A Community-Academic Collaboration to Reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System

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Abstract

This article outlines a community-academic collaboration to mobilize government and community agencies to take strategic actions that will contribute to a reduction of disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system in Guilford County, North Carolina. Since July 2004, a cohesive, representative, and action-oriented committee (including representatives from local law enforcement agencies, the school system, departments of social services, mental health and public health, the district court, nonprofit organizations, and parents of court-involved youth) has executed Guilford County's DMC Planning Grant. A Project Management Team based at University of North Carolina at Greensboro's Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships has served as the central convening, organizing, and planning arm for the project.

Introduction

Minorities represent approximately one-third of the United States' juvenile population, but they account for nearly two-thirds of its youth detentions, according to the latest figures provided by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention *(Hsia, Bridges, and McHale 2004)*. Numerous studies conducted at both the national *(Leiber 2002; OJJDP 1999; Poe-Yamagata and Jones 2000)* and state *(Bishop and Frazier 1996; Ekpunobi et al. 2002; Pope et al. 1996)* levels consistently identify systemwide problems of disproportionate minority contact (DMC).

Since 1988, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act has required states participating in the Formula Grants Program to determine if minority youth are being confined at a disproportionate rate relative to their representation in the general population *(Public Law 93-415, 42 USC 5601 et seq.)* and, if so, to develop and implement plans to reduce DMC rates. In 1992, congressional amendments elevated this requirement to a "core protection" for youth and tied states' eligibility for future funding to compliance *(Hsia, Bridges, and McHale 2004)*. Despite these mandates, little systematic attention has been given to examining and documenting

effective ways of achieving these reductions: "What is not reflected in the literature is a systematic assessment of the impact of these efforts on the level of DMC within the affected communities or a systematic effort to identify characteristics of programs that appear to reduce DMC levels" *(Pope, Lovell, and Hsia 2002, 9)*. As a result, challenges persist for communities seeking effective and enduring strategies for lowering DMC rates *(Frabutt, Cabaniss, et al. 2005; Frabutt, Kendrick, et al. 2005)*.

In 2003, the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission (chief state advisory body on crime and justice issues and administrator of the state's criminal justice and juvenile justice federal block grants) announced that their Disproportionate Minority Contact Committee had identified four demonstration counties to establish, plan, implement and evaluate a process intended to reduce the number of minority youth involved with the juvenile justice system in their county. The following counties were invited to apply for one-year planning grants under this priority: Guilford, New Hanover, Forsyth, and Union. These demonstration sites were chosen based on their diverse geographic locations, minority population, willingness to participate, and county-specific data related to DMC. Each county was charged with the task of researching and identifying the issues contributing to the overrepresentation of minority youth having contact within each area's juvenile justice system.

A Community-Academic Collaboration to Drive the DMC Project

The Guilford County[1] DMC project began with the convening of a group of representatives from our local Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) in November 2003. This group invited the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships (CYFCP), which has been involved with juvenile justice issues in Guilford County over the past several years *(Forsbrey, Frabutt, and Smith, 2005; MacKinnon-Lewis and Frabutt 2001; Shelton, Frabutt, and Arbuckle 2003)*, to become involved and write a DMC planning proposal to the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission. Since the mission of the Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships is to build the capacity of families, service providers, researchers, teachers, and communities to ensure the health and well-being of children, the aims and scope of the project were a natural fit with the center's experience and existing portfolio of initiatives.

Table 1. DMC Committee Members and Agency Affiliations

- Alcohol and Drug Services
- Black Child Development
- Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships
- Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Department of Social Services
- District Court Judges
- Family Life Council
- Faithworks Ministries
- Family Services of the Piedmont
- Governor's Crime Commission
- Greensboro City Council
- Greensboro Education and Development Council
- Greensboro Housing Authority
- Greensboro Lifeskills Center
- Greensboro Parks and Recreation
- Greensboro Police Department
- Guilford Center
- Guilford County Manager's Office
- Guilford County Department of Juvenile Court Alternatives
- Guilford County Schools
- Guilford County Sheriff's Department
- Guilford Education Alliance
- Guilford Technical Community College
- High Point Parks and Recreation
- High Point Police Department
- Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
- NC A&T University
- North Carolina Office of the Juvenile Defender
- One Step Further
- Parent Representatives
- United Way
- Win-Win Resolutions
- YWCA of Greensboro
- Youth Focus

Immediately, CYFCP recommended expansion of the working group to a larger committee for the DMC process. The group now includes representatives from county organizations that address concerns of children and youth (police departments from High Point and Greensboro and Guilford County Sheriff's Department, Guilford County Schools, Departments of Social Services, Mental Health and Public Health, Guilford County District Court judges, nonprofit organizations, and parents of youth involved with the juvenile justice system).

Since July 2004, a cohesive, representative, and action-oriented committee has executed the Guilford County DMC Planning Grant (see table 1 for a listing of participating agencies). A Project Management Team (including a half-time project coordinator, quarter-time project director, and a graduate research assistant) based at CYFCP has served as the central convening, organizing, and planning arm for the project. This team has issued monthly reports to the Guilford County JCPC on DMC committee activities.

One of the first project activities organized to raise awareness of the societal context of DMC issues was the committee's participation in Undoing Racism™ Training. This training was provided by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, based in New

Orleans, and uses dialogue, reflection, role-playing, strategic planning, and presentations. The intensive process challenges participants to analyze the structures of power and privilege that hinder social equity and prepares them to be effective organizers for justice. Over twenty DMC Committee members attended this event in June 2004.

Another key milestone event occurred in September 2004, when members of the DMC Committee joined with the superintendent of Guilford County Schools, the police chiefs of High Point and Greensboro, the Guilford County sheriff, the chief Juvenile Court counselor for the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the chief District Court judge, the public defender, the district attorney, and the director of the Department of Social Services in signing a memorandum of understanding. This document formally and publicly acknowledged their collective commitment to identifying and addressing DMC in Guilford County. Moreover, signatories agreed to give serious consideration to subsequent recommendations following our analysis of agency data.

A critical working group derived from the overall DMC Committee was the Resource and Needs Subcommittee, chaired by a parent advocate and representative. The Resource and Needs Subcommittee was tasked with identifying and cataloging a local continuum of services—both prevention and intervention—that could reduce DMC. Moreover, by identifying the array of existing services, the subcommittee would gain a better understanding of services that were needed but were currently unavailable in Guilford County. The listing was intended as a resource for parents, service providers, school staff, law enforcement, and youth-serving organizations seeking appropriate referrals. Drawing from resources such as United Way's 211 Listing of community-based and governmental services, existing program documentation, and committee members' suggestions, the subcommittee produced a twenty-nine-page listing of supportive services for youth. The list of services and resources is organized according to major categories such as afterschool programs, mentoring, counseling, and substance abuse. The document contains contact information for each program

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or service, a short description of program content, the intended audience, and active hyperlinks for those programs or services that have existing Web pages. The document was posted to numerous Web sites of agencies serving youth throughout the county (e.g., Guilford Education Alliance [http://guilfordeducationalliance.org/links.htm], UNCG Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships) and will be routinely distributed to parents, school administrators, law enforcement agencies, juvenile court counselors, and other youth service providers in both hard copy and electronic format.

The second major focus of our efforts during the planning grant year was to collect, analyze, and summarize relevant data that would inform our understanding of the dynamics surrounding decision points impacting DMC. Over the course of the planning grant, the Data Subcommittee worked in concert with the Focus Group Subcommittee to compile both quantitative and qualitative data that would provide insight into the local community's understanding of the DMC issue. The following section reviews those data sources (i.e., schools, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and focus groups) in more detail.

A Data-Driven Process to Inform Action

School data

Numerous investigations have documented the link between school suspensions and subsequent entry into the juvenile and criminal justice systems *(e.g., Mendel 2003; Wald and Losen 2003)*. Therefore, one of the DMC Committee's key goals was to measure the extent of disproportionate black suspensions in Guilford County Schools. One way to do that is to compare black student suspensions with white student suspensions.

Such comparisons can be done in various ways. The federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention assesses disproportionate minority contact within the juvenile justice system through a Relative Rate Index (RRI). This method is preferable to other measures that are affected by the relative size of minority youth populations and the number of different minority populations to be compared. The RRI method reduces statistical bias, allows accurate comparisons, and can be used to compare multiple racial and ethnic groups. For these reasons, we chose to use RRI to analyze suspensions in the Guilford County School system.

Short- and long-term suspension data compiled by the Data Warehouse for Guilford County Schools during the 2003–2004

school year were provided to the DMC Management Team by the chief student services officer for the Guilford County Schools. Data were organized by school and by race and ethnicity. For each school, data reviewed included total student body membership, total number of students of each race or ethnicity (categorized as American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multi-ethnic, and White), total number of short- and long-term suspensions for the school, and total number for each racial or ethnic group within the school. Importantly, data were unduplicated, which means every count represented a different student rather than multiple suspensions for individual students. These data allowed us to examine discrepancies in black and white suspension rates for each school.

Suspension rates and relative rate indices were calculated for every school in Guilford County, comparing the short- and long-term suspension rates of black students to those of white students. Suspension rates for each race were calculated by dividing the number of short- or long-term suspensions for each race by the total number of students of that race and multiplying by 100. Next, the RRI for each school was calculated by dividing black short- and long-term suspension rates by white short- and long-term suspension rates. For instance, if School XYZ had a black short-term suspension rate of 15.1, we would divide that suspension rate by the white short-term suspension rate of 5.8 and arrive at an RRI of approximately 2.6. This means black students were short-term suspended at 2.6 times the rate of white students; or, for every white student suspended, 2.6 black students were suspended.

"[R]outinely calculating an RRI will enable schools to proactively monitor racial and ethnic discrepancies in suspension rates and take steps to address imbalances before they become larger problems."

The findings were presented in several tables, arranged by school level, beginning with data for elementary schools, then middle schools, high schools, and other schools, like middle colleges and multilevel schools (see table 2 for sample school data). School names and total student membership are listed on the left, and short- and long-term suspension rates are broken down for white and black students in the cells of the tables. RRI for short- and long-term suspensions were provided for each school in the far right columns. In order to protect the privacy of individual

Table 2. Guilford County High Schools Short- and Long-Term Suspension Rates, 2003–2004

	White		Black		Relative Rate Index	
Schools	ST Rate	LT Rate	ST Rate	LT Rate	Short Term	Long Term
Andrews (1166)	4.4	0.6	22.7	3.5	5.2	5.8
Eastern (891)	18.3	3.3	30.4	6.0	1.7	1.8
Grimsley (1738)	1.1	.1	20.0	4.4	18.2	44.0*
Southeast (1230)	12.7	0.8	19.7	2.5	1.6	3.1

students, we reported only rates, rather than frequencies, for each school.

Review of the tabular data indicates that although some schools have relatively high rates of black suspensions compared to white suspensions, other schools were found to have very few (if any) problems with disproportionate black suspensions. Discrepancies between black and white suspensions were seen at all school levels, including elementary, middle, and high school. Even though no students were long-term suspended from elementary schools, some of the largest racial discrepancies in short-term suspension rates were reported by elementary schools.

Observations such as these indicate that routinely calculating an RRI will enable schools to proactively monitor racial and ethnic discrepancies in suspension rates and take steps to address imbalances before they become larger problems. Moreover, schools that do not currently exhibit issues with disproportionate black suspensions will benefit from monitoring their RRI as much as schools that are actively working to reduce disparities.

Law enforcement data

Review of law enforcement decision points is a critical step in identifying those pathways into the juvenile justice system that most impact DMC *(Cox and Bell 2001)*. As Hoyt and colleagues have noted, "Racial disparities in juvenile detention begin at the arrest stage. In fact, it is these disparities that set the stage for disproportionality at all the other decision points in the court process" *(2002, 68)*. In fact, other sites have discovered that variability in police practices (e.g., arrest and transport) resulted in differential treatment of minority youth *(Pope et al. 1996)*. Given these observations, throughout the planning phase our local DMC Committee worked collaboratively with the Greensboro Police Department, High Point Police Department, and the Guilford County Sheriff's Department to examine locally relevant decision point information.

Table 3. Greensboro Police Department Total Juvenile Arrests, 2004 (Total 1,834)

Race (n)	Percentage of Total	Gender
Blacks (1509):	82.28%	72.10% male 27.90% female
Whites (253):	13.79%	52.57% male 47.43% female
Other (72):	3.93%	73.61% male 26.39% female

Table 4. Greensboro Police Department Total Juvenile Arrests by Race and Gender, 2004 (Total 1,834)

Race and Gender	Percentage of Total
Black Males (1088):	59.32%
Black Females (421):	22.96%
White Males (133):	7.25%
White Females (120):	6.54%
Other Males (53):	2.89%
Other Females (19):	1.04%

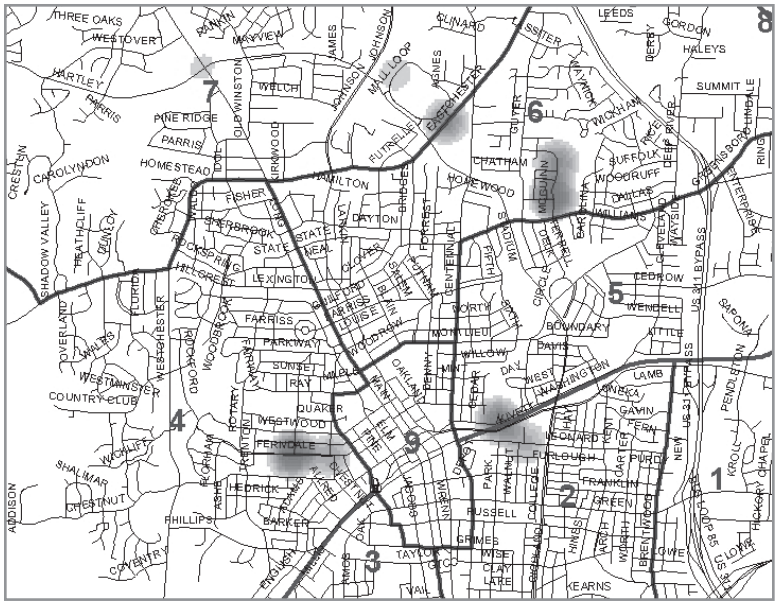
Table 5. High Point Police Department Total Juvenile Arrests, 2004 (Total 742)

Race	Percentage of Total	Gender
Blacks (596):	80.32%	70.97% male 29.03% female
Whites (138):	18.60%	61.59% male 38.41% female
Other (8):	1.08%	87.50% male 12.50% female

Table 6. High Point Police Department Total Juvenile Arrests by Race and Gender, 2004 (Total 742)

Race and Gender	Percentage of Total
Black Males (423):	57.01%
Black Females (173):	23.32%
White Males (85):	11.46%
White Females (53):	7.14%
Other Males (7):	.94%
Other Females (1):	.13%

Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of Juvenile Offending



Source: High Point Police Department

In particular, the DMC Committee requested that each law enforcement agency provide juvenile (ages 6–15) arrest information for calendar year 2004. Table 3 indicates that 1,834 juvenile arrests were recorded by Greensboro Police Department (GPD) in 2004, with African American youth representing 81 percent of all youth arrested. Table 4 examines GPD's juvenile arrests by race and gender, highlighting that nearly 59 percent of all juvenile arrests involved an African American male, and nearly 23 percent of all arrests involved an African American female. The most common charges reported in Greensboro were runaway, larceny, simple assault, and disorderly conduct.

A nearly identical pattern emerged in the analysis of High Point Police Department's juvenile arrest data for the same time period. As Table 5 indicates, 81 percent of 742 juveniles arrested were African American. Similarly, Table 6 illustrates that African American males (57 percent) and African American females (23 percent) were most represented among all arrested juveniles. The most common charges reported in High Point were affray/simple assault, disorderly conduct, larceny, and breaking and entering.

Figure 1 is a map provided by the High Point Police Department that uses shading to illustrate geographic patterns of juvenile offending. The gray areas on the map denote locations with a high density of juvenile arrests. As the DMC Committee reviewed this

Table 7. Most Common Complaints, DJJDP, 2004

Complaint	Frequency
Simple Assault	335
Larceny	250
Simple Affray	163
Breaking and Entering	133
Disorderly Conduct by Engaging in Fighting	126

Table 8. Complaints Received by Offense Class, DJJDP, 2004

Race	A-E (Violent)	F-I, A1 (Serious)	1-3 (m) (Minor)	Infraction	Status	Totals
Asian	2	10	26		9	47
Black	46	507	1507	6	130	2196
Latino	1	9	32	1	6	49
Multi-racial		10	17		5	32
Native American		4	3		2	9
Other		2	22		3	27
Unknown		10	9		1	20
White	8	110	460	8	47	633
Totals	57	662	2076	15	203	3013

map, it became clear that the highest arrest densities were areas clustered around school addresses (e.g., High Point Central High School, Ferndale Middle School, Andrews High School).[2] Just as it has been documented at other sites *(e.g., Wald and Losen 2003)*, this local information has been critical to the DMC Committee's clearer understanding of the obvious link between behavioral issues at school and entry into the juvenile criminal justice system.[3]

Juvenile justice data

The purpose of this component of our data-gathering efforts was to measure the extent of disproportionate minority contact in Guilford County's juvenile court system. One way to do that is to compare white youth contacts in the system with African American youth contacts. Such comparisons can be done in various ways. As noted earlier, the measure that the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention uses to assess disproportionate minority contact within the juvenile justice system is the Relative Rate Index (RRI). In order to produce analyses consistent with those conducted at the state level, we also utilized this method

Table 9. RRI Complaints Received by Offense Class, DJJDP, 2004

	Number of White Youth	Rate of Occurrence: White Youth	Number of Black Youth	Rate of Occurrence: Black Youth	Relative Rate Index
Population at Risk (ages 10–17)	27,593[a]	----------	17,426	----------	
Minor Complaints	460	1.7	1,507	8.6	**5.1**
Serious Complaints	110	.4	507	2.9	**7.3**
Violent Complaints	8	.03	46	.3	**10.0**

Population numbers were derived from Puzzanchera, Finnegan, and Kang (2005).

to analyze minority contacts in Guilford County's juvenile court system.

Using NC-JOIN, an online data system maintained by North Carolina's Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP), the department's data analyst provided data by age, race, and gender for key decision points in Guilford County's juvenile court system for calendar year 2004. Among the data reviewed were total complaints received, complaints approved, complaints not approved, complaints adjudicated, complaints disposed, and complaints dismissed. These data were organized by race and by offense severity. Likewise, the DMC Committee reviewed counts of Guilford County admissions to juvenile detention, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) programs, and youth development centers.

In 2004, most complaints against youth were not for serious or violent offenses. In fact, as Table 7 shows, the top five most common complaints were for misdemeanor offenses, which is not surprising considering the most common charges reported by law enforcement agencies. Table 8 provides an example (complaints received) of the type of descriptive information that was reviewed for each juvenile justice decision point. For each race, the table reports simple frequencies for each category offense (grouped according to severity). For example, 47 complaints were received for Asian youth in 2004: 2 violent, 10 serious, 26 minor, and 6 status. Of note in Table 8 is that of complaints received in 2004 (3,013 total), 2,196 (73 percent) involved black youth and 633 (21 percent) involved white youth. No other racial category exceeded two percent of the total.

Incidence rates and RRIs were calculated for each decision point in Guilford County's juvenile court system, comparing rates of occurrence for black youth with those for white youth. First, incidence rates for each race were calculated by dividing the number of incidents for each race by the total county youth population for that

race and multiplying by 100. Next, an RRI for each decision point was calculated by dividing black incident rates by white incident rates.

Table 9 provides an example of incidence rates and relative rates at the point of complaints received. For example, in the minor complaint category, the incidence rate for white youth was 1.7, while for black youth, it was 8.6. Stated another way, out of all the white youth in Guilford County (27,593), 1.7% of those youth accounted for a minor complaint in 2004. In contrast, of all the black youth in Guilford County (17,426), 8.6% of those youth accounted for a minor complaint during the same time period. Also note that for each level of severity, the incidence rate is higher for black youth.

Continuing the above example, to calculate the RRI, the incidence rate of 8.6 for minor complaints received for black youth is divided by the incidence rate of 1.7 for white youth to arrive at an RRI of 5.058 or approximately 5.1. This means minor complaints were reported against black youth at 5.1 times the rate of white youth; or, for every minor complaint involving a white youth, 5.1 minor complaints involved black youth.

Focus groups

There was a commitment among the DMC Committee to seek the voices and experiences of several groups directly involved with DMC issues. Therefore, in the spring of 2005, four focus group sessions were conducted: with caregivers of court-involved youth, with court-involved males, with court-involved females, and with juvenile court counselors. The focus groups were convened to explore participants' personal experiences and provide their insights into ways the juvenile justice system could address the issues around DMC in Guilford County. Each session was audio-recorded and transcribed. Findings and interpretations represent major themes and perspectives of the sessions as summarized by multiple observers and readers.

New Directions

As the DMC project moves beyond its first year, a set of four interrelated focus areas will guide the committee's work. First, sites across the country concur that data review and decision-point mapping consistently emerge as critical initial steps in DMC reduction efforts, for these processes often set the stage for fundamental change *(Nellis 2005)*. "Data identify how DMC looks and how it operates in a system, without resorting to anecdotes or emotionally charged debates over individual bias" *(Hoytt et al. 2002, 14)*. Given

those observations, our first focus area is DMC data management and utilization. That is, each quarter we will continue to track school, law enforcement, and juvenile justice DMC trends.

An emphasis on cultural competence used in DMC decision-making is the second focus area. Cultural competency training for key juvenile justice decision makers is a promising strategy across multiple sites *(Nellis 2005)*. Misunderstandings about cultural differences and racial stereotyping frequently contribute to differential sentencing decisions for black and white youth who have committed similar crimes. Some culturally based expectations of youth that influence judgments and tend to vary across racial and ethnic groups include a "proper" display of respect toward officials and an appropriate expression of remorse for delinquent behavior *(Bridges and Steen 1998)*. Because "cultural competence is not a fixed characteristic of an agency; rather, it is an ongoing developmental process that agencies and individuals engage in to address diversity in the community-service area," routinized cultural competency training teaches agency officials to recognize and minimize the influence of cultural differences on their decision-making processes and to empower youth to more successfully negotiate the juvenile justice system *(Cox and Bell 2001, 38)*.

"Small, cost-free changes in policies, procedures, or practices have demonstrated powerful impacts on DMC."

When Devine, Coolbaugh, and Jenkins *(1998)* examined the strategies used by five states successful in reducing DMC, they found that multiple-approach, rather than single-approach, strategies were most effective. Specifically, strategies that incorporated family and youth advocacy, coalition-building among youth-serving agencies, and targeted resource development appeared to lower DMC rates. Similarly, Cox and Bell *(2001)* maintain that DMC increases when communities lack sufficient and appropriate detention alternatives, fail to identify and address gaps in needed services, or exclude caregivers and family members from decision-making processes. Therefore, our third focus area is the promotion and utilization of targeted prevention services.

The fourth major focus area is to develop and implement agency policy, procedure, and practice modifications to impact DMC. Small, cost-free changes in policies, procedures, or practices have demonstrated powerful impacts on DMC. For instance, some agencies have reduced DMC by changing detention eligibility

criteria so that only the highest risk offenders are detained *(Orlando 1999)*, others developed race-neutral assessment instruments for law enforcement officers to use in the field to guide their decisions to detain or release youth *(Rust 1999)*, and still others modified their operating hours to accommodate the schedules of working parents *(Cox and Bell 2001)*.

Opportunities and Challenges

Guilford County embarked on this DMC work fifteen years ago during the early 1990s. What came of that effort was little more than a plan that was promptly shelved and received no further attention. This time, we have been committed to making our DMC efforts *goal-driven* and *action-oriented*. It is significant that the university was invited to take a lead role in the first place. This is a result of several years of working with the community service providers and establishing relationships. In many communities, service providers and/or the "system" itself would be host for this kind of project, with university participation being ancillary. In this instance, the grant was awarded to the university, not to a community-based organization or collaborative. Unlike the last time DMC activities were undertaken in Guilford County, our UNCG Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships has served as a centralized, objective, convening organization that has taken a clear managerial lead (grant management, logistics, research, agency coordination) on the project. Having an engaged, university-based center involved in project management was useful to several other aspects of the project. For example, the process of data access and sharing (from schools, law enforcement, and juvenile justice) was no doubt facilitated by our commitment to be impartial, objective receivers of such data. Likewise, our center's faculty and graduate student expertise was brought to bear on the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and immediate dissemination through reports, fact sheets, handouts, and presentations.

The university's engagement in the project has at times presented challenges as well. For example, the Focus Group Subcommittee was significantly driving the focus group planning and design, but UNCG Institutional Review Board approval was still required. There was a significant delay and loss of momentum for the focus group effort when it was determined that full IRB committee review was required. Another seemingly mundane but significant challenge in working through the university is arranging meeting locations. There are never enough parking spaces on a university campus, which is very problematic for a large community com-

mittee that is attempting to meet on a regular basis. That means the university researchers must rely on the benevolence of other committee members to provide more suitable meeting facilities. A third challenge is that universities may be perceived as removed from the community service providers. There can be the perception from community providers that the experience from university participants is only through research and study and not "real life." It is important to establish relationships that are respectful of all perspectives, and this takes time and commitment from all parties involved. Despite these elements, the upside of university involvement has clearly been dramatic and powerful. In fact, the lines between university and community partners in this effort have become blurred and at times nonexistent. It is in such circumstances that the truly collaborative aspects of community-based work for children and adolescents can take hold.

Endnotes

1. As part of North Carolina's eleven-county Piedmont Triad region (population 1.27 million), Guilford County is centered along the Piedmont industrial crescent stretching from Raleigh to Charlotte. Guilford County has the third highest population in the state at 421,000.

2. Another area with a high arrest density was observed at the Oak Hollow Mall.

3. Greensboro Police Department provided a similar geographic map (not reproduced here) that showed patterns of juvenile offending clustered near schools.

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