

FOSTER YOUTH AND DELINQUENCY PRACTICE TIP SHEET

When a young person has contact with the justice system through arrest, court involvement, or detention/confinement there is an opportunity for assessment and intervention. In any case where a youth is arrested an unusual incident report should be completed within 24 hours after you learn of the incident.

If a young person has been arrested, but there is no referral to court for prosecution, the youth may still be subject to a formal station adjustment and required to meet certain requirements, such as a class or

- Reach out to the police department to find out what the requirements are;
- Ask what the consequences are for not fulfilling the requirements;
- Meet with the youth and the care taker to ensure that expectations are clear and to make a plan to fulfill those expectations;
- Clearly restate to the youth and caretaker what the consequences are for not meeting the requirements of the station adjustment.

If the case has been referred to court:

- Contact DCFS legal in your region – ask about court date and calendar
- Plan to attend delinquency court date
- Contact probation
- Contact the Office of Guardian, D. Jean Ortega Piron at 312-814-8600, to determine whether or not an attorney is needed

If the youth has been detained in county detention center:

- Is there a placement to which the youth can return or is a new placement needed?
- What are the visiting guidelines?
 - Visit the youth
 - Encourage other appropriate visitors
 - Are there items that the youth needs and is allowed to have while in the detention center that someone could bring?

Assessment Issues:

- Nature of the incident?
 - Violent or non-violent
 - Seriousness of the act
 - Was the youth under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the act?
 - First offense?
 - Mental health issues?
 - Does CANS need to be updated?

- Who was involved in the incident?
 - Was the youth alone or with same age friends?
 - Older friends/family members? Is the youth acting under the influence of someone else?
 - Gang related? – Safety issues, can the youth safely remain in current placement?
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- When and where did the incident in question occur?
 - In school?
 - Discuss school situation with youth and caretaker;
 - Request a meeting with school: what is happening at school in regards to academic and behavior issues? If the youth has an IEP, are services being delivered as indicated in plan? Does there need to be a new plan? If the youth does not have an IEP, does there need to be an assessment? If no special education needs, what services supports can the school offer?
 - Are there consequences/ramifications at school beyond police/court requirements?
 - Can the youth return to school? Suspension/expulsion?
 - Is an alternative school placement necessary?
 - During school hours, but not at school?
 - Why is young person not at school?
 - What is he/she doing if not going to school?
 - Is there appropriate support for education in the placement?
 - What is the routine for getting youth to school?
 - Request a meeting with the school: review attendance records, discuss school's intervention regarding attendance;
 - Are there other school issues at school that impede or discourage the youth from attending school?
 - In the community?
 - Does the youth receive appropriate amounts of supervision, especially after school and in the evenings?
 - Does the placement have the appropriate amount of structure?
 - Does the youth have enough activities to be involved in?
 - Does the youth have opportunities to develop friendships with pro-social peers?
 - In youth's placement?
 - Assess relationships in the placement?
 - What led up to or triggered the incident?
 - Ongoing issues or isolated incident?
 - Are there safety issues for the youth or for others in the home?
 - Can the youth remain/return to the placement?
 - What supports, assistance, or interventions does the family need to sustain and improve the placement?

- Possible Interventions (should be designed to address issues identified in assessment following incident). What needs to be put into place to help the youth get on the right track?
 - Community-based balanced and restorative justice programs;
 - Family sessions to resolve issues in placement – address impact of the incident, relationship issues, structure and supervision issues;
 - Evidence Based Practices for delinquency intervention such as multi-systemic therapy or functional family therapy;
 - Behavior management support for caretaker;
 - After school programs;
 - Community-based or school based activities depending on the young person’s interests: sports, music, dance, art, etc.;
 - Mentoring;
 - Prevention or intervention groups;
 - Drug or alcohol assessment and follow-up of recommendations;
 - Community service - even if not mandated by court, can be useful and educational for youth;
 - Vocational training – can help youth look towards the future;
 - Summer programming – work, internships, camps;
 - Mental health treatment.

- In Chicago, a youth might be referred to the Juvenile Intervention and Support Center (JISC) if they are arrested in Police District Area One. This catchment area includes the following neighborhoods:

Archer Heights	Armour Square	Ashburn
Bridgeport	Brighton Park	Chicago Lawn
Clearing	Douglas	Englewood
Fuller Park	Garfield Ridge	Grand Boulevard
Greater Grand Crossing	Kenwood	Lower West Side
McKinley Park	Near South Side	Near West Side
New City	North Lawndale	Oakland
South Lawndale	Washington Park	West Elston
West Englewood	West Lawn	Woodlawn

If the youth has been referred to the JISC, you should contact Cynthia Williams at 773-257-6651 to learn the name of the casemanager who will be working with the youth. This casemanager will be able to tell you what the youth may expect from the JISC and what, if anything, will be expected of him or her. If the youth is part of a diversion program through the JISC, failure to comply with recommended programs or services may result in the case being referred to court for prosecution, or at the very least, will make it less likely that diversion will be considered should there be a subsequent arrest.