



National Juvenile Information Sharing Initiative

REPORT

October 2011

Jeff Slowikowski, Acting Administrator

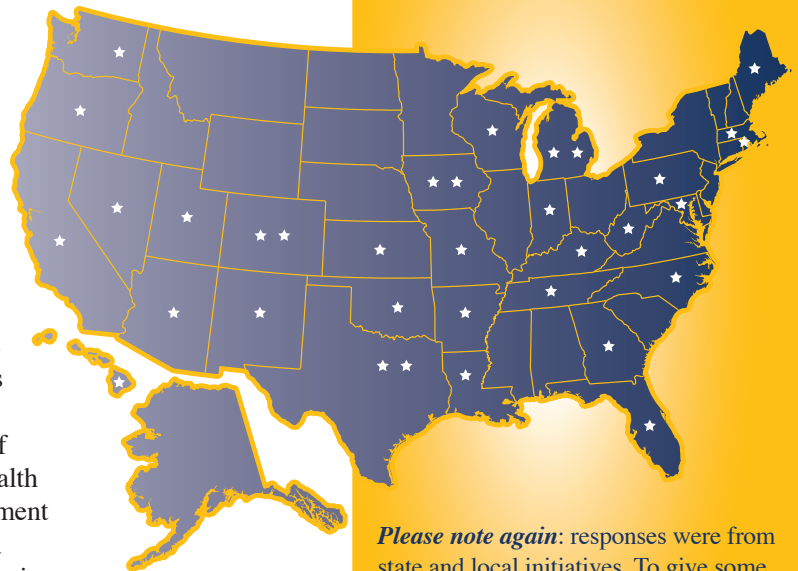
Project Advances Locally, Regionally & Nationally

Stephanie Rondenell, Executive Director, Center for Network Development
Christine Duclos, Ph.D.

Sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the National Juvenile Information Sharing Initiative (NJISI), managed by the Center for Network Development (CND) is a training and technical assistance project designed to build state and local jurisdictions' ability to plan and implement juvenile information sharing. In this report, learn more about how the project is advancing, collaborators' readiness for implementation, and steps that are occurring to address concerns raised in a recent NJISI Readiness Assessment.

OJJDP identified *juvenile information sharing* in 1999 as an essential tool to help justice, education, health, and other youth-serving agencies improve outcomes for at risk youth, juvenile offenders and their families. Since then, numerous partnerships across all levels of government have been formed to turn NJISI into reality. At the federal level, OJJDP, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have come together to further the information sharing benefits for children, youth and families. Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) also encourage communities to build a comprehensive continuum of services, sanctions and incentives and, in doing so, help children, youth and families successfully transition away from, or out of, involvement with the juvenile justice system.

As of June 23, 2011, 36 jurisdictions have completed or partially completed the NJISI Readiness Assessment. States represented included: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado (2), Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa (2), Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan (2), Missouri, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas (2), Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and West Virginia.



Please note again: responses were from state and local initiatives. To give some level of confidentiality in this report, the state in which the initiative resides was only identified. American Samoa and Saipan also completed the assessment.



Many states and local government agencies have begun development of cross-agency information sharing collaboratives and systems. NJISI has and continues to provide expertise in this development.

A component of the **NJISI** program involves using the CND's modified *Governance Guidelines for Juvenile Information Sharing* as part of **NJISI's** test-site implementation strategies. Test sites and potential technical assistance projects are currently being identified based on a **NJISI Readiness Assessment**.

NJISI Readiness Assessment Confirms Need

In FY2010, a **NJISI Readiness Assessment** was disseminated to over 132 representatives in **53** locations that are in various stages of developing or implementing electronic juvenile information sharing. This assessment identified the top challenges and technical assistance needs for state or local juvenile justice collaboratives addressing at risk youth. Through this readiness assessment, participating sites—representing 36 states and territories —identified technical assistance needs in all three key components of **NJISI**: collaboration, governance development and support; privacy and confidentiality constraints; and, technology using the juvenile justice data model (JJXDM) and the National Information Exchange Model - NIEM. The results also ascertained challenges to implementation, such as training, access to needed resources, and collaboration between local communities and the **JISI** program as a whole.

Assessment results show a variance in how “ready” participating collaboratives feel they are for JIS.

The Top Reported Challenges:

The top challenges identified by the assessment participants were:

- Identifying a national data protocol standard for data exchanges
- Involving youth, parents/legal guardians in the collaborative process
- Sustainability planning
- Communication planning and governance development
- Identifying what information should be shared and with whom
- Agreement on a common process for informed consent
- Understanding of privacy and confidentiality responsibilities and authority
- System security
- Identifying data exchange points
- Evaluating and identifying outcomes for JIS

Additional Challenges

The **NJISI Readiness Assessment** also revealed concerns in the areas of:

- **Confidentiality and privacy issues**—developing confidentiality and privacy policies and procedures that respond appropriately to such laws as FERPA and HIPAA of which attorney opinions and interpretations differ widely.
- **Resources**—having appropriate and sufficient project management and IT staffing, training, and funding for information sharing.
- **Collaboration**—gaining cooperation and participation from all appropriate staff agencies, developing a strategic plan, and then developing the needed trust between these agencies to be able to share data responsibly and accurately.
- **Outcomes and performance measures**—determining appropriate and measurable outcomes and developing a system to track them.

Uniting Data

OJJDP and CND are also working together with BJA to complete a domain harmonization process with the child welfare and child support enforcement data that already existed within the Family Services domain supported by BJA. The synthesization of these two data sets will form a new domain within the national information sharing model – NIEM. The Children, Youth and Family Services, (CYFS) domain identifies information sharing for children and youth as an important element in a national information sharing model. OJJDP has:

- formally adopted NIEM as its NJISI data-sharing protocol;
- developed over 300 data elements and has harmonized this data with the existing Family Services domain;
- created specific children, youth and juvenile data exchanges that have been identified as priorities by the juvenile justice field and its juvenile information sharing (NJISI) pilot sites.

The domain will be released in the upcoming month and it will allow users to begin utilizing the domain.

The NJISI has also developed needed technology tools specifically targeting at risk youth and juvenile justice agencies and jurisdictions that are working with NIEM and juvenile information sharing. These tools created by the NJISI technology team will provide the information sharing community with an *Extension Wizard* to ensure conformance with NIEM when building data exchanges; an explorer tool - *JJXplorer* with a business process /Subject Matter Expert (SME) edition for searching existing data in the data model and, currently under development, an [online interactive version](#) of the *NJISI Governance Guidelines* that provides templates and additional tools for use by NJISI collaboratives including governance structure templates, Interagency Agreements, legal search tools, mapping matrices and technical tools and training for the field. These tools and NJISI's technical assistance initiatives will enhance assistance to youth and juvenile justice cross agency efforts with:

- the ability to access training and tools to assist with developing data exchanges for information sharing across systems
- provision of updates and information on what other JIS sites are doing and how they are implementing their solutions
- access to online training, webinars and technical assistance.

Next Steps

Guided by lessons learned through the NJISI Readiness Assessment, OJJDP and CND have implemented the modified version of the *Governance Guidelines for Juvenile Information Sharing* and develop policy frameworks that will continue to expand data exchanges using the at-risk youth and juvenile justice data model.

Additionally, OJJDP and CND will continue to design and deliver education to the at-risk youth and juvenile justice communities. Training will cover such topics as the new **CYFS NIEM** domain, governance structures and escalation procedures, policy development, security structures and data exchange processes, and evaluation methodologies

Our Purpose

NJISI is working to improve procedures and policies of information sharing across state and local agencies, and with youth and juvenile services within communities.



NATIONAL
Juvenile
INFORMATION SHARING
INITIATIVE

Go to the National Juvenile Information Sharing Initiative's website: <http://www.juvenileis.org> for frequent updates and information on promising JIS sites.

This document was prepared under grant/cooperative agreement number 2009-MU-FX-K101 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice.

Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of OJJDP or the U.S. Department of Justice.