Introducing the New Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines

Developed by:
National Drug Court Institute

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Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines
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• *Treatment-oriented* to focus on substance use disorders and mental health

• *Evidence-based* to support JDTCs identify the strategies most likely to result in positive outcomes

• Guided by *adolescent development* and *family engagement*
WHAT LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JDTC GUIDELINES?

Part 1: Research on Adolescent Substance Use and Juvenile Courts

• Substance use disorders (SUD) are prevalent among adolescents, with over 1 million adolescents identifying a SUD in 2014.

  o While risk-taking and experimentation may be a part of normative adolescent development, SUDs can have particularly damaging consequences for the developing adolescent brain.

• Youth with substance abuse issues also often come in contact with juvenile courts.

  o In 2013, 13% of juvenile delinquency cases involved a drug charge as the most serious offense.
  o SUD are prevalent among youth involved in the juvenile justice system, projected at 34% based on diagnostic assessments aggregated from 57 sites/9,818 youth.

• Formal juvenile court processing can sometimes exacerbate negative behaviors instead of improving outcomes.
Beginning in the early 1990s, to address the problem of justice-involved youth with substance use disorders (SUD), adult drug court models were adapted for juveniles by placing an emphasis on family-based and developmentally-appropriate services for adolescents.

- **Juvenile Drug Courts (JDC): Strategies in Practice (2003)** was developed by expert consensus to serve as a framework for planning, implementing, and operating a JDC.

- Overall, evaluations regarding the effectiveness of juvenile drug courts has been inconclusive - there is a lack of rigorous research and consistent implementation.
**The Types of Information in the JDTC Guidelines**

- **Map of Objectives and Guideline Statements:**
  - categorizes and organizes the evidence-based Guideline Statements according to a set of objectives
  - designed to allow Web navigation

- **Guideline Statements:**
  - brief, action-oriented, derive directly from research
  - must directly reference a finding from one of the research reviews with an Evidence Quality Credibility Rating of “High Quality” or “Moderate Quality

- **Guideline Statement Contextual Information:** definitional or descriptive statements that clarify the Guideline Statement and include summaries of:
  - the research/evidence that underlies each guideline statement
  - the convergence of practice themes that emerged from the assessment of current policies and practices
  - practice and implementation considerations
Focus on effectively addressing substance use and criminogenic needs to decrease future offending and substance use and to increase positive outcomes.

1.1 Team Committed to JDTC’s Philosophy and Practice
1.2 Team Member Roles Clearly Allocated
1.3 Involve Local Schools
1.4 Access to High-quality TTA
1.5 Engage Family Throughout JDTC Process
1.6 Interpreters for Non-English-Speaking Families

2.4 Great from JDTC Process in Traditional Juvenile Court

2.1 Eligibility Criteria
2.5 Equity of Access

2.3 Screening for Substance Use Disorder
2.2 Validated State Assessment

3.1 Collaboration With Parent/Guardians
3.2 Judges are Nonjudgmental and Fair
3.3 Consistent Application of Requirements
3.4 Ongoing Review of Progress

4.1 Assessments of Youth and Parent Needs
4.2 Plan Individualized and Culturally Appropriate

5.1 Incentives & Sanctions
5.4 Address Youth’s Needs

6.1 Continuum of Treatment Resources
6.2 Evidence-based Treatments for All Identified Needs

6.5 Participants Equipped to Practice Prosocial Skills

7.1 Monitor and Track Program Completion and Termination
7.2 Termination Only as Last Resort
7.3 Performance Measures

Healthy Adversity Development
Reduced Substance Use
Reduced Delinquency
Reduced Delinquency
Healthy Relationships
Educational Success
Employment Stability
Personal Well-being

Ineligible Eligible
The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has released the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines.

Juvenile drug treatment courts (JDTs) are designed for youth with substance use disorders who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. The new guidelines provide juvenile courts with an evidence-based, treatment-oriented approach that emphasizes family engagement, and addresses the substance use and often co-occurring mental health disorders experienced by the youth.

OJJDP partnered with a research team, experts in the field, and other federal agencies to develop the guidelines to support judges and professional court staff, young people with substance use disorders, and their families.

The guidelines are organized into key objectives with corresponding guideline statements, and include rigorous supporting research and considerations for implementation.

Additional research reports, the research translation process, the list of partners, and frequently asked questions can be accessed in the Supporting Information.

Register for a three-part webinar series to explore the new Guidelines in detail.

Click on the objectives in the graphic below to navigate through the content of the guidelines or review the complete Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines.

1. Objective 1. Focus the JDTC philosophy and practice on effectively addressing substance use and criminogenic needs to decrease future offending and substance use and to increase positive outcomes.

2. Objective 2. Ensure equitable treatment for all youth by adhering to eligibility criteria and conducting an initial screening.

3. Objective 3. Provide a JDTC process that engages the full JDTC team and follows procedures fairly.

4. Objective 4. Conduct comprehensive needs assessments that inform individualized case management.

5. Objective 5. Implement contingency management, case management, and community supervision strategies effectively.

6. Objective 6. Describe participants to evidence-based substance use treatment, to other services, and for prosocial connections.

7. Objective 7. Monitor and track program completion and termination.
Objective 1: Focus the JDTC philosophy and practice on effectively addressing substance use and criminogenic needs to decrease future offending and substance use and to increase positive outcomes.

Click on each circle below to navigate through the guidelines.

1.1 Team Committed to JDTC’s Philosophy and Practice
1.2 Team Member Roles Clearly Articulated
1.3 Involve Local Schools
1.4 Access To High-quality TTA
1.5 Engage Family Throughout JDTC Process
1.6 Interpreters for Non-English-Speaking Families

Guideline 1.1
The JDTC team should be composed of stakeholders committed to the court’s philosophy and practice, and to ongoing program and system improvement. The team should include collaborative relationships with community partners.

Overview
JDTCs are, by design, problem-solving agencies. Within this framework, various stakeholders collaborate to find innovative and effective strategies to address problems pertaining to specific JDTC cases.

Evidence
Organizations that serve youth across several systems that identify common goals, agree to share resources, and coordinate effectively through a strong stakeholder team experience greater success with their interventions.

Practice Considerations
There are a number of components that are important for building a comprehensive approach to service coordination. The role of the court in coordinating services should be clearly spelled out in the JDTC policy manual. The judge’s role in leading the coordination of services is a critical component of a comprehensive approach. A steering (or policy) committee can provide a forum to discuss issues pertaining to the coordination of services. Case-level service coordinators are needed. The court should monitor service agencies’ compliance with court referrals. Creative approaches should be used to provide services, and it is important to provide cross-training so court staff (including the judge) and service providers can understand the context in which each person operates.

Additional Resources
For more information about service coordination and JDTCs, visit:

- Juvenile Drug Court Information Center
- OJJDP’s National Training and Technical Assistance Center
- Multi-System Collaboration Training and Technical Assistance Program

For more information on this guideline, refer to page 10 in Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines.

Next Guideline
7 MAIN JDTC OBJECTIVES

1. Effectively address substance use and criminogenic needs
2. Ensure equitable treatment by adhering to eligibility criteria and conducting initial screenings
3. Engage full team and follow procedures fairly
4. Comprehensive needs assessments and individualized case management
5. Effective implementation of contingency management, case management, and community supervision strategies
6. Refer participants to evidence-based substance use treatment, to other services, and for prosocial connections
7. Monitor and track program completion and termination
OBJECTIVE 1:
FOCUS JDTC PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE ON EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING SUBSTANCE USE AND CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS TO DECREASE FUTURE OFFENDING AND SUBSTANCE USE AND TO INCREASE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

• Importance of a multidisciplinary team - including local school personnel and other community partners - committed to 1) JDTC’s philosophy and practice and 2) ongoing program/system improvement

• Roles for each team member are clearly articulated
OBJECTIVE 1, CONTINUED:
FOCUS JDTC PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE ON EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING
SUBSTANCE USE AND CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS TO DECREASE FUTURE
OFFENDING AND SUBSTANCE USE AND TO INCREASE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

• Ongoing team training and technical assistance
  o Adolescent development
  o Cultural competence
  o Screening and assessment for substance use and criminogenic needs
  o Nature of substance use disorders and dynamics of recovery
  o Evidence-based practices in substance use treatment
  o Effective case management, development of treatment plans
  o Family engagement, working with caregivers through trauma-informed lens
  o Effective incentives and sanctions
  o Purpose of each intervention, evidence of its value, and how it aligns with the
    JDTC mission
OBJECTIVE 1, CONTINUED:

FOCUS JDTC PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE ON EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING SUBSTANCE USE AND CRIMINOGENIC NEEDS TO DECREASE FUTURE OFFENDING AND SUBSTANCE USE AND TO INCREASE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

• Focus on removing educational barriers by including schools as team members

• Engage parents/guardians throughout the court process and address specific barriers to full engagement
OBJECTIVE 2:
ENSURE EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ALL YOUTH BY ADHERING TO ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND CONDUCTING AN INITIAL SCREENING

• Eligibility criteria should include: substance use disorder, 14 years or older, and moderate/high risk of reoffending

• Screen and assess using validated risk assessment and substance use instruments

• Ensure that eligibility criteria result in equity of access for all genders, racial/ethnic groups, and sexual orientations
**OBJECTIVE 3:**
**PROVIDE A JDTC PROCESS THAT ENGAGES THE FULL TEAM AND Follows PROCEDURES FAIRLY**

- Work collaboratively with parents/guardians to encourage active participation in court hearings, supervision and discipline of their children, and treatment programs
- Judges should interact with participants in a nonjudgmental and procedurally fair manner and be consistent when applying program requirements
- JDTC should meet weekly to review each participant’s progress and consider incentives and sanctions based on progress across all aspects of the treatment plan
OBJECTIVE 4:
CONDUCT COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENTS
THAT INFORM INDIVIDUALIZED CASE MANAGEMENT

• Needs Assessments should include information on:
  • substance use
  • criminogenic needs
  • mental health needs
  • history of trauma or abuse
  • well-being needs and strengths
  • parental drug use, mental health needs, and parenting skills

• Case management and treatment plans should be:
  • Individualized
  • culturally appropriate
  • Based on assessment of the youth’s and family’s needs
OBJECTIVE 5:
IMPLEMENT CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT, CASE MANAGEMENT, AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION STRATEGIES EFFECTIVELY

• Incentives should equal or exceed sanctions

• Participants should feel that assignment of incentives and sanctions is fair
  • Consistent
  • individualized

• Financial fees and detention considered ONLY after other graduated sanctions have been attempted

• Use detention:
  • sparingly
  • only for short periods of time
  • only when a youth is a danger to him/herself or the community, or may abscond
Focus on addressing needs in a holistic manner rather than on detecting program violations.

Strong focus on behavioral health treatment and family intervention.

Address failure to appear for a drug test or tampering with drug test results with immediate, graduated sanctions.

Consider risk, needs, and responsivity (RNR) when responding to any return to substance use.
OBJECTIVE 6:
REFER PARTICIPANTS TO EVIDENCE-BASED SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT, TO OTHER SERVICES, AND FOR PROSOCIAL CONNECTIONS

• Use continuum of evidence-based substance use treatment resources, from outpatient to residential

• Providers should administer treatment modalities that have been shown to improve outcomes for youth with substance use issues and maintain fidelity to the programmatic models

  Examples:
  • Assertive continuing care
  • Behavioral therapy
  • Cognitive behavioral therapy
  • Family therapy
  • Motivational enhancement therapy
  • Motivational enhancement therapy/cognitive behavioral therapy
  • Multiservice packages
OBJECTIVE 6, CONTINUED:
REFER PARTICIPANTS TO EVIDENCE-BASED SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT, TO OTHER SERVICES, AND FOR PROSOCIAL CONNECTIONS

• Make appropriate use of evidence-based treatment services that address the risks and needs identified in the case plan:
  • trauma
  • quality of family life
  • educational challenges
  • criminal thinking

• Encourage and assist participants to practice prosocial skills:
  • work
  • education
  • relationships
  • community
  • health
  • creative activities
OBJECTIVE 7: MONITOR AND TRACK PROGRAM COMPLETION AND TERMINATION

• Court and treatment practices should facilitate equal outcomes for all participants – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation
  • Retention
  • Duration of involvement
  • Treatment progress
  • Positive court outcomes

• Termination from JDTC:
  • only after the team has carefully deliberated
  • only as last resort after full implementation of behavioral contingencies
OBJECTIVE 7, CONTINUED:
MONITOR AND TRACK PROGRAM COMPLETION AND TERMINATION

• Routinely collect data

Examples
• family related factors
• recidivism
• drug/alcohol use
• educational enrollment
• employment
• involvement in prosocial activities
• program completion/termination
• Test Guidelines in several jurisdictions
  o If implemented exactly as written, what are outcomes compared to business-as-usual?
  o Movement toward standard JDTC implementation practices
Questions?

Vanessa Price, Division Director
National Drug Court Institute
vprice@ndci.org
Guidelines-Specific Resources

Kierra Zoellick, Program Associate

Justice Programs Office at American University
OJJDP’s JDTC Guidelines

*JDTC Guidelines* website:

National Training and Technical Assistance Center (NTTAC):
[https://www.nttac.org/](https://www.nttac.org/)
JDTC Guidelines TTA Initiative

JPO at AU (technical assistance) & NADCP (training)

• **Technical Assistance**, office-based and site-based
  ▫ Self-Analysis Tool based on the *JDTC Guidelines*
  ▫ TA Tailored to jurisdiction
  ▫ Strategic Planning

• **Training**, local, regional, and web-based focused on implementing the *JDTC Guidelines*
**JDTC Guidelines TTA Initiative**

Access our website for resources and to request Guidelines-specific training and technical assistance.

[www.au-jdtc.org](http://www.au-jdtc.org)
Follow us!

Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts Initiative

@JuvDTC

# JDTC

www.au-jdtc.org
What’s Next?

Phase 2 - Testing

- **Proposed Objectives of the Studies Planned:**
  - Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of the JDTC model (i.e., based on the *JDTC Guidelines*)
  - Examine whether (and how) the *Guidelines* matter for JDTC practice
  - Examine whether (and how) the *Guidelines* matter for JDTC outcomes
Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Interactive Listserv

Join the JDTC Interactive Listserv!
Connect to the juvenile drug treatment court community to:

- Ask questions of others working in the field
- Assist programs in problem-solving
- Share resources that are unique to juveniles

To sign up, send an e-mail to jdtc@american.edu with "Subscribe to listserv" in the subject line.
Thank you!

JUSTICE PROGRAMS OFFICE  
SCHOOL of PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Office phone: (202) 885-2875  
E-mail: jdtc@american.edu

Zoë Root  
zoeroot@american.edu

Kierra Zoellick  
zoellick@american.edu

Anna Koozmin  
koozmin@american.edu

Twitter: @AU_JPO  
facebook.com/aujpo  
www.american.edu/spa/jpo