

Virginia Juvenile Justice Summit

on

Children and Youth with Disabilities

REPORT

**Parents and Professionals Sharing Ideas to
Improve Outcomes for Virginia Youth**

October 16, 2001

**University of Richmond
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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
Issues Surrounding Juvenile Justice and Youth with Disabilities	2
Addressing the Issues.....	3
The Summit.....	3
Focus Group Recommendations	4
Next Steps	6
Youth Perspective	7
SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS	9
Morning Session - <i>Speakers and Panel Presentations</i>	9
Afternoon Session - <i>Summaries of Focus Groups</i>	13
▪ Prevention.....	13
▪ Alternatives to Incarceration.....	14
▪ Family Partnerships	17
▪ Access to Appropriate Special Education.....	18
▪ Successful Transitions.....	21
Experiences, Ideas, Concerns and Trends.....	24
Summit Evaluations	25
<i>Appendix</i>	26
▪ Biographies of Presenters.....	27
▪ Transcription of Focus Groups	30
▪ Juvenile Justice Resources.....	54
▪ Powerpoint Presentation – Dr. Leone	57
▪ Session Handouts – Dr. Waite	61

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Issues Surrounding Juvenile Justice and Children with Disabilities

Youth experiencing failure in school are most at risk of behavioral issues that are associated with children who are in the juvenile justice system or at risk of becoming involved in the system. Some of these behaviors are:

- Impulsiveness
- Poor social skills
- Poor decision making skills
- Aggressiveness

Many children with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, ADHD and other disabilities have those same traits. Also, school failure, one of the highest risk factor for involvement with the court system, is no stranger to students with disabilities.

Nationally, estimates of the number of children and youth who are involved with the juvenile justice system and have identified disabilities range up to 90%. While behavioral disorders are the most frequently identified disabilities, other disabilities are widely represented. A study by The Institute on Mental Disability and the Law at the National Center of State Courts (1987) reported that 36% of incarcerated children met the diagnosis criteria for learning disabilities. Another source suggests that 46% or more have ADD/ADHD. In 1999, the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice reported that many youth in correctional systems who have disabilities have not been identified or they have been identified inappropriately.

The following is a profile of youth in Virginia's correctional facilities:

- 75% have at least one diagnosable mental disorder.
- 50% have moderate to severe disabilities.
- 70% are four or more years behind their same-aged peers in reading.
- 78% are five or more years behind in writing.
- 82% are four or more years behind in math.
- 24% have ADHD
- 47% have a history of use of psychotropic drugs
- 30% have had prior psychiatric hospitalizations

These children may or may not be identified as special education students under IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) or as eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Sharon Trimmer, Director of Special Education for the Virginia Department of Correctional Education indicated at the conference that 42% of incarcerated youth are receiving special education services.

Addressing the Issues

These statistics relating to youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system, calls from Virginia parents concerned about the treatment of their children in correctional and detention centers, and discussions with local, state, and national experts working in the field of juvenile justice led PEATC to begin dialogue with other public and private agencies about how parents and professionals could collaborate to improve outcomes for youth with disabilities who are involved with the justice system.

Representatives from advocacy organizations, parent groups, university programs, professionals serving children and state agencies came together as a planning group. Over a nine-month period, they planned a summit at which parents and professionals would address some of the issues surrounding youth with disabilities and the juvenile justice system and share their experiences, knowledge, ideas and priorities about:

1. Prevention
2. Alternatives to Incarceration
3. Family Partnerships
4. Access to Appropriate Special Education
5. Successful Transitions

The Summit

More than 125 parents and professionals from public and private schools, universities, social services agencies, state and local correctional facilities, advocacy organizations, state agencies and private professionals serving youth came to the Juvenile Justice Summit for Youth and Children with Disabilities at the University of Richmond School of Law in October 2001 to express their concerns and recommend solutions. In addition to parents, attendees included advocates, educators, school administrators, juvenile justice administrators, professionals from correctional facilities, probation officers, therapists, social workers and members of the legal profession.

- **Dr. Peter Leone, Director of the National Center for Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice** opened the Summit by presenting a clear picture of the forces shaping educational policies, national statistics relating to students with disabilities and next steps that advocates can take to support youth with disabilities.
- **Expert Panelists** from the Virginia Departments of Education, Juvenile Justice and Correctional Education were joined by an attorney from JustChildren and two parents offered information, facts and perspectives.
- **Judge Eric Andell, Senior Policy Advisor and Juvenile Justice to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education**, shared his experiences and advice as an attorney, juvenile court judge and parent.

Summit Focus Groups - Recommendations

Focus groups met in the afternoon to address the five issues identified by the Summit Planning Group (Prevention, Alternatives to Incarceration, Family partnerships, Access to Appropriate Special Education and Successful Transitions). Below are highlights of each group's recommendations.

1. Prevention

What are the possibilities and opportunities for preventing youth with special needs from becoming involved with the justice system?

- Identify disabilities and change the attitudes about disabilities by both the system and community.
- Involve community and faith-based organizations in prevention by encouraging them to provide mentors, tutors, jobs and recreational opportunities.
- Use public and private funds to set up appropriate alternative programs.
- Change public policy from “getting tough on crime” to healing and re-integration in the community.
- Invest more proactive resources for parents before youth are involved with the justice system.
- Identify eligible youth with disabilities through the “Child Find” requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

2. Alternatives to Incarceration

What are the possibilities and opportunities for serving juvenile offenders with special needs in their communities?

- Use Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) funds to fund services, local treatment centers, and other family supports for custodial parents and foster parents.
- Ask Drug Courts to promote local treatment as an alternative to a state facility.
- Encourage community groups and faith-based organizations to provide role models or mentors and scholarship programs.
- Get businesses involved in providing scholarships, successful role models and job opportunities.
- Educate the community about these youth and their disabilities.

3. Family Partnerships

What are the possibilities and opportunities for parents to be effectively involved on behalf of their children in the Juvenile Justice System?

- Make parent-friendly information available to families about juvenile justice services, parent involvement, partnerships and advocacy.

- Distribute information to families through Court Service Units, probation officers, truant officers, social workers, intake workers and correctional facility officers.
- Resolve the difficulty of parental participation in meetings that are located at state correctional facilities by providing transportation and overnight stays for parents; conference call participation and, conducting meetings at places nearer to the family.

4. Access to Appropriate Special Education

How do we ensure that children with disabilities involved in the Juvenile Justice System, incarcerated or not, receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?

- Utilize a statewide curriculum for all school programs.
- Train all teachers about special education.
- Provide adequate funding to meet the requirements of IDEA.
- Improve communication between all those who are involved in any assessment of a child, including the parents.
- Transfer children's records in a more timely manner for youth entering and exiting detention facilities.
- Include impartial advocate on staff to advise all parents of their rights.
- Make available court-mandated parent advocates to train parents.

5. Successful Transitions

What are the possibilities and opportunities for successful transition from placement in the juvenile system to school and community?

- Require the same continued relationships by local schools when students are incarcerated as they do for out-placed CSA (Comprehensive Services Act) students.
- Share what is working between local agency and facility staff through preplanning and ongoing communication (including site visits).
- Fund a transition clerk in each facility to assist with scheduling meetings with school and staff and to monitor student after returning.

Next Steps

The Summit participants identified a great need for the additional education and training of all those working with children and youth about effective practices and resources available to address the needs of children and youth in the Juvenile Justice system and their families.

1. To raise public awareness in support of this need, Summit Report findings and recommendations will be presented to State leadership (Governor, Education, Juvenile Justice, Public Safety, etc.) and to General Assembly committees. In addition, results will be shared with juvenile, domestic relations and circuit court judges and statewide organizations.
2. The Virginia Juvenile Justice Coalition will provide the organizational leadership needed to advocate for Summit recommendations by working with state and community leaders to promote effective practices and needed policy changes and raising public awareness.
3. PEATC will work closely with the Coalition to strengthen and support its efforts to improve outcomes for Virginia youth.

Youth Perspective

Giuseppe Luisi is a seventeen-year-old young man with disabilities who was a detainee in the Virginia Juvenile Justice system. He was released this past year and is now gainfully employed. He currently holds a responsible position within a family enterprise. Giuseppe responded candidly to questions posed regarding his personal experience in a Virginia juvenile correctional facility. Giuseppe and his parents granted PEATC permission to interview and identify him and publish his response. His mother, Lorri Luisi was a panelist at the Juvenile Justice Summit for Virginia Children and Youth with Disabilities. This interview was conducted as a follow up to the summit.

Q. Please describe your experience as a young person with special needs in the Virginia Juvenile Justice.

A. Overall, I learned a lot about myself, my family and others. It was a rude awakening.

Q. Why do you think you ended up in juvenile detention?

A. I ended up in juvenile detention because I had substance abuse issues that I didn't know how to cope with, and kept making the same mistakes over and over. I ended up breaking the law or getting in trouble in school a total of about ten times, beginning at age 13 to 17. Juvenile detention was the only option left to remove me from the environment that contributed to my downfall.

Q. How do you feel your educational needs were met in juvenile detention? How about other detainees?

A. My needs were well met because I had information and family [support] and I initiated a lot on my own. I knew what the outside world had to offer. Others didn't fare as well. Most did not have basic reading, writing or math skills; most seemed to have learning and other disabilities much worse than mine but no one addressed them. Many classrooms were just day care, you know, babysitting and busy time. Also, they were not encouraged to develop academic skills. They were told to do just enough to get a GED or seek vocational training, no matter what their potential. If you didn't care, no one else seemed to.

Q. Do you feel that you benefited or suffered as a result of your detention?

A. I benefited. Why? Because I got a grasp of a lot of opportunities to change my life, unlike my peers, who don't have the same opportunity to make their lives better. I realized that education is the key, and unlike most of them, I know which doors it unlocks. It was a sad eye-opener.

- Q. Did your family provide you with support while you were detained? If so, how?*
- A. Yes. My entire immediate and extended family, including children, visited me on a regular basis. They never turned their backs on me. I came to realize that my family are my true friends. Others were just acquaintances or accomplices.
- Q. Do you feel that families are encouraged or encountered barriers in their efforts to support young people who are detained?*
- A. The system actually encourages visits and support. However, many families do not have the flexibility or resources to visit as much as mine did. I found it very upsetting that often times, even on weekends, my family and I were the only ones in the visitor's areas. I think a lot of the families have problems at home that are so big they don't find a way to make visiting a troubled family member a priority. The system offers little or no support in this area. To my knowledge, no one looks at visitor records and asks why families are not supporting loved ones or offers assistance for them to do so.
- Q. What advice would you offer to other young people and their parents?*
- A. If they find themselves in the same situation as I, was make the most of it, get or learn something from it even if it's just finding out who your real friends are and who really supports you.
- Q. What changes, if any, would you recommend for improving the system?*
- A. Provide realistic career guidance and relevant curriculum to detainees. Give them something to motivate them. Get staff that is more prone to emphasize correcting behaviors than administering punishment.

Virginia Juvenile Justice Summit for Children and Youth with Disabilities Proceedings

Morning Session

The morning session of the Juvenile Justice Summit included presentations on juvenile justice from a national perspective, a state perspective and from individual parents' perspectives.

Morning Key Note Speaker: Peter Leone, Ph.D., Director of the National Center for Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice (EDJJ)

Dr. Peter Leone shared national statistics and issues involving students with disabilities and juvenile justice. Highlights included:

- 30 to 50 percent of youth in correctional facilities have been in special education.
- Children and youth who experience failure are primarily at risk for involvement with the juvenile justice system.
- The characteristics of these children and youth, including poor social skills, impulsivity, and distractibility, are those that most likely lead to suspension, expulsion, and detainment by the police.
- Zero tolerance policies have had a disproportionate impact on African American and Latino students.

The following were included in the solutions suggested by Dr. Leone:

- Promote academic performance and support for all students.
- Examine disciplinary practices.
- Use behavior assessments and positive behavior supports.
- Advocate for the best teachers and staffs.
- Promote partnerships in the community.
- Link the community economic interests to schools that are positive, productive and inclusive.
- Communicate with juvenile courts and correctional facilities.

Dr. Leone concluded by encouraging the participants to ask administrators and politicians if incarcerating children and youth with disabilities is in the "best interest" of society. Let leaders know that they are supported in providing adequate prevention and other services to children at risk.

(Please see the Summit Report Appendix for the overheads used in Dr. Leone's presentation.)

**Panel Presentation Moderated by Robert E. Shepherd, Jr., Professor Emeritus
University Of Richmond School of Law**

Panel Members and Summary of Comments:

H. Douglas Cox, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Supports Services for the Virginia Department of Education. Mr. Cox explained the role of the Department of Education to oversee the educational programs in detention homes. He reported these statistics:

- 23 local or regional detention homes are located in Virginia,
- 2,700 students can be served,
- 12% of the population are identified with disabilities,
- the average stay is 13 days, and
- VADOE fully funds these programs through contracts with the local school system.

At the present time there is a committee of juvenile court judges and school superintendents who are determining mutual issues they can work together to solve. They are trying to get a better understanding of the child in the court system and looking at ways to reduce truancy.

Sharon Trimmer, Director of Special Education for the Virginia Department of Correctional Education. Ms. Trimmer offered the following information:

- DCE educates children and youth in Virginia correctional facilities and jails,
- When a youth has spent 13 days in a facility, testing for special needs occurs.
- 42% of the population is in special education.
- The majority of youth who are identified have learning disabilities and/or have emotional disabilities. Some have mental retardation and some are gifted.

Ms. Trimmer stated that sometimes the parents, school and the community take a sigh of relief when a child is incarcerated because they think the problem is solved. They forget the youth will return. Transition needs to occur while that student is in corrections so the youth will be more successful upon returning to the community. Ms. Trimmer stated that returning youth need to be recognized for what they accomplished in corrections and they need to be forgiven and welcomed into their communities.

Dennis Waite, Ph.D., Chief Psychologist for the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. Dr. Waite presented a statistical picture of children and youth in the Virginia correctional system. Included in his presentation were these facts:

- 83% of those incarcerated were 18 months below their chronological age on the Woodcock-Johnson Knowledge Achievement Test.
- 17% were at least 4 years below their chronological age on that test.
- 70% of those incarcerated were four or more years below their chronological age on the Woodcock-Johnson Reading Achievement Test.
- 50% ranked at 6 years or more below their chronological age on the Woodcock-Johnson Written Language Achievement Test.

- 82% scored at 4 or more years below their chronological age on the Woodcock-Johnson Math Achievement Test.
- 52% of youth offenders were often truant and
- Over 68% were suspended from school.

Copies of Dr. Waite’s summit handouts can be found in the appendix.

Chris Ladnier is a parent of a child with a disability. Ladnier spoke of the difficulty of getting appropriate services long before her child became involved with the juvenile justice system. She struggled with teachers who did not implement his educational plan and who insisted that he fit into the mold of what they thought was a good student. Her child, a young man now 20 years old, is quite bright but was never challenged in the public school system. He became frustrated and hopeless. He thought he could not succeed and use of illegal drugs led to court involvement. Ladnier regrets that she ever agreed to detention. She feels that the environment only made things worse. Once he left detention, she never sent him back to a public school. Instead she agreed to an educational program that brought teachers to their home to provide education. At first she did not believe the teachers were qualified to provide services; but after Ladnier persisted, the school sent special education teachers who could help her son. Her son is now attending a trade school on a full scholarship. Ladnier says that she would never tell a parent to “lock up their kid;” that most young people with disabilities just need appropriate school services so that they experience success in their lives, not failure.

Lori Luisi is the parent of a young man who has Attention Deficit Disorder and who was incarcerated in the Virginia juvenile justice system. Her son had behavior, alcohol and drug issues. She came from a family where discipline was the answer. The schools said discipline was the answer. She found that discipline was not the answer. It just made him angry and more disruptive. The schools and the court said alcohol was the problem so he was mandated to attend 90 Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings in 90 days. She went to Al-anon. Nothing worked. Incarceration began to look good. Eventually he was placed in a correctional facility where his diagnosis was “anger” and he was sent to anger management classes. He was never diagnosed with ADD until he returned from the correctional facility. When he was young he was a happy child, now he’s angry, cold and bitter. Ms. Luisi closed her remarks with a quote from Erik Erikson, “The deadliest of all sins is the mutilation of a child’s spirit. (*Please see Interview with Guiseppi Luisi – Youth Perspective found on page 9.)

Andrew Block, Esq., Director of the JustChildren Project of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Legal Aid Society. Mr. Block who provides civil legal representation to at-risk youth and children goes to court with parents, guardian ad litem and other attorneys to help with civil issues. Highlights of his concerns were:

- Courts often focus only on what a child or youth did wrong, rather than what has not been done by people responsible.
- It is critical that parents be involved.
- Judges and court personnel must be educated about special education.
- Public defenders must have information about the child they are defending.

- Some families are deeply suspicious of schools because it doesn't work. With the right ideas and resources, it can work.

Mr. Block suggested that if there ever were anything to replace the juvenile justice system it would be special education. Special education has individualized instruction, counseling, family involvement, and people working as a team.

Key Note Address by Judge Eric Andell, Senior Policy Advisor on Juvenile Justice to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education

Judge Andell, a former juvenile court judge, encouraged parents and service providers to keep “doing good” for the children in the juvenile justice system who need their help, despite obstacles, misunderstanding, or disinterest by others. Some key points of his message were that:

- Communities must be mobilized to provide services.
- Local representatives must take responsibility. They must have plans for troubled youth.
- Local agencies must identify troubled youth, youth with mental health issues and other special needs.
- Parents need tools. There must be someone to call.
- The juvenile justice system should not be feared, but worked with.
- Once a child is involved in the justice system, the whole community needs to be involved.

Paraphrasing Alex Haley who said “Everytime you see a turtle on a fence, one thing you know for sure is that it didn't get there by itself.” Judge Andell reminded the group “There's one thing we know about a child who is sitting on the fence post of failure, he did not get there alone.”

The morning session ended following Judge Andell's well-received remarks.

Afternoon Session

Participants divided themselves into five focus groups addressing the issues identified by the Planning Group.

The summaries of each of the five focus groups that follow were taken from the worksheets of the focus groups. Each focus group responded to one general question about the issue and then five sub-questions related to the issue topic. Four of the focus groups indicated their priority responses, which we listed in order for those groups. One chose not to prioritize. We attempted to the best of our ability to transpose all written responses in the appendix.

Focus Group Summaries:

1. Prevention

Research has identified several factors that place juveniles with disabilities at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system including:

- **poor social skills**
- **misunderstood behaviors**
- **improper identification**
- **school failure**

What are the possibilities and opportunities for preventing youth with special needs from becoming involved with delinquent behaviors?

In response to this overall question, participants had a range of ideas:

- Make sure that Child Find – the federally mandated identification of children with disabilities – is implemented.
- Educate all those involved in the juvenile justice system about disabilities.
- Use public funds to set up appropriate alternative programs.
- Change public policy from “get tough on crime” to healing and re-integration in the community.
- Provide proactive resources for parent before youth are involved with the justice system.

Concerns included:

- IEP Teams (Teams that develop Individualized Education Plans provided for all students with disabilities who receive Special Education services) do not always have “qualified” members to address behavioral needs of students.
- Lack of parental structure before formal education.
- Lack of communication between courts and schools.

A selection of the responses to the sub-questions follows. No priorities were indicated. All responses may be found in the transcriptions section of the appendix.

Question # 1. How would you suggest we encourage communities, businesses and faith-based organizations to address the needs of these at-risk youth?

- Kids want to feel grown-up. Give them responsibilities at community service organizations for school credit.
- At-risk students must be deeply connected – integrated into communities. They must truly be a part. Establish after-school, mentoring, tutorial and recreational programs for youth to include children with disabilities.
- Educate the public and professionals through the news media about the needs of at-risk youth.
- Invite adult community stakeholders to organize and qualify as a non-profit organization authorized to receive and spend funds on programs of their own design that help kids and families who live outside the “middle class” box.

Question # 2. What would you suggest to ensure early identification and appropriate intervention for children and youth with disabilities?

- Educate the public. Use the media, face-to-face contact – anything to spread the word of available services. Identify – in few words and maybe with illustrations – the behaviors that identify at-risk youth.
- Enforce the Child Find regulations as Congress intended.
- Mandatory individual evaluations (comprehensive) for all students who do not achieve at grade level especially those who have behavioral problems.

Question # 3. How do you think schools can be safe and at the same time address the needs of youngsters with troublesome or antisocial behaviors?

- Teach conflict resolution at early ages and involve parents and community.
- Use what we have in place:
 - Functional Behavioral Assessments
 - FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team)
 - Child Study Teams
 - Mental Health Services
 - Referrals to outside agencies
 - Parent contact
- Implement Restorative Justice Programs in community/schools so that offenders, their parents, school teacher, school officials and other students affected sit down together to work out remedy.

Question # 4. What do you think is the role of special education in preventing youth with disabilities from becoming involved in the juvenile justice system?

- School divisions need to implement IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). When identification, evaluation, appropriate education and direction processes break down, children with unmet needs become involved with the juvenile justice system.
- Schools should provide leadership in the field of children's mental health; address the unique needs of children and youth with emotional behaviors (problems) from birth to adolescent so they may be successful in life.
- Schools should offer an environment where all children are valued for what they can do right. Use all the modalities to instruct the children. Create activities that they can demonstrate their abilities even if it's being cheerful.
- To inform parents about what they can do to help their children and where to get help in the community.

Question # 5. Are you aware of projects or programs that teach positive coping skills to youth who have special needs and who are at-risk of using violence or antisocial behaviors to solve their perceived problems? If so, what are they?

- Virginia Treatment Center
- PADDA's (Peninsula Attentional and Developmental Disabilities Association) six-week social skills program
- Lions Quest Skills for Action – a partnership with schools program
- Programs that include the following are effective in teaching positive coping skills:
 - Mediation
 - Visualization
 - Yoga
 - Music and Arts
 - Gang prevention

2. Alternatives to Incarceration

Some communities are seeing alternatives to correctional institutions and detention centers. What are the possibilities and opportunities for serving juvenile offenders with special needs in their communities?

This group identified numerous possibilities and opportunities for serving juvenile offenders within their communities. Among the ideas presented were:

- Therapeutic Foster Care
- Group Homes
- Independent living
- Wrap around services
- Comprehensive Services Act funding for
 - family support
 - residential placements
 - wrap around services

- treatment centers

Medicaid services
FAMIS for medical care

Public school systems

- providers of parent training and other resources
- psychological services, social work services
- school failure early indication of possible discipline problems

Foster Care Prevention

Court Services Units provide probation, supervision and other direct services

Vocational Programs

Mentors provided by churches, colleges, and other community organizations

Virginia Juvenile Crime Control Act funds several alternative programs

A major issue discussed was the lack of funding for alternative programs and that often programs did not provide services for sufficient time period, i.e. drug treatment programs that last for 30 days as opposed to a needed five-month period.

Focus Group Sub-questions follow. Prioritized responses are included here. All responses maybe found in the transcription section of the appendix.

Question # 1. Are you aware of model alternative programs? What did they do to make it a model?

1. Outreach Detention Program started in Norfolk in 1974. It is an alternative to detention for children and youth who have charges against them and are awaiting disposition. It is an alternative to detention.
2. Drug Courts provide a treatment-oriented approach to delinquency rather than punishment and incarceration.
3. Multi-Systemic Therapy – The results of longitudinal studies comparing recidivism rates with thousands of incarcerated kids showed MST is much better at reducing rates of incarceration than locking kids up. Focus of program is on developing kid's ability to function in all systems of life – home, neighborhood, school, and community. Treatment takes place in all these places as well.
4. Elk Hill School – Residential and Day Program. The emphasis at Elk Hill is on education, social skills, family environment, and progression through the program. There is a quality, motivated staff. The program lasts a sufficient length of time and has good after-care.

Question # 2. What examples have you seen of the Comprehensive Services Act being used to create and facilitate alternative placements?

1. Localities are given two pots of money. Most juvenile offenders fall in the non-mandated funds. Our locality has designated our non-mandated money just to help court kids.

2. Community Assessment Teams (CATs) or Family Assessment Planning Teams (FAPTs) teams allow parents, probation office, school counselors, nurses, and outreach counselors to get funds authorized for juveniles to be placed in the community rather than a state facility.
3. A child in foster care had special needs. In order to keep the child in the home, the special needs payment was increased so the foster mother could leave her job and stay home fulltime. Therefore this child was not placed in a private residential setting. This was cost effective.

Question # 3. How do you think public resources can be used to create alternative placements for youth with disabilities?

1. More alternative day treatment programs and placements for girls are needed. Girls have a higher commitment rate for lesser offenses than boys because of lack of fewer alternative placements.
2. Public resources can be used to educate parents and teachers to recognize and handle the child/youth with special needs or disability.
3. Put money into early intervention so that these issues can be identified and addressed early on before the cost to treat them is so great. The longer it takes to address the problem, the more costly it is to the family as well, both financially and emotionally.

Question # 4. What would you suggest to encourage community groups, businesses and faith-based organizations to address the needs of juvenile offenders in their communities?

1. Role models from the community – successful leaders who become involved with juveniles could be powerful persuaders. Local employers could give employee paid time off – 4 to 6 hours /week for work with juveniles.
2. Apprenticeship programs
 - Scholarship programs
 - Mentoring programs
3. Each of these organizations should become involved with local detention centers and also state correctional centers. There are many misconceptions and myths associated with juvenile offenders. This type of interaction would help dispel some of those myths and misconceptions.
4. Point out that they are reinvesting in their communities. Also to provide some type of tax break to offset their involvement. They should know that each youth saved is less tax dollars will have to support a child or youth in incarceration.
5. Offer anything to keep them busy and off the streets – along with some skill building and responsibility. Join with businesses to offer job-training programs.

Question # 5. How can the public special education system provide educational alternatives to the juvenile justice system?

1. Provide after school programs (evenings and weekends, also) that provide supervision, instruction and are fun and safe.

2. Limit schools' ability to expel. Instead, focus on the funding of alternative schools for kids with behavioral problems.
3. Address early intervention. Create public preschool.
4. The school system should inform the justice system about disabilities, behaviors and special education. It should provide educational ideas and alternatives to incarceration.

3. **Family Partnerships**

Family members most often do not have knowledge of the juvenile justice system and how to participate on behalf of their children with disabilities. What are the possibilities and opportunities for parents to be effectively involved on behalf of their children in the Juvenile Justice System?

In responding to this introductory question, the group identified numerous "needs" of parents and family members to be effectively involved. Included in the list were an understanding of the court process, the juvenile justice system, parental rights and responsibilities, and the Comprehensive Services Act process.

To enhance involvement by parents and family members, the group suggested the following possibilities:

- Training for parents and family members on those identified "needs"
- Providing support groups
- Finding creative ways for parents to participate at meetings when transportation, employment or other factors exist
- Including parents and family members from "day one"
- Providing a resource listing for families

Focus Group Sub-questions follow. Prioritized responses are included here. All responses maybe found in the transcriptions section of the appendix.

Question #1. What characteristics make an agency "parent friendly"?

1. Team approach to planning with the parents considered equal partners
2. Providing clear, concise information, easy access, follow through, inviting and empathetic atmosphere
3. Scheduling times that are mutually convenient

Question #2. Share your ideas about how agencies can take steps to demystify the juvenile justice system for families.

1. Agencies should develop and distribute information and referral resources regarding the process, rights and responsibilities of all.
2. Staff should meet with the parents and the child together.

3. Staff should be educated, caring and give suggestions.

Question # 3. Have you seen parents be effective advocates for their children? What made them effective?

1. Parents who were effective understood the process and the disability, which they could explain to professionals.
2. Effective parents are persistent, consistent, determined, and patient. Sometimes they are desperate, fearful and angry, but they persevere.
3. They maintained a timeline with information about the child and his life.

Question # 4. What do you think parents can do to promote placements other than incarcerations for their children with disabilities?

1. Know what is available to serve a child/youth with a specific disability by researching treatment facilities and other options.
2. Develop a partnership with the schools to develop an alternate education program.
3. Find alternative places and treatment facilities and how they are funded.

Question # 5. How do you think agencies can promote parental involvement while youth are incarcerated? What can parents do?

1. Communication – agencies can stay in contact with parents and keep them informed through letters, phone calls and emails. Parents can make more effort to attend meetings, become involved, speak out and show up. There should be two-way communication.
2. Agencies can give parents hope. Include parents at meetings with counselors and regular meetings with inmates. Parents can increase visits to their child, especially on birthdays and holidays.
3. Agencies and parents can advocate at state level for involvement of parents with juvenile justice experiences on the Juvenile Justice Commission.

4. Access to Appropriate Special Education

How do we ensure that children with disabilities involved in the juvenile justice system, incarcerated or not, receive a free, appropriate education as guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act?

Of the many ideas forthcoming in response to this general question, the group chose these three responses as priorities. (All responses may be found in the appendix.)

1. Statewide curriculum – science involves lab work that cannot be done at facilities.
2. Full funding of these requirements to get the job done – including clerical and particularly specially trained special education teachers.

3. Staff training for all staff, not just special education teachers, about Special Education.

Focus Group Sub-questions follow. Prioritized responses are included here. All responses may be found in the transcriptions section of the appendix.

Question # 1. What do you think needs to be done to ensure that youth in the juvenile justice system are assessed for special educational needs?

1. Communication between all individuals who assess the youth on a routine manner.
 - parent input
 - prompt transfer of records – especially eligibility meeting minutes
2. Assessments for all
3. Accurate observations – informal assessments, interest inventory and learning style inventory and more parental monitoring of child’s educational needs.

Question # 2. What would you suggest to help parents exercise their right to participation and to give informed consent as guaranteed by IDEA?

1. Ensure that all parents are provided a means to be involved.
2. Each Local Education Agency should have an impartial advocate on staff whose job is to contact any and all parents of special education students on a regular basis to find and advise on problems and rights as parents. There should be court-mandated parent advocates on staff to train parents.
3. Set up parent education process geographically throughout state to ensure information is available to parents. Provide a Parent’s Day to disseminate and discuss information.

Question # 3. How do you think we can ensure the rights of youth to participate in the decision making process, especially in transition planning, while they are involved in the juvenile justice system?

1. Provide students access to career information and to professionals in their field of interest.
2. Students by regulations are to be included in transition planning as young as 14. They should be invited to participate in the IEP meeting.
3. Provide expanded vocational assessments.

Question # 4. What do you see as issues and solutions for sharing records between parents, schools, juvenile justice systems, and other involved agencies?

1. Develop a statewide data base system where information is stored and can be easily accessed by representatives from the many agencies our youth are placed.
2. Training by all parties on the use of the re-enrollment plan.
3. Lack of commitment to deal with parents who may not be at an educational level of understanding laws and procedures to make things plain and simple and friendly.

Question # 5. What do you think the people involved in the juvenile justice system (courts, law enforcement, community service agencies, parents, attorneys, probation officers, corrections officers) need to know about special education and youth with disabilities?

1. Understand the relationship between disabilities and behavior.
2. Actual facts of what goes on and what we are really up against. Onsite observations, no "walk-throughs" – "The Real Deal."
3. Specific training as part of orientation or yearly training requirement that would prepare employees with general information concerning special education populations.

5. Successful Transitions

Transitions planning in the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and planning for the return to the community are critical for the success of children and youth with disabilities when leaving a correctional facility, detention or alternative placement.

What are the possibilities and opportunities for successful transition from placement in the juvenile system to school and community?

1. Schools should have continuing relationship with committed students as they do for out-placed CSA (Comprehensive Services Act) students.
2. School people need to be ready to receive; mandatory training for staff: "Attitude Adjustment" – information about correctional system.
3. Transition clerk in each facility to assist with scheduling meeting with school, staff, monitor student after returning (detention, Department of Juvenile Justice, public school).
4. Empower student; give information about resources in community (GED, vocational education) and prepare to ask questions, provide contact names in community.

Focus Group Sub-questions follow. Prioritized responses are included here. All responses maybe found in the transcriptions section of the appendix.

Question # 1. What do you think are ways to address the needs of youth who require long-term care after they exit a correctional or detention facility?

1. Invite community service organizations to transition meeting. Develop a transition plan that is collaborative and multi-agency. Student/family would be responsible for making the initial contact after they are released. Service organization could be CSB, DRS, school system, and probation officer. Issues to be discussed would be education, employment, community involvement, limited financial support, and job readiness.

2. Long term counseling services that will address social, emotional, and academic needs as well as independent living and employability skills.
3. Needs assessment at least two months prior to release, revisit a month, then a week before release.

Question # 2. How would you suggest businesses, community services and faith-based organizations could be involved as youth transition to the community?

1. Businesses can provide paid and unpaid vocational training and job placement to students. Community services can provide case management in terms of job assessment, job training, job placement, residential support, driver's education, limited financial assistance and counseling. Faith based organizations can provide counseling, mentoring, organizational membership, youth rap groups and open forum to discuss community issues.
2. Have businesses, community services and faith-based organizations along with detention officials and transition coordinator meet with the youth who is to be released at least 6 months in advance. Meet regularly to make sure there is a job for the student and he is to be treated like the other employees.
3. Communication with these outside organizations can foster an understanding of tools that they can provide for use in a transition program.

Question # 3. Do you know of examples of local school system working with the Department of Correctional Education to successfully coordinate re-enrollment of youth with disabilities? What did they do?

1. Connections Program: Bon Air's (DCE) program with Chesterfield County Schools. Larger communities (Chesterfield, Richmond) with more kids can figure out how to do it. Avoid commitment with more community programs.
2. Richmond – Adult Career Development: finish GED or high school diploma.
3. Norfolk school (system), through pupil personnel, has a liaison person who will assist with students returning from DJJ. Students are referred to alternative educational programs.

Question # 4. Give examples of existing programs or projects that are being used in communities to successfully transition youth back to their communities. Are they successful?

1. Partnership between Jackson and Associates Law Firm and Barrett Juvenile Correctional Center.
2. Prince William County School has a person who serves as an advocate for students.
3. Norfolk Public Schools transitional services – finding jobs, independent living situation, transportation, etc and using a special transition team for children who were incarcerated.

Question # 5. How would you suggest parents and family members could be involved in the transition and re-enrollment process?

1. Hold transition meetings in community locations – less intimidating to parent.
2. Involve family from the beginning not just at transition.
3. Parents and other family members may be involved by participating in support groups or parent/family training set up by school division special education and Title I resource centers. Community services organization can provide family counseling and case management services to the family to check on transition success.

Experiences, Ideas, Concerns and Trends Identified by Summit Participants

Participants were asked to share their experiences, ideas, concerns and any trends they observed. The following are a sampling of those responses:

- “There are many examples of poor responses from educators, but folks need to appreciate how educators are often in the middle. Many parents pressure school officials to maintain zero tolerance and help these kids out of school. To have an impact, the community’s attitude needs to change and educators’ attitudes will change.”
- Several participants spoke to the need to include minority speakers (parents and professionals in the juvenile justice and public school systems) at forums like the Summit that address juvenile justice issues. Over-representation of minorities in the system is a fact recognized by national experts.
- The creation of a position similar to the ombudsman position that exists within the adult correctional system today would be very effective in the juvenile justice system. Advocacy is needed to support this development.
- Training about special education and disabilities should be developed for professionals in the juvenile justice system and court ordered for parents of youth involved with the system.
- Many of the young people involved in the system have serious mental health and substance abuse issues, which schools and juvenile justice professional cannot address. Advocacy for funding to provide more resources and services in the public and private sector is needed.
- Resilience needs to be discussed. The majority of children and youth with disabilities are not involved in the juvenile justice system. Identifying the factors that enable success is an effective way to identify why (*there is failure*) and how to prevent it.
- The number of female offenders is increasing. Development of programs designed specifically for women is needed.
- Individuals from Tidewater, Central Virginia, Southwest Virginia, the Shenandoah Valley and Northern Virginia cited the lack of local resources as a major issue, especially resources for female offenders.

A Review of Juvenile Justice Summit Evaluations

The participants at the Juvenile Justice Summit often expressed their desire to learn more about special education, disabilities and the justice system. The summit allowed them to do that and to be a part of discussion groups (focus groups) where they could share their ideas and concerns and learn from others.

Comments from evaluations included:

- *“It was an important opportunity to see the linkages in the system.”*
- *“Dr. Peter Leone and Judge Andell were excellent and really gave the audience a challenge to do something.”*
- *“Everyone wants the same thing and there were some good suggestions about more creative avenues to explore.”*
- *“These discussions were helpful in igniting ideas and solutions to problems/concerns.”*
- *“Hearing from the parents was a very emotional piece.”*

The participants generally stated that the information and materials gained at the Summit would be used to share with other parents, other agencies and professionals, and the community. Others saw this information as useful in influencing policy at the state and local level and indicated their intentions of using it in that manner. The need to involve more minorities presenters at efforts such as the Summit since there is such an over representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system and special education was stressed. The importance of parents, professionals, and agency representatives collaborating and advocating for system change and improvement was recognized as the key to making a difference for youth and children with disabilities.

- *“I will use the information and ideas to assist in my special education job related duties/responsibilities; share with co-workers and others involved.”*
- *“As a parent representative on our local FAPT, I will use the information gathered today to help our team make decisions.”*
- *“I will take it to my LAC, school board, and other county agencies/groups.”*
- *“I will use this information to motivate others to be committed to the process of change.”*

Appendix

Table of Contents

Biographies of Presenters	27
Transcriptions of Focus Groups	30
Juvenile Justices Resources	54
Dr. Leone’s PowerPoint Presentation.....	57
Dr. Waite’s Handouts	61



**Juvenile Justice Summit
October 16, 2001**

Biographies

Judge Eric Andell, Senior Policy Advisor on Juvenile Justice to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Rod Paige. Prior to his current appointment, Judge Eric Andell served as an appellate judge on the First Court of Appeals in Houston, Texas. His judicial experience also includes service as the presiding judge of the 315th State District Court (juvenile court) in Houston. Board certified as a family law specialist by the State Bar of Texas, Judge Andell was a family and juvenile law practitioner.

His community service includes: Chair, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission; Participant, White House Conference on Mental Health, June 1995; Member, Houston/Harris County Commission on Children, 1999; Board of Directors, Hope Center for Youth, Inc., 1999; Chair, At-Risk Students, Harris County Education Foundation, 1999; Chair, Advisory Board, Aspiring Youth Program, 1999; Member, Houston Independent School District Committees on Partnerships and Parental Involvement, 1998; Founder, Lawyers in Public Schools; Advisory Board, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Houston, 1999; Advisory Board, CASA, Inc.; and Vice Chair, Mental Health, Mental Retardation Authority of Harris County.

Among the Judge's honors and distinctions are: Mayor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service, 1999; Outstanding Texas Jurist of the Year, Texas Bar Foundation, 1995; President's Award for Outstanding Service to the Houston Bar Association, 1991, 1994; Outstanding Contribution to Youth Award, Texas Youth Commission, 1991; and Special Service Award, Learning Disabilities Association of Texas, 1994.

Andrew K. Block, Jr. Andy Block received his B.A. from Yale University in 1987, and his J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law in 1994. Between college and law school, he taught in a rural secondary school in Kenya for one year, and worked with at-risk and delinquent children in New Mexico for two years. In January 1998 he received a Soros Justice Fellowship to start the JustChildren Project of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Legal Aid Society. Now in its fourth year, JustChildren provides comprehensive civil legal representation to at-risk children, and helps parents become more effective advocates for their children. Since September of 1999, Mr. Block has co-supervised the University of Virginia School of Law Child Advocacy Clinic.

H. Douglas Cox, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support Services, Virginia Department of Education. Mr. Cox has been with the Virginia Department of

Education since 1973 where he has served in a number of roles including regional special education supervisor and as the Director of the Office of Special Education and Student Services. In January 2001, he was appointed to his current position. Mr. Cox is a Board Member of PEATC and serves on a number of Advisory Councils including the Virginia Institute for Developmental Disabilities, and the Virginia Disabilities Council. He is also a member of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities and serves on the State Executive Council for the Comprehensive Services Act.

Chris Ladnier. Ms. Ladnier is the parent of a child with special needs who was incarcerated in a Virginia correctional facility. She advocated intensely for her child to receive services from the public school system and the juvenile justice system.

Peter Leone, Ph.D. Dr. Peter Leone, a Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of Maryland, College Park, has been actively involved in research, teacher training, and advocacy in juvenile justice for a number of years. He completed undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Iowa and received his Ph.D. at the University of Washington. Dr. Leone has served as an expert for plaintiffs and defendants in class actions involving juvenile corrections in a number of states. He has served Courts as special master or monitor of correctional programs in Arizona, New York, Pennsylvania, California, and the District of Columbia. He recently completed work as Receiver for Education in Jerry M. v. DC. Dr. Leone directs The National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice, a project jointly funded by the Office of Special Education Programs of the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Lori Luisi. Ms. Luisi is a parent of a child with special needs who was incarcerated in a Virginia correctional facility. Her experiences have led her to volunteer with advocacy organizations.

David W. Marsden, Acting Director, of the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice.

Mr. Marsden was named Acting Director of the Department in September 2001. He is a 1970 graduate of Randolph Macon College. His service of 29 years in the Fairfax County juvenile justice system includes work as a probation officer, a group home director and 17 years as a juvenile detention superintendent. The Virginia Juvenile Justice Association honored him as the 1997 Administrator of the Year.

Robert E. Shepherd, Jr. Mr. Shepherd is an Emeritus Professor of Law at the University of Richmond Law School serving as a professor of law at the university from 1978 to 2001. For over twenty-five years, Mr. Shepherd has devoted his energies to the protection of the rights of children and youth. His many involvements in advocacy for children include: Chair, Virginia Bar Association Commission on the Needs of Children, 1986-present; Member, Virginia Commission on Youth, 1990-96; VALC Juvenile Code

Revision committee, 1974-76; Former Member and past Chair, Virginia Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Advisory Committee; Board of Fellows, National Center for Juvenile Justice, 1992-present; and Editor, *Virginia Juvenile Law and Practice Handbook* (Virginia CLE, 1999.) The author of numerous articles on juvenile justice and the rights of children, Mr. Shepherd is a frequent lecturer to juvenile justice professionals. His recent awards include: "Outstanding Advocate Award", National Association of Counsel for Children, Virginia Juvenile Court Hall of Fame inductee and a "Lifetime Achievement Award," Family Law Section, Virginia State Bar.

Sharon H. Trimmer. Ms. Trimmer is the Director of Special Education for the Virginia Department of Correctional Education (DCE). She has held this position since August of this year; however she is not new to correctional education. Prior to her current appointment Ms. Trimmer was the Principal of Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center for thirteen years and has held administrative positions at three other DCE Youth Schools. Her experience also includes several years as a special education teacher in the public schools. In addition to her duties as Director of Special Education, she co-supervises a unique night school program that offers an opportunity to students who have long-term suspensions to continue their education.

Dennis Waite, PhD. For 26 years Dr. Waite has served as the Chief Psychologist for the Behavioral Services Unit in the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, overseeing mental health and related treatment within the juvenile correctional centers. Dr. Waite is a licensed Clinical Psychologist and a Certified Forensic Evaluator. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatric Medicine at the University of Virginia and an Affiliate Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Waite has served on numerous legislative task forces on topics such as youth gangs, Megan's law, and the insanity defense in juvenile court. He has been a consultant to the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division investigating the conditions of confinement within juvenile justice facilities.

Transcriptions of Focus Group Results

1. Prevention

Research has identified several factors that place juveniles with disabilities at risk. What are the possibilities and opportunities for preventing youth with special needs from becoming involved with delinquent behaviors?

- A letter to promote
 - connection
 - creativity
 - communication
 - change
- A shift in public policy from “get tough on crime” to healing and reintegration into community (society).
- Revolution. Sue.
- Address the needs of the child whatever that need may be
- Identifying children with hidden disabilities – Child Find implementation
- Lack of parental structure before formal education
- Involving parents
- “Holistic” approach to solve behavior
- Awareness of resources for parents (proactive) before child is in trouble
- No collaboration between school and court system
- Knowledge of “safe guards” across systems
- Use of word “delinquent”
- Educate people on range of behaviors
- Change the way we view children with behaviors (troublesome)
- Recognize that children think outside box/approach things differently
- Helping child be successful
- Funding streams/help community to utilize funds to develop programs outside normal boxes
- Problem with curriculum to help children cope with behaviors – inappropriate
- Over referring to special education if SOL’s are involved
- Break down in qualified IEP Team, qualified service providers
- Not enough “frequent” monitoring
- Juvenile system – criminal attorneys, judges and (guardian) ad litem: educate/change attitudes
 - how disability impacts
 - culture related to their native education
 - education/disability how overlaps with criminal

Question # 1

How would you suggest we encourage businesses and faith-based organizations to address the needs of these at-risk youth?

- Kids want to feel grown-up. Give them responsibility at community service organizations for school credit. Court order of community service.
- Have people from the schools, churches and businesses to form clubs for these at-risk youth to help meet their needs.
- Communities themselves must be less fractured – businesses should support school involvement.
- At-risk students must be deeply connected – integrated into communities. They must truly be a part.
- Establish after school programs, mentorships, tutorials and recreational programs for youth to include children with disabilities.
- Parenting classes – positive parenting classes for each new parent through churches, daycare centers, etc.
- Educate the public and professionals through the news media about the needs of at-risk youth.
- Communities (should) force the juvenile courts to force the educational system to stop burdening the court systems by implementing the I.D. (IEP?) process/manifestation and other procedural safeguards.
- Organize the delivery of services for at-risk youth to reduce duplication, promote accountability, increase identification and provide a continuum of services.
- The organizations can define their particular strengths/resources and additional training they may need to understand the identifiable behaviors of the children. Then have a master artist/teacher advocate to create ways to channel and coordinate the possibilities.
- Invite adult community stakeholders to organize and quality as a non-profit organization authorized to receive and spend funds on programs of their own design which help kids and families who live out side the “middle class” box.

Question # 2

What would you suggest to ensure early identification and appropriate intervention for children and youth with disabilities?

- Educate the public!!! Use the media, face to face contact – anything to spread the word of available services, i.e. identification.
- Implement Child Find the way congress intended it to be implemented.
- Education that reduces the stigma.
- Identify – in few words and maybe with illustrations – the behaviors that identify at-risk youth. Use a variety of techniques to identify “appropriate” that involves the whole person. Keep the techniques simple.

- Just do it!
- Enforce the child find regulations that are on the books. Mandatory individual evaluations (comprehensive) for all students who do not achieve according to grade or skill level.
- Have schools evaluate children suspected of learning disabilities, especially children who are a discipline problem and getting them placed in special education programs.
- Involve custodial parents in the process of developing the programs and spending the money legislators and local leaders allocate to I.D. their kids.

Question # 3

How do you think schools can be safe and at the same time address the needs of youngsters with troublesome or antisocial behaviors?

- We must fund different kinds of schools to meet the different natural learning styles of different kinds of kids.
- Teach conflict resolution young and involve parents and community.
- Find the children with antisocial behavior and put them in charge of something.
- Use what we have in place:
 - Functional Behavioral Assessments
 - FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team)
 - Child Study Teams
 - Mental Health Services,
 - Referrals to outside agencies
 - Parent contacts
- Get parents involved in the treatment of troublesome/antisocial children.
- Implement Restorative Justice Programs in community/schools so that offender, their parents, schoolteacher, school officials and other students affected sit down together to work out remedy.
- Give parents and teachers more control. Taking the fear of being sued out of everyone's mind. Taking Tenure out of school systems – loose the bad apples. Giving more information to parents. Offering support groups, etc.

Question # 4

What do you think is the role of special education in preventing youth with disabilities from becoming involved in the juvenile justice system?

- To teach children with disabilities to work and live with:
 - social skills
 - impulsivity (impulsiveness)
 - distractibility
 - to have hope
 - to have confidence

- to have positive self-esteem
- To inform parents about what they can do to help their children and where to get help in the community.
- Remove the stigma from being involved in special education by limiting its function to three things:
 - identification
 - evaluation
 - direction

This suggestion presupposes that school system are adequately staffed and diversified with different programs and approaches for different kinds of kids. Let's designate ALL education as "special education."
- School divisions need to implement IDEA rather than spend time trying to figure out how to get around providing services.
- To provide leadership in the field of children's mental health; address the unique needs of children and youth with emotional behaviors (problems) from birth to adolescent so they be successful in life.
- Offer an environment where all children are valued for what they can do right. Use all the modalities to instruct the children. Create activities that they can demonstrate their abilities even if it's being cheerful.
- Educate and encourage immigrant parents and immigrant children re: our system (education), legal system, and disabilities...
- The school cannot be the "catch-all" for all problems. There needs to be "homework" too.
- Be an advocate in all walks of life.
- Incorporate social skills, "law abiding information", i.e. review the ages for possession of tobacco, alcohol, etc; tours of local jails (Straight Talk) in IEP's when needed. Character education, etc.
- The role of special education is to identify, evaluate and to direct children (and families) to the public services that are in place (and plentiful). When identification, evaluation and direction processes break down, children with unmet needs become involved with the juvenile justice system.

Question # 5

Are you aware of projects or programs that teach positive coping skills to youth who have special needs and who are at-risk of using violence or antisocial behaviors to solve their perceived problems? If so, what are they?

- Mediation, visualization, yoga, tai chi, and performing arts programs that incorporate those.
- PADDA's (Peninsula Attentional and Developmental Disabilities Association) six-week social skills program.
- Gang prevention, mythic drum, and music and arts workshops.
- Virginia Treatment Center, RBHA (?), Project Tutor
- Lions Quest Skills for Action – a partnership with schools program

2. Alternatives to Incarceration

Some communities are seeking alternatives to correctional institutions and detention centers. What are the possibilities and opportunities for serving juvenile offenders with special needs in their communities?

- Foster care – specialized therapeutic
- Home – wrap around in home services – individual and family
- Group homes – FOG – Family Oriented Group Homes
- SILK – Spiritual Intervention Leadership for Kids – make sure students go home after school
- Independent Living
- ISSUE: Finding Funding
- More receive foster care prevention services
 - child then becomes mandated
 - EPSDT (Early Periodic Screening and Diagnostic Test) Federally mandated for children in foster care to 21 (physical, developmental and mental health)
- Medicaid is funding resource – can pay for services ordered by court
- FAMIS for health care
- School – strong parent resources
 - parent training
 - counselors, social workers, psychologists
 - resources not tapped before criminal behavior
- CSB (Community Services Board) mental health resources
- Lack of acute care – residential pays more
- Residential substance abuse centers for youth, 30 days vs. 5 months
- Vocational Programs
 - assist with independent living
 - trades
 - create options – outside predetermined trades
- CSA (Comprehensive Services Act) teams
 - residential – nonresidential
 - home supports
 - treatment centers
- School – provide opportunities, failure indicative of discipline problems
- Court Service Units
 - probation – supervision
 - direct services
 - VJCCA – Virginia Juvenile Crime Control Act
- Mentor – role models
 - Richmond had great demand – not enough adults
 - VCU (Virginia Commonwealth University) college students tutoring
- Campus Group Home
 - start structured
 - building 6 – independent

- Churches – take part
 - use professionals within congregation to work with children
 - cost vs. effectiveness
 - adopt school – provide mentors
- CARITIS – fixes homes in Richmond

Question # 1

Are you aware of model alternative programs? What did they do to make it a model?

- Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) and FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Team)
- Virginia Juvenile Crime Control Act (VJCCA)
- Elk Hill School – Emphasis on education, social skills, family environment, progression through program, quality motivated staff. Program lasts a sufficient length of time and has good after-care.
- Woodville School (Richmond) sponsored by St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Tutoring, mentoring, field trips, parental contact, etc. Called the “Micah Project”.
- Elk Hill Day Treatment Program
- Eckerd Family Youth Alternatives
 - Biggest Problem is that these alternative programs work nicely for low-end offenders NOT violent or serious offenders.
- Drug Courts – Treatment oriented approach to delinquency.
- Multi-Systemic Therapy – Did longitudinal studies comparing recidivism rates with thousands of incarcerated kids. Results showed MST is much better at reducing rates of incarceration than locking kids up. Focus of program is on developing kid’s ability to function in all systems of life – home, neighborhood, school, community. Treatment takes place in all these places as well.
- Youth Challenge is a local boot camp. Referral by courts only.
- Model programs are innovative, based upon good research and knowledge and have outcome data that are positive and able to be replicated.
- Outreach Detention Program
 - started in Norfolk
 - alternative to detention for children with charges that are awaiting disposition
- Outreach Detention Program in Norfolk (started in 1974) was evaluated for its effectiveness.
- A model alternative program that is in place and is positive is the Electronic Monitoring Program. It is a very good alternative that if properly utilized can be very successful.
- Project One – A new program offers vocational, GED, moves toward independent living. Has classes in employability skills and life skills. Offers tutoring to those who need it. Is a “home” environment.
- Youth activity programs, i.e. Police Athletic League: structured, provides supervision after school and weekends.

- It Takes a Village “SILK” Program
 - activities
 - caring people
 - one on one help
 - county-wide appeal
- Reconciliation Program

Question # 2

What examples have you seen of the Comprehensive Services Act being used to create and facilitate alternative placements?

- Provides therapeutic care and treatment in a residential setting.
- CSA works very well for Foster Care placements with special needs – sum sufficient.
- CSA does not work well for kids committed to DJJ.
 - non-mandated
 - localities have to supply matching funding
 - placements are too expensive
- FAPT (Family Assessment and Planning Teams) with parent members on board review cases.
- Have a structured setting for parents and mentors for juveniles
- There was a Trust Fund that was created and used to help start early intervention programs – some are still available and on going. However the fund is now limited to a few localities. Services may have been created indirectly through demand. Since there were now funds available through CSA to pay for the services. However, the problem with this is that these services can often be market driven rather than available based on the best treatment for the child and his/her particular condition.
- CAT team allows parents, probation office, school counselors, nurses, out reach counselors to get funds authorized for juveniles to be placed other than UP –STATE.
- I serve on a CSA team for sex offenders in Norfolk. Placement and treatment of clients is usually appropriately matched.
- Have a structured setting for parents and mentors for juveniles.
- Localities are given two pots of money. Most juvenile offenders fall in the non-mandated funds. Our locality has designated our non-mandated money just to help court kids.
- We had a child in foster care that had special needs. In order to keep the child in the home, we increased the special needs payment so the mother could leave her job and stay home fulltime so this child would not go residential. This was cost effective.
- I see the biggest problem coming from the distinction between mandate and non-mandated juveniles. Funding is not sufficient and other prioritization is not possible.
- In certain jurisdictions with abundant resources many services and alternatives can be offered. In other, with fewer resources, funding is reluctantly distributed and parents are often faced with such choices as giving up custody of their kid so they can get help, or keeping custody and getting none. Parents should not be made to make such choices.

Question # 3

How do you think public resources can be used to create alternative placements for youth with disabilities?

- More money to Mental Health facilities for beds for children.
- More money for Mental Health outpatient treatment for children.
- More alternative Day Treatment programs and placements for girls. Girls have a higher commitment rate for lesser offenses than boys because of lack of fewer alternative placements.
- Provide parenting and mentoring classes to educate on disabilities and give guidance as they progress. Create a follow-up process.
- Provide places where kids can live if their homes are not suitable or they are difficult to handle because they have many issues. (Foster homes may not be appropriate. Provide counseling, job skills, independent living skills and training. Keep them at these places and out of the environment that produced them. Maybe there is no family for some of the kids. They need a stable environment.
- Put money into early intervention so that these issues can be identified and addressed early on before the cost to treat them is much higher. The longer it takes to address it, the more costly it is to the family as well, both financially and emotionally.
- Provide funding so that no child can be completely excluded from educational services.
- Set up mentoring programs across the state.
- Provide free legal representation for all parents of students who are experiencing difficulties with the school or mental health systems.
- Pass a law forbidding incarceration of non-violent youth with mental health problems or use those resources to set up tested and authenticated community mental health programs.
- Pay court-appointed lawyers more.
- After school programs
- Home work tutorial and mentors
- Community sports
- Vocational – independent living programs.
- Any program that will give the youth some self-worth
 - education
 - training
 - goal setting – something the youth wishes to get goals for
- An evaluation of successful programs nationwide should be the basis for developing new programs. There is an enormous amount of information available but seldom used. Adequate funding is needed and a sufficient time period with program coordination.
- Public resources can be used to (better) schools, provide adequate and specialized educational programs to teach these kids properly. Also provide funds for PARENTS to participate.

- Public resources can be used to educate parents and teachers to recognize and handle the child/youth with special needs or disability.
- By addressing the issues at the local level with the persons who are currently operating or working with youth with disabilities. By asking the question, what is working locally?

Question # 4

What would you suggest to encourage community groups, businesses and faith-based organizations to address the needs of juvenile offenders in their communities?

- Provide mentors in a school setting to support them.
- Start a “Younglife” group in schools.
- Role models from the community – successful leaders who become involved with juveniles could be powerful persuaders.
- Local employers could give employee paid time – 4 to 6 hours /week for work with juveniles.
- University and community colleges could develop and promote more internships based on involvement. Some could have a stipend to be more attractive.
- Provide a landscaping business or any small or odd jobs needed for a house.
- Apprenticeship programs
 - Scholarship programs
 - Mentoring programs
- Each of these organizations should become involved with local detention centers and also state correctional centers.
 - There are many misconceptions and myths associated with juvenile offenders. This type of interaction would help dispel some of those myths and misconceptions.
- Point out that they are reinvesting in their communities. Also to provide some type of tax break to offset their involvement. They should know that each youth saved is one less the tax dollars will have to support in jail.
- Outfit one child for school in the fall. Sponsors could be clubs, businesses, church groups, etc.
- After school and summer programs, offer jobs, offer computer training.
- Offer anything to keep them busy and off the streets – along with some skill building and responsibility. Join with businesses to offer job-training programs.
- It would not hurt for kids to do some volunteer work – help elderly people, work at the animal shelters.
- Raise taxes if they don’t participate.
- Give tax credits for their work.
- Show how much we spend to lock up kids and how little we get in return (by way of reduced recidivism rates) overall costs of youthful/adult offenders to society. Show organizations that it works. Start a group and use as an example. A child is a child – give him the chance to be one.

- Utilize some of their expertise and money to educate, train and provide a support system for juveniles and their families.
- Work share Programs: Pay ½ for the first 6-month of training for new employees and provide on the job support for employer and employee.
- Groups interested in doing something should first meet with a group of judges, Court Service Unit workers, CSB, etc to find out what the need is and how they could best serve the children and community. Assist them in making the connection by setting up the meeting.
- These organizations need to take time out to get introduced in the community and keep money, jobs and specialized programs in the community for these youths.

Question # 5

How can the public special education system provide educational alternatives to the juvenile justice system?

- Evening and weekend use of school for recreational sports, classes (craft, photography hobby, etc. Provide supervision and fun and place for children to go – something to do.
- Limit the ability to expel and focus funding on alternative schools for kids with behavioral problems.
- Address early intervention. Create public preschool.
- Providing training and vocational skills.
- Educate the juvenile system on expected behaviors and how they can treat them.
- Intensive early intervention. Provide opportunities for kids to be successful. **TEACH THEM TO READ.**
- Special education teachers should teach kids with special needs – resources should be used properly!
- Give all low-income families access to a lawyer knowledgeable about special education law.
- Increasing use of transition and related services.
- Not sending disabled kids whose misconduct is a manifestation of their disability to juvenile court for that misconduct.
- Expand options within special education to be more attractive to juveniles and supportive of parents. Far more avenues for programs are needed – many different goals. Alliances with employers and internships are needed. Corporations and employers should be involved in developing and sustaining training programs and internships.
- They can teach the justice system the ways of special education. Offer ideas and alternatives to system.
- Provide the same level of materials, equipment and staff that are available in the public schools. The Norfolk Detention Center school program is an exceptional model of what can happen with the right resources.
- If a child is expelled, that means they can't return to "the grounds"; but don't expel the idea of education. Provide another setting where they can still learn and grow.

Maybe a few hours of the day they can do community service. One locality decided to use (education) money (only) to create an alternative school in their community for children with ODD (Oppositional Defiance Disorder), conduct disorder, etc. Thus lowering the residential placement costs with IEP mandates.

- Training and education, workshops and seminars.

3. Family Partnerships

Family members most often do not have knowledge of the juvenile justice system and how to participate on behalf of their children with disabilities. What are the possibilities and opportunities for parents to be effectively involved on behalf of their children in the Juvenile Justice System?

- Understanding the court process, i.e. language, legaleze
- Parents and advocates rally to educate public re lack of necessary mental health and other services
- Court appointed advocate (volunteer or otherwise) throughout state – CASA
- System personnel accountable (persistent/consistent contact)
- Support groups of juvenile offenders – system of supports for currently involved
- CSA/FAPT opportunity for family involvement
- Education on FAPT process and court system referring families back to FAPT or other agencies
- Develop model from “drug court” for mental health
- Parents without transportation need assistance (localities joining together)
- Parents involved in transition from day one (from incarceration to school) (transition plan required by IDEA)
- Incarcerated PTA program
- Family partnerships involve families and agency folks
- Find creative ways for parents to participate in IEP meetings
- Train parents on juvenile justice system
- IDEA handbook
- What is the system of Parental rights
- Parents informed of rights at intake (e.g., Age specific, charges)
- Defining rights and responsibilities
- Child, parents, attorney, Court responsibilities and rights
- Public defender and private attorney roles defined
- Guardian ad litem
- Parents sharing records
- Organizations such as CURE for age-out minors
- Parents must be taught how to hold it together - emotionally (xanax, act do, say, spit)
- What is Court protocol
- What is Department of Corrections, Detention Centers and Jail protocol?
- Virginia Cares/OAR (adult system)
- Transition also connected to Rehab programs
- Resource Listing for Parents, e.g. United Way – First Care

- Copies of Stone Soup book to all parents and professionals dealing with CSA

Question # 1

What characteristics make an agency “parent friendly”?

- “Transparency”- meaning clear, concise, easy access, follow through, inviting and empathetic approach
- Returning phone calls promptly.
- Making home visits
- Following through with what you said you would do.
- Hours: flexibility
- Scheduling times that are mutually convenient
- Empathy – true concern of your needs
- Warm, inviting atmosphere with empathetic staff
- Team approach to planning – parents considered equal partners
- Include parents
- Make parents equal partners
- Build parent supports
- Languages – diverse cultures
- Language – acronyms

Questions # 2

Share your ideas about how agencies can take steps to demystify the juvenile justice system for families.

- Explain the process in parent friendly language and do not judge.
- Diagrams – simple explanations
- Distribute information about the juvenile justice system to parents as we serve them.
- Develop and distribute information and referral resources regarding the process and rights and responsibilities.
- Listen and respond to your concerns and special needs.
- Question and answer pamphlet/booklet
- Be educated. Care and give suggestions.
- Explain the court process.
- Meet with the parents and the child together.

Question # 3

Have you seen parents be effective advocates for their children? What made them effective?

- “We” attitude-determination, persistence, desperation, consistence, fear and anger
- Being persistent in seeking assistance
- Understood the process and the disability and could explain it to professionals

- Knowledge
- Yes, they persevere.
- Yes, determination, desperation, fear and anger
- Timeline on the child and his life
- Educate themselves and other people
- Determination, persistence and patience
- Persistent and consistent

Question # 4

What do you think parents can do to promote placements other than incarceration for their children with disabilities?

- Know what is available to serve child/youth with specific disability.
- Know and understand the options.
- Work within the community for options/programs for placement.
- Know the options available and present them when appropriate.
- Develop a partnership with the schools to develop an alternate education plan.
- Find placements and their funding.
- Research treatment facilities and ways they are paid.
- Speak to legislators to help get funding.

Question # 5

How do you think agencies can promote parental involvement while youth are incarcerated? What can parents do?

- Include parents via visits with inmate, counselor, etc.
- Give parents hope.
- Parents can ask agencies for a partnership. Agencies can stay in contact with parents through letters, phone calls, etc.
- Parents can make more effort to attend meetings.
- Two-way communication with case workers
- Keep parents informed – be available, give feedback to parent
- Partnerships
- Communication – stay connected
- Advocate at state level for parental involvement on Juvenile Justice Commission (not tokens - REAL parents.)
- Support groups and group therapy
- “PTO”
- Parenting classes
- Support groups
- Facility can contact parents, solicit input
- Parents can become involved, speak out, show up
- Agency can develop a family services plan.

- Parents can access community resources.
- Parents can visit child often – remember birthdays

4. Access to Appropriate Special Education

How do we ensure that children with disabilities involved in the juvenile justice system, incarcerated or not, receive a free, appropriate education as guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act?

- Entire juvenile justice education system needs to be modified to take safety concerns into account – appropriate for the setting – modification of SOL system – let schools understand what is being offered.
- Statewide curriculum would help – science involves lab work that cannot be done at facilities.
- Parents must attend meetings. Local Education Agencies should attend meetings because they know these kids.
 - Parents can be a part of conference calls
- Staff training for all staff not just special education teachers about Special Education.
- Child study teams need social workers or psychologists who meet at Department of Correctional Education schools.
- School systems must follow and implement laws and regulations for special education.
- To ensure access to special education all must understand roles and responsibilities.
- Monitoring to ensure access. State Department of Education, local education agencies with parent involvement at State and local level.
- Juvenile justice system and schools need to understand the importance of why they have these roles and responsibilities.
- Local education agencies have data management tracking system to find out who is where – between places and systems.
- Complete communication with superintendents (independent school agency), staff, parent on the status of child, who is doing what when.
- Full funding of these requirements to get the job done – including clerical and particularly specially trained special education teachers.
- Statewide language base – we use words in different ways – glossary of terms.

Question # 1

What do you think needs to be done to ensure that youth in the juvenile justice system are assessed for special educational needs?

- Initiate Child Find and Child Study Teams.
- All Children coming through the juvenile justice system receive a screening for special education.

- Solicit confidential records from Local Education Agencies as well as credit sheets, etc.
- Utilize diagnostic instruments during the orientation period. Look for red flags.
- Implement eligibility teams for students housed in detention facilities for lengthy periods.
- Increase/enhance local monitoring by local education agencies.
- Establish criteria for report cards for detention/jails.
- Assessments for all.
- Accurate observations – informal assessments, interest inventory and learning style inventory.
- Communication between all individuals who assess the youth on a routine manner.
 - parent input
 - prompt transfer of records – especially eligibility meeting minutes
- An identification process is already in place at the youth schools, detention homes and RDC. Should be an ongoing process. Staff turnover and poor communication break down the process. Communication and training.
- Involve parents
 - Make sure parents are involved in this process. They know (hopefully) their own child’s academic weaknesses better than anyone.
- Have input from guardian ad litem, if assigned.
- More testing.
- Records need to follow the students(s) more closely.
- Students need to be observed in the class setting
- More follow-ups on educational needs, grades.
- More staff training for teachers on special policies.
- Survey educational needs and history upon entrance into the correctional facility.
- Assigned Child Study Teams for facilities.
- Informal testing administered to those referred.
- Motivate and educate other “in house” programs on the referral process.
- Referrals should be made and followed up by IEP coordinator. The regular education teacher or special education teacher can make referrals with written documentation/evidence that the child needs to be assessed.
- Retesting upon entering the facility they are committed to.
- Retesting after one month of incarceration.
- Child Find team at each juvenile facility with psychologist testing and educational evaluations
- More parental monitoring of child’s educational needs.
- Monitored closely by the Department of Education
- More communication between child’s home school and corrections facility
- Appoint a case manager to ensure that child’s educational needs are being met.
- All students entering the system should be interviewed and assessed
- Better access to records from the local educational agency, probation officers, parents, etc. and retesting of students after placement in correctional centers.
- Communicate with parents (families) to find out the child’s behavior at home and in the community.
- Psychological testing and monitor child (periodically).

- Testing for all
 - Intake questions/survey
 - Observations
 - Staffing re-evaluations
 - Parent involvement

Question # 2

What would you suggest to help parents exercise their right to participation and to give informed consent as guaranteed by IDEA?

- Tie in the family to events/activities.
- Explain rights.
- Cooperation between Department of Juvenile Justice and Social Services
- Explain how special education can help
 - College
 - Vocational education
 - Job
- Free transportation with visits and meetings.
- Advertise
- Reduced hotel accommodations if applicable
- Be involved; attend meetings; sharpen knowledge; know the laws/regulations/rights
- First to understand their rights. A focus group/task force to go into the communities, into the homes of children who have been sited as at risk.
- Follow up with parents on their progress by making sure the parents feel that their concerns are being attended to.
- Ask questions.
- Attend your child's IEP meetings
- Call to receive more information on updated policies on special education and your rights as a parent.
- Hold IEP and other meetings at times convenient to working parents (at night, weekends, etc).
- Parents need to be informed of their right to participate, not only by the agency providing education services, but also by the facility manager or jail program coordinator.
- Each Local Education Agency should have an impartial advocate on staff whose job is to contact any and all parents of special education students on a regular basis to find and advise on problems and rights as parents.
- Provide all parents training on their rights for special education services.
- Inform communities: Give community talks, informative handouts, etc.
- Court orders to reluctant/no show parents.
- Match parents with a mentor to ensure they are accessing all rights entitled to them under Part B.
- Ensure parent representation on LEA
- Establish a parent group/forum in Detention Centers, correctional facilities, jails, regional jails.

- Court mandated parent advocates on staff to train parents.
- Parent Day to disseminate and discuss information.
- Set up parent education process geographically throughout state to ensure information is available to parents.
- Set up IEP meetings at more accessible and convenient time; possible Sunday visitation.
- Employer programs to prevent loss of wages by parents.
 - match pay
 - tax incentives for employers
- Provide incentives such as food.
- Ensure that all parents are provided a means to be involved.
- Ensure that parental notifications are received and in the language of the parent
- Set up meeting at a time accessible to parents.
- Find creative ways for parents to be able to have input.
- Assist with transportation.
- Parents could submit a written summary of their concerns for services to the IEP coordinator prior to a meeting if they are unable to attend.
- Parents could participate via conference call.
- If the child was assessed and identified by public schools prior to going to court, have the court make it part of the order that the parent participate in meetings etc, which should give that parent enough time to make arrangements for transportation needs. The Probation office could also become involved at this point.

Questions # 3

How do you think we can ensure the rights of youth to participate in the decision making process, especially in transition planning, while they are involved in the juvenile justice system?

- Provide students access to career information and to professionals in their field of interest.
- Community resources need to be a part of transition planning which must reflect the interest of the child.
- Have them present at meetings.
- Bring in resources to help them reach their transition goals.
- Have a portfolio for each student to contain samples of work, report cards, award, resume, etc.
- Set up resources for return to the community.
- Follow the law mandating his/her participation.
- Involve guardian ad litem or advocate as needed.
- Require parental involvement through email or teleconference.
- Require home district school to attend transition meeting/planning for the student.
- Have the transition planning on flexible schedules (evenings, Saturdays).
- Implement a court ordered mandate that includes participation and cooperation of parent and child.
- Close monitoring by a court appointed case manager.

- Provide expanded vocational assessments.
- Involve youth in the process
- Give them knowledge of services available and confidence.
- Communicate with the youth. If they do not have any goals, need to explain the possibilities available for the future – looking to friends, relatives, etc. as role models.
- Involve groups like Department of Rehabilitation Services/others involved to meet with juveniles individually to give insight into purpose of transition planning and to do preplanning.
- Provide additional course offerings to students in order to develop their self-advocacy skills.
 - character education and social skills
 - prevocational evaluations/skills
 - Education for Employment (EFE) classes
- Physical involvement at meeting.
- Involvement in IEP meetings, transition and exit meetings.
- Transition specialist should meet with students on a regular basis throughout stay. They should contact local agencies making it an on going process; not just an exit meeting.
- The youth should attend his/her meeting and allow him/her to have input.
- Have in-depth interview and discuss possibilities.
- Students should be part of all their IEP meetings.
- Students need to understand their rights, placement, etc.
- Students by regulations are to be included in transition planning as young as 14.
- They should be invited to participate in the IEP meeting.
- Students should receive “training” in how to self-advocate.
- Incentives for participation.
- Ask before the meeting.
- Realistic experiences and pay.
- Client survey.
- Vocational Assessments.

Question # 4

What do you see as issues and solutions for sharing records between parents, schools, juvenile justice systems, and other involved agencies?

- Develop a statewide data base system where information is stored and can be easily accessed by representatives from the many agencies our youth are placed.
- Parents move from address on student’s records.
- A central database.
- Use technology to share records. A central system with access through Internet.
- No procedure to ensure records are sent/shared between all agencies in a timely manner. Re-enrollment plan in place, but who monitors compliance?
- Confidentially, how much is enough?
- Clerical workers/adequate staffing.

- Training/education of local education administrators.
- Development of an electronic system to share information with people involved in the juvenile justice system.
- Lack of consistent protocol on what should be shared. Releasing information that may be considered confidential.
- Development of checklist of what is appropriate to share.
- Development of electronic system to share information reduces time needed for copying and faxing.
- Records may be interpreted differently.
- Records may not be attainable when needed for assessment.
- Lack of confidentiality.
- Unfortunately, the easiest way is a centralized date base that would be available to those involved. This could lead to privacy issues so safeguards need to be in place to ensure confidentiality.
- Give consent on day one.
- Follow-up.
- Set time frames/site law.
- Improved communication between court and school.
- Use email.
- FAX information.
- Lack of commitment to deal with parents who may not be at an educational level of understanding laws and procedures to make things plane and simple and friendly.
- Training by all parties on the use of the re-enrollment plan.

Question # 5

What do you think the people involved in the juvenile justice system (courts, law enforcement, community service agencies, parents, attorneys, probation officers, corrections officers) need to know about special education and youth with disabilities?

- Have the general public exposed to through community based sessions or actually site visits – the actual process education in the agencies
- The main thing is to have those involved that with special education youth with disabilities can become worthwhile, contributing members of society and the community as long as these youth are given the proper methods to learn.
- These students have rights.
- Juvenile workers need knowledge:
 - child growth and development
 - laws/regulations relative to education and juvenile justice
 - knowledge base for the various exceptionalities (LD, ED, MR, OHI, etc.)
 - resources available and how to access them
- Intervention strategies, on-going training on a regular basis.
- They need to understand and know the special education needs of the student and their disability before making decisions, if possible about placement.

- Need to work more closely with guidance counselors in the schools regarding the student's public school placement. Some probation officers make regular visits each six weeks to communicate with school personnel. Others, only once or twice a year.
- Provide education and training on the rules and regulations on Part B.
- Develop of fact sheet on eligibility and services children are entitled to receive.
- Specific training as part of orientation or yearly training requirement that would prepare employees with general information concerning special education populations.
- Behavioral characteristics, differences in learning, general knowledge that people with disabilities react differently to situations and not to stereotype all disabilities as similar.
- Understand the relationship between disabilities and behavior.
- Lots of training on behavior intervention.
- How special education can make their jobs easier.
- Extent of disability.
- "The Real Deal". On site observations, no "walk-throughs". Actual facts of what goes on and what we are really up against.
- The law and regulations. General knowledge of impairments and affects on learning.
- Types of disabilities and etiology of various disabilities.
- A basic review of the process.
- A need for better awareness of child's special need and services needed.
- Get all involved with the youth communicating with one another.
- Student profile completed by parent.
- IDEA – What? and Why?

5. Successful Transitions

What are the possibilities and opportunities for successful transition from placement in the juvenile system to school and community?

- Preplanning and communication that the child is coming and opportunity to visit placement where child was incarcerated to find out what worked.
- Connect young people with mentors in community prior to release
- Transition clerk in each facility to assist with scheduling meeting with school, staff, monitor student after returning (detention, Department of Juvenile Justice, public school).
- Contact person in school system that is proactive with school staff – DCE (Department of Correctional Education), detention staff, DJJ (Department of Juvenile Justice) – communication and understanding.
- Schools should have continuing relationship with committed students as they do for out-placed CSA (Comprehensive Services Act) students.
- Students should receive regular counseling to adjust to change (before leaving DJJ and after arriving in community).
- Required after-care with goal setting (2 x mo. for at least a year), community service projects.

- Empower student; give information about resources in community (GED, vocational education) and prepare to ask questions, provide contact names in community.
- Ensure probation officer caseloads are light enough to ensure successful transition.
- Mesh DJJ with adult for student who needs support after the age of 21.
- Provide services they need to meet the student's plan (including transportation).
- Family case management, financial support (e.g. Career clothes, housing,)
- Link with CSB (Community Services Board) or DRS (Department of Rehabilitation Services) – transition services available to children with disabilities who aren't incarcerated.
- Parent training
- Training for businesses; liaison with businesses to assist with transition to the job.
- Put all children with transition needs in 1 DJJ facility; as getting ready to go home, put into 1 facility.
- Judges hold probation officers accountable (probation officers not always knowledgeable about transition resources).
- School people need to be ready to receive; mandatory training for staff: "Attitude Adjustment" – information about correctional system.

Question # 1

What do you think are ways to address the needs of youth who require long-term care after they exit a correctional or detention facility?

- Develop a transitional step down plan from intense to autonomous, as youth is able to manage independence. Link them to long-term agencies (CSB, DRS).
- Invite community service organizations to transition meeting. Develop a transition plan that is collaborative and multi-agency. Student/family would be responsible for making the initial contact after they are released. Service organization could be CSB, DRS, school system, and probation officer. Issues to be discussed would be education, employment, community involvement, limited financial support, and job readiness.
- Establish linkages with adult agencies – CSB, DRS, and DSS (Department of Social Services) adult.
- Involve family in implementing plan.
- Have a liaison (e.g. probation officer, school contact person) do a bi-monthly progress report on how the citizen (youth) is adhering to the rules and regulations of his/her living arrangement and working environment and make necessary adjustments.
- Provide group therapy sessions to address problems the citizen (youth) maybe having adjusting to life outside the detention facility.
- Have regular monitoring session meetings with a health care provider who has training in transitional services.
- Ask students what their plans are upon their arrival to DJJ – create a plan – check their progress every 2 – 3 months. Check every 2 weeks six months before their release.

- First find out what are the needs. Each individual may have different needs.
 - address needs individually and separately
 - what resources (in the community) are available to assist with long term care (churches, mentor groups, businesses)
 - how can the family help
 - develop a residential program if needed, that addresses skills such as, financial, independent living, employment transition
 - follow up
- Long term counseling services that will address social, emotional, and academic needs as well as independent living and employability skills.
- Involve special educators more in the transition of youths since special educators know more about transition.
- Develop avenues of communication between correctional facilities and outside agencies for pre/post exchange of information.
- Needs assessment at least two months prior to release, revisit a month, then a week before release.
- Before youth is released from a correctional or detention facility, a counselor could be used to determine goals and possible steps to reach those goals once youth is exited.
- Once released a follow up should be done on a weekly basis.
- Planning to set up a facility that would be appropriate to meet the needs.

Question # 2

How would you suggest businesses, community services and faith-based organizations could be involved as youth transition to the community?

- Require college students in special education to volunteer with programs serving youth who were incarcerated.
- Prepare the individual for the environment; prepare the environment for the individual. Youth should be given opportunities to familiarize themselves with the services to be offered by businesses, community programs and faith-based organizations and vice versa.
- The court should establish one main agency devoted to community transition efforts. This agency should then solicit support from businesses, communities and faith-based organization under one “umbrella” similar to United Way – “United Way for Youth”. Businesses/community groups get tired of so many organizations begging for funds/support.
- Businesses can provide paid and unpaid vocational training and job placement to students. Community services can provide case management in terms of job assessment, job training, job placement, residential support, driver’s education, limited financial assistance and counseling. Faith based organizations can provide counseling, mentoring, organizational membership, youth rap groups and open forum to discuss community issues.
- Mentorship between youth and community organizations.
- Have businesses, community services and faith-based organizations along with detention officials and transition coordinator meet with the youth who is to be

released at least 6 months in advance. Meet regularly to make sure there is a job for the student and he is to be treated like the other employees.

- Business offering real employment opportunities and supportive training and mentoring.
- States assist faith-based organizations with the funds and training to assist/address youth's needs.
- Communication with these outside organizations can foster an understanding of tools that they can provide for use in a transition program.
- Through employment training services that exist in schools. They can have support while providing training for the student.
- Volunteers/missionaries from church provide transportation for youth who cannot get home.
- Senior citizens become surrogate grandmothers (grandparents) visit students while incarcerated.
- Complete interview/survey with youth to find out what they would like to accomplish. Then send out to businesses, community organization what is needed for transition. This gives organizations and businesses (opportunity) to volunteer services and become a resource for youth.
- Become a resource for finding housing, jobs, transportation, parenting skills, etc.

Question # 3

Do you know of examples of local school system working with the Department of Correctional Education to successfully coordinate re-enrollment of youth with disabilities? What did they do?

- Prince William County - good communication, good advocates (school employees) for kids.
- Bon Air's program with Chesterfield County Connection Program. Larger communities (Chesterfield, Richmond) with more kids can figure out how to do it. Can avoid commitment with more programs.
- Richmond – Adult Career Development: finish GED or high school diploma.
- Connections Program: Chesterfield County and Bon Air (DCE)
- No. All our youth in DJJ custody are 16 to 21 and their length of stay will likely take them to 21. Have kids 21 (who) have some transition time before release.
- Norfolk school (system) through pupil personnel has a liaison person who will assist with students returning from DJJ. Students are referred to alternative educational programs. No details.
- No. Most school systems I know of or have been involved with try to keep information like this very secretive and usually hound that individual until he/she quits school or do something to be expelled from school.

Question # 4

Give examples of existing programs or projects that are being used in communities to successfully transition youth back to their communities. Are they successful?

- Law firm partnership between Jackson and Associates and Barrett Juvenile Correctional Center.
- Prince William County School contact person serves as an advocate for students.
- Prince William County
- Norfolk Public Schools transitional services – finding jobs, independent living situation, transportation, etc. Using special transition team and applying to children who were incarcerated. Talking about creating team just for students who were incarcerated.
- I have been involved in a school – to – work transition program with Longwood College where I went to area businesses and learned about their organization, came back to school, taught the student the skills of that business and had them fill out the employment form. Sadly, this program was not for any student who had been in any type of correctional facility. I really think it was geared toward nondisabled students also.

Question # 5

How would you suggest parents and family members could be involved in the transition and re-enrollment process?

- Involve family from the beginning not just transition.
- Just be supportive, show you care.
- Hold transition meeting in community location – less intimidating to parent.
- I do not feel that parental involvement should start during transition phase, but (rather) they should be involved and allowed to have input throughout the incarceration process that is positive in regard to their child's rehabilitation.
- Parents need to be given information on the process of re-enrollment and outside agency opportunities.
- Make parents part of the transition plan meeting with school administrators and student.
- Court ordered programs only – many parents have given up or will not seek help. It must be court ordered.
- Parents and families may be involved by participating in support groups or parent/family training. Community services organization can provide family counseling and case management services to the family to check on transition success. Set up by school division special education and Title I resource centers.

Electronic Links to Juvenile Justice Resources

American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Manual

www.abanet.org/crimjust/juvjus/manual.html

American Youth Policy Forum

Www.aypf.org
1836 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202-775-9731
aypf@aypf.org

Building Blocks for Youth

www.buildingblocksforyouth.org
Info.bby@erols.com

The Corrections Connection Network Juvenile Network

www.juvenilenet.org

Correctional Education Association

www.sunsite.unc.edu/icea/
Correctional Education Association
4380 Forbes Blvd.
Lanham, MD 20706
(301) 918-1915

International Association of Chiefs of Police

www.theiacp.org
703-836-6767

The National Center for Education Disabilities and Juvenile Justice

www.edjj.org
EDJJ
University of Maryland,
1224 Benjamin Building
College Park, MD 20742
(301) 405-6462
edjj@uemail.umd.edu

National Criminal Justice Reference Service

www.ncjrs.org
NCJRS Research and Information Center
2277 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850
301-519-5063

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice

www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org
OJJDP
810 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531
202-307-5911
Askjj@ncjrs.org

OJJDP National Training and Technical Assistance Center

www.nttac.org
10530 Rosehaven Street, Suite 400
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: (800) 830-4031

PACER Center

www.pacer.org/jj
PACER
8161 Normandale Boulevard.
Minneapolis MN 55237-1044
(952) 838-9000

PADDA Community Parent Resource Center

www.padda.org
813 Forrest Drive, Suite 3
Newport News, Virginia 23606
(757) 591-9119

PAVNET Online

www.pavnet.org

John Gladstone
301/504-5462
jgladsto@nalusda.gov

**PEATC (Parent Educational
Advocacy Training Center)**
www.peatc.org

PEATC
6320 Augusta Drive, Suite 1200
Springfield, VA 22150
(703) 923-0010
partners@peatc.org

**Virginia Department of Correctional
Education**

www.dce.state.va.us/who.htm
James Monroe Building, 7th Floor
101 North 14th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 225-3255

Virginia Department of Education

www.pen.k12.va.us
James Monroe Building
101 North 14th
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(800) 292-3820

**Virginia Department of Juvenile
Justice**

www.djj.state.va.us
700 East Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23218
(804) 371-0700

The Youth Law Center

www.youthlawcenter.com
Youth Law Center
Children's Legal Protection Center
1010 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 310
Washington, DC 20005-4902
(202) 637-0377

**Additional Resources in Virginia for
Parents and Professionals**

Arc of Virginia

2025 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23223
(804) 222-1945

**Comprehensive Services for At-Risk
Youth and Families Office**

730 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 662-9815

**Department for Rights of Virginians
with Disabilities (DRVD)**

202 North Ninth Street, 9th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(800) 552-3962

East District Family Resource Center

2405 Jefferson Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23223
(804) 644-4496

Families First of Alexandria

817 Little Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22301
(703) 548-2477

**Federation for Families for Children's
Mental Health**

1101 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 684-7710

**Legal Services Corporation of
Virginia**

700 East Main Street, Suite 1504
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 782-9438

JustChildren

Charlottesville-Albemarle Legal Aid
Society
105 Fourth Street, SE, Suite A
Charlottesville, VA 22902
804/977-0553 or 800/763-7323

**Parents and Children Coping
Together**

P.O. Box 26691
Richmond, Virginia 23261
(804) 559-6833

**University of Richmond Mental
Disabilities Law Clinic**

University of Richmond School of Law
28 West Hampton Way
Richmond, Virginia
(804) 289-8921

**Virginia Treatment Center for
Children**

Virginia Commonwealth University
515 North 10th Street
P.O. Box 980489
Richmond, Virginia 23298-0489
(804) 828-9878