



Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice

P. O. Box 66458, Audubon Station, Baton Rouge, LA 70896

www.ojj.la.gov

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Jerel M. Giarrusso, Tel. 225.235.0484; email Jerel.Giarrusso@la.gov

Office of Juvenile Justice Receives National Recognition for Innovative Program

The Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) has been recognized by Harvard University for its innovative programming. OJJ's Service Coordination Model was recognized as a government initiative through the "Bright Ideas" program, an initiative of the broader Innovations in American Government Awards program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

"We are very pleased and humbled that our Service Coordination Model was chosen as a Bright Idea," said Deputy Secretary Dr. Mary L. Livers. "As we searched for ways to provide better outcomes for our youth, OJJ staff conducted extensive research into then-current best practices. We developed our service coordination model as an innovative way to provide single case management for our youth and their families. Service coordination is an important component of reform of the OJJ juvenile justice system."

"Government innovation does not require endless resources and generous budgets," said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in Government Program at the Ash Center. "As exemplified by this year's Bright Ideas, some of our country's smartest innovations can in fact reduce government's size while serving our citizens more efficiently and effectively."

The Service Coordination model was developed and implemented to provide single case management that allows consistent, individualized management and oversight of all cases. Youth entering the OJJ system are assigned a probation/parole officer (PPO) who handles the case from entry until exit from the system. The officer becomes familiar with the needs of the youth and family and assures that needed services are in place. Better outcomes for youth and decreased recidivism have resulted from this innovative program.

Service Coordination addresses the needs of the youth in the least restrictive environment, with options allowing progressive movement throughout the system. Improved information

technology streamlines and consolidates information, allowing the tracking of service needs throughout the continuum of care.

Service Coordination helps build stronger relationships and increased communication with stakeholders and other state agencies to enhance service delivery and create blended funding opportunities. The PPO is the central point of contact, bridging the gap between OJJ service units, creating an integrated effort among field staff, facilities, providers, family and youth.

PPOs provide a comprehensive, integrated approach to the care, management, and service delivery for OJJ youth. As a coordinator of services, they take an active role in each phase of the youth's classification, placement, and programming. The PPO coordinates effective services and supervises the youth to ensure seamless case management, serving as the case manager and single point of contact for the youth. The PPO ensures that the youth's service plan is implemented, followed, and modified as necessary.

Through supervision, monitoring and frequent contact with youth, PPOs are in an ideal position to assist youth with the challenges of making healthy choices, while teaching them that unhealthy decisions can lead to consequences. OJJ seeks to instill in the youth the importance of accountability for his/her own behavior, while keeping public safety a priority.

Service coordination exemplifies OJJ's mission which is to protect the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law abiding citizens.

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University recognizes all levels of government - school districts, county, city, state, and federal agencies as well as public-private partnerships – that demonstrate a creative range of solutions to issues. Programs were evaluated and selected by a team of policy experts from the academic and public sectors.

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