

Profile of Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Funding: Minnesota

Overview

In Minnesota, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) provides oversight of the federally mandated requirements that accompany participation in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP). Among other responsibilities, JJAC allocates funds appropriated to Minnesota under the JJDP and reports on the state's compliance with the four core requirements of the JJDP. Members of JJAC, who are appointed by the governor, represent all eight congressional districts, all major cultural and national groups in the state, and a mix of urban, suburban and rural communities.

It has been a perennial struggle for Minnesota to allocate juvenile justice funds in the same equitable manner reflected in the JJAC membership. This challenge has become even more acute as federal investment in juvenile justice has declined. Nationally, federal investments in the prevention and reduction of juvenile delinquency have decreased by 50 percent since 2002, while spending on policing, prosecution and incarceration has increased by 60 percent.ⁱ The decrease in juvenile justice spending has been felt even more severely in Minnesota, with federal spending dropping off by 65% in the state over the past four years.

State Summary

FY2014 Federal Investment:
\$631,755

FY2010 Federal Investment:
\$1,814,245

Decrease of 65% over the past four years.

Minnesota has scored some notable successes in spite of the difficult financial times. They have experienced a gradual decrease in the percentage of total youth arrests from 26 percent in 2000 to 21 percent in 2010, yet significant issues remain.ⁱⁱ One such issue is disproportionate minority contact (DMC). The state's Relative Rate Index continues to show significant disparities in system outcomes for white children and children of color. Further decreases in federal support pose a clear threat to the state's ability to retool their juvenile justice system to address DMC, and to equitably and adequately serve all families who come into contact with that system.

The Title II Formula Grants Program and the Title V Local Delinquency Prevention Program

The federal investment in Title II in Minnesota in FY2014 was \$631,755, down from \$1.19 million in 2002, the last year in which the JJDP was reauthorized. Title V funds, meanwhile, were last allocated to Minnesota in 2011.

Minnesota previously used Title V funds to increase community resources that provide alternatives to youth system involvement. Nonetheless, with a combination of Title II and Title

V dollars, JJAC has facilitated many positive outcomes, including those achieved by the following programs:

The Children's Health Care project in Minneapolis provides Advanced Practice Nurses at the Runaway Intervention Program (RIP). These nurses work with sexually exploited runaway youth to help them get back on track developmentally. This grant program originally focused on runaway girls, however the most recent version of this grant program also includes sexually-exploited boys and older girls. This project has received national recognition from a variety of agencies.

In Mankota, meanwhile, Title II funds are used to finance Project Succeed, an effort to help empower Latina women and encourage them to remain in school. The grant project targets children at the middle school level and helps teach participants how to avoid high-risk social behaviors.

In St. Cloud, Title II helps finance efforts to identify cross-over youth (young people who were previously part of the foster care system) and divert them from the juvenile justice system when possible.

The Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program (JABG)

In Minnesota, JJAC also serves as the JABG State Advisory Board and allocates the state's JABG discretionary funds. In FY2014 and FY2015, this funding source was zeroed out. In 2002, this funding source provided \$4.14 million to the state. The elimination of these funds creates potential financial hardship to the numerous state programs that previously received JABG awards.

Notable examples of prior programs include the Leech Lake Tribal Court which received funding to formalize and expand already established judicial collaborations between the Leech Lake Tribal Court and surrounding district courts in the state's Ninth Judicial District. In 2007 and 2008, the tribal court and judicial district entered into a Joint Powers Agreement to address the drug and alcohol epidemic on the Leech Lake Reservation. That agreement -- the first of its kind in the nation -- provided a foundation for the tribal court and judicial district to pilot a bold new approach to addressing the disproportionate contact of Native-American youth in their region with the juvenile justice system. The new program's goals include providing alternatives to adjudication for Native-American youth that emphasize culturally appropriate restorative justice approaches, and reducing the number of Native-American youth in secure detention facilities by at least 30 percent.

ⁱ Coalition for Juvenile Justice (2011). *Safeguarding Our Future: Strategic Investments to Secure the Safety of America's Youth, Families and Communities*. http://juvjustice.org/media/resources/public/resource_617.pdf

ⁱⁱ Minnesota Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (2013). *Annual Report and Recommendations to Governor Mark Dayton and the Minnesota State Legislature*. <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/forms-documents/Documents/2013%20JJAC%20Annual%20Report.pdf>