

# Dennis M. Mondoro Probation and Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Project

## INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

The RFK National Resource Center continues its extraordinary partnership with six local jurisdictions, through the support of a three-year grant awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), to enhance probation and juvenile justice system performance. There is one year remaining in the project funding cycle. The six jurisdictions selected to participate in the **Dennis M. Mondoro Probation and Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Project** (Mondoro Project) are:

### Cohort One:

- Clark County, Nevada (Las Vegas)
- Fairfax County, Virginia
- Lancaster County, Nebraska (Lincoln)

### Cohort Two:

- Dutchess County, New York
- Greene County, Missouri
- King County, Washington (Seattle)

Our work within the six Mondoro Project sites is largely guided by the [Probation System Review Guidebook, 3rd Edition](#) (Tuell and Harp, 2019). In addition to the Mondoro Project and our OJJDP-funded work, the RFK National Resource Center continues to work closely with other communities throughout the country. Currently, these partnerships include supporting the implementation of recommendations resulting from their respective Probation System Reviews in the following jurisdictions:

- Cobb County, Georgia
- Hennepin County, Minnesota (Minneapolis)
- Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

To accommodate challenges presented by COVID-19, we have continued to provide our technical assistance to this diverse portfolio of jurisdictions through a combination of on-site (where possible to do so in a safe and responsible manner) and intensive off-site virtual conference activities that rely on system, agency, community, and youth and family collaborations. These collaborative efforts promote systemic change to ensure fair, equitable, and just enhancements that positively impact youth outcomes and their communities. There are two critically important principles that distinguish our work and drive the remarkable progress made in these jurisdictions:

- First, our approach is reliant on building positive partnerships with all stakeholders. We believe in collaboration to achieve sustainable and measurable change.
- Second, we seek to support the unique solutions that honor the environmental and contextual factors that exist within each jurisdiction.

Our historical and current jurisdictional partners will attest that we spend little time pontificating about where "you have it wrong," choosing instead to facilitate and support self-identification of strengths, challenges, and opportunities to improve, and then getting to work. Our current work in Las Vegas, Nevada and Seattle, Washington does not look like the efforts in Greene County, Missouri or Dutchess County, New York. Our field-based technical assistance highlights the research and science-informed practices that provide the highest likelihood of success. We encourage the development of detailed policies and procedures that are applied to every key decision point impacting the efficiency and efficacy of the juvenile justice system and critical stakeholders in each individual jurisdiction.

Our experience in more than 40 jurisdictions suggests this approach is desirable – and more importantly, the progress, changes, and outcomes are producing a body of evidence that strongly suggests we are enhancing



*The Dennis M. Mondoro Probation and Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Project, named after our late OJJDP colleague to honor his living spirit.*

*The RFK National Resource Center provides support to state and local jurisdictions by offering training, presentations, and consultation using proven frameworks, tools, and resources. Contact us to learn how we can support your community!*

[Contact Us!](#)

probation and juvenile justice system transformation. The following list of impact areas demonstrates where these nine jurisdictions are making incredible advances through their commitment to collaboration with all stakeholders and the creation of unique – and replicable – solutions that improve outcomes for their youth, families, and communities. We hope you will learn from these jurisdictions and welcome the chance to speak with you further about your progress or interest in achieving enhanced positive impacts in your probation and juvenile justice system.

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### **Impacted Practice Areas**

*The list of practice areas that have been enhanced and are being implemented with the capacity to sustain and quantitatively/qualitatively measure progress include:*

- Enhancing alternative responses and diversion
- Establishing multi-disciplinary collaborations with a shared mission and goals
- Developing new adolescent development training curricula requiring proficiency of understanding and application in practice
- Improved partnerships with law enforcement, schools, child welfare, and their community partners
- Adherence to research-based family engagement principles and practices
- Implementing innovative protocols to address active trauma symptoms through routine screening and follow-up assessments where indicated
- Adjusting court docketing and case processing procedures and timelines
- Applying continuous quality improvement methods to the effective and consistent use of risks-needs-responsivity instruments for case planning
- Applying continuous quality improvement methods to the effective and consistent use of all new programs and practices across the probation, court, and juvenile justice systems
- Analyzing court orders and probation condition documents and implementing recommended improvements
- Implementing innovative case management approaches that provide a balance of supervisory oversight and focus on positive behavior change
- Creating improved early case closure procedures that prioritize the proven reduction of risk to reoffend
- Improved community partnerships
- Sustainable collection of data that quantitatively informs the impact on youth and family outcomes and examines fidelity to practice and system performance
- Application of Implementation Science principles and practices to create an infrastructure that ensures sustainable and measurable progress of policy and practice changes

We applaud the exceptional work of all of our partners in these nine jurisdictions. We firmly believe that if you reach out to your colleagues in these jurisdictions you can establish peer-to-peer relationships that will inform and support your progress toward improved youth outcomes and system performance. We welcome the chance to answer your questions and serve as the liaison between you and these jurisdictions.

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### **About Us**

Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice, led by Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, uses proven models, frameworks, tools, resources and the best available research to serve local, state, and national leaders, practitioners, and youth-serving agencies to improve system performance and outcomes for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. RFK National Resource Center focuses primarily on youth with prior or current involvement in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (dual status youth), the review and improvement of juvenile probation systems, and the use of a model framework to address the state and national laws and policies governing the exchange and sharing of data, information, and records for youth and families. To learn more about us and how we can serve your jurisdiction, please visit [www.rfknrcjj.org](http://www.rfknrcjj.org).

### **Every Child Deserves a Childhood**

Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps is a private, non-profit licensed child welfare agency providing community-based services, education, foster care and adoption, residential treatment, and juvenile justice programming to individuals and families in crisis. Our programs are focused on helping children and adolescents deal with past hurts, develop self-esteem, and have a chance for a brighter future as contributing members of society. All that we do at RFK Children's Action Corps is based on the belief that every child deserves the chance to lead a happy, healthy, and productive life. For more information and to get involved, visit [www.rfkchildren.org](http://www.rfkchildren.org).