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Summary
Disproportionate Minority Confinement Committee
Wednesday, March 10, 2004
Human Resources Alliance Building
Des Moines, Iowa

The Disproportionate Minority Committee met Wednesday, March 10, 2004 in Des Moines. Members present: Mike Leiber, presiding; Natalie Anderson, Kimberly Baxter, Barry Bennett, Ray Blase, John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas, Kim Cheeks, Marchelle Denker, Bob Greenlee, Charles Grigsby, Arthur Johnson, John Spinks, Felicia Toppert, John Wauters, Kittie Weston-Knauer, Ruth White. Regrets: Devon Binion, Allison Fleming, Stephan Pearson, Lori Rinehart, Carl Smith, Marvin Spencer, Miguel Trevino. Guests: Natalie Lee. The summary of the last meeting was approved as corrected. Correction: The spelling of Heidi Hsia's last name should be "Hsia" on page 2, line 4.

Budget Report

The DMC Committee was updated on budget changes -- at its December 2003 meeting the DMC Committee recommended a budget to the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council which would reduce JJDP Act formula grant funding to the DMC Resource Center. That budget was approved by the JJAC at its January 2004 meeting. The changes will impact the DMC Resource Center during the grant period of January 2005 through December 2005. The reduction is due in large part to cuts in federal JAIBG funding. Changes related to the loss of funding include: the Resource Center will conduct only a one-day conference and no scholarships will be offered (the Resource Center is exploring alternative funding for the conference); the Resource Center will focus its technical assistance on only three sites instead of the current six. The budget for Polk County's DMC Diversion effort will not change for the time being as it is funded through 2005.

Membership

Leiber suggested that it was time to review the membership of the committee and conduct a training session after new members were invited to participate. The committee made suggestions of names of individuals to invite to participate. Kuker and Leiber will review the list and extend invitations. Leiber also asked the committee where it wanted to go as a group. Among the objectives will be the encouragement of DMC committees in communities. He asked what are the five things we want to do. These will be agenda items for the next meeting – recruitment, goals and objectives.

New Matrices

Kuker presented information regarding new DMC Matrices. The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) requires states to complete matrices as part of the DMC Requirement connected with the annual JJDP Act formula grant plan update. The matrices include information regarding various juvenile court decision-making points broken down by race/ethnicity. The matrices allow for comparison of the processing "rates" of minority youth to those of a population of white youth – the overall calculation is based on a "relative rate index". Kuker provided the following analysis:

- The RRI for African American youth are higher than White youth at the decision points of “arrest” (5.95), “referral” (5.05), “detention” (1.72), and “petition” (1.50). The RRI for African American youth at “arrest” and “referral” are higher than for any individual race/ethnicity category. The RRI for African American youth are lower than those of White youth at the decision points of “transfer to adult court” (.60), “diversion” (.72), and “probation” (.74).
- The RRI for Hispanic/Latino youth are higher than White youth at the decision points of “confinement in juvenile correctional facility” (2.26), “detention” (1.77), “arrest” (1.56), “referral” (1.40), and “transfer to adult court” (1.38). The RRI for Hispanic/ Latino youth are lower than those of White youth at the decision points of probation (.76) and “diversion” (.82).
- The RRI for Asian youth is higher than White youth at the decision point of “petition” (1.32). The RRI for Asian youth is lower than that of White youth at the decision point of “transfer to adult court” (.32, n=3), “probation” (.38, n=8) “referral” (.80), and “arrest” (.80).
- The RRI for Native American youth are higher than White youth at the decision points of “confinement in correctional facility” (4.43, n=8), “arrest” (3.57), “detention” (3.55), and “referral” (2.46). The RRI for Native American youth at “secure correctional facility” and “detention” are higher than for any individual race/ethnicity category. The RRI for American Indian youth are lower than White youth at the decision points of “petition” (.47), “diversion” (.56), and “probation” (.61).
- The RRI for other/mixed (typically bi-racial) youth is higher than White youth at the decision point “detention” (2.01). The RRI for other/mixed youth are lower than that of White youth at the decision points of “arrest” (.42), and “referral” (.48), “probation” (.69 – n=12), “diversion” (.75).
- The RRI for all minorities are higher than White youth at the decision points of “arrest” (2.59), “referral” (2.23), “detention” (1.80), and “petition” (1.33). The RRI for “all minorities” are lower than White youth at the decision making phases of “diversion” (.75), “probation” (.72), and “transfer to adult court” (.75).

White asked if population shifts were taken into account in the number of juvenile court cases and assault level charges. Kuker explained the major data sources from which matrices information was generated. Chaisson-Cardenas asked numbers could be calculated the old way and the new way with the new ICIS system. Kuker compared the old matrices formula to the new one required by OJJDP. Chaisson-Cardenas asked if charts and graphs would be available to present to people. Kuker recommended further discussion regarding the matrices as the future DMC Committee meetings. Wauters suggested the possibility of interviews with SROs, police and others on what decisions they make, how they decide to arrest, hold or refer to juvenile court.

Chaisson-Cardenas and Baxter asked if there was a way to report offenses and frequency in relation to matrices numbers. Leiber suggested that updated analysis that he is performing in three counties would take into consideration offense severity. Leiber is utilizing information from the ICIS to update the DMC assessment that he performed in the early 90's.

Legislation Regarding Interpreters

Chaisson-Cardenas asked the Committee to lend its support to proposed legislation before the Iowa General Assembly that would change Iowa law relating to qualifications of interpreters assisting Iowa Latinos unable to speak the English language. While this committee is unable, by federal law, to lobby the Iowa legislature on any issue, individual members may call the House Majority Leader's office as private citizens to speak in favor of the measure.

Publicity

The presentation by Jonathan Narcisse was tabled until the next meeting.

Polk County DMC Diversion Effort

Natalie Lee, Polk County DMC Coordinator presented an update of the diversion efforts. Its Detention Review Team continues to function on a weekly basis, detention alternatives tracking and monitoring is being done, a risk assessment tool is being created to reduce minority confinement. However, the Chief JCOs are preparing a standard risk assessment so Polk County will wait to see what the JCOs present. A community task force is being formed that, it is hoped, would carry on the work of this effort in the event state funding would no longer be available.

Black Hawk County

Sara Petersen passed out a summary of the Black Hawk County community events. She reported the Juvenile Court Services leaders are overwhelmingly supportive of the effort. Their core community group met three times and a smaller group has met to review objectives. They are exploring family foster homes as a detention alternative for youth of color. Their community committee is moving ahead well. They will ask for site money from the DHS Child Welfare Redesign, Youth of Color Effort.

U of I National Resource Center- DMC Center

Richardson reported for the Resource Center. The new pamphlet about the DMC Center was distributed and Richardson asked for thoughts and criticisms on it.

Scott County - task force is preparing a network analysis and will get results soon. A separate tool by population will be done for detention. Technical Assistance from OJJDP is a possibility.

Muscatine County - overall efforts have been connect to those of Scott County.

Hamilton/Humboldt/Wright County's - next step is additional planning related to DMC.

Polk County – The Resource Center has provided some assistance related to data. They're new local DMC person is Natalie Lee. Detailed information will be provided regarding their overall efforts at the upcoming DMC Committee meeting.

Woodbury - A June 4 conference is planned by Woodbury County. John McCain will present at this conference. McCain has been a present in the previous two state level DMC Conferences – he also presented at Woodbury's local DMC conference one year ago.

Black Hawk – Fairly extensive activity is underway through a local planning group. Much of that activity was discussed in an earlier presentation by Sara Petersen.

The Resource Center has applied for \$10,000 to the Polk County Government Grant Committee – Prairie Meadows funds – to supplement the DMC Conference in November in order to provide for a two-day event.

DHS has established a Youth of Color Task Force Group as part of its Child Welfare Redesign. They will contract with the Resource Center to assist in the effort. As part of the DHS redesign, funding is being set aside for local demonstration efforts in two sites. They may focus on 10 and 11 year olds court populations and minority family foster care. Petersen volunteered that Black Hawk County would help DHS with a diversion project.

DHS would also like to have a forum or some form of DMC Conference. There was specific interest in connecting the DMC Committee's annual conference with that of DHS. Some were concerned about what role DHS would play in planning and presentation, selection of forums, etc – discussion will continue in future DMC Committee meetings.

The Youth of Color Task Force is open and needs more information. They want policy recommendations and are still searching.

May 5, 2004 is the date of the next meeting.

Agenda items will include but are not limited to:

Future DMC Committee activities – Goals and objectives, recruitment of new members

Media Coverage

Presentation of Polk County second year diversion project.

County DMC information in plain language requested by Wauters.

Interpretation of figures