM emphasizes that planning for permanency should begin at the time a youth becomes involved with any child-serving system. Permanency is defined as having established lifelong connections for the youth as well as having provided the skills and resources needed

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for the young person to effectively transition to adulthood. Adolescence can be a time of tremendous discovery, growth, and new independence. With proper guidance and support, young people explore their unique talents and interests. They seek aspirational experiences that give them a sense of what can be, they develop knowledge and skills to be successful in life and work, and they begin to acquire the relationships they will depend upon for a lifetime. Although many youth experience detours during their transition to adulthood, including periods of unemployment and periodic interruptions in education, the majority of youth are embedded in networks such as families, friends, and communities that provide guidance, support, and help—both financial and otherwise—when they face the crises that are an inevitable part of the transition.

In contrast, many crossover youth have extremely limited support systems to help them through the difficult transition to adulthood. Because many of these youth have spent a significant amount of time in care, most of their relationships are tied to the system itself. They are often disconnected from the world of education, and they work and struggle to complete high school. They rarely attend college or post-secondary training, and frequently face joblessness and homelessness. It is the responsibility of every child-serving system to ensure that youth do not leave the system on a pathway to disconnection from family, education, and employment. This requires a focus on building connections with family members, mentors, and coaches who can guide youth in their life choices and decision making, opening pathways to college and/or post-secondary training, and helping the young person find and sustain living wage employment.

While the child welfare system has focused on permanency since the passage of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (PL 96-272), permanency have not been a primary objective of the juvenile justice system. As such, the permanency discussions held as part of implementation of the CYPM has resulted in a heightened awareness of the importance of permanency planning for juvenile justice practitioners. Rather than being child welfare's job, both systems have been encouraged to own the permanency outcomes for crossover youth.

The specific efforts surrounding permanency planning described within the CYPM include:

- Early and rapid identification and engagement of kin
- Ongoing engagement of kin in assessment, planning, placement decisions, and the court process
- Completion of permanency pacts to define the array of adults who might provide support and assistance during the young person's transition to adulthood
- Creation of a blueprint that will pave the young person's way to employment, college, or other post-secondary educational options
- Development of skills and capacities to ease the transition to adulthood, including specific supports for finding employment, going to college, or exploring other post-secondary education options

In some jurisdictions, the passage of legislation allowing child welfare systems to serve youth up to age 21 has broadened the scope of permanency to include the concept of self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is defined as having permanent relationships with adults, satisfying housing and other basic needs, achieving a level of education that can launch a young person to a job or post-secondary educational options, showing career and workforce readiness, and demonstrating emotional and social well-being. In the state of California, the passage of AB12 allowed youth in foster care to remain in the system and receive housing assistance and support until age 21. This legislation prompted discussions about what happens to youth after they leave high school. In an effort to address the long-term plight of crossover youth, Los Angeles County adopted a robust approach to self-sufficiency for dually-involved youth by engaging the child welfare, probation, and mental health systems in the planning and service delivery process. This effort, spearheaded by the county supervisors, is resulting in partnerships with housing providers, the agency that oversees the Workforce Investment Act, and other nontraditional child welfare and juvenile justice partners. It also is increasing the focus on the job readiness of youth served by multiple systems. Further, Travis County, Texas, has adopted the use of the Preparation for Adult Living Program. This program is designed to work with youth ages 16 and over who are aging out of care. The program

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seeks to provide youth with the skills and resources that will aid them in becoming healthy and productive adults. This includes life skills such as balancing a checkbook, building self-esteem, and making responsible decisions.

As we have seen, both the SII and CYPM have supported and promoted significant crossover youth reform efforts around the country. By promoting the structural foundations needed to move this work forward, the SII has helped jurisdictions to mobilize, analyze, and plan for needed changes, and provided a construct for implementation of those changes. The CYPM built on these structural foundations by presenting a standard of practice for how professionals in child-serving systems should work together to promote positive outcomes for crossover youth. Together, these initiatives provide a comprehensive array of best practices for jurisdictions seeking to undertake or strengthen their work on this issue. How these two efforts are aligned is presented in the final section as the next frontier of crossover youth reform work.

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## V. The Next Frontier

As previous sections of this paper have demonstrated, the Systems Integration Initiative (SII) and Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) are complementary reform efforts that seek to improve the outcomes of the crossover youth population. The SII provides an effective architecture and structural foundation (policies and protocols) for the coordination and integration of child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and the CYPM provides a laser-like focus on a defined set of practices that system partners can undertake to improve outcomes for this population. The next frontier of work around crossover youth issues calls for the contemporaneous building of the architecture and structural foundations of the work, while a jurisdiction also begins implementing identified practices for reforming the systems.

This section brings together the key elements of SII and CYPM that are needed to comprehensively improve the way systems serve the crossover youth population. This next frontier combines the strengths of both initiatives into a cohesive set of six imperatives that will assist any jurisdiction seeking to further its work in this area. After presenting these imperatives, the section concludes with a return to the Results-Based Accountability™ (RBA) framework as a mechanism a community can use to rally support around this issue, organize implementation of a variety of complementary strategies, hold each individual agency accountable for its role in improving system practice, and ultimately improve the lives of dually-involved youth.

### Key Elements of the Next Frontier

The historical experiences of the multiple jurisdictions that have implemented the SII and/or the CYPM help to identify an important set of six imperatives requiring focused attention by any jurisdiction seeking to take on this work. What follows is an articulation of those imperatives to create a road map for the next frontier of work on behalf of dually-involved youth. Although these imperatives are presented as necessary to have in place to comprehensively reform systems, we recognize that

### Overarching Themes

Three overarching themes relate to the next frontier and are considered crucial to the success of multi-system work. These themes include:

- Use of evidence-based or promising practices
- Use of trauma-informed care that recognizes the relationship between a youth's history and his/her behavior
- Reduction of disparate treatment and racial and ethnic disproportionality within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems

Consideration of each of these themes, particularly as they relate to the six imperatives presented in this section, is vital.

system reform requires a degree of flexibility to take into account factors unique to particular jurisdictions. The following imperatives are not intended to be implemented in sequence. As the RBA section below discusses in more depth, we believe it is important for jurisdictions to start with those imperatives and strategies that are most feasible and therefore will have the most impact in order to build momentum around the work. See sidebar, "Overarching Themes," which presents three major themes that underlie the work of the next frontier.

### Imperative 1: Develop Leadership and Establish Governance and Management Structures

Leadership, governance, and management are essential considerations for jurisdictions undertaking this work. Therefore, the first imperative for this work involves the mobilization of relevant and necessary agencies and stakeholders. Through their collective knowledge and support of the work, these individuals and stakeholder

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groups can provide expert input and solicit buy-in of the broader community at large. But to do so effectively, these leaders and constituent groups must possess both the political will and the authority to carry out this work. While both the SII and the CYPM identify an inventory of agencies, disciplines, and corresponding personnel that should be considered for inclusion (see sidebar, “Recommended Leadership Representation”), it is critical that leadership and support at least come from the triad of child welfare, juvenile justice, and the judiciary.

The mobilization process requires that jurisdictions consider the structural foundations they have, or will need to develop, to support their systems integration work. The work should have a clear management structure to support the change and reform process that takes into consideration staffing and funding requirements, as well as the working teams and committees that are needed. It is therefore strongly encouraged that jurisdictions create an implementation team or executive committee made up of agency personnel and community representatives who will be involved in day-to-day implementation of the reforms. This group should have the expertise to inform the issues in need of examination and conduct the analysis of the change process. This structure should allow for subcommittees or working groups to be flexibly established to function continuously or in an ad hoc manner on specific issues.

### **Recommended Leadership Representation**

- Child welfare
- Juvenile justice
- Judiciary
- Other social services
- Education
- Housing
- Health care
- Mental health
- Substance abuse

Governance of this work should be formalized through executive orders, charter agreements, or memoranda of understanding (MOUs). These agreements can directly state the unified vision, action strategies, and goals of the collaboration. A unified vision motivates the forward-thinking, goal-achieving mentality across systems, which is an essential component in the foundation of successful system change. Jurisdictions that clearly articulate goals and strategies (described in more detail in section IV) in collaborative agreements have seen great success in the implementation and sustainability of their objectives. (The discussion of RBA below elaborates upon the need to develop a collective vision in more detail.

### **Imperative 2: Study and Analysis**

The second imperative, Study and Analysis, is crucial to the next frontier of multi-system work. In order to create and maintain successful multi-agency collaborations, jurisdictions must have an understanding of data and how it is being managed, and be aware of all the affected key decision-making points. They must also identify the barriers and opportunities that are presented by legal and policy issues and know what resources, practices, and assessments are available to them. This is achieved through thoughtful data collection and scrutiny, process-mapping exercises, legal and policy analysis, and agency inventories.

#### **Data**

A fundamental premise of this body of work is that system and practice reforms should be informed by reliable data that supplement and strengthen our professional expertise and observations. Therefore, data collection on the prevalence and characteristics of crossover youth, both nationally and locally, should be at the front end of the change process.

While many jurisdictions have encountered all-too-familiar failed system interfaces, it is nevertheless necessary to press the question to create solutions that overcome this impediment. This may require inquiries of data system managers and experts for possible system interfaces; clear identification of case identifiers that will permit confirmation of a “match” in both systems; initial data-sharing agreements; or designation of a liaison from the dependency and/or delinquency system who will

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be responsive to inquiries that allow a cross-system youth to be identified. Once in place, data collection on the prevalence of this population may engender greater understanding of many key characteristics about the youth in the aggregate, which will enhance opportunities for the leadership of the initiative to identify more precisely the actual target population(s) of the reforms and what is needed to improve their outcomes. Additionally, the jurisdiction's leadership can make informed initial decisions about capacity in relation to agency staffing needs, community resources, court procedure, and other related practice reforms that are likely to be impacted by reliable cross-system data. Whatever the approach, the initial data collection process for research and analysis purposes can serve as the trigger for a series of routine actions and practices undertaken to identify youth at the point they cross over.

Another result of the reliance on data is the increased capacity for the leadership of the initiative to identify and agree to a set of system and youth outcomes that the work aspires to achieve. Establishing goals and objectives for the work at the outset and developing a methodology—reliant on routinely collected data and information—that creates the capacity to measure system performance and youth and family outcomes allows systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the work. One such methodology is RBA, which was first presented in the Introduction and is explained in more detail below.

### Mapping

With all of these potential system experiences and processes through which the targeted population of youth—and their families—traverse, how do we create an understanding of all of the key decision points in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems that will be affected by the initiative? While there may be a presumed understanding of the key decision points in each system and the activities undertaken to assist youth and families, it is essential that jurisdictions collaboratively conduct a mapping exercise. Maps and flowcharts—either existing or constructed for this work—make each of the work processes visible through a common frame of reference and improve cross-system understanding and communication. Process maps present an opportunity to depict a snapshot in time that shows the specific combination of functions, steps, responsibilities, decisions,

derived products, and documentation used to complete each key decision and action on behalf of the target population. Analysis of same will yield strengths, gaps, deficiencies, and barriers in existing practices, providing clarity of current case processing and management in each system as well as of places where the child welfare and juvenile justice systems overlap (see appendix D for sample process maps and flowcharts). Additionally, with particular focus on the participation of behavioral health providers, educators, prosecuting and defense counsel, and court and judicial personnel, all of the important relationships and decision points can be comprehensively understood. This analysis is at the core of highlighting opportunities for improved use of screening and assessment methods, effective and proper sharing of information, and coordinated access to funding and resources.

### Legal and Policy Analysis

It is vital for leaders of jurisdictional reform to recognize the critical nature of the legal and policy issues confronting collaborative work. It is therefore necessary

#### Legal and Policy Analysis and Information-Sharing Resources

- *A Guide to Legal and Policy Analysis for Systems Integration* (Child Welfare League of America Press, by Jessica Heldman, 2005)  
This guide details the process of examination of the legal, policy, and procedural mandates unique to each agency and organization in order to make recommendations for changes that will contribute to improved coordination of initial decision making, case management, and service delivery.
- *Models for Change Information-Sharing Tool Kit* (Child Welfare League of America Press and the Juvenile Law Center, by Janet K. Wiig, John A. Tuell, Lourdes M. Rosado, and Riya S. Shah, 2008)  
This publication lays out a framework that includes a set of principles and a foundation for the development of information-sharing protocols for individual case planning, data collection for policy and program development, and program evaluation and measurement.

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for jurisdictions embarking on this work to conduct a legal and policy analysis of both the opportunities and the barriers that affect effective information sharing for individual case planning and management, as well as the legal and policy considerations regarding court processes and funding mandates for resource allocations.

Two significant publications have provided guidance to states and local jurisdictions as they undertook information-sharing and data collection projects (see sidebar, “Legal and Policy Analysis and Information-Sharing Resources”). As jurisdictions have successfully navigated through legal and policy analyses, it has frequently been the case that while barriers exist, so do opportunities to promote the change and reform process. These have resulted in enhanced policies, information and data sharing, interagency agreements, resource guides for system practitioners, and statutory reform. In some jurisdictions, existing cooperative agreements and contracts and/or a historical culture permitting access to services across systems eliminate the need for a comprehensive review of multi-system resources. In situations such as these, it simply may not be necessary to commit staff or subcommittee time to the conduct of these comprehensive reviews. If at some point in the work one of these issues arises, then an ad hoc working group or subcommittee may be formed to conduct an examination and make recommendations for resolution. In jurisdictions that have successfully navigated through legal and policy analyses, this work has resulted in enhanced policies, interagency information- and data-sharing agreements, resource guides for system practitioners, and statutory reform. As we look forward to the next frontier and take full advantage of the lessons learned from on-the-ground experiences of jurisdictions, the second imperative requires that analyses and mapping exercises be undertaken collaboratively and that the critical issues serving as barriers—real or perceived—be identified.

### **Inventory Resources, Best Practices, and Assessment Tools**

An additional aspect of the second imperative is for jurisdictions to conduct an inventory of resources, best practices (both national and local), and risk and assessment tools and practices within the child welfare, juvenile justice, behavioral health, and education systems

(see appendix B for a sample resource inventory and appendix C for a sample assessment inventory). This work can lead to the creation of a directory that makes all this information accessible in one concise and convenient location. The directory can become an extremely useful resource for everyone involved in the collaboration effort. The most obvious benefit is the awareness of the full range of resources that are available to the target population. A secondary benefit might be a deeper understanding of the duplicative programs being offered by the multiple systems (with restricted funding access to those within that system). For example, cross-system knowledge of what screening and assessment tools are being used to inform risk and treatment decisions will identify overlap or duplication, strengthen systems’ use of assessments to assign programs and services, and promote opportunities for development of a common risk and assessment methodology for dually-involved youth.

### **Imperative 3: Create Culture Change across Systems**

To sustain and institutionalize the reforms, the third imperative calls for change to any entrenched culture of the system and organization partners that may be detrimental to the effort. To assist in this process, staff within the collaboration should work in close proximity on a daily basis. Co-location of staff creates an environment that encourages close working relationships and easily permits child welfare and juvenile justice caseworkers to collaborate on shared cases.

It is also necessary to develop a comprehensive training plan that is executed in a manner that ensures ongoing orientation for leadership and agency personnel responsible for implementing the specific practice changes. Training should be directed to all personnel whose functions may change as a result of the reforms. Training is likely to be more effective when it is presented in phases and utilizes case examples for case review. Additionally, the training should provide opportunities to assess the effectiveness of practice implementation and actual reforms in a multi-system environment. It is often beneficial to cross-train a group of individuals representing different levels and disciplines of the participating agencies. Cross-training allows participants to learn about the other systems and develop relationships

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with colleagues in other agencies. Finally, it is important to assign responsibility for training to those personnel who have credibility in the field based in part on their experience with the new tools, processes, and practices.

Staff are accountable for implementing the new policies and practices being put in place by leadership. In addition to promoting buy-in by having staff from all levels involved in the decision-making process regarding new agency procedures, it is helpful to revise staff evaluation processes to assess how well staff are implementing the new procedures. If staff know they will be evaluated on their adherence to the new policies and practices, they will be less likely to be resistant to the change.

Another aspect of the third imperative concerns the embedding of a mechanism that provides for continuous quality improvement (CQI) when a new practice is implemented. An effective CQI process will assess how true a practice is to the model as well as show the effectiveness of implementation on the target population using outcome data. This type of quality assurance process involves a wide range of stakeholders, including line staff, families, and various levels of interagency and community leadership. Creating this level of transparency about the effectiveness—or lack thereof—of a program aids in its ability to be adjusted to accommodate the dynamics of the given systems.

More broadly, culture change can be aided by measuring what is important. For example, if a system transparently tracks the percentage of cases with joint case plans (along with consideration of the factors that affect the percentage) and posts the data visibly to staff, staff are more readily going to embrace the new practice. They will see the impact of their work and understand that their efforts are important to their superiors. The discussion below on RBA explains in more depth how to construct measures to hold efforts accountable.

#### **Imperative 4: Prevent Youth from Crossing Over**

The fourth imperative calls for jurisdictions to prevent arrest from occurring whenever possible by reforming child welfare and education system practices that propel youth into the juvenile justice system. These efforts entail

engaging representatives from systems that are involved in the arrest decision, such as law enforcement, school officials, and group care providers. For example, it is important for child welfare to share information with schools (in particular, data that identify a youth's involvement with the child welfare system), which will allow school resource officers and other officials to make informed decisions that are in the best interest of the youth and other parties involved. Reduction and targeted intervention in the use of group home and congregate care settings may also prevent a youth from crossing over to the juvenile justice system. When youth require care in group settings, providers must be trained in trauma-informed care and de-escalation approaches, which provide alternatives to calling law enforcement for less serious incidents.

#### **Imperative 5: Engage the Family and Community**

Engaging the family and community, through the use of strength-based approaches, is foundational to multi-system work. The fifth imperative recognizes that, in order to accomplish this work, systems must believe that families have strengths that can be tapped to successfully create change and that the support and engagement of the community are crucial to that success. Following an arrest, or initial point of contact with the juvenile justice system, child welfare and juvenile justice caseworkers must immediately engage the family, school personnel, community connections, and service providers close to the youth. Together, these individuals can come together (by convening multi-disciplinary meetings, family meetings, or dually-involved youth case staffings) to explore diverting the youth from the juvenile justice system or using community-based alternatives to detention that support a youth and provide services within the community. It is vital that good family engagement practices be implemented across all child-serving systems because if a family has a negative experience with one agency, that family will be less likely to engage with other government systems—despite the other agency's family engagement practices.

In addition to engaging family members in their child's individual case, the success of multi-system reforms can also be aided by the engagement of system-involved families and the community at large in the development and review of system practices and policies. This can

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be accomplished by organizing focus groups or by asking youth, parent, and community representatives to participate in leadership groups, among other strategies.

## **Imperative 6: Develop Policies, Procedures, and Practices for Agencies to Work Together Collaboratively**

While every effort should be made to divert youth from the juvenile justice system when appropriate, it is inevitable that some youth will become dually involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. When this occurs, the final imperative calls for agencies to develop policies, procedures, and practices that successfully and collaboratively support youth and families.

### **Information and Resource Sharing**

As has been discussed throughout this paper, information sharing is at the crux of successful collaboration. Using the findings from the legal and policy analysis, agencies must develop and apply clear information-sharing policies and procedures to carry out effective programming, case planning, and informed decision making for dually-involved youth. Such procedures also increase the likelihood of detecting a youth's involvement in multiple systems—in which case, the juvenile justice caseworker should immediately notify the child welfare caseworker (or vice versa) and begin the collaborative process. Many jurisdictions embarking on this work have found ways to successfully blend resources and funding streams to maximize programs and services for youth and families. The resource-mapping process explained above can aid in the identification of duplicative services or gaps in resources and thereby prompt a discussion about ways to share resources—both programmatic and financial.

### **Develop Crossover Court Practices**

The child welfare social worker and juvenile justice caseworker should attend all court hearings throughout the minor's delinquency and dependency cases. Courts are encouraged to use case assignment approaches to consolidate court processing and simultaneously handle dependency and delinquency cases. Such hearings are supervised by attorneys and judges familiar with both systems. Case assignment approaches include dedicated dockets, one family/one judge, and pre-

court coordination (see sidebar, "Collaborative Court Approaches," in section IV).

### **Coordinate and Conduct Joint Assessment and Case Planning**

Joint assessments and case planning are often encouraged and permitted through the early development of MOUs and information-sharing agreements. Child welfare and juvenile justice agencies should develop case plans that thoroughly integrate the learning from the various or joint assessments completed in each system. Effective sharing of information that has already been compiled is a wise use of time and resources, and may not require either system to modify existing validated assessment instruments.

### **Coordinate Case Supervision**

Both systems must coordinate case supervision to appropriately serve crossover or dually-involved youth and their families. Coordinated case supervision identifies which agency has lead or primary supervision of the case and relies on a formal agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding, to outline the roles and responsibilities of each agency. Coordinated ongoing assessments should be provided to measure the efficacy of provided services and identify any youth or family changes that may require modification of the original services.

### **Plan for Permanency and Positive Youth Development**

The plan for permanency and positive youth development should begin at a youth's initial point of contact with any child-serving system. Early permanency efforts include the rapid identification and engagement of kin throughout assessments, planning, placement decisions, and court processes, while later permanency efforts can include the use of permanency pacts, as described in section IV, to formalize various supports the youth will need once he/she is no longer involved with any system. Though perhaps not ideal, dual-status services can offer the opportunity to maximize a youth's chances for success and positive outcomes. Prior to involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, a youth perhaps may have had only limited opportunities to truly explore his/her unique talents and interests; however, with proper guidance and support, these strengths can be tapped into, and the knowledge and skills critical to a successful transition—

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be it into adolescence, a return to family and community, or adulthood—can be developed.

## Using RBA to Manage Multi-System Reforms for Dually-Involved Youth

Each of the six SII and CYPM imperatives described above is necessary for a jurisdiction to comprehensively reform its child welfare and juvenile justice systems to better serve dually-involved youth. Each imperative requires the two systems to share in common one or more ends<sup>11</sup> they collectively seek to achieve, the achievement of which are the responsibilities of multiple partners. For example, imperative 6 calls for integrated case planning, and requires both systems to share in partnership collective accountability for the case management of dually-involved youth. In order to manage such reform with accountability, we need to measure how the partnership is doing in achieving its collective end and how each individual partner is doing in performing its role. Further, given resource constraints, it is not realistic to expect that a jurisdiction can undertake all six of the imperatives at once. Also, because every jurisdiction, child welfare agency, and juvenile justice system is different, some imperatives may be more feasible than others and therefore may have a greater impact in some systems than in others.

Therefore, in this final section of the paper, we re-present Results-Based Accountability™—first presented in the Introduction—as a methodology that can assist jurisdictions wishing to improve the way their child welfare and juvenile justice systems serve dually-involved youth by helping them identify which of the six imperatives they will undertake and ensure that their investment of finite resources will yield measurable improvements for the dually-involved youth they serve. To achieve those measurable improvements, RBA aligns the decision making and accountability of multiple stakeholders within the systems around a shared end, while retaining the individual accountability of each partner for performance of its role.<sup>12</sup> The key component of RBA that makes this alignment possible is the idea of Turn-the-Curve

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<sup>11</sup> The generic term “end” is used at this point in the event the reader does not recall the terminology of performance measures presented in the Introduction to this paper. The terminology of performance measures is re-introduced below.

Thinking™. Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, as applied to partnerships between child welfare and juvenile justice systems, is a decision-making process that allows partners to determine collectively the end they are working toward, to assess how they are currently doing with regard to that end (using a performance measure) and why (the factors impacting the trend line or “curve” for the performance measure), to determine the best means—in this case, the best imperative—to “turn the curve,” to implement the imperative, and then to continually assess whether their efforts, as augmented by the imperative, are turning the curve of the performance measure. The Turn-the-Curve Thinking™ process is comprised of answering the following six questions:

1. What ends do we want?
2. How are we doing?
3. What is the story behind the curve?
4. Who are the partners who may have a role to play in turning the curve?
5. What would work to turn the curve?
6. What do we propose to do to turn the curve?

The six imperatives presented above exemplify “what works” when trying to improve the impact of the two systems on or for the dually-involved youth they serve. While each of the imperatives is essential for an effective and comprehensive multi-system reform effort for dually-involved youth, it is not likely, in light of current resource constraints, that a particular jurisdiction will be able to undertake concurrently each and every imperative. Given this reality, RBA gives jurisdictions a way to prioritize. It provides a decision-making process that allows systems to identify and implement only those imperatives that will be most feasible and therefore have the greatest impact for the dually-involved youth they serve, while providing

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<sup>12</sup> As described in the Introduction to this paper, RBA distinguishes between population accountability and performance accountability. The discussion in this section focuses exclusively on the performance accountability of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems for the crossover youth they serve: dually-involved youth. A more inclusive discussion, framed in terms of population accountability, would concern broader strategies involving multiple other stakeholders, both in and outside of the public sector, with a role to play in achieving a particular result, such as “Crossover youth succeed in school,” as gauged by an indicator such as percent of crossover youth graduating from high school.

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## Performance Measures for a Partnership Focused on Case Management

When partnering for case management, each system and its respective caseworkers are responsible for ensuring that the procedures are followed, implemented well, and have an impact on the intended beneficiary of the services provided: the children and their families. The following are examples of performance measures that could be used to support performance accountability and decision making by the partnership and each system’s caseworkers.

### How much did we do?

- Number of dually-involved youth who received case management services
- Number of assessments
- Number of hours of case planning and supervision

### How well did we do it?

- Percentage of dually-involved youth who received a joint assessment
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who had an integrated case plan across systems
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who received coordinated supervision across systems

### Is anyone better off?

- Percentage of dually-involved youth diverted from adjudication
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who showed improvement in behavioral health and substance abuse problems
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who showed improvement in educational achievement
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who recidivate\*

\* If the case management partnership is broad across the two systems, a measure like recidivism rates will be relevant.

a mechanism for the later introduction of additional imperatives to supplement the initial reform efforts. The specific imperatives selected as priorities should correspond with the most important factors influencing the curve for the relevant performance measures and should contemplate the role of each partner in implementing and sustaining the imperative.

The starting point in selecting an imperative is the end the two systems have chosen to share in common. At this point, it will help to revisit the terminology of performance measures. As noted in the Introduction, in gauging the performance of a program, agency, system, or two systems working in partnership, RBA classifies performance measures into three common sense categories:

#### 1. How much did we do?

- Who are the customers or clients we served and how many?
- What services did we provide and how much?

#### 2. How well did we do it?

- What was the quality of our service delivery?

#### 3. Is anyone better off?

- To what extent did we achieve the desired impact on the customers and clients we served?

Here is how these measures inform decision making. The answers to “How much did we do?” will define the scope of the partnership. The systems are in partnership, of course, because they share the same clients—dually-served youth—but the scope of the partnership will vary. In some jurisdictions the partnership might concern only certain programs, while in others the partnership might only share in common specific services provided. A more complex partnership might involve a variety of programs, agencies, and systems providing a variety of services.

The answer to “How well did we do it?” concerns the very issues addressed by several of the imperatives. For

example, an integrated case plan is an improvement to how well case management is delivered.

The answer to “Is anyone better off?” identifies the intended impact of the services provided on or for the clients shared by the partnership. By impact, we mean, for example, with case management, perhaps the percent of youth served who show improvement in behavioral health. For intake and assessments, perhaps the percent diverted from adjudication. For a partnership involving a larger scope of programs and agencies, perhaps the percent of dually-involved youth who achieve permanency or who recidivate.

The key in decision making is that the partnership wants to determine, with Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, which of the six SII and CYPM imperatives will have the greatest influence on the trend line—the curve—for the relevant “Is anyone better off?” performance measures. A partnership that encompasses all or most of the two systems, will, of course, take a wider perspective.

Once an imperative has been implemented, the partnership should continue to review progress—turning curves—and, applying Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, determine what adjustments and/or new imperatives should follow. See sidebar, “Performance Measures for a Partnership Focused on Case Management,” for an example of the application of RBA performance measures to a partnership focused on case management. Note which imperatives have been implemented and the corresponding “Is anyone better off?” measures.

In addition to informing the selection of SII and CYPM imperatives to implement, RBA can also support decision making and accountability of a team or unit charged with implementation of those imperatives.<sup>13</sup> The key principle to bear in mind is that the implementation team’s customer is the two systems, not the youth served by the partnership. When applying Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, the implementation team will start with the ends—the changes it seeks to achieve in the two systems—gauge the extent to which it is achieving those ends, and then

<sup>13</sup> The implementation team can be any group assuming accountability for implementation of SII, CYPM, or a particular SII or CYPM imperative, including an existing unit within the systems or a team organized across the systems specifically for implementation.

## Performance Measures for a Team Implementing SII Governance and Management Structures

### How much did we do?

- Number of agencies pursued for involvement in each committee
- Number of MOUs negotiated
- Number of hours spent recruiting committee members
- Number of hours spent staffing committees
- Number of meetings held for each committee

### How well did we do it?

- Percentage of committee members who regularly attended meetings and did not send substitutes in their place
- Percentage of committee members who rated the staffing of the committee as excellent or very good
- Percentage of negotiated MOUs executed

### Is anyone better off?

- Percentage of each committee’s expected SII action plan items implemented
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who received a joint assessment
- Percentage of dually-involved youth and parents who were engaged in decision making
- Percentage of dually-involved youth who had an integrated case plan across systems
- Percentage of committee members who rated collaboration as high

work backward in its decision making to systematically determine the best means to achieve those changes.

To start, the implementation group should select the measures by which it will gauge the extent to which it is achieving the desired changes in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems—measures that will answer the question: “Is anyone better off?” The group should also select measures to gauge the quality and/or efficiency

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with which it is delivering its services to the two systems, measures that will answer the question: “How well did we do it?”

Before selecting its “Better off?” and “How well?” measures, the group will need first to identify and quantify who in the systems it will be working with—the implementation group’s specific customers—and what services the group will provide to those customers. In identifying and quantifying its customers and services, the implementation group will be answering the question: “How much did we do?” Because implementation plans will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, the systematic development of RBA performance measures will help to specify, track, and maintain accountability for achieving the specific changes the implementation group is pursuing. See sidebar, “Performance Measures for a Team Implementing SII Governance and Management Structures,” for examples of RBA performance measures for an SII implementation team.

With these measures and Turn-the-Curve Thinking™, the implementation team can monitor progress and, on an ongoing basis, determine what adjustments are necessary to best achieve successful implementation of the SII and CYPM imperatives.

## Conclusion

We have sought in this paper to identify opportunities where significant, positive, and long-lasting impacts can be made on the lives of vulnerable youth and families served dually by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Experience has shown that jurisdictions undertaking the Systems Integration Initiative and Crossover Youth Practice Model push through barriers and equip their staffs to better meet the needs of their dually-involved youth. While the work to date has been impressive, the ultimate purpose of this paper is to provide a framework that will enable communities to take their multi-system reform work further—to the next frontier. By combining the strengths of the SII and CYPM into a comprehensive set of six imperatives and placing them within the context of RBA, a more cohesive framework emerges for approaching multi-system reforms for dually-served youth. Within this framework, child welfare and juvenile justice systems can build even stronger collaborations that will more effectively address the unique needs of and challenges faced by these youth and their families. Most importantly, within this framework, the child welfare and juvenile justice systems can produce better client results for dually-involved youth and their families.

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# Appendix A. Jurisdictions Participating in the Crossover Youth Practice Model

The following jurisdictions either have been or are currently involved in implementation of the Crossover Youth Practice Model.

## **California**

Los Angeles County

## **Colorado**

Broomfield County  
Denver County  
Douglas County  
Larimer County  
Morgan County

## **Florida**

Broward County  
Duval County  
Hardee County\*  
Highlands County\*  
Miami-Dade County  
Polk County\*  
Volusia County

## **Iowa**

Woodbury County

## **New York**

Monroe County

## **Ohio**

Hamilton County  
Lucas County  
Montgomery County  
Summit County

## **Oregon**

Marion County  
Multnomah County

## **Pennsylvania**

Philadelphia

## **South Carolina**

Berkeley County  
Charleston County  
Georgetown County

## **Texas**

Travis County

## **Washington**

King County

*\*Part of the 10th judicial circuit and therefore worked as one team in the CYPM.*



# Appendix B: Sample Resource Inventory

## King County Systems Integration Project Resource Inventory and Analysis Subcommittee Resource Inventory of Programs and Services

Agency	Program	Service Description	Target Population	Funding Source	Partnerships/Agreements
JRA*	Region 4	Functional family parole	Parole youth/families	State/federal (targeted case management)	FFT/JRA**
JRA*	Region 4	Sex offender treatment	Parole sex offenders	State	Contracts with providers
JRA*	Region 4	Substance abuse treatment	Chemically dependent parole youth	State	King County Dept Community and Human Services/JRA*
JRA*	Region 4	Functional family therapy	Parole youth/families	State	FFT/JRA**
JRA*	Region 4	Sex offender functional family therapy	Parole sex offenders/families	State	FFT/JRA**
JRA*	Region 4	Learning life skills	Juvenile offenders—probation and parole	State/Seattle School District	Seattle School District/JRA*
JRA*	Region 4	Family integration therapy	Parole youth/families	State	University of Washington/JRA*
JRA*	Region 4	Mental health treatment	Parole youth	State	Regional Support Network/JRA*
JRA*	Region 4	Emergency psychiatric assessment/care	Parole youth	State	Contract with provider
JRA*	Region 4	Mentoring	High-risk and other parole youth	State/federal (Going Home grant)	Department of Corrections/JRA*

\*Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration

\*\*Functional Family Therapy, Inc./Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration



# Appendix C: Sample Assessment Inventory

## Division of Children and Family Services Required Assessments

Assessment	Required Of	When Required	Includes	Result
Intake risk Tag determination	CPS referrals	At intake	Initial assessment of risk of abuse Legal requirements for accepting referral for investigation	Decision to accept referral for CPS investigation; determines how quickly and how intrusively CPS responds to referral
Safety assessment	CPS referrals rated 3, 4, 5 when children remain at home	Immediately following initial face-to-face contact with child	Assessment of how safe child is if remaining in the home	Development of a plan to monitor child's safety
Investigative risk assessment	CPS referrals with high standard of investigation	Within 90 days of referral	Evaluation of future risk of child abuse over domains that include severity/chronicity of abuse, child characteristics, caretaker characteristics, social and environmental factors, protective factors, and overall level of risk; includes screening for substance-abusing parents	Results in a decision to "found" abuse and future status of case (closure/open for services)
Re-assessment of risk	Open CPS cases	At case transfer and every 6 months if no ISSP is required on case	Re-assessment of risk factors for CAVN	Development and monitoring of case plan for child/family
Reunification assessment	Children returning home	Prior to children returning home	Assessment of safety if child returns home	Safety plan for monitoring child after return home
Passport	Children in placement; currently done only on children 12 and under	After placement of children in care 90 days, updated once a year	Obtaining copies of child's hospital birth records, all child's medical records, immunization records, school records, testing	Helps identify problems and identifies routine health needs
Pre-Passport (AKA Kidscreen)	Children in placement	Within 30 days of initial placement of a child in care	Screening for physical, developmental, behavioral problems using standardized tests	Plan for remediating problems and planning for routine medical/dental care

## Appendix C: Sample Assessment Inventory (continued)

Assessment	Required Of	When Required	Includes	Result
FAS/FAE assessment	All children in care who are enrolled in Passport	Following Passport assessment	Photograph of child taken—if child has facial features of FAS, then a full diagnostic exam is completed with UW FAS clinic	Children who are possibly FAS/FAE-afflicted are jumped to the front of the line for assessment; results in quicker service provision
Early Periodic Screening Report (EDSDT)	All children in care	Once a year while in care	Physician's assessment of medical and health status/needs of child	Referral for medical or dental services
FRS family assessment	Youth for whom DCFS is referring for phase II counseling or for whom an AYR or CHINS petition is being filed	Prior to phase II referral; prior to filing of an AYR or CHINS petition	Description of crisis situation, family dynamics, child/family demographics/problems, history of counseling or previous solutions, assessment of risk of abuse/neglect	FRS phase II counseling provided or filing of an AYR or CHINS petition
CWS family assessment	New referrals for CWS services	At time of assignment for CWS services	Description of family strengths and needs; presenting problems and expected resolutions; family's description of problems; family history to include dynamics, economics, social and cultural factors, education; review of case records; Native American status	Plan for provision of CWS services
Social summary	Children going into placement	Required at time of placement; usually requirements are met through development of ISSP (Individual Service and Safety Plan)	Physical and emotional strengths and needs of child; proximity of proposed placement to family; racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious background of child; least restrictive placement setting possible; and parental preferences for placement	Selection of appropriate placement for child
Sexually aggressive youth assessment	Children who are thought to be sexually aggressive and for whom treatment/evaluation is sought	When requesting funding for evaluation/treatment	Screens for risk factors for sexually aggressive behavior	Provision of funding for further evaluation or treatment; plan for ensuring safety of other children who might be at risk from SAY youth

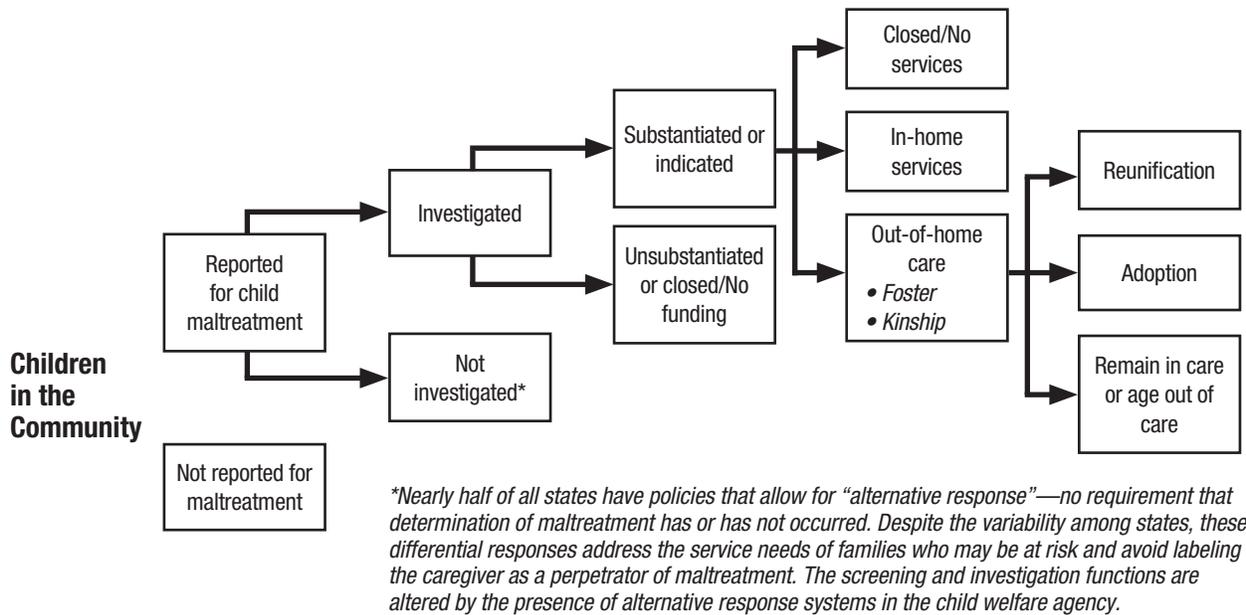
### Appendix C: Sample Assessment Inventory (continued)

Assessment	Required Of	When Required	Includes	Result
Independent living assessment	Children aged 16–21 who are in out-of-home care	When children in care reach age 16	Assessment of life skills, including education, housing, jobs, relationships	Plan for helping youth reach independence
Life skills inventory	Children aged 16–21 who are in out-of-home care	When children in care reach age 16	Assessment of life skills	Plan for helping youth reach independence
Indian child welfare identity assessment	Children for whom there is reason to believe may be subject to state/federal child welfare ICW requirements	Screened initially at time of intake into any DCFS program, then further follow-up required if needed post-case assignment	Ancestry information; screening questions to determine tribal or Native American self-identification	Compliance with federal and state ICW requirements
Group care assessment/referral form	Children being referred for group care/behavioral rehab services	At time of referral to behavioral rehab services	Social summary, behavioral assessment, history of service and placement provision, medical and educational history	Selection of appropriate placement for child
Child background form (13-041)	Children being placed for adoption	At time of referral for adoption services	Full history on child's birth family—physical, ethnicity, problems, strengths, interests	Provides full information for adoptive parent on background of child
Foster care rate assessment	Children in placement for whom foster care payment is made	At time of placement into paid foster care	Assessment of the time required for a foster parent to meet child's individualized physical, emotional, social, and educational needs	Level of payment to foster parent is matched with child's needs

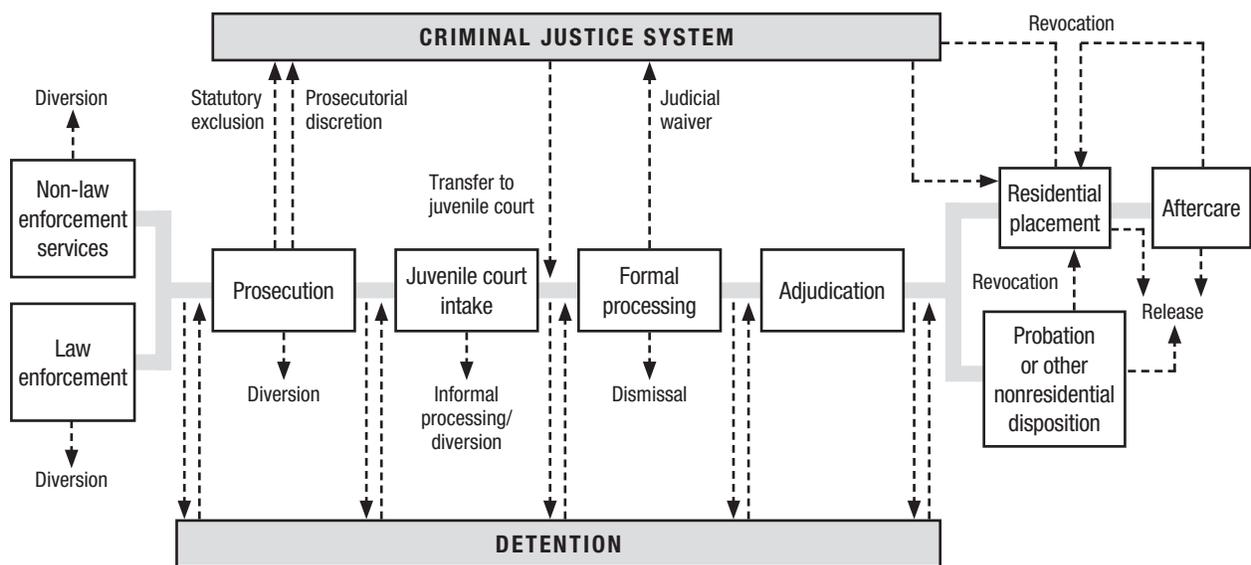


# Appendix D: Sample Maps and Flowcharts

**Figure 1:** Simplified Model of Case Flow of Children in the Child Welfare System



**Figure 2:** Juvenile Justice System Case Flow





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