

Colorado Statewide Information Sharing Initiative

What you need to know about information sharing



"to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of State government, citizen service delivery and policy-making by providing guidance and recommendations on how the State should govern and manage data and data management systems."

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National News

National JIS Advisory Group Reconvening!

OJJDP is reconvening its National Juvenile Information Sharing (**JIS**) **Advisory Group**. The National Juvenile Information Sharing (**NJIS**) initiative, funded by OJJDP since 2000, provides collaboration-building, training and technical assistance to agencies and organizations that have successfully demonstrated a capacity to work together across agencies and systems, e.g., law enforcement, juvenile justice, probation, behavioral health and human services, education and treatment providers to improve outcomes for children and youth.

The **NJIS** is the first national endeavor to establish guidelines, procedures, and a data exchange model for use in governing information sharing practices

A Note from the CCYIS Chair

I recently met Robin Delaney-Shabazz of the U.S. Department of Justice/Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and informed her about the progress of the [Colorado Children and Youth Information Sharing](#) (CCYIS) initiative. I also thanked her for the Technical Assistance and Training support from OJJDP, which has made the progress possible. OJJDP funded the development of the first edition of federal [Guidelines for Juvenile Information Sharing](#) (2006) prepared by the Center for Network Development. The work of the **CCYIS Collaborative** is contributing to the revision of the guidelines for a second edition. Ms. Delaney-Shabazz expressed her appreciation for the work that is being done in Colorado to advance information sharing to improve services and outcomes for children and youth.

It is important to note that the work of the **CCYIS Collaborative** is contributing to the Children, Youth and Family Services (**CYFS**) domain work of the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) that is being adopted by federal agencies, in particular the **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)** and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (**ACF**). **ACF** is now working to map the information exchanged between State human service agencies, like TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, Child Support and Child Welfare, to the data elements and definitions already in the NIEM family service domain. **ACF** is working closely with **OJJDP**, and the children and youth information sharing efforts in Colorado are very well aligned with federal efforts. The most recent milestone for the **CCYIS Collaborative** is the articulation of the [CCYIS Governance Structure](#) in accordance with **Guideline 3** of the [Governor's Office for Information Technology's Guideline for Information Sharing](#). The governance structure describes the oversight and management of the development, implementation, maintenance, performance, and sustainability of children and youth information.

The **CCYIS Collaborative** is now delving into the identification of data exchange points and the information or data that is commonly exchanged among providers and with parents and youth. This work entails a close look at existing state statutes and federal privacy and confidentiality laws. The **CCYIS Collaborative** is currently examining state statutes related to informed consent through a **CCYIS** Privacy Committee. If you have questions about this committee, please contact: info@ccyis.org.

José Esquibel, Chair
CCYIS Collaborative

Colorado School Safety Resource Center

By Cynthia Coffman, Chief Deputy Attorney General, State of Colorado

Colorado has clear and progressive laws governing information sharing among schools,



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concerning youth across Local, State, Federal and Tribal governments and organizations in accordance with the Department of Justice and Homeland Security's National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). Presently, communities in **35 states** are actively engaged in JIS efforts and, others are participating in a readiness assessment process developed by the Center for Network Development (CND), OJJDP's grantee. The need for – and the issues associated with responsible juvenile information sharing are being raised repeatedly by juvenile justice and at-risk youth agencies across the country. The most recent information sharing issue raised is happening now in Texas surrounding the sharing of all juvenile arrest and police contact information with schools and educators (see [Texas Teachers article below](#)).

The **JIS Advisory Group**, whose mission is to discuss and examine policy issues surrounding juvenile information sharing, will be presenting recommendations and opinions to **OJJDP** on various information sharing matters. The **JIS Advisory Group** will examine privacy issues and explore policy implications for cross systems and agency collaborative attempting to share critical information, while ensuring the safety of our youth and communities. At this time, the most pressing topic facing the **JIS Advisory Group** are concerns over privacy and how best to facilitate "Need to Know" information exchange nationally. **CND** and **OJJDP** were recently presented with an concerning query – *'Should a juvenile's criminal history be shared in the form of a RAP Sheet data exchange?'* What are the ramifications of this type of information sharing exchange to at-risk youth and juveniles?

The outcomes and recommendations from the JIS Advisory Group will be

law enforcement, courts and juvenile probation, social services and school officials. After the Columbine High School shootings in 1999, the Colorado General Assembly passed the Safe Schools Act to give agencies guidance about when it is okay to share information. Since summer is a good time for getting back to the basics, here is a refresher course for the practitioner.

House Bill 00-1119, Concerning the Exchange of Information Related to Children –

Authorizes the exchange of information as follows:

- Judicial department or agency that performs duties and functions with respect to juvenile delinquency or dependency and neglect **shall** exchange information with other similar agencies or individuals to facilitate provision of services.
- School personnel also **may** obtain this information in order to perform their legal duties and responsibilities.
- Any criminal justice agency or assessment center **may** share information and records on a child with a school principal or his/her designee at that child's current or future school. This includes any information or records that involve a public safety concern including threats by the student, arrest or charging information for acts classified as felonies or misdemeanors if committed by an adult; or that relate to a child committing a municipal ordinance violation. Medical and mental health records are excluded.
- A criminal justice agency **may** seek disciplinary and truancy information from a school principal or designee.
- A principal or designee of a school where a child is or will be enrolled **shall** have access to court records in a juvenile delinquency proceeding involving a municipal ordinance violation; to a juvenile probation officer's records; to parole records; and to records of law enforcement officers concerning juveniles.

Senate Bill 00-133, Concerning Safe Schools –

Notwithstanding **FERPA**, information directly related to a student and maintained by a public school **shall** be available for release if the disclosure meets one of the following conditions:

Notwithstanding **FERPA**, information directly related to a student and maintained by a public school **shall** be available for release if the disclosure meets one of the following conditions:

- Is to other school officials, including teachers, working at the school where the student is enrolled who have a specific and legitimate education interest in the information for use in furthering the student's academic achievement or maintaining safe and orderly learning environment;
- Is to state or local authorities if the disclosure concerns the juvenile justice system;
- Is to comply with a court order or subpoena;
- Is in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

Nothing prevents a public school administrator from disclosing information derived from personal knowledge or observation.

The [Colorado School Safety Resource Center](#) and the Colorado Attorney General's Office continue to collaborate and offer training on school and public safety information sharing agreements.

made available to the CCYIS and will be posted in this e-newsletter for review and comment. For more information on the NJIS Initiative, go to: www.juvenileis.org.

Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice: Juvenile Justice Task Force

By Meg Williams, Manger, Office of Adult and Juvenile Justice Assistance, Colorado Dept of Public Safety

In an effort to address concerns within the adult and juvenile justice systems, *Colorado's Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ)* was created in 2007 as "an acknowledgement of the need for fundamental policy changes in Colorado's juvenile and criminal justice systems". The **CCJJ's** mandate is "to enhance public safety, to ensure justice, and to ensure protection of the rights of victims through the cost effective use of public resources". Its work focuses on "evidence-based recidivism reduction initiatives and the cost-effective expenditure of limited criminal justice funds". The Commission is comprised of 26 voting members; 18 are appointed representatives of specific stakeholder groups and 8 are identified to serve based on their official position. After two years of focusing on the adult criminal justice system, the **CCJJ** created the **Juvenile Justice (JJ) Task Force** to conduct a comprehensive and thorough analysis and assessment of the juvenile justice system in Colorado. This task force has a broad membership representing different disciplines within the juvenile system as well as behavioral health, prevention, and private citizens.

The **JJ Task Force** held a retreat in March 2011 to begin the analysis starting with the deepest part of the



What's New with Family and Youth

By Margie Grimsley, CCYIS Family Youth Involvement Committee, Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

The Colorado Children and Youth Information Sharing Collaborative (CCYIS) is in the process of developing important policies and procedures which will influence not just Colorado, but also become the national model for children and youth information sharing.

A key component of this model is that it values family, youth and family-driven organization involvement. Recently, youth and parents of children who are, or have been, involved in multiple systems (i.e. juvenile justice, mental health, schools, child welfare), were invited to participate in one of a series of focus groups designed to learn:

- Their experience sharing sensitive information during an intake process.
- Their understanding of where this information may go.
- How agencies explained their information sharing consent process and,
- Personal examples of positive and negative experiences when their information was shared with different agencies.

The results from the focus groups will be shared in a future newsletter, but for now, as a follow up, several participants answered a few more questions. This is what we heard:

From a parent perspective, please briefly describe what the information sharing focus group experience was like for you.

"It was good to actually be listened to. It made me think about information sharing and privacy. They are things I haven't thought much about before. I've just assumed we had no choice in the matter."

"Was comforting to hear other people had some of the same experiences. Was sad some had it so much harder. Because it's hard enough. Never goes away."

After participating in the focus group, share any new thoughts or insights you have about how agencies collect, use and or share information about children, youth and their families.

"Even if I have already signed a release to share the basic background information, they don't share it anyway. That basic information should be shared instead of my having to say it over and over again."

"A lot of the time we don't understand what we are signing or how the information is going to be used. This problem has been magnified with electronic signing or signatures. Often there is no opportunity to read what you are signing."

"Most of the time, the signing of the consent information is done in the middle of the crisis so you don't even know what you are signing, because you are so focused on the crisis. Some papers should wait until the next morning. In crisis you are desperate for help, and the consent is the least of your worries."

In conclusion, here are two extremely valuable "**lessons learned**" by this focus group experience. The first is that the "invite" and the process matters.

- Match life experiences of the participants with the discussion topic.
- Before the meeting, educate participants about what to expect.

system, commitment to the Division of Youth Corrections working their way back to the entrance to the system, arrest. This allowed the members to identify gaps in systems as well as interventions which, if they had been place, may have kept youth from further penetrating the system. The information from the retreat was categorized. Three themes emerged and are now the basis for three work-groups that will be meeting throughout the next year to delve deeper into many issues: Education, Assessment and Judicial.

The **JJ Task Force** recognizes that there are many other initiatives in the state that are working on similar issues, such as **juvenile information sharing**. Through cross membership and open communication the intent is not to duplicate any current work that is occurring but to enhance the work of other initiatives and the work of the task force. The ultimate goal of the **JJ Task Force** is to develop recommendations for juvenile justice system reforms for submission to the Colorado Commission on Criminal Justice.

If you have questions about the CJJ or the **JJ Task Force**, please contact Meg Williams at 303-239-5717 or meg.williams@cdps.state.co.us.

- Pick times that work and provide supports such as child care, dinner, and stipends.
- Create a safe environment for attendees and clarify how discussion information will be used

The second is to never fear asking and learning from parents and youth. Who best knows “*why*” valuing a quality information sharing process is essential for multiple services to be delivered in a coordinated manner. Then, and only then, can children and their families move through service systems in accordance with their changing strengths and needs

In order to learn more about the **CCYIS FYI committee** and or to join this work of balancing the privacy interests of children and their families , contact Margie Grimsley at: m_grimsley@msn.com or go to the **CCYIS** web page located at: http://www.juvenileis.org/pilot_colorado.html.

Denver County & the Crossover Youth Practice Model

By Sara Boylan, Director, Denver Collaborative Partnership

Since 2008, Denver County has been involved with Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform (CJJR) as part of the rigorous Certificate Program/Breakthrough Series Collaborative addressing Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Integration. Developed from this work, the Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) is the current phase of this project that Denver is now implementing.

The practice model addresses the unique issues presented by children and youth who are known to both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. A disproportionate number of them are youth of color and girls, and the population as a whole generally requires a more intense array of services and supports than other youth known to each system individually. Research has established that youth who have been maltreated are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior. The model describes specific practices that would be helpful in order to reduce the number of youth who crossover between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, the number of youth entering and reentering care, and the length of stay in out of home care.

It provides a mechanism whereby agencies will strengthen their organizational structure and implement or improve practices that directly affect the outcomes for crossover youth. This will include but is not limited to the following practices: the creation of a process for identifying crossover youth at the point of crossing over, ensuring that workers are exchanging information in a timely manner, including families in all decision-making aspects of the case, ensuring that foster care bias is not occurring at the point of detention or disposition, and maximizing the services utilized by each system to prevent crossover from occurring.



Three additional counties will be participating in the spread of this work this year: Broomfield, Larimer, and Morgan Counties.

Quick Links

Upcoming CCYIS Meetings	Resources	National Agency News	Publications
07/20/2011 @ JCJAC 9:00 to 11:00 AM	National Juvenile Information Sharing Initiative	White House Might Alter Juvenile Justice Spending Plan for 2012	Juvenile Information Sharing Guidelines
08/17/2011 @ JCJAC 9:00 to 11:00 AM	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)	Supreme Court Gives Juveniles Protection in Police Interrogations	
09/21/2011 @ JCJAC 9:00 to 11:00 AM	Bureau of Justice	Texas Teachers May Get Access To Confidential Student Criminal Histories	