

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION STATE ADVISORY GROUP



2006 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE OF FLORIDA



**STATE OF FLORIDA
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION
STATE ADVISORY GROUP
REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR**

According to the Department of Juvenile Justice Report Card, Florida has shown a substantial decrease in juvenile crime. The State has reported that juvenile crime has been reduced 8% over the past five years, that fewer juveniles have been committed to adult prisons, 58% of juvenile offenders are staying crime-free one year after release, and the state has provided services to 67,000 high risk youth. The State has shown great progress in the past years. However, Florida's juvenile population is projected to increase significantly in the next three years. In order to continue to address the needs of the communities, Florida must continue to create methods to reduce juvenile crime and increase public safety.

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention State Advisory Group was established by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to serve as the advisory group to the Department of Juvenile Justice for the administration of funds received by the State of Florida. The State Advisory Group also serves as the Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition (JCEC), the policy committee for the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant.

The State Advisory Group has four committees: Executive, Finance, Disproportionate Minority Contact, and Grants & Contracts. The Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee is focused on addressing the issue of overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice system.

One of the responsibilities of the State Advisory Group is to monitor and ensure the four federal mandates, defined by the JJDP Act of 1974, as amended, are addressed. The JJDP Act requires the State Advisory Group to:

- Advise the State planning agency, Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Participate in the development and review of Florida's State plan
- Review and recommend grant applications submitted to the Department of Juvenile Justice for funding.

The State Advisory Group and the Department of Juvenile Justice awarded more than 4.5 million dollars in Title II, Challenge and Title V grants.

This report describes the programs and activities funded to prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION
STATE ADVISORY GROUP**

SAG Member	Occupation	Residence City
Emilio Benitez	Attorney	Fort Lauderdale
Triste Brooks	Chief Operating Officer, Planned Parenthood	Palm City
Sophia Campbell	Youth Member	Miami
James Clark	President/CEO, Daniel Memorial	Jacksonville
Jacqui Colyer	Operation Manager, A1 Loving Care	Miami
Nathan Crock	Youth Member	Treasure Island
Christine Epps	Executive Director, Shared Services Network	Vero Beach
Judge Robert Evans	Circuit Court Judge	Orlando
Sheldon Gusky	Executive Director, Florida Public Defender Association	Tallahassee
Georgia Jones-Ayers	Director, The Alternative Programs	Miami
Jacquelyn Ledbetter	Youth Member	Tallahassee
Judge Frank Orlando	Policy Director, Nova SE University Law School	Fort Lauderdale
Patricia Pieri	Assistant State Attorney	Tampa
Raymond Pilon	Governmental Affairs Coordinator, Peace River/Manasota Regional Water Supply	Sarasota
Donnie Read	President/CEO, Twin Oaks Juvenile Development	Bristol
Dennis Shuman	Chief Assistant Public Defender	Pensacola
Otis B. Stander	President/CEO, Associated Marine Institutes	Tampa
Janet Ter Louw	Director, PACE Center for Girls	Tallahassee
Susan Tholl	Director of Media Services, Lloyd Daniel Corp.	Fort Lauderdale
Mitch Wilkins	School Resource Officer, Tampa Police Department	Tampa
Aimee Wilson	Youth Member	Tallahassee

**JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION
STATE ADVISORY GROUP COMMITTEE**

Executive Committee

Responsibilities of the committee include but are not limited to acting on behalf of the State Advisory Group (SAG) when the full group is not in session; assisting in the development of the agenda for future SAG meetings; assisting in the development of the OJJDP Annual Report to the Governor.

Members:

Judge Robert Evans, SAG Chair
Jacqui Colyer, SAG Vice Chair
All Sub-Committee Chairs

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Committee

Responsibilities of the committee include but are not limited to building long-term systemic change that can be maintained; creating a balanced Juvenile Justice System; Supporting accountability and “Data Driven-Research Based” approaches; Supporting “Performance-Based” funding opportunities; allocating funding for each DMC initiative

Members:

Donnie Read, Chair
Jacqui Colyer
Sophia Campbell
Jim Clark
Judge Frank Orlando

Finance Committee

Responsibilities of the committee include but are not limited to review of current and proposed financial plans for disbursing of funds and recommend financial decisions under the duties of the State Advisory Group.

Members:

Sheldon Gusky, Chair
Triste Brooks
Susan Tholl

Grants & Contracts Committee

Responsibilities of the committee include but are not limited to review any Request for Proposals, programmatic evaluation reports, OJJDP Annual Report to the Governor and JJDP grant funded applications.

Members:

Triste Brooks, Chair

Mitchell Wilkins

Christine Epps

Raymond Pilon

Pattie Pieri

Dennis Shuman

O.B. Stander

JJDP Act Mandates and Compliance Status

The four core requirements of the JJDP Act were established to protect juveniles in the juvenile justice system from inappropriate placements and from the harm – both physical and psychological – that can occur as a result of exposure to adult criminal offenders.

G4S Youth Services are contracted by DJJ to conduct compliance-monitoring services throughout the state for FY 2006-07.

A description of the mandates and Florida's 2001 compliance status by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is as follows:

JJDP Mandate	Compliance Status
Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders (DSO) Juvenile charges with or who have committed offenses that would not be criminal if committed by an adult shall not be placed in juvenile detention or correctional facilities, but must be placed in shelter facilities. Status offenses include but not limited to truancy, running away, and minors in possession of alcohol.	Florida de minimis – 12%. The non-compliance violations plan was accepted by OJJDP. In January 2002, Department of Juvenile Justice contracted out the JJDP compliance monitoring function to Securicor New Century to conduct compliance monitoring for the FY2002 and FY2003 reporting years.
Removal of Juveniles From Adult Jails and Lockups (Jail Removal) No juvenile shall be securely held in adult jails and lockups. Under the Reporting Exception, accused law violators may be held for up to six hours for the purpose of identification, processing, interrogation, transfer to a juvenile facility or while awaiting release to parents/guardians.	2001 Compliance Monitoring Report, 70% of all facilities was visited during the reporting year. This includes 42% of all juvenile detention facilities; 90% of all jails; and 28% of all municipal lockups. Florida is currently in compliance.
Separation of Juveniles From Adult Offenders (Separation) During the temporary period that a juvenile may be securely held in an adult jail and lockup, sight and sound contact is not permitted between the juvenile and adult inmates or trustees.	2006 Compliance Monitoring Reports 100% of all facilities were visited during the reporting year. This includes 393 jails and municipal lockups. Florida is currently in compliance.
Reduction of Disproportionate Minority Confinement (DMC) States must address reducing the proportion of juvenile detained or confined in secure detention facilities, secure correctional facilities and jails and lockups, who are members of ethnic groups if such proportion exceeds the proportion such group represents in the general population.	DMC Committee has submitted a plan to OJJDP to implement Referral Reduction Coordinators in pilot sites. Four sites (circuits) have been identified and will commence Civil Citation/ Equal Justice Projects effective January 1, 2007. Each project will target minority youth with the hiring and training of Referral Reduction Coordinators. This position will work collaboratively with judicial services, law enforcement, local schools, and civil citation providers to assist in linking minority youth with appropriate non-judicial services and programs. The Department has designated funding to support ten additional sites projects. The Department designated funding and implemented a DMC Taskforce. The taskforce will focus on policy changes, programmatic efforts and cost effective solutions to DMC.

Formula Grant, Title II

Purpose: To enable states to meet and maintain compliance with the four mandates of the Act, support delinquency prevention efforts, and improve the juvenile justice system.

The Title II, Part B Formula Grant Program allocates funding based on the state's youth population. States eligibility is based upon each state's Compliance Monitoring Report on compliance with the mandates of the JJDP Act.

FY 2005-06, SAG recommended communities to be funded \$2.9, FY 2006-07, existing projects were recommended continued funding of \$3.4 million.

2007 Direction:

- Continue programs for third year funding
- Fund Research Based Programs
- Encourage cooperative and collaborative efforts for prevention programming
- Fund programs that present promising approaches to address Disproportionate Minority Contact
- Continue efforts to education law enforcement on the JJDP Act mandates.

	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount Funded	Program Description
Q5001	Liberty County Board of Commissioners	Bethune Community Service Center	\$100,000	Bethune Community Service Center, (BCSC) offers wrap around services to at-risk youth and their families in a community most affected by crime and delinquency, located in targeted zip code 32321.
Q5002	Tallahassee YMCA, Inc.	Wakulla All Stars	\$100,000	Wakulla All Stars, an after school program serving at risk middle school youth, is a collaborative effort of the Wakulla Coalition for youth. This program will not only provide youth with tutoring and other academic guidance, but also the All Stars curriculum, including character building, drug use and juvenile delinquency prevention.
Q5003	Friends of the Franklin County Public Library, Inc.	WITH-IT (Winners In Tune Have- It Together)	\$100,000	With-It will provide structured after school, vacation, and evening activities, in three library-based centers for youth primarily from 10-17 exposed to multiple risk factors. With-It will inspire personal growth development by focusing on social, educational, and recreational activities in a safe community environment.

	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount Funded	Program Description
Q5005	City of Jacksonville	H.A.R.K. 32208 Initiative	\$100,000	Helping At risk Kids (H.A.R.K.) Program to provide services to youth in zip code 32208. The H.A.R.K. program would be expanded to specifically provide services to school-aged youth who have witnessed violence in the home.
Q5006	Marion County Children's Alliance	Youth Alliance	\$100,000	Youth alliance focuses on two middle schools serving high-risk zip codes. Program activities include guidance through assistant counselors, violence prevention, and activities involving youth, parents, and community. Building relationships between youth, schools, families, and community is the goal, creating connections with others/adults who care.
Q5007	Celebration of Praise Church of God	Student Ministry	\$100,000	The Student Ministry is reaching diverse youth, both those who have exhibited delinquent behavior and those who are considered at risk to do so. It is believed that through positive direction they can succeed in life and significantly reduce their risk for becoming a statistic in the judicial system.
Q5009	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office	Boys: ABOUT FACE!	\$99,968.00	Boys: About Face! Offers an intensive style program, followed by an intensive six month minimum follow up and case management in the home and school for youth experiencing problems at home and at school, as well as after-school and summer tutoring and recreational activities.
Q5011	Putnam County School District	Drug Awareness Program of Putnam County	\$100,000.00	The Drug Awareness Program is a family-focused early intervention substance abuse program that combines elements of a number of science-based theories and models to interrupt substance use and delinquency.
Q5012	Union County School Board	The Outpost Alternative School	\$44,336.00	The Outpost provides a different school setting for students exhibiting juvenile delinquency risk factors. We will offer a standard academic curriculum supplemented with a reading component and a faith-based character education component. We hope students can return to their schools with skills enabling them to avoid delinquent behavior.

	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount Funded	Program Description
Q5013	Office of the Public Defender	Children's Advocacy Program (CAP)	\$100,000.00	The Children's Advocacy Program (CAP) provides a program for the children with parents incarcerated in the St. Lucie County Jail to address the DJJ identified risk factors. Services: prevent/reduce delinquency referrals, and increase behavioral and emotional strengths.
Q6001	Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation	Formally Florida Business Partners	120,000	Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation is a Direct Support Organization that builds partnerships between DJJ and the business community. The Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation facilitates the Governors Community Investment Awards.
Q6009	Baker County Teen Court Inc.	Baker County Teen Court	\$40,000.00	Program serves approximately at risk youth between the ages of 10-17, first time offenders with misdemeanor charges. This program incorporates peer mediation.
Q6010	Lee County Human Services	Restitution Accountability Board	\$64,137.00	The RAB, adhering to restorative justice principles, will work with juveniles (charged with grand theft auto and burglary), victims of the crime, and the community. Restitution to the victim will be negotiated to address the harm and may not necessarily be monetary restitution.
Q6011	Jewish Family and Children's Service of Sarasota-Manatee, Inc.	Adolescent Diversion and Assistance Program	\$100,000.00	A diversion program for juvenile ages 11-17 providing intervention services for youth who have been involved in domestic violence, shoplifting, battery/assault or gang activities. Youth participate in psycho educational groups or individual counseling for limited time frames to learn more adaptive behaviors and reduce the potential to reenter the justice system
Q6012	Children's Home Society of Florida, Inc.	Bay County Prevention Intervention	\$89,153.00	Bay Preventive Intervention use teacher-completed report cards to monitor student behavior. Weekly student meetings focus on student progress toward behavioral objectives, problem solving, and social skills development. Parent trainings focus on reinforcement-based parenting techniques and increased parent-school communication.

	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount Funded	Program Description
Q6013	Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Tampa Bay	P.O.W.E.R for Girls	\$42,080.00	P.O.W.E.R for Girls is a gender specific program focusing on the special needs of adolescent girls, through mentoring and developing strengths and assets through community collaboration and psycho-educational group sessions. P.O.W.E.R targets the specific and general risk factors that affect girls, and fosters an environment that nurtures non-delinquent behavior.
Q6014	Twin Oaks Juvenile Development, Inc.	Wilderness Quest: Alternative to School Suspension Program	\$98,920.00	Wilderness Quest is a 5-day therapeutic wilderness experience serving at risk youth 10-17. The program fosters the development of self-reliance and skills necessary to deal effectively with others at school, home, and the community. The program provides weekly behavioral and academic follow-up contact between the youth, parent, teacher, and case manager; monthly education and family support
Q6015	Eckerd Youth Alternatives	Hi-Five Early Intervention Program at Sherwood Elementary in Melbourne	\$100,000.00	Violence and substance abuse prevention program serving 330 at-risk 3rd-5th graders at Sherwood Elementary School. School-based coordinators deliver CSAP approved classroom curriculum proven to reduce violence by the U.S. DOE and facilitate small groups, literacy development, family and teacher training.
Q6016	Okaloosa Academy, Inc.	Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders	\$100,000.00	Okaloosa Academy proposes to utilize "Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders" prevention curriculum as an elective course for middle and high school students attending the alternative schools in Fort Walton Beach and Crestview. Bridgeway Center will provide counseling to assist students in behavioral change.
Q6017	Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Tampa Bay	Project DOVE	\$65,000.00	Project DOVE provides comprehensive mentoring to children living in Hillsborough County who have witnessed domestic violence. Services include: specially trained volunteers who serve as mentors to children, case management, support groups and counseling for children and their families. The goal is decreased juvenile delinquency and stronger, violence-free families.

	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount Funded	Program Description
Q6018	Mental Health Care, Inc.	Project End Violence Early (EVE)	\$100,000.00	Project End Violence Early provides voluntary clinical services to families of youth at risk of becoming involved with juvenile justice due to the youth's domestic violence. The program aims to eliminate the violence by providing clinical case management, psychosocial assessment, in-home therapy and psychiatric consultation.
Q6019	Gadsden County Sheriff's Department	Gadsden County Community Justice Program	\$65,000.00	The program provides a school accountability board to deal with problem behaviors in the school and mentoring, academic services to those referred to the program.
Q6021	DISC Village, Inc.	Civil Citation for Minority Populations	\$33,333.00	Civil citation and teen court program -Leon
Q6022	University of South Florida	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	\$75,000.00	USF Research project
Q6024	Gadsden County Civil Citation	Gadsden County Community Justice Program	\$33,333.00	The Community Justice Program is a collaboration of community systems and volunteers who coordinate community resources to reduce youthful entry into the juvenile justice system through employing crime prevention, restorative justice and targeting human service providers to work with at risk youth and youthful offenders.
Q6026	Suspension Termination Opportunity Program	STOP	\$50,000.00	The STOP program provides academic support and counseling services, to mitigate against repeat suspensions, school dropouts and juvenile delinquency.

Formula Grant, Part E, Challenge Grant

Purpose: To provide incentives for states to develop, adopt, and improve policies and programs in one of more of the ten specified Challenge Activities to improve the juvenile justice system.

The State Advisory Group implemented the following activities:

Challenge Activity E: Prohibit gender bias in placement and treatment of young female offenders, and to ensure that female youth have access to comprehensive, gender-specific services.

Challenge Activity H: Alternatives to suspension and expulsion from school.

FY 2005-06, SAG recommended communities to be funded \$400,000, FY 2006-07, existing projects were recommended continued funding of \$300,000. The Challenge Grant Project was eliminated by OJJDP; as a result the projects were supplemented with general revenue support.

Grant	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount	Program Description
Q5010	Juvenile Services Program, Inc.	Choices: A Chance to Change	\$100,000.00	The Action for Safety program is a self- defense and violence prevention program for female youth.
Q5013	Unity Family Community Center, Inc.	Levy County Girls Life Skills Program	\$100,000.00	The Girl Power program encourages 9-14 years old ladies to make the most of their lives by providing life skills, self-esteem classes, and intervention to stop loss of self-confidence and self worth.
Q5015	Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.	Hillsborough County Youth Advocate Program	\$100,000.00	The Rites of Passage Intervention and Prevention Program is designed to empower girls between the ages of 10-16, with the knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully effect positive change in their lives and communities

Title V Community Prevention Grant

Purpose: to reduce juvenile delinquency and youth violence by supporting communities in providing their children, families, and neighborhoods, with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities necessary to foster a healthy and nurturing environment which supports the growth and development of productive and responsible citizens,

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Title V Program was established in the 1992 reauthorization of the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Under the OJJDP Title V Program, each State Advisory Group has the responsibility to recommend and fund projects.

The Title V Program is geared to helping communities develop a collaborative, community-based delinquency prevention planning effort. Communities are required to form a Prevention Policy Board that will identify community risk and protective factors, which contribute to and protect against delinquency.

OBJECTIVES OF THE TITLE V PROGRAM

- To form coalitions in order to mobilize the community and direct delinquency prevention effort;
- To identify known delinquency risk factors which are present in the community;
- To identify protective/preventive factors, which will counteract identified risk factors and develop local delinquency prevention plans to strengthen those protective factors;
- To develop and implement local comprehensive prevention strategies which use and coordinate federal, state, local, and private resources for a continuum of services for at-risk children and their families; and
- To implement the delinquency prevention strategy, monitor the program and modify local delinquency prevention plans as needed.
- Title V is designed to assist communities in identifying delinquency prevention strategies that fit their needs and help to enhance their individual efforts.

To become eligible for Title V funding, units of local government must be in compliance with the mandates of the JJDP Act, establish a Prevention Policy Board (PPB) and have a 3-year Delinquency Prevention Plan. In addition, applicants must provide a 50% match (cash/in-kind).

FY 2005-06, SAG recommended communities to be funded \$1,207,258, FY 2006-07, existing projects were recommended continued funding of \$881,559.

County	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount	Program Description
Q6002	City of St. Petersburg	Youth Enhancement Skills (YES)	\$73,725.00	YMCA YES Program serves the most at-risk students enrolled at Riviera Middle School providing protective factors through a designated "exemplary" program Life Skills Training (LST) and CRISS. Relevant outcomes of the YES Program include factors related to making schools safe, disciplined, and drug-free; reduced substance use, violence, and other conduct problems.
Q6004	Live Oak City Council	Community Organizing Program	\$100,000.00	The mission of Live Oak City Community Organizing Program is to decrease juvenile delinquency by offering the youth of the community safe, mentoring and focused environments.
Q6005	Liberty County Board of Commissioners	Friends for the Future	\$59,576.00	This program is designed to reduce early persistent defiant and anti-social behavior, enhance family functioning and increase family involvement by building a community-family-school network.
Q6006	Orange County Sheriff's Office	Reclaiming Our Community and Youth (ROCY) Program	\$98,253.00	The mission of the Reclaiming our Community and Youth Program are to reduce truancy, academic failure, and delinquent behavior.
Q6007	City of Ocala	2005 Title V and Beyond	\$100,000.00	The 2005 Title V and Beyond is designed to strengthen the community through building resiliency in children, youth, and families to avoid drugs, crime, and violence. The project will fortify the community's protective factors, increasing awareness of and choices for, positive options that lead to an improved quality of life - including succeeding in school, being drug free, and developing skills in non-violence.
Q6008	Village of El Portal	Change the Culture	\$100,000.00	Change the Culture is committed to preventing juvenile delinquency, improving the mental health of adolescents and working towards breaking the cycle of violence. Recognizing the intrinsic relationship among the health of the community, family and schools, our program seeks to support these elements in order to create a new culture based on belonging, respect, stress-reduction and human values.

County	Agency Name	Program Name	Amount	Program Description
Q4502	Clay County Board of County Commissioners	Clay CARES Partnership	\$49,500.00	Clay CARES Partnership, a multi-faceted interagency collaboration, will reduce juvenile delinquency and improve school attendance in Clay County's highest risk zip code. This will be accomplished through a research based approach that strengthens families and includes; Consequences of Truancy Workshops, case management, counseling, mentoring, positive incentives and consequences for non-compliance.
Q4503	Putnam County Board of Commission	Creating Lasting Family Connections	\$100,000.00	The Delinquency Prevention Program provides leadership and coordination of a structured training program offered on site for key community agencies. The training curriculum promotes effective community mobilization strategies, increase the number of positive role models and improve partner collaboration.
Q4504	Broward County	Leadership Academy	\$98,253.00	The Leadership Academy provides academic and disciplinary instruction that gives at-risk students the necessary skills to adjust maladaptive behavior and increase learning. The program will also provide family therapy and substance abuse intervention and prevention services designed to address risk factors associated with drug use and increase protective factors.
Q4505	City of Madison	ICAN2	\$49,500.00	ICAN2 is a long term, comprehensive year-round after school program, providing a safe place to interact with caring adults, develop social competencies, learn computer skills, and to serve their community at the Kid's Café', a feeding program for low-income children. Expected outcomes include decreased feelings of alienation, increased social competencies, improved GPA, at least 250 hours of volunteer services to the community, and sufficient contact hours to develop relationships with caring, supportive adults.

Comprehensive Strategy

OJJDP developed the Comprehensive Strategy to provide a framework for strategic responses and assist in implementing solutions to growing juvenile violence. The Comprehensive Strategy, which has five key principles, is an initiative presented to individual states as a foundation for their juvenile delinquency prevention activities.

- Strengthen the family in their role of providing guidance and discipline and instilling sound values as their children's first primary teachers.
- Support core social institutions in their role of developing capable, mature, and responsible youth.
- Promote delinquency prevention as the most cost-effective approach to reducing juvenile delinquency. Communities must take the lead in designing and building comprehensive prevention approaches that address risk factors, enhance protective factors, and target youth at greatest risk of delinquency.
- Intervene immediately and effectively when delinquent behavior occurs. Ensure that appropriate sanctions for misconduct are delivered in a timely fashion.
- Identify and control the small group of serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders through a range of graduated sanctions, including placement in secure facilities.

Goal: To reduce delinquency and youth violence by supporting a statewide DMC Initiative.

Juvenile crime in Florida has declined to its lowest level in many years. There have been especially large declines in serious and violent felonies. Unfortunately, declines in the number of arrests for less serious delinquency offenses have not been as great. More youth, about 54 % (51,047), were referred to the Department of Juvenile Justice (Department) for misdemeanor offenses than any other type of delinquency in 2004-05.

There has been minimal fluctuation in the total number of referrals over the past three years. While the total number of referrals has remained stable, the population of youth at risk for delinquency, those ages 10 to 17, has increased in Florida.

In FY 2004-05, 59 % of all referrals were attributable to minority youth. Over the past three years the total number of referrals generated by black and Hispanic youth has increased by six % (for each group).

The Department of Juvenile Justice continues to expand its efforts to reduce the number of juvenile justice arrests for minor crimes. The Department of Juvenile Justice, in partnership with the State Advisory Group (SAG) announced the Civil Citation/Equal Justice Initiative. Through the development of a statewide civil citation/equal justice initiative, the goal of the SAG and Department of Juvenile Justice is to reduce the number of referrals to the juvenile justice system and significantly reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact with the juvenile justice system throughout the state of Florida.

Florida is presently in compliance with Section 223(a)(22) of the juvenile prevention efforts and system improvement efforts designed to reduce the disproportionate number of juvenile members of minority groups who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. The Department continues to assist communities in providing their children, families, neighborhoods, and institutions with the knowledge, skills and opportunities necessary to foster a healthy and nurturing environment, which supports the growth and development of productive and responsible citizens.

Comprehensive Strategy Key Elements

- Support circuit partners in the implementation of local projects designed to reduce the number of referrals to the juvenile justice system.

Through the Civil citation initiative, youth who commit non-serious delinquent acts are given the opportunity, by the responding law enforcement officer, to accept an alternative to arrest. Florida's goal is to better equip each circuit with the tools and resources necessary to utilize alternatives to arrest for minor crimes. An intended area of specialized focus is reduction of school related referrals and the disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system. This process is not used as punitive response to mischievous acts. Civil Citation will be used strictly as "an alternative to arrest". Providing a civil citation alternative, including proper training and technical assistance to school resource officers/officials, on how and when to use the civil citation program could substantially reduce the number of school-related referrals

- Reduce the detention rate for youth with misdemeanor cases of domestic battery.

Collaborative partnerships have been developed with local Runaway Shelters and/or Florida Network of Youth and Families Services shelters to provide an alternative placement for a youth who commits an offense of domestic violence but otherwise does not meet the detention criteria. Misdemeanor cases of domestic battery may also meet the criteria for civil citations thus avoiding the requirement for detention.

The Civil Citation/Equal Justice Initiative an efficient and innovative alternative to referral to the Department for youth who commit minor delinquent acts and to ensure swift and appropriate consequences.

Florida has four (4) Comprehensive Strategy sites:

- Gainesville (Circuit 8)
- Miami/Dade (Circuit 11)
- Ft. Pierce (Circuit 19)
- Fort Myers (Circuit 20)

In order to assist other communities in fully developing and implementing the Comprehensive Strategy/Civil Citation/Equal Justice project, the State Advisory Group allocated \$1,000,000 to implement additional sites in the State of Florida.

Direction for 2006-08: To develop and implement a minimum of sixteen (16) sites, allowing a project in each state circuit.