

Disproportionate Minority Contact for African American and Hispanic Youth: *The Story Behind the Numbers and the Path to Action*

Presentation to Fairfax Board of Supervisors &
Fairfax County School Board

September 18, 2012

Today's Presentation

- Why conduct an analysis in Fairfax?
- What is an Institutional Analysis?
- What did we learn from this Institutional Analysis?
- What's next?

Terminology and Background

- *Disproportionality* refers to the over- or under-representation of a given population group, often defined by racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic status
- In the juvenile justice system, disproportionality is measured as *disproportionate minority contact* (DMC) at all decision points in their system (i.e. cases referred, diverted, probation, detention, etc.)
- In the 1988 Amendments to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, Congress **required** that States address DMC in their State plans

Regional & State Context

- Disproportionality and disparities exist in neighboring localities and at the State level
- Aside from Arlington County, Fairfax County has the highest rate for African American referrals to juvenile court.
 - For every one white youth referred, there are 3.78 African American youth referred in Fairfax County
 - In Prince William, the rate is 2.41 to 1
 - In Montgomery County, the rate is 4.38 to 1
- Except for Loudoun County, Fairfax has the lowest diversion rates for both African American and Hispanic youth
 - For every one white youth diverted from juvenile court in Fairfax, .64 and .60 (*African American and Hispanic*) are diverted
 - In Arlington County, the rates are .75 and 1.76 respectively
 - In Montgomery County, the rate is .87 and .82 respectively

Why an Analysis in Fairfax?

- Fairfax County's has always made efforts to eliminate disparities in outcomes for youth and recognize the complexities across institutions and community. Continual improvement examples of practices working well include:
 - JDRDC "Youth Assessment Screening Instrument"
 - Opportunity Neighborhood: Mount Vernon pilot
 - Systems of Care reform
 - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) school based teams
- A community collaborative ***Together We're the Answer*** engaged stakeholders across communities, faith, private and public sectors to further the local journey in 2004
 - To reduce disproportionality of African American and Hispanic children and youth in Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice systems
 - To eliminate the achievement gap and health disparities
- Despite efforts and rhetorically "race-neutral" policies, disproportionate minority contact (DMC) within juvenile justice remains a relevant and growing problem

Why an Analysis in Fairfax?

- About 3% of youth ages 10 – 17 in Fairfax County are referred to Juvenile Court (4,106 of 119,287 – FY 2011)
- African American youth comprise 10% of the County's youth population, yet:
 - 27% of JDRC referrals (1,108 youth)
 - 37% of detention center placements (173 youth)
- Hispanic youth comprise 17% of the County's youth population, yet:
 - 27% of JDRC referrals (1,108 youth)
 - 36% of detention center placements (167 youth)

Why an Analysis in Fairfax?

- Disproportionality has been increasing for both African American and Hispanic youth at almost every decision making point in the juvenile court system
 - In FY 2004, the rate of referral for African American and Hispanic youth was 2.45 and 1.17 and in FY 2011, these rates were 3.78 and 2.22
 - In FY 2004, the rate of diversion for African American and Hispanic youth was .80 and .76 and in FY 2011, these rates were .64 and .60
- DMC is most marked at the initial stage of referral to JDRDC and is most dramatic for African American youth
- An African American youth has nearly a four times greater chance than his/her white peer to be referred to juvenile court – a Hispanic youth more than twice
- African American and Hispanic youth have less than half the chance to be diverted – and are more than twice as likely to be detained

What is an Institutional Analysis?

- A diagnostic process used by a trained team to reveal the gap between what a youth and their family needs to be safe, stable and successful and what institutions are actually set up to do
- Grounded in sociology, institutional ethnography
- Ethnographic methods uncover the experience of individuals as they encounter institutions and provide an understanding of how the organization of institutions and the standardized methods of processing people as “cases” contributes to problematic outcomes

What the IA is **NOT**

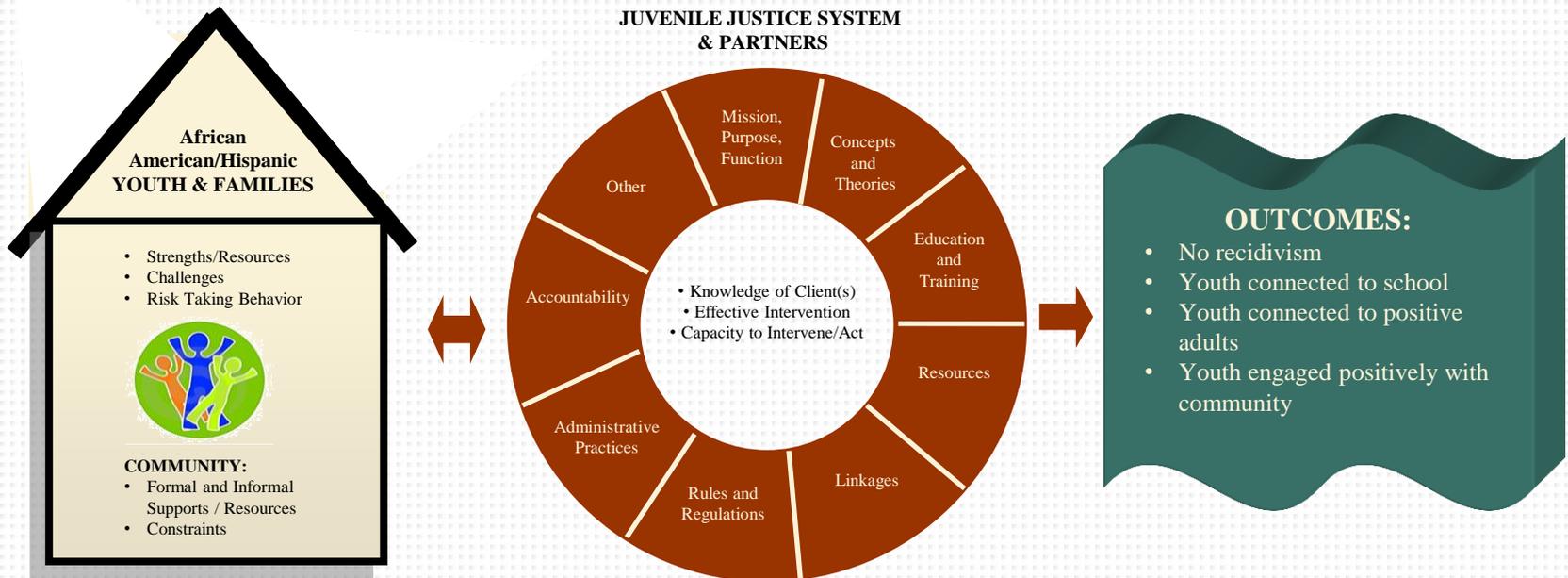
- Not quantitative analysis
- Not an assessment of individual judges, police or probation officers
- Not a comparative study
- Not intended to uncover all sources of DMC

What is an Institutional Analysis?

Core Assumptions

- Institutions are designed to ensure consistency among staff and limit the influence of idiosyncratic worker behavior
- Institutional view of clients is rarely neutral
- Institutional changes can improve outcomes for youth and families
- Population specific studies produce valid insights

Institutional Analysis Framework

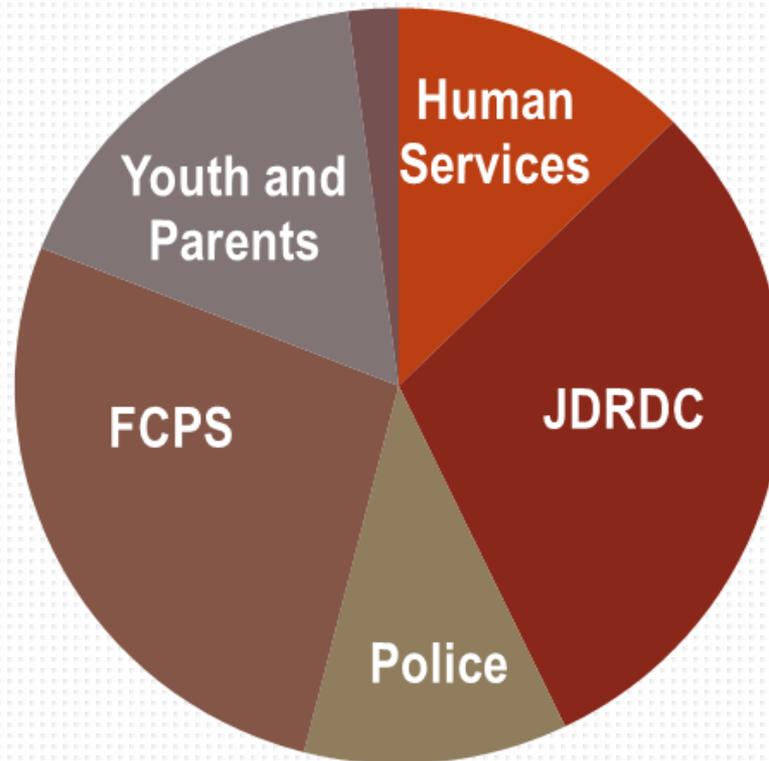


IA Data Collection

- 'Big Picture' Interviews with Leadership (37)
- Case based analysis (8 youth – included 71 interviews)
- Work Practice Interviews (71)
- Observations (23)
- Youth and Parent interviews / focus groups (11)
- Practitioner Focus Groups (4)
- Text Analysis (70 case records)
- Policy Analysis

IA Data Collection

N= 179 interviews and focus groups



Phases of the Fairfax IA Process

- ✓ ● Initial Planning and Preparation
 - Identify and Train Internal Investigative Team
- ✓ ● Map Key Decision Points of Institutional Intervention
- ✓ ● Data Collection
 - Phase I – African American Lived Experience
 - Phase II – Latino Lived Experience
- ✓ ● Analyze Information
 - Identify Opportunities for Improvement
 - Communicate Findings
- ✓ ● Identify Mechanisms to Support Local Action Plan
 - Implement Action Plan

What We Learned from the IA

Shared by African American and Hispanic Youth and Families

- **Theme 1:** *Publicly available preventive services do not consistently meet the broad range of needs of African American and Hispanic youth and families.*
- **Theme 2:** *Youth who become involved with the courts frequently have mental health, substance abuse and special education needs, and earlier interventions to address these needs have either not occurred or not been sufficient.*
- **Theme 3:** *A common, cross-system vision promoting the well-being of youth and families and emphasizing collaborative work with families has not been fully developed and implemented. As a result, families experience uncoordinated teams, assessments and case plans.*

What We Learned from the IA

Shared by African American and Hispanic Youth and Families

- **Theme 4:** *Approaches to working with families are often based on operational requirements of the system—that is, the system privileges its need for efficiency over the individual needs of families.*
- **Theme 5:** *Most youth involved with juvenile court are also struggling in school. System interventions do not consistently support youth in remaining connected to and completing school.*

What We Learned from the IA

Specific to Hispanic Youth and Families

- **Theme 6:** *The mixed documentation status of many Hispanic households creates unique needs for this population and often compromises a family's ability to access prevention services.*
- **Theme 7:** *School truancy is often a warning sign of significant needs of the youth and family. Interventions around school truancy issues of Hispanic youth do not necessarily account for and meet the underlying needs of youth and are therefore unsuccessful resulting in youth becoming more involved in the juvenile court system.*
- **Theme 8:** *Interventions do not take into account the language barriers and cultural barriers experienced by some Hispanic families who were newer to the United States.*

Opportunities for Improvement

- Findings illustrate the complexity of addressing DMC and that DMC is not solely caused by - nor solved by - the juvenile justice system
- Changes and actions are required within communities and other public systems

Opportunities for Improvement

- Improve cross-systems data capabilities
- Change the way County institutions are organized
 - Align partner missions and functions into overarching County goals
 - Revise administrative procedures and protocols
 - Expand and tailor resources
- Strengthen systems of accountability
- Expand knowledge and skills
- Enhance partnerships and linkages
- Conduct additional analyses

Next Steps Discussion

Additional Data and Information

- The IA serves as beginning point of analysis, not an exhaustive investigation
- Other County and School data will inform our actions
 - Youth Survey
 - Graduation Task Force Report
 - Community School Linked Services unified assessments
- Promise Scorecard will begin to collect data across the systems in Opportunity Neighborhood

Change Framework

Strategic Action Levels	Change Mechanisms
Influence Policy & Legislation	Successful Children & Youth Policy Team
Change Organizational Practices	Regional Change Team(s) Dialogue with Directors Series Individual Agency Actions
Foster Coalitions & Networks	DDPET Opportunity Neighborhood: Mt Vernon
Educate Providers	DDPET & Ambassador Program
Promote Community Education	DDPET, Community & All Stakeholders
Strengthen Individual Knowledge & Skills	Community & All Stakeholders

Organizing for Improvements

Influencing Policy and Legislation

- Successful Children and Youth Policy Team (SCYPT)
 - Provides the leadership, vision, and strategy needed to enhance the well-being and resilience of children and youth
 - Shared vision for positive youth outcomes
 - Capacity to address shared policy issues
 - Shared accountability
 - Balanced Membership comprised of Human Services, Police, Schools, Community, Youth and Parents

Organizing for Improvements

*Change Organizational Practices - Foster Coalitions & Networks
- Educate Providers*

- Disproportionality and Disparity Prevention and Elimination Team (DDPET)
 - Facilitate Dialogue with Directors
 - Link and support Regional Change Teams
 - Track and connect agency specific and system wide initiatives
 - Provide workforce development actions on disproportionality and disparity

Organizing for Improvements

Change Organizational Practice – Promote Community Education

- Regional Change Team(s)
 - Membership comprised of community based organizations, faith groups, county and schools providers
 - Neighborhood based change teams
 - Start-up in Opportunity Neighborhood
 - Apply a deliberate change model to pilot and measure impact of incremental changes
 - Identify policy issues for the SCYPT

Organizing for Improvements

Change Organizational Practices – Promote Community Education

- Individual Agencies
 - Examine the implications of the IA findings for your agency's policies and practices
 - Examine how your agency's policy and practices potentially influenced the IA findings
 - Identify and monitor agency specific disproportionality and disparity initiatives
 - Participate in cross-system initiatives

Communication Plan: IA Findings

- CSSP & Fairfax County Joint Report
- Internal Communications
 - ✓ □ Board of Supervisors & School Board
 - ✓ □ Human Services, Police and School Leadership
 - Human Services, Police and School Staff
- Community
 - Target groups include
 - Annandale Round Table
 - Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee
 - Opportunity Neighborhood Governance Team
 - Partnership for Youth
 - Together We're the Answer
 - United Prevention Coalition

Disproportionate Minority Contact for African American and Hispanic Youth:

The Story Behind the Numbers and the Path to Action

Report contains:

- Additional data
- Discussion regarding how each theme emerged through the analysis
- Opportunities for Improvement strategies
- Appendix C contains a growing inventory of initiatives targeting supports for African American and Hispanic Populations

Questions and Dialogue