



Report to the Legislature

Community Juvenile Accountability Act

**Chapter 338, Laws of 1997
RCW 13.40.540**

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Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA)

Background

RCW 13.40.540 requires the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) to report annually on the implementation of the Community Juvenile Accountability Act (CJAA). Specifically, the statute directs JRA to report on the programs funded under the Community Juvenile Accountability Act, the total cost for each funded program, cost per juvenile, and the essential elements of the program. This report is in fulfillment of that requirement and covers the period from July 1, 2003, through September 30, 2004.

The CJAA was included in Chapter 338, Laws of 1997, as an incentive to local communities to implement interventions proven by behavioral science research to cost-effectively reduce recidivism among juvenile offenders. The Act's primary purpose is to:

“provide a continuum of community-based programs that emphasize a juvenile offender’s accountability for his or her actions while assisting him or her in the development of skills necessary to function effectively and positively in the community in a manner consistent with public safety.” (RCW 13.40.500)

Drawing on program evaluations and meta-analysis, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP), in collaboration with the Washington Association of Juvenile Court Administrators (WAJCA) and JRA, identified a range of effective approaches that could cost-effectively reduce juvenile offender recidivism. Four of these approaches were ultimately chosen for implementation in Washington State. They are:

- Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)
- Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
- Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
- Coordination of Services (CS)

Descriptions of these CJAA programs can be found in the *Report and Recommendations of the CJAA Workgroup*, November 1997. Two other programs (Mentoring and Dialectical Behavior Therapy) are currently under evaluation and considered to be “Promising Programs,” though Dialectical Behavior Therapy has been limited to residential treatment programs in JRA.

At the direction of the Legislature, the Institute for Public Policy conducted and completed a comprehensive evaluation of all CJAA programs. Analysis of program and control groups occurred at six, twelve, and eighteen months (preliminary information was released on ART in June 2002 and on FFT in August 2002). In January 2004, WSIPP released their final report, *Outcome Evaluation of Washington State’s Research-Based Programs for Juvenile Offenders*, and their data reflected the CJAA program’s positive impact on felony recidivism. The report also provides data on the cost-effectiveness as well as competent versus non-competent delivery of each CJAA program. To read the full report, please visit the Institute’s website at www.wsipp.wa.gov.

Quality Assurance to Maintain Rigorous Program Standards

The CJAA represents the first ongoing effort in the nation to replicate effective interventions on a statewide basis. To ensure program integrity, to meet evaluation standards, and to continuously identify and resolve program issues ART, FFT, and MST have mandatory quality assurance measures.

The WSIPP, in their October 2002 report *The Juvenile Justice System in Washington State: Recommendations to Improve Cost-Effectiveness* referenced interim outcome results and concluded that CJAA research-based programs work, but only when implemented competently. The report further recommended an improved form of quality control in order to ensure cost beneficial reductions in recidivism. Following this recommendation, JRA in consultation with WSIPP and the CJAA Advisory Committee, developed an enhanced quality assurance process which is further explained in the Aggression Replacement Training and Functional Family Therapy sections of this report.

In December 2003, WSIPP published a *Quality Control Standard: Washington State Research-Based Juvenile Offender Programs*, which details recommendations for the quality assurance plans for research-based interventions. The enhanced quality assurance plans for the CJAA projects are in compliance with the recommended standards detailed in the Institute's report.

Aggression Replacement Training (ART)

ART Quality Assurance

ART is a cognitive-behavioral intervention that is delivered three times per week over a ten-week period to groups of eight to ten juveniles. To effectively implement ART in Washington State, motivators were developed to encourage at-risk youth to attend three groups per week for ten weeks. While there is research on the effectiveness of ART, there was no blueprint for statewide implementation. In Washington State, ART has now been implemented statewide.

As of June 2004, 621 court and contracted staff from 28 juvenile court jurisdictions attended training sessions for ART. Christopher Hayes, a contracted in-state ART expert, and a statewide Quality Assurance (QA) group with representatives from each county advise on the curriculum, training, and implementation. The ART Quality Assurance process has been redefined to enhance the level of review and feedback that is available to local trainers across the state. The statewide Quality Assurance Specialist has been increased from a half- to a full-time position to assist in the development and implementation of this new process.

A primary component of this enhancement is the addition of consultants that work with the trainers from each program on a monthly basis, providing technical assistance and consultation. Five site consultants provide phone consultation to teams of trainers who deliver the intervention across multiple courts in relatively close geographic locations. Additionally, the consultants review video tapes of active trainers delivering the intervention. Each active trainer is required to be taped annually delivering each of the three program components. As with the FFT quality assurance, this enhancement is primarily motivated by the findings of WSIPP regarding the

critical nature of program fidelity and model adherence for the achievement of outcomes, which was further supported in the final outcome evaluation.

Significant ART Results for the project include:

- The development of an expanded ART training curriculum for Washington State, giving the state the capacity to train its own new ART facilitators. A total of 121 court staff and contracted staff in Washington have been trained using this curriculum since July 1, 2003, and every court delivering ART received an environmental assessment by the ART Quality Assurance Specialist.
- The certification of 13 ART Master Facilitators further enhanced Washington's ability to sustain the intervention.
- The development of a supplemental parent curriculum —the parents of participating youth are taught ART skills in a separate class during the same 10 weeks the youth are in class. Counties are using this curriculum across the state as funding allows.
- The development of a self-paced curriculum for youth who receive ART as a follow-up aftercare program to the initial 10-week class.
- The development of a 12-week curriculum that is provided to youth who are participating in Intensive Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Treatment. The curriculum was developed and implemented as a result of a cooperative effort by the Snohomish County Juvenile Court and the Northwest Alternatives treatment program.
- The addition of 11 moral reasoning problems to the 10-week curriculum menu.
- The collaboration of juvenile courts with local schools to provide ART classes to probation youth at school sites. This partnership reduces the need for transportation to ART classes.
- The development of an enhanced Quality Assurance Plan which is intended to improve model adherence and competent program delivery, ultimately improving program outcomes.
- Implementation and development of teams and contracted site consultants to further improve model fidelity.
- Development of ART program capacity across 28 juvenile courts.
- An enhanced self-assessment process, which is used by the active ART Trainers.
- The development of an environmental assessment, used by the Statewide Quality Assurance Specialist during program reviews, to assess the court's culture regarding the support of ART.

- The final WSIPP outcome evaluation which demonstrated that ART has an estimated 18-month felony recidivism rate reduction of 24 percent and a benefit-to-cost ratio of \$11.66 per \$1.00 invested in the program.

Traits of counties that retain youth in ART include:

- ART facilitators who are enthusiastic and able to motivate youth.
- Court administrators, judges, prosecutors, and public defenders who are actively interested in and participate in ART programs.
- Parent participation in ART classes.
- Strong incentive programs to reward youth for positive participation in ART.
- Strong formal and informal communication between ART facilitators and probation officers regarding ART youth.
- For counties who use probation officers as ART facilitators, a reduction in work activities commensurate with the time it takes to effectively facilitate ART groups, or overtime pay for working beyond a 40-hour week to facilitate ART groups.
- Probation staff knowledge and support of the program through accountability and reinforcement of youth participation.

ART Results

From July 1, 2003, through May 31, 2004, juvenile courts have reported the following results:

- A total of 1,557 moderate-to-high risk probation youth have been referred to ART groups in 28 juvenile court jurisdictions across Washington State.
- Of these 1,557 youth, 897 have completed an ART group, and 341 youth were still involved in the program as of May 31, 2004.
- Of these 1,557 referred youth, 319 (or 21 percent) did not successfully complete an ART group. Reasons for non-successful completion include but are not limited to: absconding from probation, removal because of noncompliance, transportation barriers, moving from the area, and refusal to attend despite court sanctions.

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

FFT Quality Assurance

FFT, a family based service, is conducted for an average of 16 weeks. The program emphasizes engaging and motivating families in order to achieve specific, obtainable changes related to repeat criminal behavior.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy completed research on FFT in January 2004. This research examined FFT as provided in Washington to determine if it cost effectively reduced repeat criminal behavior. The report indicated that when FFT was provided with fidelity, a 38 percent reduction in recidivism was accomplished. The full report can be found at their website: www.wsipp.wa.gov. These results add further emphasis to the recent efforts to provide greater quality control to the FFT program.

Twenty-five juvenile courts across Washington State provide FFT as a CJAA program. The sites are demographically diverse and are located in cities, remote/rural areas, and regions centered around medium-sized communities. FFT therapists are either juvenile court service employees or contracted service providers. In nine of the sites, a single FFT therapist works on his or her own.

With the ongoing needs of a large scale multi-site implementation, JRA provides statewide oversight of training and program fidelity for FFT. Recently, Dr. Tom Sexton (Indiana University), an experienced FFT clinician and principal researcher, collaborated with JRA and the juvenile courts to implement a new quality assurance and quality improvement plan. FFT therapists receive on-going clinical consultation, mutual support and accountability from trained FFT consultants in Washington State. The Washington model has become the consultation model nationwide and is even being used by FFT providers in the Netherlands.

Currently, 37 FFT therapists are divided into eight “working units” consisting of three to eight therapists each. Working units are geographically proximate and attempt, where possible, to organize therapists into groups with similar client needs.

FFT therapists receive on-going training on the practical application of this complicated intervention. Through biweekly clinical consultations and training sessions, Washington FFT clinical consultants and contracted FFT experts assess Washington State therapists for clinical competence and adherence to the FFT model. Assessments provide the therapists with ongoing feedback that ultimately will improve services.

The quality assurance process has been enhanced in the past year. The goal of the enhancements is improved model fidelity. The quality assurance plan, developed by JRA in coordination with WSIPP, Dr. Tom Sexton, and WAJCA, has been in place since October 2003. Under this plan, a statewide Quality Assurance Specialist has been hired and has implemented eight individual quality improvement plans with FFT therapists. The quality assurance plan for the state is aimed at:

- Improved model fidelity (adherence and competence) through ongoing, specific, and timely feedback.
- A systematic and individualized plan for therapist development and improvement.
- Enhanced quality assurance which is intended to improve program delivery, and ultimately improve program outcomes.

Additional items that have been accomplished this year are:

- The addition of eight juvenile courts to the FFT project.
- The implementation of a quarterly assessment process that provides therapists and juvenile courts feedback on the quality of the FFT service.
- The development of an Environmental Assessment, used by the Statewide Quality Assurance Specialist during program reviews, to assess the court's culture regarding the support of FFT.

FFT Results

From July 1, 2003, through May 31, 2004, the juvenile courts reported the following results:

- 18 court and contracted FFT therapists have received initial and on-going training in the FFT model.
- 635 moderate-to-high risk probation youth with risk factors in their current living situation were referred to functional family therapists.
- 366 families completed the FFT intervention; 223 families were still involved in FFT as of May 31, 2004.
- 44 families (7 percent of referrals) did not successfully complete FFT. Reasons for not completing are varied and can include families moving from the area, families refusing treatment, and families participating in other treatment.

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

MST Quality Assurance

MST is a family intervention that is conducted for an average of four months. The intervention targets specific factors around youth and their environment that contribute to anti-social behavior. It is typically provided in the home and the therapists, who have very small caseloads, are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CJAA is currently funding a single site in King County. Prior to FY 2003, CJAA funds were used as a match for the federal Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG), which funded three MST projects in Washington State (King, Pierce, and Kitsap counties). The JAIBG funds were no longer available following the completion of the JAIBG funding cycle in FY 2002.

Close oversight of MST implementation is being conducted by MST Services of South Carolina. The first two years of training and consultation were provided through the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (University of Colorado) through a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the U.S. Department of Justice. Initial and ongoing training, site visits, and on-going clinical consultation are provided by MST Services and are partially subcontracted out to the University of Washington. Ongoing training and consultation from MST services is now paid with CJAA funds.

**Please note the total program costs above only reflect those CJAA costs reimbursed by JRA through July 15, 2004. Juvenile courts also use other funds to support ART, FFT, MST, and Coordination of Services.*

Tribal CJAA Programs

In September 1999, JRA initiated discussions with the Department of Social and Health Services' Indian Policy Advisory Committee to implement elements of effective juvenile justice programs for tribal youth.

JRA continues to provide grant funds to federally recognized tribes and four Native American urban organizations. Each federally recognized tribe was allotted \$9,233 to implement programs with research-based components. Twenty-eight tribes and four Native American urban organizations were eligible for funds. Twenty-four tribes applied for and received CJAA funding. It is estimated that 650 Native American youth, involved with tribal or county juvenile court programs, will be served in these projects. JRA has earmarked funding for the next fiscal year to continue to fund research-based tribal programs.