



**A Study of Juvenile Review Boards  
(Supported by Youth Service Bureaus in Connecticut)**

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**Report Written By:**

*Joel Rosenberg, Executive Director, AHM Youth & Family Services, Inc.  
Christopher Montes, Administrator, New Britain Youth & Family Services*

**Introduction**

**The information found in this study was collected via a telephone survey conducted by the Connecticut Youth Services Association during the week of September 17, 2007. This was a cross sectional survey; a snapshot of what is happening at the moment within the Youth Service Bureau system in Connecticut. Fact based responses were collected directly from 84 participant agencies, representing 85% of the Youth Service Bureaus statewide. The survey was recorded in real time by three members of the Connecticut Youth Services Association's Board of Directors. This survey was developed based upon a collection of questions presented to the Connecticut Youth Services Association by the Connecticut Legislative FWSN Advisory Board.**

**Background information on the history of Juvenile Review Boards in Connecticut**

**In 2005, the Connecticut Youth Services Association formed a statewide Juvenile Review Board Advisory Panel, which is presently chaired by two Youth Service Bureau Directors. Along with a staff member from the Chief State's Attorney's Office, this advisory panel has assisted a broad range of urban, suburban and rural communities from across the state, establish new Juvenile Review Boards.**

**The advisory panel provides in-kind support to municipalities where Youth Service Bureaus exist or are being formed, with resources and technical assistance; including workshops, training manuals, outlines, sample contracts, a law enforcement ticketing system to refer youth to the JRB, and best practices guide to model the Youth Service Bureau concept for Juvenile Review Boards in Connecticut. In the near future the JRB Advisory Panel hopes to complete a guide for measuring the effectiveness of the diversion process.**

**During the last two years the Connecticut Youth Services Association has been approached by a number of state leaders, legislative committees and state agencies that are interested in the Youth Service Bureau model of Juvenile Review Boards. Historically, this JRB model is unique in that the Youth Service Bureau plays a critical role as a "service bridge" among families, police departments, school systems, juvenile court, human service departments, mental health delivery systems, and DCF.**



**The system of Juvenile Review Boards in Connecticut dates back some forty years. The earliest review boards in Connecticut were directly associated with language contained in state statute coinciding with the creation of community based Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) offering diversion alternatives for at-risk youth. Some of the earliest examples of Juvenile Review Boards were found in communities such as Enfield and East Hartford where they still exist today.**

**The 2007 survey explores a number of systems within each of the 84 participating communities that relate directly to youth at-risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system and child protective services, (FWSN). The report also examines the direct relationship between youth service bureaus and other service partners in communities where Juvenile Review Boards exist in Connecticut.**

**While the term Juvenile Review Board is not a patented license, the model referred to in Connecticut has for more than forty years most often been closely associated with the local Youth Service Bureau. In those cases, the local Youth Service Bureaus continue to play the lead or supportive role in the administration and management of Juvenile Review Board cases relative to local police departments, school and courts.**

#### **Creating Youth Service Bureaus and the intent of “diversion” services**

**The following text from CGS 10-19m defines the role of a Youth Service Bureau. The text references diversion services that helped define the creation of the YSB Juvenile Review Board model. The cornerstone of this legislation that created Youth Service Bureaus was the concept of developing municipally based youth programs that would divert children and teens from the juvenile justice system through a broad range of community based prevention, intervention, and youth development services.**

**Today Youth Service Bureaus in Connecticut are regulated by CGS Sec. 10-19m, referred to as laws and regulations monitored by the State Board of Education. According to the statute:**

- (a) For the purposes of this section, "youth" shall mean a person from birth to eighteen years of age. Any one or more municipalities or any one or more private youth serving organizations, designated to act as agents of one or more municipalities, may establish a multipurpose youth service bureau for the purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of services, including prevention and intervention programs for delinquent, pre-delinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youth referred to such bureau by schools, police, juvenile courts, adult courts, local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals.**

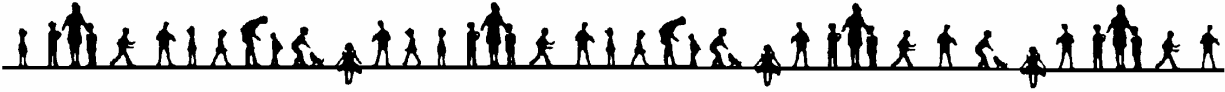


**A youth service bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services.**

**(b) A youth service bureau established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section may provide, but shall not be limited to the delivery of, the following services: (1) Individual and group counseling; (2) parent training and family therapy; (3) work placement and employment counseling; (4) alternative and special educational opportunities; (5) recreational and youth enrichment programs; (6) outreach programs to insure participation and planning by the entire community for the development of regional and community-based youth services; (7) preventive programs, including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention; and (8) programs that develop positive youth involvement. Such services shall be designed to meet the needs of youth by the diversion of troubled youth from the justice system as well as by the provision of opportunities for all youth to function as responsible members of their communities.**

**(c) The Commissioner of Education shall adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 54, establishing minimum standards for such youth service bureaus and the criteria for qualifying for state cost-sharing grants, including, but not limited to, allowable sources of funds covering the local share of the costs of operating such bureaus, acceptable in-kind contributions and application procedures.**

**Said commissioner shall, on December 1, 1979, and annually thereafter, report to the General Assembly on the referral or diversion of children under the age of sixteen years from the juvenile justice system and on the referral or diversion of children between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years from the court system. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, the number of times any child is so diverted, the number of children diverted, the type of service provided to any such child, by whom such child was diverted, the ages of the children diverted and such other information and statistics as the General Assembly may request from time to time. Any such report shall contain no identifying information about any particular child.**



### **Survey Results:**

**Of the 100 youth service bureaus in Connecticut, 84 participated in this survey. This represents an 85% response to the survey.**

1) Does your community *presently* have a Juvenile Review Board?

**Of the 84 bureaus that participated in the survey 56 (66%) responded “yes.”**

**Andover, Hebron, Marlborough**

**Ansonia**

**Bloomfield**

**Branford**

**Bristol**

**Canton**

**Cheshire**

**Clinton**

**Colchester**

**Coventry**

**Cromwell**

**Durham-Middlefield**

**East Hartford**

**East Haven**

**Ellington, Stafford, Somers**

**Enfield**

**Farmington**

**Granby**

**Guilford**

**Haddam-Killingworth**

**Hartford**

**Madison**

**Meriden**

**Middletown**

**New Britain**

**New Haven**

**New Milford**

**Newington**

**Newtown**

**North Haven**

**Norwalk**

**Norwich**

**Old Saybrook**

**Orange**

**Portland**

**Rocky Hill**

**Shelton**

**Simsbury**

**South Windsor**

**Southbury-Middlebury**

**Southington**

**Stamford**

**Stonington**

**Suffield**

**Torrington**

**Tri-Town**

**Vernon**

**Waterbury**

**West Hartford**

**Wethersfield**

**Windham**

**Windsor**

**Windsor Locks**

**Groton**

**Ledyard**

**Plainville**

2) Approximately how old is your review board?

**Of the 56 bureaus that have a JRB, a range was reported from less than 1 year to 42 years.**



3) If your community has one, does your YSB provide any staff support for the JRB?

**Of the 56 bureaus that have a JRB, 53 responded “yes” to providing staff support.**

4) If you answered yes to the last question, what role? (Check those that apply)

**43 Administer the Juvenile Review Board**

**42 Provide Case Management Services**

**48 Are Review Board Members**

**3 Other**

5) If your community does not have a JRB, are you interested in starting one?

**Of the 84 bureaus that participated in the survey, 28 did not have a JRB. Of those 28 bureaus, 18 responded “yes” that they would be interested in starting one. Those communities include:**

**Darien-The Depot**

**East Haddam**

**Greenwich**

**Hamden**

**Housatonic**

**Lyme**

**Mansfield**

**Milford**

**Montville**

**Naugatuck**

**New Canaan**

**New London**

**Stratford**

**Tolland**

**United Services**

**Waterford**

**West Haven**

**Westport**

6) If you answered yes to the last question within what time frame do you hope to establish a review board?

**5 One year**

**6 Two years**

**1 Three years**

**6 No timeframe**

7) If you are interested in establishing a JRB, what type of assistance from CYSA would be helpful to start one?

**14 Start up funding**

**15 Advocacy**

**18 Access to policies**

**18 Procedures**

**18 Best practices**

**18 Training**



8) If CYSA sponsored a statewide conference on Juvenile Review Boards, would your agency send one or more participants?

**Of the 84 bureaus that participated in the survey, 64 responded “yes.”**

9) Does your JRB or other diversion program handle delinquency, FWSN, or YIC cases?

**Of the 84 bureaus that responded to the survey, including those that offer alternative diversion programs:**

a) Delinquency cases	51 yes
b) FWSN cases	39 yes
c) YIC cases	23 yes

10) Does your youth service bureau either provide or offer in partnership with another agency any of the following services for children and teens in your community? Please check yes or no.

<b>Family Counseling</b>	<b>54 yes</b>
<b>Individual Counseling, (children or teens)</b>	<b>53 yes</b>
<b>Crisis Intervention Service</b>	<b>65 yes</b>
<b>Psychological Evaluations</b>	<b>19 yes</b>
<b>Medication Consultation</b>	<b>15 yes</b>
<b>Gender Specific Programs</b>	<b>55 yes</b>
<b>Gender specific trauma treatment/services</b>	<b>16 yes</b>
<b>Partial hospital program</b>	<b>3 yes</b>
<b>In home mental health services</b>	<b>29 yes</b>
<b>Respite care program</b>	<b>8 yes</b>
<b>Residential treatment program</b>	<b>5 yes</b>
<b>Substance Abuse Assessment</b>	<b>32 yes</b>
<b>Substance Abuse Treatment Services</b>	<b>26 yes</b>
<b>Substance Abuse Prevention Program</b>	<b>67 yes</b>
<b>Violence Prevention Program</b>	<b>50 yes</b>
<b>Problem Sex Offender Treatment Services</b>	<b>5 yes</b>
<b>Teen Pregnancy Prevention</b>	<b>35 yes</b>
<b>Truancy Program</b>	<b>33 yes</b>
<b>Tutoring Program</b>	<b>35 yes</b>
<b>Mentoring Program</b>	<b>54 yes</b>
<b>After School Activities</b>	<b>68 yes</b>
<b>Summer Activities</b>	<b>65 yes</b>
<b>Community Service Program</b>	<b>69 yes</b>
<b>Positive Social Activities</b>	<b>70 yes</b>
<b>Police/Youth Relationship Program</b>	<b>48 yes</b>
<b>Family Mediation</b>	<b>32 yes</b>
<b>Peer Mediation Program</b>	<b>22 yes</b>
<b>Child Welfare Program</b>	<b>54 yes</b>
<b>Parent Education Program</b>	<b>68 yes</b>



Continue Question 10: Does your youth service bureau either provide or offer in partnership with another agency any of the following services for children and teens in your community? Please check yes or no.

<b>Host Homes/Shelter Program</b>	<b>8 yes</b>
<b>Youth Employment Program</b>	<b>51 yes</b>
<b>Independent Living Skills Program</b>	<b>17 yes</b>
<b>Educational Advocacy</b>	<b>59 yes</b>
<b>Multilingual Services</b>	<b>20 yes</b>
<b>Resiliency Skills Building</b>	<b>46 yes</b>

**In conclusion, the YSB Juvenile Review Board model uses a multi-faceted approach to working in partnership with law enforcement, schools, DCF and the juvenile court system to tailor diversions to the needs of the “whole child.” Each case is unique, and as such these local Juvenile Review Boards by design can evaluate all at-risk behaviors associated with the individual and family. What may work in one community may not work in another; yet the YSB, as the lead agency for community based services to youth has the capability to appropriately refer, or in most cases provide, services to each Juvenile Review Board referred youth.**

**This is one of the most successful attributes to the YSB Juvenile Review Board model. Youth Service Bureaus have a demonstrated history and capacity for adapting to the needs of the community and as such have modeled Juvenile Review Boards in such a way to meet the needs of the families served in each community or neighborhood served by these boards.**

**For additional information, please contact members of the CYSA Juvenile Review Board Advisory Panel: Joel Rosenberg, Executive Director, AHM Youth & Family Services, Inc., 1-860-228-9488, Christopher Montes, Administrator, New Britain Youth & Family Services, 860-826-3370, or Francis J. Carino, Supervisory Juvenile Prosecutor, Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice, 860-258-5800.**