



Comprehensive Juvenile Justice Reform: Phase I and Phase II

States have adopted and implemented comprehensive juvenile justice reform legislation with support from the collaborative efforts of the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice (CJI). The model that seven states – Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Kentucky, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Utah – have followed is a two phase process: Phase I is supported by Pew in partnership with CJI and involves establishing a task force to analyze data, make legislative policy recommendations, and work with the state legislature to adopt those policy recommendations; Phase II is supported by OJJDP through funding to CJI that helps state agencies implement the package of legislative policies passed in each state.

Both phases of the juvenile justice reform process mirror the work states engage in on adult criminal justice reform efforts through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI), funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). BJA launched the JRI in 2006, and in recent years has aligned its efforts with Pew to support justice reinvestment and effective approaches to corrections and sentencing issues. OJJDP's support for Phase II of juvenile justice reform is a similar collaboration with Pew. The Phase I and Phase II processes for comprehensive juvenile justice reform are described below.

PHASE I: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- A bipartisan, inter-branch task force is established with support from the executive, judicial and legislative branches. This also requires a formal technical assistance request letter to Pew signed by leaders of all three branches of state government
- Stakeholders across the system comprise the membership of each state task force including: judges, staff from probation and juvenile justice agencies, law enforcement, prosecutors, public defenders, county commissioners, human services and child welfare agency representatives, service providers, and legislators

Duties and responsibilities of the task force:

- The task force is charged with comprehensively examining the state's juvenile justice system and developing policy options to accomplish the following:
 - Protect public safety
 - Hold youth accountable for their actions
 - Reduce taxpayer costs

Task Force process supported by Pew and CJI:

- Complete a comprehensive data analysis and system assessment to help the Task Force understand the current drivers of the system and potential areas in need of improvement
- Review juvenile justice research and evidence-based practices on what works to reduce recidivism for youth in the system
- Task Force members engage with community stakeholders to gather input on changes needed to the system

- Following the data analysis and system assessment and stakeholder outreach, the Task Force establishes subgroups to develop policy recommendations in specific areas (e.g., out-of-home placement, community supervision, evidence-based programming)
- The Task Force members build consensus and issue a final report with policy recommendations

Legislative process:

- Legislators on the Task Force draft legislation to reflect policy recommendations in task force report
- With assistance from Pew and CJJ, the legislators introduce the bill, lobby for support, prepare for committee hearings and testimony, and pass legislation, which is then signed by the Governor to become state law

PHASE II: IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATIVE POLICIES

- The state forms a multidisciplinary implementation team with representatives from agencies that are required to change policies and practices based on the legislative change
- Members of a juvenile justice oversight council are appointed, as required by legislation, and the council is charged with overseeing implementation of the reforms

Duties and responsibilities of implementation teams and oversight councils:

- Cross-agency implementation teams are comprised of the staff collaboratively responsible for implementing and operationalizing policy changes
- Inter-branch oversight councils are responsible for overseeing and reporting to state leadership on the reforms and developing, collecting and reviewing performance measures and recidivism data

Transition from Phase I to Phase II led by CJJ:

- Following bill passage, states identify training and technical assistance priorities for CJJ and identify potential challenges to overcome for successful implementation
- CJJ develops policy and agency-specific implementation plans detailing requires tasks and activities necessary to complete full implementation of the legislation
- CJJ works with state agencies to train staff and stakeholders on research that provide skills and tools to support staff in helping youth achieve successful outcomes

Components of CJJ's efforts to build capacity and sustainability within state agencies:

- Implement train-the-trainer processes for staff to understand research and develop skills designed to improve outcomes for youth
- Establish processes to support ongoing implementation fidelity for risk assessment tools and community-based programming
- Routinely report performance and outcome measures to monitor progress of the reforms
- Facilitate stakeholder collaboration and ongoing commitment to juvenile justice reform
- Develop long-term sustainability plans to maintain positive system changes

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