

"Datapalooza"

.....Improving the quality of and access to Juvenile Justice System data

Summary Report **Summary of October 5, 2012 Meeting**

Sponsored by:

**Juvenile Justice Vision 2020, Michigan Department of Human Services,
Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice, and
The State Court Administrative Office**

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Summary Report

I. The Data Dilemma – Overview

The need for reliable and accessible data permeates Michigan’s juvenile justice system on every level. Current juvenile justice data are inconsistent, often inaccurate, difficult to access, and incomplete according to juvenile justice leaders from across the state.

Various types of data are increasingly mandated by funders, required by courts and state agencies to measure program outcomes, and sought by juvenile justice system stakeholders and partners to improve the quality of justice for and services provided to Michigan’s youth. Without reliable communication among the many entities that gather and analyze data, and easy access to the collected data, the juvenile justice system will continue to suffer from the result of poor decision making that often is the consequence of “bad” data. Because juvenile courts, agencies, stakeholders and partners have diverse purposes, needs and separate systems, the data collected are incomplete and difficult to access.

Working together to streamline such processes will serve to improve the accuracy, consistency, and availability of juvenile justice data. Among other things, a single, comprehensive, juvenile justice data repository that satisfies the diverse needs of the courts and associated agencies and organizations will serve to unify juvenile justice organizations and produce the high quality data each entity is seeking.

Nearly 40 juvenile justice leaders representing the juvenile courts, social service agencies, law enforcement, and other interested partners from across Michigan convened in Ottawa County for a “Datapalooza” on October 5, 2012 to begin a dialogue about this challenging and complex issue. Sponsored by Juvenile Justice Vision 2020, the Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice, Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), and the State Court Administrative Office, the purpose of the Datapalooza for Juvenile Justice was to: (1) document juvenile justice system data sources and needs, and (2) begin to develop ways to improve the quality of and access to data.

In preparation for Datapalooza, a survey was disseminated to over 60 Datapalooza invitees from across Michigan in an effort to assess the biggest challenges and concerns regarding juvenile justice data, and gather suggestions for improving the integrity of the data. With a 61% response rate, the survey results clearly reflect the juvenile justice “data dilemma” as described above.

The Datapalooza pre-meeting survey was conducted by Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., and meeting was facilitated by Dr. Wagenknecht-Ivey in partnership with Sandi Metcalf, Project Manager, Juvenile Justice Vision 2020/Juvenile Services Director, 20th Circuit Court and Terri Gilbert, Manager, Child Welfare, Funding and Juvenile Programs, DHS.

Dr. Wagenknecht-Ivey continues to assist in the strategic planning and implementation efforts of Juvenile Justice Vision 2020.

A summary of the Datapalooza meeting follows.

II. Summary of Pre-Meeting Survey

The survey included 3 questions. Below is a summary of the responses.

Q1: What are your organization’s top 3 challenges related to juvenile justice data?

- Internal capacity (e.g., lack staff; low priority; lack of resources to collect and analyze data; lack of staff expertise to collect, analyze, and use data, time constraints)
- Quality/Usefulness of the data (e.g., data are incomplete, inaccurate, not reliable; data not current/entered in a timely manner; jurisdictions don’t all collect or report consistent case information; lack historical data; lack of consistency and standardization; lack of common definitions; can’t use data for comparative analysis)
- Accessing and extracting useful data (e.g., don’t know where data are located or how to retrieve; no single repository or clearinghouse at the state and local levels; systems are cumbersome/not user-friendly; difficult to retrieve useful data; limited access to DHS data; difficult to get mental health, correctional and neglect/abuse data)
- Reporting (e.g., must report data on multiple platforms and formats; redundancies)
- Funding constraints (e.g., lack of staff; untimely data entry; inability to update and improve systems; obsolete case management systems)
- Lack of coordinated/integrated data system(s) (e.g., across branches and agencies; systems don’t talk to one another; limited data sharing)

Q2: What concerns do you have about making changes/improvements to Michigan’s juvenile justice data (e.g., the manner in which it is recorded, stored, shared, accessed, etc.)? (Please list your top 3.)

- Simple/streamlined data entry
- Involvement of local organizations in making changes
- Storage of data (e.g., data must be secure and confidential; improve retention & destruction of data).
- Consistency/quality of the data (e.g., consistency and standardization are needed; data need to be more accurate, complete, and useful; ease of use and interpretation).
- Easy access to data (e.g., easy to generate reports; easy to access data at all levels – county, region, state;)
- Lack of resources/staff to collect, analyze, and manage data
- Misuse/misinterpretation of data (e.g., need to ensure the data are not misused – used again jurisdictions – or misinterpreted).
- Cost & time commitment
- Participation of all jurisdictions/agencies (e.g., it is important for all jurisdictions/ agencies to report some consistent/standardized data)
- Ability of systems to talk to one another (e.g., systems must be integrated)
- Willingness of agencies to collaborate and share data (within and across agencies)

Q3: What suggestions do you have for improving the quality of and/or access to juvenile justice data in Michigan? (Provide up to 3).

1. Develop a central repository/clearinghouse that is user friendly and easily accessible (e.g., central data storage and sharing; or multiple, integrated systems to access shared data).
2. Increase collaboration and communication between “data personnel” and “local court personnel.”
3. Need clear, simple, and uniform reporting – increase consistency and standardization (e.g., use common/standard definitions and categories of data).
4. Improve the quality, integrity, and interpretation of data at all levels (e.g., train staff that input and extract data; improve accuracy and completeness of data; increase knowledge and understanding; use common definitions and categories of data; improve reports).
5. Provide easy access to data for appropriate agencies/professionals (e.g., have clear standards and guidelines on who has access to data and appropriate uses of data – ensure confidentiality; provide various levels of access to stored data; provide web/remote access to tools and reports).
6. Increase the participation of all agencies/jurisdictions in reporting important juvenile justice data (e.g., get agreement from state and local agencies to participate in data quality activities).
7. Enhance/expand data sharing across agencies (e.g., courts need access to DHS data; develop/expand data sharing agreements; better interfaces between systems).
8. Form a juvenile justice data consortium/oversight group; work with universities.

III. Data Mapping and Data Needs

In an effort to complete an inventory of juvenile justice data, identify the sources of that data, and with whom the data are shared, Datapalooza participants worked in small groups to create a data map for their respective organization/organizational type. They also were asked to list their data needs. Table 1 below provides a summary of their work.

**Table 1:
Juvenile Justice Data Maps and Data Needs**

Agency/Organization	Data Inventory	Sources of Data	Data Sharing	Data Needs
Law Enforcement – Michigan State Police	SID numbers, fingerprints, petition data, dispositions, demographics	Local police, juvenile courts, juvenile detention facilities, prosecutors	Police, prosecutors, courts, state and local government agencies, general public	Consistency of format in reporting, quicker reporting of data
Law Enforcement – County Police	Fingerprints, offense data, identification/demographics, parent information, photos	Individuals, parents	Other law enforcement agencies, state, courts – including juvenile probation and detention, prosecutors	Ease of accurate data entry without duplication (more duplication = more errors), better integration with other systems
Courts	Demographics, case, petition, offenses, placements, length of stay, dispositions, service waiting periods, eligibility, cost of fines, restitution, risk assessments, clinical data, assessment data, detention admission, out of state residence, social security number – last 4, birth certificate, school records, drug tests, program or outcome data, SCAO case summary, criminal history, DCCMIS, victim data, tribe, driver’s license, billings, court order, face to face contacts	Police, school, Secretary of State, detention, Community Mental Health, service providers, Department of Human Services, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention/national organizations, local sources, tribes	Secretary of State, Department of Human Services, State Court Administrative Office, prosecutors, Judicial Data Warehouse, county commissioners, schools, the public, funders, media, private foundations, military, parents, attorneys, tribe, law enforcement, other courts, health department, high education institutions, federal agencies/organizations, Community Mental Health	Better quality data, outcomes, performance standards/ measures, standardized operational definitions, better integration of data/centralized locations, cost per case, repository for data, easier access to data, ability to analyze data – create common and custom reports, quality control and ongoing training, real time data, accurate data from other agencies
Department of Human Services	DMC, jail/detention, residential treatment plans, juvenile	JJOLT, SWSS, MICR, MSP - LEIN	JIS, MICR, share the data as much as possible	Arrest, SID numbers, parole, probation,

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Agency/Organization	Data Inventory	Sources of Data	Data Sharing	Data Needs
	justice service plans, legal status, MA status, funding, immunizations, foster providers			prison, adjudications, charges, convictions, petitions, mental health, substance abuse, CHAMPS data, GED, diplomas, school attendance, report cards, special education, testing
Department of Community Health	Physicians, pharmacy, prescription history, benefit plans, location of services, paid, MA, claims, mental health data, substance abuse data, age, placement, death match, BRIDGES eligibility data	CHAMPS, Community Mental Health, Department of Human Services		Juvenile justice data, placement security, program code, service code, legal status, provider code
Michigan Council on Crime & Delinquency/Grand Valley State University	Local, state and national trends data	Public information and dashboards, courts (e.g. competency), Department of Human Services, Michigan Department of Corrections, State Court Administrative Office	To inform public policy and best practice, publications, policy makers, system leaders, communities	Quality, clean, consistent data, outcome indicators for state and local levels, criminogenic factors, recidivism/risk data, outcomes at all decision points, racial equity data, mental health and substance abuse, history in child welfare, number of juveniles waived to the adult system,

**Table 1:
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Agency/Organization	Data Inventory	Sources of Data	Data Sharing	Data Needs
				number of juveniles in the system or placement, outcome data on programs (diversion, interventions, reentry), comparison data to target resources effectively, family support system data, education – school data, number of juvenile justice kids who end up in prison

IV. Improving Juvenile Justice Data in Michigan – Strategy Development

After mapping out juvenile justice data by organization, Datapalooza participants were reassembled into small, multi-disciplinary groups. During this time participants were charged with developing a preliminary strategy for improving juvenile justice data quality and access, by answering three questions: (1) Given the discussion today, what are the biggest “data gaps” across Michigan, in your opinion?; (2) In your opinion, what are the biggest barriers to sharing juvenile justice data in Michigan (within and across agencies and partners)?; and (3) List ideas for overcoming barriers, filling data gaps, and/or improving access to juvenile justice system data in Michigan.

A summary of the information provided by each group is detailed below.

Q.1: Biggest “Data Gaps” Across Michigan

- Aggregate level data does not exist
- Record level data does not exist
- There is a lack of standardized data definitions/data elements
- There are no requirements for an IT infrastructure, a data structure or evaluation criteria
- There is a lack of agreement regarding which data are most important
- DMC data
- Goals are not prioritized
- The use of data is unclear to end users
- The data lack quality
- There is a general inability to see the “big picture” of the youth
- Information exists in silos rather than one comprehensive format
- There is a lack of financial data for eligibility across funding opportunities and services
- There is a lack of service provider outcome and performance data
- There is a lack of data for research/trends

Q2: Biggest Barriers to Sharing Juvenile Justice Data in Michigan

- Language – there is a lack of operational definitions
- Organizations have “ownership” issues
- There is inadequate funding (e.g., for system integration)
- Silos - systems do not communicate with each other
- There are partnership and collaboration challenges
- Legal regulations (e.g. FERPA, HIPAA, privacy laws)
- Organizations lack resources and capacity (e.g., staffing, technical knowledge)
- Bureaucratic red tape/politics
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Concerns about how data will be used for courts, organizations and clients; lack of trust
- Security/confidentiality
- Infrastructure for sustainability of the process and the solution
- Data are submitted but not accessible
- Lack of a unified data system

Q3: Ideas for Overcoming Barriers, Filling Data Gaps and/or Improving Access to Juvenile Justice System Data in Michigan

- Identify why we want to do this, the motivation for doing this, and why it is important (e.g. what’s in it for me)
- Start with one simple question, solve the problem, then move on to the next (learn from this and build a process around it) – take baby steps
- Clearly define goals and the intended purpose for collecting, using and sharing data – identify the end point and build a consensus
- Start with a basic set of agreed upon key data elements (e.g. arrest, truancy, recidivism, number of kids in the system)
- Create an accountability/oversight group to verify the accuracy of data
- Quality control for data dissemination
- Develop/identify a master data sharing agreement
- Continue the dialogue and problem solving among multi-disciplinary teams
- Enhance and expand the Judicial Data Warehouse (or other state warehouse)
- Collaborate and review privacy laws to create a single guide
- Continue educating the legislature
- Take a collaborative approach with decision makers
- Use university resources for research, education, etc.
- Develop integration tools that work and are easily accessible
- Address issues around juvenile justice data sharing – determine the unintended consequences of doing this (and a mechanism to clean the data)
- Ensure money is allocated for resources to collect and analyze data (and seek legislative mandates for these processes)

V. The Future of Juvenile Justice Data in Michigan – Next Steps

After mapping out juvenile justice data, identifying data needs, and developing a preliminary strategy for improving the quality of and access to juvenile justice system data, Datapalooza participants indicated they are willing to continue this initiative and offered a great deal of insight regarding possible next steps. Their suggestions, outlined below, reflect the strong desire and commitment of the juvenile courts and juvenile justice agencies, stakeholders and partners to work toward a solution for this “data dilemma”.

Next Steps – Suggestions for Moving Forward

- Research the methods of other states that may have successfully dealt with this problem, learn from their successes and failures, anticipate any potential obstacles Michigan may face and determine their impact.
- Identify, document, and consolidate overlapping juvenile justice data initiatives.
- Complete an analysis of all systems and of the data infrastructure; create a schematic or matrix to catalog this information.
- Summarize the data we are already sharing.
- Start basic, first look at data in relation to serving the individual child vs. data relating to the aggregate.

- Seek out those who are currently analyzing data to determine the unknowns in this process; common definitions may already be established and their insight could be very helpful.
- Develop and define what juvenile justice data should look like in the Judicial Data Warehouse, or other data repository.
- Review unified data sharing agreement structures, select or create a model that will work for this process.
- Work to establish trust among organizations through events like the Datapalooza and by adopting a uniform/standardized data sharing agreement.
- Continue to have open conversations and planning opportunities, across agencies, to develop joint goals and strategies.
- Develop a strategic planning process (which could be modeled after the process used for Juvenile Justice Vision 20/20) to determine collective goals, identify strategies, and establish action teams for juvenile justice data. This process should begin at the local level.