



STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 29, 2009
TO: Frank Peterman Jr., Secretary
FROM: *me* Mary Roe Eubanks, Inspector General
SUBJECT: Internal Audit's Six-Month Follow-up Report- *OPPAGA Report No. 08-56, DJJ Should Use Evidence-Based Practices to Address Juvenile Gang Involvement*

In October 2008, the Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA) released Report Number 08-56, *DJJ Should Use Evidence-Based Practices to Address Juvenile Gang Involvement*. This report addresses juvenile gang involvement of youth served by the Department. Florida Statute requires that the Office of the Inspector General conduct a six-month follow-up for all OPPAGA and Auditor General Reports. The statute also requires that a copy of the six-month follow report be filed with the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee (JLAC).

In April 2009, the Bureau of Internal Audit conducted six-month follow-up activities in coordination with the Office of Detention Services. All OPPAGA's applicable findings and recommendations have been addressed. Attached, please find a copy of the follow-up report.

Please feel free to contact Michael Yu, Audit Director, at 921-5698 if you have any questions.

ME/my

Cc: Rod Love, Deputy Secretary
Kelly Layman, Chief of Staff
Gary R. VanLandingham, Director of OPPAGA
Terry L. Shoffstall, Director, Legislative Auditing Committee

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Charlie Crist, Governor

Frank Peterman, Jr., Secretary

The mission of the Department of Juvenile Justice is to increase public safety by reducing juvenile delinquency through effective prevention, intervention, and treatment services that strengthen families and turn around the lives of troubled youth.

*JLAC
Rec 5/1/2009*

Department of Juvenile Justice
 OIG Bureau of Internal Audit
 Follow-Up On OPPAGA Audit Number 2008-56
“DJJ Should Use Evidence-Based Practices to Address Juvenile Gang Involvement”
 Status of Corrective Actions
 As of April 2009

Finding 1: The number of youth identified as gang members is increasing, and a higher percentage of gang members than other delinquents are involved in serious crime.		
OPPAGA Recommendations	Agency Response	Status of Implementation
<p>Legislature expand the criteria for the Redirection Program to include youth on probation who are identified as gang members and assessed as high risk to re-offend whether or not those youth are being considered for commitment.</p>	<p>The Department of Juvenile Justice concurs with this recommendation; however, we have limited availability for services provided by the Redirection Program to youth being considered and eligible for commitment as a cost-savings approach. The recommendation to expand criteria will require additional funding earmarked for the targeted subgroup of the probation population for the purposes of reducing future criminal activity. Furthermore, the Department recognizes additional practices that meet the Department's stringent definition of "evidence-based". These practices have shown similar appreciable effects on reducing recidivism and criminogenic needs. Evidence-based practices meeting the Department's definition can be implemented at a lower cost to the State (still requiring additional funding), delivered by staff trained to facilitate each specific practice, and feasible to be incorporated at a community-based level.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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Finding 2: Research is lacking on programs developed explicitly for anti-gang prevention and intervention.		
OPPAGA Recommendations	Agency Response	Status of Implementation
<p>Identify current research-based programs/pilot implementation of new programs that address risk factors for gangs and focus these programs on serving gang members assessed at high risk of gang membership and recidivism.</p>	<p>The Department of Juvenile Justice will begin piloting Teaching Alternatives to Gangs (TAG): Detention Curriculum (October 2008) with identified Detention centers that utilizes research-based components to address specific risk factors prevalent in high-risk youth. Additionally, the Department will pilot a separate curriculum for Day Treatment that focuses on criminogenic needs and reducing recidivism. The Department plans to evaluate the impact of these curricula during the first quarter of 2009.</p>	<p>Teaching Alternatives to Gangs (TAG): Detention Curriculum The TAG Detention Curriculum design has been completed. Trainers from each of the 9 North Region Detention Centers have been identified and trained in the TAG Detention Curriculum. An implementation schedule has been completed for the North Region, with additional one-day training for each Center trainer, and subsequent one-day training for each staff member at each center who will facilitate TAG lessons with youth (5 staff per Center). A technical assistance specialist has been assigned to each of the 9 Centers to assist with implementation, data collection, and coaching to maintain fidelity. Implementation in the North Region will begin by June 1, 2009.</p> <p>Currently the Department is allocating its resources to the Teaching Alternative to Gangs (TAG): Detention Curriculum implementation (e.g., training of center specific facilitators, delivery of the lessons to youth, and fidelity monitoring of the groups). Within the next six months, the Department will begin to focus on the packaging of the Day Treatment Curriculum and selection of pilot sites across the State.</p>

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OPPAGA Recommendations	Agency Response	Status of Implementation
<p>The Department of Juvenile Justice in conjunction with the Attorney General's office serve as a resource in providing expertise in gang and delinquency intervention research to guide statewide gang strategy.</p>	<p>DJJ is a key participant in the development of the Attorney General's Gang Reduction Strategy. Personnel have been identified to serve as Executive Task Force Members and will continue to serve as a resource and provide expertise in delinquency intervention.</p>	<p>DJJ personnel has attended each of the Attorney General's Gang Strategy Task Force meetings held at key locations throughout the state. DJJ personnel are represented on workgroups and will provide expertise that will develop the implementation plan for the strategy. This plan will address gang intervention. DJJ is currently working with FDLE to integrate the Juvenile Justice Information System with FDLE's InSite database.</p>
Finding 3 Evidence-based programs address the major risk factors for gang membership.		
OPPAGA Recommendations	Agency Response	Status of Implementation
<p>The Department of Juvenile Justice should develop an interagency committee to coordinate with the Department of Education to plan and implement evidence-based programs to address bullying and aggressive behavior problems in elementary school.</p>	<p>DJJ will continue to work with the Department of Education and other community stakeholders to support the implementation of programs that address bullying and aggressive behavior problems in the school setting. DJJ will be represented on the Attorney General's Gang Reduction Education Task Force throughout the state.</p>	<p>DJJ is represented on the Attorney General's Gang Reduction Education workgroups throughout the state. Upon development of the implementation plan, DJJ will supplement current practices with identified tasks from the workgroup.</p>