

Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Implementation Evaluation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current evaluation describes the implementation of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug, which was planned beginning in 1999 and established initially as a pilot program in January 2001. It received funds to become fully implemented in September 2001. During this evaluation, data were collected on drug court operations and drug court participants in order to determine how effectively the 16 Strategies (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2003), a set of standards defining effective Drug Court operations, were being applied by this program. Process evaluation methods included interviews with Drug Court team members, a participant observation, a focus group, and a review of program documentation. The conclusion of this report is that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is in compliance with the 16 Strategies, specifically:

Strategy #1. Collaborative Planning – Engage all stakeholders in creating an interdisciplinary, coordinated and systemic approach to working with youth and their families.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the participant observation showed that the Fayette Juvenile Drug Court team members have formed a cohesive unit that involves community-based stakeholders during the planning and implementation stages of the Drug Court process. The Juvenile Drug Court team includes representatives from various local agencies who work together to develop policies and procedures regarding Drug Court operations. The team works together to ensure that participants receive intensive supervision and treatment.

Strategy #2. Teamwork – Develop and maintain an interdisciplinary, nonadversarial work team.

Findings from the focus group and from the participant observation showed that the Fayette Juvenile Drug Court team members work efficiently and effectively together. The Drug Court staff work together when making decisions concerning the participants, and each staff member's opinions are heard and taken into consideration. Observations and interviews indicated that prosecutors, defense attorneys, and treatment professionals on the team communicate well with one another: thereby, maximizing the efficacy of the program. The opinions of all team members are equally respected.

Strategy #3. Clearly Defined Target Population and Eligibility Criteria – Define a target population and eligibility criteria that are aligned with the program's goals and objectives.

Findings from the focus group and from staff/team interviews showed that the target population and eligibility criteria are appropriate and well-defined. The Drug Court team has utilized data regarding various aspects of the community as well as assessed local resources in order to correctly identify juveniles who might benefit from the program. Eligibility criteria have been established and incorporated into a written set of guidelines so that each potential participant may be effectively assessed. In this way, the Drug Court team is able to consistently target and admit potential participants in accordance with these standardized criteria.

Strategy #4. Judicial Involvement and Supervision – Schedule frequent judicial reviews and be sensitive to the effect that court proceedings can have on youth and their families.

Findings from the participant observation and subsequent interviews showed that judicial involvement and supervision is highly regarded in the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program by staff and participants alike. During court sessions, the Judge relates well to each participant and takes an obvious interest their lives. Between court sessions the Judge stays in contact with staff and team members to remain updated on participants' progress. The judge provides a well-balanced atmosphere of legal supervision within a personal relationship with each participants.

Strategy #5. Monitoring and Evaluation – Establish a system for program monitoring and evaluation to maintain quality of service, assess program impact, and contribute to knowledge in the field.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team effectively monitors and evaluates the program. The Drug Court team has contracted with the Center on Drug and Alcohol Research at the University of Kentucky to perform an independent, external evaluation.

Strategy #6. Community Partnerships – Build partnerships with community organizations to expand the range of opportunities available to youth and their families.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has forged partnerships with the community in order to offer as many support services as possible. Recreational opportunities, educational programs, and community service work are integrated into the drug court program to meet the many needs of the participants. Not only has the team successfully enlisted support from various community resources, but they are also planning to expand these services by forming relationships with key agencies such as the University of Kentucky Athletics Department and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America.

Strategy #7. Comprehensive Treatment Planning – Tailor interventions to the complex and varied needs of youth and their families.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has met the diverse needs of participants and their families. By using tools such as the initial assessment and Individualized Program Plan (IPP) staff members are able to address the individual needs of each participant and their family. The effectiveness of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program is increased by this individualized treatment-based approach.

Strategy #8. Developmentally Appropriate Services – Tailor treatment to the developmental needs of adolescents.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has based their program on developmentally appropriate methods. The program addresses the needs of the adolescent population by providing services such as in-house AA/NA meetings designed specifically for juveniles. Services such as this provide participants with opportunities and encouragement to successfully complete the program.

Strategy #9. Gender-Appropriate Services – Design treatment to address the unique needs of each gender.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has recognized the need for gender-appropriate services and has incorporated certain program characteristics to accommodate for these differences. By tailoring their approaches to gender-specific issues, the team is able to develop appropriate relationships with each participant and to deliver treatment that is beneficial for males and females.

Strategy #10. Cultural Competence – Create policies and procedures that are responsive to cultural differences and train personnel to be culturally competent.

Findings from the participant observation, focus group, and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has demonstrated cultural competence by hiring staff members of different ethnic/racial backgrounds and admitting participants of various ethnicities. Data gathered from the Monthly Statistics showed that 75% of Drug Court participants identified themselves as being African-American. Thirty-three percentage of the full-time Drug Court employees are also African-American. The diversity of the staff and participants reflects the team's awareness of the need to be sensitive and responsive to cultural issues.

Strategy #11. Focus on Strengths – Maintain a focus on the strengths of youth and their families during program planning and in every interaction between the court and those it serves.

Findings from the participant observation, focus group, and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team focuses on the individual strengths of each participant and their family throughout their participation in the Juvenile Drug Court program. As part of the initial assessment, the Juvenile Drug Court team includes a “Strengths Assessment” questionnaire, which helps the participant to recognize accomplishments and successes. This approach begins the participant's program with a strength-based perspective and prepares the participant to accept a more responsible role in the community. This strengths-based approach also aides in creating bonds between the participants and their families and helps the families to provide the needed support and encouragement to the participants.

Strategy #12. Family Engagement – Recognize and engage the family as a valued partner in all components of the program.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program recognizes the importance of family roles and support in the treatment of the juvenile participant. Members of the Drug Court team understand that family members can influence the decisions made by the juveniles throughout the duration of the program. Therefore, the team makes every effort to engage the family in all components of the program. In the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program court sessions are scheduled so that parents or other family members can be present and family members are encouraged to participate in treatment. The Juvenile Drug Court team also uses the initial assessment and other tools to evaluate the role of each family member and the dynamics between family members and the participant. By involving the participant's family members during the Juvenile Drug Court program the participant's progress is enhanced, and relationships between family members are strengthened.

Strategy #13. Educational Linkages – Coordinate with the school system to ensure that each participant enrolls in and attends an educational program that is appropriate to his or her needs.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program has a strong relationship with school guidance counselors and teachers. This facilitates the intensive monitoring of participants' attendance, grades, and teacher assessments. A Case Specialist frequently visits the schools in order to monitor participants' performance and behaviors. The frequent contact between team members and school officials enables the team to quickly address any issues that might arise in order to best meet the needs of the participant.

Strategy #14. Drug Testing – Design drug testing to be frequent, random, and observed. Document testing policies and procedures in writing.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program performs frequent, random drug tests to all participants throughout the duration of the program. Participants must test negative for six consecutive months before they become eligible to graduate from the program. Participants undergo drug testing a minimum of 3 times per week in Phase I, two times per week in Phase II, and once per week in Phase III. Additional tests can be administered if team members feel it is necessary. Each drug test is observed by a staff member of the Community Alternative Program, a section of the Fayette County Detention Center. The Drug Court team has outlined drug testing procedures in the Participant Handbook and reports results of the drug tests in the Monthly Statistics report.

Strategy #15. Goal-Oriented Incentives and Sanctions – Respond to compliance and noncompliance with incentives and sanctions that are designed to reinforce or modify the behavior of youth and their families.

Findings from the staff/team interviews and participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program uses a variety of sanctions and rewards for modifying participant behavior. Sanctions include community service, increased curfew, detention, and placement into residential treatment. Although they have specific sanctions in place, the Drug Court Team often adjust sanctions to better address the specific behaviors of individual participants. Incentives also are granted based on merits of negative drug test results, exceptional school performance, group leadership and positive attitudes. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court awards gift certificates, decreases curfew, applause during sessions, tickets to sporting events, and key chains to recognize participants' successes. Sanctions and incentives are consistent and fair and are granted consistently and are applied immediately to help the participant understand that his or her actions lead to corresponding reactions.

Strategy #16. Confidentiality – Establish a confidentiality policy and procedures that guard the privacy of the youth while allowing the drug court team to access key information.

Findings from the staff/team interviews and focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team members have designed policies and procedures to protect each participant and their family members while in the Drug Court program. Participant files are kept in a locked storage area and computer records are password protected. Court sessions and staffing meetings are closed to the public in order to ensure the maximum amount of privacy for the participants and family members.

Recommendations

Based on information provided by drug court team members the following four recommendations are made:

- (1) Build stronger relationships with local treatment programs in order to effectively treat participants who have more serious problems and may need more intensive treatment (e.g., residential treatment).
- (2) Increase the programs involvement in the homes of the participants by including more random and frequent home visits, and more intensive therapy for the entire family in the home setting.
- (3) Focus on maintaining an active census of 15 participants to maximize program capacity. Increase capacity to 25 to increase the overall impact of the program by enrolling up to 30% of the youth potentially eligible for Juvenile Drug Court each year.
- (4) Develop a plan for sustaining the Juvenile Drug Court beyond grant monies provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance by locating other potential funders, including other government grant programs, local foundations, and grass roots community efforts.

Summary

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program was established in 1999 as a planning program and in January 2001 it began as a pilot program. It received funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in September 2001 to become a fully implemented drug court program. Findings from the process evaluation show this program has successfully incorporated the national standards set by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (2003) in Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice. The staff of the juvenile drug court program strives to meet the individualized needs of each participant. The opinions and suggestions of team members are considered by the judge before making final decisions regarding participants. The cohesiveness of the drug court team creates a supportive and therapeutic environment, facilitating the recovery of the participants.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Need for Juvenile Drug Court

Between 1989 and 1998, national juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations increased 86% and arrests for curfew and loitering violations increased 178% (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs, OJJDP, 1999). An estimated 2.6 million juvenile arrests were made in 1998, which accounted for 18% of all arrests in 1998 (OJJDP, 1999). In addition, juveniles were involved in 13% of all drug abuse violation arrests in 1998 (OJJDP, 1999). In the majority of sites reporting on drug use among juvenile arrestees, more than half of the juvenile males tested positive for at least one drug (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring System, 1999).

For adolescents, substance use for is in many ways normative behavior (Kaminer & Tarter, 1999). By age 18, almost 80% of youths in the U.S. report having used alcohol, 64% report smoking cigarettes, and 50% report using marijuana at least once (Johnston et al., 1996). For adolescents, drug and alcohol abuse reduces motivation, interferes with cognitive processes, contributes to mood disorders, has implications for immediate and long-term physical health, and increases the risk of accidental injury or death (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992; Paglia & Room, 1998). Adolescent substance use is related to less educational achievement, an increase in crimes committed by juveniles, and increased health and mental health care services use and cost. In addition, early substance use and abuse is associated with a variety of other risk factors including early and frequent sexual intercourse (which is associated with STDs, HIV, and unwanted pregnancies) as well as delinquency and later criminal activity (Ball et al., 1982; Dembo et al, 1991; Elliott, Huizinga, & Menard, 1989; Jessor & Jessor, 1977; Speckhart & Anglin, 1985; Watters et al., 1985).

Treatment for juvenile delinquency has not been overwhelmingly successful. For example, Lipsey (1992) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of juvenile delinquency treatment and found that overall there was a modest treatment effect, but there were certain circumstances in which treatment was much more effective than others, although the circumstances of effectiveness were not readily apparent. In response to juvenile delinquency and substance abuse, and to the need for better outcomes with juvenile populations, more than 140 juvenile drug courts have been established across the nation since 1995, and more than 125 are currently being planned (Cooper, 1999; 2001). However, juvenile drug court models are still being established, and it is not clear what works best in a juvenile drug court. Because the field of juvenile justice is in a constant state of flux, evaluation efforts clearly are needed to provide “snapshots” of established juvenile drug courts. **Therefore, the focus of the current report will be to provide a detailed description of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court and to describe preliminary outcomes of participants seen in this program. This report also is submitted to fulfill the Bureau of Justice Assistance’s requirement that a process evaluation be conducted by an external evaluator. This report will meet these 2 objectives:**

- 1. Provide an in-depth description of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court. This will include summarizing program structure, program components, procedures, staff, and participants.**
- 2. Describe in-program outcomes, summarizing the impact of the Juvenile Drug Court on the lives of its participants. Measures will include treatment retention, arrests, drug use, employment, sanctions, and phase promotions.**

Drug Court in Kentucky

The motto for Kentucky Drug Court is “A chance...a change.” The Kentucky Drug Court program administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts is aligned with hundreds of Adult and Juvenile Drug Courts in operation across the United States. The mission of the

Kentucky Drug Court program is to create a criminal justice environment that stops illicit drug use and related criminal activity and promotes recovery and resocialization.

Juvenile Drug Courts in Kentucky are grounded in the 16 Strategies described in the publication Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2003). These Strategies were developed by the Drug Court Standards Committee to ensure that a core set of standards were defined for all Drug Court programs (Table 1 to follow). The 16 Strategies were adapted from the adult drug court standards published in Drug Courts: 10 Key Components (Office of Justice Programs, 1997) in order to better fulfill the needs of juvenile drug courts.

Drug Courts transform the roles of both criminal justice practitioners and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment providers as they collaborate with each other in an attempt to help the adolescent offender learn to live drug-free, crime-free, prosocial lives. A balance is struck between the need for intensive supervision (ensuring public safety and offender accountability) and focused treatment on the many needs evident in adolescents who abuse drugs. Family therapy, drug abuse therapy, relapse prevention, anger management, impulse control, stress management, education, employment, life skills, structure, responsibility, and accountability, are only a few of the areas that a Juvenile Drug Court must address in order to have a positive impact on the juvenile offender and the community.

The Judge is the central figure in the Juvenile Drug Court, which is a team effort that focuses on participant sobriety and accountability as its primary goals. As the central authority figure for the team, the Judge acts as both “parent,” advocate, and instructor. This fundamentally shifts the role of the Judge from being an adversary and punisher to being a mentor and a socializing agent for the participants. In exchange for successful completion of the Drug Court program, the Judge may choose to dismiss the participant’s original charge, reduce or set aside a sentence, offer a lesser penalty, or use a combination of these rewards.

Table 1. Juvenile Drug Court Strategies

1. Collaborative Planning – Engage all stakeholders in creating an interdisciplinary, coordinated and systemic approach to working with youth and their families.
2. Teamwork – Develop and maintain an interdisciplinary, nonadversarial work team.
3. Clearly Defined Target Population and Eligibility Criteria – Define a target population and eligibility criteria that are aligned with the program’s goals and objectives.
4. Judicial Involvement and Supervision – Schedule frequent judicial reviews and be sensitive to the effect that court proceedings can have on youth and their families.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation – Establish a system for program monitoring and evaluation to maintain quality of service, assess program impact, and contribute to knowledge in the field.
6. Community Partnerships – Build partnerships with community organizations to expand the range of opportunities available to youth and their families.
7. Comprehensive Treatment Planning – Tailor interventions to the complex and varied needs of youth and their families.
8. Developmentally Appropriate Services – Tailor treatment to the developmental needs of adolescents.
9. Gender-Appropriate Services – Design treatment to address the unique needs of each gender.
10. Cultural Competence – Create policies and procedures that are responsive to cultural differences and train personnel to be culturally competent.
11. Focus on Strengths – Maintain a focus on the strengths of youth and their families during program planning and in every interaction between the court and those it serves.
12. Family Engagement – Recognize and engage the family as a valued partner in all components of the program.
13. Educational Linkages – Coordinate with the school system to ensure that each participant enrolls in and attends an educational program that is appropriate to his or her needs.
14. Drug Testing – Design drug testing to be frequent, random, and observed. Document testing policies and procedures in writing.
15. Goal-Oriented Incentives and Sanctions – Respond to compliance and noncompliance with incentives and sanctions that are designed to reinforce or modify the behavior of youth and their families.
16. Confidentiality – Establish a confidentiality policy and procedures that guard the privacy of the youth while allowing the drug court team to access key information.

Source: Bureau of Justice Assistance (2003, March). Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice.

History and Development of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court

Building on the strengths of a successful adult drug court program in the county, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program received a planning grant in July of 1999. The Drug Court Judge, along with the representatives from Department of Youth Services, area treatment providers, and other local officials, initiated the planning grant application.

Community linkages were established with the local schools, the Health Department, and local employers in order to prepare an effective Drug Court program. After much planning, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court began as a pilot program in 2001, serving four participants. The fully operational Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program began in September of 2001 with an implementation grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court differs from Adult Drug Court in Kentucky in its focus on the special needs of drug-involved adolescent offenders. This program must address the special needs of this group, which include: (1) the negative influences of peers, gangs, and family members; (2) the needs of the family, especially families with substance abuse problems; (3) confidentiality requirements for juvenile proceedings while obtaining information necessary to address the adolescent's problems and progress; and (4) motivation for juvenile offenders to change, taking into account their sense of invulnerability and lack of maturity.

PROCESS EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Interviews

A set of interview instruments that collected both quantitative and qualitative data from key drug court stakeholders was used during this process evaluation (see Logan, Lewis, Leukefeld, & Minton, 2000). These interviews were conducted with, (1) judges, (2) drug court staff, (3) prosecutors, (4) defense attorneys, and (5) treatment providers. The Drug Court Judge

Interview assessed level of prior experience with the target population, the perceived potential impact of the drug court on the community and judicial system, who determined program eligibility, overall capacity, the consequences for failing the program, services needed, planned level of supervision, and the types of graduated sanctions and rewards used. The Drug Court Coordinator Interview is a comprehensive questionnaire which was completed with the drug court coordinator and detailed the specific operational characteristics of the drug court program. Specific sections highlighted the target population, program goals, program organization and function (e.g., recruitment, capacity, assessment, and services), supervision practices, staff characteristics, and community organization involvement. The Drug Court Staff Interview gathered detailed data about the roles and treatment orientation of the drug court staff members. The Prosecution and Defense Interviews focused on perceived benefits, level of understanding of what the drug court program includes, level of commitment to help make it work, and perceived problems. The External Treatment Interview helped to pinpoint what types of treatment services were offered and through what avenues.

Court Observation

Two researchers from the University of Kentucky observed one Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court session, providing two unique observations of the operations of this court. Data were coded using a protocol developed by Satel (1998) during a national study of 15 adult Drug Court programs. This protocol facilitated a systematic description of the interactional (exchanges between the judge, court staff, and participants) and environmental (physical characteristics of the setting) variables of the Juvenile Drug Court session. The method involved coding the session on 17 specific characteristics that focused upon the interaction between the Juvenile Drug Court judge and participants (including eye contact, physical proximity of the

judge to the participant, who the judge first addressed, whether each participant remained present in the court room throughout the entire session, and time spent with each participant) and the court room setting (including seating arrangements and ambient noise level). In addition, drug court staff were asked to indicate how typical the observed session was for regular drug court operations. The court session that was observed by the researchers was described as being a typical session by the drug court staff. A copy of the observation code sheet is included in Appendix A.

Monthly AOC Statistical Reports

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court makes monthly reports to the Administrative Office of the Courts. These reports summarize the number of candidates referred, the number assessed, the number of individual drug screens, number of candidates eligible, and the number transferred from probation. The number of participants receiving phase promotions or demotions also are reported; the number of court sessions held; the number of participants identified as using an illicit substance based on urine drug screens; the number of individual sessions held; the number of drug treatment sessions; the number of family/support sessions; the number of participants referred to outside agencies; employment and educational status of participants; the number of employment and housing verifications made, amount paid towards court obligations; the number of sanctions, the number of participants rearrested for new charges; the number of terminations; and the total number of active participants in the preceding month. For the current evaluation, the monthly statistics reports covering July 2001 through June 2002 were reviewed and included in this evaluation report.

Program Documentation

Several sources of program documentation also were reviewed for the process evaluation. These included copies of the grant application submitted by the court for funding, the participant handbook provided by the drug court to its participants to outline the design and expectations of the program, and the policy and procedure manual for the court. In addition, a previous evaluation report also was available. This previous report documented the planning phases of this juvenile drug court (Logan, Lewis, & Leukefeld, 2000).

Focus Group and Logic Model

A focus group also was conducted during the process evaluation with drug court team members. The goal of the focus group session was to synthesize a comprehensive description of program elements for this drug court using a “logic model” approach. A preformatted logic flow model (adapted from Harrell, 1996) was completed during a researcher-led focus group to help drug court staff to describe their target population for the program, articulate specific short- and long-term goals, treatment activities, and community linkages for their Drug Court. A special emphasis placed on identifying links between specific program activities and their influence on the short- and long-term goals of the program.

FINDINGS: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Drug Court Program Structure

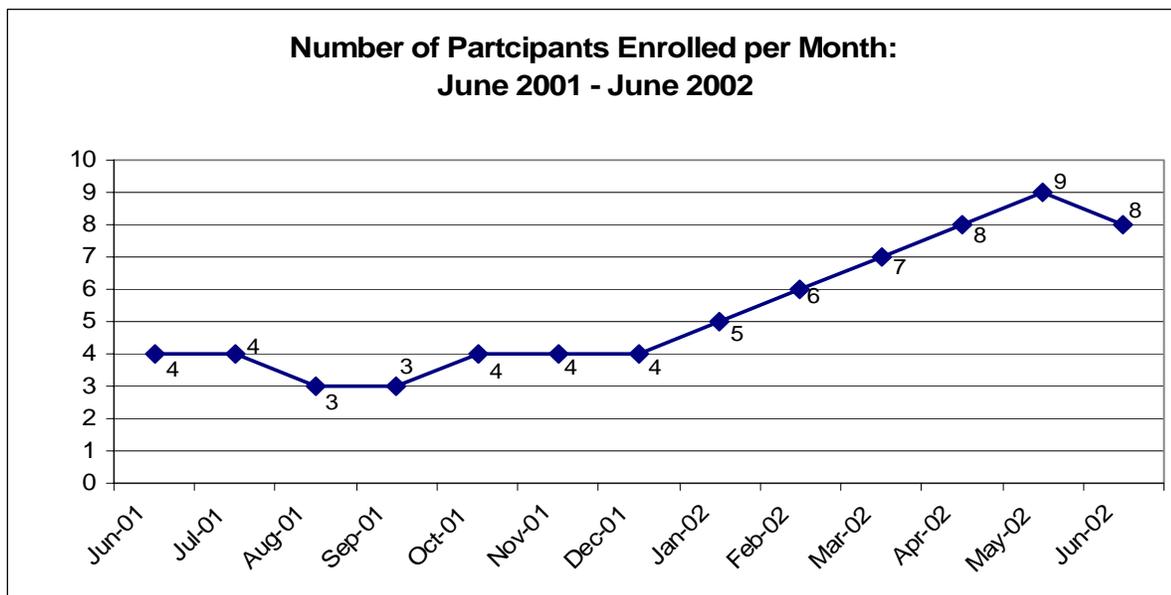
Location. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program serves residents in the judicial district encompassing Fayette County, Kentucky. Fayette County is located in the inner Bluegrass Region of the state, and is the second largest county in the state. The estimated population for the county in 2000 was 260,512. In 2000, 81% of the population were Caucasian, 13.5% African American, 3.3% Hispanic, and 2.5% Asian, and approximately 21.3% of the

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population was under age 18. The Juvenile Drug Court provides needed supervision and treatment to drug-involved youth, and fills services gap highlighted in findings from a state report that showed in 1999, a total of 94 adolescents in Fayette County were arrested for drug and alcohol offenses, including 54 who were arrested for narcotic drug offenses; 14 arrested for driving under the influence; 10 arrested for liquor laws, and 16 arrested for drunkenness.

Capacity and caseload. Although it is not large enough to accommodate all drug-involved youth described in statistical reports for the county, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court provides needed treatment and supervision slots available for up to 15 participants at a time. Findings described in Figure 1 showed that at the time the data were collected for this process evaluation, the Fayette Drug Court had 8 active participants. Three of these participants were female (1 Caucasian female, 2 African American females) and 5 were male (1 Caucasian male and 4 African American males). There was not a waiting list for the program at time of this evaluation. A total of 10 participants were active in the program during this time period, and the average number of active participants per month was 5.1 (range 3-9, see Figure 1).

Figure 1.



Drug court staff and team members. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court currently employs three full-time professional staff. There is one Drug Court Coordinator and two Case Specialists on the drug court team. The Drug Court Treatment Coordinator's primary responsibility is to coordinate all aspects of the program, while the Case Specialists assist with case management, participant monitoring, and conducting group sessions. These three staff members manage an average of caseload of 5-7 participants each. The two Case Specialists have pagers and are "on-call" 24 hours a day. The Drug Court Judge volunteers his time to the program, and works approximately 4-5 hours per week on Drug Court cases. Interns from the School of Social Work at the University of Kentucky assist the Drug Court team. The team also includes a School Liaison, Defense Attorney, County Attorney, Police Officer, Treatment Provider, representatives of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) and the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and a representative of the CAP program (who conducts urine testing for the Drug Court). All team members participate in the decision to accept referrals to the program based on a uniform set of eligibility criteria (described below).

Referral, eligibility, and admission procedures. Participants are generally referred into the program by a probation officer (either from the DHS or DJJ) or by the Judge, with input from both the prosecutor and defense counsel. It was stated that ideally probation officers would be the primary agent for referring the participants, but the Drug Court team will consider referrals from any source. When a potential participant is referred into the program either the Drug Court Coordinator or a Case Specialist meets with the potential participant to determine their eligibility to participate in the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program. The Adolescent Intake Assessment (AIA; Logan, Messer, and Minton, see appendix C) is used to assess eligibility based upon substance abuse of each of the potential participants. The AIA is administered in the

detention center or at the Department of Youth Services (DYS) office, and is completed within one week of the referral.

To be eligible for the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program, youth must be assessed for inclusion/exclusion criteria. Participants must be between the ages of 14 and 17, have committed a public offense, have substance abuse issues, have had prior treatment interventions, and be a resident of Fayette County. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court will not accept youth who have committed violent and/or sexual offenses, status offenders, or youth that will turn 18 before the time frame that is needed for completing the Juvenile Drug Court program. Once a youth is determined to be eligible for the Juvenile Drug Court and expresses a desire to participate in the Drug Court, the youth is required to sign a written agreement of participation which is outlined in the participant's handbook of the program.

Program goals. Also outlined in the participant's handbook for the program, each participant is given a set of goals for completing the program. The primary goals for all participants are to stop illegal activity, reduce substance use, and remain in school or some form of educational or vocational program (see Table 2). Court dockets, criminal histories, and drug testing are used as short-term progress measures to determine if these long-term goals are being realized by the participants while they are in the Juvenile Drug Court. Other goals of the Juvenile Drug Court program include, increasing participant accountability and responsibility, improving family relationships, promoting educational levels and performance, and improving participant self-esteem and self-worth. Progress towards these goals is measured via school records, employer reviews, court attendance, and close observation of each participant.

Table 2. Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Program Goals

1. Reduce or eliminate drug/alcohol usage and delinquent activity among Drug Court youth through:
 - A. Chemical testing
 - B. Treatment
 - C. Support Services
 - D. Sanctions and Rewards
 - E. Supervision and Monitoring
 - F. Collateral Contact
2. Facilitate accountability in Drug Court youth through:
 - A. Incentives and Sanctions
 - B. Random Testing
 - C. Community Service
3. Increase the competency level of Drug Court youth and families:
 - A. Education
 - B. Community Service
 - C. Build and enhance life skills
 - D. Victim awareness
4. Increase cultural awareness and sensitivity among Drug Court youth and families through:
 - A. Educational programs and groups

Phase structure. Like all Kentucky Drug Courts, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is divided into three distinct phases, each with a separate set of goals, requirements, and minimum length of time for reaching these goals. The phase structure of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is intended to help the participants to reach the many goals and objectives (described above) set for them by the program during their individual treatment plans. A general overview of these three phases (including the number of drug court sessions, treatment activity, expected duration of the phase, and supervision level) is presented in Table 3. As may be seen in Table 3, the program is designed to last a minimum of 9 months, but participants are allowed take much longer than this to finish all 3 phases of the program. The first phase establishes a structure in the youth's life and focuses on helping them regain control over their lives by also requiring an early evening curfew, and the youth has their detention sentence set aside, while

they are required to serve 7 days of in-home detention, commonly called “house arrest.” After the requirements for phase I are successfully met, the participant is promoted to phase 2 which adds an additional focus on performing “good deeds” to model and reinforce prosocial behavior. The participant also is required to network with community support groups to help facilitate the development of prosocial peer groups that can help sustain progress made while in the program. The first two phases of the program require the most intensive levels of treatment and supervision, and the final phase represents a re-entry phase where the youth are reintegrated back into the community with additional structure provided through continued treatment and supervision. Finally, after fulfilling the requirements for phase 3 the participant is eligible for graduation from the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Program.

Table 3. Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Phase Minimum Requirements

PHASE I: Treatment Assessment and Orientation

- Drug Court probation terms are signed
- 45/90 days in detention, to be suspended
- 7 days of home detention
- 7 days of prior permission with a 7:30 pm curfew
- 7:30 pm curfew after completion of prior permission status
- Drug testing three (3) times per week
- Attend one Drug Court Session per week
- Attend and participate in all treatment and or educational sessions
- Attend all court assigned appointments
- Treatment plan is developed
- Program plan developed

PHASE II: Education and Application

- Curfew to be determined by case specialist/drug court team;
- Attend one Drug Court sessions very two week
- Provide all requested drug screens/tests;
- Attend all court assigned appointments
- Attend and participate in all treatment and/or educational sessions.
- Do at least one good deed and report it at each court appearance
- Obtain/maintain an approved recovery mentor and continue to work on recovery program

Table 3. (Continued)

PHASE III: Graduation

- Attend one Drug Court session every 3 weeks;
- Adhere to curfew determined by case specialist/drug court team;
- Attend and participate in all assigned treatment/educational sessions;
- Provide all requested drug screens/tests
- Test “clean” on urine drug tests for 180 consecutive days
- Attend all court assigned appointments

Graduation. The Judge has the discretion to determine who will graduate or and who be terminated from the Juvenile Drug Court, but his decisions are based on input from the rest of the team. Participants are recommended for graduation by the Drug Court Team after they have been in the program for at least nine months, have actively participated in the program, have successfully completed all three program phases, have maintained stable living conditions for nine months, have maintained stable employment for six months (unless the participant is in school or a vocational rehabilitation), and have provided negative urine tests for at least six consecutive months demonstrating they have not used drugs.

A graduation ceremony is held when a participant has completed all the requirements for graduation. A special effort is made by the Juvenile Drug Court staff to make the graduation ceremony a memorable experience for the participants. The graduate is encouraged to invite their family and friends to the ceremony. Graduations are held in the district court room and a guest speaker is invited to speak. Graduates are given plaques acknowledging their accomplishment, T-shirts, and gift certificates. After the ceremony, everyone is invited to a reception to honor each graduate. Once a participant graduates, he or she is removed from probation and their detention sentence is set aside.

Program rules and termination from drug court. Each new Drug Court participant and their family is given a Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Handbook at program entry that details the operations of the program, policies and procedures, rules, and what each participant can expect and what is expected in return. Rules impose a structure (often unfamiliar to participants) to the lives of the participant, help ensure the safety of the staff and participants, show participants that society follows a social order, and help the program to run more smoothly and not seem arbitrary to the participants. Table 4 presents the statement of the rules imposed on the participants when they enter Juvenile Drug Court. Failure to follow rules can and frequently does result in the imposition of a disciplinary sanction. When a participant is repeatedly non-compliant with program rules, they may be terminated from the program (often the team recommends this to the judge who enacts termination from the program). Upon termination from the program, the participant returns to Juvenile Court for further disposition and is committed to the Division of Juvenile Justice. Violence, mistreatment of any of the Drug Court team members, consistent positive drug screens, and new felony charges often prompt immediate termination from the program.

Table 4. Participant Rules

1. Any infraction of the rules will be reviewed by the Juvenile Drug Court Judge who may impose sanctions.
2. Appropriate clothing is expected at all times. You must wear a shirt or blouse, pants or skirt and shoes. Sunglasses will not be worn inside the Drug Court Office or Court. Clothing bearing drug or alcohol related themes, or promoting or advertising alcohol or drug use is not allowed. No gang colors or gang clothing shall be worn in the Office of the Court.
3. You must attend all scheduled counseling sessions, educational sessions, and Court sessions unless you have prior approval. You must arrive on time and not leave until the session is over. If you are late, you may not be allowed to attend the session and may be considered absent. Arrangements must be made to make up missed groups before your next court appearance.

Table 4. (continued)

4. The following actions will not be tolerated:
 - a. Violence or threats of any kind;
 - b. Use and/or possession of drugs and/or alcohol;
 - c. Belligerent behavior;
 - d. Possession of any type of weapon;
 - e. Inappropriate sexual behavior or harassment;
 - f. Romantic relationships among participants;
 - g. Failure to notify staff of any arrest, court obligations or fees within 12 hours
 - h. Failure to notify staff of school/work absences, school suspensions, or expulsions.
5. Your family, children, and/or friends cannot loiter on the premises. If they are providing transportation, they should simply drop you off and pick you up at the end of the session unless they are required to attend the session with you.
6. You may not carry beepers or cellular phones to Court or group sessions.
7. The program shall comply with KRS 620.030 regarding the reporting of cases of abuse or neglect of minors. The program shall also comply with KRS 209.030 regarding the reporting of cases of abuse and neglect. Federal law and regulation do not protect any information about suspected child abuse or neglect from being reported from being reported under state law to appropriate state or local authorities.
8. You are expected to maintain appropriate behavior at all times during the Drug Court session and while in the courthouse. The Judge shall be addressed with respect. Unless prior approval is given, you will remain for the entire proceeding. There will be no talking while seated in the audience. You will be permitted to show support and encouragement to fellow participants by applause, but only during appropriate times. Your behavior and demeanor while in the courthouse is a reflection on the entire program. Maintaining appropriate behavior is indicative of the progress you and your fellow participants are making towards your recovery.
9. All participants must comply with curfew times as set by the court. Exceptions must be approved by the Drug Court Judge or staff.

Drug Court Program Elements

In addition to the structural components described in the preceding sections, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court also includes a set of program elements designed to engage participants in treatment while supervising their progress. These major program elements, include (a) Drug Court sessions, (b) treatment, (c) supervision, (d) sanctions and rewards, (e)

community service, (f) journaling, and (e) family involvement. The following section describes these elements and presents a series of graphics that show how these elements were provided across the timeframe covered in this evaluation. Collectively, the data presented below can be used to assess the implementation of specific program elements and show trends that can be used programmatically for monitoring and planning.

Court sessions. Drug Court sessions are held every Thursday at 4:00 pm at the Fayette County District Courthouse to review the progress of the participants scheduled for review that week. Prior to drug court sessions the drug court team meets for their weekly “staffing” of the cases. Staffing last approximately 30 minutes during which the progress of each participant that will appear in court that day is discussed. The Drug Court Coordinator presents the progress notes to the Judge while up to 12 drug court team members including the Drug Court Coordinator, case specialists, a public defender, a prosecutor, representatives of Teen Pop (the local treatment provider), a police officer, and a bailiff provide input during in this staffing. The team helps the Judge to decide which sanctions and rewards will be given to each participant depending on their behavior (including attendance or lack of attendance at counseling sessions, school performance, urinalysis results) since their case was last reviewed. The Judge discusses the progress or lack of progress for each participant and additional input is provided by the team. It was evident from researcher observations of this meeting that the team and Judge worked together closely to make recommendations for participant cases, including when a participant was ready to be promoted to the next phase, if and what type of sanction or reward should be used, unmet service needs, and clinical and professional opinions regarding strategies that could be used to help the participant to progress in on treatment goals. The next section provides an in-depth description of a “typical” drug court session for the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court.

Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Implementation Evaluation

UK researchers also observed a Juvenile Drug Session. A summary of this observation is provided below to give a detailed picture of how a Drug Court session is organized and conducted. Participant and their families entered the court room as a group and in no particular order. The ambient noise level was high throughout the drug court session because all participants and family members remained in the court room throughout the court session. Participants were acknowledged with applause several times for reaching goals and having positive progress in the program, which also added to the overall noise level in the court session. A table was located approximately 12 feet from the Judge's bench at which the participant being addressed sat. The participant's family member remained seated in the audience throughout the session. The Judge remained seated on the bench throughout the session. The Treatment Coordinator, case specialists, police officer, bailiff, and additional staff sat on benches to the Judge's left. The participants not being addressed by the judge sat in two rows of benches that were located in the back of the courtroom. A microphone was present on the table in front of the participants; however, it was not turned on. The Judge always addressed the client first, and addressed family members when pertinent. The judge addressed the gallery frequently throughout the Drug Court session. The participants did not address the gallery. The Judge maintained eye contact with the participants and family members throughout each session. There was no physical contact between the Judge and the participant or a family member of the participant. The Drug Court staff had reviewed the cases of all participants addressed during the session during the staffing preceding the session. Participants new to the Juvenile Drug Court program were addressed first. After viewing one session, researchers witnessed a total of 6 participant sessions. The average length of time a participant was before the Judge was 2.5 minutes. The mode was 2 and 3 minutes, with three sessions lasting 2 minutes and three lasting 3 minutes.

Although individual sessions with the Judge were almost uniform in length, the Judge addressed each participant in a unique manner to best meet the needs of the individual participant. For example, the Judge allowed a participant with a newborn child to serve her sanction of 4 days in jail non-consecutively. Also, a participant who was given a sanction of 4 days in jail was granted work release. Not all active participants appeared before the judge during this session because the number of times participants appear in court each month varies depending on their phase level.

Treatment. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court had been using Teen Pop as their primary treatment provider through a local Comprehensive Care network. Initially, Teen Pop lacked resources needed to hire a counselor solely devoted to the Drug Court participants thus the Drug Court participants were integrated into treatment groups with other Teen Pop clients. Problems with this arrangement prompted Teen Pop to terminate their relationship with the Juvenile Drug Court participants. Since then, however, this problem has been remedied and Juvenile Drug Court participant treatment has resumed at Teen Pop. Currently, the Case Specialists provide groups for the participants on topics such as substance abuse treatment and education, life skills training, anger management, and corrective thinking. Participants are required to attend three group sessions per week during each of the three phases of the Juvenile Drug Court program. The typical length of a group session ranges anywhere from 1.5 hours to 2 hours. During individual sessions with a counselor, behavioral, family, and school issues are addressed with each participant. The typical length of an individual session is about 45 minutes to an hour. Data from the monthly statistic show the participants in the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program were receiving fairly intensive treatment services. Overall, group counseling was provided more frequently than individual counseling (see Figure 2), and analyses

combining group and individual sessions (summarized in Figure 3) showed that the fewest number of treatment sessions ($\bar{n}=23$) were provided in November of 2001, and the greatest number of sessions ($n=65$) were provided in January 2002. In terms of the average number of sessions each participant received each month (i.e., per capita treatment), and the average treatment levels ranged from 16 session per participant per month to 6 sessions per participant per month (See Figure 4).

Figure 2

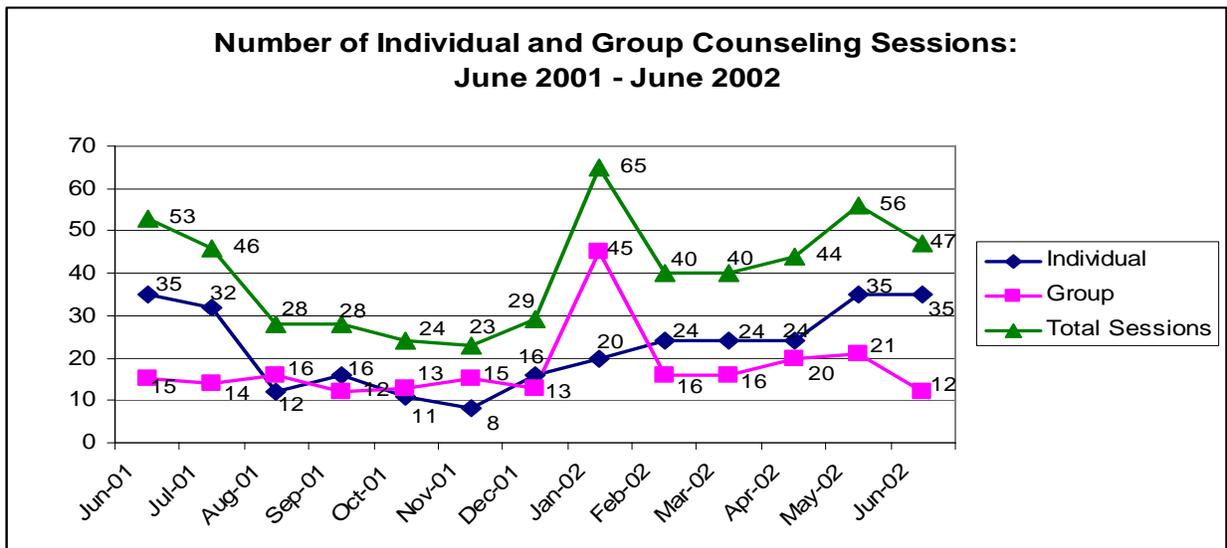


Figure 3

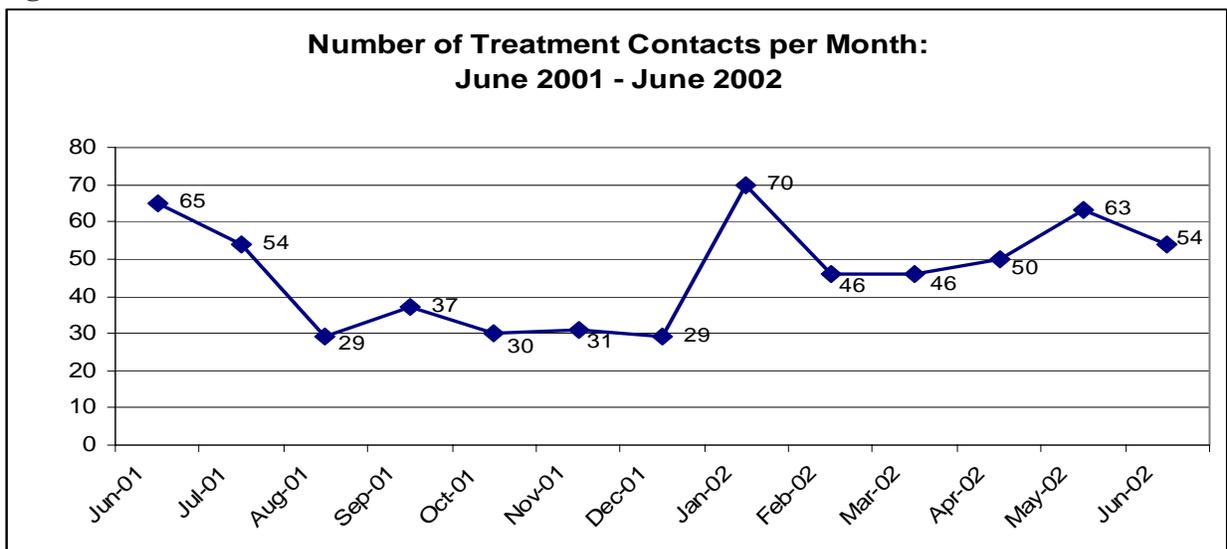
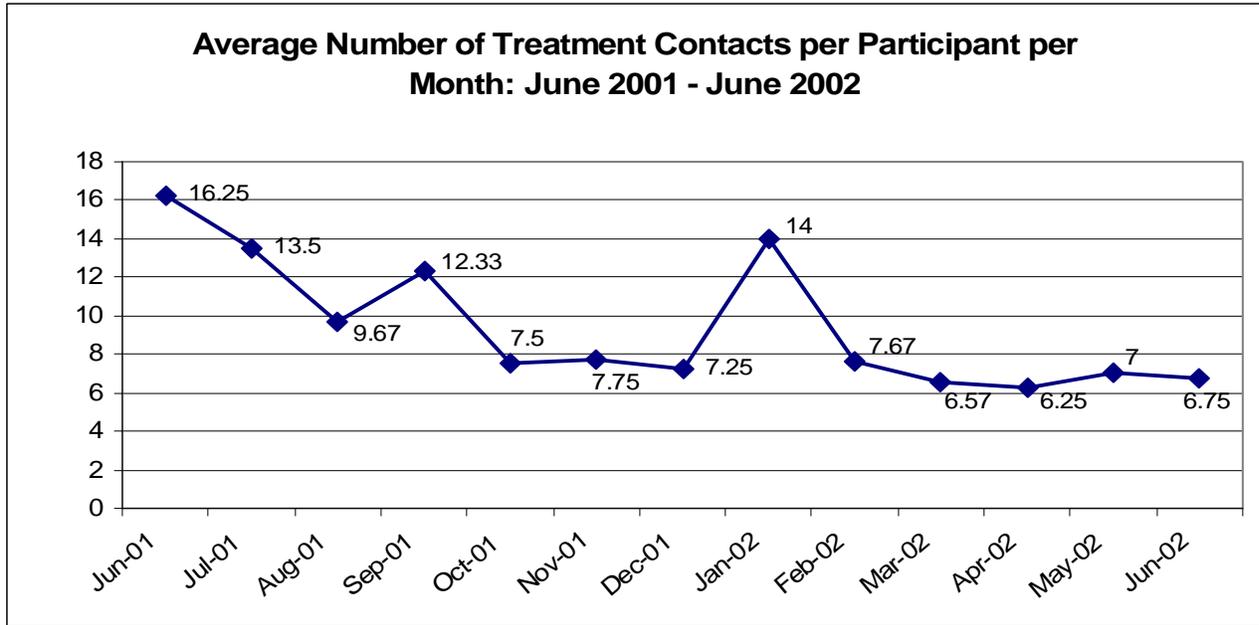


Figure 4



Supervision. Treatment and supervision are two of the essential features of the Juvenile Drug Court. Independently, these aspects of the Drug Court intervention have been repeatedly shown to be effective for offenders in criminal justice-based treatment (Nurco, Hanlon, Bateman, & Kinlock, 1995). Supervision is accomplished primarily through regular and random urine testing of participants, regularly scheduled court sessions, and visits by drug court staff to participants' homes and schools. Data from the Monthly Statistical Reports showed that the participants in the Juvenile Drug Court are well-supervised. Observed urine screen collections were frequently used, with a total of 520 urines collected (an average of 40 urine screens were conducted each month). As shown in Figure 5, the fewest ($\underline{n} = 27$) urine screens were collected in October of 2001, and the most ($\underline{n} = 66$) were collected in June 2002. While the frequency of urine screens are related to overall supervision level, it should be noted that urine-screening requirements decrease as participants are promoted to higher phases, and participant phases were not considered in these analyses. Thus, the number of urine screens per participant described in the graphs below underestimates the intensity of supervision provided. Observation of a court

session by researchers from the University of Kentucky showed that the Judge paid careful attention to urine drug test results, and reviewed these with participants during the court session.

Figure 5

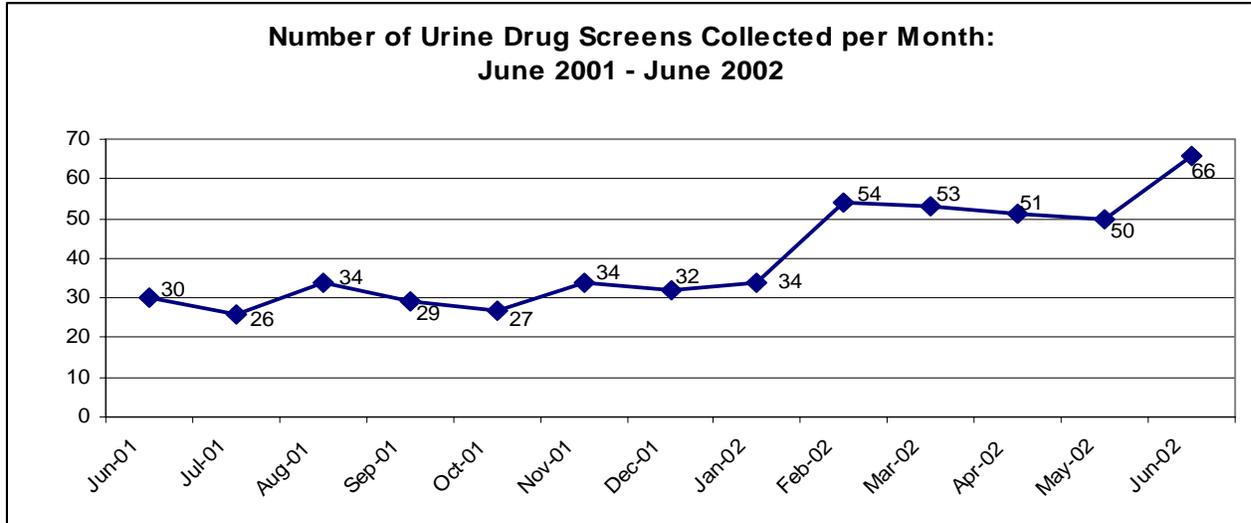
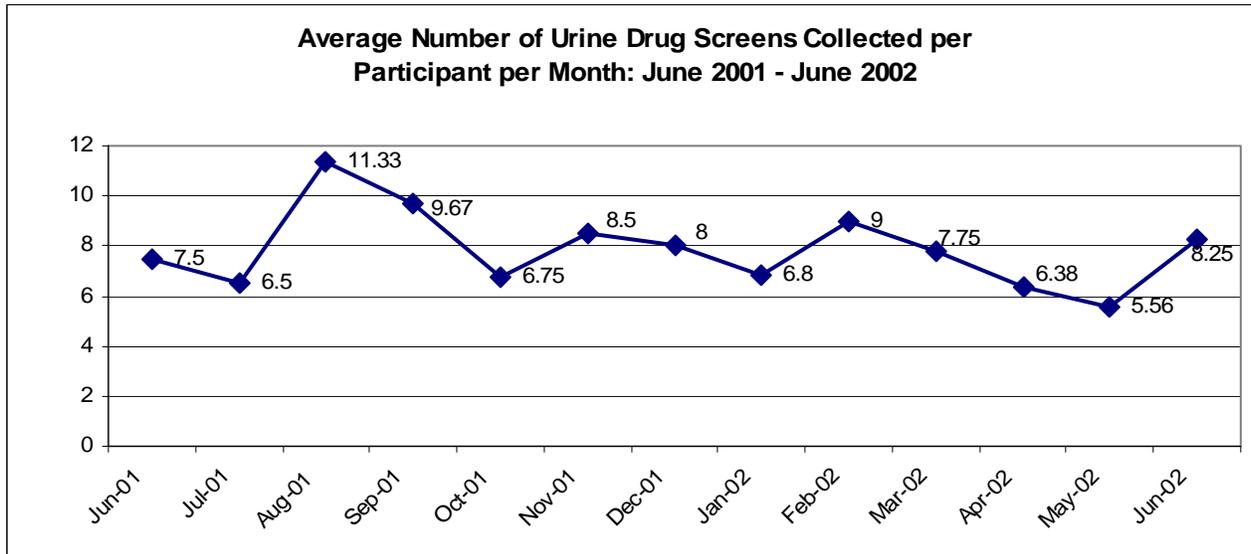


Figure 7



Sanctions and rewards. The Juvenile Drug Court program uses a standard set of sanctions, but this set may be modified to meet the individual needs of the participants. The entire Drug Court team has input into sanctions; however, the Judge makes the final determination of which sanction will be used. Positive drug screens, missing work, incomplete

community service, incomplete assignments, tardiness to Drug Court sessions, missed treatment sessions, and non-compliance with the Drug Court program all prompt the use of sanctions. Sanctions include detention (the length of which varies according to the severity of the act), phase demotion, additional drug screens, additional treatment, placement in residential treatment, community service, earlier curfews, home detention, and lastly termination from the program. Results for sanctions are described in the during program impacts and outcomes sanctions below.

Participants earn rewards by complying with program rules and showing significant progress towards treatment goals. Rewards are prompted by negative drug screens, good journal entries, good attendance, and no probation violations. Rewards that are typically used to support participant progress include phase promotion, reduction in frequency of contacts with the Judge, curfew extensions, candy, gift certificates, and tickets to sporting events. Also, the participants earn praise from the Judge and the Drug Court Team.

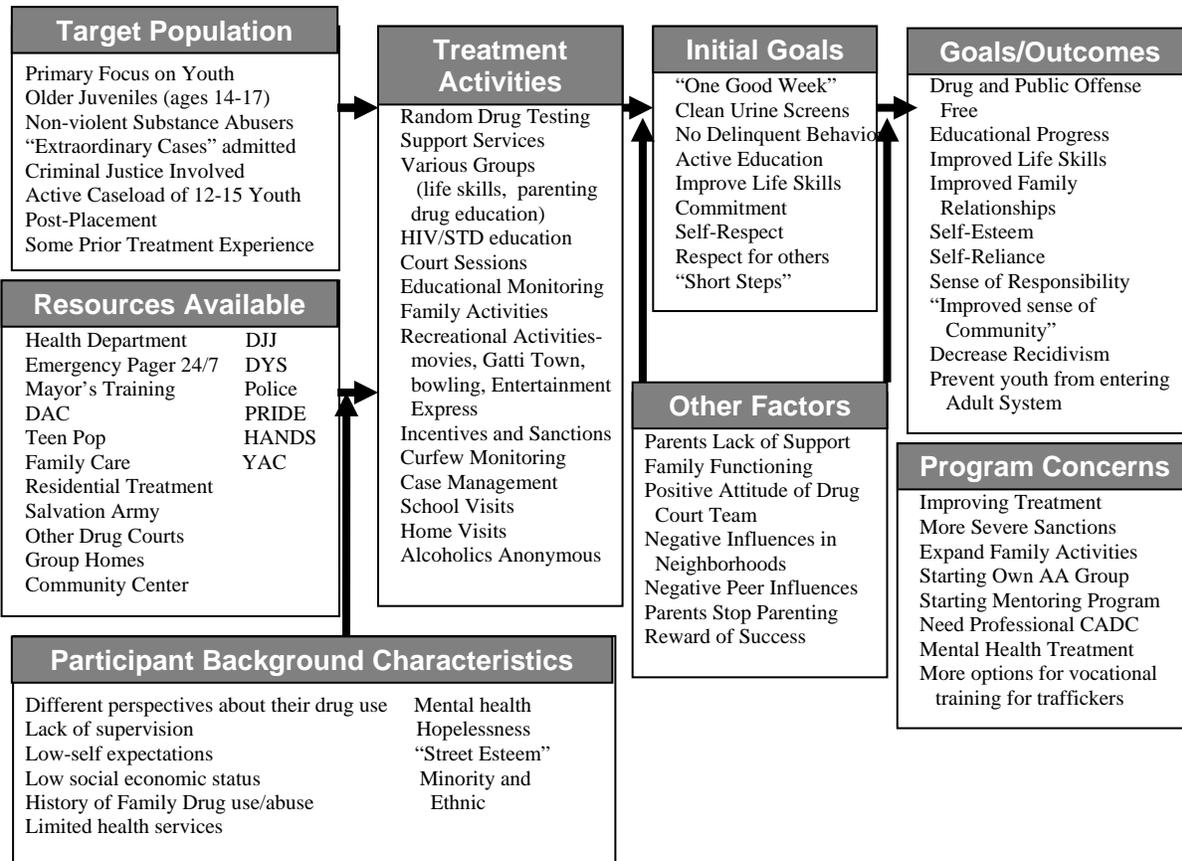
Community service. Community service is a part of the Juvenile Drug Court program because it encourages the youth to be productive members of their communities. Community service is mandatory for Juvenile Drug Court participants during the summer and when they are not attending school. Participants who do not attend school must either have a job or complete community service hours. Participants may be required to complete community service hours at the Fayette County Juvenile Detention Center, the Fayette County Court House, the Hope Center, the Salvation Army, God's Pantry, the Community Center, or Habitat for Humanity. Community service is also utilized as a sanction and was given as a sanction 12 times during the timeframe of the current study.

Journal assignments. Journal assignments are used to increase literacy skills. The participants are required to turn in two journal entries at every court hearing. The journal topics

may be assigned either by the Judge or Drug Court staff and are often taken from a handbook used by the staff (Drug Court: A Program of Positive Values and Personal Responsibility).

Family involvement. Family involvement is an integral part of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program. Family members of participants must cooperate with the Drug Court program rules. If they choose not to cooperate, the Drug Court Judge may sanction them. Parental sanctions range from fines to confinement in the Fayette County Detention Center. In order to foster the positive development of the family, participants and their family members must attend family therapy sessions. A total of 80 family therapy sessions were conducted between June 2001 and June 2002, with an average of six sessions per month.

Figure 7. Logic Model: Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court



Logic model of the Drug Court program. The logic model is one method for describing a program in a standardized manner (Harrell, 1996). It also is useful for integrating the large amounts of information collected during a process evaluation to provide an overall broader picture of what the drug court program is, who it serves, what it does, and what it hopes to accomplish. Therefore, to help integrate the information in the preceding pages of this report, the logic model of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court (see Figure 1) was completed during a researcher-led focus group with JDC team members. As may be seen in this figure, The *target population* for this program is drug-involved youth between the ages of 14 and 17 years old. Staff noted that “the program would not be appropriate for 11, 12, and 13 year old drug users, because they should not be in groups with 17 year olds.” The staff members also indicated that they do not accept juveniles with violent offenses, and one staff member indicated that “the program is not suitable for offenders with major mental health problems”; however, “extraordinary cases” are admitted. Also, the program targets juveniles who have had some sort of prior substance abuse treatment. Staff indicated that “we (the Drug Court) use the least restrictive alternative, and if offenders have not had some prior treatment, they will first be placed in a program that is less restrictive and then, if needed, into the Drug Court program.” The Fayette County Drug Court maintains a maximum caseload of 15 participants, however 8-12 juveniles is viewed as the ideal caseload for this Drug Court. Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court has access to a variety of *available resources* whose roles are to provide positive interventions for drug-involved youths and their families. At the time of this focus group, the Drug Court did not have a professional substance and mental health treatment provider. The Drug Court previously utilized Teen Pop; however they had terminated treatment services because the drug court participants did not fit the criteria for the Teen Pop target treatment

population. Staff noted that “It is not a question of us not using the (treatment) resources that are available, but they simply can not work with our youth.” Team members expressed concern over the treatment issue, and feel “they need a treatment provider who will be able to address the needs of the kids, and the program.” **[Since the focus group, a renewed relationship with Teen Pop has resulted in more treatment being offered].** The Drug Court team thinks that random drug screening as a treatment activity has been successful. The Drug Court also conducts their own peer support group because “the kids did not need to be in the same support groups as adults.” Additional resources are also utilized such as PRIDE, a program which teaches parenting skills and provides vocational training to pregnant women and mothers with young children. They also provide vocational training for mothers for two years after a baby is born. Another resource for pregnant participants is HANDS, a program run by nurses who provide information to mothers about what to expect during pregnancy and birth. Also, they provide in home medical visits and refer the women to other resources if necessary. The Family Care Center is a resource that mothers with young children can utilize for day care and school. Staff indicated that the public school system is an important resource, as is YAC which is a program similar to in-school detention. The Detention Alternative Center (DAC) is a resource that is used when a participant is pending placement in a facility so they will not have to be placed in detention. Residential facilities are resources used for participants who need long term placement (30 to 60 days). Day treatment and group homes (such as MASH and The Coleman House) are also used as resources for the participants. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court also utilizes community service resources such as God’s Pantry, Salvation Army, GoodWill, and the Community Center to help participants and their families meet their needs for food, clothing, and shelter. The Health Department is used to teach participants about HIV and AIDS and how to

minimize high-risk behaviors. The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and the Department of Youth Services (DYS) are other agencies that are used as referral resources. Also, the Drug Court case specialists are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Staff identified many *participant background characteristics* of the Fayette County Drug Court participants. Staff said that the majority of the participants are minority children of African-American background. The majority of the target population has experienced minimal supervision and neglect in the home. Most participants have a family history of substance use and abuse and mental health issues. Staff members said that “some kids have actually been parenting their parents.” Staff identified the participants as having a different perspective about their drug use: “the kids don’t think they have a problem, and our first step is to convince them they are substance abusers.” Low self-expectation and hopelessness are characteristics that “all the participants have.” The treatment team indicated that the drug court participants “feel as if it is OK to be in Drug Court and detention; they have a false sense of self esteem which we call street esteem which is taking pride in things which most people would not take pride in.”

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court utilizes a variety of *treatment activities*. The Drug Court team thinks they have had success with random drug testing as a treatment activity. Other treatment activities include groups that teach life skills, parenting skills, substance abuse education, and HIV/AIDS education. Court sessions, educational monitoring, curfew monitoring, school visits, and home visits are some of the many treatment activities drug court team members perform daily. The Drug Court staff plan frequent family activities for the participants and family members, including going bowling, to the movies, Gatti Town, and Entertainment Express.

Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Implementation Evaluation

The *initial goals* of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court are for the participants to have at least “one good week.” Staff said that they “often times ask the kids to give us one good week”. The team indicated their primary goal is for the participants to stop using drugs. The Drug Court team’s goal for the participants is eight consecutive negative drug screens, “which some kids can’t even get.” Commitment to the program is another initial output the staff encourage. The staff feels that the participants need to learn to be responsible and accountable for their own actions. They emphasize the importance of attending appointments on time. They also require participants to have no delinquent behavior. Self-respect and respect for others is another quality that the Drug Court hopes to foster in each participant. Participants are required to make educational progress. The participants are not required to attend mainstream school; however, they must be actively working on enhancing their educational level. Staff indicated that they tell their participants “not to worry about tomorrow, just work on making improvements today.” They advise them to take life one step at a time in “short steps.”

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team indicated *other factors* which influence their Juvenile Drug Court. Staff said that there is sometimes a lack of support from the family members of the participants. The team members indicated that parents often feel as if “it is their kid who is in drug court and not them, so they (the kids) have to do it, not them.” Neighborhoods and friends are a negative influence in many of the participants’ lives. Staff noted, “We see them leaving very positive, they come here and it’s a safe place and they walk out to the same old neighborhood, peer pressures, and negative influences.” The Drug Court staff expressed that the positive and encouraging attitude of the Drug Court staff facilitates the progress of the participants. Staff described the success of the participants as “very

heartwarming” and said, “When things get tough around here and aren’t looking very positive, I simply think about the two successful graduates we have had.”

The *long term outcomes or overall objective* of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court are for the participants “not only to be drug free but also public offense free.” Staff indicated another objective of the program is to improve the education level of the participants, and also to improve life skills, family relationships, self-esteem, and self-reliance. Team members said that they “need to model a sense of responsibility, because some of the participants don’t have it coming in from other sources.” The team also hopes to keep these youthful offenders out of the adult criminal system and reduce recidivism rates.

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Team expressed different concerns with the program. One of these *program concerns* involves the how regular Juvenile Court has very limited sanctions (with a maximum of 90 days detention set by State law). The drug court team thinks that this not severe enough to act as a real motivator for youth to remain in the program, stating that “90 days in custody is simply not as scary as the 5 years in jail that the adult drug court participants might have to serve.” Another program concern addressed the need for improved treatment and better relationships with treatment providers. The team is planning on starting their own unique self-help group and also a mentoring group with University of Kentucky athletes. They would like to increase their resources for mental health treatment, and expand family involvement in the program. They hope to have a professional Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor (CDAC) working with the participants. Staff indicated a need for more options for vocational training for adolescent drug traffickers in order to teach them other ways to make money. Finding vocational education for these youths is difficult because vocational schools do not accept youth with prior drug trafficking charges.

FINDINGS: DURING PROGRAM IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

The primary emphasis of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is to help its participants to learn to live drug-free and crime-free lives. Participants learn they are accountable for their behaviors through therapeutic sanctions and rewards. Participants in the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court between June 2001 and June 2002 improved in many area of their lives, including maintaining involvement in school and remaining drug and offense free. Program compliance rates were assessed by examining how often participants received sanctions. The imposition of a sanction reflects both a negative (at the level of the individual) and a positive therapeutic action (at the level of the program). Non-compliance implies poor participant performance, but should not necessarily be viewed as a negative outcome for the program because Juvenile Drug Courts function as long-term intensive behavior modification programs directed at extinguishing antisocial behavior and promoting prosocial behavior.

Retention in Drug Court

Retention of participants in the Juvenile Drug Court program is an essential and crucial element. Participant terminated from the program prior to graduation frequently stop receiving treatment; thereby, decreasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. At times, however, certain participants may need be removed from drug court because of certain types of and/or repeated non-complaint behaviors and to maintain the therapeutic environment of the Juvenile Drug Court. Between June 2001 and June 2002 only one participant was terminated from the program, and it was for absconding. In the same timeframe, two participants successfully graduated from the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program. This is important, because large body of research in the substance abuse treatment field and in Drug Courts shows that program graduates

have significantly better outcomes than those who do not finish the program (Peters & Murrin, 2001).

Recidivism

Recidivism (often defined as rearrests) is a fundamental outcome indicator used to judge the effectiveness of criminal justice based programs. Therefore, one of the primary performance measures for the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is the number of participants who are arrested for new crimes while they are under the program's supervision. Between June 2001 and June 2002, 6 of the participants were rearrested for a new crime. Only one participant received a new felony charge, which was for trafficking cocaine. Other charges included disorderly conduct, theft by unlawful taking, and beyond control, assault IV (Domestic Violence), driving without a License, and shoplifting.

Drug Use

Many of the resources of Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court are focused on reducing the use of alcohol and other illicit drugs among the participants. Juvenile Drug Court staff provide recovery-oriented therapy to the participants and employ frequent testing for illicit drugs to determine participant progress and to reveal relapses. Between June 2001 and June 2002, a total of 490 urine screens were conducted during the timeframe and seven participants tested positive for drugs at least one time, but there were few overall positive drug tests. Of the 490 urine screens collected, only 22 were positive for illicit drugs, including five that were positive for cocaine only, two that were positive for opiates, nine for marijuana, one for benzopiazidnes, two for amphetamines, one for marijuana and opiates, one for cocaine and marijuana, and one for methamphetamines.

Education

Remaining in school and pursuing education is strongly emphasized by the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court. Between June 2001 and June 2002, the majority (95%) of participants remained in school during the program (including alternative schools like Day Treatment that combine education and therapy). Observation by researchers of a Juvenile Drug Court session during this study showed that the Drug Court Judge paid careful attention to the school performance and attendance record of each participant. By paying special attention to the educational achievement of participants, the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court has a great potential for reducing the high school dropout rate among its participants. This will continue to benefit both the participant and society in the long-run because educational achievement is positively and linearly related to lifetime earnings from employment. Individuals with a higher level of education earn more money and can be more productive members of society than those with low educational achievement.

Sanctions

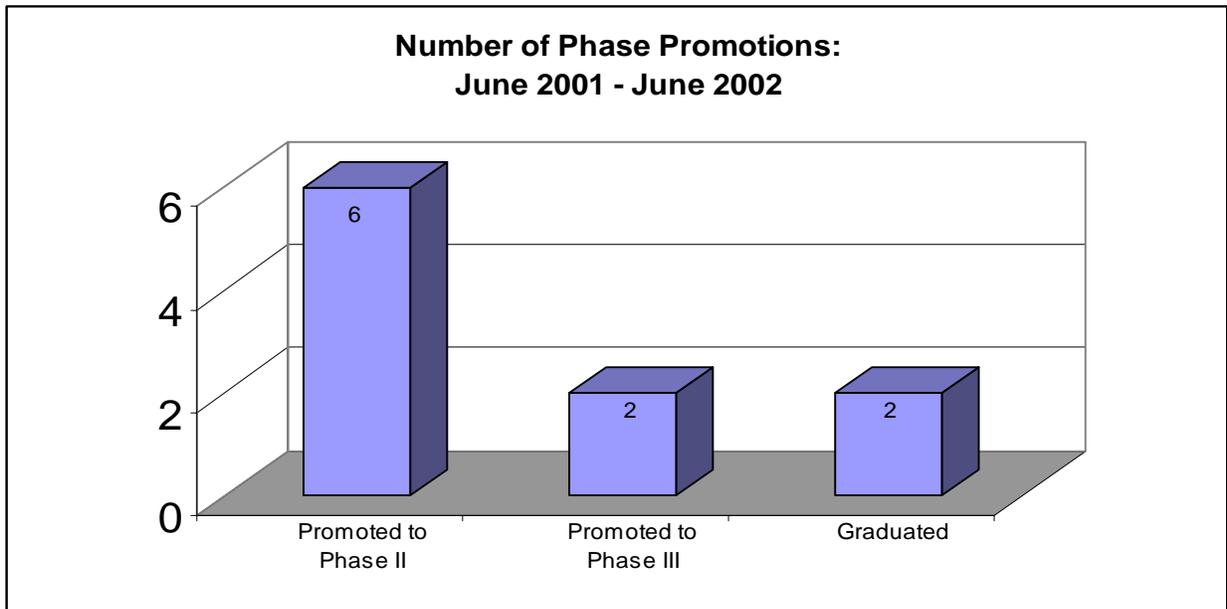
Drug Court programs are intensive behavior modification programs, and therefore, sanctions may be understood as a positive output of the program directed at encouraging pro-social behavior and holding participants accountable for their behaviors. At the level of the individual, sanctions imply that the participant has been non-compliant with program rules. Review of program records indicated that sanctions were generally used in a consistent manner following specific behavioral problems. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program does not use a fixed sanction algorithm, and the application of sanctions is individualized to maximize the therapeutic potential of the sanction. Between June 2001 and June 2002, a brief stay in jail was the most commonly given sanction. Seventeen of the total sanctions given were jail time

varying in length (usually 2 to 4 days). Community service was given as a sanction six times, and one participant was demoted to a lower phase.

Phase Promotions

A promotion to a higher phase indicates that the participant is performing successfully in the program. Therefore, examining the number of phase promotions is a valuable during-treatment performance measure. This provides direct behavioral measures of participants remaining compliant with treatment plans and program rules. As shown in Figure 8, analysis of data from the monthly statistics showed that 10 phase promotions were given during the timeframe covered by the report, including 6 promotions to Phase II, and 2 promotions to Phase III. Two participants graduated from the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program during this time frame.

Figure 8



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court is grounded in the 16 Strategies that define effective Juvenile Drug Courts nationwide (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2003). It provides

recovery-oriented services and intensive supervision to juveniles with drug abuse problems. A dedicated team of professionals representing key stakeholders invested in addressing the problems created by drug-involved juveniles work together closely to help participants to begin their substance abuse recovery, improve social functioning, and remain crime free. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court has matured beyond its planning phase and is transitioning into a fully implemented cohesive program. In conclusion, the Fayette Juvenile Drug Court is in full compliance with the 16 Strategies outlined for implementing effective Drug Court programs (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2003). Specifically:

Strategy #1. Collaborative Planning – Engage all stakeholders in creating an interdisciplinary, coordinated and systemic approach to working with youth and their families.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the participant observation showed that the Fayette Juvenile Drug Court team members have formed a cohesive unit that involves community-based stakeholders during the planning and implementation stages of the Drug Court process. The Drug Court planning team includes representatives from various local agencies who work together to develop policies and procedures regarding Drug Court operations. The planning team and the policies that are written ensure program collaboration, participant accountability, and effective program evaluation.

Strategy #2. Teamwork – Develop and maintain an interdisciplinary, nonadversarial work team.

Findings from the focus group and from the participant observation showed that the Fayette Juvenile Drug Court team members work efficiently together. The Juvenile Drug Court staff work together when making decisions concerning the participants, and each staff member's

opinions are heard and taken into consideration. Observations and interviews indicated that prosecutors, defense attorneys, and treatment professionals on the team communicate well with one another: thereby, maximizing the efficacy of the program. The opinions of all team members are equally respected.

Strategy #3. Clearly Defined Target Population and Eligibility Criteria – Define a target population and eligibility criteria that are aligned with the program’s goals and objectives.

Findings from the focus group and from staff/team interviews showed that the target population and eligibility criteria are appropriate and well-defined. The Juvenile Drug Court team has utilized data regarding various aspects of the community as well as assessed local resources in order to correctly identify juveniles who might benefit from the program. Eligibility criteria have been established and incorporated into a written set of guidelines so that each potential participant may be effectively assessed. In this way, the Drug Court team is able to consistently target and admit potential participants in accordance with standardized criteria.

Strategy #4. Judicial Involvement and Supervision – Schedule frequent judicial reviews and be sensitive to the effect that court proceedings can have on youth and their families.

Findings from the participant observation and subsequent interviews showed that judicial involvement and supervision is highly regarded in the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program. During court sessions the Judge relates well to each participant and takes an obvious interest their lives. Between court sessions the Judge stays in contact with staff and team members to remain updated on participants’ progress. The judge provides a well-balanced atmosphere of legal supervision and personal relationship with the participants.

Strategy #5. Monitoring and Evaluation – Establish a system for program monitoring and evaluation to maintain quality of service, assess program impact, and contribute to knowledge in the field.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team effectively monitors and evaluates the program. The Drug Court team has contracted with the Center on Drug and Alcohol Research at the University of Kentucky to perform an independent, external evaluation.

Strategy #6. Community Partnerships – Build partnerships with community organizations to expand the range of opportunities available to youth and their families.

Findings from staff/team interviews and from the focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has forged partnerships with the community in order to offer as many support services as possible. Recreational opportunities, educational programs, and community service work are integrated into the drug court program to meet the many needs of the participants. Not only has the team successfully enlisted support from various community resources, but they are also planning to expand these services by forming relationships with key agencies such as the University of Kentucky Athletics Department and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America.

Strategy #7. Comprehensive Treatment Planning – Tailor interventions to the complex and varied needs of youth and their families.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has met the diverse needs of participants and their families. By using tools such as the initial assessment and Individualized Program Plan (IPP) staff members are able to address the individual needs of each participant

and their family. The effectiveness of the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program is increased by this individualized treatment-based approach.

Strategy #8. Developmentally Appropriate Services – Tailor treatment to the developmental needs of adolescents.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has based their program on developmentally appropriate methods. The program caters to the needs of the adolescent population by providing services such as in-house AA/NA meetings designed specifically for juveniles. Services such as this provide participants with opportunities and encouragement to successfully complete the program.

Strategy #9. Gender-Appropriate Services – Design treatment to address the unique needs of each gender.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has recognized the need for gender-appropriate services and has incorporated certain program characteristics to accommodate for these differences. By tailoring their approaches to gender-specific issues, the team is able to develop appropriate relationships with each participant and to deliver treatment that is beneficial for males and females.

Strategy #10. Cultural Competence – Create policies and procedures that are responsive to cultural differences and train personnel to be culturally competent.

Findings from the participant observation, focus group, and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team has demonstrated cultural competence by hiring staff members of different ethnic/racial backgrounds and admitting participants of various ethnicities. Data gathered from the Monthly Statistics showed that 75% of Juvenile Drug Court

participants identified themselves as being African-American. Thirty-three percent of the full-time Drug Court employees are also African-American. The diversity of the staff and participants reflects the team's awareness of the need to be sensitive and responsive to cultural issues.

Strategy #11. Focus on Strengths – Maintain a focus on the strengths of youth and their families during program planning and in every interaction between the court and those it serves.

Findings from the participant observation, focus group, and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team focuses on the individual strengths of each participant and their family throughout their participation in the Drug Court program. As part of the initial assessment, the Drug Court team includes a “Strengths Assessment” questionnaire, which helps the participant to recognize accomplishments and successes. This approach begins the participant's program with a strength-based perspective and prepares the participant to accept a more responsible role in the community. This strengths-based approach also aides in creating bonds between the participants and their families and helps the families to provide the needed support and encouragement to the participants.

Strategy #12. Family Engagement – Recognize and engage the family as a valued partner in all components of the program.

Findings from the focus group, staff/team interviews, and the participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program recognizes the importance of family roles and support in the treatment of the juvenile participant. Members of the Juvenile Drug Court team understand that family members can influence the decisions made by the juveniles throughout the duration of the program. Therefore, the team makes every effort to

engage the family in all components of the program. In the Fayette County program court sessions are scheduled so that parents or other family members can be present and family members are encouraged to participate in treatment. The Drug Court team also uses the initial assessment and other tools to evaluate the role of each family member and the dynamics between family members and the participant. By involving the participant's family members during the Drug Court program the participant's progress is enhanced and relationships between family members are strengthened.

Strategy #13. Educational Linkages – Coordinate with the school system to ensure that each participant enrolls in and attends an educational program that is appropriate to his or her needs.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program has a strong relationship with school guidance counselors and teachers. This facilitates the intensive monitoring of participants' attendance, grades, and teacher assessments. The Case Specialist frequently visits the schools in order to monitor participants' performance and behaviors. The frequent contact between team members and school officials enables the team to quickly address any issues that might arise in order to best meet the needs of the participant.

Strategy #14. Drug Testing – Design drug testing to be frequent, random, and observed. Document testing policies and procedures in writing.

Findings from the focus group and staff/team interviews showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program performs frequent, random drug tests to all participants throughout the duration of the program. Participants must test negative for six consecutive months before they become eligible to graduate from the program. Participants undergo drug testing a minimum

of 3 times per week in Phase I, two times per week in Phase II, and once per week in Phase III. Additional tests can be administered if team members feel it is necessary. Each drug test is observed by a staff member of the Community Alternative Program, a section of the Fayette County Detention Center. The Drug Court team has outlined drug testing procedures in the Participant Handbook and reports results of the drug tests in the Monthly Statistics report.

Strategy #15. Goal-Oriented Incentives and Sanctions – Respond to compliance and noncompliance with incentives and sanctions that are designed to reinforce or modify the behavior of youth and their families.

Findings from the staff/team interviews and participant observation showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program has a system for graduated sanctions that applies to all participants. These sanctions include community service, decreased curfew, detention, and placement into residential treatment. Although they have specific sanctions in place, the Drug Court may adjust the sanction in order to better address the behaviors of the participants. Incentives also are granted based on merits of negative drug test results, exceptional school performance, group leadership and positive attitudes. The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court awards gift certificates, tickets to sporting events, and key chains in order to recognize the participants' successes. Sanctions and incentives are consistent and fair and are granted consistently and are applied immediately to help the participant understand that his or her actions lead to corresponding reactions.

Strategy #16. Confidentiality – Establish a confidentiality policy and procedures that guard the privacy of the youth while allowing the drug court team to access key information.

Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court Implementation Evaluation

Findings from the staff/team interviews and focus group showed that the Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court team members have designed policies and procedures to protect each participant and their family members while in the Drug Court program. Participant files are kept in a locked storage area and computer records are password protected. Court sessions and staffing meetings are closed to the public in order to ensure the maximum amount of privacy for the participants and family members.

Recommendations

Based on information provided by drug court team members the two following recommendations are made:

- (1) Build stronger relationships with local treatment programs in order to effectively treat participants who have more serious problems and may need more intensive treatment (e.g., residential treatment).
- (2) Increase the programs involvement in the homes of the participants by including more random and frequent home visits, and more intensive therapy for the entire family in the home setting.
- (3) Focus on maintaining an active census of 15 participants to maximize program capacity. Increase capacity to 25 to increase the overall impact of the program by enrolling up to 30% of the youth potentially eligible for Juvenile Drug Court each year.
- (4) Develop a plan for sustaining the Juvenile Drug Court beyond grant monies provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance by locating other potential funders; including other government grant programs, local foundations, and grass roots community efforts.

Summary

The Fayette County Juvenile Drug Court program was established in 1999 as a planning program and in January 2001 as a pilot program. It received funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance in September 2001 to become a fully implemented drug court program. Findings from the process evaluation show this program has successfully incorporated the national standards set by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (2003) in Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice. The staff of the juvenile drug court program strives to meet the individualized needs of each participant. The opinions and suggestions of team members are considered by the judge before making final decisions regarding the participants. The cohesiveness of the drug court team creates a supportive and therapeutic environment, which facilitates the recovery of the participants.