

Attachment 1a: King County Juvenile Justice System Efforts to Reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

Juvenile Justice in King County

King County, Washington has one of the most ethnically and racially diverse populations in the countryⁱ; a quality that its residents and leaders celebrate. While taking pride in this diversity, King County's leaders and communities are concerned that traditional institutions, specifically the juvenile justice system, have historically reinforced patterns of racial and ethnic disparity. The King County Superior Court leadership acknowledges the positive role that the courts can have in helping youth from all backgrounds prosper while also strengthening and healing communities. To benefit all King County residents, the juvenile justice system has embraced the opportunity to be forerunners in fomenting social change by intentionally and systematically pursuing reforms to reduce disproportionate minority contact (DMC).

In King County, juvenile justice reform efforts have contributed to a remarkable reduction in the overall numbers of youth involved in the court system and held in detention. Local successes have exceeded state and national trends.

From 1998 to 2013 in King Countyⁱⁱ:

- Referrals from Law Enforcement decreased 69%.
- Juvenile offender filings dropped 78%.
- The average daily population in secure detention is down 69%.
- Commitments to Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (state institutions) dropped 68%ⁱⁱⁱ.

While all youth have benefited from these changes, not all racial groups have benefited equally. Therefore, efforts to reduce disproportionate minority contact continue to be a high priority. One of King County Juvenile Court's greatest concerns is the disparate impact of these changes on African American youth. From 1998 to 2013, the *numbers* of African American youth in the justice system declined, but their *percentage* of total youth at each point increased:

Juvenile Justice Trends for African American Youth 1998-2013			
	Referrals	Filings	Detention ADP
1998	3436 (27%)	2460 (31%)	68.9 (37%)
2013	1517 (35%)	733 (42%)	24.2 (42%)

With this knowledge, in conjunction with a declared interest in changing these patterns of disproportionality, the King County Juvenile Court is studying practices and policies that may contribute to DMC. These analyses led to the implementation of multiple approaches to further dismantle the patterns of DMC. Descriptions of these efforts are outlined in the Strategies to Reduce DMC section of this document.

Racial Disparity in Juvenile Justice

The racially disproportionate pattern of youth involved in the juvenile justice and dependency systems is a concern nationwide. While there are other socio-economic factors that contribute to this disparity, including unequitable access to health, education, and employment opportunities, the juvenile justice system represents a unique intervention point for embracing institutional accountability while striving to achieve racial equity and social justice.

In an effort to reduce DMC, King County acknowledges the need to objectively review statistics on the demographics of youth involved in the juvenile justice and dependency systems. With this knowledge, the County is empowered to effectively reform practices to the benefit of all youth equally.

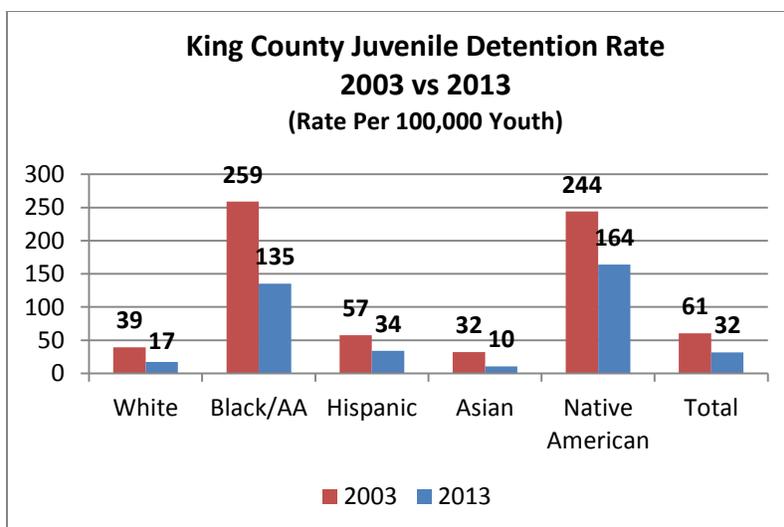
In 2013 in King County, African American youth made up about 10% of the general population aged 10-17 and about 42% of the secure juvenile detention population. African American youth are over five times more likely than white youth to be referred by law enforcement to the prosecutor, about eight times more likely to have charges filed and nearly nine times more likely to spend time in secure confinement.

As with the offender system, the rates of disproportionality in the dependency system increases as youth move deeper into the system. Native American, African American and Hispanic youth are represented at a higher rate at every point of the child welfare system as compared to white children. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy released a report in 2008 titled *Racial Disproportionality in Washington State* which included this information on child welfare in King County.

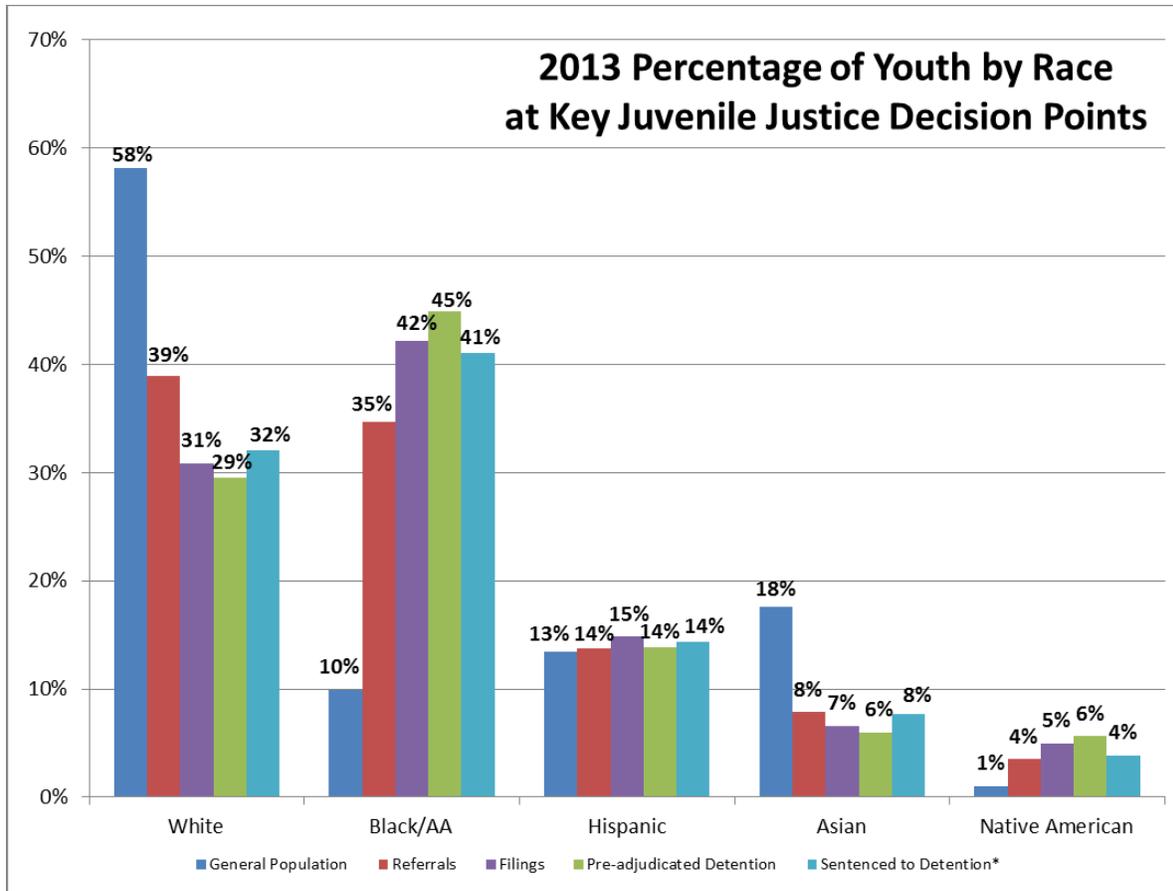
In King County, as compared to white children referred to child welfare:

- Native American children referrals are over 5 times more likely to be accepted and classified as high risk.
- Black children are nearly 5 times more likely to remain in care for over two years.
- Hispanic children are nearly three times as likely to be removed from the home.

Fewer youth of all races are detained today compared to 2003.^{iv} The chart below illustrates the downward trend in the juvenile detention rate for all youth over a ten year period.



This chart shows the percentage of youth aged 10-17 by race in King County and the number of cases at key decision points in the juvenile justice system – referral from law enforcement to the prosecutor, filed by the prosecutor, pre-adjudicated detention admissions and whether or not the youth was sentenced to confinement (local detention or a state institution).



* Sentenced to Detention includes both local detention and state institutions.

While most youth of color remain overrepresented at each juvenile justice decision point^v, there are observable positive trends in 2013. For example, the percentage of African American youth in secure detention dropped from 46.6% in 2012 to 42.1% in 2013.^{vi} The drop in average daily population (ADP) from 32.7 to 24.2 is a 26% decrease for African American youth compared to a 12% decrease (20.8 to 18.3) for white youth during the same period. The average length of stay for African American youth decreased by 13 days.

Secure Detention Average Daily Population by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2012		2013	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
African American	32.7	46.6%	24.2	42.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.7	6.6%	3.3	5.8%
Caucasian	20.8	29.6%	18.3	31.9%
Hispanic	10.6	15.1%	8.3	14.4%
Native American	1.2	1.7%	3.0	5.3%
Other/Unknown	0.3	0.5%	0.3	0.5%
Total	70.3	100.0%	57.4	100.0%

King County Strategies to Reduce DMC

The leadership of the juvenile justice system in King County is acutely aware of the patterns of DMC and in a concerted effort to change these trends, DMC reduction strategies have been integrated into all services provided by Juvenile Court. For example, the Juvenile Detention Oversight Committee provides guidance on offender DMC related issues. The DMC Workgroup was originally convened in early 2000 as the Detention/ASD Placement Process Review (DAPPR) Workgroup focused on examining how youth bound for detention were screened, placed, and released. The group's role and responsibilities evolved over time. In 2005, as part of Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), the group was formally assigned the role of "DMC Workgroup". While all of its previous efforts included a DMC component/lens, additional emphasis was now placed specifically on reducing DMC. The King County Coalition on Racial Disproportionality continues to examine child welfare data and practices and is part of the Model Court Initiative to reduce disparity in the child welfare system. These groups have worked to identify areas in the court process where disparity exists, develop and implement strategies to reduce disparity, and monitor outcomes.

Analysis of offender data has identified several areas of concern including disproportionate minority representation in warrants, youth of color remaining longer in secure detention, and overrepresentation of youth of color in certain offense categories such as felony drug offenses. Much work has also been done to change the culture of the offender system by establishing principles and guidelines for the use of detention and defining success for DMC efforts.

Reducing Racial Disparity

How do we define success?

- Develop and implement strategies to reduce disparity at specifically targeted juvenile justice decision points for similarly situated youth.
- **Determine success by eliminating disparity measured at those decision points.**
- Track DMC trends in broader juvenile justice system indicators such as detention population to inform additional efforts to reduce disparity.

Evolution of DMC Efforts in King County

System Approach: Early reform efforts concentrated primarily on system reform. Policies were applied "across the board", using a DMC lens to review the potential impact of proposed policy and practices on disproportionality. Examples include implementing more objective decision making tools for detention admission, expanding alternatives to secure detention programs, and putting a probation violation and sanction grid in place. These efforts contributed to fewer youth of color in detention, but did not necessarily reduce the percentages.

Cross System Approach: Understanding that youth serving systems are interrelated; Child Welfare, Juvenile Court, and the Puget Sound Educational Service District were the initial local cornerstones of the Systems Integration Initiative (now Uniting for Youth). Effectively sharing information and coordinating services for youth already involved in multiple systems was the initial focus of this effort. Since its inception, the Uniting for Youth membership has grown to include more agencies serving youth and families in King County.

Targeted Approach: Over the years it became apparent that a more targeted and intentional approach was needed to reduce racial disparity. Emphasis was placed on program activities and/or target populations designed to directly impact DMC. For example, the Warrant Prevention

Program specifically targets warrants, a part of the offender court process that increases DMC, and prioritizes youth of color for services.

Outside the Box – Reaching Beyond the Court & Traditional Partners

While Juvenile Court actively examines and improves its own policies and practices, it also recognizes the power and effectiveness of systems and organizations outside of the Court’s authority that can assist in guiding youth away from the juvenile justice system. Since 2004, the King County Juvenile Court has initiated a cross-systems approach that has built an effective collaboration with other systems and community partners to support youth in the County. These efforts are designed to help *prevent* juvenile justice involvement and reduce DMC through early interventions that aim to address youth’s needs before they come in contact with the system. For example, to improve and advance these efforts, the Court has partnered with local schools and community organizations to provide wraparound services for youth to succeed in society and divert them away from the justice system.

Working with Schools

Research clearly shows a relationship between the extent of school engagement and the likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system. “The Silent Epidemic” is a report sponsored by the Gates Foundation that states that a youth who drops out of school is more than eight times as likely to be in jail or prison as a person with at least a high school diploma.^{vii} The report further explains how youth who drop out of school are more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, live in poverty, receive public assistance, be in prison, be on death row, be unhealthy, divorced, and ultimately be single parents with children who drop out from high school themselves.

The Court has embraced the opportunity to lead efforts in helping detained youth successfully transition back to their home schools, while also challenging school leadership to examine discipline practices that have a disparate impact on youth of color. In the Seattle School District from elementary to high school, black students are, on average, suspended or expelled more than three times as frequently as white students. The overall racial disparity in Seattle schools is similar to what a privately funded study has found throughout Washington State.^{viii} Juvenile Court, the Center for Children and Youth Justice (CCYJ), the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD), and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) sponsored a symposium in November 2013 to bring together eight school districts to initiate a discussion on effectively reducing out of school suspensions and expulsions that disproportionately impact youth of color.

Community & Parent Partnerships

Community engagement is central to the functioning of Juvenile Court and the delivery of its services. The Juvenile Justice 101 (JJ 101) program is an innovative solution to closing the information and support gap for families at the initial court phase of the juvenile justice process. Using a peer support model, the program informs families about court basics and community resources through an onsite orientation in the juvenile courthouse lobby and one-on-one support. The project has been implemented in the Juvenile Court since November 2010 with high satisfaction ratings from families who have experienced the program.

Striving to take a pre-emptive approach, to provide support and services to youth before they even enter the juvenile justice system, Juvenile Court partners with community leaders to educate and serve youth in a positive and impactful manner. The Court believes that early education and support increases the chances of successful engagement. For example, when Juvenile Court was approached by Somali community members and parents concerned about the increase in juvenile crime within their community, court staff saw an opportunity to establish a partnership through the creation of JJ 101. In 2012, Juvenile Court obtained grant funding for the JJ 101 program, in partnership with Somali community members, to hold a series of geographically distributed workshops reaching Somali communities throughout King County. The program's goal is to educate the Somali community on how to assist court-involved youth, engage youth and families in the court process, avoid warrants, and encourage active participation in court ordered treatment and services. The workshops have been a widespread success and have assisted in establishing a positive collaborative relationship between the Court and the Somali community.

Funding is available through 2015 to continue collaborating with the Somali community and also to initiate a similar program with the Hispanic community as requested by community leaders. Juvenile Court is also exploring the idea of using the community outreach model to improve engagement and completion rates for youth of color in diversion programs.

New Horizons

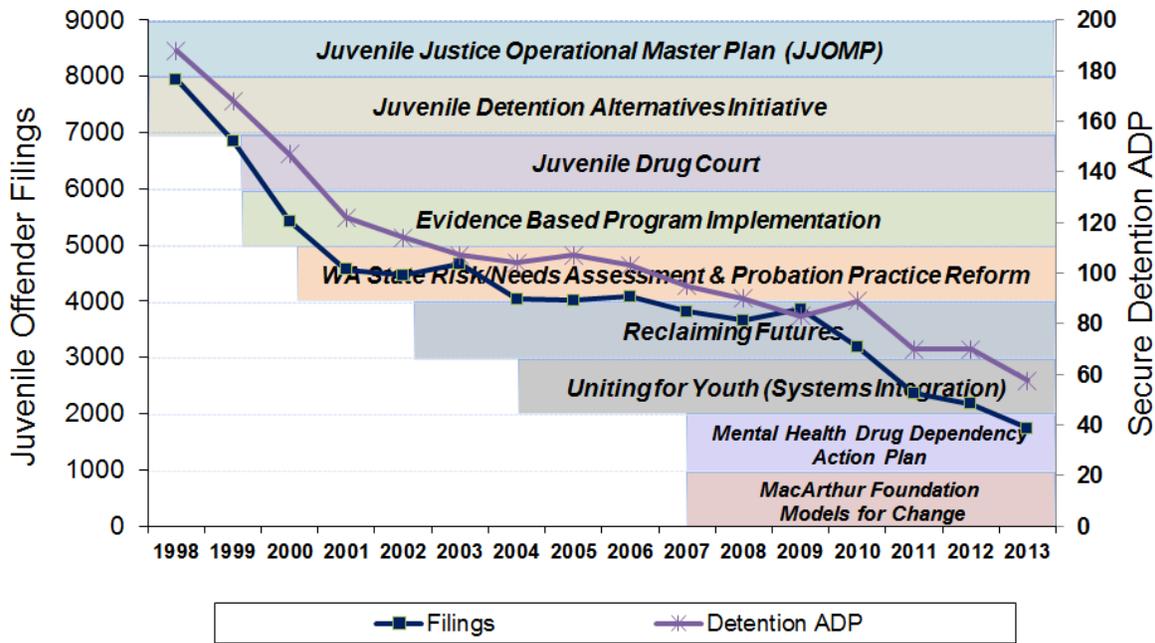
As positive trends start to emerge with the reduction of DMC from the Court's varied approaches – system, cross-system, or targeted – it is recognized that efforts must be strengthened to continually reduce equitable patterns. Being aware that the issue of disparity reaches beyond the juvenile justice system and traditional justice system partners, the Court continues to actively engage stakeholders in other agencies, as well as community members and organizations, to successfully address the root causes of DMC.

Key Reform Efforts Addressing DMC

The number of King County initiatives focusing on juvenile justice and at-risk youth and their families is a strong indicator of the Court's commitment to safer communities and seeing youth succeed in their communities. Juvenile Court and its partners have been actively engaged in several national reform initiatives, as well as state and local efforts, to improve coordination, provide research-based effective interventions, and reduce costs. These efforts have contributed to the dramatic decrease in the number of youth of all races being held in detention.

The chart below overlays the timelines of key juvenile justice initiatives overlaid with filings and the detention population, showing a clear connection between King County's DMC efforts and a reduction in court involvement for youth of all races.

Juvenile Justice Trends and Initiatives 1998 - 2013



Reducing racial disparity remains one of King County’s priorities in 2014 and efforts to address DMC are an integral component of the following initiatives and programs.

Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP)

Since 1998, King County Juvenile Justice System has been systematically examining and improving its offender practices and programs under the framework of the Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP). The JJOMP process brought together an unprecedented number of youth-serving government and non-profit agencies, elected officials, and community members to revisit how business is conducted and find better ways to promote justice, protect the public, and help youth in trouble make responsible choices. The Phase I JJOMP culminated in 1998 with a vision, six goals, and a commitment to make fundamental changes to the juvenile justice system. One of those goals is to “Reduce Over-Representation of Youth of Color in the Juvenile Justice System”. In August 2000, the King County Council unanimously approved the JJOMP Phase II report which detailed recommendations and strategies to accomplish the JJOMP goals.

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

While JDAI principles were a key element of the JJOMP process it wasn’t until 2004 that King County joined four other counties in Washington State to formally become a JDAI replication site. The objectives of the JDAI are to reduce the number of children unnecessarily or inappropriately detained, to minimize the number of youth who fail to appear in court or reoffend pending adjudication, to redirect public funds toward successful reform strategies, and to improve conditions of confinement. To accomplish these objectives the JDAI focuses on eight core strategies including “Reducing Racial Disparities in Juvenile Detention.”

Washington Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (WA-PCJJ)

King County has actively partnered with the WA-PCJJ to reduce DMC. Over the years WA-PCJJ has provided grant funding and technical assistance to support several King County DMC efforts including the Community Juvenile Justice Coalition, warrant reduction, expedited case processing and data analysis. WA-PCJJ has also been instrumental in the support and expansion of the JDAI. King County provides WA-PCJJ data to meet annual federal reporting requirements to measure racial disparity at key points in the juvenile justice process including disproportionate minority confinement in juvenile detention.

Uniting for Youth

Since 2004, a leadership group representing juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health and educational systems have been meeting monthly to examine and improve the way they work together on behalf of King County children and youth. The Child Welfare League of America and Casey Family Services (Seattle Office) helped to guide the initial formation and planning efforts of Uniting for Youth. More recently, King County has received financial support and technical assistance from MacArthur Foundation and Georgetown University through the Models for Change (MfC) and the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) initiatives. Given the extensive research showing the connections between abuse, neglect, school failure, and juvenile justice involvement it is especially important to include cross system efforts in any serious attempt to reduce DMC.

Reclaiming Futures Initiative

Seattle-King County was one of the original 10 sites nationally selected by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2002 to participate in the Reclaiming Futures initiative to reform the way youthful offender's access substance abuse services and mental health services. The purpose was to build upon current juvenile justice reforms and successes to develop a comprehensive model of care targeting substance abusing youthful offenders and their families. From its start the King County Reclaiming Futures Initiative has made a commitment to design and implement service improvements specifically for youth of color, meeting its targets in the initial grant proposal which stated 50% of the population served would be chemically dependent youth of color that are a high risk to reoffend. One priority of the Reclaiming Futures Initiative is to ensure culturally competent and effective screening, assessment, and treatment for youth of color. Accomplishments include implementation of a standardized behavioral health assessment, the Global Appraisal of Individual Need (GAIN), throughout King County's publicly funded adolescent treatment system; implementation of Wraparound Services and Mentoring to support youth with substance abuse and mental health issues beyond their court and treatment system participation; and implementation of evidence-based practices through King County's adolescent treatment providers. Mentoring services are provided in collaboration with the African American faith community. The program aggressively recruits minority mentors to match with youth of color.

Race and Criminal Justice Task Force

Convened in November 2010, the Task Force on Race and the Criminal Justice System is working to address racial disparity in Washington's criminal justice system. Participants include attorneys, judges, faculty members from the three Washington law schools, and several community and advocacy organizations. The group has articulated a set of goals and developed working groups. The first phase involves developing informational resources on racial bias in the

criminal justice system. The second phase involves bringing into conversation all levels of the criminal justice system and to develop a set of recommendations to address racial bias at the systemic level. The third phase involves working to implement the recommendations. Throughout, the Task Force will develop educational projects to reach judges, the bar, law enforcement, students, and the public. Juvenile Court judges and staff are active on the Task Force and support its efforts.

Model Dependency Courts Initiative

The Model Courts project is a cutting-edge and effective catalyst for systems change implementation using court-based innovations to enhance practice in the child welfare system and improve outcomes for children and families. Model Courts have served as the laboratories for implementing best practices from the Resource Guidelines including the Courts Catalyzing Change (CCC) initiative to reduce disparities for children and families of color. The on-the-ground implementation framework of the project represents a unique and vital tool in local and statewide systems change efforts. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) provides intensive training and technical assistance to designated model courts. King County became a participating Model Dependency Court in 2006.

Strategies to Reduce DMC

Since 1998, King County has implemented many strategies to reduce disproportionality. As new ideas are proposed and piloted, the County measures outcomes and advocates for obtaining resources to continue refining practices to reduce disparity. The following is a list of key King County efforts to understand and mitigate DMC:

- *Community Engagement* – Uniting for Youth (formerly the King County Systems Integration Initiative) is building support for reform efforts by engaging community agencies and representatives through focus groups, public meetings/events, and recruiting non-traditional partners to participate on committees. Emphasis has been placed on engaging communities of color. Both adult and youth Community Advisory Boards were convened in 2010. Members of the adult boards are participating in the Uniting for Youth Executive Steering Committee meetings.
- *Cultural Competency Initiative* – Juvenile Court completed a cultural competence self-assessment in 2004. The Strategic Diversity Committee was convened and launched the Cultural Competency Initiative in 2008 which generated action plans for each program/unit. Key accomplishments include the “Undoing Institutional Racism” training in 2010 for all Juvenile Court managers, supervisors and Diversity Committee members. A current focus of the initiative is providing on-going education for court staff and ensuring action plans are linked to reducing racial disparity.
- *Juvenile Justice 101 Program* – since November 2010 King County Juvenile Court has reached out to parents of court involved youth through the Juvenile Justice 101 program. The program provides justice-involved families information about the juvenile court process as well as community resources through a peer-support model. Expansion of the community outreach component of the program is described under “Community and Parent Partnerships”.
- *Expand Alternatives to Secure Detention (ASD)* – added new program options including a weekend reporting program, and increased participation in existing alternative to secure detention programs. Efforts to maintain and expand participation in ASD are ongoing.

- *Expediter* – created an “expediter” position in juvenile detention to review length of stay and work with ASD staff, prosecutor and defense attorneys to move appropriate youth from secure detention to alternative programs. When grant funding was eliminated in 2008, the Expediter process evolved into a process that prioritized placement reviews for youth of color in an effort to mitigate DMC.
- *Detention Intake Criteria* – implemented standardized criteria and a telephone screening process to keep low risk youth out of detention in 1999. Periodically reviewed and updated criteria including restructuring and streamlining the criteria in 2008. Completed a comprehensive evaluation of the criteria including outcomes by race and gender in 2010.
- *Detention Risk Assessment Instrument (DRAI)* – in 2004 implemented a structured decision-making tool to generate a placement recommendation (release, ASD eligible, secure detention) for the court at the first hearing for detained youth. Completed a comprehensive evaluation of the tool and implemented a revised version in 2007. Grant funds were secured for an evaluation in 2014 to ensure the tool continues to work well as demographic and offense trends change over time.
- *Warrant Reminder Calls* – using telephone calls and texting, youth and families are contacted a few days before scheduled arraignment hearings to remind them to attend court and avoid warrants.
- *2-Tier Warrants* – implemented a process in 2008 where youth with an eligible warrant can have their court hearing rescheduled and avoid detention.
- *Warrant Prevention Pilot Project* – conducted a grant funded pilot project from January 2010 through March 2011 designed to identify and connect youth who may fail to appear at court to a community provider for support. The pilot showed promising results and several areas for improvement. The court has contracted with the YMCA Alive and Free Outreach Network to locate youth and provide supports to help them get to court. Youth of color in South King County are prioritized. Grant funds were secured to continue the program through 2014.
- *Law Enforcement Pre-Booking Placement Option* – implemented in April 2013, the goal of this pilot project is to provide Law Enforcement with a new placement option for youth under the age of 16 involved in family conflict utilizing open group care beds at YouthSource contracted through DAJD’s Alternative to Secure Detention program.
- *Detention School Transition* – Seattle School District youth who spent only a day or two in detention were faced with the challenging process of getting re-enrolled in their home school. The practice was disproportionately affecting youth of color and youth already struggling with school. The DMC Workgroup collaborated with the Interagency School principle to explore the issue and changes were made in November 2011 to detention school enrollment practices to improve transitions for detained youth. Other efforts, briefly described under “Working with Schools” are underway to address disparate disciplinary practices that may contribute to higher rates of involvement in the juvenile justice system or keep justice involved youth out of school.
- *Juvenile Drug Court* – implemented in 1999 to reduce recidivism and the impact of substance abuse on youth and their families. The program recently expanded, adding staff and capacity to serve more youth and hold court hearings in South King County. A 2007 evaluation found that minority youth who participated in the program had substantially lower recidivism rates than their counterparts in the comparison group.

- *Evidence-Based Programs* – Juvenile Court implemented four treatment programs with a track record for reducing recidivism. In 2011, there was capacity to serve about 310 high and moderate risk youth on probation. An evidence-based program for low-risk offenders was implemented in 2010 with capacity to serve 170 youth annually. Emphasis is placed on tracking the success of minority youth and ensuring the services are culturally competent.
- *Youth Employment Programs* – established partnerships with minority business leaders to increase employment opportunities for court-involved minority youth.
- *Felony Drug Offender Study* – completed a study showing significant overrepresentation of African American youth in detention on felony drug offenses in 2007. Completed a detailed case file review of felony drug offenders in detention in 2009 which generated recommendations for process improvements. The percentage of the secure detention population held on felony drug offenses has dropped from 5.3% in 2007 to 1.5% in 2013.
- *Probation Violation Study* – collaborated with the University of California, Irvine to conduct a study of DMC in probation violations sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation. A knowledge brief based on the study was released in 2012 which indicated they found no clear pattern of systematic discrimination for juveniles on probation.
- *Decision Point Analysis* – the DMC Workgroup has undertaken a detailed analysis of each key decision point in the court process. The purpose of this analysis is to identify changes to policy and practice that will reduce racial disparity.
- *Courts Catalyzing Change* – the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and Casey Family Programs are partnering with Superior Court to examine and reduce disparity in the dependency system. One strategy implemented in 2010 is a benchcard for judicial officers to use as a tool to raise awareness and reduce disparity.
- *Indian Child Welfare Act* – through the Model Dependency Courts Initiative, the Juvenile Court has partnered with the Administrative Office of the Courts and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, to focus on increasing compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) requirements. A statewide ICWA summit was held in October 2012. Model Court has undertaken an ICWA Compliance – Court Readiness and Implementation Continuum assessment with assistance from NCFJ CJ as a 2012-2013 improvement strategy.
- *Family Treatment Court (FTC)* – is an alternative to regular dependency court and is designed to improve the safety and well-being of children in the dependency system by providing parents access to drug and alcohol treatment, judicial monitoring of their sobriety and individualized services to support the entire family. The program began in August 2004. An evaluation completed by the University of Washington School Of Medicine in 2011 showed that FTC children were more likely to be permanently reunified with their parent and spent less time in out-of home placements in the child welfare system than their counterparts in a comparison group. Additionally, children and families of color in the FTC had more positive outcomes than families of color in the comparison group.
- *Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer Minority Recruitment* – efforts to recruit minority CASA volunteers, particularly African American volunteers, have been ongoing. Since 2004, the local CASA program has secured four different grants through the National CASA Association to support these efforts including funds to hire a part-

time recruiter and expand advertising specifically targeting communities of color. In 2012, Dependency CASA joined forces with the Courts and Community Committee to recruit diverse volunteers. They have held two special community recruitment events, visited numerous churches and have reached out to the specialty bar associations. This effort is ongoing and articles highlighting the campaign were published in the Seattle Times and the Renton Reporter.

- *Parent to Parent Program* – early engagement in the dependency process is critical for improving the chance of reunification. This may be particularly difficult for some minority families; the Parent to Parent Program assists families by providing peer parents who are approachable and a culturally relevant connection to the dependency process.

Recent DMC Related Events

Creating opportunities for training and recognizing accomplishments is an important practice for furthering Juvenile Courts efforts to reduce disparity and improve cultural competency. Events in 2013 included:

- *50th Anniversary Celebration of March on Washington*: A special event commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Dr. King’s March on Washington and the “I have a Dream” speech was sponsored by the King County Superior Court Diversity Committee and MLK Celebration Workgroup. The event, held on August 28, 2013 from 11:30am – 1:30pm in the Juvenile Court lobby included a King County Proclamation, educational displays, music, a video: “I have a Dream” speech and youth and community reflections.
- *Annual Cultural Competency Initiative Symposium*: Each year Juvenile Court holds a mandatory half day symposium to discuss disparity and how to improve culturally competent services and interactions. The work of the Diversity Committee and individual units to address cultural diversity is acknowledged and the agenda includes exercises to build internal capacity, teambuilding, small group work and exercises on personal biases.
- *Cultural Competency Initiative Brown Bag Training Sessions*: Juvenile Court units sponsor frequent cultural diversity training sessions. Topics in 2013 included Programs for Sexually Exploited Youth; Fetal Alcohol and the Criminal Justice System; What You Should Know About Working with Somali Families; Street Scholars: Using Social Justice Education to Engage Marginalized Youth; Understanding Refugee Mental Health; LGBTQ Youth Panel Discussion; and a Taste of Diversity potluck with information on the importance and role of food in ethnic cultures.

DMC Reports

Juvenile Court is committed to using data to direct effective decision making. Accurate and timely data is necessary to identify problem areas and gauge the impact of new programs and initiatives. The following section describes reports that inform the Court on the actual impact of its efforts to reduce DMC.

Relative Rate Index Report (RRI): The RRI is a federal DMC reporting tool that is submitted annually to the state. The RRI compares the rate at which minority youth are involved in the

juvenile justice system compared to the rate at which white youth are involved at each key decision point in the court process. Locally the RRI is reviewed by the JDOC and used by the DMC Workgroup as a basis for its decision point analysis.

JDOC Reports: Standard quarterly reports are prepared for JDOC review and discussion that include trend data on juvenile justice measures including referral, filing, diversion, detention and alternative to detention programs with each measure broken out by race and gender. Based on the report, JDOC frequently requests more in-depth information such as a report on offender filings by offense type and race.

JDAI Reports: JDAI reporting requirements include a quarterly report detailing secure detention and alternative to secure detention (ASD) program involvement. The reports detail admissions, average length of stay, and average daily population by race and gender and offense category. Additional information on ASD referrals and program completions are also collected by race and gender. These reports are used extensively to determine the composition of the detention population.

Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System: In 2013, the Washington State Center for Court Research and the National Center for Juvenile Justice released state- and court-level five-year averages (2007-2011) showing racial and ethnic disproportionality at several points in the juvenile justice court process. It is intended to help Washington State's juvenile courts identify where in the juvenile justice system, from arrest to sentencing, disproportionate minority contact (DMC) occurs.

Washington State Disproportionate Minority Contact Assessment: The Washington State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (WA-PCJJ) contracted with the University of Washington's Division of Public Behavioral Health and Justice Policy (PBHJP) to conduct an assessment of the level of DMC at each major decision point in the juvenile justice system for Washington State. The report, released in January 2013, includes King County and highlighted many of our efforts to reduce DMC.

Conclusion

King County Juvenile Court acknowledges that no one system or single approach will solve the pervasive problem of disparity in the justice system. However, the Court embraces the opportunity to utilize its position to lead efforts in juvenile justice to effectively address DMC. By collaboratively working with other juvenile justice partners, and engaging new stakeholders, King County Juvenile Court is committed to continuing these efforts until disparity is eliminated in the juvenile justice system.

Endnotes:

ⁱ King County (2013). *King County Equity and Social Justice Annual Report*

ⁱⁱ Source: PAO Stats, JJWEB/JIMS, and JRA data systems

ⁱⁱⁱ JRA Data covers 1998-2012

^{iv} Source: 2003 demographic data is WA State OFM; 2013 demographic data is based on National Center for Health Statistics Bridged-Race Estimates (2011). Hawaiian/Pacific Islander is included in the Asian Category. Data extracted 12/17/2012.

^v Sources: JIMS, population figures are based on National Center for Health Statistics Bridged-Race Estimates (2011)

^{vi} Source: JDAI reports generated from JJWEB and JIMS data

^{vii} The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts (2006) available at:

<http://www.civicenterprises.net/pdfs/thesilentepidemic3-06.pdf>

^{viii} Keith Ervin and Katherine Long, *Seattle schools seeking an even hand at discipline*, Seattle Times (March 9, 2013)