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**Report to  
Vermont Governor Phil Scott**

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**2016 Annual Report  
Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs  
Vermont State Advisory Group on Delinquency Prevention**

**In Accordance with: 42 U.S.C. 5633 [Sec. 223.]**

**Submitted to:** Phil Scott, Governor  
Al Gobeille, Secretary, Agency of Human Services  
House Judiciary Committee  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice

**Submitted by:** Ken Schatz, Commissioner  
Department for Children and Families

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**Report Date:** January 15, 2017



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**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Department for Children and Families**

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## Executive Summary

The Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs (CFCPP) is the state advisory board for juvenile justice, delinquency, and primary prevention as required by V.S.A. 33: 33 § 3302, and the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) 42 U.S.C. 5633 [Sec. 223.] The Council is assigned to the Agency of Human Services for administrative purposes.

The Council consists of 21 members appointed by the Governor with consent of the Senate. Members are selected for their expertise, guided by the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act requirements, and represent the State, community non-profit sectors, youth and family voice. The Council funds youth justice system change efforts designed to improve youth service and practitioner effectiveness; and contribute funds to the Vermont Children's Trust Fund which it oversees.

**CFCPP Mission:** The Council is grounded in prevention and works to ensure justice by building equitable and effective opportunities for children, youth and families to thrive in Vermont.

### **2016 Council Members:**

Maria Avila	Peter Hathaway	Andrew Longhi
Kathryn Brayton	Caprice Hover	Kreig Pinkham, Chair
Laurey Burris	Linda Johnson	Michael Reyes
Stuart Berry	Michelle Kaczynski	Robert Sheil
Hon. Amy Davenport	Susan Kamp	Linda Sullivan
Cheryl Elovirta	Isra Kassim	Christopher T. Veal
Willia Farrell	Michael Loner	

### **Activities:**

The Children and Family Council has four primary functions:

- 1. Monitor state compliance** with the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act.
- 2. Advise** State and Federal legislative branches and administration on delinquency prevention and intervention
- 3. Determine prevention priorities** based on data, the experience of members, youth and families, and agency priorities. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funds and Council advisory work are guided by data and use of evidence-based practice.
- 4. Make grants** in partnership with the Agency of Human Services (AHS) Department for Children and Families (DCF) that promote established priorities and identify service gaps. Administer and contribute funds to the Vermont Children's Trust Fund in concert with DCF and the Children's Trust Foundation.

## Section I: Monitoring

### **Monitor Vermont's compliance with the core requirements of the (JJDP)**

Core requirements:

1. Status offenders (youth with run away, truant behavior) may not be securely detained.
2. Youth adjudicated delinquent may not be detained in adult jails or police holding cells except to process and release.
3. Youth may not be subject to sight or sound contact with adult inmates while securely held.

4. The rate of minority race youth in contact with the justice system must be monitored to assess for disparity. Where disparity exists, the Council and DCF work with community and decision-makers to assure an equitable response to all youth. OJJDP uses the term ‘Disproportionate Minority Contact’ or DMC.

Compliance with the JJDPA serves two purposes:

- Protects youth and promotes their rights to due process.
- Ensures State eligibility for federal delinquency prevention funds.

### **2015 Status of Vermont Compliance with JJDPA Core Juvenile Justice Protections:**

The JJDP compliance monitor reviews police youth holding logs, and conducts site visits and trainings as needed at all facilities that have the potential to securely hold youth per public authority. During 2015, Vermont maintained its full compliance with the requirements of the JJDPA. There was one violation of the jail removal requirement when a runaway youth was securely held by a police department. There were no violations of ‘separation’ or ‘sight and sound’ protections.

### **Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) status:**

The rates of racial disparity and equity are based on available data that has limitations but which has improved substantially in 2016. Indicators of disparity are monitored for at least nine federally designated contact points in the justice system. When indicators are present, closer examination and discussion occurs with decision makers and other parties to learn more about possible underlying causes.

In 2015, we identified the following trends of three years or more:

- Chittenden County youth of color are cited to court for delinquency offenses at substantially higher rates than Caucasian youth relative to the population.
- Chittenden County youth of color are sent to detention by DCF and the courts at higher rates than are Caucasian youth.

Race disparity in the justice system is cumulative. For example, when youth of color are detained at Woodside more often than Caucasian youth relative to cases with court involvement, the disparity is on a foundation of over representation at the court referral contact point.

This year state DMC staff engaged community decision makers and service providers about local views of what may be happening in Chittenden County. Universal agreement about which youth were being referred to courts and DCF among youth of color was found.

In response to the data and community feedback, the Council and DCF issued a ‘request for proposals’ to fund a prevention and system change project in Burlington beginning in 2017.

## **Section II: Advise and Inform**

CFCPP is required by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act to advise government in delinquency prevention. The CFCPP attends to state and federal issues affecting children and youth; engages with government partners; and advises on compliance with JJDPA.

For example, the Council testified to the legislature and provided input to DCF regarding modifications to state statute on managing the response to youth charged with legal violations. The Council advocated to change to the upper age of court jurisdiction for youth for many years. A significant piece of legislation passed this year, Act 153, which effectively raises the age for most youth. The exception is

for those youths charged with serious offenses. The Council was pleased to see this legislation pass and continues to partner with AHS Departments to support the change required.

**Part III:  
Fund and Monitor Grant Programs**

The Council prioritizes funding strategies based on documented need, best practices, and competitive requests from the community and State. It awards and monitors a continuum of prevention and early intervention grants with federal, State, and private dollars including the Vermont Children’s Trust Foundation and the Vermont Children’s Tax Check-off. Where youth justice interventions need improvement, the Council seeks community partners to design and implement long-term changes.

**FY 2016 Grants:**

In 2016, more than \$982,000 was provided to community and State programs for children, youth, and family services and improvements.

**Early intervention, core protections and system improvement:**

• Training and system change to support a positive youth development approach by decision-makers and service providers	\$140,900
• Youth screening and assessment	\$2,500
• Community prevention & drug court	\$18,800
• Reduction of school suspension and expulsion	\$70,800
• Reduction of race disparities	\$14,000
• Compliance monitoring	\$23,000
• PREA - Prison Rape Elimination audit	\$49,000
• Woodside hearing officer - due process for detained youth	\$16,000
• Research	\$10,850
• Report software	\$76,750
Subtotal	\$422,600

The Children’s Trust Fund is comprised of state, federal, private, and foundation monies. They award primary prevention programs as defined by 33 V.S.A § 3301-3307.

• Afterschool, mentoring, teen programs, disability awareness, children's art, health, and well-being	\$325,350
• Early childhood care enhancements	\$108,250
• Substance Abuse prevention	\$37,000
• Parent education and support	\$89,000
Subtotal	\$559,600

**Part IV:  
Evidence-Based Priorities for State Improvements**

The Children and Family Council utilizes a three-year strategic plan of system priorities as required by the JJDPA. These priorities include:

**1. Working with youth through evidence-informed approaches:**

An example of an evidence-informed approach to working with youth and young adults is the Youth Thrive Framework developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP). This year, DCF and the Washington County Youth Service Bureau programs who serve youth transitioning out of foster care and homeless and runaway youth around the state, received an award for technical assistance from CSSP. The award enables a learning exchange of the Youth Thrive Framework, guidance and research, and a ‘training of trainers.’ These new Vermont Youth Thrive trainers will implement training for service providers and others that have contact with youth and young adults aged 9 – 25.

The training and practice improvements under the Youth Thrive model focus on implementing practice, policy, and service informed by: a) Youth resilience, b) Social connections, c) Knowledge of adolescent development, d) Concrete support in times of need, and e) Cognitive and social-emotional competence.

The Council was pleased to offer start-up funding for the Youth Thrive implementation which is also supported by the DCF, AHS and other agency leaders and practitioners.

**2. Reduction of disparate contact of youth of color with the justice system:**

The Council and DCF are looking forward to partnering with a community organization being work in 2017 to reduce the disparate contact of youth of color referred to court and detention. The work will engage key decision-makers, service providers, schools, families and youth affected.

The implementation of Act 153 beginning in 2016 that aims to send most youth charged with violations of law to community-based diversion whenever possible, and when not, to family court rather than criminal court. Research is clear that youth fare better when treated with developmentally-oriented approaches that support repair of harm to victims and communities while enabling continued development towards a positive life trajectory without the undue collateral consequences of a criminal record. The Council will continue to play an advisory role with DCF and the legislature to assure the best information and research related to youth development, reduction of recidivism, and community inclusion are applied to the service of youth and young adults during their formative years.

**3. Primary prevention:**

The CFCPP will continue to partner with the Children’s Trust Foundation to administer community grant opportunities aimed at creating conditions for children and youth to thrive.

**Conclusion**

During 2016, the State Advisory Board to delinquency prevention, in partnership with DCF and other State departments, law enforcement, and community programs, administered the requirements of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act and 33 V.S.A § 3301-3307.

Primary outcomes have been:

- 1) Monitoring all public authorities able to hold youth securely; maintained compliance with the core protections of the federal JJDP legislation.
- 2) Identified causes and began to address disparate referrals to the justice system of youth of color in Chittenden County.

- 3) Distributed grant funds to communities throughout the State for primary prevention, early intervention, and systemic improvement projects benefiting communities and youth.
- 4) Supported the legislative passage of Act 153.

For more information please email:

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