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# Phase II: Assessing Disproportionate Minority Contact in Indiana

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## Executive Summary

African American youth represent 16% of the adolescent population in the United States, and almost 40% percent of the youth in local detention and state correctional facilities. The Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, as amended in 2002, requires states to implement delinquency prevention and systems improvement strategies to reduce the disproportionate number of juvenile members of minority groups who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. To guide states in these efforts, the office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) developed a five-phase Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Reduction Cycle. Criminologists contracted from Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis' Center for Criminal Justice Research conducted Indiana's a Phase I DMC study (the identification phase) in every county across the State of Indiana. This Phase II study is the second step in the DMC Reduction Cycle: Assessment. Three jurisdictions were selected for the assessment phase in order to assess and diagnose possible causes of disproportionality that was identified during the Phase I study. The three Indiana counties (Allen, LaPorte, and Vanderburgh) were selected on the basis that they were relatively large metropolitan areas with appropriate case volume and significant DMC. The current study is the work of researchers from Community Solutions Inc., in collaboration with researchers from the Center for Criminal Justice Research at IUPUI, the IU School of Medicine, and the American Institutes for Research.

The DMC assessment process utilized a mixed-methods, case study approach to examine and identify potential causes of DMC. Profiles of the counties were generated, including basic demographic and juvenile risk factor data. Additionally, interviews were completed with 112 probation-involved and detained youth across the three jurisdictions. Finally, we conducted focus groups with key stakeholders working in the local juvenile justice systems, including: Judges and Magistrates, Prosecutors and Public Defenders, Probation and Detention Center Staff, School Personnel, Police Officers, and Community Service Providers. In total, 19 focus groups with 106 participants were conducted. We used qualitative analysis techniques to analyze the content gathered from focus group interviews.

## Overall Findings

Data analyses based on youth survey results and focus group discussions for each jurisdiction are presented in detail within the report. We also present a set of county-specific conclusions and recommendations in each county's section. Detailed below are a number of common, cross-cutting themes shared by the jurisdictions.

1. Overall, stakeholders in the jurisdictions involved in the current study (Phase II) were energized to address DMC in their community. Additionally, leaders from these jurisdictions were motivated to begin or continue innovative juvenile justice reform efforts. This is a very positive finding for the state as there are interested and willing change agents in each of these counties.
2. In trying to pinpoint reasons for DMC within the juvenile justice system, there was much attention focused on the earliest stages of juvenile justice system. When system-involved youth were asked to describe if they felt they were discriminated against by juvenile justice professionals, police officers received the highest perceived discrimination scores. Moreover, during the focus group portion of this study, police officers were often described by other non-police focus group members as needing intervention (e.g., training, programming with kids) to reduce DMC. During focus groups with police officers, officers clearly stated they were open to receiving additional training, as long as the training was aimed at improving their interactions with minority youth.
3. Focus group participants provided a wide variety of reasons for DMC. Geographic location impacted which factors focus group participants thought were important causes of DMC. Additionally, the mechanisms that focus group participants identified as leading to DMC included contextual factors such as: disorganized neighborhoods with little to offer youth; poverty; institutional racism; family structure, lack of parental involvement and poor parenting practices; policies and procedures that are differential applied (e.g., detention decisions and alternatives to detention, the influence of gang participation on all areas of system decision making); poor access to services, migration, and cultural and language differences. One thing was clear in each location; there is not one major reason for DMC. DMC (during the study period and likely beyond) is a result of a mixture of important individual, community and system level factors, which in combination

contribute significant amount DMC at various decision points in the three jurisdictions in this study.

## Recommendations

As previously mentioned, there are sets of recommendations that are specific to each individual county. Those recommendations are not included here; they can be found at the end of each county's section. Provided below are several cross-cutting recommendations that were common to all of counties.

1. Local DMC taskforce. Each community would benefit from creating a local DMC Taskforce. There are significant local issues that impact DMC as well as cross-cutting issues evidenced by each jurisdiction. Models of successful DMC taskforces exist both across the country and in the State of Indiana. Another example of this type of community council whose focus is to deal with a specific concern in a community are Indiana's Local Coordinating Councils (LCC). LCCs are the planning and coordinating body for addressing alcohol and other drug problems in a county. These councils are comprised of stakeholders from a variety of sectors including education, treatment, social services, and local police.
2. Police officer training. A primary issue identified by both youth and adult stakeholders in all three of the jurisdictions included interactions between youth and police officers. It is recommended that each jurisdiction consider offering or requiring specific training (on a regular basis) that provides information to the police about adolescent development and communication, signs of distress in a youth, and enhanced de-escalation techniques, aimed at improving police officer-adolescent interactions. While this training is recommended for officers who interact regularly with youth in general, the greatest need seemed to be for those officers that interact with minority youth regularly.
3. Cultural competency training (or cultural adaptation frameworks). This recommendation includes two parts: re-conceptualizing current training and expanding the frequency in which it is offered. First, cultural competency training, termed cultural adaptation frameworks, is recommended to increase the utilization of evidence-based practice to improve outcomes of youth. A cultural adaptation framework focuses on the adaptation of evidence-based practice to the specific population targeted. Therefore, jurisdictions are

encouraged to re-frame training in the area of cultural competency as a way to increase the uptake of evidence based practice with diverse populations. Second, few of the participants that we spoke with that work with youth regularly state that they had received some form of this training (or if they had it occurred long ago). Since the desire for such training was a consistent theme in all three counties, it is necessary for all youth-serving agencies to require cultural adaptation training when they hire their staff and to provide “booster sessions” periodically to prevent staff from returning to old patterns of behavior.

4. Extensive arrest records. Some youth develop an extensive juvenile record quickly and at an early age. Prior criminal records greatly influence every decision point and minority children often have longer prior juvenile records. In order to combat this effect, the involved jurisdictions would benefit from developing a reception center that is separate from the detention center. This reception center could be for youth with minor charges were they are processed, screened, and then both the parent and youth are connected to community resources. We understand that LaPorte County recently started one; we recommend that they assess monthly data to see if their reception center is, in fact, reducing admissions to their detention center.
5. Relationship between community and police. A universal problem identified for each jurisdiction included the relationship between community members and the police. This is not only specific to the collaborating jurisdictions but is a nationwide issue. Thus, recommendations are detailed in the report to educate youth regarding interactions with police, educate parents about the ramifications of their youth having a record with police, and improving funding for police officer programs that allow officers to interact with youth in a positive manner.
6. Indiana House Bill 1001. A cross-cutting issue that adversely affects outcomes with minority youth was Indiana House Bill 1001. Juvenile court personnel reported that the change in funding streams has made getting juvenile justice-involved youth into appropriate treatment more difficult. The suggestion was made across sites that Indiana House Bill 1001 exacerbates DMC when funding is denied for treatment or a placement for pre-adjudicated youth. Thus the system is forced to hold the youth in detention and sometimes must be adjudicated to receive the services they need. It is recommended that

counties continue to dialogue with DCS regional representatives regarding this difficulty as well as advocate for change within their respective professional groups.

7. Parent volunteer networks. Each of the jurisdictions involved in the Phase II study identified difficulty in empowering families to become and stay involved with their youth during the juvenile justice process. One recommendation is to explore the possibility of developing volunteer groups of parents of system-involved youth to serve as a network of support and advocacy for each other.
8. Disciplinary referrals from school. Each jurisdiction identified school systems as being one place where youth of color are disproportionately referred. A possible solution is to develop an initial hearing court.
9. The importance of early childhood intervention. Virtually all of the focus group participants identified the important need for early childhood intervention. Effective programming exists, such as Nurse-Family Partnership and Head Start/Early Head Start. Jurisdictions are encouraged to explore implementing or expanding these and other evidence-based early childhood intervention programs in their jurisdictions.
10. Employment opportunities. Few of the agencies believed that they have enough minority male and female staff members, and recruitment of qualified minority candidates should be a priority. Human Resource departments within agencies should develop strategies for increasing racial and ethnic diversity within the organization, even in communities with relatively small minority populations. For example, agencies could conduct a coordinated recruiting effort twice per year near the end of the semester at Indiana college campuses. Many minority students are earning degrees in fields related to criminal justice and are seeking employment in the field.
11. Trade education. Although this is a far-reaching recommendation, each of the jurisdictions involved identified the need for trade education. The claim was made that students who do not excel in traditional academics should be offered trade classes (e.g., shop, electrician training) to provide youth an avenue for success, a way to build competence and self-esteem, and to protect these youth from dropping out of school which eventually could impact their likelihood of entering the juvenile justice system. While this is clearly a school issue, probation personnel could also play a role by



referring their clients to trade training programs should they learn that their charges are at risk of dropping out of school and show an interest or aptitude in the trades.

Just as there is no single cause of DMC in any of the three jurisdictions involved in the Phase II study, there is no single solution. The cross-cutting recommendations, coupled with County- and State-level recommendations included in the full report of the Phase II study, identify a variety of ways that stakeholders across sectors can work individually and collectively to reduce DMC within their communities.

## I. Introduction

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) is the “overrepresentation of minorities in the criminal justice system relative to their proportions in the general population.”<sup>1</sup> As in the adult criminal justice system, minorities are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. The federal statute that requires states to collect DMC data is the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act [further known as the Act]. The Act, authored by Indiana Senator Birch Bayh was originally authorized in 1974. The 2002 reauthorization defined DMC as “the disproportionate number of juvenile members of minority groups, who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.”<sup>2</sup> Youth of color encompass about a third of the youth population in the United States, yet over half of the youth in the juvenile justice system are youth of color.<sup>3</sup> Studies at all level (i.e., national, statewide and meta-analytic studies) have found DMC at all decision points in the juvenile justice process for minority youth.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the overrepresentation of minority youth accumulates from the point of arrest to the final point of secure confinement.<sup>5</sup>

African American youth, in particular, are overrepresented throughout the juvenile justice system. They represent 16% of the adolescents in the country and 26% of arrested juveniles, 31% of referrals to juvenile court, 40% of youth placed in residential facilities, and 44% of detained youth.<sup>6</sup> Research also demonstrates that African American youth are treated more harshly than White youth, even when charged with a similar offense. Under most charge categories, especially drug offenses, White youth are much more likely than African American

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<sup>1</sup> Desai, R. A., P. R. Falzer, et al. (2012). "Mental Illness, Violence Risk, and Race in Juvenile Detention: Implications for Disproportionate Minority Contact." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* **82**(1): 32-40.

<sup>2</sup> Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, as amended, Pub. L. No. 93-415 (1974).

<sup>3</sup> Piquero, A.R. (2008). "Disproportionate Minority Contact." *The Future of Children* **18**(2): 59-79.

<sup>4</sup> Ekpunobi, A. E., G. P. Wilson, et al. (2002). "A study of the overrepresentation of ethnic minority youth in North Carolina's juvenile justice system." Juvenile Justice Institute, North Carolina Central University.; Pope, C. E. (1995). *Equity within the juvenile justice system: directions for the future. Minorities in juvenile justice.* K. Kempf-Leonard, C. E. Pope and W. Feyerherm. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage: 201-216.

<sup>5</sup> Hamparian, D. and M. Leiber (1997). *Disproportionate confinement of minority juveniles in secure facilities: 1996 national report.* C. R. Associates. Champaign, IL.

<sup>6</sup> Poe-Yamaga, E. and M. A. Jones (2007). *And justice for some: differential treatment of youth of color in the justice system.* N. C. o. C. a. Delinquency. Oakland, CA.

youth to be placed on probation, and African American youth are twice as likely as White youth to be sent to out-of-home placements.<sup>7</sup>

Indiana's Phase I DMC study found that African American youth are similarly overrepresented at key decision points throughout the state. In 2009, despite representing only 12% of the Indiana's youth population, African American youth accounted for 30% of the referrals to juvenile court, 40% of youth placed in secure detention, 31% of youth against whom a petition was filed, 29% of adjudicated youth, 27% of youth placed on formal probation, 36% of youth placed in a state correctional facility at disposition, and 30% of youth waived to adult court.

### **Phase I Process and Methodology**

A core requirement of the Act of 1974, as amended in 2002, requires states to report DMC Data and the state's efforts to address it to OJJDP. To guide states in these efforts, the office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) developed a five-phase Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Reduction Cycle. Criminologists contracted from Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis' Center for Criminal Justice Research conducted Indiana's Phase I DMC study (the identification phase). In Phase I, the researchers examined every juvenile case that was referred to juvenile court in all 92 counties during the timeframe 2005-2009. The purpose of the study was to determine if, and to what degree, minority youth were overrepresented at the various decision points in the system (referral, secure detention, diversion, petition, adjudication, disposition, whether youth were placed on formal probation or confined in a state correctional, facility, and waiver to adult court). Other data collected in the study included race, age, offense severity, and gender.

Following the Phase I study, an Assessment Study (Phase II) was conducted in three jurisdictions to determine possible causes of the DMC found during Phase I. A number of counties were considered for inclusion in the Phase II study, and juvenile justice system leaders were invited to consider participation in the study. Three counties, Allen, LaPorte, and Vanderburgh were selected for inclusion in the Assessment. They were selected on the basis that

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

they are relatively populous communities with appropriate case volume and significant DMC at various decision points.

***RRI Results from Phase I***

Using the case-level data collected in each county during the Phase I study, the degree of disproportionality at each decision point was determined using two analytic strategies: the relative rate index (RRI) and logistic regression analysis. The RRI indicates the rate of representation of nonwhite youth compared to white youth. An RRI higher than 1 indicates overrepresentation of the minority group at that decision point, and an RRI lower than 1 indicates underrepresentation of the minority group. Overrepresentation of minorities at referral, secure detention, petition, adjudication, placement in a secure correctional facility, and waiver to adult court is viewed as problematic. In contrast, underrepresentation of minorities at diversion and formal probation is viewed as problematic, because these decisions are less punitive than their alternatives. The results of an RRI analysis of statewide DMC data from 2009 are presented in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: 2009 Relative Rate Index, Indiana</b>							
	Black or African-American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other/Mixed	All Minorities
2. Juvenile Arrests	**	**	**	*	*	*	**
3. Refer to Juvenile Court	<b>3.23</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>0.23</b>	*	*	*	<b>2.46</b>
4. Cases Diverted	<b>0.94</b>	0.95	0.90	*	*	*	<b>0.94</b>
5. Cases Involving Secure Detention	<b>1.65</b>	<b>1.28</b>	1.21	*	*	*	<b>1.58</b>
6. Cases Petitioned	<b>1.08</b>	<b>1.07</b>	1.13	*	*	*	<b>1.08</b>
7. Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	<b>0.89</b>	0.97	0.97	*	*	*	<b>0.91</b>
8. Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	<b>0.89</b>	<b>0.86</b>	0.94	*	*	*	<b>0.89</b>
9. Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	<b>1.36</b>	1.20	**	*	*	*	<b>1.31</b>
10. Cases Transferred to Adult Court	0.83	<b>0.40</b>	**	*	*	*	<b>0.72</b>
Key Statistically significant results <b>Bold font</b> Results that are not statistically significant Regular font Group is less than 1% of the youth population * Insufficient number of cases for analysis ** Missing data for some element of the calculation ***							

In the State of Indiana, the magnitude of the disproportionality is greatest for African American youth. African American youth are overrepresented at referral, secure detention, petition, and confinement in state juvenile correctional facilities. They are underrepresented at diversion, adjudication, placement on formal probation, and waiver to adult court. Underrepresentation at formal probation and diversion is viewed as more punitive towards African American youth while underrepresentation at adjudication and waiver might be viewed as less punitive towards African American youth. The RRIs were statistically significant for African American youth at every decision point, with the exception of waiver to adult court. The RRIs specific to each county are presented later in the county case studies.

Logistic regression is another method of analyzing DMC data. It has an advantage over the RRI in that it allows one to control for other variables that might affect how a youth moves through the juvenile justice system. The results of a logistic regression analysis represent the likelihood (or odds) of an affirmative decision (e.g., yes to diversion or yes to a petition being filed) at a particular decision point for a subset of juvenile offenders, relative to another group (e.g., females compared to males, nonwhites compared to whites). For continuous variables (e.g., age or number of prior offenses), the odds represent how likely a decision is for each additional unit (1 year older or 1 additional prior offense). The results of these analyses are presented later in this report for each of the three counties involved in Phase II.

## **Phase II Process and General Methodology**

Phase II in the DMC Reduction Cycle is the assessment phase. The purpose of Phase II is to determine possible causes of DMC. Three Indiana counties were selected to participate: Allen, LaPorte, and Vanderburgh Counties. All three counties were identified in Phase I as having significant DMC and indicated an interest further research to assess potential causes of the DMC. Additionally, they each have moderate-sized metropolitan areas and a case volume that is great enough to use statistical analyses. Finally, these counties were selected, in part, because they were not already receiving assistance via the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

Researchers from the Community Solutions, Inc., the Center for Criminal Justice Research at IUPUI, the IU School of Medicine, and the American Institutes for Research were

contracted to work closely with these jurisdictions to learn why they believe DMC happens in their respective counties.

A mixed-methods, case study approach was used to assess and explain potential causes of DMC and to recommend strategies to reduce DMC in each of the three counties. First, the research team created County Profiles that described basic demographic and juvenile risk factor data for each of the three counties. This information, coupled with the Phase I DMC data, provided a foundation for the inquiry. The methodology utilized for this project, informed by a review of the DMC literature, involved a combination of one-on-one interviews with system-involved youth and focus groups with key stakeholders in each of the counties. Data were then analyzed and triangulated to develop county-specific case-studies, including conclusions and recommendations, as well as cross-cutting recommendations for reducing DMC in all three jurisdictions. Finally, this report includes State-level recommendations for reducing DMC in Indiana, particularly in the three counties examined in this study.

### Interviews with System-Involved Youth

Interviews were conducted with youth on probation as well as youth being held in secure detention. Our initial goal was to conduct at least 40 interviews in each county, approximately 20 interviews with youth on probation and 20 interviews with youth in detention. County-specific interview methodology is contained within each of the county case studies. A survey instrument was constructed to gain information about each youth's subjective experiences with racial issues as they relate to family, school, community, and the juvenile justice system. The interview instrument incorporated measures of the following concepts:

- Perceived Discrimination<sup>8</sup>
- Procedural Justice<sup>9</sup>
- Family Affluence Scale<sup>10</sup>
- MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Prelow, H.M., et al., The impact of ecological risk and perceived discrimination on the psychological adjustment of African American and European American youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 2004. 32(4): p. 375-389.

<sup>9</sup> Tatar, J.R., S.O. Kaasa, and E. Cauffman, *Perceptions of procedural justice among female offenders: Time does not heal all wounds*. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 2012. 18(2): p. 268-296.

<sup>10</sup> Currie, C., et al., Researching health inequalities in adolescents: the development of the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) family affluence scale. *Social Science & Medicine*, 2008. 66(6): p. 1429-1436.

- Sense of Safety<sup>12</sup>
- Neighborhood Disorganization<sup>13</sup>
- Collective Efficacy<sup>14</sup>
- Ethnic Socialization<sup>15</sup>
- Self-Reported Delinquency – Problem Behavior Frequency Scale<sup>16</sup>
- Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency<sup>17</sup>

The full interview instrument and a description of each of the measures are available in Appendix C.

### Key Stakeholder Focus Groups

Focus groups with key stakeholders sought to better understand underlying processes that may contribute to DMC in these jurisdictions. Starting with a presentation of county-specific DMC data (data from 2005 to 2009 combined into a single table), participants in each focus group were asked to discuss problems and processes that may have led to the disproportionality. The major research questions underlying the focus group portion of the study were:

- What do juvenile justice practitioners and other community stakeholders who work with youth believe are the causes of DMC in their county?
- What do these same practitioners believe can be done to stop or significantly lower DMC?
- Are there major differences between the various focus groups in their beliefs about how to stop or reduce DMC?

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<sup>11</sup> Goodman, E., et al., Adolescents' perceptions of social status: development and evaluation of a new indicator. *Pediatrics*, 2001. 108(2): p. e31-e31.

<sup>12</sup> Dahlberg LL, Toal SB, Swahn M, Behrens CB. 2005. *Measuring Violence-Related Attitudes, Behaviors, and Influences Among Youths: A Compendium of Assessment Tools*, 2nd ed., Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

<sup>13</sup> Arthur, M.W., et al., Measuring Risk and Protective Factors for Use, Delinquency, and Other Adolescent Problem Behaviors The Communities That Care Youth Survey. *Evaluation Review*, 2002. 26(6): p. 575-601.

<sup>14</sup> Sampson, R.J., S.W. Raudenbush, and F. Earls, Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science*, 1997. 277: p. 918-924.

<sup>15</sup> Huynh, V.W. and A.J. Fuligni, *Ethnic socialization and the academic adjustment of adolescents from Mexican, Chinese, and European backgrounds*. *Developmental Psychology*, 2008. 44(4): p. 1202.

<sup>16</sup> Henry, D. and A. Farrell, Multisite Violence Prevention Project. The study designed by a committee: Design of the Multisite Violence Prevention Project. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 2004. 26(1): p. 12-19.

<sup>17</sup> Henry, D. and A. Farrell, *Multisite Violence Prevention Project. The study designed by a committee: Design of the Multisite Violence Prevention Project*. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 2004. 26(1): p. 12-19.

Sector-specific focus groups were conducted with judges and magistrates, prosecutors, public defenders, juvenile probation officers, juvenile detention center staff, school personnel, police officers, and social service providers. The RRI and logistic regression analyses from Phase I were presented to each of the groups to generate discussion around the root causes of DMC specific to the county. The focus group data were analyzed using a modified Grounded Theory approach. The results were organized according to the the DMC explanations found in *OJJDP's DMC Technical Assistance Manual*<sup>18</sup> as well as Appendix A of this document. The focus group protocol is located in Appendix B. Detailed explanations of the county-specific methodology are contained within the case study for each county.

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<sup>18</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.



## II. County-Specific Case Studies

The information contained in the following case studies represents the combined data collection efforts of the Identification and Assessment Phases of the DMC Reduction Cycle in Indiana. The first section of each case study provides background information on the county, as well as a presentation of the RRI and logistic regression analysis results of the Phase I (Identification) data. The sections that follow present and discuss the results of the youth interviews and focus groups. The final section discusses how the various sources of data point to particular causes of DMC, and includes recommendations for addressing DMC.

### Allen County

Allen County has the third largest juvenile (age 10 to 17) population in the state, and proportionally the fourth largest juvenile minority population in the state. As of 2009, 29.1% of the juveniles in that age group were members of a racial or ethnic minority. Table A1 presents summary data on race and ethnicity in the county.

Race/Ethnicity	Total		Females		Males	
	Allen	Indiana	Allen	Indiana	Allen	Indiana
<b>Juvenile Population</b>	<b>42,446</b>	<b>730,177</b>	<b>20,813</b>	<b>355,588</b>	<b>21,653</b>	<b>374,589</b>
White	70.9%	78.2%	71.0%	78.2%	70.8%	78.3%
Black	16.9%	12.3%	16.8%	12.3%	17.0%	12.3%
American Indian	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Asian	3.4%	1.5%	3.3%	1.6%	3.4%	1.5%
Hispanic, of any race	8.4%	7.6%	8.5%	7.6%	8.3%	7.6%

### Child Indicator Data

The 2010 public high school graduation rate in Allen County was 87.9%, which is higher than the graduation rate of the state as a whole. The rate of delinquency case filings is 21 per every 1000 youth, which is the highest of the three counties and higher than the statewide rate. The percentage of children in poverty is 19.8%, lowest of the three counties and lower than Indiana as a whole. The unemployment rate is 10.5%, which is slightly higher than Indiana's unemployment rate. Allen County had a drug violation rate of 4.1, higher than LaPorte County, much lower than Vanderburgh County, and slightly lower than the state as a whole.

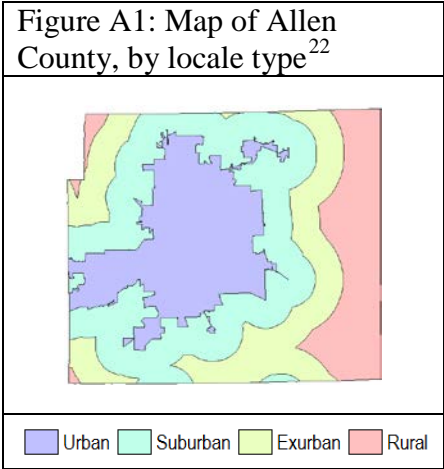
<sup>19</sup> Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2010). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2009." Online. Available: <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

	<b>Allen</b>	<b>Indiana</b>
<b>Total Child Population<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>94,334</b>	<b>1,589,365</b>
% of Children in Poverty (2010)	19.8%	21.6%
Annual Average Unemployment Rate (2010)	10.5%	10.2%
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 females, 15-17 (2008)	22.5	20.5
Child Abuse/Neglect rate per 1,000 children (2010)	9.8	14.5
# of Juveniles Committed to the DOC (2010)	36	1,008
# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings (2010)	1,996	20,585
# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings per 1000 Youth	21.2	13.0
# of Juvenile Status Case Filings (2010)	596	4,586
# of Juvenile Status Case Filings per 1000 Youth	6.3	2.9
Public High School Graduation Rate (2010)	87.9%	84.5%
Total Drug Violations (2009)	1,434	30,254
Total Drug Violations Rate (2009)	4.1	4.5

Population Distribution

The central and west-central portions of Allen County are urban, with rings of suburban and exurban land around the urban core. The eastern edge of the county is rural. The Census Bureau defines an urban area as a “densely settled core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density (1000 ppsm), along with contiguous territory containing nonresidential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settle territory with the densely settled core.”<sup>21</sup> Suburban areas are defined as areas within 2.5 miles of urban boundaries, exurban as areas within 2.5 miles of suburban boundaries, and rural as areas beyond exurban boundaries (i.e., everything else).

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>659.2</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Urban	171.8	26.1%
Suburban	233.4	35.4%
Exurban	141.4	21.4%
Rural	112.6	17.1%



<sup>20</sup> This table uses population data for all youth in the state (age 0 through 17).  
<sup>21</sup> “Urban Area Criteria for the 2010 Census; Notice.” *Federal Register* 76:164 (24 August 2011) p. 53030.  
<sup>22</sup> Source: Created 5/30/2012 by Bill Newby ([wnewby@iupui.edu](mailto:wnewby@iupui.edu)); IU Public Policy Institute

DMC Phase I Data

Consistent with the literature on DMC, the disproportionality is the most pronounced for African-American youth, who were referred to juvenile court over four times as often as white youth relative to their proportion in the general population. For African-American youth, there is also disproportionality at diversion, secure detention, petition, probation placement, and most markedly, secure confinement, where African-American youth were placed in a juvenile correctional facility at disposition 1.85 times as often as white youth. Hispanic youth were also disproportionately referred to the juvenile court, but at a lower rate than African-American youth. Table A4 displays the RRI for each decision point in Allen County for the years 2005-2009.

	Black or African-American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other/ Mixed	All Minorities
2. Juvenile Arrests	**	**	**	*	*	*	**
3. Refer to Juvenile Court	<b>4.39</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>0.57</b>	*	*	*	<b>3.42</b>
4. Cases Diverted	<b>0.92</b>	0.96	0.98	*	*	*	<b>0.92</b>
5. Cases Involving Secure Detention	<b>1.06</b>	1.05	1.05	*	*	*	<b>1.06</b>
6. Cases Petitioned	<b>1.10</b>	1.05	1.03	*	*	*	<b>1.09</b>
7. Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	1.00	1.00	0.93	*	*	*	1.00
8. Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	<b>0.93</b>	1.06	0.87	*	*	*	<b>0.95</b>
9. Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	<b>1.85</b>	1.22	**	*	*	*	<b>1.79</b>
10. Cases Transferred to Adult Court	**	**	**	*	*	*	**
<b>Key</b>							
Statistically significant results				<b>Bold font</b>			
Results that are not statistically significant				Regular font			
Group is less than 1% of the youth population				*			
Insufficient number of cases for analysis				**			
Missing data for some element of the calculation				***			

Table A5 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis of Allen County’s DMC data. The analysis shows that even when sex, age, offense level (whether or not it was a felony), and the number of prior referrals are considered, nonwhite youth are still more likely to be placed in secure detention and to receive a disposition of secure confinement in a juvenile correctional facility. Specifically they were placed in secure detention 1.16 times more often than white youth and sent to a juvenile correctional facility upon disposition 1.58 times more often than white youth. There were no statistically significant differences between white and

nonwhite youth at diversion, petition, waiver, adjudication and formal probation (after controlling for sex, age, offense level, and number of prior referrals).

Independent Variable	Decision point						
	Diverted	Detention	Petition	Waived	Adjudicated	Probation	DOC
NONWHITE	1.011	<b>1.162</b>	0.989	0.951	0.942	0.985	<b>1.578</b>
FEMALE	<b>1.436</b>	<b>1.248</b>	<b>0.696</b>	0.378	<b>0.627</b>	<b>0.668</b>	<b>0.437</b>
AGE	<b>0.942</b>	0.999	<b>1.062</b>	<b>2.164</b>	<b>1.092</b>	<b>1.060</b>	<b>0.916</b>
FELONY	<b>0.553</b>	<b>1.139</b>	<b>1.808</b>	*	<b>1.65</b>	<b>1.766</b>	<b>2.178</b>
NUMBERPRIOR	<b>0.640</b>	<b>1.114</b>	<b>1.562</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>1.529</b>	<b>1.159</b>	<b>1.404</b>

\*Offense level was excluded as a control variable

### Youth Interviews

The youth interviews were designed to assess the experiences of juvenile justice system-involved youth in their home, school, and community, as well as their experiences within the juvenile justice system. The results of these interviews are used here to identify trends specific to Allen County in an effort to identify possible causes of disproportionality and to identify opportunities for intervention.

The results of the interviews with youth in Allen County are presented in Table A6. The results are compared between white and nonwhite youth and statistically significant differences are displayed in bold. The interview results were also compared between youth who were interviewed in detention and youth who were interviewed in probation. Statistically significant differences between those two groups of youth are also indicated in bold.

<b>Table A6: Allen County Youth Interview Results</b>				
	Race Comparison		Setting Comparison	
	White	Minority	Detention	Probation
Sample Size (Total = 38)	N =20	N=18	N =23	N=15
Perceived Discrimination (higher scores indicated greater perceived discrimination)				
Police	4.1	4.4	4.6	3.6
Detention Staff	3.4	3.2	3.6	2.7
Public Defender	0.8	1.2	0.8	1.5
Prosecutor	2.6	3.8	3.4	2.4
Judge	2.4	2.6	2.8	1.9
Probation Officer	2.8	3.6	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Procedural Injustice (higher scores indicate more negative perceptions)	41.8	38.2	40.0	40.1
Family Affluence Scale	3.4	4.1	3.6	3.9
MacArthur Subjective Social Status	10.2	9.5	10.0	9.7
Family	5.7	5.3	5.7	5.2
Adolescent	4.5	4.2	4.2	4.5
Neighborhood/Community Factors				
Sense of Safety	17.9	18.2	17.9	18.4
Neighborhood Disorganization	10.7	11.3	11.5	10.1
Collective Efficacy	30.9	28.8	29.1	31.2
Social Control	14.7	13.2	13.4	14.9
Social Cohesion	16.3	15.6	15.7	16.3
Ethnic Socialization	<b>17.3</b>	<b>35.8</b>	25.9	27.1
Cultural Socialization	<b>7.0</b>	<b>14.6</b>	10.7	10.7
Preparation for Bias	<b>8.1</b>	<b>17.4</b>	11.9	13.9
Promotion of Mistrust	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>	3.3	2.5
Self-Reported Delinquency	20.0	18.3	20.2	17.7
Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency	22.4	27.0	<b>27.9</b>	<b>18.4</b>
Physical Aggression	9.1	12.6	11.7	9.2
Non-Physical Aggression	8.3	8.3	8.8	7.0
Relational Aggression	6.8	7.9	7.5	6.9

Thirty-eight justice-involved youth participated in the interviews, with 15 recruited through the probation department and 23 recruited from the Allen County Juvenile Detention Center. Twenty-one of the participants were female and 27 were male. Twenty were White, non-Hispanic and 18 were racial/ethnic minorities.

A measure of Perceived Discrimination was administered to measure levels of perceived discrimination at different points of penetration of the juvenile justice system; through contact with police, detention staff, public defender, prosecutor, judge/magistrate, and probation. We first asked the participants to indicate individuals in the juvenile justice system they interacted with, and then they were asked a series of questions about their interactions with those individuals.

We anticipated that there would be differing levels of perceived discrimination based on the roles that employees in each system play; for instance, based on the research literature, we expected police to be perceived as more discriminatory than public defenders due to the nature of the respective professions. In the context of DMC, we can begin to understand, from the youth's perception, at which points within the juvenile justice system they are experiencing more or less discrimination. In sum, we expected this measure of Perceived Discrimination to indicate whether "Differential Processing" is occurring or whether "Policies with Disproportionate Impact" are in place at each county. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth in terms of perceived discrimination, but detained youth reported significantly higher levels of perceived discrimination in their interactions with probation officers than probation participants.

We examined perceptions of Procedural Justice to understand the roots of DMC. This measure allows participants to rate their perceptions of fairness throughout the court process. A measure of Procedural Justice may also suggest whether "Differential Processing" is occurring within a county. We found no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

We also included two measures of socioeconomic status: the Family Affluence Scale and the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status. Socioeconomic status (SES) is relevant to DMC because SES is related to the quality and safety of neighborhoods as well as family factors associated with crime. For instance, lower SES families may be less able to provide parental supervision, thus placing their children at higher risk for delinquent behavior. SES also may be related to "Programming Access/Eligibility" as lower SES families are less likely to have access to needed services. We found no statistically significant differences on either measure of SES between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

We included two measures of neighborhood factors: Neighborhood Disorganization and Collective Efficacy. Neighborhood factors are associated with crime rates and police patrol patterns. Since more disorganized neighborhoods with lower levels of collective efficacy among neighbors are associated with a greater police presence, we sought to understand if neighborhoods where participants lived differed by race, as well as between probation and detained youth. However, there were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

Ethnic Socialization is a measure which asks participants about what level of socialization they have been exposed to in their family as it relates to their race/ethnicity. Specifically, this measure assesses if parents have prepared youth for bias and if there is a promotion of mistrust of others, as it relates to race. A measure of Ethnic Socialization was selected to identify if there were any “Specific Risk Factors” correlated with race or ethnicity which may lead to differential offending. Minority youth in Allen County reported higher levels of ethnic socialization than White youth, including the cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust subscales. The differences were statistically significant. The importance of these differences will be discussed in focus group section of the report under Differential Processing. There were no differences between youth on probation and youth in detention.

We included two self-report measures which assessed Delinquency and Aggressive Problem Behaviors. We wanted to understand if minority youth are experiencing rates of DMC due to “Differential Behavior”; that is, do minority youth commit more severe crimes or at a higher rate? If so, this may be an explanation for DMC occurring in that jurisdiction. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but detained youth reported higher levels of Aggression-Problem Behavior.

### **Stakeholder Focus Groups**

As discussed previously, sector-specific focus groups were conducted with stakeholders representing the juvenile justice system, youth serving agencies, and schools from across the community. This section includes a discussion of the focus group method employed and the Allen County results. What is learned from this study can be used by leaders in the county to develop plans aimed at addressing disproportionate minority contact in the jurisdiction.

### Focus Group Access & Sample

*Stakeholder Meetings.* In late June 2012, members of the DMC research team met with a group of key stakeholders in Allen County, including their Systems Administrator for the Allen County Juvenile Center and the Chief Probation Officer, to explain the purposes of the study, agree on a study plan, develop a process to implement the study plan and identify a potential list of invitees for the focus groups.

*Participants.* Focus groups were convened to acquire in-depth, qualitative information about the workings of the local juvenile justice system and learn why local practitioners believe that DMC exists in their jurisdiction. Focus groups were conducted with the following participants:

- Juvenile judges and magistrates
- Juvenile prosecutors and public defenders
- Juvenile probation and detention staff
- Police and school resources officers
- School personnel
- Community service providers

First, all juvenile judges/ magistrates and prosecutors/public defenders were invited to participate. The research team then developed a list of individuals holding the rank of supervisor, or below, to participate in the probation/ detention, police, school representatives and community service provider focus groups. Table A7 displays the number of individuals initially invited, the number who agreed to participate, and the number and percentage of individuals that actually participated in the focus groups held in August 2012.

	<b># Invited</b>	<b># RSVP'd</b>	<b># Participated</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>78.5%</b>
Judges/Magistrates	6	5	4	67%
Prosecutors/Public Defender	5	5	5	100%
Probation/ Detention	12	11	12	100%
Police	12	7	7	58%
Schools	11	8	8	73%
Community Service Providers	10	8	8	80%



## Focus Group Procedures

All of the focus groups were conducted on August 23, 2012 at the Allen County Juvenile Center. Participation in the focus groups was strictly voluntary. After the purpose and objectives of the study were explained, subjects completed a brief demographic questionnaire. Subjects were then assigned aliases and instructed to refer to themselves or others using their aliases.

Three members of the research team, all experienced focus group facilitators, conducted a total of six focus groups, each lasting 1 to 1 ½ hours. The facilitators employed a semi-structured interview schedule. The questions for all groups were similar, although each group included unique questions based on the sector represented by group members (i.e., judges/ magistrates, prosecutors/ public defenders, probation/ detention, police/ school resource officers, school representatives, and community service providers). The focus group protocol is included in Appendix B.

As seen in Table A7, the overall response rate (based on the number of initial invites made and the number of individuals who were able to participate in their respective focus groups) was very good at 78.5%. Moreover, the response rate for each subset was quite strong with three groups at 80% or better; the group with the lowest participation rate was the police (58%).

## Focus Group Data Collection & Analysis

Every focus group was recorded using small hand-held digital recorders. Additionally, (beyond the facilitator) two researchers were present during each focus group to take detailed notes on laptops. Analyzing focus groups takes a number of steps. Beyond developing an open coding scheme and organizing data along a schematic, a qualitative researcher should also consider not only the answers offered by the subjects, but also the words chosen, the context in which they were said, the internal consistency of the discussion, the frequency, extensiveness, specificity and intensity of comments, and what was not being said during the focus group discussions. To aide in the analysis, our research team took time to debrief after all focus groups were completed at each site. Of interest during the debriefings were issues such as the flow of the groups, particular themes that stood out during the sessions, and any group dynamics or

relational issues that might have influenced group discussions. These issues were noted and used later during the analysis of the transcripts.

We chose to utilize content and narrative analysis techniques to analyze the focus group transcripts and research team notes. Open coding techniques borrowed from Grounded Theory were used to identify key themes (also known as original categories).<sup>23</sup> Some qualitative researchers keep raw counts of the number of times an issue is raised, no raw counts are provided in this report. Unfortunately, raw counts can offer inaccurate representations of the various discussions that take place. Therefore, we decided against reporting raw counts as it was not always clear in our notes whether a new person was stating a new idea or the same person was clarifying a previous comment. Moreover, counts are not necessary for this report as we were merely identifying the causes of DMC nominated by the focus group participants.

Once coded, the data were mapped against what OJJDP refers to as *Mechanisms Leading to DMC*.<sup>24</sup> These mechanisms are what OJJDP has identified (from the extant literature) as the possible explanations for the existence of DMC in juvenile justice systems. Subjects' perceptions regarding causes of DMC in Allen County were organized around each of the OJJDP mechanisms that were identified as being an issue in the county. In the results section, we present a discussion of the demographics of focus group participants by group type and what focus group participants believe causes DMC in Allen County. We also offer recommendations to address and reduce DMC that are specific to Allen County, and others that are applicable to all of the counties that participated in the study.

#### Limitations of the Focus Group Data

The nature of the focus group method itself can introduce limits on the data. For example, the method does not require all participants in the group to answer each question individually. Participants were advised that they could refrain from answering any questions they do not wish to answer. As such, focus group data are likely incomplete. For example, the data presented below which discuss why there is DMC and what should be done about it was

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<sup>23</sup> We should note here that while we borrowed an approach from Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory, we did not exercise their full grounded theory approach as the data collected did not allow for a more detailed analysis. In Grounded Theory, the purpose of coding is to offer the researcher a way to identify and describe phenomena found in their data.

<sup>24</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

developed only from verbal responses provided to direct questions or as comments about others' responses to direct questions. We did not systematically capture all instances where others in the room may have provided signals of non-verbal agreement. Therefore, the results discussed below are a conservative snapshot of the discussion that took place. If a comment was made that seemed to be irrelevant to the discussion or an individual offered a belief that no one else shared, it was not likely included in the information presented below.

One final concern should be raised about focus group studies. The data collected in focus groups can be vulnerable to a process referred to as “group think.” Group think occurs when one or more subjects endeavor to regulate the discussion or force others to censor their comments based on what the regulator(s) share.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes, participants choose (on their own), to adapt their statements according to what they believe is the majority opinion—even when no one is exerting external pressure to do so.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, participants of focus groups who work together or who serve as volunteers together run the risk of group think because they belong to a cohesive group that may wish to present a consensus view on sensitive topics.<sup>27</sup> To protect against group think during the focus group sessions, the facilitator must be skillful at identifying when group think occurs and adroit at interrupting it (Kleiber, 2004).<sup>28</sup> To guard against group think, each facilitator in this study followed a script that instructed them to address the issue up front with participants by defining what group think is and how destructive it could be to the quality of the information to be collected. Additionally, the facilitators worked with their groups by building group norms and operating rules, took time to build rapport with the participants before asking substantive questions, and reminded participants not only about how important their individual opinions were to the study, but that in the end, the information gathered would be used to help their jurisdiction improve the functioning of their system in general, and to reduce DMC specifically.

### Focus Group Results

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<sup>25</sup> Janis, I.L. (1982) *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.; Janis, I.L. (1982) *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>28</sup> Kleiber, P.B. (2004). Focus groups: More than a method of qualitative inquiry, Pp. 87-102. In DeMarrais, K. & Lapan, S. (Eds.) *Foundations of Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

The research team met with a total of 44 juvenile justice practitioners in six focus groups: four judges, twelve probation officers and detention staff, five prosecutors and public defenders, seven police officers, eight representatives from area schools, and eight service providers from the Allen County community. Refer to Table A8 for the specific demographic information of each of the focus groups.

	<b>Judge/ Magistrates (n=4)</b>	<b>Probation/ Detention (n=12)</b>	<b>Prosecutors/ Public Defenders (n=5)</b>	<b>Police (n=6)</b>	<b>School (n=8)</b>	<b>Community Service Providers (n=8)</b>
<b>Age range:</b>	45 – 65	27 – 60	41 – 59	30 – 49	36 – 65	32 – 79
<b>Average age:</b>	54	40	49	39	48	50
<b>Sex: Male</b>	50%	50%	80%	66.7%	87.5%	50%
<b>Female</b>	50%	50%	20%	33.3%	12.5%	50%
<b>Race: White</b>	75%	75%	100%	100%	87.5%	75%
<b>Nonwhite</b>	25%	25%	0%	0%	12.5%	25%
<b>Highest education level:</b>						
<b>HS/GED</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Some college</b>	0%	0%	0%	33.3%	0%	25%
<b>Associate’s degree</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Bachelor’s degree</b>	0%	83.3%	0%	66.7%	12.5%	50%
<b>Master’s degree</b>	0%	16.7%	20%	0%	87.5%	25%
<b>PhD</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>JD</b>	100%	0%	80%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Other:</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Average # of years working with youth:</b>	25	17	22	20	25	17

There were wide ranges in age across the six focus groups; however, the youngest participant of all was 27 years old (a member of the probation/ detention staff) and the oldest was 79 years old (a member of the school representatives group). Nearly two-thirds (63%) of the focus group participants were male. Female participants were mostly concentrated in two groups—the probation/detention staff (n=6) and service providers (n=4); however, two judge/magistrates, one prosecutor, two police officers and one school representative were also female.

As one would expect given the professions that were targeted to participate in this study, our sample reported a high level of educational attainment; all 44 indicated that they had completed at least some college. Approximately 44% had earned at least a bachelor’s degree and 28% had earned a master’s degree. Additionally, nearly one-fifth of the participants had been awarded law degrees.

Focus group participants were asked to indicate their racial/ethnic identity. As Table A9 shows, racial and ethnic identity was broken into two categories (white and non-white). The vast majority of the juvenile justice practitioners (84%) self-identified as white and the proportion of white participants were even higher in a few of the groups. Specifically, 100% of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders and the Police self-identified as white. Whereas, nearly 88% of School Personnel and 75% of the Judges/Magistrates, Probation/Detention, and Community Service Providers that participated, identified as white. Non-white participants (n=7), which account for 16% of our sample, were clustered in the Probation/Detention and the Community Service Provider groups, and one nonwhite participant was a member of the School Personnel group.

An interesting issue raised in the focus groups was the disconnect that many of the participants feel between themselves and the youth they serve. Specifically, they explained that the youths' culture—the way they look, act and live—is very different from theirs, which they believe can make it difficult to adequately address their clients' needs. Differences in race/ethnicity and class account for much of the feelings of disconnect that were offered. At first glance, there seems to be some evidence of distinct differences in the racial and ethnic identities of practitioners and their clients. Youth of color account for 29% of the child population in Allen County. Almost 45 % of the probation and detained youth we interviewed self-identified as African American and almost 11% claimed they were of Hispanic heritage. Yet, 100% of the prosecutors/public defenders and police; nearly 88% of the school personnel and three-quarters of the judge/magistrates, probation/detention staff, and service providers that participated in the study—and have much say over case initiation and processing—self identify as white. This does NOT explain why DMC occurs in Allen County. It simply supports what many of the study participants said when they indicated that they look different and come from different backgrounds than those they serve.

One final note should be included before we present the focus group findings. When we discuss study results, we will not be identifying the identity of the person who raised a subject or who offered a relevant quote as we promised to protect the anonymity of the focus group participants. We will, however, identify the focus group type (i.e., police, prosecutor/public defender, etc.) from which an idea or relevant quote came, as long as there are more than a few individuals in the group. All of the focus groups in Allen County met this criterion.

## Focus Group Findings

To try to understand why DMC occurred in Allen County, the focus group members were asked several questions about their perceptions of the juvenile justice system in their county and their day-to-day work. In the following section, we present the main themes that were expressed during the focus groups. There is rarely a simple answer for why minority youth face disparate, negative outcomes in United States juvenile courts. As previously discussed in this report, DMC was not found at every decision point in Allen County. Again, the Allen County DMC data analysis showed that nonwhite youth were more likely to be placed in secure detention and receive a disposition of secure confinement in a juvenile correctional facility in Allen County, even when age, gender, crime type, and number of prior referrals to court were taken into account. This information was shared with the various focus groups and they discussed why they believe DMC occurred at these decision points in their county. Their explanations are presented below as they relate to OJJDP's *Mechanisms Leading to Delinquency*. Not all of the mechanisms are expected to operate in any single jurisdiction; this was the case in Allen County. The mechanisms identified as possible factors that may lead to DMC in Allen County include: Differential Behavior, Indirect Effects, Specific Risk Factors, Programming and Accessibility/Eligibility, Justice by Geography, Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision making, Legislation/ Policy and Legal Factors that affect DMC, Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Intervention, and Immigration and Migration-Related Mobility.

### Differential Behavior

The argument that minority youth participate in behavior that is different than their white counterparts has been offered as one mechanism that leads to DMC. Research is mixed about whether this is, in fact, a major determinate of DMC. Nevertheless, it is often cited as an explanation for DMC by juvenile justice practitioners. Differential Behavior includes three categories under its umbrella: *Serious Offenses* (i.e., gang involvement and gang crime, drug use and sales, guns, and violence resulting in serious injuries); *Involvement in Delinquency at an Early Age*; and *Involvement in Other Justice Systems* (e.g., child welfare system).

In Allen County, the belief that minority youth were often involved in more serious crimes than their white counterparts was expressed in five of the six focus groups (i.e., Police, Community Service Providers, Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and Probation/ Detention). In particular, many participants discussed that referrals to the court for drug use and

sales, firearms charges, and violent offenses were more commonly made against minority youth. In addition, several people commented that youth of color tended to have longer prior records and that length and seriousness of prior records can influence a number of the decision points in juvenile justice case processing. Several individuals in the groups acknowledged that prior criminal history appears to be an easy answer to explain DMC, but they were aware of the reality that some youth obtain juvenile records at an early age or have longer records, not because they commit crimes more than other kids, but because they live in high crime areas where the police may more easily come into contact with them. Furthermore, several participants claimed that this can start a cycle in that once a youth has been arrested by the police, the police may then focus on them more, which can result in even more increased system involvement. This perspective was vocalized by participants in the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/ Public Defenders, and the Probation/Detention groups.

Another reason for DMC that is relevant to differential behavior has to do with how more serious behavior can result in the over-representation of minority youth in the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC). Specifically, the facilitator asked the groups why they believe that minority youth received a commitment to the IDOC 1.5 times more often than white youth. Several individuals in the Prosecutor/Public Defender group explained that it had to do with different offenses and longer records. As one individual explained, “...commitments to DOC only happen if it's a serious crime and if they (minority youth) are the ones committing the serious charges, that is why they get sent there.” Participants in this group quickly clarified that their county does not actually send a large number of youth to DOC since they have more in-county support services than many other counties, so if they send a juvenile to DOC, “...he has a serious record and current charge.”

In addition to the question about why more minority youth were sent to DOC, each of the groups were asked what might explain why youth of color were also more likely to be detained than white youth in Allen County. The explanations were similar to those explaining the overrepresentation of minority youth at IDOC. Specifically, participants in the Judge/Magistrates and Prosecutor/Public Defender groups explained that the factors for secure detention and commitment to DOC are usually the same: prior criminal history and seriousness of the current offense.

One final topic that is related to differential behavior was discussed in the School Personnel and the Prosecutor/Public Defender groups: the idea that minority youth are thought to behave differently than white youth in school, and are more likely to be referred to the courts for these “different behaviors.” For example, the way in which African American students supposedly speak to school authorities when confronted about something was described. One individual offered, “*it looks the same from my perspective, the school system, you get a Caucasian who talks back to a teacher versus a minority, the white kid will get talked to but the minority kid might get kicked out of school,*” and referred to the court. In fact, many individuals in the same groups (school and prosecutor/public defenders) explained that youth of color receive more disciplinary referrals from school and are thus disproportionately punished for school problems. A number of other related issues were raised in the various groups about language, attitude and values held important by youth of color; these issues will be discussed below.

#### Immigration & Migration-Related Mobility

One type of Mobility Effect that may be at play in Allen County is *Immigration and Migration-Related Mobility*. When new immigrant youth are not able to speak English and/or their parents are not able to speak with local authorities about their child’s case a serious problem arises and can clearly impact DMC. Specifically, the inability to communicate can lead to a number of negative consequences including longer detention holds, loss of services or out-of-home placements. The special challenges that new immigrant populations present in Allen County were discussed in the Judges/Magistrates, Probation/Detention staff and the Prosecutors/ Public Defenders groups.

#### Indirect Effects

This category represents the broader social context of the relationship between race and ethnicity and a host of factors associated with delinquent behaviors. There is a relationship between race and ethnicity and economic status, education, location and other risk factors associated with increased delinquency. Thus, the impact of race and ethnicity may be *indirectly* affected by secondary factors. In the DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition<sup>29</sup>, indirect

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<sup>29</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.



effects are divided into three categories: Specific Risk Factors, Programming Access/Eligibility, and Decision-making Factors.

#### Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors

Several factors identified through the focus groups are appropriately organized under this category. For example, we discovered a specific risk factor that we refer to as the *Intersection of Socio-Economic Status (SES) & Race*. The argument was made that SES and Race are closely intertwined; participants often used the terms interchangeably. For example, many people argued that it was not just race that led to crime and being detected by laws enforcement; rather it was the negative influence of having a low SES and the fact that the majority of the poor people in their jurisdiction were Black. This same comingling of words can be found in later sections where “culture” is discussed. The notion of the intersection of *SES & Race* was discussed in all six focus groups. Yet, in several groups individuals indicated that they believed it was more an SES issue than a race issue. Additional ideas about how other Indirect Effects impact the occurrence of DMC are as follows.

*SES and current economic trends.* The intersection between a family’s SES and current economic trends was a popular topic in the Judges, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and Community Service Providers focus groups. Several members of each of these groups explained how SES and the economy could impact DMC by suggesting that poor people have a myriad of strains in their lives to contend with that can be major sources of stress (e.g., family strife, bills, not enough money to provide for basic living necessities); therefore, family members (usually a single-mother) have to work several jobs to provide adequate food and shelter for their family. Many argued rather passionately that this can become a problem because “mom” must work several jobs (or extensive overtime at one job) which prevents an otherwise able parent from providing the requisite supervision and consistent discipline that is crucial to keeping kids out of trouble. One focus group member explained that “*many kids have to raise themselves.*”

The complexities of family economics—employment, no one being home to watch over the children, outstanding bills—that can impact DMC came up several times in different groups. In one instance, community service providers underscored that SES and the economy is the very reason that a juvenile and their family cannot afford a private attorney, which can affect the quality of justice one receives. Judges and prosecutors/public defenders spoke eloquently about how this type of family situation could really impact a youth as they progress through the

system. Specifically, kids with certain charges (e.g., battery) can only be released from detention on electronic monitoring; however, they explained that this is a hardship for many youth as their electronic monitoring system requires the use of a landline telephone. According to several focus group participants, it is all too common that a youth's family cannot afford to have a landline telephone or to pay the reinstallation fees and overdue charges due from a previous landline. As a result, some youth are forced to remain in secure detention prior to an adjudication hearing, which the research suggests can result in a more negative case outcome than if he had been released to the community. Moreover, detention holds like this can increase DMC given the correlation between poverty and race in the county.

Members of the police focus group noted how SES directly impacted children's behaviors, rather than how SES impacted their opportunities as described above. For instance, some officers claimed that poor minority youth (those with low SES) cause a majority of the problems in schools. On the other hand, some police officers argued that other indirect effects (i.e., culture and peer pressure) were at least as important as their SES.

*Cultural Influences & Peer Pressure.* Another argument is that minority youth act badly (or commit crime) because of the "culture they live in" and the "people they associate with." Specifically, individuals from the Police, Service Providers and Probation/Detention groups suggest that youth behave according to the norms of those around them. In essence, youth commit crimes and get in trouble at school because it is what they see every day. They argued that youth learn this behavior from TV, family, neighbors and friends. Their friends can also pressure them into behaving in such a way that they get arrested and brought into the system. As one individual from the Judges/Magistrates group explained, "*Culturally, there's a lot that plays into this – thug life and all that that has been aggrandized through popular music. It gives you street cred to do time in jail. For rappers, it's better professionally to have done these things. It's popular. It's what you see on TV. We see both black and white youth doing this.*"

For several of the focus group participants, the essence of the argument is that minority youth appear to be growing up in a more permissive culture that does not characterize their illegal behaviors negatively. Thus, DMC is increased because minority youth are disproportionately committing crimes and they are disproportionately being arrested and processed through the system. Some individuals referred to this as a culture of poverty. In calling this a culture of poverty, these other individuals were quick to state that "*race is not the*

*issue, poverty is the issue.*” The argument is that race/ethnicity has nothing to do with creating what some would label a deviant culture; rather it is the poverty that causes the problematic culture. In the end, “it is not race, it is poverty” became a consistent mantra throughout the entire study. As one service provider intimated, poverty “*seems to have its own culture and what is important and skills to negotiate the system. [They have] their views on police officers. And what a family values, is at times, a huge predictor on where that kid is gonna end up.*”

*Lack of cultural understanding.* The fact that many in the majority (i.e., white authorities) are unfamiliar with or feel threatened by minority youth was suggested in the Police, Service Provider, School Personnel, Judge/Magistrates and Probation/Detention groups. Specifically, several participants explained that juvenile justice and school staff and kids and their families just cannot relate to one another because they come from such diverse cultures. It is this lack of “understanding the other” that results in so much frustration and anger toward one another. A lot of the cultural disconnect that was discussed in the groups relates to the way in which minority youth communicate with and act toward figures of authority. Specifically, several participants described how the way in which African American youth communicate can appear unnecessarily aggressive. One participant in the school group explained:

*“...minority students tend to be a little more confrontational than majority students. Disorderly conduct needs to be witnessed by the police. Sometimes it goes back to the home. Minority students are more likely to be agitated when we arrive. When we arrive, if they’ve calmed down, I’m more likely to let them go, but if I get cussed at, they’re more likely to get locked up. Until that mentality of obeying authority changes, they’re more likely to get those numbers [the DMC statistics that were shown]. Some white kids act that way too. It isn’t just limited to black and white—there are parts of town where that happens more. It’s more socio-economic than race, the willingness to resist law enforcement.”*

Others discussed their confusion over what they believe to be minority youths’ unwillingness to internalize middle class values such as the importance of graduating from high school and wanting to go to college. Further still, others explained that the way “*they dress and act can be scary to some people.*” For example, one school representative explained:

*“...so Mr. E (an alias for a well-dressed, clean cut, white individual in the focus group) is coming in [to the office] with a box cutter and Jimmy comes in with*

*sagging pants and twisties. You are going to deal with them differently. Jimmy is going to get it, because I'm scared of Jimmy—what I've seen on TV, news, I've formulated this opinion, and I'm going to think I believe what Mr. E says.”*

Clearly, the unfamiliarity of those in power with the “culture” of these young people they work with on a daily basis can exacerbate DMC.

#### Indirect Effects: Decision-making Factors

Many factors are considered by juvenile justice system actors when they are to make decisions about how to process youth through the system. For example, if a juvenile who is arrested lives at home with a grandmother and she is in the hospital, then the arresting officer or detention center intake staff has to decide if they are willing to release the youth to another responsible adult or detain the youth. If this staff member has personal beliefs about what a family structure ought to be and decides to detain this youth because he does not live with his mother and father, or the jurisdiction has a policy against releasing the youth to anyone other than the legal guardian, then this mechanism may come into play. The reason that these types of decision-making factors can impact DMC is that previous research indicates that minority youth are more likely to live in what some consider ‘non-traditional’ family structures. So, if decision-making factors like this disparately impact youth living in non-traditional families, then DMC can increase in the jurisdiction. The decision-making factors that are indirect effects include demographic and social risk factors that are associated with higher levels of delinquency. Focus group comments related to decision-making factors centered on the family and household composition of system-involved youth.

*Family structure, parental involvement, poor parenting, single-parented households, broken homes, etc.* By far, the most common specific risk factor that surfaced during the focus groups was related to a child’s home life. In fact, the structure of the family (i.e., single-mother headed household, divorce or whether the father was ever involved in the child’s life), how involved the parents are in the child’s life and case, and the poor parenting skills demonstrated by many parents were discussed in every single focus group. Lack of parental involvement, for example, can result in a child staying in detention longer or having to be placed outside the home. When asked how parental involvement impacts decision-making about placement or detention, two participants explained:

*“How much involvement do the parents have in their kids’ lives? It’s a real challenge to get ahold of a lot of them, some of the parents, because the numbers don’t match up or they don’t have minutes on their phone.”*

While one police officer remarked:

*“...a lot of times that (referring to what is done with a kid after arrest) is affected by how much parental backing they had. If we can’t get ahold of the parents, then it’s more likely we’ll have to bring them downtown. If we call the parents, and they come--show up, then they [the juvenile] don’t go down there. It isn’t because the kid is black, white, yellow, or green. It’s because we couldn’t get ahold of the parents.”*

Sometimes parents want to participate, but do not have the means to do so. As another participant explained, *“...they were going to come, but they did not have gas money to come to court.”* While another claimed that *“we can order parents to participate. You can make families do things up to a certain point – you can make it a condition of their paternity, but then if you throw them in jail, when they don’t show up, it creates more disproportionality.”*

Further still, one participant demonstrated his frustration with society arguing that we have created a disincentive for fathers to play a role in the lives of their kids: *“...you can’t get aid if the father is in the house.”* He claimed that these fathers say:

*“...I’d take care of my kids if I had to.”* The problem, this focus group participant continued, is that *“we have created such a disincentive [for dad to be involved] which is harmful to the family structure. You can have structure and be poor, but I don’t know if you can do it if you tell the dads that ‘you produce the kids, but you don’t have to be responsible for them. We’ll make sure they get fed’.”*

*Movement of kids from relative to relative.* A slightly different family issue was raised during the Judges/Magistrates focus group. Several participants spoke about the negative impact that being bounced around from relative to relative can have on youth and their case outcomes. The group members explained that more often than not, these juveniles were bouncing back and forth between mother and grandmother and that this ‘bouncing around’ was more common among the minority youth that came before them.

*When a parent will not take a child back.* Another somewhat different concept, yet still related to the quality of parenting, deals with the reality that some parents refuse to allow their children to come back home after arrest. Individuals in the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Probation/Detention, Police and Community Service Providers groups explained that this is a real problem and typically results in the child facing more severe consequences. It is not clear why this is believed to happen more in minority homes, however based on the conversations, it appeared to be related to SES and the structure of the family. Perhaps the single-mom knows that she will not be home to keep a watchful eye on her child, or she does not have help disciplining her child and she is concerned the influence that he/she may have on other siblings. The reality is that the participants did not offer explanations for why this might be happening; however, this is something that the jurisdiction should investigate as it begins its next phase of DMC review.

*Education.* Participants in the School Personnel and Community Service Providers groups believed that many poor and minority children are not ready to begin kindergarten and they are never really able to make up these deficits. The individuals in these focus groups believe that kids that fall behind educationally, exhibit higher levels of frustration at school, which leads them to act out, talk back to teachers, fight, and so on. Other individuals in these groups argued that educational achievement in poor areas is lacking for both the kids and their parents.

#### Indirect Effects: Programming and Access/ Eligibility.

When young people cannot access the resources that they need because of economic factors such as a lack of health insurance (which is due to a negative economic circumstances), DMC can increase in several juvenile justice decision points such as diversion, detention, petition and out of home placement. This issue was raised in Allen County focus groups just a few times. Yet, the issue was of relative import as it might clearly impact DMC in the county. Specifically, individuals in the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group explained that many youth in their jurisdiction would likely have been released from secure detention, or might have received a more favorable placement, if they had had private insurance that could have covered the cost of private, secure facilities and stays in behavioral hospitals. Since minority youth may be more likely to be poor, and thus less likely to have private health insurance, DMC could be increased in this way as well.

## Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Treatment

Access to quality prevention and treatment programs which are evidence-based are critical for local justice systems. This mechanism can lead to DMC as it deals the lack or differential availability of certain types of prevention and treatment resources in a jurisdiction. The various groups detailed what they thought was missing from their local system that was important for youth to have. For the most part, individuals in this county believe that the range of services available to youth in their county was good, but with a few key exceptions. In particular, some pointed out that many of the currently available programming was not accessible to the non-English speaking families in the county. Further still, even when language was not a barrier, some suggested that not all of the necessary services were welcoming to diverse cultures. Finally, several participants (in three of the groups—Judges/Magistrates, Community Service Providers and Probation/Detention) suggested that the variety and depth of services available to youth has been declining due to budget cuts and/or the revised funding schemes resulting from HB 1001 which concentrated service provision funds under the umbrella of the Indiana Department of Child Services). In particular, these groups believed that many youth and their families were not receiving the mental health services they need.

One participant explained how access to appropriate resources was entirely dependent on one's resources:

*“...we have a lot of kids in detention because we have a gap between school and jail. There are no programs to deal with them in between. We have a gap there. As an administrator, I might be in a situation where I might decide to send a kid to ACJC [the local detention center]. But, is there anything in between that I can get this kid involved in? People that have money, have interventions. For people who don't have money, the gap widens. When you have money, that gap shrinks. If I make a lot of money, you're more willing as a school to work with me.”*

Another participant noted that there has always been a lack of resources in the county when it comes to mental health services and drug treatment, but since HB1001 and the DCS takeover, things are “*worse now.*” One prosecutor/public defender explained his frustration at the child welfare system's refusal to step in:

*“There’s an increase in severe mental illness among the young, including bipolar disorder. They’re on serious drugs. Category 6 is statutorily on the books still, but CPS will not file because it takes a lot of money to fix broken kids. They won’t take the kids we would have sent to them. Now we get them, but we can’t do anything with them. The kind of services we provide don’t fit them.”*

Probation/Detention group members also complained that there are NO inpatient drug treatment facilities in the county for juveniles. When the Prosecutor/Public Defender group was asked what we can do to deal with all of this and reduce DMC, several talked about the need to intervene in the lives of these kids early. However, one participant showed his skepticism that we can do anything stating, *“It’s easier to float a bond to build bricks and mortar than it is to float a bond to hire more case workers. It’s the mindset that the majority have to try to deal with that.”*

One other issue was raised that is loosely related to access to services by Probation/Detention and Community Service Provider groups. Specifically, a handful of participants in these groups explained that program and probation/detention staffs are not receiving the training that many of them believe that they need to adequately serve the youth on their caseloads. This is particularly true when it comes to cultural competence training.

#### Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making Criteria

The DMC Technical Assistance Manual describes this mechanism as it relates to decisions about eligibility for certain programs or processes (e.g., diversions or intermediate sanctions). Additionally, it relates to whether decisions made about how to act (e.g., arrest, divert, refer, detain, etc.) are made in a fundamentally fair way. And finally, it relates to whether any criteria that are applied to such decisions are structured in a way that might place some groups at a greater disadvantage than other groups.<sup>30</sup> The ways in which this mechanism came up in Allen County are discussed below.

*Perceived racism/ discrimination.* Several issues that are related to differential processing were discussed in the focus groups. In its simplest form, differential processing can result from outright racism or discrimination. While claims of possible racist decision-making

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<sup>30</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this mechanism see: Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.



were raised (particularly in relation to the police and placement decisions), many of these claims were quickly followed up with explanations that, rather than racism, the actions undertaken were probably a result of a misunderstanding of cultures. It is not clear how much discrimination and racism versus misunderstandings of culture is occurring and how either may be impacting the key decision points in the system. What is clear is there are some differences in perceptions about what is going on in the system. As such, it is imperative as this jurisdiction goes forward in its DMC efforts, that key stakeholders in the county go to great pains to scrutinize all processes/ decisions for underlying discriminatory behavior or actions that are seemingly race neutral and yet unwittingly exacerbate DMC.

*Economics can influence decision making.* A family's resources impacted decisions about whether to detain a youth pre-adjudication or to release them. For example, during the Judges/Magistrates, Probation/Detention and Prosecutor/Public Defender groups, participants detailed a number of instances where a youth would have been released on electronic monitoring if the family would have been able to afford to install a telephone land line. Additionally, in all six groups there were instances discussed where parents either could not afford to take time off work, or did not have transportation (i.e., could not afford gas for their car or bus money) to get to court to take custody of their child. Sometimes there seemed to be skepticism about these claims; however, the decisions to hold youth like these were far from nefarious. In fact, they appeared to be made in the interest of safety. Nevertheless, such decisions still exacerbate DMC when they occur often enough.

*Perceived lack of accountability can influence decision making.* In several groups, participants alluded to a perception that some parents and their children did not have a sense of responsibility or need to be held accountable for their actions. This bothered some of individuals in the various groups—probably, in part, because they have dedicated their careers to a system that requires accountability. In a few instances it appears that a perceived lack of family participation was thought to be a refusal to be held accountable. While not explicitly stated as a reason for more formal processing in the system, a few focus group participants alluded to the fact that they go easier on families that are present at all proceedings and who they believe will keep their children under close supervision.

*Suspected gang and/or drug involvement can influence decision-making.* Just as is the case in other DMC literature, we found that if a juvenile was thought to be a serious drug

user/seller or “gang-banger” then many people acknowledged that they would be dealt with more seriously by the system. This was brought up by at least one person (if not many) in every group. On face value, the general public would likely not take issue with such a practice; however, the general public is not always made aware of the assumptions that are made about juveniles solely based on where they live, how they prefer to dress and who their buddies are. As such, the implications of identifying someone as drug-involved (where there is no positive test) or gang-involved, short of a tattoo or a confession of membership, can unfairly exacerbate DMC.

*Criminalizing African American speech, dress and mannerisms.* Another issue related to differential processing must be included in this discussion. First, during the Judges/Magistrates and School Personnel groups, it was mentioned that African American youth are referred to court for basically normal things. In essence, the thought was that these youth are being criminalized (i.e., referred to court from school for disciplinary reasons) based on the way they speak and interact with authorities.

*“It goes back to the individuals comfort with dealing with groups of kids. I think stereotypes play a huge part in how administrators deal with kids. A young man comes in looking like Mr. E. If he gets in trouble, the administrator thinks, he dresses nice, he looks serious. But you have a student come in whose pants are sagging, and he has twists, you have a prejudgment and a lot of time the penalty is a little harsher because of that.”*

*Lack of respect and mistrust of authority.* One final concern that can lead to minority youth being arrested and/ or dealt with more severely than white youth is the perceived lack of respect that minority youth have for persons in authority—particularly the police. This was a commonly discussed problem, but seemed of greatest interest to the Police, Prosecutor/Public Defender, Probation/Detention and School Personnel groups. As one focus group participant stated:

*It may go back to their upbringing. There always seems to be a lack of trust [in the system] with minorities, maybe for good reason. I think a lot of African Americans distrust the police. That’s their perception; that causes problems. That means whenever a police officer is driving down the street and a 15 year old black male is walking, he’s more apt to run than a 15 year old white kid because*

*of his beliefs of the police. That means the police run after the black kid, and that means he resists. The other thing that happens all the time, because they don't trust the police department, they are far more vocal. The 15 year old that decides not to run decides to flip the officer off, mouth at him, and start, and that just doesn't work. Their belief system leads to a lot of disproportionality.*

The idea that minority youth (in general) lack respect for authority was a common refrain. What was also noted, though less often, was that there may be justifiable reasons for their mistrust. Unfortunately, what was missing from most of the discussions was how to build trust and increase respect. Interestingly, one group member pointed out the lack of diversity in his group:

*“Look here. There's no minority representation at this meeting. As for the disproportionate number of referrals, how many minorities are working on our side of the fence in administration, probation, etc.? There's a lack of trust from parents, and if everyone is unfamiliar [looks different], it's easy to see why. On the non-detention side of this building, the minority representation is probably very low.”*

### Justice by Geography

Justice by Geography (JbG) is a large category. We know from the literature that who you are (i.e., minority or majority) can influence where you live (e.g., high crime, high poverty areas versus low crime suburbs) which can influence how you are dealt with in the juvenile justice system. In part, youth processing differences may be more related to their county of residence rather than a focus on the best outcome for youth. Case outcomes may have more to do with police practices in one city than how another law enforcement agency deals with youth in an unincorporated area of the county. Additionally, JbG could be related to whether a youth is processed in a mostly rural area versus a mostly urban area. Finally, differential processing can result from differing attitudes about how to hold kids accountable and what resources are available in different neighborhoods within a city.

There are four JbG related issues in Allen County that deserve mention: (a) neighborhoods or areas where police patrol is saturated; (b) neighborhoods or areas where gangs and drugs are located; (c) relatively few minorities work in administrative positions in education

or in basic jobs in treatment and service provision, case management and juvenile justices; and (d) availability of transportation versus the location of the probation, the court and community-based programs. Interestingly, these same issues also appear elsewhere under other mechanisms. While this might seem like an unnecessary duplication, we believe it speaks to the complex nature of DMC and how impactful these issues can be to both the behavior of youth and the system's response to that behavior (i.e., decision-making).

*Where patrol is saturated.* According to participants in nearly all of the focus groups, the police are heavily concentrated in the parts of the county that are considered high crime. Moreover, high crime areas are where a large majority of the county's poor people live. Further still, most of the minority youth in the county are poor and live in these high crime areas. Therefore, this brings minority youth into contact with the police far more often than upper or middle class white youth. Thus, a number of the study participants argued that the proximity of minority youth to the police, may in part, account for some of the disproportionality in referrals to the juvenile court. One service provider put it more succinctly, "*just based on the location of the police station, more minority youth are gonna be arrested with it right next to the area that the minorities live.*"

*Drugs and Gang Territory.* Drugs and gangs are often located in high crime, high poverty areas. As mentioned above, this is where most of the minority youth live in this county. The basic proximity argument made above is further complicated by the reality that gangs and open air drug markets are located in these same areas that many minority kids live. Additionally, with the need for police to be hyper-vigilant in their investigation of drugs, gangs and gang-related crimes, coupled with the reality that most members of youth street gangs are young, it becomes exceedingly clear how referrals to juvenile court can be disproportionate in terms of race and that geography matters.

*Few minorities work in the system.* Another common topic in many of the focus groups (specifically, Community Service Providers, School Personnel, Prosecutor/Public Defender and Probation/Detention groups) was that ethnic and racial minorities are under-represented in positions of authority in the schools, as well as in service provision and case management, probation, criminal defense, prosecution and on the bench. Does this matter to DMC? Many of the participants in our study thought that it did in some meaningful ways.

First, the lack of racial and ethnic minorities (particularly African American males) in the schools at both the teacher and administrator ranks was thought to add to the lack of cultural understanding about the communication styles and behavior of Black children. Furthermore, this under-representation likely increases suspensions, expulsions and behavioral referrals to court. Frankly, the lack of cultural understanding as it relates to communication styles was also an issue in the justice setting. One subject clarified the issue explaining it is critical for more people to become aware of culturally different communication styles so that we do not continue to misinterpret them as “*violent or belligerent.*”

Second, not having many African Americans, Latinos, and Burmese working in service provision as well as juvenile court is problematic and can exacerbate DMC. Some individuals suggested that having staff from similar backgrounds would be beneficial if we are to assist kids in building trusting relationships with authority figures outside of the home. Individuals in the Community Service Providers group explained that they are desperate to hire African American males so that their clients can more easily bond with them and have a more successful treatment experience. Additionally, some groups explained that they are in need of interpreter resources as they have Hispanic and Burmese clients whose families cannot communicate in English.

*Availability of transportation.* One final issue to note that is relevant to JbG deals with understanding one’s client base and the particular challenges that poor clients may bring to the table. Specifically, an issue in many of the groups was the lack of parental involvement and/or their clients’ inability to successfully complete their program. One of the main indicators of whether parents would be involved or if a juvenile would meet the requirements set out in their programs, seems to be related to transportation. A service provider expounded on this by saying that poverty “*seems to have its own culture and ideas about what is important.*” So, making it to court or to their program when their transportation falls through may be closely related to how their “culture” views the importance of appearing. On the other hand, the value they place on attendance may well be irrelevant if they truly have no alternate means to get there. Unfortunately, transportation is a real issue for some given that much of juvenile justice processing is centralized. In other words, the court and probation offices are not always located in the areas where most of the juveniles live.

#### Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact

There was one overarching theme related to both legislation and policy that was believed to directly impact DMC in Allen County. That one theme revolved around HB 1001 and the restructuring of funding controlled by DCS. This issue came up regularly in all of the groups. In particular, the issue was raised in a number of ways that the legislation (i.e., the policy itself) and the way it has been implemented has hurt the juvenile justice system's ability to serve its clients.

The Community Service providers, Judges/ Magistrates, Probation/ Detention and the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group all suggested that HB 1001 hurt the county's (already ailing) ability to provide mental health service to youth in school, on probation, in detention and in placement. Several individuals explained this by arguing that DCS was handcuffing judges' ability to order services to youth under their care. Furthermore, they were extremely frustrated that they had to *"call Indianapolis to get approval for services and that it can take forever. It is not working."*

#### Accumulated Disadvantage

The mechanism known as accumulated disadvantage can be viewed in two ways: simple accumulation and impacts on later decision. Simple accumulation was the most common type of accumulated disadvantage discussed in the focus groups in Allen County.

#### Accumulated Disadvantage: Simple Accumulation

This suggests that there may be a higher rate of arrest for minority youth, followed by a lower rate of diversion and higher rates of petitions filed, and so on, and that the accumulation of these contribute to DMC. More specifically, it is the accumulation of these incremental decisions that increase DMC rather than what happens at individual stages.

Perhaps the first, but most important, of the accumulated disadvantages was found at arrest. Many focus group participants explained that the area of Ft. Wayne where most of the minority youth live was where most of the crime occurs. As explained earlier, this can be a problem because high crime areas garner the greatest police presence. And, an increased police presence in high crime, high poverty areas are likely to result in more arrests of the minority youth that live there. One of the prosecutor/defense attorneys explained it like so:

*"Yeah, I think they [minority youth] have more frequent encounters with law enforcement...yeah I think they probably have more run ins with the law, you*

*can't get caught if police don't see you. The police aren't hanging out in white neighborhoods, they are in the inner city neighborhoods where minorities live."*

Thus, accumulation begins with increased encounters with police. If even some of these encounters result in arrest, then a juvenile has an arrest record, which can influence future detention and diversion decisions, and eventually petition filings and adjudications. In the end, these accumulations that are experienced by minority youth living in high crime areas may explain some of the DMC at detention and commitments to DOC in Allen County.

#### Accumulated Disadvantage: Impacts on Later Decisions

Early decisions made about a juvenile's case by a decision maker can influence subsequent decisions. In these instances, race and ethnicity may influence how these early, yet influential, decisions are made. For example, in the Specific Risk Factors section, we learned that a decision to detain a youth may be made according to whether a child lives in a single-parent household. The belief may be that if there is only one parent in the home, and if that parent works, there will be no one to adequately supervise that child upon release. Since the research indicates that minority youth often resided in this type of family structure, minority youth may be disproportionately detained pre-adjudication. Because we know that juveniles held in detention tend to receive more severe dispositions, the conclusion can be made that impacts on Later Decisions are likely a mechanism for DMC in the county.

Nonwhite youth in Allen County were more likely than white youth to be detained pre-adjudication and more likely to be committed to DOC. Throughout the focus groups, the research team tried to discern why nonwhites were overrepresented at pre-adjudication detention. We learned that pre-adjudicated detention occurred when a decision maker believed that there were no other viable choices. Not surprisingly, the reasons that lead to detention appeared to be correlated with what we have learned about racial and ethnic minorities in this county. In particular, the child might be detained if any of the following are true: a parent did not want the youth home or no immediate family member could take custody of the child; the family structure consisted of a single-parent and the single parent had to work; the family could not afford the cost of a telephone land line for electronic monitoring; or the youth was not eligible for diversion due to seriousness of the current offense or prior criminal history.

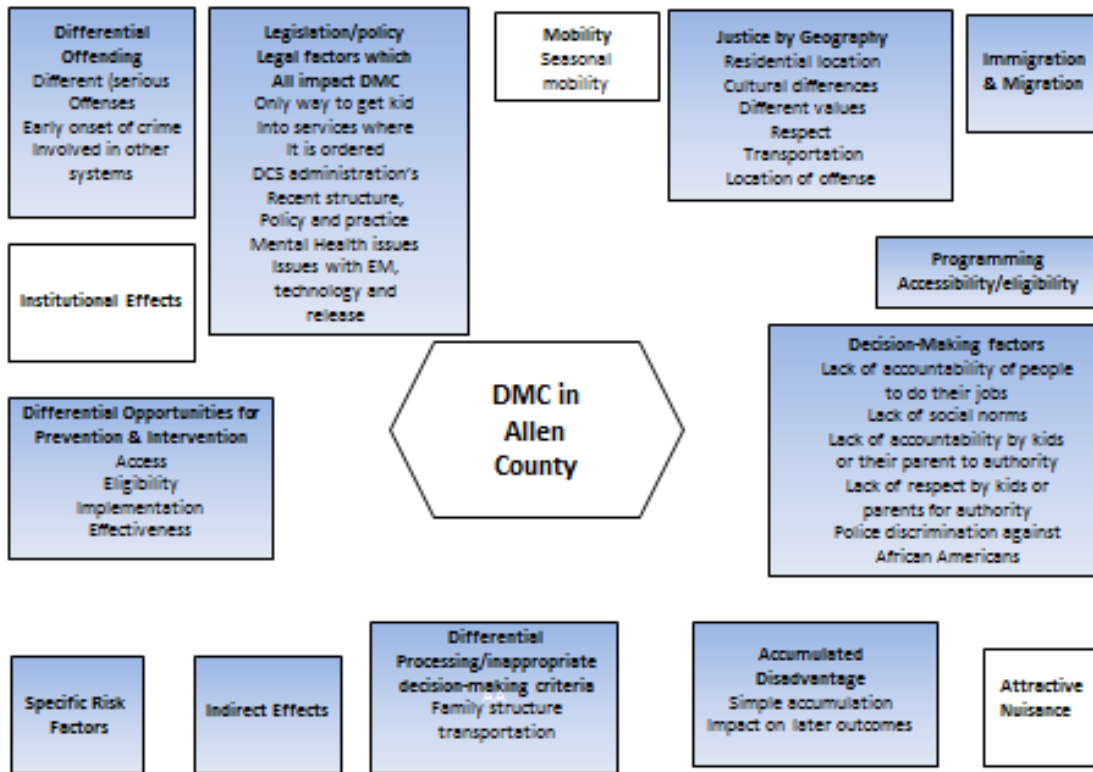
## Conclusions

The causes of DMC are complex and varied. Figure A1 includes all of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* according to OJJDP. Evidence existed for most, but not all, of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* in Allen County. The shaded boxes in the figure indicate that we uncovered evidence of these mechanism; non-shaded boxes indicate that no evidence of these mechanisms were found. As such, the only mechanisms that we did not identify in Allen County were Seasonal Mobility, Attractive Nuisance and Institutional Effects. Moreover, just because a mechanism was discussed in one focus group, does not mean that it was suggested as a cause of DMC in all of the groups. Some of the mechanisms in Figure 1 were far more common among the various groups. The mechanisms that were most common among the groups are indicated below.

Four of the major mechanisms (and what we have deemed related to the mechanism) were major topics in all six of the focus groups. In every instance, these topics were seen to be important to justice processing and may have an impact on DMC in Allen County. Specifically, the **Indirect Effect—Specific Risk Factor, SES & Race** was discussed at length in every group. Another **Indirect Effect—Decision-making Factor, Family structure, parental involvement, poor parenting** was also important. In particular, focus group participants across the board believed that they made decisions in the school setting and during justice processing that are influenced by familial structure, the level at which parent/guardians are involved in the process, parenting skills, and an overall sense of the child’s home life. While such decisions may be made with the best intentions, they could at the same time increase DMC in the jurisdiction.



Figure A1. Perceived Explanations for DMC in Allen County



Another mechanism that provoked a spirited discussion was **Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact, HB1001 and DCS Funding**. This was a major theme in all focus groups across all three jurisdictions included in this study. In particular, the belief is that constraints put on local jurisdictions by this legislation have kept the counties from garnering the services they need for their clients, is slowing down service provision, in some cases it is creating major gaps in services (specifically in terms of mental health and drug treatment), is hurting youth in the state, and may well exacerbate DMC.

One final mechanism that received much attention in all six of the focus groups was **Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making Criteria, Suspected gang and/or drug involvement can influence decision making**. Several people in all six groups explained that if a juvenile was thought to be a drug dealer or “gang-banger,” then the youth would be dealt with more severely than non-drug or gang-involved youth. It is likely that most people would be comfortable with this; however, assumptions made about juveniles solely based on where they live, how they dress (sagging pants, twisties or braids, various professional jerseys) and who

their friends are can be problematic. As such, the implications of identifying someone as drug-dealer or gang-involved, short of obtaining a confession or identifying a gang tattoo, could easily violate the youth's due process rights and complicate DMC in the jurisdiction. One last note on this subject—there was a companion mechanism, Drugs and gang territory. It was discussed under the heading **Justice by Geography**. In this section, several of the participants made the same argument presented here, but from a slightly different angle. In that section, the argument was that in the areas where minority youth live, gangs and drug dealers are everywhere. Gang-controlled neighborhoods receive high police patrol saturation, which can bring minority youth into contact with police more than white youth living elsewhere. Thus, living in these neighborhoods increases the likelihood of police contact, and perhaps arrest, even if a youth does not join a gang.

Three other mechanisms were discussed in five of six focus groups in Allen County. One mechanism that typically kicked off our discussions about what might explain DMC in the county was **Differential Offending**. This mechanism was also critically important in focus groups in the other counties. The **Indirect Effect, Lack of Cultural Understanding** was also discussed as a possible explanation for DMC in five of the six groups as was the mechanism **Justice by Geography, Where patrol is saturated**.

**Justice by Geography's Few minorities work in the system** was a common reason given for DMC (and relatedly, hiring more racially and ethnically diverse staff was one of the more common suggestions for improving DMC) in four focus groups. The same was true for the mechanisms, **Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making Criteria's Lack of respect and mistrust of authority** and **Indirect Effects: Decision-making Factors, Serious consequences when a parent will not take a child back**.

Finally, four other DMC mechanisms were topics in three of the focus groups. Specifically, **Mobility-Immigration**; two **Indirect Effects** mechanisms—**SES and Economic trends** and **Cultural Influences & Peer Pressure**; and the idea that **Economics influence decision-making** from the mechanism **Differential Processing/Inappropriate Decision-making Criteria** were discussed in various focus groups.

It should be noted that these DMC explanations were identified as being present by analyzing the interview and focus group data; however we cannot argue unequivocally these are

the exact reasons or the only reasons that youth of color are overrepresented at detention and commitment to DOC in Allen County. What can be taken from this is that system-involved youth and stakeholders in this county perceive that these are areas of concern and that the processes surrounding them must be further examined should the county hope to reduce DMC in the future.

With the conclusion of the focus group section, it is important to review the key points of the Phase I and interview results to be oriented toward the recommendations. From the RRI data it was evident that African-American youth were referred to the juvenile court over four times as often as white youth. Hispanic youth were referred to juvenile court about 1.5 times more often. African-American youth were also placed in juvenile correctional facilities at disposition 1.85 times more often than white youth. Using logistic regression to control for sex, age, severity of offense, and the number of prior referrals, minority youth were still placed in juvenile correctional facilities at disposition 1.6 times more often. In regards to the youth interviews, minority youth reported higher levels of ethnic socialization including all three subscales. Youth in detention reported higher levels of perceived discrimination from probation officers and higher levels of aggression and problem behavior.

## Recommendations

In this section, we present recommendations specific to Allen County. While each of the three counties examined in this study include unique characteristics, several cross-cutting themes were uncovered. Additional, cross-cutting recommendations are included in Section IV of this report.

Based on a review of information available regarding DMC at each of the juvenile justice system decision points, county profile data, youth interview data and focus group results, recommendations to address DMC in Allen County include:

1. Probation officers in schools. Individuals within the focus groups identified possible disconnects between the school system as well as probation youth. Thus, it may be helpful to have probation officers situated within school-based settings. A number of jurisdictions within Indiana have done so. For instance, in Marion County, probation officers are housed within the larger high school systems as well as specific alternative

schools for youth with problem behaviors. Allen County should explore the feasibility of this idea within their current system.

2. DMC task force. There should be a standing DMC task force in Allen County. It would be beneficial for the Allen County DMC task force to develop alternatives to detention that do not rely so heavily on electronic monitoring. For example, alternatives to detention that other jurisdictions have found to be effective include day reporting, home supervision without electronic monitoring, respite beds, and teen courts. The county is encouraged to investigate what other jurisdictions are using as alternatives. Two sources of this information include Annie E. Casey's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) website (<http://www.aecf.org/majorinitiatives/juvenilealternativesinitiative.aspx>) as well as contacting Michelle Tennell, the JDAI State-Wide Expansion coordinator.

## LaPorte County

LaPorte County has the thirteenth largest juvenile (age 10 to 17) population in the state, and proportionally the sixth largest juvenile minority population in the state. As of 2009, 22.0% of the juveniles in that age group were members of a racial or ethnic minority. Table L1 presents summary data on race and ethnicity in the county.

Race/Ethnicity	Total		Females		Males	
	LaPorte	Indiana	LaPorte	Indiana	LaPorte	Indiana
<b>Juvenile Population</b>	<b>11,940</b>	<b>730,177</b>	<b>5,712</b>	<b>355,588</b>	<b>6,228</b>	<b>374,589</b>
White	77.9%	78.2%	77.6%	78.2%	78.3%	78.3%
Black	13.7%	12.3%	14.0%	12.3%	13.5%	13.5%
American Indian	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%
Asian	0.5%	1.5%	0.6%	1.6%	0.4%	0.4%
Hispanic, of any race	7.4%	7.6%	7.5%	7.6%	7.4%	7.4%

### Child Indicator Data

The 2010 public high school graduation rate in LaPorte County (84.3%) is comparable to the other two counties as well as to the state. The rate of delinquency case filings is 18 per every 1000 youth, which is higher than the statewide rate. The percentage of children in poverty is approximately the same as Vanderburgh County but quite a bit higher than both Allen County and the state as a whole. The unemployment rate is also higher in LaPorte County than Allen County, Vanderburgh County, or Indiana. Of the three counties, LaPorte County has the lowest drug violation rate, which is also lower than the state's.

	LaPorte	Indiana
<b>Total Child Population<sup>32</sup></b>	<b>25,690</b>	<b>1,589,365</b>
% of Children in Poverty (2010)	25.0%	21.6%
Annual Average Unemployment Rate (2010)	12.0%	10.2%
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 females, 15-17 (2008)	30.1	20.5
Child Abuse/Neglect rate per 1,000 children (2010)	7.8	14.5
# of Juveniles Committed to the DOC (2010)	16	1,008
# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings (2010)	458	20,585
# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings per 1000 youth	17.8	13.0

<sup>31</sup> Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2010). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2009." Online. Available: <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

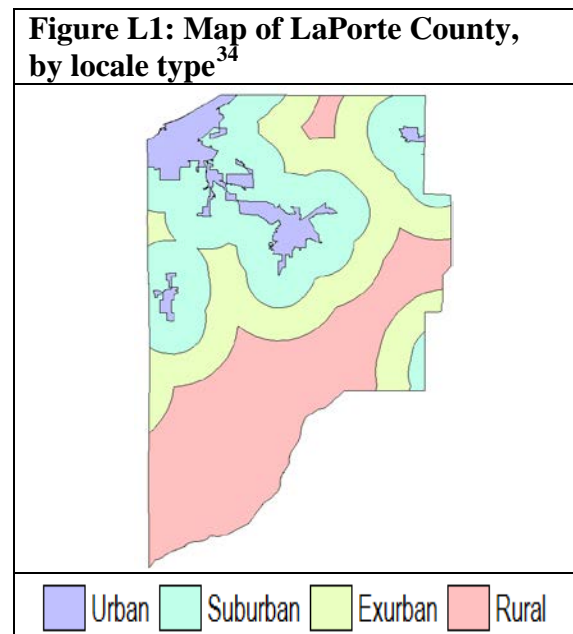
<sup>32</sup> This table uses population data for all youth in the state (age 0 through 17).

# of Juvenile Status Case Filings (2010)	343	4,586
# of Juvenile Status Case Filings per 1000 youth	13.4	2.9
Public High School Graduation Rate (2010)	84.3%	84.5%
Total Drug Violations (2009)	402	30,254
Total Drug Violations Rate (2009)	3.6	4.5

### Population Distribution

Michigan City and LaPorte (city) include urban areas, and are surrounded by suburban and exurban land. Much of the southern portion of LaPorte County is rural. The Census Bureau defines an urban area as a “densely settled core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density (1000 ppsm), along with contiguous territory containing nonresidential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settle territory with the densely settled core.”<sup>33</sup> Suburban areas are defined as those within 2.5 miles of urban boundaries, Exurban areas as those within 2.5 miles of suburban boundaries, and Rural areas as those beyond exurban boundaries (i.e., everything else). Table L3 presents distribution of urban, suburban, exurban, and rural land area in LaPorte County. Figure L1 provides a county mapping of the distribution of land area for LaPorte County, by locale type.

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>602.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Urban	43.1	7.2%
Suburban	186.3	30.9%
Exurban	160.2	26.6%
Rural	213.2	35.4%



<sup>33</sup> “Urban Area Criteria for the 2010 Census; Notice.” *Federal Register* 76:164 (24 August 2011) p. 53030.

<sup>34</sup> Source: Created 5/30/2012 by Bill Newby ([wnewby@iupui.edu](mailto:wnewby@iupui.edu)); IU Public Policy Institute

Phase I DMC Data

Table L4 displays the RRI for each decision point in LaPorte County for the years 2005 - 2009. At the referral stage, the disproportionality is the most pronounced for African American youth, who were referred to juvenile court almost 4 times more often than white youth relative to their proportion in the general population. African American youth were also diverted less often and placed in secure detention more often than white youth. There were no significant differences between minority youth and white youth at petition, adjudication, and probation. Hispanic youth were placed in a juvenile correctional facility at disposition more often than white youth, and were waived to adult court over five times as often as white youth. African American youth were also waived to adult court more often than white youth but at about half the rate of Hispanic youth.

<b>Table L4: 2005 – 2009 Relative Rate Index, LaPorte County</b>							
	Black or African-American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other/Mixed	All Minorities
2. Juvenile Arrests	--	--	*	*	*	*	**
3. Refer to Juvenile Court	<b>3.92</b>	1.01	*	*	*	*	<b>3.08</b>
4. Cases Diverted	<b>0.90</b>	1.03	*	*	*	*	<b>0.90</b>
5. Cases Involving Secure Detention	<b>1.28</b>	1.18	*	*	*	*	<b>1.26</b>
6. Cases Petitioned	1.05	0.98	*	*	*	*	1.05
7. Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	0.96	1.03	*	*	*	*	0.97
8. Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	0.98	0.90	*	*	*	*	0.98
9. Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	1.06	<b>1.66</b>	*	*	*	*	1.09
10. Cases Transferred to Adult Court	<b>2.64</b>	<b>5.60</b>	*	*	*	*	<b>2.95</b>
<b>Key</b>							
Statistically significant results				<b>Bold font</b>			
Results that are not statistically significant				Regular font			
Group is less than 1% of the youth population				*			
Insufficient number of cases for analysis				**			
Missing data for some element of the calculation				***			

Table L5 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis of LaPorte County’s DMC data. The analysis shows that even when sex, age, and the offense level (whether or not it was a felony) are considered, nonwhite youth still experience higher rates of being placed in secure detention, having a petition filed, and being waived to adult court, while experiencing lower rates of going through an informal diversion program. Specifically, nonwhites were placed in secure detention at a rate 1.556 times higher than whites, had a petition filed at a rate 1.169 times higher than whites, and were waived to adult court at a rate 4.151 times higher than

whites. On the other hand, white youth were diverted at a rate 1.17 times higher than nonwhite youth. There were no statistically significant differences between white and nonwhite youth at adjudication, formal probation, and sentencing to a juvenile correctional facility at disposition.

Table L5: LaPorte County Logistic Regression (n = 4674)							
Decision point	Diverted	Detention	Petition	Waived	Adjudicated	Probation	DOC
Independent Variable							
NONWHITE	<b>0.855</b>	<b>1.556</b>	<b>1.169</b>	<b>4.151</b>	1.090	1.015	1.175
FEMALE	<b>1.655</b>	<b>0.465</b>	<b>0.604</b>	<b>0.235</b>	<b>0.690</b>	<b>0.775</b>	<b>0.465</b>
AGE	0.979	<b>1.165</b>	1.022	<b>2.034</b>	<b>1.106</b>	<b>1.052</b>	1.065
FELONY	<b>1.305</b>	<b>1.743</b>	<b>0.766</b>	<b>5.191</b>	<b>1.383</b>	<b>1.139</b>	<b>2.006</b>

### Youth Interviews

The youth interviews were designed to assess the experiences of juvenile justice system-involved youth in their home, school, and community, as well as their experience within the juvenile justice system. The results of these interviews were used to identify trends specific to LaPorte County in an effort to identify possible causes of disproportionality and to opportunities for intervention. The results of the interviews with youth in LaPorte County are presented in Table L6. White and nonwhite youth are compared and statistically significant differences are displayed in bold. The interview results are also compared between detained and probation youth. Statistically significant differences between probation and detained youth are displayed in bold.



<b>Table L6: LaPorte County Youth Interview Results</b>				
	Race Comparison		Setting Comparison	
	White n = 18	Minority n = 14	Detention N =13	Probation N=19
Sample Size (Total = 32)				
Perceived Discrimination (higher scores indicated greater discrimination)				
Police	5.4	4.6	6.0	4.4
Detention Staff	3.4	3.5	4.2	2.8
Public Defender	1.3	0.3	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>
Prosecutor	2.3	1.0	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Judge	2.0	1.1	<b>3.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>
Probation Officer	3.2	1.7	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Procedural Injustice (higher scores indicate more negative perceptions)	<b>39.7</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>30.9</b>
Family Affluence Scale	4.3	3.4	4.1	3.8
MacArthur Subjective Social Status	9.4	9.2	9.4	9.3
Family	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.9
Adolescent	4.6	4.5	4.6	4.4
Neighborhood/Community Factors				
Sense of Safety	20.5	18.0	20.4	18.7
Neighborhood Disorganization	7.8	9.4	7.7	9.1
Collective Efficacy	33.5	31.1	35.0	30.7
Social Control	15.9	15.4	16.2	15.3
Social Cohesion	17.6	15.7	<b>18.8</b>	<b>15.4</b>
Ethnic Socialization	22.1	23.7	24.0	21.9
Cultural Socialization	8.2	9.2	9.3	8.1
Preparation for Bias	10.0	12.1	10.9	10.8
Promotion of Mistrust	3.9	2.4	3.8	2.9
Self-Reported Delinquency	21.6	21.1	23.1	20.2
Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency	29.4	24.5	31.4	20.4
Physical Aggression	12.6	10.5	13.6	8.2
Non-Physical Aggression	9.3	7.3	10.0	5.8
Relational Aggression	7.6	6.8	7.8	6.4

Thirty-two justice-involved youth participated in the interviews, with 19 recruited through the probation department and 13 recruited from the LaPorte County Juvenile Detention Center. Nine participants were female and 22 were male. Eighteen were white, non-Hispanic and 14 were racial/ethnic minorities.

A measure of Perceived Discrimination was administered to measure levels of perceived discrimination at different points of penetration of the juvenile justice system; through contact with police, detention staff, public defender, prosecutor, judge/magistrate, and probation. We first asked the participants to indicate individuals in juvenile justice they interacted with, and then they were asked a series of questions about their interactions with those individuals.

We anticipated that there would be differing levels of perceived discrimination based on the roles that employees in each system play; for instance, based on the research literature, we expected police to be perceived as more discriminatory than public defenders due to the nature of the respective professions. In the context of DMC, we can begin to understand, from the youth's perception, at which points within the juvenile justice system they believe they are experiencing more or less discrimination. In sum, we expected this measure of Perceived Discrimination to indicate if "Differential Processing" is occurring or whether "Policies with Disproportionate Impact" are in place at each county. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but detained youth reported higher levels of perceived discrimination in their interactions with public defenders, prosecutors, judges, and probation officers.

A measure of Procedural Justice was selected to understand the roots of DMC because it allows participants to rate their perceptions of fairness throughout the court process. Inclusion of such a measure allows us to understand if there are differential rates of perceived procedural justice between white and minority participants. A measure of Procedural Justice may also suggest whether "Differential Processing" is occurring within a county. White, non-Hispanic youth reported more negative perceptions than their minority peers, suggesting that white youth perceive the justice system as less fair than minority youth. Detained youth reported higher levels of procedural injustice than probation youth.

We included two measures of socioeconomic status: the Family Affluence Scale and the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status. Socioeconomic status (SES) is relevant to DMC because SES is related to the quality and safety of neighborhoods as well as family factors associated with crime. For instance, lower SES families may be less able to provide parental supervision, thus placing their children at higher risk for delinquent behavior. SES also may be related to "Programming Access/Eligibility" as lower SES families are less likely to have access to needed services. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

We included two measures of neighborhood factors: Neighborhood Disorganization and Collective Efficacy. Neighborhood factors are associated with crime rates and police patrol patterns. Since more disorganized neighborhoods with lower levels of collective efficacy among neighbors are associated with a greater police presence, we sought to understand if neighborhoods where participants lived differed by race, as well as between probation and detained youth. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but detained youth reported higher levels of social cohesion, a subscale of the collective efficacy measure, than probation youth. Detained youth reported higher levels of prejudice and perceived injustice, despite the fact that they live in neighborhoods with higher levels of social cohesion.

Ethnic Socialization is a measure which asks participants about what level of socialization they have been exposed to in their family as it relates to their race/ethnicity. Specifically, this measure assesses if parents have prepared youth for bias and if there is a promotion of mistrust of others, as it relates to race. A measure of Ethnic Socialization was selected to identify if there were any “Specific Risk Factors” correlated with race or ethnicity which may lead to differential offending. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

We included two self-report measures which assessed Delinquency and Aggressive Problem Behaviors. We wanted to understand if minority youth are experiencing rates of DMC due to “Differential Behavior”; that is, do minority youth commit more severe crimes or at a higher rate? If so, this may be an explanation for DMC occurring in that jurisdiction. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

### **Stakeholder Focus Groups**

The purpose of focus groups was to better understand underlying processes that may contribute to disproportionate minority contact in these jurisdictions. Specifically, each focus group examined county specific DMC data (for the years 2005-2009) and discussed problems and processes that group participants believe may have led to the disproportionality. The major research questions underlying the focus group study were:

- What do juvenile justice practitioners believe are the causes of DMC in Vanderburgh County?
- What do these same practitioners believe can be done to stop or significantly lower DMC in Vanderburgh County?
- Are there major differences between the various focus groups in their beliefs about how to stop or reduce DMC?

The following section includes a discussion of the focus group method employed and LaPorte County results. What is learned from this study can be used by leaders in the county to develop plans aimed at reducing disproportionate minority contact in the jurisdiction.

### Focus Group Access & Sample

*Stakeholder Meetings.* In late June 2012, members of the DMC research team met with the Director and Assistant Director of the LaPorte County Juvenile Detention Center, the Director of LaPorte County Juvenile Court Services, the Chief Juvenile Probation Officers of Michigan City and the City of LaPorte, and a Magistrate and the LaPorte County Circuit Court Judge. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the purpose of the study, agree on a study plan, develop a process to implement the study plan and identify a potential list of invitees for the focus groups.

*Participants.* Focus groups were convened to acquire in-depth, qualitative information about the workings of the local juvenile justice system and learn why local practitioners believe that DMC exists in their jurisdiction. In this county, focus groups were conducted with the following:

- Juvenile Judges and Magistrates
- Juvenile Prosecutors/Public Defenders
- Juvenile Probation
- Detention Staff
- Police and School Resource Officers
- School Representatives
- Community Service Providers

Initially, all juvenile judges, magistrates, prosecutors and public defenders were targeted to participate. Then the research team developed a list of individuals holding the rank of supervisor (or below) to participate in the probation, detention, police, school personnel and

community service provider focus groups. Table L7 indicates the number of individuals initially invited, the number who agreed to participate and the number and percentage of individuals that actually participated in the focus groups held on September 30, 2012 in LaPorte County.

	<b># Invited</b>	<b># RSVP'd</b>	<b># Participated</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Judges/Magistrates</b>	2	2	2	100%
<b>Prosecutors/Public Defender</b>	7	6	7	100%
<b>Probation/ Detention</b>	21	13	17*	81%
<b>Police</b>	6	3	1	17%
<b>Schools</b>	8	5	5	62.5%
<b>Community Service Providers</b>	8	7	6	75%

\* The Probation and Detention groups were split into two groups, on the request of the county stakeholders. They are combined here for continuity of reporting.

### Focus Group Procedures

All of the focus groups were conducted on September 30, 2012 during regular business hours at the LaPorte County Superior Courthouse, the LaPorte County Juvenile Center and the LaPorte County Central Library. Participation in the focus group was strictly voluntary. After the study’s purpose and objectives were explained and it is was clear that everyone was willing to participate, subjects completed a brief demographic questionnaire. Subjects were then assigned aliases and instructed to only refer to themselves or others with the aliases.

Three members of the research team, all experienced focus group facilitators, conducted a total of seven focus groups, each lasting 1 to 1 ½ hours. The facilitators employed an informal discussion method—using a semi-structured interview schedule. The interview schedules were dependent on who the participants were (i.e., judges/ magistrates, prosecutors/ public defenders, probation, detention, police/ school resource officers, school personnel, and community service providers).

Given the professional nature of the groups involved, it is not surprising that there were scheduling conflicts that did not allow everyone that was invited to participate. Nevertheless, according to Table L8, the overall response rate (based on the number of initial invites made and the number of individuals who were able to participate in their respective focus groups) was strong at 73%. The response rate in each focus group type was also quite high, the exception

being the police (17%). Only one officer attended the police/school resource officer focus group. This particular officer was not a juvenile officer, but had had some experience working with kids. It is unclear why more officers did not participate; six officers were invited and three indicated they would attend. Additional attempts to reach out to law enforcement in this county were unsuccessful.

### Focus Group Data Collection & Analysis

All of the focus groups were digitally recorded. Additionally, (beyond the facilitator) at least one other researcher was present during every focus group session to take notes on laptops. Analyzing focus groups involves a number of steps. Beyond developing an open coding scheme and collecting data along a schematic, a qualitative researcher should also consider not only the answers offered by the subjects, but also the words chosen, the context in which they were said, the internal consistency of the discussion, the frequency, extensiveness, specificity and intensity of comments, and what was not being said during the focus group discussions. To aid in the analysis, our research team took time to debrief after all focus groups were completed. Of interest during the debriefings were issues like the flow of the groups, particular themes that stood out during the sessions, and any group dynamics or relational issues that might have influenced group discussions. These issues were noted and used later during the analysis of the transcripts.

Content and narrative analyses on the focus group transcripts and research team notes were performed. Open coding techniques borrowed from Grounded Theory<sup>35</sup> were used to identify key themes (also known as original categories). While some qualitative researchers keep raw counts of the number of times an issue is raised, raw counts can offer inaccurate representations of the various discussions that take place. Therefore, we decided against reporting raw counts as it was not always clear in our notes whether a new person was stating a new idea or the same person was clarifying a previous comment. Moreover, counts are not necessary for this report as we were merely attempting to identify which reasons the various constituents identified as causing DMC.

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<sup>35</sup> We should note here that while we borrowed an approach from Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory; we did not exercise their full grounded theory approach as the data collected did not allow for a more detailed analysis. In Grounded Theory, the purpose of coding is to offer the researcher a way to identify and describe phenomena found in their data.

After the open coding was complete we still needed to develop a framework with which to organize and make sense of the data. Thus, focus group data were mapped against what OJJDP refers to as *Mechanisms Leading to DMC*.<sup>36</sup> These mechanisms are what OJJDP has identified (from the extent literature) as the possible explanations for the existence of DMC in juvenile justice systems. Interestingly, there was much parity between our subjects' perceptions of why DMC occurs in LaPorte County and the mechanisms identified by OJJDP. In the results section, we present a discussion of the demographics of focus group participants by group type and what focus group participants believe leads to DMC in LaPorte County. We also offer recommendations to address DMC that are specific to LaPorte County, and others that are applicable to all of the counties that participated in the study.

#### Limitations of the Focus Group Data

The nature of the focus group method itself can introduce limits on the data. For example, the method does not require all participants in the group to answer each question individually. Participants were advised that they could refrain from answering any questions they did not wish to answer. As such, focus group data are likely incomplete. For example, the data presented below which discusses why there is DMC and what should be done about it was developed from *verbal* responses provided to direct questions or as comments about others' responses to direct questions. We did not systematically capture all instances where others in the room may have non-verbally agreed. Therefore, the results discussed below are a conservative representation of the discussion that took place.

One final concern should be raised about focus group studies. The data collected in focus groups can be vulnerable to a process referred to as group think. Group think occurs when one or more subjects endeavor to regulate the discussion or force others to censor their comments based on what the regulator(s) share.<sup>37</sup> Sometimes, participants choose (on their own), to adapt their statements according to what they believe is the majority opinion—even when no one is exerting external pressure to do so.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, participants of focus groups who work together or

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<sup>36</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

<sup>37</sup> Janis, I.L. (1982) *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

who serve as volunteers together run the risk of group think because they belong to a cohesive group that may wish to present a consensus view on sensitive topics.<sup>39</sup>

In order to protect against group think the facilitator must be skillful at identifying when group think occurs and adroit at interrupting it or the quality of the data may be doubtful.<sup>40</sup> To guard against group think each facilitator in this study followed a script that instructed them to address the issue up front with participants by defining what group think is and how destructive it could be to the quality of the information to be collected. Additionally, the facilitator worked with their groups by building group norms and operating rules, took time to build rapport with the participants before asking substantive questions, and reminded participants not only about how important their individual opinions were to the study, but that in the end, the information gathered would be used to help their jurisdiction improve system functioning and reduce DMC.

### Summary of Focus Group Results

The LaPorte county study included 38 juvenile justice practitioners, school representatives and service providers in seven focus groups and one interview. The groups consisted of two judges, six probation officers, eleven detention staff, seven prosecutors and public defenders, one police officer, five representatives from area schools, and six service providers from the LaPorte County community. Refer to Table L8 to see the specific demographic information for each of the focus groups.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.; Janis, I.L. (1982) Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>40</sup> Kleiber, P.B. (2004). Focus groups: More than a method of qualitative inquiry, Pp. 87-102. In DeMarrais, K. & Lapan, S. (Eds.) Foundations of Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.



	Judge/ Magistrates (n=2)	Probation/ Detention		Prosecutors/ Public Defenders (n=7)	Police (n=1)	School (n=5)	Community Service Providers (n=6)
		P (n=6)	D (n=11)				
<b>Age range:</b>	54-64	30-53	28-60	29 – 44	46 – 46	37 – 69	31 – 64
<b>Average age:</b>	59	41	45	38	46	50	51
<b>Sex: Male</b>	50%	50%	54.5%	57.1%	100%	60%	33.3%
<b>Female</b>	50%	50%	45.5%	42.9%	0%	40%	66.7%
<b>Race: White</b>	100%	66.7%	54.5%	85.7%	100%	100%	66.7%
<b>Nonwhite</b>	0%	33.3%	36.4%	0%	0%	0%	33.3%
<b>Did not answer</b>		0%	9.1%	14.3%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Highest education level:</b>							
<b>HS/GED</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Some college</b>	0%	0%	27.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Associate’s degree</b>	0%	0%	9.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Bachelor’s degree</b>	0%	100%	45.5%	0%	100%	0%	16.7%
<b>Master’s degree</b>	0%	0%	18.2%	0%	0%	100%	50%
<b>PhD</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>JD</b>	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	16.7%
<b>Other:</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16.7%
<b>Average # of years working with youth:</b>	24	14	19	8	23	26	22

There were wide ranges in age across the various groups, with the youngest focus group participant being 28 years old (a detention staff person) and the oldest 69 years (a school representative). In the other counties in this study, probation officers and detention staff participated in the same focus group. However, in this county, probation and detention staff participated in separate groups due to the sheer numbers available in each group.

As Table L8 indicates, a slight majority of the focus group participants were male (53%). Female participants were mostly concentrated in the probation and detention groups; however, unlike the other two counties, women were also well represented in judge/magistrate, prosecutor/public defender, and school and service provider groups. The only group that had no female participants was the police group; however, only one police officer participated in that group.

As one would expect given the professions that were targeted to participate in this study, our sample reported a high level of educational attainment; all 38 indicated that they had completed at least some college. One-fifth of the participants had earned at minimum a bachelor’s degree and one-quarter of the sample earned a master’s degree. Additionally, one of the service providers had received a PhD and 25% of the participants had been awarded law degrees.

Participants were also asked to indicate their racial/ethnic identity. For reporting purposes, we broke racial and ethnic identity into two categories (white and non-white). We did

the same with our surveys of probation and detention youth reported on above. Of the focus group participants that indicated their racial/ethnic identity, the vast majority said that they are white (78%). In fact, 100% of the judges/magistrates, police, and school personnel, nearly 86% of prosecutors and public defenders, 67% of the probation and community service providers; and almost 55% of the detention staff that indicated a racial/ethnic identity said that they are white. The eight non-white participants (22% of the sample), were clustered in the probation, detention and service provider groups.

An interesting issue raised in the focus groups was that many participants felt disconnected between themselves and the youth they serve. Specifically, they explained that the youths' culture—the way they look, act and live—is very different from theirs, which they believe can make it difficult to adequately address their clients' needs. Differences in race/ethnicity and class were felt to account for the feelings of disconnect that were offered. At first glance, there seems to be some evidence of distinct differences in the racial and ethnic identities of practitioners and their clients. Youth of color account for 23.5% of the child population in LaPorte County and 28% of the probation and detained youth we interviewed self-identified as African American. Additionally, almost 9% indicated that they are of Hispanic heritage. Yet, almost three-quarters of the focus group participants—who have much say over case initiation and processing—self identified as Caucasian. The fact that the justice professionals and school staff are overwhelmingly white, does not explain why DMC occurs in Vanderburgh County. It simply supports what many of the study participants said when they indicated that they look different and come from different backgrounds than those they serve.

### Focus Group Findings

To try to understand why DMC occurred in LaPorte County, focus group members were asked several questions about their perceptions about the juvenile justice system in their county and the day-to-day work in their professional setting. In the following section, we present the main themes that were expressed during the focus groups.

As previously discussed, DMC was not found at every decision point in LaPorte County. Specifically, the analysis showed that even when we controlled for age, gender, and crime type (felony vs. misdemeanor), nonwhite youth were still detained, petitioned, and waived to the criminal court more often than their white counterparts. Additionally, nonwhite youth were also diverted less often. This information was shared with each focus group, and members were

asked to generate possible explanations for why DMC occurred at these decision points in their county. Their explanations are presented below as they relate to OJJDP's *Mechanisms Leading to Delinquency*.

### Differential Behavior

The argument that minority youth participate in behavior that is different than their white counterparts has been offered as one mechanism that leads to DMC. Research is mixed about whether this is, in fact, the major determinate of DMC. Nevertheless, it is often cited as an explanation for DMC by many juvenile justice practitioners. Differential Behavior includes three categories under its umbrella: *Serious Offenses* (e.g., gang crime, drug sales, guns, and violence resulting in serious injury); *Involvement in Delinquency at an Early Age*; and *Involvement in Other Justice Systems* (e.g., child welfare). While offending differences were the only form of “differential behavior” mentioned in the focus groups in this county, some individuals claimed that minority youth are often second and third generation court regulars and that everyone knows their family names. Otherwise, there was not a more concise nod to *participation in crime at a young age or participation in other justice systems*.

*Offending Differences.* The major discussion of differential offending in LaPorte County revolved around discussions that minority youth are involved in more serious crimes than their white counterparts. This may, in part, explain the more serious consequences they face. In fact, this belief was expressed in all but one of the focus groups. The only group that did not discuss differential offending was the Community Service Providers group. Specific claims about differential offending are included below.

Participants in the Judge/Magistrates, Police, Detention, Probation, Prosecutors/Public Defenders groups suggested that youth of color in this county commit, “...*more serious crimes...or more violence*,” or are more likely to be gang-related. Additionally, of all of those groups, with the exception of Detention, claimed that minority youth have more gun charges. As a Prosecutors/Public Defenders group member explained, “*If you go to Michigan City, you’re routinely seeing gun charges, but I don’t see that in LaPorte. There are more violent crimes in Michigan City.*” While another member of the same group further stated, “*Theft and burglary are whiter. Gang activity and armed robbery are black.*” Finally, one last individual in this group explained, “*Anything gun related is usually black.*” And yet another suggested, “*I have ten gun cases on my desk, and they’re all black.*”

*Seriousness of current offense & prior criminal history.* Similarly to what was previously discussed, several of the group members also explained that poor, minority youth have longer criminal histories which could explain why they are more often detained, have a petition filed, and waived to the criminal court than white youth (as per the *Judges/Magistrates, Detention, School Personnel and Probation focus groups*). For example, as a participant in the Judges/Magistrates group claimed, “Waivers only happen with serious instant offense or longer criminal history. Specifically, we only waive for B felony or higher or if they have already been to DOC.” Furthermore, “*The system we set up is to reserve DOC for kids we’ve basically given up on. We send a lot less [to DOC] than we used to.*” Finally, an individual in the Prosecutor/Public Defenders suggested that while age, seriousness of current crime and prior criminal history explain who is committed to DOC, it is not always so clear which offenders are worse than others, “*...I agree with that, you’ve got white kids getting picked up for selling heroin and then they go home with services, they spend 30 days in secure and they let you go home. A black kid robs someone, next thing you know, they’re going to Boys’ School.*”

*Disciplinary referrals.* Individuals in the School Personnel and Judges/Magistrates groups offered one other way that minority youth differ in their behavior. Specifically, all school personnel agreed that youth of color receive more disciplinary referrals. Several, in fact, claimed that they track these numbers, though there was not consensus regarding whether the behavior of these youth was different or whether the ways the schools respond to minority youth “misbehavior” was different. Additionally, one participant explained that Spanish-speaking students can suffer in this arena. In particular, this individual explained that they have Hispanic students that are doing well in terms of grades but then get into trouble because of things that are happening at home. When their parents are called into the school and they cannot speak English and the schools cannot communicate with them about their child, there are real problems. Finally, members in the Judges/Magistrates and School Personnel groups claimed that Michigan City schools refer more kids for misbehavior than LaPorte schools.

#### Mobility Effects: Migration

While migration from a different location into LaPorte County was raised in only one group, it is important to note in that it was seen as important in the Judges/Magistrates group. Apparently, many poor, minority families move from Chicago to Michigan City, “*...they leave Chicago to get away from big city problems and give their children and family better lives. The*

*problem is that things are not necessarily better for them in Michigan City.*” This refers to the fact that so many families move to high crime, high poverty areas, where there is limited opportunity for youth and their families, and many minorities have negative interactions with police. Therefore, even moderate migration from a big city, with big city problems—including gang issues—could create problems for DMC in the inner-city area of Michigan City.

### Indirect Effects

This DMC mechanism represents the broader social context of the relationship between race and ethnicity and a host of factors that have been shown to be associated with delinquency. For example, the impact of race and ethnicity may be *indirectly* affected by secondary factors such as social economic status, educational achievement, familial structure, living situation and other risk factors associated with increased crime and delinquency. According to the DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, indirect effects can be broken into three categories: Specific Risk Factors, Programming Access/Eligibility, and Decision-making Factors.<sup>41</sup> We discuss each of these factors separately.

### Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors

We identified a number of factors that we believe are appropriately organized under the Specific Risk Factor category. For example, we discovered a specific risk factor in many of the groups that we refer to as the *Intersection of Socio Economic Status (SES) & Race*. This relationship was so interconnected that it was confusing to many. In early rounds of coding, we identified numerous people in all three counties who seemed to be using the terms ‘race’ and ‘SES’ synonymously. Additionally, a similar concept (stated two different ways) quickly began to be substituted for the intersection of SES and race. This new concept was referred to as “culture.”

The notion of the intersection of *SES & Race* was discussed in six (i.e., Judges/Magistrates, Detention, Schools Personnel, Probation, Prosecutors/Public Defender, and Community Service Providers) of the seven focus groups. The most common refrain in all of the groups that discussed SES and race is that “*it’s more SES than race.*” To illustrate the

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<sup>41</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

importance that many of the participants placed on SES, one of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders argued:

*“There’s a mindset in Michigan City where it’s not unusual for kids to get together and commit higher level crimes. Burglary is the hottest crime in Michigan City. Everyone’s doing it, and no one cares; there’s no remorse. It’s not black or white but due to economic circumstances--SES. It seems to boil down to how kids were raised, not just by their parents, but how their neighbors think of them and crime. Kids who have never committed crime who come in, and their families are shocked that their son is there, but the kid hangs out with people who get in trouble all the time. There’s a pattern where parents don’t watch out, so they get accustomed to it, so it is no big deal. It’s more socioeconomic and the region of the town you grew up in, which are racially homogenous. Then it depends on what gang you end up in.”*

*SES and current economic trends.* This idea suggests that poor people have a myriad of related issues (family strife, bills, not enough money to cover living expenses) which force parents (usually a single-mother) to work several jobs to put food on the table and provide a home for their family. Where this becomes a problem is when it inadvertently results in a lack of supervision and inconsistent discipline of minor children. In essence, kids that are part of these family structures are often forced to “raise themselves.” *SES and current economic trends* was a common theme in the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Detention, and School Personnel.

When asked what factors might explain DMC in LaPorte County, one member of the School Personnel group jokingly referred to the much quoted line from the 1990’s Presidential Election, “*It’s the economy, stupid. It’s a big factor.*” Several group members smiled and many agreed with the sentiment that DMC may well be impacted by economics. More specifically, it is possible that poor, minority youth and their families are faced with additional financial challenges during a down-turned economy and this can result in more crime. What participants did not say is that there are other economic factors that could also impact delinquency—loss of funding for prevention and intervention services that might prevent these same youth from engaging in crime. While we cannot point to specific programs that were cut during the timeframe under investigation (beyond Extended Day Programs), we can say that Community Service Providers, Detention, Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders and School

Personnel all claimed that the county lost funding for juvenile justice programming that they felt was valuable.

*Unprepared for Education.* Being unprepared for school or not achieving a basic level of education was suggested as a problem by individuals in the Detention and School Personnel groups. As one detention participant explained:

*“Many poor minority youth are not well-prepared for school. So, they do poorly in school and become frustrated and act out or drop out...some kids do not go to school because their family cannot afford to wash their clothes so they don’t go. Or, they cannot afford the transportation to school...”*

Others discussed the reality that some children go to school hungry and even with lunch subsidies they are still hungry.

*Lack of cultural understanding.* Misunderstandings about communication styles were a common issue revealed in all three counties involved in the study. In LaPorte County, participants in the Detention and Judges/Magistrates groups explained that African Americans are more likely to communicate loudly or to be very direct in their communication. They indicated that the volume and directness with which these youth communicate can be misunderstood and perceived as disrespectful, even when it is not meant that way.

Cultural misunderstandings appeared to be common at school as well. Misunderstandings occur between kids and between kids and teachers and a lot of the misunderstanding are class related. According to one member of the School Personnel group, it is hard for some to understand why people don’t act the same way that they behave and it seems to start early.

*“Eighth grade is really where it starts – economics kick in, and they develop distaste for kids who don’t have the same resources they do. It was the same thing in Iowa where I grew up. It’s how we act as humans – to flock to people we most relate to. It’s one of the biggest problems in public school. There’s so much to deal with and too varied backgrounds; we can’t handle it. It’s obvious in the lunch room and outside.”*

Some of the schools are trying to change the way they interact with youth of color—to understand what might drive the way a student responds to a teacher’s intervention in the classroom, one school official claimed:

*“We’re trying to make efforts in the way our staff responds to incidents with our kids. It usually starts out with something minute – they’re late, they forgot materials, they’re visiting or speaking when they shouldn’t be– something I wouldn’t look at and think is a suspendable offense. Sometimes, it’s how we speak to our students. Our students are used to making the decisions at home and running around and doing what they want, so it is difficult to take direction. For a student of color, it’s difficult to take direction from an adult white. They also have lower socioeconomic status.”*

When further pushed to consider why DMC occurs in the county, one School Personnel group member indicated that part of the problem could be that the majority of people in power are white and even though they may want to, they will never fully be able to relate to the youth they serve:

*“I think its resources for us. It doesn’t matter how educated I become; I’m not going to relate to a black kid like I ever want to. Until we have the right people to work with these highly needy students – I wish I could have a staff member to talk to these kids. We used to have outreach for Spanish-speaking students; it was good for the community and keeping kids in school.”*

One final important cultural misunderstanding that occurs is between minority youth and the police. Detention staff felt it was important that we understand that stereotypes that the police and others have about poor kids is that they are all bad and it isn’t fair:

*“...a lot of kids tell me that, it doesn’t mean that just because you’re in poverty doesn’t mean you don’t know how to act but they get lumped in with the kids who don’t know how to act, and these kids that are good and come from good homes get. And they get grouped with those others and then there’s a stereotype with the police that all these kids are bad.”*

#### Indirect Effects: Decision-making Factors



Many factors are considered by juvenile justice system actors when they make decisions about how to process youth through the system. For example, if a juvenile who is arrested lives at home with a grandmother and she is in the hospital, then the arresting officer or detention center intake staff has to decide if they are willing to release the youth to another responsible adult or detain the youth. If this staff member has personal beliefs about what a family structure ought to be and decides to detain this youth because he does not live with his mother and father, or the jurisdiction has a policy against releasing the youth to anyone other than the legal guardian, then this DMC mechanism may come into play in the jurisdiction. The reason that these types of decision-making factors can impact DMC is that previous research indicates that minority youth are more likely to live in what some consider ‘non-traditional’ family structures. So, if decision making factors like this disparately impact youth living in non-traditional families, then DMC can increase in the jurisdiction. The decision-making factors that are indirect effects are demographic and social risk factors that are associated with higher levels of delinquency. Focus group comments related to decision-making factors centered on the family support and household composition.

*Family structure, parental involvement, poor parenting, single-parented household, etc.* A number of the school personnel described how living in a disorganized family, or being raised by uninvolved parents, or by working parents who are not home to raise their children can impact a child’s performance and the school environment and negatively and can influence decisions made by those working with youth. Specifically, one school official explained:

*“a lot of students of color are raising themselves. Their parents have jobs, a boyfriend or girlfriend, etc. that take their attention. When they come to school, and all the teachers are asking them to do is do their work, and because the student may have had a bad day and blows up over it, it escalates from there and creates a disruption in the classroom and learning environment.”*

A different group member stated it is about, “...*defiance of authority.*” However, fairly quickly another group member jumped in to explain that children get into trouble because “*The family structure is not very good.*”

School Personnel were not the only participants that spent a good deal of time talking about the impact of family structure and parenting practices on youth behavior and system responses to that behavior. In fact, the detention staff and the school officials shared a number of

similar opinions. This detention staff offered an explanation for how the family is structured can influence decisions to detain:

*“...Family structure, if you have a mom and dad you’ll have a lot more support, you’ll get better direction before it becomes an issue, in detention we think about, if I send you home who am I sending you home to, is it your parents or 22 year old sister that’s raising you, black or white the kids we see have less stable families.”*

Whereas another detention staff member spoke about how a youth’s adjudication and/or disposition can be effected by parental involvement, *“The support system is just not there with a lot of the families, even when it comes time to go to court, the parents aren’t there and that weighs a lot on the decision of the judge, a lot of times they don’t want to send them back.”*

A public defender echoed similar sentiments:

*“I’ll send letter to parent to say, ‘I’m your child’s public defender. If you want to contact me, please do so.’ I hear from less than 5%, and those that do are married and have stable housing. I use that to argue for them – kid’s been punished at home. It’s usually a lower level offense. The judge can tell immediately if the parents are involved. I definitely rely on that.”* And one prosecutor said, *“Prosecutor’s do too. You have to prove they need services and if there are family members helping them.”*

A colleague of the public defender from the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group further explained how family impacts a youth’s outcomes in a different way. Rather than the issues being parental involvement, this individual believes that how a parent presents himself/herself in court can influence the decision made: *“You could have two kids with the same crime. One’s parents come in nice clothes, are white, and say they’ve been grounded. The black kid has parents in t-shirts with no job. He is less likely to go home.”*

*One final issue deserves mention here. A participant from the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group expressed his frustration over how few of his clients have someone on their side, in their home willing to help them succeed:*

*“I have clients that want to be better and could be better, but they don’t have anyone that encourages them. They’re not involved in extra-curricular activities.”*

*They don't have a strong mentor in their life. If they had that one person who they could see and could encourage them, I thought it would be good to implement it as part of their disposition."*

*Some parents do not want their children at home.* We learned that there are parents that do not want their child to return home after their arrest or detention, or are afraid of them and cannot have them back in the house. This was true in all three counties. In each jurisdiction, we were told that parental refusal to take custody of their child leaves the court little option when it comes to continued detention and especially at disposition (when the court may be considering an out of home placement because a child cannot go home). For example, one detention staff stated, *"I think we get more calls from parents than we would have gotten years ago. Somebody else take care of my kid, because I can't. They've [the juvenile] gotten to the age where parents are frustrated."* Two other probation officers explained that the parents are afraid of their kids and they, *"...call the police and have the police officer deal with them."* Other time parents are more blatant and want the juvenile removed from their home. *"...I had someone this morning ask if their child can be put in residential placement. We can't without a psychological evaluation, and then DCS is involved. In a few cases I've had, parent says, I just want them out."* The problem is that this can clearly impact DMC if the majority of parents that are calling are those that live in high poverty areas and do not receive the support resources that they need to help to keep their child from spiraling into more serious delinquency.

*Language barrier.* One last way that a family's background can influence the system's decision making is related to language proficiency. While no one described the Latino population as large, we were told that there are pockets of Hispanic families in the city of LaPorte. Some of the families originate in the county and others are new or second generation immigrants. In these families, there are some parents that either do not speak English or are not proficient enough to understand the court process in English. A detention staff member communicated that *"We don't get a lot of Hispanics, but one problem with them is language barriers, trying to explain certain factors, we have some bilingual staff but you may end up having to keep a kid longer sometimes when that barrier interferes with the process."* The members of the Probation focus group agreed that language barriers present problems for the child and the system, but they intimated that have more assistance with interpreters at court. What is not clear is how available interpreters are for probation office and home visits.

### Programming Accessibility/Eligibility

This indirect effect mechanism explains that when young people cannot access the resources that they need because of economic factors such as a lack of health insurance (which is due to negative economic circumstances), DMC can increase. In particular, DMC could be impacted for youth of color in LaPorte County if they are receiving less favorable outcomes in court because they do not have private health insurance. The DMC data indicates that minority youth are diverted less often, detained more often (pre-adjudication), have a formal petition filed more often and are waived to the criminal courts more often in this county. Given that one group member from the Judges/Magistrates group explained that “*Children with private insurance end up getting better dispositions. What Medicaid and DCS covers is limited,*” it is fair to conclude that the not having access to key resources like private health insurance can negatively impact key decisions made during juvenile justice processing.

### Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Treatment

This mechanism refers to the varied accessibility of treatment services, prevention and intervention in a county. The reality is that it is rare for all services to be available to all youth in all areas of a county. Three sub-mechanisms make up this larger mechanism. They deal with whether services/programs are accessible to all groups; whether certain groups are excluded from services due to factors like prior record or current offenses, the eligibility of certain offenders to participate and whether the service or programs are implemented in such a way that they are welcoming to diverse groups. All seven focus groups discussed this mechanism using its broadest definition—limited access to services. Concerns related to eligibility and implementation were not really discussed separately from the access issues.

*Lack of Diversion Alternatives.* The Judges/Magistrates and the Detention group highlighted the scarcity of programs available to the probation department, the prosecutors and the judges in the county. As one court officer explained, “*most [diversion programs] are for first time offenders, but even then there is not much to offer. The programs are the same for everyone...and really, nothing that is offered meets a model diversion program.*” This individual continued to explain that there needs to be different types of diversion programs that last varying lengths based on what brought the young person to court:

*“Not all kids need longer term informal adjustments, for six months, they are not always the key. Sometimes a quick and dirty diversion where you bring in [to court] the youth and parents to talk about the kid’s behavior and talk about what can happen to them if they keep making bad choices and getting into trouble...something like this for minor consumption kids would be great! Maybe half day session about the juvenile justice system – an education type thing.”*

Along this same vein, this same individual argued that the lack of diversion programs did not just hurt juveniles early in the process, but also those that could (and perhaps should) be diverted post-petition.

Finally, this participant explained that while some kids get caught drinking at a party, they do not need to go to alcohol classes or Alcoholics Anonymous. *“Kids make dumb mistakes and many need mini-diversions, a quick but impactful response. Let them know what can happen and then divert them out of these system with no extra programming would be good.”* To clarify, this participant was not speaking about an ultra-brief counsel and release meeting with probation. The argument was that this child and their parent should have to come to court and be seen by a judge.

Along these same lines, when it comes to providing alternative programs, whether they be diversion from court programs or alternatives to suspension and expulsion, etc., an individual in the Community Service Provider group explained that providers need to stop infighting and work together, we need to get rid of, *“...the silos, this office won’t work with that office because I need to make sure that I establish my funds and secure my money. This happens even in the faith-based community.”* One member of the Detention group summed it up best, claiming, *“Everyone’s in a power struggle, and now with limited resources it’s getting even worse.”*

*Lack of Detention Alternatives.* This discussion was similar to the discussion about the dearth of diversion programs. LaPorte was similar to the other counties in the study in terms of not having many meaningful alternatives to detention beyond electronic monitoring. When discussing the impact that such scarcities have on probation officers’ decision making about what to do with their clients. As one individual court officer explained that *“some probation feel pushed into detaining kids because there seems to be a lack of meaningful alternatives and the probation officers want these kids to be safe.”*

*No resources for pro-social activities.* The Detention group discussed what they believe is a paucity of pro-social activities available for youth in the county and most particularly in Michigan City. They argued that many of the parents in Michigan City cannot afford to pay for their children to participate in extra-curricular activities. Specifically, they suggested that the poor kids in the county do not have sports, music, art class, etc. (outside of school), to draw kids away from gangs and other delinquent youth in their neighborhoods. Interestingly, two individuals in the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group mentioned that the sporting programs at the Michigan City High School have deteriorated greatly in recent years. Further still, the Community Service Provider group also briefly mentioned that there is little to do for the kids in Michigan City—except perhaps hang out on “the Boulevard.” They explained that there is only one Boy’s in Girl’s Club and no YMCA in Michigan City. However, it is not clear that having a Y program will serve a majority of the youth that the Detention group referred to since the Y is a member organization that charges fees. While the fees are nominal for low income families, any fee driven activity may not be easily accessible to the many youth that are growing up in very poor families that are working hard to pay housing fees and feed their children.

*Mental health services are lacking in the county.* Four of the focus groups (Judges/Magistrates, Community Service Providers, Detention, Probation, and Prosecutors/Public defenders) talked about how the mental health services in the county are lacking for youth and the families. One individual even spoke clearly that those with resources get treatment and those that do not have insurance may not. This lack of services is frustrating to all of the parties involved. Moreover, there are instances when apparent attempts are made to offer services, but they are not accepted, though in part that may be due to cultural barriers. As a Community Service Provider explains: “*Hispanic youth just don’t come in for treatment, I think it’s lacking on both parts, they don’t stress mental health, also though I don’t think in reality that much effort has...it’s been hard to recruit Spanish speaking therapists.*”

*DCS’ refusal to acknowledge the need for prevention services.* A common refrain in many of the groups was that DCS does not see the need to provide funds for prevention programs. This was briefly touched on above in relation to diversion programs, but the issue goes further than just diversion. Some participants argued that the county is in desperate need of straight out primary prevention programs and programs that intervene before a youth is adjudicated. One court officer explained that, “*DCS refuses to acknowledge that pre-*

*adjudicated kids need services,” and that, “they refuse to acknowledge the necessity of prevention services...The problems with these kids starts with the child welfare system, but that is ignored...” Another court officer claimed, “we’re having all this planning and graduated sanctions implemented with an emphasis on diversion and then all of a sudden you don’t have the freedom to implement diversion programs.” A Community Service Provider did not suggest that DCS funding mechanisms was the problem, but that “Access to basic services has been limited to legislative changes related to property taxes.” Another individual in that same group explained:*

*“A big issue has been funding, property tax law, counties used to have that money to pay providers and you could do interventions, I used to do a fatherlessness programs, but the state took control of the property tax money and it’s been split into regions and the regional councils have control of the money and you can’t do little programs anymore.”*

Another individual in this same group explained, *“There used to be youth centers in place and places for youth to go and that is no more.”* One final member of the Community Service Provider group expounded that all programs are limited now, *“Hot call hours for the police are right after school gets out, and they have nothing to do, there’s not boys and girls club in LaPorte and there’s not YMCA in Michigan City, so it’s really just tough because there’s limited resources.”*

*There is no adolescent drug treatment in county.* Many individuals across all of the groups talked about the problem of drug use and abuse among youth in the county. We learned that Heroin use is increasing quickly among white youth and marijuana is the drug of choice among black youth in the county. A judicial officer advised, *“Drug treatment is a big problem. There are no local providers of adolescent drug treatment and no residential drug treatment programs.”* This same individual is frustrated by the lack of services available in that many youth need to be ordered into treatment. Furthermore, drug court exists for adults in the county and this individual believes that it needs to be extended to include juveniles and their families.

*The Extended Day Program is not widespread.* Participants in the School Personnel group spoke highly of a cooperative program between the courts and some schools that provided services after school for youth in trouble at school called, *Extended Day*. One participant explained, *“There’s a program LaPorte County does in our district, but our problem is funds.*

*It's not housed in our district. It's not far away, but it's something we wish we had more readily available. Extended Day. We have Day 2, and we appreciated it.*" Several jumped into the discussion to say that it is effective—some called it “outstanding” and they had data to show the program is effective. Another participant explained its utility, *“If you have to go in front of the judge, and they're sending you to school, and you have to bring your parent, it makes a difference.”* However, the program was tied to grant monies and when the money dried up so did the programs.

*Lack of cultural competence or bias avoidance training in the county.* When this topic was discussed in the groups, no one claimed to currently receive this type of training in their jobs. The one police officer did not remember receiving this type of training, and the school representatives explained that some of them had it quite some time ago and many of them are open to more. Detention staff explained that there is not much in the way of this training but that they send people out for cultural sensitivity training when it seems they need it. Budget cuts were the common reason offered for why this training is not currently offered. While the school group seemed most interested in participating in this training, not all educators are on board with having more:

*“When you breach the topic, you get a lot of resistance and hear, ‘We’ve done that before.’ In other words, ‘I’d really rather not.’ When you see it as an issue – and in our district, it is a problem – you have to take care of this stuff before you can even begin to understand English, social studies. I’m not expecting everyone to change their belief system, but if we can have a better understanding of why we act this way or why things are the way they are [we can do better].”*

### Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making

The DMC Technical Assistance Manual describes this mechanism as it relates to decisions about eligibility for certain programs or processes (e.g., diversions or intermediate sanctions). Additionally, it relates to whether decisions made about how to act (e.g., arrest, divert, refer, detain, etc.) are made in a fundamentally fair way. And finally, it relates to whether any criteria that are applied to such decisions are structured in a way that might place some



groups at a greater disadvantage than other groups.<sup>42</sup> The ways in which this mechanism came up in LaPorte County are discussed below.

*Racism and discrimination.* Not surprisingly, when decisions are made that are either outright racist or discriminatory, DMC will be impacted. We are in no way suggesting that racism and discrimination accounts for all or even most of the DMC in this county. However, there were individuals in the Probation and Community Service Provider Groups that intimated that they have seen persons (either in the past or present) make case decisions and suggest dispositions that they believe were influenced by their own biases—whether the biases be race or gender based. For example, one probation staff stated:

*“I’m not calling anyone out, I just don’t think they’re looking at the entire big picture that you have to factor—I don’t know how they come to the conclusions that they deal with. I don’t know if it is fear, I don’t know if it was just not looking at the all the risks and the needs of the child—looking at everything. Now we have the INSIGHT assessment. I just don’t think that they holistically looked at everything. Not that they didn’t want what is best, I just don’t think that they looked at everything. The history, the family dynamics, and all of that.”*

Whereas a member of the Community Service Provider group explained:

*“...when African American kids walk into a store, the loss prevention officer starts watching them and then they catch them, the white kids they aren’t following around, if they followed all the white kids too we’d have a lot more arrests, not that we need more arrests, they include in the narrative that the kid looked suspicious with no explanation, the only explanation is that it was race based.”*

*Harsher treatment for youth of color.* Along the same lines as the racism section above, there were study participants in the Judges/Magistrates and Prosecutors/Public Defenders that said youth of color are treated more harshly than their white counterparts, but they did not go so far as to say that the cause was racism. As court officer suggested, *“Exact reasons are unclear—but the police in Michigan City are on high-alert....they practice very aggressive policing. You*

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<sup>42</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this mechanism see: Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

*see more kids of color arrested for more serious crimes, more guns, etc.* “ One person suggested that kids in Michigan City are growing up in high crime areas and are gang involved or look like they belong to a gang and so they “scare us [members of the police and the justice system] and we need to come down on them.” Another person said, it “*Feels like the black officers in Michigan city are toughest on black kids...kids always refer to this cop like , ‘oh yeah, I dealt with Officer XXXX.’*”

Again, it was not clear that anyone could identify the factual reason why the police seem to enforce the law more stringently against certain types of juveniles or why different areas are policed differently. All that we can say is that many of the people in this study perceived a difference in police behavior. Some tried to explain that it may be because of where “*they live which impacts how likely they are to have an interaction with a police officer.*” A member of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders explained that this was especially true:

*“if you’re a minority in Michigan City because of the way the city is set up. You’re more likely to live in town, downtown, on the Boulevard or West side, right by the police station. If you’re a white kid, you probably live in the Franklin St. and Edgewood neighborhoods. It’s a small area, but if young children are out in the evenings in the summer in Edgewood, you’re not as worried, but if they are near the Boulevard, you are more likely to be concerned.”*

*Lack of Respect for and/or Distrust of Authority.* The lack of respect that poor and minority youth have for persons in positions of authority or their distrust of authority in general was a topic that came up in three of the groups in this county (Detention, Police, and Prosecutors/Public Defenders). Detention staff spoke about how this distrust and disrespect can color how interactions unfold between youth of color and authority figures. As one member of this group explained, “*Respect issues are huge... a big issue for African Americans. These young people, “...do not want to look weak...”* so they react badly to being fronted or called out.”

When it comes to African American young people and the police, a detention staff person explained that there is “*lots of distrust between police and kids of color. There is a significant historical background. Police are agents of control that have abused their power.*” Yet another detention group member explain the role that young people play in these unproductive interactions and that it would be great if the police could meet with young people in a non-

threatening situation and just talk to them, *“sometimes the kids don’t understand how to deal with the police when they tell them to stop and they run, the police can let them know that if they run then they’re gonna think they’re doing something.”*

One individual in the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group had a different take on why youth of color react the way they do when interacting with the police:

*“There’s a different perception of police in white and black communities. Whites will embrace the police in times of turmoil, but blacks will remain hesitant and be reluctant to give information. It has to do with their value system and the way they were raised. That influence is so powerful that you can bring child into the system and try to make changes, but that pressure from their peer group is so powerful that nothing else sticks.”*

*The ease with which schools are allowing students to drop out.* Some individuals we spoke to are concerned that youth are not educated properly or are dropping out of school too easily. Specifically, one member of the Judges/Magistrates group explained that schools are too easily allowing juveniles to drop out and not meeting the statutory requirements when students do drop out. IC 20-33-2-9 00 states that if a youth of at least 16 years of age (but less than 18) wants to quit attending school they must have an exit interview with the child, the parent and the school principal. At this exit interview, the school must make sure that the reason for withdrawal meets statutory requirements and that a statement is made by the student and parent that they understand the negative consequences of withdrawing from school early (e.g., reduced future earnings and increased likelihood of unemployment). Furthermore, when this same individual asks juveniles before the court for the transcripts of the statutorily required exit interviews that took place when they quit school, *“these kids give a blank stare. The reality is there are a lot of truant kids that no one is out there looking for...and no one is really making sure that when kids want to drop out, their reason for quitting school satisfies the statute...kids aren’t being encouraged to stay in school.”*

*No Public Defenders at Detention Hearings.* We were told by individuals in the Prosecutors/Public Defender and Judges/Magistrates groups that there are no public defenders at detention hearings in LaPorte County. This can impact DMC because this is where the decision is made to detain or continue to detain many youth. If there is no one to argue on behalf of indigent (i.e., poor) youth, then it is possible that they may be more likely to be detained. The

research indicates that youth that are held in secure detention pre-adjudication have less favorable case outcomes. For example, they are more likely to be adjudicated and committed to DOC. As such, if poor youth in the county are more likely to be minority youth, as was said throughout the focus groups, then they are more likely to have public defenders which means they have no representation at the detention hearing and face an increased likelihood of negative case outcomes, which in the end, exacerbates DMC. Why is it that there are no public defenders at detention hearings? A member of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders groups explained:

*“At detention hearings, public defenders are not there typically. That’s an issue that Judge Gettinger sees going statewide. Because of budget, public defenders cannot be at every detention meeting. Kids aren’t represented at those hearings. That could be an issue. When they are detained pre-adjudication, they are already on probation, or they’ve had a few swipes already.”*

*Lack of cultural competency training.* There are several places that we could discuss the lack of cultural competence or bias avoidance training, but not having this sort of training can impact the decision making of school and justice actors as they might make decisions based on incorrect assumptions that are in some way related to race, ethnicity, class, or other cultural factors. For example, when the police officer was asked if he had received cultural competency training in the past, the officer stated, *“There’s a cultural diversity training next week. This is the first one I can think of, it’s just come up.”* Whereas a detention staff joked, *“This is our training.”* However, another detention group member said there aren’t many spots available at this kind of training so they try to send people out to it *“...that need it the most.”* Interestingly, the probation group believed that some decisions are made based on biases; however, they also thought that cultural competence training is available to the probation officers when they are first hired.

### Justice by Geography

Justice by Geography (JbG) is a large category. We know from the literature that who you are (i.e., minority or majority) can often influence where you live (e.g., high crime, high poverty areas versus low crime suburbs) which can then influence how you are dealt with in the juvenile justice system. In part, the differential processing some youth may experience can be more about what county he is processed in over what is the most appropriate outcome.

Additionally, case outcomes may have more to do with police practices in one city than how

another law enforcement agency deals with youth in an unincorporated area of the county. Additionally, JbG could be related to whether a youth is processed in a mostly rural area versus a mostly urban area. Finally, differential processing can also result from differing attitudes about how to hold kids accountable and what resources are available in different neighborhoods in a city.

There are four JbG related issues in raised in LaPorte County that deserve mention: (a) where police patrol is saturated; (b) a tale of two juvenile justice systems; (c) relatively few minorities work in administrative positions in education or in basic jobs in treatment and service provision, case management and juvenile justice; and (d) there is no champion for youth in county. These same or related issues also appear elsewhere under other mechanisms. While this might seem like an unnecessary duplication, we believe it speaks to the complex nature of DMC and how impactful these issues can be to both behavior of youth and system responses to that behavior (i.e., decision-making).

*Where patrol is saturated.* According to participants in five of the focus groups (Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Probation, Detention, and School Personnel) it is all about where you live. What this means is that the police are heavily concentrated in the parts of the county that are considered high crime. Moreover, high crime areas are where a large majority of the county's poor people live. Further still, most of the minority youth in the county are poor and live in these high crime areas. Therefore, this calculus brings minority youth into contact with the police far more often than upper or middle class white youth. Thus, a number of the study participants believed that the proximity of minority youth to the police, may in part, account for some of the disproportionality in referrals to the juvenile court.

Another related issue has to do with the very different ways that people perceive the police to enforce the law in the two cities. Michigan City police were described by many as "overly aggressive" whereas the LaPorte police were described as "very non-reactive." Several people across the groups hesitantly suggested that there were real differences in the ways that the police agencies operated, but seemed uncomfortable and did not want to discuss in how they were different beyond the basic descriptions of overly aggressive and non-reactive. What one of the Prosecutor/Public Defender group did say was:

*"You're more likely to have interaction with a police officer if you're a minority in Michigan City because of the way the city is set up. You're more likely to live in*

*town, downtown, on the Boulevard or West side, right by the police station. If you're a white kid, you probably live in the Franklin St. and Edgewood neighborhoods. It's a small area, but if young children are out in the evenings in the summer in Edgewood, you're not as worried, but if they are near the Boulevard, you are more likely to be concerned."*

*A tale of two juvenile justice systems.* LaPorte County was the only jurisdiction in the study that was described by focus group participants as having two different systems. In reality, not all of the individuals used that exact language but all spoke as if there was, "*Michigan City and the City of LaPorte and they are two different counties.*" Please note that in this one section, we are choosing not to attribute any quotes as some are sensitive and may aggravate already tense relations between residents of Michigan City and the City of LaPorte.

Quite often in the focus groups, individuals said that the DMC data is the way that it is because of Michigan City. Or, they would say that they did not know how anything is done "*over there*" meaning Michigan City. Moreover, individuals in all seven focus groups said that they county is entirely divided. As one individual claimed, "*I've always described it as, we have two cities in this county and they're not on speaking terms.*" Another individual explained that it all came down to "*a political divide that goes back a long way.*" We learned from the focus groups that traditionally, there has always been two probation departments because there is such a "*...clear divide between LaPorte and Michigan City...*" but no one ever really articulated what major difference there was that necessitated the different probation departments or the need for two different Superior Court Judges until 1995. Also, while we were told by some that the probation department is one department now, there are two juvenile Chief Probation Officers. When the groups were pushed to explain what the differences in the county are that creates such a divide, one person claimed that the two cities are so different because one is an urban inner city and the other suburban with a lot of rural areas. However, many counties are like this around the country and do not have this clear divide between the people and officials systems that govern the areas. Another person said,

*"it's very territorial here, there may be one case manager you work with or five, and they may be very helpful but it's very territorial, the juvenile justice system decides who and it's done very piecemeal, it came out of a good ole boy network*

*at one point and it kind of fractured and that's what I keep hearing from other service providers."*

Further still, the divide was said to be along color lines, "Michigan city has always been diverse, but it's always had some institutional racism." Finally, one of the participants opined that nothing will get better in the county [with regard to DMC] until the divide is fixed and that it is:

*"the major problem, probably the biggest problem facing the county, and it has to be fixed. Having two probation departments in the same county can lead to disparate services and it does."*

When followed by the question, "This sounds like you are saying things are separate, but not equal?" The respondent said, "exactly." Unfortunately, we did not come away from the focus groups with an understanding of the concrete issues that necessitate the continued divide between the two cities that make up this county.

*Few minorities work in Positions of Authority.* The concern over the relatively low numbers of minority youth is another topic that came up in all three counties. However, in LaPorte County, individuals were skeptical that merely hiring more minority police officers is the easy answer. As discussed previously, it was alleged earlier that the African American police officers in Michigan City are much tougher on African American youth than the white officers. The thought was that perhaps this "tougher enforcement" was a misguided attempt to help turn these youths' lives around—not realizing that the "tougher enforcement" could be making things worse for these young people down the road as individuals and increasing DMC in the long run in the jurisdiction.

There was a lot of agreement in the School Personnel group that there is a need to hire more minority staff in all positions, *"We are starving for minority teachers. We would love that. We always ask if they speak Spanish, but those that do aren't qualified. We just got our first African American teacher out of 50 teachers. We're desperate to get cultural perspective."* Another school official tried to come up with all of the reasons why having minority staff, particularly minority males, is important:

*"African American males will have the most effect on African American male students. A white male they will listen to, to a point, then an African American female, then a white female. When I see suspendable offenses in school,*

*statistically, we have more African American kids who will get in trouble as youth. Those kids who are in trouble are then taking and doing things outside of school that are causing them problems with local law enforcement. There's something that's not right here. We only have a handful of minority staff members in our building that can talk to or relate to students that need that guidance. Our SROs and others are taxed with issues daily with things that happen. I made a comment to both gentlemen that there's not enough of you to go around for all of them that need you to provide. I try to provide as much as I can, and some trust me more than others, but they can see that you don't look like them. It takes many years to build that trust. It would be helpful in our district to have more minority administrators to deal with our students. We need more all the way around."*

*There is no champion for youth in County.* When asked what it would take to reduce DMC in the county, one of the Judges/Magistrate group members stated, *"...it would take money and leadership on the community level to deal with children in general. We're going to coordinate our efforts toward youth, educating them, for professions, mentoring, things that lead to something positive. If our biggest factor is who we're getting into the system, it'd be great if we didn't get them in the system to begin with. Families need help too."* The idea of having a youth champion or actually what was suggested was a group of leaders that come together over youth issues would probably impact poor youth and youth of color more as kids with resources have champions—private counsel—parents with education, etc., to speak for them. However, it was brought up that this is not just a juvenile justice thing, what they county needs is a broad-based coalition that looks out for the interests of youth to help coordinate the big picture in terms of what young people need to grow and become successful adults. As it was explained to us, no one in the county is doing this for youth—even the faith community seems absent on this.

#### Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact

*LaPorte County cannot get what it needs for pre-adjudicated youth.* The concern that the courts and their various agents are not able to provide services they need for youth prior to them being adjudicated delinquent came up in four of seven groups (i.e., Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public defenders, Community Service Providers, Probation). One individual from the Judges/Magistrates group explained, "DCS won't get involved pre-adjudication. Even for truants, the truancy programming and services does not start until after they are adjudicated."



*House Bill 1001 changed everything.* A wide-held belief among the various actors in the LaPorte County Juvenile Justice system was that the changes to service provision and placing DCS in charge of making decisions about what the services that youth under the juvenile court's jurisdiction was detrimental to justice. As one service provider suggest, "House Bill 1001 changed everything." A member of the Judges/Magistrates group explained that this legislation kept the county from expanding services to youth that are evidence-based, "*One thing we wanted to do before we lost control of the money, we wanted Functional family Therapy.*" And member of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group stated, "A probation officer has to get authorization and permission from DCS before they can do anything, which is a big hurdle."

During a follow up discussion about this topic, one officer of the court explained, "*the DCS philosophy is that if a kid is delinquent then they [DCS]do not need to be involved....the problem is if we wait until a child is delinquent –that goes against the philosophy that has always driven the juvenile court.*" This same individual further explained that the legislation caused funding changes brought about a sense of frustration for probation officers, "they can't get what they need for their [clients] and DCS doesn't think there is a need for them [DCS] to get involved if kids are delinquent...their attitude is you've got him, you keep him." Interestingly, a handful of people across the three counties lamented the "unnatural separation" between the juvenile court and the DCS, "*There's a history of separation between DCS and the juvenile justice System, where if they were integrated it might be more effective.*"

### Accumulated Disadvantage

The mechanism known as accumulated disadvantage can be viewed in two ways: simple accumulation and impacts on later decision. Both types of disadvantage were found in LaPorte County, however, simple accumulations were more easily identified.

### Simple Accumulation

Simple Accumulation occurs when there are things like higher rates of arrest and referral to juvenile court for minority youth. Add to that, incremental increases resulting from lower rates of diversion and higher rates of petitions filed and the accumulations begin to really add up. Individually, these outcomes may not account for a marked increase in DMC individually, but together, they can accumulate and contribute to DMC in a major way.

The first of the accumulated disadvantages begin with disproportionate arrests and referrals to juvenile court—if there were no arrests there would be no referrals. Youth of color were nearly four times more likely to be referred to court, which in resulted in a 1.5 times greater likelihood of being detained (according to the logistic regression results). The other simple accumulation that likely impacted DMC in LaPorte County is the reduced likelihood of diversion of minority youth. As such, it is not a stretch to suggest that the combination of an increased likelihood of arrest (suggested by most of the focus groups members), the increased chances of referral and detention and lesser likelihood of diversion increased DMC in the county. Many focus group participants explained that the area of LaPorte where most of the minority youth live is where most of the crime occurs.

#### Impacts on Later Decisions.

Early decisions made about a juvenile’s case by a decision-maker can influence subsequent decisions. In these instances, race and ethnicity may influence how these early, yet influential, decisions are made. For example, in the Specific Risk Factors section, we learned that a decision to detain a youth may be made according to whether a child is part of a single-parent household. The belief may be that if there is only one parent in the home, and that parent works, there will be no one to adequately supervise that child upon release. Since the research indicates that minority youth often reside in this type of family structure, minority youth may be disproportionately detained pre-adjudication. Because we know that juveniles held in detention tend to receive more severe dispositions, the conclusion can be made that *Impacts on Later Decisions* is likely a mechanism for DMC in the county.

Attractive Nuisance. LaPorte County is the only location in which anyone identified a particular area that could be considered an attractive nuisance (AN) which could impact DMC in the jurisdiction. According to the *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*<sup>43</sup>, ANs are entertainment and commercial locations that are located in an “urban area or a suburban community...has lower proportions of minority residents but draws youth from across an urban area. It is likely that the demographic profile of youth in such a location reflects a higher proportion of minority youth than does the census estimate for the area immediately surrounding the facility.” Example of ANs are shopping malls, water parks, or summer festival locations. A

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<sup>43</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

member of the Judges/Magistrates group explained that kids come in from surrounding areas to go to the beach (e.g., the Dunes) in the county; other juveniles come from around the immediate area to hang out at the “Boulevard.” The way in which a beach could draw youth from other areas (inside or outside of the county) is obvious and does not necessarily need further discussion. The location that is less obvious is the Boulevard (BLVD).

The location, referred to as the BLVD is located along East Michigan Blvd. Where most of the youth activity is located is on the East side of the lake. The BLVD came up in many of the focus group discussions; however, it was not until a member of the Judges/Magistrates group explained how much of a draw it is for youth that live in and around the county. As it was described, youth from certain areas in the county—especially the poorer parts of Michigan City, like to hang out on the BLVD, near where some public housing projects used to be located. It is also approximately two blocks from the police station and is also close to the courts. We were told that this possible NA is located in gang territory and a number of participants from the various focus groups explained that this area is highly saturated with police patrols, particularly at night and on the weekends. One judicial officer provided the context for how this NA could impact DMC in LaPorte:

*“The BLVD has a long history of juveniles coming from different parts of the county to hang out there...and there is a heavy gang presence, a number of shootings have occurred there in the last few years, and the proximity to police, lots of police, equates to lots of arrests—most of which are African American kids.”*

Whether we provide the BLVD with the technical label of NA is not the most critical issue. The important take away from this particular discussion is that a lot of youth are being drawn to this area, and the area has been identified as high crime, gang and police saturated which in combination can increase the interaction between the police and poor minority youth at this location. One participant in the Prosecutor/Public Defender group nicely described the problem that other eluded to”

*“There’s more focus on the Boulevard in Michigan City. More activity happens on it, so it’s easier for kids to get picked up and caught doing what they’re doing, and there’s nowhere to hide. If something happens, there’s multiple units there in minutes. Exposure for minority youth is more significant, especially in the summer.”*

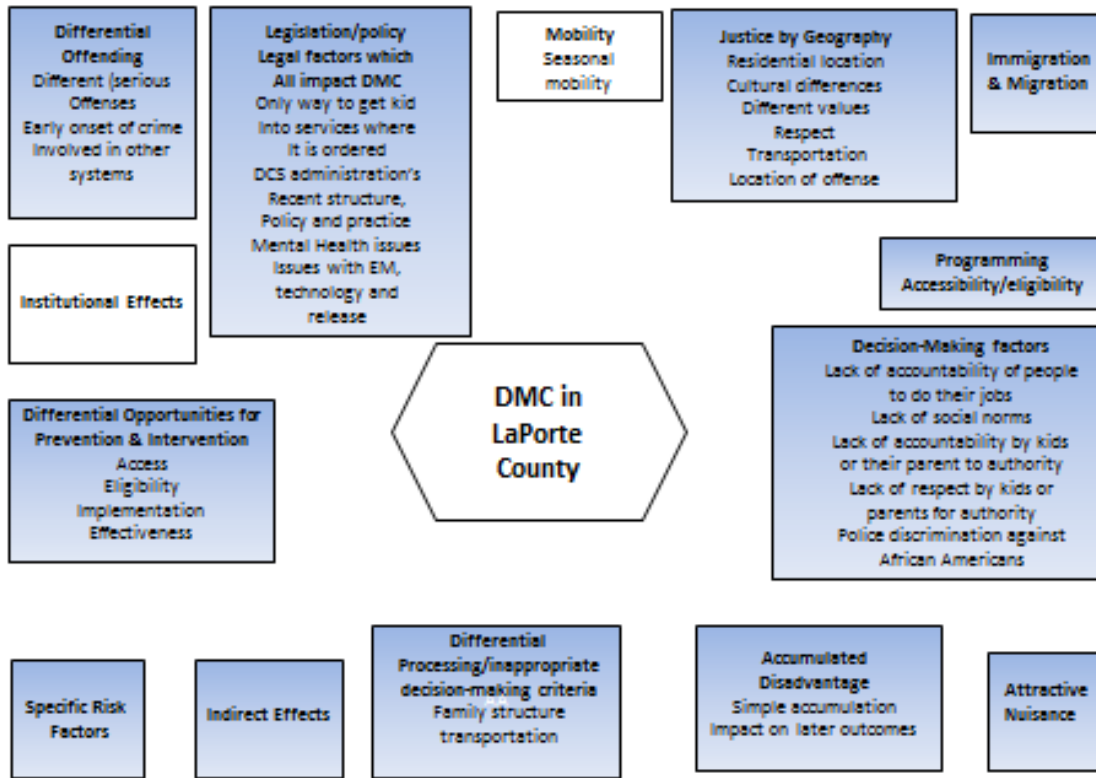
*Miscellaneous.* Two last issues are discussed in the section. First, individuals in the Judges/Magistrates and the Prosecutors/Public Defenders groups acknowledged that there seems to be, “Lots of hopelessness and despair among these kids.” While the topic was only raised in two of the groups, it was a more common topic in the other counties. As such, we thought it prudent to include it as it may play a role in youth behavior. Moreover, we also thought it important to include as one of the individuals that made the observation presides over the juvenile cases and the other either prosecutes or defends these same youth. Thus, they have important perspectives on the youth that come through the court in LaPorte County.

Second, there were significant changes in positions of authority in the in LaPorte County Juvenile Justice System that spanned the timeframe of this study. Specifically, a new Superior Court Judge was elected at the end of 2006, a Chief Probation Officer was replaced in (in 2007), and a new Prosecutor was elected in later 2010. We learned that a number of changes in practice and policy coincided with these shifts in power. For example, the Serious Habitual Offender program was terminated, probation decisions became more decentralized and adoption of differing approaches to waiver.

## Conclusions

The causes of DMC in LaPorte County are likely are complex and varied. Figure 1 includes all of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* according to OJJDP. While we found evidence for many of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* in this jurisdiction, we did not find them all. The shaded boxes in the figure indicate that we found possible evidence of these mechanism; non-shaded boxes indicate no evidence of these mechanisms were found. As such, the only mechanisms that we did not identify in this county are Seasonal Mobility and Institutional Effects.

Figure L2: Perceived Explanations for DMC in LaPorte County



Three of the major mechanisms (or what we have deemed related to the mechanisms) were major topics in all seven of the focus groups in LaPorte County. The first two are the more general categories of **Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Intervention** (broadly defined) and **Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making** (broadly defined). By broadly defined we mean that the general issue came up in all seven focus groups, but each of the sub-mechanism (e.g., lack of detention alternatives) was not necessarily mentioned in each of the groups. One sub-mechanism, **Justice by Geography**, *A tale of two juvenile justice systems* came up in all seven groups and was a major topic of conversation. More specifically, the groups discussed how there are seemingly two juvenile justice systems that mirror each other in the county, but also differ in important and significant ways. For example, some participants felt that juveniles in Michigan City did not have the same access to services as LaPorte youth and were policed more aggressively too.

Only two mechanisms were discussed in six of the seven groups: **Differential Offending**, Offending differences and **Indirect Effect—Specific Risk Factor**, SES & Race. First, **Differential Offending**, offending differences was cited by most of the groups as one of

the main reasons that there is DMC at the referral, detention, petition, and waiver decision points in this jurisdiction. More simply stated, minority youth have longer criminal histories and commit more serious crimes than their white counterparts which is why there is DMC at the decision points mentioned. Second, the mechanism referred to as **Indirect Effect—Specific Risk Factor, SES & Race** was discussed at length in all but one of the groups as well. In short, it is the intersection between SES and Race and how they interact with other key social factors which can impact DMC. In LaPorte County, the discussion about SES and Race was specific to what minority youth do. In particular, the argument was made that youth commit crimes like burglary because of their SES.

Two other mechanisms were topics in five of the seven groups. First, **Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Treatment, Mental health services are lacking in the county** dealt with the reality that mental health services for youth and their family in the county are sparse. Second, **Justice by Geography, Where patrol is saturated** was identified as one of the major reasons that so many minority youth are arrested and referred to court. Many argued that minority youth in the county commit more serious crimes than their white counterparts, but also that youth of color are more likely to come into contact with the police based on where they live. In fact, some participants explained that many of the youth that come to the court live within just two blocks of the police station in Michigan City near the BLVD.

There was also a lot of agreement among the groups about other mechanism that can lead to DMC. Specifically, the following were identified in four out of seven focus groups as being related to DMC: **Indirect Effect—Specific Risk Factor, Seriousness of current offense & prior criminal history;** and **Indirect Effect—Specific Risk Factor, SES and current economic trends.** Additionally, the mechanism **Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors, Lack of cultural understanding** which mostly referred to the inability of study participants to relate to the juveniles and their families because they come from diverse cultures; and **Indirect Effect—Decision-making Factor, Family structure, parental involvement, single-parent households** were both seemingly important to participants in four of the seven groups. Two other mechanisms were discussed in four of the groups: **Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact, LaPorte County cannot get what it needs for pre-adjudicated youth;** and **Justice by Geography, Few minorities work in positions of authority.** Many of the participants in all three counties believed that this is an issue and that needs attention as they

argued that minority youth will never be able to feel more trusting toward the system until they see people that look like them working in it.

Finally, the mechanisms, **Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact, House Bill 1001 changed everything, and Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision-making, Lack of Respect for and/or Distrust of Authority** were thought to explain at least some of the DMC in three out of the six focus groups in LaPorte County.

We do not claim that the DMC explanations identified through our data collection and analysis are an exclusive and exhaustive listing of all of the mechanisms leading to the overrepresentation of youth of color placed in secure detention, having a petition filed, and waived to adult court, and an underrepresentation of youth of color in an informal diversion program. What can be taken from this is that justice professionals in this county perceive that these are areas of concern and that the processes surrounding them must be further examined should the county hope to reduce DMC in the future.

With the conclusion of the focus group section, it is important to review the key points of the Phase I and interview results to be oriented toward the recommendations. From the RRI data it was evident that African-American youth were referred to the juvenile court almost four times as often as white youth. African-American youth were also waived to adult court 2.64 times more often than white youth. Hispanic youth were placed in juvenile correctional facilities 1.66 times more often than white youth and referred to juvenile court 5.6 times more often. Using logistic regression to control for sex, age, and severity of offense, minority youth were still placed in secure detention 1.6 times more often and waived to adult court 4.2 times more often. They were also diverted less often and petitions were filed more often. In regards to the youth interviews, minority youth reported lower levels of perceived procedural injustice. Youth in detention reported higher levels of perceived discrimination from probation officers, judges, prosecutors, and public defenders, as well as higher levels of perceived procedural injustice than youth in probation.

## Recommendations

In this section, we present recommendations specific to LaPorte County. While each of the three counties examined in this study include unique characteristics, several cross-cutting themes were uncovered. Additional, cross-cutting recommendations are included in Section IV of this report.

Based on a review of information available regarding DMC at each of the juvenile justice system decision points, county profile data, youth interview data and focus group results, recommendations to address DMC in LaPorte County include:

1. County versus city led juvenile justice reform efforts. LaPorte County has **strong** leadership in the juvenile court system. The LaPorte County juvenile court system has made great strides in juvenile justice reform efforts. In order to improve the possibility of success for future juvenile justice reform efforts, the separation between the cities of La Porte and Michigan City will need to be addressed. For example, currently there are two separate juvenile probation departments. On the one hand, this could be beneficial since focus group participants were able to identify a myriad of differences between La Porte and Michigan City. On the other hand, this separation of functions can cause difficulty when implementing juvenile justice reform efforts. For instance, multiplication of leadership can be difficult when reforming probation practices. A larger combined agency will be able to leverage additional internal and community resources as well as request for assistance from the state. As an additional example, JDAI is a county, not city, run effort. It is a highly data-driven process and data is reported on a county level. These issues are best addressed prior to initiation of further juvenile justice reform efforts. Thus, it is recommended that LaPorte County consider ways to consolidate efforts in departments across the juvenile justice system to best build a solid foundation for juvenile justice reform.
2. DMC task force recommendations. A common recommendation for all sites is a creation of a DMC task force. In addition to the development of the task force, there are several specific recommendations for LaPorte County.
  - a. Juvenile justice cultural change. Divisions between the cities of LaPorte and Michigan City are negatively impacting justice system processing in general, and kids in particular. A broad based coalition of community and system partners are



needed. It is recommended that the task force have co-chairs. Specifically, it is recommended that the Superior Court Judge Alevizos co-chair the task force with the Michigan City Chief of Police and/ or an influential religious leader from Michigan City. Having co-chairs that are strong reform leaders in the community could act as a bridge between LaPorte in Michigan City. Additionally, efforts to build bridges between Michigan City police, probation and schools with LaPorte police, probation and schools, must happen before enacting further significant juvenile justice reform (e.g. JDAI and DMC).

- b. Task force participants. It was evident from the focus groups that LaPorte County has strong leadership in the justice system, community service providers, and churches. However, there is a difficulty galvanizing these individuals into common efforts. Thus, the leadership of the task force is encouraged to utilize this broad-based of community leaders to populate the task force. Additionally, parent and youth representatives should be members of the task force.
3. Drug treatment. A major concern of LaPorte County participants was the lack of adolescent drug treatment programs in the county. This lack of service was felt to specifically impact the most vulnerable youth in the county. Additionally, focus group participants identified the lack of residential drug treatment, which is concerning given the increased rate of heroin use and drug overdose in LaPorte County. It is recommended that juvenile justice leaders in LaPorte County contact seasoned experts at ICJI as well as the Indiana State Department of Mental Health and Addictions (DMHA) to explore treatment options as well as possible funding options for pilot programs.
4. Functional Family Therapy (FFT). Participants identified the need for increased evidence-based practice for juvenile justice involved youth. This, again, was an issue that was felt to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable youth in LaPorte County. Functional Family Therapy was a specific evidence-based practice that was highlighted as a need. There are currently no FFT providers in the county and many juvenile justice personnel as well as treatment professionals were interested in providing this evidence-based treatment for juvenile justice involved youth. It is recommended that juvenile justice leaders in LaPorte County consult with either state agencies (i.e. ICJI and DMHA)

or juvenile justice advocacy groups (i.e. Indiana Juvenile Justice Task Force) to identify possible providers and the funding needed to train community mental health staff in FFT.

5. Diversion. LaPorte County participants emphasized that diversion opportunities were limited for juvenile justice involved youth. It is recommended that evidence-based practice for juvenile justice diversion be explored for LaPorte County.

## Vanderburgh County

Vanderburgh County has the tenth largest juvenile (age 10 to 17) population in the state, and proportionally, the juvenile minority population is the tenth largest in the state. As of 2009, 19.1% of the juveniles in that age group were members of a racial or ethnic minority. Table V1 presents summary data on the race and ethnicity of youth ages 10 through 17 in the county.

Race/Ethnicity	Total		Females		Males	
	Vanderburgh	Indiana	Vanderburgh	Indiana	Vanderburgh	Indiana
<b>Juvenile Population</b>	<b>17,104</b>	<b>730,177</b>	<b>8,363</b>	<b>355,588</b>	<b>8,741</b>	<b>374,589</b>
White	80.9%	78.2%	80.2%	78.2%	81.5%	78.3%
Black	14.8%	12.3%	15.1%	12.3%	14.6%	12.3%
American Indian	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	1.6%	1.0%	1.5%
Hispanic, of any race	2.8%	7.6%	2.9%	7.6%	2.7%	7.6%

### Child Indicator Data

Vanderburgh County's public high school graduation rate is 84.1%, which is very close to that of the state. The rate of delinquency case filings is 15 per every 1000 youth, which is the lowest of the three counties but higher than the state as a whole. The percentage of children in poverty in Vanderburgh County is 25.1%, which is higher than in the state as a whole. At 8.7%, the unemployment rate in Vanderburgh County is lowest of the three counties and lower than the state unemployment rate. Vanderburgh County has the highest drug violation rate; at 10.5, it is almost triple the rate in LaPorte County and, more than double the rates in Allen County and the state of Indiana.

	Vanderburgh	Indiana
<b>Total Child Population<sup>45</sup></b>	<b>38,778</b>	<b>1,589,365</b>
% of Children in Poverty (2010)	25.1%	21.6%
Annual Average Unemployment Rate (2010)	8.7%	10.2%
Teen Birth Rate per 1,000 females, 15-17 (2008)	19.2	20.5
Child Abuse/Neglect rate per 1,000 children (2010)	22.7	14.5
# of Juveniles Committed to the DOC (2010)	55	1,008
# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings (2010)	581	20,585

<sup>44</sup> Puzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2010). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2009." Online. Available: <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>

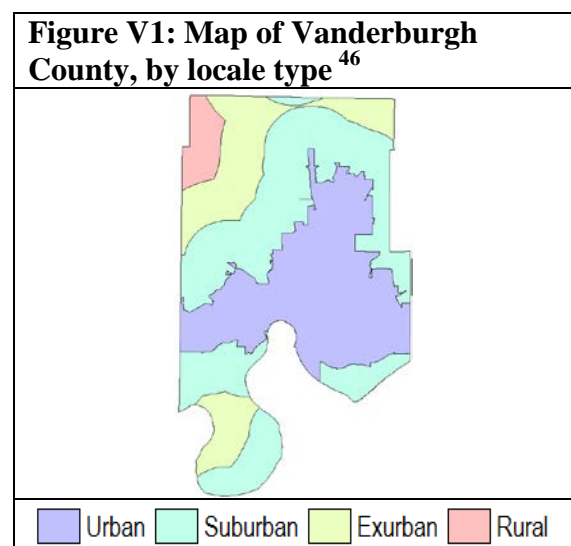
<sup>45</sup> This table uses population data for all youth in the state (age 0 through 17).

# of Juvenile Delinquency Case Filings per 1000 youth	15.0	13.0
# of Juvenile Status Case Filings (2010)	92	4,586
# of Juvenile Status Case Filings per 1000 youth	2.4	2.9
Public High School Graduation Rate (2010)	84.1%	84.5%
Total Drug Violations (2009)	1,849	30,254
Total Drug Violations Rate (2009)	10.3	4.5

### Population Distribution

Over one-third of Vanderburgh County is urban. The northwest corner of the county is rural, and the remainder is suburban or exurban. The Census Bureau defines an urban area as a “densely settle core of census tracts and/or census blocks that meet minimum population density (1000 ppsm), along with contiguous territory containing nonresidential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settle territory with the densely settled core.”<sup>47</sup> Suburban is defined as areas within 2.5 miles of urban boundaries, Exurban as areas within 2.5 miles of suburban boundaries, and Rural as areas beyond exurban boundaries (i.e., everything else). Table V3 presents distribution of urban, suburban, exurban, and rural land area in Vanderburgh County. Figure V1 provides a county mapping of the distribution of land area for Vanderburgh County, by locale type.

	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>235.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Urban	83.6	35.5%
Suburban	98.5	41.8%
Exurban	43.6	18.5%
Rural	9.7	4.1%



<sup>46</sup> Source: Created 5/30/2012 by Bill Newby ([wnewby@iupui.edu](mailto:wnewby@iupui.edu)); IU Public Policy Institute

<sup>47</sup> “Urban Area Criteria for the 2010 Census; Notice.” *Federal Register* 76:164 (24 August 2011) p. 53030.

Table V4 displays the RRI for each decision point in Vanderburgh County for the years 2005 - 2009. Consistent with the literature on DMC, disproportionality in Vanderburgh County was the most pronounced among African American youth. The disproportionality was highest for African American youth at referral, secure confinement, and waiver to adult court. Specifically, African American youth were referred to juvenile court over four times as often, waived to adult court more than twice as often, and placed in a juvenile correctional facility at disposition 1.76 times as often.

<b>Table V4: 2005 – 2009 Relative Rate Index, Vanderburgh County</b>							
	Black or African-American	Hispanic or Latino	Asian	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other/Mixed	All Minorities
2. Juvenile Arrests	--	--	--	*	*	*	--
3. Refer to Juvenile Court	<b>4.39</b>	<b>0.29</b>	**	*	*	*	<b>2.79</b>
4. Cases Diverted	<b>0.93</b>	**	**	*	*	*	<b>0.94</b>
5. Cases Involving Secure Detention	<b>1.29</b>	**	**	*	*	*	<b>1.29</b>
6. Cases Petitioned	<b>1.07</b>	**	**	*	*	*	<b>1.07</b>
7. Cases Resulting in Delinquent Findings	0.97	**	**	*	*	*	0.96
8. Cases Resulting in Probation Placement	0.94	**	**	*	*	*	0.94
9. Cases Resulting in Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities	<b>1.76</b>	**	**	*	*	*	<b>1.74</b>
10. Cases Transferred to Adult Court	<b>2.24</b>	**	**	*	*	*	<b>2.22</b>
Key							
Statistically significant results				<b>Bold font</b>			
Results that are not statistically significant				Regular font			
Group is less than 1% of the youth population				*			
Insufficient number of cases for analysis				**			
Missing data for some element of the calculation				***			

Table V5 presents the results of the logistic regression analysis of Vanderburgh County’s DMC data. The analysis indicates that even when sex, age, race, and offense level (whether or not it was a felony) are considered, nonwhite youth are still more likely to be placed in secure detention, to have a petition filed, to be waived to adult court, and to receive a disposition of secure confinement in a juvenile correctional facility. They were also less likely to be placed in an informal diversion program. Specifically they were 1.532 times more likely to be placed in secure detention, 1.198 times more likely to have a petition filed, 3.591 times more likely to be waived to adult court, and 1.951 times more likely to be sent to a juvenile correctional facility upon disposition. They were .836 times as likely to be diverted. Looking at this another way, white youth were 1.2 times more likely to be diverted from juvenile court. There were no

statistically significant differences between white and nonwhite youth regarding adjudication and formal probation.

<b>Table V5: Vanderburgh County Logistic Regression (n = 5,468)</b>							
Decision point	Diverted	Detention	Petition	Waived	Adjudicated	Probation	DOC
Independent Variable							
NONWHITE	<b>0.836</b>	<b>1.532</b>	<b>1.198</b>	<b>3.591</b>	1.091	0.949	<b>1.951</b>
FEMALE	<b>1.689</b>	<b>0.595</b>	<b>0.592</b>	*	<b>0.637</b>	<b>0.778</b>	<b>0.430</b>
AGE	<b>0.907</b>	<b>1.140</b>	<b>1.104</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>1.086</b>	0.997	<b>1.155</b>
FELONY	<b>0.518</b>	<b>2.728</b>	<b>1.926</b>	<b>6.521</b>	<b>1.807</b>	<b>1.382</b>	<b>2.330</b>
* Excluded from the model because there were no girls who were waived.							

### Youth Interviews

The youth interviews were designed to assess the experiences of juvenile justice system-involved youth in their home, school, and community, as well as their experience within the juvenile justice system. The results of these interviews are used to identify trends specific to Vanderburgh County in an effort to identify possible causes of disproportionality and opportunities for intervention. The results of the interviews with youth in Vanderburgh County are presented in Table V6. The results are compared between white and nonwhite youth and instances where the differences are statistically significant are displayed in bold. The interview results were also compared between youth who were interviewed in detention and youth who were interviewed in probation. Instances where these differences are statistically significant will also be displayed in bold.

<b>Table V6: Vanderburgh County Youth Interview Results</b>				
	Race Comparison		Setting Comparison	
	White	Minority	Detention	Probation
Sample Size (Total = 42)	N = 21	N = 21	N = 9	N = 33
Perceived Discrimination (higher scores indicated greater discrimination)				
Police	4.6	4.3	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Detention Staff	1.9	1.4	2.9	1.3
Public Defender	1.2	0.9	1.5	1.0
Prosecutor	2.1	1.3	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Judge	2.3	1.9	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Probation Officer	1.5	0.7	<b>3.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>
Procedural Injustice (higher scores indicate more negative perceptions)	35.2	35.4	<b>44.8</b>	<b>32.7</b>
Family Affluence Scale	3.2	4.0	3.1	3.8
MacArthur Subjective Social Status	8.7	9.4	7.8	9.4
Family	5.1	4.9	1.3	5.2
Adolescent	3.6	4.5	3.4	4.2
Neighborhood/Community Factors				
Sense of Safety	19.5	18.8	18.8	19.2
Neighborhood Disorganization	10.0	10.9	9.9	10.6
Collective Efficacy	31.1	30.0	29.3	30.9
Social Control	14.8	14.2	13.8	14.7
Social Cohesion	16.4	15.8	15.6	16.2
Ethnic Socialization	19.7	21.4	<b>24.7</b>	<b>19.4</b>
Cultural Socialization	9.0	8.9	<b>11.0</b>	<b>8.4</b>
Preparation for Bias	<b>7.8</b>	<b>9.8</b>	10.0	8.4
Promotion of Mistrust	2.9	2.8	<b>3.7</b>	<b>2.6</b>
Self-Reported Delinquency	22.1	18.5	22.4	19.7
Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency	23.5	23.8	25.8	23.1
Physical Aggression	9.5	10.0	11.6	9.3
Non-Physical Aggression	7.0	6.6	7.2	6.7
Relational Aggression	7.0	7.1	7.0	7.1

Forty-two justice-involved youth participated, with 33 recruited through the probation department and 9 recruited from the Youth Care Center. Thirteen of our participants were female and 29 were male. Twenty-one were White, non-Hispanic and 21 were racial/ethnic minorities.

A measure of Perceived Discrimination was administered to measure levels of perceived discrimination at different points of penetration of the juvenile justice system; through contact with police, detention staff, public defender, prosecutor, judge/magistrate, and probation. We first asked the participants to indicate individuals in juvenile justice they interacted with, and then they were asked a series of questions about their interactions with those individuals.

We anticipated that there would be differing levels of perceived discrimination based on the roles that employees in each system play; for instance, based on the research literature, we expected police to be perceived as more discriminatory than public defenders due to the nature of the respective professions. In the context of DMC, we can begin to understand, from the youth's perception, at which points within the juvenile justice system they're experiencing more or less discrimination. In sum, we expected this measure of Perceived Discrimination to inform if "Differential Processing" is occurring or whether "Policies with Disproportionate Impact" are in place at each county. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but detained youth reported higher levels of perceived discrimination by police, the prosecutor, the judge, and probation.

Procedural Justice was selected to understand the roots of DMC because it allows participants to rate their perceptions of fairness throughout the court process. Inclusion of such a measure allows us to understand if there are differential rates of perceived procedural justice between White and minority participants. A measure of Procedural Justice may also inform us about whether "Differential Processing" is occurring within a county. Again, there were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but detained youth reported higher levels of procedural injustice than probation youth.

We included two measures of socioeconomic status: the Family Affluence Scale and the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status. Socioeconomic status (SES) is relevant to DMC because SES is related to the quality and safety of neighborhoods as well as family factors associated with crime. For instance, lower SES families may be less able to provide parental supervision, thus placing their children at higher risk for delinquent behavior. SES also may be related to "Programming Access/Eligibility" as lower SES families are less likely to have access to needed services. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.



We included two measures of neighborhood factors: Neighborhood Disorganization and Collective Efficacy. Neighborhood factors are associated with crime rates and police patrol patterns. Since more disorganized neighborhoods with lower levels of collective efficacy among neighbors are associated with a greater police presence, we sought to understand if neighborhoods where participants lived differed by race, as well as between probation and detained youth. Again, there were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention.

Ethnic Socialization is a measure which asks participants about what level of socialization they have been exposed to in their family as it relates to their race/ethnicity. Specifically, this measure assesses if parents have prepared youth for bias and if there is a promotion of mistrust of others, as it relates to race. A measure of Ethnic Socialization was selected to identify if there were any “Specific Risk Factors” correlated with race or ethnicity which may lead to differential offending. There were no differences between White, non-Hispanic youth and minority youth for overall levels of Ethnic Socialization. However, minority youth did report significantly higher levels of Preparation for Bias. The importance of this difference will be discussed in focus group section of the report under Differential Processing. There were no statistically significant differences between white and minority youth, but Detained youth reported higher levels of ethnic socialization, including the cultural socialization subscale and the promotion of mistrust subscale.

We included two self-report measures which assessed Delinquency and Aggressive Problem Behaviors. We wanted to understand if minority youth are experiencing rates of DMC due to “Differential Behavior”; that is, do minority youth commit more severe crimes or at a higher rate? If so, this may be an explanation for DMC occurring in that jurisdiction. There were not statistically significant differences between white and minority youth or between youth on probation and youth in detention in terms of self-reported delinquent behavior.

## Stakeholder Focus Groups

The purpose of focus groups was to better understand underlying processes that may contribute to disproportionate minority contact in these jurisdictions. Specifically, each focus group examined county specific DMC data (for the years 2005-2009) and discussed problems and processes that group participants believe may have led to the disproportionality. The major research questions underlying the focus group study were:

- What do juvenile justice practitioners believe are the causes of DMC in Vanderburgh County?
- What do these same practitioners believe can be done to stop or significantly lower DMC in Vanderburgh County?
- Are there major differences between the various focus groups in their beliefs about how to stop or reduce DMC?

The following chapter includes a discussion of the focus group method employed and Vanderburgh County results. What is learned from this study can be used by leaders in the county to develop plans aimed at reducing disproportionate minority contact in the jurisdiction.

### Focus Group Access & Sample

*Stakeholder Meetings.* In late June 2012, members of the DMC research team met with the Vanderburgh County Superior Court Judge and a representative of the Juvenile Probation Department, Vanderburgh County Superior Court to explain the purposes of the study, agree on a study plan, develop a process to implement the study plan, and identify a potential list of invitees for the focus groups.

*Participants.* The invitation to participate in the focus groups was sent the Superior Court Judge's office. Once the judge approved the request for participation, the invitations were sent. RSVPs were sent directly to Community Solutions, Inc. so that their staff could manage study logistics.

Focus groups were convened to acquire in-depth, qualitative information about the workings of the local juvenile justice system and learn why local practitioners believe that DMC exists in their jurisdiction. Focus groups were conducted with the following justice practitioners:

- Juvenile Judges and Magistrates
- Juvenile Prosecutors and Public Defenders
- Juvenile Probation and Detention Staff
- Police and School Resources Officers
- School Representatives
- Community Service Providers

First, all juvenile judges/ magistrates, prosecutors and public defenders were invited to participate. The research team then developed a list of individuals holding the rank of supervisor, or below, to participate in the probation/ detention, police, school representatives, and community service provider focus groups. Table V7 displays the number of individuals initially invited, the number who agreed to attend and the number percentage of individuals that actually participated in the focus groups on August 31, 2012 in Vanderburgh County.

	<b># Invited</b>	<b># RSVP'd</b>	<b># Participated</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
<b>Judges/Magistrates</b>	2	2	2	100%
<b>Prosecutors/Public Defender</b>	5	4	4	80%
<b>Probation/ Detention</b>	8	6	5	62.5%
<b>Police</b>	7	5	5	71.4%
<b>Schools</b>	9	4	2*	22.2%
<b>Community Service Providers</b>	7	7	6	85.7%
<b>Total</b>	38	28	24	63%

\*Only one participant was able to be present for the entire duration of the discussion.

### Focus Group Procedures

All of the focus groups were conducted on August 31, 2012, during regular business hours at the juvenile court and a local library in Vanderburgh County. Participation in the focus group was strictly voluntary. After the purpose and objectives of the study were explained and it is was clear that everyone was willing to participate, subjects completed a brief demographic questionnaire. Subjects were then assigned aliases and instructed to only refer to themselves or others by their aliases.

Three members of the research team, all experienced focus group facilitators, conducted a total of six focus groups, each lasting 1 to 1 ½ hours. The facilitators employed an informal discussion method—using a semi-structured interview schedule. The interview schedules were

dependent on the makeup of the group (i.e., judges/ magistrates, prosecutors/ public defenders, probation/ detention, police, school personnel, and community service providers).

As seen in Table V7, the overall response rate (based on the number of initial invites made and the number of individuals who were able to participate in their respective focus groups) was strong at 63%. The response rate in each focus group type was also quite high, the exception being the schools (22%). Two participants from area schools started the focus group, but only one was able to stay for the entire discussion. It should be noted that the low participation among this group was understandable, as a major security event occurred just prior to the focus group, so many of the participants had to stay at their work locations.

### Focus Group Data Collection & Analysis

Every focus group was recorded using small hand-held digital recorders. Additionally, (beyond the facilitator) two researchers were present during every focus group to take detailed notes on laptops. Analyzing focus groups takes a number of steps. Beyond developing an open coding scheme and collecting data along a schematic, a qualitative researcher also considers not only the answers offered by the subjects, but the words chosen, the context in which they were said, the internal consistency of the discussion, the frequency, extensiveness, specificity and intensity of comments, and what was not being said during the discussions. To aide in the analysis, our research team took time to debrief after all focus groups were completed at each site. Of interest during the debriefings were issues like the flow of the groups, particular themes that stood out during the sessions, and any group dynamics or relational issues that might have influenced group discussions. These issues were noted and used later during the analysis of the transcripts.

Content and narrative analyses on the focus group transcripts and research team notes were performed. Open coding techniques borrowed from Grounded Theory<sup>48</sup> were used to identify key themes (also known as original categories). While some qualitative researchers keep raw counts of the number of times an issue is raised, no raw counts are provided in this report. Unfortunately, raw counts can offer inaccurate representations of the various discussions that take place. Therefore, it was decided against reporting raw counts as it was not always clear

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<sup>48</sup> We should note here that while we borrowed an approach from Strauss and Corbin's (1998) grounded theory; we did not exercise their full grounded theory approach as the data collected did not allow for a more detailed analysis. In Grounded Theory, the purpose of coding is to offer the researcher a way to identify and describe phenomena found in their data.

in the notes whether a new person was stating a new idea or the same person was clarifying a previous comment. Moreover, counts are not necessary for this report as it is merely attempting to identify which reasons the various constituents identified as causing DMC.

After the open coding was complete, a framework was needed to make sense of what was found. Therefore, the understood possible causes of DMC in Vanderburgh County were mapped against what OJJDP refers to as *Mechanisms Leading to DMC*.<sup>49</sup> These mechanisms are what OJJDP has identified (from the extent literature) as the possible explanations for the existence of DMC in juvenile justice systems. Interestingly, there was much parity between the subjects' perceptions of why DMC occurs in Vanderburgh County and the mechanisms identified by OJJDP. In the results section, a discussion of focus group participant demographics by group type and what the participants believe cause DMC in Vanderburgh County is presented. Recommendations are offered to address DMC that are specific to Vanderburgh County, and others that are applicable to all of the counties participating in the study.

#### Limitations of the Focus Group Data

All studies produce data that is limited in some way. The nature of the focus group method itself can introduce limits. For example, the method does not require all participants in a group to answer each question individually. Participants were advised that they can refrain from answering any questions they do not wish to answer. As such, focus group data are likely incomplete. For example, the findings presented below which discuss why there is DMC and what should be done about it was developed from verbal responses provided to direct questions or as comments about others' responses to direct questions. All instances where others in the room may have non-verbally agreed were not systematically captured. Therefore, the results discussed below are a conservative representation of the discussion that took place. If a comment was made that seemed to be irrelevant to the discussion, it was not included in the findings.

One final concern should be raised about focus group studies. The data collected in focus groups can be vulnerable to a process referred to as group think. Group think occurs when one or more subjects endeavor to regulate the discussion or force others to censor their comments based

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<sup>49</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

on what the regulator(s) share.<sup>50</sup> Sometimes, participants choose (on their own), to adapt their statements according to what they believe is the majority opinion—even when no one is exerting external pressure to do so<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, participants of focus groups who work together or who serve as volunteers together run the risk of group think because they belong to a cohesive group that may wish to present a consensus view on sensitive topics<sup>52</sup> In order to protect against group think, the facilitator must be skillful at identifying when group think occurs and adroit at interrupting it, or the quality of the data may be doubtful (Kleiber, 2004).<sup>53</sup> To guard against group think, each facilitator in this study followed a script that instructed them to address the issue up front with participants by defining what group think is and how destructive it could be to the quality of the information to be collected. Additionally, the facilitators worked with their groups by building group norms and operating rules, took time to build rapport with the participants before asking substantive questions, and reminded participants not only about how important their individual opinions were to the study, but that in the end, the information gathered would be used to help their jurisdiction improve system functioning and reduce DMC.

### Summary of Focus Group Results

The research team met with a total of 24 local stakeholders in six focus groups: two judges, five probation officers and detention staff, four prosecutors and public defenders, five police officers, two representatives from area schools, and six community service providers from the Vanderburgh County Community. Refer to Table V8 to see the specific demographic information for each of the focus groups.

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<sup>50</sup> Janis, I.L. (1982) *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.; Janis, I.L. (1982) *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and fiascos*. (2nd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin

<sup>53</sup> Kleiber, P.B. (2004). Focus groups: More than a method of qualitative inquiry, Pp. 87-102. In DeMarrais, K. & Lapan, S. (Eds.) *Foundations of Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

	<b>Judge/ Magistrates (n=2)</b>	<b>Probation/ Detention (n=5)</b>	<b>Prosecutors/ Public Defenders (n=4)</b>	<b>Police (n=5)</b>	<b>School (n=2)</b>	<b>Community Service Providers (n=6)</b>
<b>Age range:</b>	53	29 – 70	33 – 63	40 – 52	51 – 59	31 – 64
<b>Average age:</b>	53	43	54	46	55	48
<b>Sex: Male</b>	50%	40%	75%	100%	100%	16.7%
<b>Female</b>	50%	60%	25%	0%	0%	83.3%
<b>Race: White</b>	100%	40%	100%	100%	50%	83.3%
<b>Nonwhite</b>	0%	60%	0%	0%	50%	16.7%
<b>Highest education level:</b>						
<b>HS/GED</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Some college</b>	0%	20%	0%	20%	0%	16.7%
<b>Associate’s degree</b>	0%	20%	0%	40%	0%	0%
<b>Bachelor’s degree</b>	0%	20%	0%	40%	50%	16.7%
<b>Master’s degree</b>	0%	40%	0%	0%	50%	50%
<b>PhD</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16.7%
<b>JD</b>	100%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Other:</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Average # of years working with youth:</b>	30	19	12	14	20	21

There were wide ranges in age across the six focus groups; however, the youngest participant was 29 years old (a member of the Probation/Detention staff), and the oldest was 70 years old (also a member of the Probation/Detention group). A slight majority (58%) of the focus group participants were male. Female participants were mostly concentrated in two groups—the Probation/Detention staff and Community Service Providers; however, one magistrate and one prosecutor were also female.

As one would expect given the professions that were targeted to participate in this study, our sample reported high levels of educational attainment; all 24 indicated that they had completed at least some college. One-fifth of the participants had earned at least a bachelor’s degree and one-quarter had earned a master’s degree. Additionally, one of the community service providers earned a PhD, and 25% of the participants had been awarded law degrees.

Focus groups participants were asked to indicate their racial/ethnic identity. As Table V8 indicates, racial and ethnic identity was broken into two categories (white and non-white). The same was done with the surveys of probation and detention youth which were reported on above. The vast majority of the juvenile justice practitioners (79%) self-identified as white, and that proportion is even greater in four of the groups. Specifically, 100% of the Judge/ Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and Police and 83% of the Community Service Providers

identified as white. Non-white participants (n=5), which account for 21% of the sample, were clustered in the Probation/Detention group, and one participated in the School group and one in the Service Provider group.

An interesting issue raised in the focus groups was the disconnect that many of the participants felt between themselves and the youth they serve. Specifically, they explained that the youths' culture—the way they look, act, and live—is very different from theirs, which they believe can make it difficult to adequately address their clients' needs. Differences in race/ethnicity and class account for much of the feelings of disconnectedness that were offered. At first glance, there seems to be some evidence of distinct differences in the racial and ethnic identities of practitioners and their clients. Youth of color account for 19% of the child population in Vanderburgh County; 24 % of the probation and detained youth interviewed self-identified as African American; and nearly 5% are of Hispanic heritage. Yet, 100% of Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and Police and 83% of the Community Service Providers who participated in the study—and have much influence over case initiation and processing—self identified as Caucasian. The Probation/Detention group was the only group for which the proportion of non-white staff was greater than white staff. The fact that the overwhelming majority of the staff is white does NOT explain why DMC occurs in Vanderburgh County. It simply supports what many of the study participants said when they indicated that they look different and come from different backgrounds than those they serve.

### Focus Group Findings

To try to understand why DMC occurred in Vanderburgh County, focus group members were asked several questions about their perceptions about the juvenile justice system in their county and the day-to-day work in their professional setting. In the following section, the main themes that were expressed during the focus groups are presented.

As previously discussed, DMC was not found at every decision point in Vanderburgh County. Specifically, the analysis showed that non-white youth were more likely to be placed in secure detention; have a petition filed; and be waived to the adult court; receive a disposition of secure confinement in a juvenile correctional facility and less likely to be placed in an informal diversion program in Vanderburgh County, even when age, gender, race and crime type (i.e., misdemeanor or felony) were held constant. This information was shared with each focus group, and members were asked to generate possible explanations for why DMC occurred at these



decision points in their county. Their explanations are presented below as they relate to OJJDP's *Mechanisms Leading to Delinquency*. The mechanisms that were determined to likely lead to DMC in Vanderburgh County include: Differential Behavior, Mobility Effects, Indirect Effects, Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Treatment, Differential Processing/Decision Making, Justice by Geography, Legislation/Policies/Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact, and Accumulated Disadvantage.

### Differential Behavior

The argument that minority youth participate in behavior that is different than their white counterparts has been offered as one mechanism that leads to DMC. Research is mixed about whether this is, in fact, the major determinant of DMC. Nevertheless, it is often cited as an explanation for DMC by many juvenile justice practitioners. Differential Behavior includes three categories: *Serious Offenses* (i.e., gang involvement and gang crime, drug use and sales, guns, and violence resulting in serious injuries); *Involvement in Delinquency at an Early Age*; and *Involvement in Other Justice Systems* (e.g., child welfare).

In Vanderburgh County, the belief that minority youth were often involved in more serious crimes than their white counterparts, which may, in part, explain the more serious consequences they face, was expressed in all six of the focus groups (i.e., Police, Community Service Providers, School Personnel, Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and Probation/Detention). Specific claims about differential offending are included below.

*Rising gang crime.* Individuals in the Prosecutors/Public Defenders focus group asserted their belief that more kids are getting involved in gangs, that gang-related crime is on the rise, and that these increases are more common among youth of color. Moreover, a few of the individuals in this group acknowledged the rigidity with which the courts deal with gang crime. “*If we show gang influence, the court takes that seriously.*” While another group member suggested that “*gangs are a hard line to beat because it’s engrained. Diversion is not going to be an option for a gang-related offense.*” Further still, another group member confirmed that “*the judges’ stance is: if you are part of a gang, we send you away.*” If these officers of the court are correct about the increases in gang-related crime, who is involved with gang-related crime, and how seriously the bench takes gang involvement—and there is no reason to believe that they are all wrong—then increases in gang-related activity in the county (particularly in minority communities) will intensify DMC in the county.

*Seriousness of current offense & prior criminal history.* Individuals from the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and the Probation/Detention groups explained how influential the seriousness of the instant offense is and how sophisticated a juvenile's prior record is in the likelihood of their being waived to the criminal courts or receiving a commitment to DOC. A number of these individuals claimed that if the data are correct and minority youth are being waived and sent to DOC more than whites, then they must be committing more serious offenses and have more lengthy criminal histories.

*Disciplinary referrals.* During the School Personnel group, the claim was made that youth of color receive more disciplinary referrals at school "*because they act different and are being treated more harshly for it,*" meaning that they are behaving in ways that do not conform to white, middle class standards. Moreover, because it is not uncommon for schools to "*dump their behavior problems on the court,*" as someone from the court acknowledged, then these referrals may impact DMC in Vanderburgh County.

#### Mobility Effects: Immigration

One mechanism that explains DMC deals with new immigrants. It stands to reason that many new immigrants, or parents of new immigrants, may be unable to speak English. If the parents of immigrant youth cannot communicate with local authorities about their child's case, a number of negative consequences can result. In particular, these youth may be less likely to be diverted, face longer detentions holds, or lose community-programs/dispositions (e.g., probation) or other services in lieu of out of home placement, etc. The Probation/Detention focus group discussed the challenges Vanderburgh County has been dealing with related to the increased immigration of Spanish-speaking families without access to adequate interpreter resources.

#### Indirect Effects

This DMC mechanism represents the broader social context of the relationship between race and ethnicity and a host of factors that have been shown to be associated with delinquency. For example, the impact of race and ethnicity may be *indirectly* affected by secondary factors, such as social economic status, educational achievement, familial structure, living situation, and other risk factors associated with increased crime and delinquency. According to the DMC

Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition<sup>54</sup>, indirect effects can be broken into three categories: Specific Risk Factors, Programming Access/Eligibility, and Decision-Making Factors.

#### Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors

A number of factors believed to be appropriately identified under the Specific Risk Factor category were identified, for example, a specific risk factor referred to as the *Intersection of Socio Economic Status (SES) & Race*. This relationship was so interconnected that it was often confusing to many. In early rounds of coding, numerous people were identified in all three counties who seemed to be using the terms ‘race’ and ‘SES’ synonymously.

Additionally, a similar concept (stated two different ways) quickly began being substituted for the intersection of SES and race. This new concept was referred to as “culture” or “culture of poverty” which will be discussed in further detail in later sections.

The notion of the intersection of *SES & Race* was discussed in all six focus groups. Additionally, both of the Judges/Magistrates group participants spent some time discussing how SES can be further impacted by family structure, educational achievement, and race. They explained that many of the kids who:

*“...come before the bench are poor...and undereducated. That’s huge. The huge majority of our kids are way behind in school. They are just lost, third to fifth grade reading ability. They have failed the majority of their classes for the last few years. We also see a lot of broken homes or homes that were never intact to be broken. For the vast majority, it’s moms or grandmothers [with whom they live], lots of grandmothers. [Not having a father,] it’s huge. Years ago, there were studies about how when kids become 17, 18, the relationship with mom changes – they become the man of the house. That age is going down, especially in poorer neighborhoods or the black community. That age is going down to 15 or so. They are men, so they act like men.”*

Much like the Judges/Magistrates group, many others in the various groups wanted to make it clear that they did not think that being of a particular race is the problem. They were adamant that everyone understand that “...it is more an SES issue, than a race issue.”

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<sup>54</sup> Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

Additional ideas about how other Indirect Effects impact DMC are discussed below.

*SES and current economic trends.* This idea suggests that poor people have a myriad of related issues (e.g., family strife, bills, not enough money to cover living expenses) which force parents (usually single-mothers) to work several jobs to put food on the table and provide homes for their families. This can become a problem because it inadvertently results in a lack of supervision and inconsistent discipline of minor children. In essence, kids that are parts of these family structures are often forced to “raise themselves.” *SES and current economic trends* was a common theme in the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Probation/Detention, School Personnel, and Community Service Providers groups.

SES, as it relates to parents working outside of the home and not being around to bail their kids out literally (by picking them up at detention) and figuratively (by paying the fees for their alcohol diversion classes), was brought up several times in the Service Provider group. Specifically, a service provider argued:

*“It falls into the same socioeconomic class. White kids caught drinking at a party and who have to take the class are generally in a higher [socioeconomic] class, and their parents are involved. When I get kids from lower [socioeconomic] status, it’s more of an issue. I wouldn’t say that black, Hispanic, etc. fail any more than white kids when I take socioeconomic status out of it. The commonalities between kids who fail are those that are from lower socioeconomic status, from a broken home, or there’s no parental involvement.”*

*Cultural influences & peer pressure.* This claim purports that these kids (minority youth) act badly because of the “*culture they live in.*” It is what they see every day. They learn it from their families, neighbors, friends, etc. Some referred to this as a CULTURE OF POVERTY. Regardless of how it was described, the consequences of cultural influences and peer pressure on juveniles and DMC were discussed in the Police, Community Service Providers, and Prosecutors/Public Defenders focus groups. One police officer explained how it works, “*In the middle school, I arrested a young Black student who was in his third fight in a week. He was polite, respectful with me. I asked him why [fight], and he said, ‘If I don’t fight when someone talks to me like I am punk, then it gets worse for me.’”* The officer wondered aloud how to change that mentality—this was a good kid and there was nothing he could do.

*Lack of cultural understanding.* Many participants in the Police, Service Provider, Judges/Magistrates, and School Personnel groups explained that they cannot relate to the juveniles and their families because they come from different cultures. It is this “*lack of understanding of the other*” that results in so much frustration and anger toward one another. This disconnect is demonstrated in the way minority youth communicate with and act toward figures of authority. Specifically, several participants described how African American youths’ communication can appear unnecessarily aggressive. One School focus group participant explained, “*People don’t understand the cultural differences, and they see it as being attacked. Blacks are more direct and people look at that they’re attacking you.*” The group went on to discuss how being unfamiliar with this form of communication can be overwhelming. In particular, one school official explained, “*...in our corporation, a large population of the teachers are white teachers, and they drive in from out of town; there are some that get it, but the majority don’t understand what these kids are going through, and then they turn them off.*” Another participant in the School group expressed that some of the white teachers may never understand these kids. “*They have a hard time separating how they grew up; they want to relate that to the kids they’re teaching, but they can’t do that.*”

#### Indirect Effects: Decision-making Factors

Many factors are considered by juvenile justice system actors when they make decisions about how to process youth through the system. For example, if a juvenile who is arrested lives at home with a grandmother, and she is in the hospital, then the arresting officer or detention center intake staff has to decide if they are willing to release the youth to another responsible adult or detain the youth. If this staff member has personal beliefs about what a family structure ought to be and decides to detain this youth because he does not live with his mother and father, or the jurisdiction has a policy against releasing the youth to anyone other than the legal guardian, then this DMC mechanism may come into play in the jurisdiction. The reason that these types of decision-making factors can impact DMC is that previous research indicates that minority youth are more likely to live in what some consider ‘non-traditional’ family structures. So, if decision-making factors like this disparately impact youth living in non-traditional families, then DMC can increase in the jurisdiction. The decision-making factors that are indirect effects are demographic and social risk factors that are associated with higher levels of

delinquency. Focus group comments related to decision-making factors centered on the family and household composition of system-involved youth are included below.

*Family structure, parental involvement, poor parenting, single-parented households, broken homes, etc.* By far, the most common ‘specific risk factor’ that surfaced during all of the focus groups (Police, Community Service Providers, Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Probation/Detention, and School Personnel) was related to a child’s home life. In fact, the structure of the family (e.g., single-mother household, divorce or whether the father was ever involved in the child’s life), how involved the parents are currently in the child’s life and case, and the poor parenting skills demonstrated by many parents were discussed in every single focus group. For example, many commented on how the lack of parental involvement can result in a child staying in detention longer or having to be placed outside the home.

Additionally, one police officer explained how a child on his own gets lured into trouble. *“Some of that is cultural, growing up in a single-family home where mom works 60-70 hours a week to provide a clean home. But she’s not there. Kids are running the street when she’s not home. They have to be hard, or the kids down the block will get them.”*

*Instability of living situations.* During the Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, and School Personnel groups, the concerns about children and unstable living arrangements were discussed. In fact, individuals in each of these groups noted how traumatizing it can be for young people to get *“bounced around from relative to relative—many kids are raised by grandparents.”* One school representative described some of the kids she works with, *“They are homeless, and couch surf to survive.”*

*Some parents do not want their children to come home.* A parent’s refusal to take custody of his or her child is particularly problematic and can serve as both a short-term and long-term specific risk factor, as well as an accumulated disadvantage (which will be discussed later). The serious negative impacts experienced by youth who cannot go home were explained by a member of the Prosecutors/ Public Defenders group:

*“It’s a cliché, but at the end of the day, your job is to do what is best for the kids, and most of the time, the parents don’t know or don’t care what that is...Some parents just don’t want their kids home for a certain period of time...I think it makes a big difference at the detention stage, and the judge is trying to decide*

*where to put them, and the parents says, 'I'm afraid of the kid,' or they prefer for them not to come home. Then they're [the child] probably looking at going to a group home."*

*Guilt by association.* Several participants discussed how kids get targets on them early because actors in the system know their families. For example, SROs may know a student's siblings because they were trouble makers. Or, a judge may have had a child's parents in court when the parents were juveniles. In either event, negative associations precede some kids. As one school administrator explained, *"There are certain names where their families have been in and out of trouble, so the kid is guilty by association."*

*Unprepared for education.* In five of the six focus groups (Police, Judges/Magistrates, Prosecutors/Public Defenders, Probation/Detention, and School Personnel), participants explained that many poor and minority children are not ready to begin kindergarten, and they are never really able to make up these deficits. *"It all goes downhill from there."* Some members of the groups argued that many poor and minority kids are way behind educationally and exhibit higher levels of frustration at school, which leads them to act out, talk back to teachers, and fight. A few insisted that this lack of attention to educational pursuits is not just a mantle worn by these kids or their families and communities. For example one individual asserted that the lack of preparation is a poverty culture issue, not necessarily a race issue. *"It's the culture. A lot of those folks don't put enough significance on education. There's not a push of much of anything. They're not motivated."* Another group member added to that statement by professing, *"It becomes a lifestyle, middle/upper class – we all have our lifestyles. Their lifestyle is school's not important. I can hang out and do this or that."*

### Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Intervention

*Access to detention alternatives,* As was the case in the other jurisdictions, Vanderburgh County had few alternatives to secure detention. The one alternative that was widely available, electronic monitoring with GPS, was only available to those that can afford a telephone land line. However, in Vanderburgh County, the Judge tries to work with the families:

*"They have to have a landline from the provider, but I will put kids on home detention without having the bracelet. They go on home detention, and then we have the parents notify us immediately, or they are in contempt. We have a deputy*

*officer who does home checks. We enter it into the police system if they are on home detention.”*

This option is a good one for families that have limited resources; however, it requires a parent that promises to participate in the child’s supervision, and for the numerous reasons detailed above, it does not help some of the very kids that need this option the most.

*Mental Health Services and DCS.* The lack of widely available mental health services in the county has been a problem for some time, but has become worse since HB 1001 and the “DCS takeover.” There were numerous statements about this issue. One focus group participant summarized the general discontent that exists in the county when it comes to mental health services, “...the lack of quality services, especially mental health services is a big problem. [They were] easier to get before the DCS change—[they were]...lacking before—[they are] worse now!” One community service provider complained that the issue goes beyond general services for youth. “Mental health service provision is the issue—kids aren’t getting what they need... Parents aren’t getting what they need.” A member of the Judges/Magistrates group concurred with this assessment and further extended the debate, explaining that the problem is not just a lack of services, but differential access. Specifically, the problem is a:

*“Lack of access to psychological or psychiatric health for adults and children. I think our county’s kind of turned into the community of the haves and the have-nots. It doesn’t fall along color lines; we have an equally poor white community. Leaders try to address gaps, but they aren’t able to. I see a big divide between black and white. It’s unfortunate.”*

Other views about access to mental health treatment and service provision, in general, are much more critical about the way these resources are currently administered. For example, one school administrator said, “Now they’ve taken the power from the judges to do what they need to do. Judge Niemeier used to have the power to send kids where they need to go, but now he has to ask DCS, and it’s BS.” Finally, a service provider and a participant in the School group commented about the DCS call line. “DCS -- Yeah you’re calling the call center. It might as well be automated, might as well be in Dubai.” And finally, “We’ve had instances where we’ve called and waited and waited and waited.”



*Residential drug treatment.* Members of the Prosecutors/Public Defenders and the Judges/Magistrates groups voiced the concern that youth in the county have no access to residential drug treatment. This is of growing concern as there is a perception that drug use is growing in certain segments. Another concern of the Probation/Detention group deals with the dearth of targeted training in their fields.

*Lack of culturally competent treatment service in the county.* There was a lot of agreement in the Probation/Detention group around the following statement:

*“There are a lot of services in this county, but it is not clear that minority youth relate well to them or get much out of them. Also, minority families are not as comfortable having outsiders come into their home and try to do programming with their families.”*

This same topic came up a few times in other groups, but the real interest in participating in this type of training was among the probation officers and the detention staff.

#### Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decision Making

The DMC Technical Assistance Manual describes this mechanism as it relates to decisions about eligibility for certain programs or processes (e.g., diversions). Additionally, it relates to whether decisions made about how to act (e.g., arrest, divert, detain) are made in a fundamentally fair way. And finally, it relates to whether any criteria that are applied to such decisions are structured in ways that might place some groups at a greater disadvantage than other groups.<sup>55</sup>

*Racism and discrimination.* Several issues that are related to differential processing were discussed in the focus groups. In its simplest form, differential processing can result from outright racism or discrimination. There were claims of racism in some of the groups. For example, one service provider explained:

*“We’ve come through a time in our history that people want to think racism is a thing of the past, or it’s just a few bigots. That’s bull crap. Take a look nationally at what’s going on. Police brutality charges are up tremendously since the 1990s.”*

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<sup>55</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this mechanism see: Leiber, M., Richetelli, D., and Feyerherm, W. (2009). Assessment. *DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. United State Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington D.C.

*Three percent or less of African American people over the age of 12 commit crimes. Forty percent are more likely to be arrested for the commission of that crime. If a 21 year old white and 21 year old black make the same offense, I [a white male] have a 50% better chance of going into probation or not going to DOC than the black offender.”*

While claims of flat out racism were rare, there was concern that some actions undertaken can end up being discriminatory or may be a result of cultural misunderstandings.

*Harsher treatment for youth of color.* Some of the school personnel and community service providers asserted that youth of color, particularly poor minority kids, are treated differently throughout the system (i.e., they are treated more harshly and have fewer resources to address their disparate treatment). In these discussions, no one had a clear idea about why this happens.

*Lack of respect for and distrust of authority.* Another major concern to all of the individuals who participated in the focus groups was the perceived lack of respect that minority youth have for persons in positions of authority—particularly the police. The groups acknowledged that if persons in positions of authority feel disrespected in their interactions with youth of color, the interactions can become negative and possibly end up in any number of negative outcomes (e.g., suspension, arrest, detention).

However, sometimes disrespect is in their ear of the beholder. A participant in the Judges/Magistrates group shared that what may appear to be disrespect may simply be a cry to be heard:

*“I had a case in court, and it was a black child. His mother was in court with him. He was arrested on disorderly. His mother was extremely angry, not toward one person, but in general. The child admitted the charge. We were getting to disposition, and she looked and said, “Doesn’t anyone want to know why he did this?” I didn’t know which way to go with this. I let her speak and asked why. She got to speak and explain her son’s actions. I listened and empathized. She felt like her son was being picked on in school, and the administration wasn’t listening or helping her son. Once you let her speak, she was a completely different person. All that rage was gone. I think it goes back to an inherent distrust of the system.*

*The school, liaison officers didn't do anything; the court wasn't going to do anything. If we could break that barrier of automatic distrust, it would really help."*

*Economics influences on decision making.* One particular example of how the resources of a family can, in a very concrete way, influence decisions and/or how decision-making criteria can be unfairly applied deals with the use of electronic monitoring (EM) as an alternative to detention. In the Judges/Magistrates and Prosecutors/Public Defenders groups, the reality that not everyone can be released on EM was discussed because not everyone can afford to pay for the installation of a land line or clear up old bills related to a previous land-based telephone.

### Justice by Geography

Justice by Geography (JbG) is a large category. We know from the literature that who you are (i.e., minority or majority) can often influence where you live (e.g., high crime, high poverty areas versus low crime suburbs) which can then influence how you are dealt with in the juvenile justice system. In part, the differential processing some youth may experience can be more about what county he is processed in over what is the most appropriate outcome. Additionally, case outcomes may have more to do with police practices in one city than how another law enforcement agency deals with youth in an unincorporated area of the county. Additionally, JbG could be related to whether a youth is processed in a mostly rural area versus a mostly urban area. Finally, differential processing can also result from differing attitudes about how to hold kids accountable and what resources are available in different neighborhoods in a city.

There are three JbG related issues in raised in Vanderburgh County that deserve mention: (a) where police patrol is saturated; (b) where gangs and drugs are located; and (c) relatively few minorities work in administrative positions in education or in basic jobs in treatment and service provision, case management and juvenile justice. These same or related issues also appear elsewhere under other mechanisms. While this might seem like an unnecessary duplication, we believe it speaks to the complex nature of DMC and how impactful these issues can be to both behavior of youth and system responses to that behavior (i.e., decision making).

*Where patrol is saturated.* According to participants in nearly all of the focus groups, the police are heavily concentrated in the parts of the county that are considered high crime.

Moreover, high crime areas are where a large majority of the county's poor people live. Further still, most of the minority youth in the county are poor, thus live in these high crime areas. Therefore, this calculus brings minority youth into contact with the police far more often than upper or middle class white youth. As such, the proximity of minority youth to the police may contribute to some of the disproportionality in referrals to the juvenile court. As one participant explained, *"Where the police patrol, where they are saturated—that is why minority kids have a lot of contact with police and get arrested more often."* Finally, when the Prosecutors/Public Defenders group was asked if they were surprised by the Vanderburgh-specific DMC data, one intimated:

*"We don't decide who comes across our desk. Law enforcement is reactionary – where the problem is, they are. They respond to calls. A lot of juvenile court is from schools. I think the numbers reflect what I would expect them to be. I don't know how else to say it. The problem areas where the police are and where they respond is concentrated with minorities. That's where they reside; it just doesn't surprise me."*

*Gang territory.* Gangs are often located in high crime, high poverty areas. The basic proximity argument made above is further complicated by the reality that gangs saturate the same neighborhoods where poor, minority kids live. A participant in the Prosecutor/Public Defender group discussed the attraction of the gangs for some:

*"The gang thing, what we're seeing with the gang thing is very young kids. Instead of writing a note to say, 'I ran off to join the circus,' he wrote a note to that he went off to join the LA Zombies... This gang influence/ they're not going to stay home and listen to their parents... and the more robberies and batteries they commit, the better their status and I think that is more active in the African American community, not so much Hispanic/Latino."*

*Few minorities work in positions of authority.* The last major issue that falls under JbG deals with the reality that there are few minorities in positions of power—especially in those positions where poor minority youth would come into contact with them in everyday life. Whereas ethnic and racial minorities are over-represented in the criminal and juvenile justice systems, they are under-represented in positions of authority in the schools, as well as in service provision and case management, probation, criminal defense, prosecution, and on the bench.

Does this matter to DMC? Many of the participants in the study thought that it did in some meaningful ways. Individuals in the Community Service Providers, Probation/Detention, and School Personnel groups discussed how there are not “*enough minorities working in the schools, on the police, in probation,*” and that diverse representation in these professions is “*critical to help kids build relationships and trust authority figures.*” Finally, this exchange took place among four individuals in the Community Service Providers group about this very issue:

*“We don’t have African American providers to speak of in our agency. It’s extremely white.”*

*“Yep.”*

*“I think it impacts the success of services. If kids could see professionals in those roles as role models, if we had the opportunity to do matching...”*

*“I agree. Our facility opened up to expand diversity. We started hiring more African Americans and males, more African Americans serving at higher positions. We want the populations we serve to connect, have role models, relate to us, and see. I think that’s a key role to have.”*

### Legislation, Policies and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact

There are two major pieces of legislation or policies that came up during the focus groups that can directly impact DMC. The first is HB 1001 and the restructuring of DCS. This particular legislation impacted the way that nearly everyone in the focus groups (with the exception of the police) goes about their business. Not one participant had a favorable opinion about the policy. Their reservations did not appear to be mere self-interest; rather they believe the changes have impeded their ability to help their clients. Moreover, it appears that HB 1001 can exacerbate DMC in another way. Based on informal discussions outside of the focus groups, the understanding is that there are some instances in which the court will have to adjudicate a youth just to be able to get them the appropriate services. Forcing courts to adjudicate youth will exacerbate DMC.

The second legislation-based policy provides that a youth either must be detained or released only on electronic monitoring for certain offenses. This specific policy was discussed in the Judges/Magistrates and the Prosecutor/Public Defender groups. This policy and the general practice of offering EM as an alternative to secure detention should be examined more closely as

it can directly impact DMC. Clearly, any alternative to secure detention is positive and could help diminish DMC. However, the way in which this policy is implemented is problematic, as the youths and their families must be able to secure a telephone land line. This can be a particular hardship for families living in poverty. Additionally, if a youth cannot secure the phone line, they often remain in detention. It was clear from the focus groups that Vanderburgh County is more flexible based on family resource constraints, as the judge sometimes releases a youth on home detention if the family promises to work with the court to make sure the child complies. Nevertheless, a more systematic, statewide review of the statute is likely in order given the problems faced in the other jurisdictions.

*Police and detention.* In Vanderburgh County, the arresting officer or transporting officer is responsible for making the initial detention decision regarding whether a youth is detained. In many jurisdictions, this decision is made by a detention or probation intake officer. Many jurisdictions use validated risk assessments to make the detention decisions—especially counties that are mindful of DMC. Given that the police said they receive no specialized education about adolescent development, nor do they use a validated risk assessment, this may be an ill-advised policy. In fact, it could easily exacerbate DMC at detention and (based on other national research) result in other more serious case outcomes— from having a petition filed to adjudication and an out of home placement or commitment to DOC.

### Accumulated Disadvantage

The mechanism known as accumulated disadvantage can be viewed in two ways: simple accumulation and impacts on later decision. Simple accumulation is the major type of accumulated disadvantage identified in Vanderburgh County.

### Accumulated Disadvantage: Simple Accumulation

An example of simple accumulation occurring is when there are higher rates of arrest for minority youth, followed by a lower rates of diversion and higher rates of petitions filed. Individually, these outcomes may not amount to a marked amount of DMC, but together, they accumulate and can contribute to DMC in a major way.

In Vanderburgh County, the first, and likely most important accumulated disadvantages, begin with disproportionate arrests and referrals to juvenile court and low levels of diversion which begin to seriously compound with detention. Many focus group participants explained

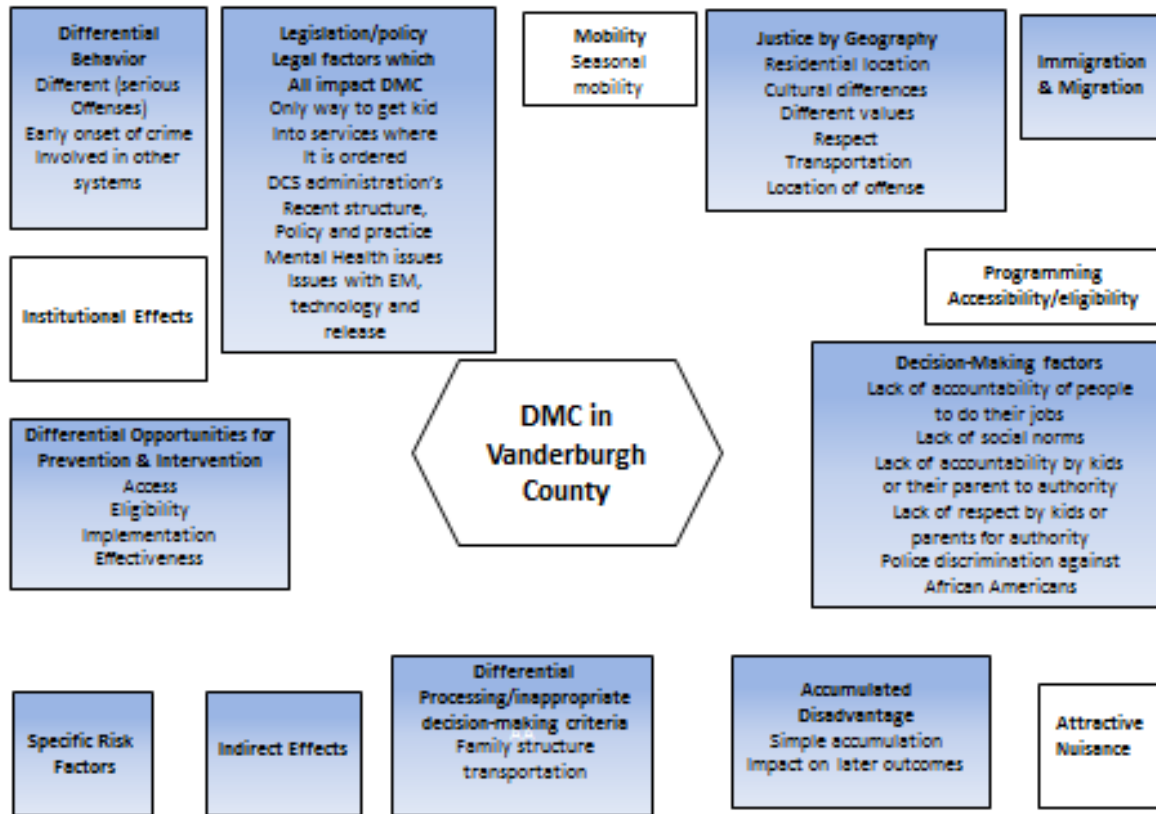
that the area of Evansville where most of the minority youth live is where most of the crime occurs. As was explained earlier, this can be a problem because high crime areas garner the greatest police presence, and an increased police presence in high crime, high poverty areas are likely to result in more arrests of the minority youth that live there. Since minority youth in Vanderburgh County are less likely to be diverted and more likely to be detained, the accumulated disadvantages quickly begin to build and affect later decisions that become more impactful the deeper into the system one goes.

Accumulated Disadvantage: Impacts on Later Decisions. Early decisions made about a juvenile's case can influence subsequent decisions. In these instances, race and ethnicity may influence how these early, yet influential, decisions are made. For example, in the Specific Risk Factors section, it was learned that, in general, actors in the system appeared to be heavily influenced by familial structure, single-parent households, perceived parental participation, etc., and that these factors might lead to decisions regarding detention or longer lengths of stay. Additionally, since a common alternative to detention in this county is EM but not everyone can afford it and not everyone is offered a straight home detention option, economics can influence detention decisions as well. Both of these accumulated disadvantages can be problematic given the research that suggests that juveniles held in detention tend to face more severe dispositions, and disproportionality can be seen at the decision points of waiver and commitment to DOC.

## Conclusions

The causes of DMC in Vanderburgh County are likely complex and varied. Figure V2 includes all of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* according to OJJDP. While evidence for many of the *Mechanisms that Lead to DMC* in this jurisdiction was found, not all of them were present. The shaded boxes in the Figure V2 indicate that possible evidence of these mechanisms was found; non-shaded boxes indicate no evidence of these mechanisms was found. As such, the only mechanisms that were not identified in this county are Programming Accessibility/Eligibility, Seasonal Mobility, Attractive Nuisance, and Institutional Effects.

Figure V2. Perceived Explanations for DMC in Vanderburgh County



Four of the major mechanisms (and what has been deemed related to the mechanism) were major topics in all six of the focus groups. In every instance, these topics were seen to be important to justice processing and may have an impact on DMC in Vanderburgh County. First, **Differential Offending** was commonly cited in all of the focus groups as one of the main reasons that there is DMC at the detention, petition, waiver, and commitments to DOC. Simply stated, minority youth have longer criminal histories and commit more serious crimes than their white counterparts. The second commonly cited mechanism is referred to as **Indirect Effect**—**Specific Risk Factor, SES & Race**, was discussed at length in every focus group as well. In short, it is the intersection between SES and Race and how they interact with other key social factors which can impact DMC. Several participants spoke about how a family’s SES can impact educational achievement. One example given was that minority children are more likely to be poor, and poor children are often undereducated. If these children are not prepared for school, they may be frustrated, act out, get in trouble at school, and get arrested. Third, the **Indirect Effect**—**Decision-Making Factor** mechanism that was related to Family structure, parental



involvement, poor parenting was also seemingly important. In particular, focus group participants, in general, believed that they make important decisions about various case outcomes that are influenced by familial structure, the level at which parents/guardians are involved in the process, parenting skills, and an overall sense of the child's home life. While such decisions may be made with the best intentions, they likely impact DMC in the jurisdiction in a negative way. The fourth and final mechanism that came up in all of the groups provoked spirited discussions. The mechanism was **Legislation, Policies, and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact**, especially around the particular policies, HB1001 and DCS Funding. This particular legislation impacted the way that nearly everyone in in the focus groups (with the exception of the police) does their jobs. The policy was not popular with any of the participants, and there were claims that it is hurting kids and, in some cases, can exacerbate DMC because in some instances the court has to adjudicate a youth just to be able to get him or her the appropriate services.

There was also a lot of agreement among the groups about other mechanisms that can lead to DMC. Specifically, the following were identified in five out of six focus groups as being related to DMC: **Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors, SES and current economic trends**; **Indirect Effects: Decision-Making Factors, Unprepared for Education** (the lack of preparedness for kindergarten and education in general); and **Justice by Geography, Where patrol is saturated**.

Three other mechanisms were discussed in four of six focus groups in Vanderburgh County. **Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors, Lack of cultural understanding** mostly referred to the inability of study participants to relate to the juveniles and their families because they come from diverse cultures. It is this "lack of understanding of the other" that results in so much frustration and anger toward one another. **Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Intervention, Mental Health Services and DCS** referred to the fact that mental health resources for youth and their families are limited in the county, and HB 1001 made things worse. **Justice by Geography, Few minorities work in positions of authority**, is an issue that many of the participants in all three counties believed needs attention as they argued that minority youth will never be able to feel more trusting toward the system until they see people that look like them working in it.

Finally, the mechanisms, **Differential Offending**, Seriousness of current offense & prior criminal history; **Indirect Effects: Decision-making Factors**, Instability in living situation; and **Indirect Effect: Specific Risk Factors**, Cultural influences & peer pressure were thought to explain at least some of the DMC in the three out of the six focus groups held in Vanderburgh County.

The DMC explanations identified through this data collection and analysis are not thought to be an exclusive and exhaustive listing of all of the mechanisms leading to the overrepresentation of youth of color placed in secure detention, having a petition filed, and waived to adult court, and an underrepresentation of youth of color in an informal diversion program. What can be taken from this is that juvenile justice professionals in this county perceive that these are areas of concern and that the processes surrounding them must be further examined should the county hope to reduce DMC in the future.

With the conclusion of the focus group section, it is important to review the key points of the Phase I and interview results to be oriented toward the recommendations. From the RRI data, it was evident that African-American youth were referred to the juvenile court more than four times as often as white youth. African-American youth were also sent to juvenile correctional facilities at disposition 1.76 times more often than white youth and waived to adult court 2.24 times more often. It is also worth noting that Hispanic youth were referred to juvenile court significantly less often than white youth. Using logistic regression to control for sex, age, and severity of offense, minority youth still had petitions filed 1.2 times more often, were placed in secure detention 1.5 times more often, were sent to secure juvenile correctional facilities almost 2 times more often, and were waived to adult court 3.6 times more often. In regards to the youth interviews, minority youth reported higher levels of preparation for bias. Youth in detention also reported higher levels of perceived discrimination in dealing with police, prosecutors, judges, and probation officers. They also reported higher levels of perceived procedural injustice than youth on probation.

## Recommendations

In this section, we present recommendations specific to Vanderburgh County. While each of the three counties examined in this study include unique characteristics, several cross-cutting themes were uncovered. Additional cross-cutting recommendations are included in Section IV of this report.

Based on a review of information available regarding DMC at each of the juvenile justice system decision points, county profile data, youth interview data, and focus group results, recommendations to address DMC in Vanderburgh County include:

1. Court process. Detained youth in Vanderburgh County reported higher levels of perceived discrimination from police, prosecutors, judges, and probation officers than youth on probation. Those involved in the juvenile justice system are encouraged to explore why this may be.
2. Gang involvement. Several participants identified an increasing problem with gangs in Vanderburgh County. Given that gang problems are thought to be on the rise in the county, the Vanderburgh County Probation Department is encouraged to develop a data driven strategy for assessing the magnitude of the problem. Based on the outcome of this assessment, the Probation Department would then work with the local juvenile justice steering committee to identify and implement evidence-based gang intervention and reduction models.
3. Detention decision point. At this time, police officers have discretion about detention for youth in Vanderburgh County. It would be helpful for decisions at this juvenile justice decision point to be made by staff members within the probation department or the detention center. Additionally, detention intake officers are encouraged to make this decision based on a validated risk assessment instrument. Research has shown that better decisions are made when they are made by detention/probation staff using a validated risk assessment instrument.
4. Detention alternatives. Several participants noted that detention alternatives were lacking in Vanderburgh County. Thus, juvenile justice system personnel, as well as community members, are encouraged to explore possible alternatives to detention. This could include expanding a list of providers for short term care as well as exploring electronic

monitoring. Moreover, Vanderburgh County Juvenile Court is encouraged to investigate other best practices for both pre- and post-adjudication detention.

5. “Champion” for juvenile justice reform and faith community. Focus group participants have highlighted the fact that there are strong community leaders within Vanderburgh County. In particular, there are faith leaders within the community that minister to people of color and are active in caring for the community. It is recommended that juvenile justice leaders utilize existing social networks to identify a “champion” for juvenile justice reform that exists outside of the juvenile justice system. It may be that there is not one champion but a team of champions in the community. This may be even more beneficial to broaden ownership of juvenile justice reform beyond the court system.

### III. Cross-Cutting Recommendations for Reducing DMC

Several issues were identified as problematic across all three jurisdictions. Each are discussed in detail below.

1. Local DMC task force. Each community would benefit from creating a local DMC Task Force. There are significant local issues that impact DMC, as well as crosscutting issues evidenced by each jurisdiction. Creating a group of passionate members in the juvenile and criminal justice system along with community members will enable ownership to occur across systems and individuals. The makeup of this group will be very important. Specifically, chairpersons of the group should be passionate about this issue and be able to cross systems to gather a strong group of leaders both inside and outside of the criminal justice system. Models exist of successful DMC task forces across the state of Indiana that can be utilized as examples.
2. Police officer training. A primary issue identified in all three sources of data (RRI, youth interviews, and focus groups) for each of the involved jurisdictions included interactions with police officers. As such, there are several recommendations for community-based work in the area of police officer interactions. It would be useful for each jurisdiction to consider specific training that may be available for police officers in regards to interacting with adolescents in general, as well as specifically with minority youth. In focus group interactions, police officers explicitly stated they did not want to have another cultural awareness training. From their perspective, they do not need to understand the differences between cultures, and previous training has not been effective. As such, jurisdictions are encouraged to consider additional training that goes beyond cultural awareness. Options include:
  - a. Training in adolescent interactions. There are specific human developmental differences based on biological changes that occur during adolescence. However, a primer on adolescent brain development may not be the most effective means for training police officers. Rather, issues specific to adolescents, such as impulse control changes as well as changes that happened to their behavior in the presence of peers, can be addressed in trainings. Police officers mentioned that they are concerned because adolescents can be more impulsive, and a group of adolescents

can be difficult to manage. Thus, training specific to interactions with adolescents may be effective in developing specific skills, not only awareness, in interacting with youth.

- b. Unintended racial bias. Training specific in understanding and overcoming unintended racial bias may be effective with police officers. In focus groups, police officers highlighted the fact that they were not intentionally arresting minority youth and would like to have improved relationships with community members. As such, they were motivated to address the issue of DMC while maintaining public safety. Training in understanding unintended racial bias not only improves insight but may impact policing behavior.
  - c. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). Jurisdictions have been exploring the impact of adolescent specific CIT. For example, Marion County police officers have received training in adolescent CIT. The CIT program helps officers handle the needs of people who are out of control due to mental illness and who, as a result, act in some manner that is disruptive to the community. Similarly, there are adolescent-specific issues that may be successfully addressed through CIT.
  - d. OJJDP's State Training and Technical Assistance Center (STTAC). Jurisdictions are encouraged to contact STTAC at <http://www.juvenilejustice-tta.org/> for information on empirically-based law enforcement curricula and trainings.
3. Cultural competency training (or cultural adaptation frameworks). Cultural competency training is a term that comes with significant negative baggage in the criminal justice system. As such, a more appropriate term for education within the criminal justice system is cultural adaptation frameworks. This term highlights the fact that a goal of juvenile justice is to use evidence-based practice as much is possible to improve outcomes of youth. Thus, cultural adaptation frameworks focus on the adaptation of evidence-based practice to the specific population targeted. Therefore, jurisdictions are encouraged to frame training in the area of cultural competency as a way to increase the uptake of evidence-based practice with diverse populations. This will hopefully reframe the issue from merely education of cultural diversity to changing practices specific to the population.

- a. Burns Institute. Jurisdictions are encouraged to explore the Burns Institute website (<http://www.burnsinstitute.org/>) for a description of programs implemented across the United States.
  - b. Training. Counties are encouraged to consider contracting with an entity like the Burns Institute to train trainers for each county. New trainers could provide training for new staff and provide “booster” training sessions on a revolving basis (e.g., every three years).
4. Extensive arrest records. Some youth develop an extensive juvenile record quickly and at an early age. Prior records greatly influence every decision point, and minority children often have longer prior juvenile records. There was acknowledgement by jurisdictions that once a child becomes known to system, police may focus on him or her more and result in further system involvement. In order to combat this effectively, the involved jurisdictions would benefit from developing a reception center that is separate from the detention center. This reception center could be for youth with minor charges where they are processed, screened, and then both the parent and youth are connected to community resources. At the reception center, none of the original cases are filed, so youth do not have lengthy records at early ages. By having the center apart from the detention center, it is much less likely that youth will be detained. The juvenile justice research indicates that it can take up to 6 arrests for minor offenses before youth internalize the message that what they are doing is wrong and then begin to change their behavior. Marion County has utilized a reception center, and individuals within Marion County Juvenile Probation could be contacted to explore this option in more detail.
5. Relationship between community and police. A universal problem identified for each jurisdiction included the relationship between community members and the police. This is not only specific to the collaborating jurisdictions but is a nationwide issue. Developing improved relationships between police and members of the community is a broad topic but vitally important. Recommendations include the following:
  - a. Educate youth regarding possible interactions with police. The Indiana Juvenile Justice Task Force recently completed a one-time training with minority youth at Black Expo in 2012. The focus of the training was a game-like atmosphere of what to expect when a police officer identifies a young person. This includes

informing the young person of possible consequences if they run away or are disrespectful with police officers. This training could be conducted in junior high settings in given communities to effectively train youth on what to expect and how best to minimize difficulty when interacting with police officers.

- b. Educate parents regarding possible interactions with police. Focus group participants highlighted the fact that many parents of youth involved in the juvenile justice system also had negative experiences with police officers. Additionally, parental ethnic socialization varied across jurisdictional sites but, in general, could be improved. Thus, parents of junior high youth could be specifically educated (either passively through flyers or actively through courses at schools, churches, or community groups) about how to talk to their youth about race/ethnicity, to prepare them for bias in general, and how to specifically interact with police officers in the community or school.
- c. Improved funding/services for police officer programs. An issue raised by participants in the focus groups was an interest in providing preventative and intervention services for youth in the community. Officers indicated they enjoyed interacting youth in a more positive light within school and community-based services. However, they also indicated that funding for programs has been cut. In sum, both participants from the community and police officers felt interactions outside of a negative, arresting interaction was positive for the community and their own morale. Specific recommendations to explore include the following:
  - i. Police officers can act as mentors in community-based programs. Police officer involvement in community-based programs, outside of the police force, could be a galvanizing force in the community and build multiple bridges between the community and police force.
  - ii. Communities are also encouraged to explore the possibility of implementing Police Athletic/Activities League (PAL; <http://www.nationalpal.org/>) as possible ways to interact with youth in a prosocial, structured manner.



6. Indiana House Bill 1001. A crosscutting issue that adversely affects outcomes with minority youth was Indiana House Bill 1001. Juvenile court personnel reported that the change in funding streams has made getting juvenile justice involved youth into appropriate treatment more difficult. The suggestion was made across sites that Indiana House Bill 1001 exacerbates DMC when funding is denied for treatment, and youth are then placed in detention. This is particularly problematic with pre-adjudicated youth when diversion maybe even more effective. It is recommended that counties continue to dialogue with DCS regional representatives regarding this difficulty as well as advocate for change within their respective professional groups. Moreover, each jurisdiction will need to explore other treatment options within their jurisdictions.
7. Parent volunteer networks. Each of the jurisdictions involved in the current project identified the difficulty of enabling families to become and stay involved with their youth during the juvenile justice process. One recommendation is to explore the possibility of developing volunteer groups of parents that have had youth come through the system. They could act as coaches to other parents regarding how to successfully complete the requirements of probation and appropriately meet the juvenile court requirements. Additionally, some jurisdictions have had positive experiences in connecting parents to volunteers that aid in transportation to court or probation.
8. Disciplinary referrals from school. Each jurisdiction identified school systems as being one place where youth of color are disproportionately referred. A possible solution is to develop an initial hearing court. The initial hearing court can act as gate keepers to make certain that all referrals that come to court should be processed. Judges/magistrates have been able to reduce a large number of unnecessary cases that are referred from schools.
9. The importance of early childhood intervention. Virtually all of the focus group participants identified the important need for early childhood intervention. Participants highlighted the fact that parents need to have appropriate role models to improve their parenting behavior. Effective programming exists, such as family nurse partnerships as well as Head Start/Early Head Start. There is a very strong evidence base for the benefit of early intervention such as family nurse partnerships (see <http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org/>) and Head Start (<http://www.in.gov/fssa/dfr/2679.htm>).

10. Employment opportunities. Few of the agencies believed that they have enough minority male and female staff members. A coordinated recruiting effort should take place (with all agencies involved) twice a year near end of the semester at Indiana campuses. Many minority students are earning degrees in fields related to criminal justice and could be recruited.
11. Trade education. Although this is a far-reaching recommendation, each of the jurisdictions involved identified the need for trade education. The claim was made that the students that do not excel in traditional academics should be offered trade classes (e.g., shop, electrician training) to provide youth an avenue for success, a way to build competence and self-esteem, and to protect these youth from dropping out of school which eventually could impact their likelihood of entering the juvenile justice system. While this is clearly a school issue, probation personnel could also play a role by referring their clients to trade training programs should they learn that their charges are at risk of dropping out of school and show an interest or aptitude in the trades.
12. Ongoing data collection. Focus groups from each participating jurisdiction highlighted that minority youth were committing more crimes than white youth, and it was therefore not surprising that they would be disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice population. Self-report data from youth in probation and detention did not show any difference in the amount of crime the youth were participating in, but the sample was admittedly small and biased because only youth who were already involved in the system were interviewed. The county level data collected in Allen County did support the idea that minority youth are committing more crimes as the effect of race at each decision point was reduced when the number of prior referrals was included in the logistic regression analysis. The best method for determining if minority youth are in fact involved in greater delinquency than white youth is to conduct self-report surveys with youth in the general population. The second best option would be to work with the groups who refer youth to the system to get a sense of the total picture of the youth they interact with. How many minority youth do they interact with compared to the number they refer? How many white youth do they interact with compared to the number that they refer? Ongoing data collection is also important so that the jurisdictions maintain

awareness of the extent of DMC, so that they can assess if their intervention efforts are working on an ongoing basis.

## IV. State-Level Recommendations for Reducing DMC

Recommendations for the state may not have been an explicit goal of this project. However, at several times during the quantitative and qualitative analysis, as well as in conversations with ICJI and OJJDP, implications at the state level were found. Thus, below are specific recommendations for Indiana in addressing county-level DMC:

1. JDAI expansion. JDAI is a tremendous opportunity for Indiana to lead the nation in juvenile justice reform. However, the state is encouraged to consider not investing JDAI resources in a county until serious efforts take place between key stakeholders across the county.
2. Cultural competency training (or cultural adaptation frameworks). It is recommended that the state provide technical/training assistance to any county in the state that wishes to participate in their JDAI expansion or continue as a JDAI site. As a way of making certain that cultural competency training takes place, the state could require proof of these trainings should a county entity wish to apply for Title II funds or to become a JDAI site.
3. Technical assistance for train-the-trainer programs. The county sites all voiced a strong need and desire for effective cultural competency training. Thus, the state could develop technical assistance grants to pay for one or more individuals from each county to be trained in a train-the-trainer program. Such training should be given continuing education credits (CE) for professions involved with juvenile justice youth.
4. Ongoing statewide data collection and analysis. Continued collection of DMC data from around the state and particularly in the sites that have been targeted for reduction will allow ICJI to monitor whether intervention strategies are working and make sure that DMC is not getting worse.
5. Ongoing education. The DMC data should be presented at statewide conferences and key meetings in order to spread awareness of the problem, particularly at the county level, where juvenile justice personnel may be the least aware of the extent of the problem and are in the best position to address the issue.

6. Aiding DMC reduction. ICJI should continue to work with local jurisdictions to build their capacity to reduce DMC within their jurisdiction through training, technical assistance, and funding.
7. DMC reduction site selection tool. ICJI should develop a protocol for selecting future targeted DMC reduction sites.
8. Working with state legislators. State legislators should be made aware of the impact that legislation can have on DMC. HB 1001 was cited by many of the focus group participants as a hindrance to their work with youth.
9. “Shoring up” the statewide DMC committee to ensure it is representative of all juvenile justice and community stakeholders. There are many different systems that are involved in working with youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system, and it is important that as many of them as possible have a voice in statewide decisions regarding DMC interventions.
10. Providing technical assistance to communities to increase family engagement and empowerment of system-involved youth and their families. Programs such as “Juvenile Justice 101” and other similar efforts to educate families about the juvenile justice system and to connect them with resources, peers, and advocates can improve youth outcomes and strengthen families.

## Appendix A: Explanations for Disproportionate Minority Contact<sup>i</sup>

### Differential Behavior

The research literature raises the possibility that the rates at which youth from various racial and ethnic subgroups are involved in delinquent activity may differ (e.g., Lauritsen, 2005). Differing rates of involvement is not a universal phenomenon, nor is it presented here to suggest that disproportionate contact is acceptable. As the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act specifies, one of the means of addressing DMC is through prevention activities, which may not only address DMC but also provide substantial benefits to children and youth generally. Several forms of differential behavior are plausible contributors to DMC, including:

- Involvement in a different set of offense categories (often including more serious activities such as possession or sale of controlled substances), involvement in gang-related activity, and more frequent involvement in offenses generally and in offenses with higher levels of severity.
- Involvement in delinquent activities at an earlier age.
- Involvement with other social services or justice-related systems, such as the child welfare system (dependency or neglect cases). It is noteworthy that many other social services systems are also establishing initiatives or standards related to cultural competency and issues similar to DMC, thus providing the opportunity for cross-system collaboration in addressing issues of racial or cultural disparities.

### Mobility Effects: Importation/Displacement

One of the realities of modern life is easy access to automobiles and other means of mobility, so that youth who reside in one community may, in fact, spend considerable time in other jurisdictions. While present in those other jurisdictions, it is possible that youth may commit delinquent behavior, resulting in their being arrested and, perhaps, processed further in a jurisdiction other than their own home area. When arrest statistics are compared to census statistics on juvenile population, which are based on the area of residence, the result may be that the rate of juvenile arrests in one area may appear either higher or lower than would be expected. Several forms of such mobility-related DMC have been observed.

### Seasonal Mobility

*Seasonal mobility* occurs when a community has an influx of juveniles during a particular season, frequently either a holiday season (spring break) or a vacation season (summer break). A community may be a destination for many families or youth; depending on the patterns of movement, this may result in higher numbers of youth of color in a community than were recorded in census estimates. For example, many resort communities draw youth from larger urban areas during school holidays. That influx will temporarily change the demographic composition of the juvenile population. As an extreme example, one midwestern county discovered that the arrests of African American youth exceeded the total number of youth estimated in the census as county residents. Further exploration suggests that this county serves as a summer retreat destination for many families, which has the impact of substantially increasing the number of African American youth in the community during the summer.

### Attractive Nuisance

*Attractive nuisance* is a term that might be applied to a number of commercial or entertainment areas, particularly in urban settings. For example, a shopping mall or entertainment facility may be located in a suburban community or an urban neighborhood that has lower proportions of minority residents but draws

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<sup>i</sup> The information in this document is an excerpt from OJJDP's DMC Technical Assistance Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. [http://www.ojjdp.gov/compliance/dmc\\_ta\\_manual.pdf](http://www.ojjdp.gov/compliance/dmc_ta_manual.pdf)

youth from across an urban area. It is likely that the demographic profile of youth in such a location reflects a higher proportion of minority youth than does the census estimate for the area immediately surrounding the facility.

### **Immigration- and Migration-Related Mobility**

*Immigration- and migration-related mobility* may have an impact on communities to create higher levels of DMC, particularly where policies of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, formerly Immigration and Naturalization Service) are a major concern. To the extent that jurisdictions detain Hispanic (or other) youth suspected of illegal immigration, DMC numbers are likely to be affected. Moreover, as networks of illegal behavior become more organized and youth from other countries join as participants, DMC numbers may be exacerbated. For example, in one community that monitors RRI numbers, the juvenile agency noticed increasing RRI values for Hispanic youth at the detention stage. The agency generated a list of possible factors, including concerns such as availability of interpretive services, availability of alternative programs, staffing changes, etc. When the agency presented this list to its advisory council, one judicial officer noted that she had seen several cases involving youth from another country who were explicitly brought to the United States as runners for drug trafficking. Upon further exploration, it became clear that there were multiple examples of this phenomenon and that when such youth were excluded from the activity counts, the RRI values were reduced for Hispanic youth. Such a finding provides an opportunity for collaboration between the juvenile justice system and both prevention workers and other agencies concerned with such activity.

### **Institutional Effects**

*Institutional effects* may occur when a jurisdiction provides residential or detention capacity for a number of other jurisdictions. For example, if a county operates a regional detention facility, then it might appear that its volume of detention activity is higher than in surrounding counties, and if the county includes these nonresident youth in its RRI calculation, it might create erroneous results. This artificial effect is usually eliminated by calculating detention activity or residential placements based on the county making the commitment placement, not the county physically holding the youth.

### **Indirect Effects**

*“Indirect effects”* is a broad term that reflects the fact that in this society, economic status, education, location, and a host of risk factors associated with delinquent behavior, among other factors, are linked with race and ethnicity. These factors, in turn, are related to delinquent activity or to other forms of contact within the justice system. Thus, impact of race or ethnicity is not direct but is indirect through these third factors. Those effects in terms of DMC issues are at least threefold:

### **Specific Risk Factors**

*Specific risk factors*, which are correlated with race or ethnicity, may lead to differential offending issues. Risk factors such as poor school performance or living in disorganized neighborhoods are more likely to occur to minority youth, putting them at a greater risk of system involvement. As an example, Sampson (1987) discovered that male unemployment is related to family disruption, a risk factor related to delinquency rates, thus creating a set of links with particular impact on African American youth.

### **Programming Access/Eligibility**

*Access to or eligibility for programming* (public or private) may be affected as well. For example, access to some forms of behavioral health or substance use treatment is often contingent on medical insurance coverage. That coverage is, in turn, often contingent on economic circumstances, which places many minority families at a disadvantage in obtaining such services. The use of alternative private schools as a preventive measure is also highly related to economic circumstances, again creating a link to race and ethnicity. Juvenile justice decision-makers report that, in some situations, the only way they can obtain

needed treatment services for minority youth is to commit them to state custody, thus adding to the DMC levels for that community.

### **Decisionmaking Factors**

*Decisionmaking factors* used within the juvenile justice system may be linked to race and ethnicity. For example, a number of studies have indicated that juvenile justice decisionmakers respond differently to youth from an intact two-parent family setting than to youth from a single-parent home. A greater proportion of minority youth in those justice systems lived in single-parent households or other family structures that created a difference in handling within the justice system (Bishop and Frazier, 1996). Thus, what appears to be a decision based on relevant factors made in good faith may still contribute to DMC. An alternative may be to expand the search to look for an adult willing to take responsibility for the youth, thus reaching past the two-parent home to examine the capacity of other family structures.

### **Differential Opportunities for Prevention and Treatment**

The allocation of prevention and treatment resources within communities is seldom uniform or universally accessible across the entire community. In some instances, those allocations create a disadvantage for minority youth. This can occur in at least four ways:

#### **Access**

*Access* may be limited by geography, hours of operation, or other means. For example, if a program is located in an area of a community that is not accessible through public transportation, the unintended outcome may be that only families who have access to private automobiles may participate. If a program is structured so that it is available only during normal working hours, then youth whose parents cannot leave their place of employment during work hours may be unable to participate. If a program is not located in those sections of a community with high concentrations of minority youth, then minority youth are less likely to access it.

#### **Eligibility**

*Eligibility* criteria may be used in many programs to define a set of youth most likely to benefit from the program or to exclude those youth that program leaders believe will likely disrupt the program or otherwise be less likely to benefit from the program resources. Some of those eligibility criteria may work to the disadvantage of minority youth. For example, drug court or mental health programs may have entry criteria that exclude youth with some types of prior delinquency or other histories. These criteria may be more likely to exclude minority youth. When such criteria are evidence based, they may suggest other intervention strategies to address DMC (e.g., to work on the factors that lead to these eligibility criteria differences).

#### **Implementation**

*Implementation* characteristics may play a role in encouraging or discouraging minority youth participation. The physical tone of a facility may be inviting or discouraging, may indicate an appreciation of multiple cultures, or may be sterile and institutional. Staff attitudes and demeanor may be welcoming or the opposite. For those youth who do not speak English, the lack of materials and interpretive services in their own language may create barriers to participation. These and other attributes may affect a program's capacity to retain minority youth participation over time, which is important to achieving the intended prevention or intervention outcomes. As an example, examination of an intervention program to improve the social skills and employment opportunities of troubled African American delinquent males –one step away from the state training school revealed that these youth were not likely to complete the 4-month program because the lead staff members were neither African American nor male. In this instance, the characteristics of staff seemed to be critical to success with minority clients. This does not, of course, mean that such an impact will occur for all programs or all



youth, simply that implementation characteristics need to be considered when differential success is present.

### **Effectiveness**

*Effectiveness* is the capability to achieve intended outcomes. Many prevention or treatment programs have been developed initially with a particular group of youth in mind, often white youth. Whether the prevention/treatment model is sufficiently culturally adapted or neutral is a question that is frequently noted in the compilation of evidence-based programs, such as the *OJJDP Model Program Guide*. The issue for examination in DMC is whether the program outcomes (e.g., prevention) are accomplished at equal rates for youth of differing racial and cultural backgrounds.

### **Differential Processing or Inappropriate Decisionmaking Criteria**

*Differential processing or inappropriate decisionmaking criteria* can be an issue in determining program eligibility, implementing diversion programs, and selecting alternative decision outcomes. The fundamental questions are:

- What are the bases or criteria on which decisions are made?
- Are those criteria applied consistently across all groups of youth?
- Are the criteria structured in a manner that places some groups at a disadvantage?

As an example of such issues, consider the use of the term gang-related, which is frequently cited as a factor in decisions about how to handle juveniles. To assess its impact, it is important to know how a jurisdiction defines the term, how it is created, and whether the question about being gang related is only asked for youth from certain areas of the community. If so, then use of this criterion likely will place minority youth at some disadvantage relative to white youth, especially white youth from areas of the community not believed to be gang affected. As another example, consider the use of family in some detention decisions. It is common to find that one of the criteria for releasing a youth from custody is that a family member must be willing to retrieve the youth. But if the definition of family member extends only to a parent, then the youth from a single-parent home is at a disadvantage. Moreover, the youth who is living with a brother or sister, an aunt or uncle, a grandparent, or other adult is at a disadvantage in such a situation. In many jurisdictions, minority youth are more likely to live in these alternative living arrangements; therefore, the way in which the decision criteria are structured may place such youth at a disadvantage in terms of consideration for being released from detention (or not held in detention at all). A last example centers on the requirement by states that before a youth may participate in diversion at intake, he or she must admit guilt. Although the criterion itself may be racially neutral, studies have raised questions concerning the extent to which minority youth, because of past discriminatory practices and/or distrust of the juvenile justice system, are more likely not to admit guilt and, therefore, are less likely to be involved in diversion than white youth (e.g., Leiber, 1994).

### **Justice by Geography**

*Justice by geography* concerns the concept that youth in general, and minority youth in particular, may be processed or handled differently in one jurisdiction than in another within the same state. Differing responses may occur based on whether the youth was processed in an urban versus a rural setting or an urban versus a suburban setting, differences in resources (availability of diversion services), or differences in operating philosophies between jurisdictions (for instance, how a jurisdiction defines accountability for youthful misconduct or whether a jurisdiction uses deterrence as a primary rationale for system action as opposed to other philosophies of public safety) (e.g., Bridges and Steen, 1998; Feld, 1991). For example, in Iowa, a study discovered that in one jurisdiction, the juvenile court adhered to an ideology of juvenile accountability and racial stereotyping of African American youth as being more delinquent and in need of intervention. This resulted in blacks being subjected to different case processing and case outcomes than similarly situated whites. In another jurisdiction, the juvenile court espoused a strong emphasis on *parens*

*patriae* at a time when multiple minority groups were moving into the area and local perceptions held that these groups did not adhere to middle-class standards of dress, demeanor, marriage, and respect for authority. As a consequence, the court responded to minority youth differently than white youth (Leiber, 2003). Another example of justice by geography can occur when minority youth in a large jurisdiction (e.g., a state) are concentrated in areas or jurisdictions (communities) where rates of processing differ from those prevalent in other portions of the larger jurisdiction. The end result is that minority youth are more likely to live in jurisdictions where higher rates of contact with the system occur; therefore, in the aggregate state-level calculations, minority youth are more likely to have high rates of system contact compared with white youth who live in other jurisdictions. A similar explanation can lead to lower levels of DMC when minority youth live in jurisdictions in which lower levels of system processing occur.

The essential characteristics of justice by geography involving the last example are twofold:

- Jurisdictions have a wide variation in the rates of juvenile justice system activity.
- The geographic distribution of minority youth populations correlates strongly with the variation in rates of juvenile justice system activity.

A further explanation of these characteristics emerges from the following example. In one midwestern state, researchers were discussing the results of the identification process with probation supervisors. One astute supervisor noted that the RRI values at the state level were higher than the values for any of the counties in the state. The explanation was that the jurisdictions in which minority youth live in that state were also the jurisdictions that had higher rates of juvenile justice activity (e.g., arrest, detention, prosecution, etc.). As a result, the minority youth in that state not only experienced a higher level of contact than their counterparts within their own community, but, compared with white youth in other sections of the state, their rates of juvenile justice system contact/activity were much higher.

The identification of justice by geography as a mechanism leading to DMC is particularly difficult in a system of government that embraces local variation and adaptation. The recognition that these variations may have unintended consequences may lead to discussions within and across jurisdictions about the basis for local variations in practice. This does not mean that any particular local practice is wrong, simply that policymakers need to be aware of the consequences of the differences in policy and practice across communities.

### **Legislation, Policies, and Legal Factors with Disproportionate Impact**

Policies enacted through legislation or through administrative action may sometimes contain elements that create a disadvantage for minority youth. These disadvantages may occur for a variety of reasons, but the most common are those that target some specific aspect of delinquent behavior, those that target specific locations, and those that use prior delinquent or criminal history as an element of the policy. As examples, consider the following:

**Policies that target certain types of offenses or offense characteristics may have a disproportionate impact on minority youth.** For example, statutes that define drug offenses tend to treat crack cocaine more seriously than powdered cocaine, which, given the usage patterns for the two forms of cocaine, creates a disadvantage for minority youth. Likewise, policies that treat gang activity more seriously than comparable activity by nongang members may place minorities at a disadvantage based on greater likelihood they will be perceived as gang involved.

**Policies that target location issues (e.g., certain types of offenses near schools or public housing areas) may place minority youth at a disadvantage given the location characteristics.** For example, an Illinois automatic transfer law mandates that 15- and 16-year-old youth charged with a drug offense that occurs within 1,000 feet of a school or public housing project are automatically tried in adult court. Although white youth use and sell drugs at similar or higher rates than youth of color, the impact of the law has almost wholly affected African American and Latino youth

([www.buildingblocksforyouth.org/illinois/](http://www.buildingblocksforyouth.org/illinois/)). As another example, Portland, Oregon, has an ordinance permitting police to exclude an individual from specified drug- or prostitution--free zones. Individuals violating that exclusion order are subject to arrest for trespassing. Since those zones are in portions of the city with the highest proportions of minority residents, it is not surprising that the ordinance creates DMC results.

**Policies that mandate specific handling (e.g., moving a case to adult court) may have eligibility or threshold criteria based on prior delinquency or offense histories.** The use of criteria such as —three strikes! may place a minority youth at a higher risk of application of such sanctions when minority youth as a category have more extensive records of justice system contact (e.g., Feld, 1999; Bishop, 2005).

This is not to say that all such policies or practices that result in differences in treatment are necessarily wrong or need to be modified. What is suggested is that if such policies result in accentuating DMC, then policymakers, analysts, and community members should be aware of those consequences and ensure that the policies are well founded and that the jurisdiction considers whether to continue those policies, end them, or seek to modify them in order to address DMC effects.

In some communities, for example, an intentional decision to reduce gang activity may result in an increase in DMC measures, which is predicted and understood as a consequence of that public safety objective. The point is not to expect to eliminate all such disparate impacts at once, but rather to examine and monitor these impacts when they occur to ensure that public safety, rehabilitation of gang members, and fair juvenile justice system response all are kept in an intentional balance. For example, although a short-term increase in DMC may be likely to result from a gang-suppression initiative, the long-term expected outcome of a comprehensive and balanced approach would be reduced levels of DMC.

### **Accumulated Disadvantage**

One of the more disturbing aspects of the DMC issue is that the impact on minority youth as a group tends to accumulate, rather than dissipate, through the system. This phenomenon is displayed in at least two different ways.

### **Simple Accumulation**

There may be a higher rate of arrest for minority youth, followed by a lower rate of diversion, higher rates of formal processing as delinquent, etc. In most stages of the juvenile justice system, minority youth (particularly black and Hispanic youth) appear to receive handling that is either harsher than their white counterparts or equal to their white counterparts. Thus, although the differential treatment at any particular stage may appear small, the cumulative impact across the entire juvenile justice system may be relatively large. The impact here is essentially equivalent to compound interest—a 10-percent difference in volume of activity (RRI value = 1.10) that occurs at each of eight decision stages in the juvenile justice system will accumulate into a rate of DMC that is more than double the level of overall contact for that minority group.

### **Impacts on Later Decisions**

Another example where race and ethnicity may work indirectly through factors that influence decisionmaking is the impact of earlier stages on later stages of the justice system, such as the impact of pre-adjudicatory detention. Studies have indicated that decisions made at earlier stages, such as detention, affect outcomes at later stages and, in particular, judicial disposition. That is, detention strongly predicts more severe treatment at judicial disposition. Although minority youth and white youth who have been detained may be treated similarly, because the former group is more likely to be detained, they receive more severe dispositions than do their white counterparts. Consequently, race or ethnicity may not directly influence judicial disposition, but its effects may be masked, operating through a racially linked criterion of pre-adjudicatory detention (e.g., Leiber, and Fox, 2005).

## Appendix B: Focus Group Protocol

### A. SCHOOL PERSONNEL

1. Think about the social environment at your school. Are there racial or ethnic groups of students that are treated differently?
  - a. By other students?
  - b. By teachers?
  - c. By administrators?
2. Are teachers, administrators, and staff sufficiently prepared to work with students from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds?
3. Do students of color receive more disciplinary referrals at your school? Are they more likely to have behavioral issues resulting in suspension?
4. Does your school employ a zero tolerance policy-based discipline approach?
  - a. Does it differentially impact particular groups of kids?

Does your school have to call the police to assist with problems or investigate crimes? Does it happen often? What type of situations warrant these calls?

5. Are students of color more likely to drop out? Are they more likely to skip school or have low attendance rates? Why do you think that is?

### 6. We would like to discuss the data that was collected in your county.

#### RRI Table

Explain what an RRI is

The RRI is a way of comparing the rates of juvenile justice contact experienced by different groups of youth. It looks at the proportions of white youth and youth of color at various decision points in the system, and provides us with an opportunity to see where youth of color are under- or overrepresented.

One way to think about an RRI is to think of going to the doctor and having your vital signs checked. There may be numbers that are out of balance or indicate that something is wrong, but that information alone doesn't tell us what the cause is.

Explain what the decision points are and why they matter—DISTRIBUTE AND REVIEW GREEN HANDOUT WITH DEFINITIONS

Explain the results

## Logistic Regression Table

Explain how LRs work

Logistic Regression is a statistical technique that we use when trying to make some predictions about a particular outcome that has only two possible values. So for instance, when we are trying to make predictions about the different juvenile court decision points, each decision point can be thought of us a yes or no decision: diverted or not diverted, securely detained or not, petition filed or not, and so on.

The results from a logistic regression analysis allow us to consider the “odds” or the relative likelihood that a youth with a particular characteristic will experience the outcome.

Identify the variables included

NONWHITE, FEMALE, AGE, FELONY, and NUMBER OF PRIOR REFERRALS (Allen County only)

Explain findings

7. Are these data what you would have expected?
8. Do you think that youth of color are treated differently by police? Are they more likely to get arrested than white youth?
9. Do you think youth of color are treated differently by the juvenile justice system? In what ways or at which points in the system?
10. Do you provide any services to support students who are engaged in the juvenile justice system?
11. What do you think might be causing DMC in this county?
12. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality where it exists in the system?

## B. SERVICE PROVIDERS

1. Think about the youth you serve and the community in which they live. Are there racial or ethnic groups of youth that are treated differently?
  - a. At their schools?
  - b. In the community?
  - c. By public officials or other adults they come into contact with?
2. What about criminal behavior among youth.
  - a. Are offending patterns and criminal behavior similar among various racial or ethnic groups?
  - b. Are white youth arrested as often as minority youth?
3. Are youth of color treated differently from their white counterparts in this jurisdiction by the juvenile justice system?
4. Are services provided to juveniles in this jurisdiction culturally appropriate?
5. Do front-line service providers and program staff in this jurisdiction receive adequate training to serve youth from different racial/ethnic backgrounds?
6. Why do some youth fail to complete services?
7. Do you get the support you need from probation that you need to really help your clients? What about courts? Parents?
8. Is there any one type of youth that is more difficult to serve?
9. What are three things that would allow you to be more successful in serving you clients?

### **10. We would like to discuss the data that was collected in your county.**

#### **RRI Table**

*Explain what an RRI is*

The RRI is a way of comparing the rates of juvenile justice contact experienced by different groups of youth. It looks at the proportions of white youth and youth of color at various decision points in the system, and provides us with an opportunity to see where youth of color are under- or overrepresented.

One way to think about an RRI is to think of going to the doctor and having your vital signs checked. There may be numbers that are out of balance or indicate that something is wrong, but that information alone doesn't tell us what the cause is.

Explain what the decision points are and why they matter—DISTRIBUTE AND REVIEW GREEN HANDOUT WITH DEFINITIONS

*Explain the results*

### **Logistic Regression Table**

*Explain how LRs work*

Logistic Regression is a statistical technique that we use when trying to make some predictions about a particular outcome that has only two possible values. So for instance, when we are trying to make predictions about the different juvenile court decision points, each decision point can be thought of us a yes or no decision: diverted or not diverted, securely detained or not, petition filed or not, and so on.

The results from a logistic regression analysis allow us to consider the “odds” or the relative likelihood that a youth with a particular characteristic will experience the outcome.

*Identify the variables included*

NONWHITE, FEMALE, AGE, FELONY, and NUMBER OF PRIOR REFERRALS (Allen County only)

*Explain findings*

11. Are these findings what you would have expected?
12. Why do you think there is DMC in this county?
13. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality that exists at several points in the system?

## C. FOR PROBATION/DETENTION

1. **SHOW RRI CALCULATIONS NOW: Are these results what you would have expected? Why or why not**
2. Do you believe that minority youth are being arrested more often?
  - a. Why? e.g., differential offending? Familial structure? Lack of familial resources?
3. In your opinion, are youth of color being referred to court more often than their white counterparts?
  - a. Why?
4. Do you consider feedback from parents and the youth in your decision to refer a case to court?
  - a. What about to services or placements?
5. How much contact does probation have with parents and youth?
  - a. Does this vary by youth racial/ethnic background?
  - b. What about those of you who work in detention intake?
6. What types of offenses are juveniles detained for in this county?
  - a. Does this county's detention center take in children from other counties?
7. **Prior to a detention hearing**, who decides if a youth is detained in this county?
  - a. Are you frequently forced to detain youth due to having insufficient placement options in your county?
8. This is question is primarily for the detention staff: Please provide the common profile of the juveniles detained in your facility.
9. *This is directed specifically at the detention representatives again:* Do the detention staff feel that appropriate services are available for youth while detained?
10. Do you believe youth of color are treated more harshly in terms of dispositions in this county? If so, what is the reason? There could be many and none of them be overt racism – let's talk about all the different reasons this may be occurring.
11. Do probation and detention staffs receive training specifically focused on cultural diversity or cultural sensitivity?
12. Why do you believe DMC exists in this county?
13. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality that exists at several points in the system?



**NOW we would like to switch gears a bit and learn about the types of services available to youth in this county**

**If short of time, this next section can be skipped. You can then go immediately to the THANK YOU section.**

14. Do you believe that that the services you have to refer your clients to are appropriate for youth from minority cultural or racial groups?
15. Are probation staff familiar with the services that are available for youth in this county?
  - a. What kinds of placements are kids referred to most often?
  - b. Does that differ by race or ethnicity? Gender?
  - c. Does your agency send youth to out of county placements?
16. What programs do you think are most effective? Are they equally effective for all youth regardless of race or ethnicity?
17. How satisfied are you with your ability to monitor youth (by telephone or in person) while they are involved in placement or treatment settings?
  - a. What obstacles, if any, prevent you from monitoring youth while they are in their placements?

## D. POLICE

1. **SHOW RRI CALCULATIONS NOW: Are these results what you would have expected? Why or why not?**
2. What do you arrest juveniles for most often?
  - a. Does that differ among various racial or ethnic groups?
3. What is the average age at which you first see kids getting arrested?
  - a. Does that differ among various racial or ethnic groups?
4. Do you believe that minority (i.e., AA or Hispanic) youth commit more crime?
  - a. If so, what type of crime?
  - b. Why do you think they commit more of this type of crime?
5. Does everyone arrest juveniles or are only juvenile officers called out to do that when the offender is known to be juvenile?
  - a. Do you have specific juvenile divisions in your agency?
6. **This is specifically for the SROs/ School police officers:** Do school administrators call you often to deal with disciplinary problems that are not necessarily delinquent acts?
  - a. Please provide examples.
  - b. Is there a particular type of student that you are called in to deal with more often?
7. Does your agency offer special training for how to deal with juveniles?
  - a. If so, is that offered to all individuals with arrest powers?
  - b. If so, is any of that trained specifically focused on cultural diversity or cultural sensitivity?
  - c. When does that training occur? At academy? Periodically?
8. Who generates most of the calls when it comes to dealing with juveniles in your jurisdiction (e.g., parents, schools, neighbors, merchants, etc.)?
9. What is the major factor that impacts your decision to arrest a juvenile?
  - a. Do other officers in your jurisdiction deal with juveniles the same as you?
10. What happens when you arrest a juvenile?
  - a. Who decides to take them to detention and once there, who decides if they stay in detention?
11. Is there delinquency “bleed over” – meaning do you tend to see youth from another jurisdiction get arrested for delinquent offenses in your jurisdiction often?

Why is that the case? Is there a specific location (e.g., theme park etc.) in your location that draws large numbers of youth from other counties?

Does this happen more often than during a certain time a year? Does the season impact behaviors and subsequent arrests?

12. Why does DMC occur in this county?

13. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality that exists at several points in the system?

## JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES

1. **SHOW RRI CALCULATIONS NOW: Are these results what you would have expected? Why or why not?**
2. Please describe the average youth you see in your court (e.g., demographics, offenses, priors)?
3. Do you believe that youth of color are arrested more often than their white counterparts?
  - a. If so, why do you believe that happens?
4. Based on your experience in the court, would you say that one race or ethnicity commits more crime than another? Please explain.
5. What types of offenses most often result in detention placements (both prior to and after detention hearings)?
6. What other factors impact your decisions when it comes to making detention decisions? Do any of these factors ever disproportionality impact youth of color?
7. Why do you suppose that minority youth in your county are slightly less likely to be diverted?
8. What factors do you believe lead prosecutors to file petitions?
  - a. Are these criteria applied in a universal fashion to all youth?
  - b. If not, is it different for one group over than another? Why?
9. What factors do you believe drive your decision making when it comes to granting a petition?
10. Do you believe probation officers serve as strong advocates for youth in your county?
  - a. Are most POs familiar with the full extent of services available to youth in this jurisdiction?
11. Are probation officers familiar with services available for youth in this jurisdiction?
12. Do certain financial resources that a family might have, such as extensive private health insurance, provide you with more opportunities for alternative dispositions?
13. In your experience, what factors influence whether a juvenile is given a probation disposition?

- a. Other community correction?
- b. DOC commitment?

14. Why does DMC occur in this county?

15. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality that exists at several points in the system?

## B. PROSECUTORS AND PUBLIC DEFENDERS

1. **SHOW RRI CALCULATIONS NOW: Are these results what you would have expected? Why or why not?**
2. Are minority youth arrested more often than whites?
  - a. If yes, why is that the case?
3. Why do you think that youth of color are being referred to court more often than their white counterparts?
4. Why do you think minority youth are slightly less likely to be diverted in this county?
  - a. What factors have the largest impact on whether you file a petition or not? Might they unintentionally exacerbate DMC? How so?
5. Why do we see so many youth of color detained in this county?
  - a. Does the county's detention center take in children from other counties?
6. Do you believe youth of color are treated more harshly in terms of dispositions in the county?
  - a. If so, what is the reason? There could be many and none of them be intentional racism – let's talk about all the different reasons this may be occurring.
7. Why are minority youth less likely to receive probation?
8. From the data, it can sometimes be difficult to tell if there is serious disparity among racial groups when it comes to those who are waived to court – though we do see a lot of evidence of DMC in waivers nationally?
  - a. Why do you think that is the case?
  - b. Is that true here in this county?
9. Why does DMC occur in this county?
10. What do you think it would take to reduce the disproportionality that exists at several points in the system?

**This was an extremely helpful discussion.**

There are clearly no easy answers when it comes to DMC. We will be working on this study through the early spring of 2013. When it is finished, we will share it with your county with the hopes that you will take it and run with it. It will be written in such a way that you can utilize it to develop a DMC reduction plan that is specific to your county.

Reminder—we ask that you not share publicly what individuals shared in this group. It would not be productive and could, in fact, be easily misunderstood or misconstrued. We are ALL here to help the youth of your county and our state, and would hate to see this information used incorrectly.

We THANK YOU so much for your time and input. Should you have any further questions, please contact Matt Aalsma, whose contact information is included on the Study Information Sheet.

## Appendix C: Description of Measures and Youth Interview Instrument

<b>Table 1: Measures for Interviews with System-Involved Youth</b>	
<b>Measure</b>	<b>Description</b>
Perceived Discrimination	This measure was created to study discrimination perceived by adolescents from various people employed in the juvenile justice system (i.e. police, detention center staff, public defender, prosecutor, judge, and probation officers).
Procedural Justice	This measure was created to study perceptions of treatment by the judge, prosecutor, and defense lawyer throughout court experiences.
Family Affluence Scale	This measure was created to study adolescent SES and focuses on objective and subjective measures of family wealth.
MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status	This measure was created to assess adolescents' perceived placement within the social hierarchy. One question dealt with the family in American society and the other with the adolescent in their school.
Sense of Safety	This measure assesses feelings of safety at home, in or on the way to school, and in the neighborhood.
Neighborhood Disorganization	This measure assesses students' perception of crime, fighting, physical deterioration, and safety in their communities.
Collective Efficacy	This measure assesses informal social control, willingness to intervene, and social cohesion in a neighborhood.
Ethnic Socialization	This measure was created to study ethnic socialization of youth by minority parents. This scale has been utilized with a variety of race and ethnicities including White, Black and Hispanic youth.
Self-Reported Delinquency – Problem Behavior Frequency Scale	This measure assesses the frequency of delinquency behaviors such as, stealing, shoplifting, and cheating as well as other indicators of problem behavior such as suspension.
Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency	This measure assesses the frequency of physical aggression, non-physical aggression, and relational aggression in the past 30 days.



Question #	Question:	Response Options	Scale
1	You were hassled by a store clerk or store guard	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
2	Peopled acted as if they were afraid of you	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
3	People acted as if they thought you were not smart	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
4	Peopled expected less of you than they expected of others your age	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
5	You were hassled by police	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
6	You received poor service at a restaurant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Institutional Discrimination
7	You were discouraged from joining an advanced level class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Educational Discrimination
8	You were given a lower grade than you deserved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. A few times</li> <li>3. A lot</li> </ol>	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Educational Discrimination

9	People expected more of you than they expected of others your age	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Educational Discrimination
10	You were wrongly disciplined or given after-school detention	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Educational Discrimination
11	You were called racially insulting names	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Peer Discrimination
12	Others your age did not include you in their activities	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Peer Discrimination
13	You were threatened	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Peer Discrimination
14	You were discouraged from joining a club	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Peer Discrimination
15	People assumed your English was poor	1. Never 2. A few times 3. A lot	Discrimination Distress During Adolescence, Peer Discrimination
	You were unfairly accused of doing something bad because of your race or ethnicity	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination

	People put you down for practicing the customs or traditions of your own race or ethnicity or country of origin	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination
	You were excluded from a group because of your culture or race	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination
	You heard people say bad things or make jokes about your culture or race	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination
	You were called a racial name that was a put down	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination
	You saw another student treated badly or discriminated against because of his/her race/ethnicity	1. Yes, it happened 2. No, it didn't happen	Perceived Discrimination
	I think I received a fair trial	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge considered the evidence/viewpoints in this incident fairly	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The prosecutor was honest in the way they handled their case	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The prosecutor used evidence that was fair and neutral	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge made up his/her mind prior to receiving any information about the case	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge treated me with respect and dignity	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice

	The judge did not let me tell all of the side of my story	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge treated me in the way that I thought I should be treated	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge showed concern for my rights	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	The judge treated me fairly	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	My punishment was fair	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	My lawyer did a good job in defending me	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	My lawyer paid enough attention to my case	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	My lawyer really wanted to help me	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	My lawyer understood my viewpoint/side of the story	1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	Procedural Justice
	It is alright to fight to protect your friends	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Slapping and shoving someone is just a way of joking	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement

	Damaging some property is no big deal when you consider that others are beating people up	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	A kid in a gang should not be blamed for the trouble the gang causes	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	If kids are living under bad conditions they cannot be blamed for behaving aggressively	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is okay to tell small lies because they don't really do any harm	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Some people deserve to be treated like animals	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	If kids fight and misbehave in school it is the teachers fault	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is alright to beat someone who bad mouths your family	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	To hit obnoxious classmates is just giving them a "lesson"	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Stealing some money is not too serious compared to those who steal a lot of money	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	A kid who only suggests breaking rules should not be blamed if other kids go ahead and do it	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	If kids are not disciplined they should not be blamed for misbehaving	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement

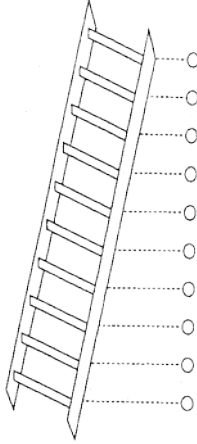
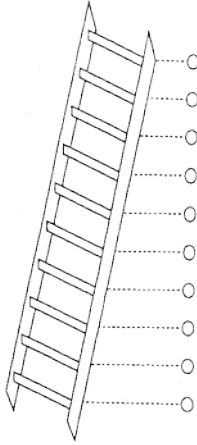
	Children do not mind being teased because it shows interest in them	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is okay to treat badly somebody who behaved like a “worm”	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	If people are careless where they leave their things it is their own fault if they get stolen	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is alright to fight when your group’s honor is threatened	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Taking someone’s bicycle without their permission is just “borrowing it”	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is okay to insult a classmate because beating him/her is worse	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	If a group decides together to do something harmful it is unfair to blame any kid in the group for it	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Kids cannot be blamed for using bad words when all their friends do it	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Teasing someone does not really hurt them	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Someone who is obnoxious does not deserve to be treated like a human being	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Kids who get mistreated usually do things that deserve it	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement

	It is alright to lie to keep your friends out of trouble	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is not a bad thing to “get high” once in a while	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Compared to the illegal things people do, taking some things from a store without paying for them is not very serious	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	It is unfair to blame a child who had only a small part in the harm caused by a group	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Kids cannot be blamed for misbehaving if their friends pressured them to do it	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Insults among children do not hurt anyone	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Some people have to be treated roughly because they lack feelings that can be hurt	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Children are not at fault for misbehaving if their parents force them too much	1. Agree 2. Neither Agree nor Disagree 3. Disagree	Moral Disengagement
	Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past few weeks:  Interested	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Distressed	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Excited	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health

	Upset	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Strong	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Guilty	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Scared	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Hostile	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Enthusiastic	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Proud	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Irritable	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Alert	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Ashamed	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Inspired	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health



	Nervous	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Determined	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Attentive	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Jittery	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Active	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Afraid	1. Very slightly or not at all 2. A little 3. Moderately 4. Quite a bit 5. Extremely	Mental health
	Does your family own a car, van, or truck	0. No 1. Yes, One 2. Yes, two or more	Socioeconomic Status
	Do you have a bedroom to yourself	0. No 1. Yes	Socioeconomic Status
	During the past 12 months how many times did you travel away on holiday with your family	0. Not at all 1. Once 2. Twice 3. More than two	Socioeconomic Status
	How many computers does your family own	0. None 1. One 2. Two 3. More than two	Socioeconomic Status

	<p>1a. Imagine that this ladder pictures how American society is set up.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ At the top of the ladder are the people who are the best off--they have the most money, the highest amount of schooling, and the jobs that bring the most respect.</li> <li>◆ At the bottom are people who are the worst off--they have the least money, little or no education, no job or jobs that no one wants or respects.</li> </ul> <p>Now think about your family. Please tell us where you think your family would be on this ladder. <b>Fill in the circle that best represents where your family would be on this ladder.</b></p>		<p>Subjective Social Status</p>
	<p>1b. Now assume that the ladder is a way of picturing your school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ At the top of the ladder are the people in your school with the most respect, the highest grades, and the highest standing.</li> <li>◆ At the bottom are the people who no one respects, no one wants to hang around with, and have the worst grades.</li> </ul> <p>Where would you place yourself on this ladder? <b>Fill in the circle that best represents where you would be on this ladder.</b></p>		<p>Subjective Social Status</p>
	<p>Please rate you addiction to cigarettes on a scale of 0 to 100</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am NOT addicted to cigarettes at all =0</li> <li>- I am extremely addicted to cigarettes = 100</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 0-20</li> <li>2. 21-40</li> <li>3. 41-60</li> <li>4. 61-80</li> <li>5. 81-100</li> </ol>	<p>Cigarette dependence scale</p>
	<p>On average, how many cigarettes do you smoke per day</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 0-5</li> <li>2. 6-10</li> <li>3. 11-20</li> <li>4. 21-29</li> <li>5. 30+</li> </ol>	<p>Cigarette dependence scale</p>
	<p>Usually, how soon after waking up do you smoke your first cigarette (minutes)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 61+</li> <li>2. 31-60</li> <li>3. 16-30</li> <li>4. 6-15</li> <li>5. 0-5</li> </ol>	<p>Cigarette dependence scale</p>
	<p>For you, quitting smoking for good would be</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Very easy</li> <li>2. Fairly easy</li> <li>3. Fairly difficult</li> <li>4. Very difficult</li> <li>5. Impossible</li> </ol>	<p>Cigarette dependence scale</p>

	After a few hours without smoking, I feel an irresistible urge to smoke	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Totally disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>4. Somewhat agree</li> <li>5. Fully Agree</li> </ol>	Cigarette dependence scale
	I feel safe on my way to school in the morning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe on the school grounds before school starts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe in my class at school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe at lunch in school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe in gym class at school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe after school before I go home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe on my way home from school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe at the park closest to my house	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe outside my house	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety
	I feel safe playing on my block	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0. Never</li> <li>1. Sometimes</li> <li>2. Always</li> </ol>	Sense of Safety

	I feel safe walking around my neighborhood	0. Never 1. Sometimes 2. Always	Sense of Safety
	During the last year, did you get poor grades on your report card	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, school problems, hassles
	During the last year, have you gotten into trouble with a teacher or principle at school	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, school problems, hassles
	During the last year, did you get suspended from school	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, school problems, circumscribe events
	During the last year, did your family move to a new home or apartment	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, life transitions
	During the last year, have your family had a new baby come into the family	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, life transitions
	During the last year, has anyone moved out of your home	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, life transitions
	During the last year, did a family member die	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, circumscribed events
	During the last year, did another close relative or friend die	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, circumscribed events
	During the last year, has a family member become seriously ill, injured badly and/or had to stay at the hospital	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, circumscribed events

	During the last year, has someone else you know, other than a member of your family, gotten beaten, attacked, or really hurt by others	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, circumscribed events, violence
	During the last year, have you seen anyone beaten, shot or really hurt by someone	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, circumscribed events, violence
	In the past year, did you change where you went to school	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, life transitions
	During the last year, have you seen or been around people shooting guns	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, violence, hassles
	During the last year, have you been afraid to go outside and play or have your parents made you stay inside because of gangs or drugs in your neighborhood	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, violence, hassles
	During the last year, have you had to hide someplace because of shootings in your neighborhood	0. No 1. Yes	Stressful Urban Life Events, violence, hassles
	If a group of neighborhood children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither likely nor unlikely 4. Likely 5. Very likely	Collective Efficacy, social control
	If some children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither likely nor unlikely 4. Likely 5. Very likely	Collective Efficacy, social control
	If there was a fight in front of your house and someone was being beaten or threatened how likely is it that your neighbors would break it up	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither likely nor unlikely 4. Likely 5. Very likely	Collective Efficacy, social control
	If a child was showing disrespect to an adult, how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would scold that child	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither likely nor unlikely 4. Likely 5. Very likely	Collective Efficacy, social control

	Suppose that because of budget cuts the fire station closest to your home was going to be closed down by the city. How likely is it that neighborhood residents would organize to try to do something to keep the fire station open	1. Very unlikely 2. Unlikely 3. Neither likely nor unlikely 4. Likely 5. Very likely	Collective Efficacy, social control
	People around here are willing to help their neighbors	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree	Collective Efficacy, social cohesion
	This is a close-knit neighborhood	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree	Collective Efficacy, social cohesion
	People in this neighborhood can be trusted	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree	Collective Efficacy, social cohesion
	People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree	Collective Efficacy, social cohesion
	People in this neighborhood do not share the same values	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree	Collective Efficacy, social cohesion
	How much do each of the following statements describe your neighborhood:  Crime and/or drug selling	1. NO! 2. no 3. yes 4. YES!	Neighborhood Disorganization
	Fights	1. NO! 2. no 3. yes 4. YES!	Neighborhood Disorganization
	Lots of empty or abandoned buildings	1. NO! 2. no 3. yes 4. YES!	Neighborhood Disorganization
	Lots of graffiti	1. NO! 2. no 3. yes 4. YES!	Neighborhood Disorganization
	I feel safe in my neighborhood	1. NO! 2. no 3. yes 4. YES!	Neighborhood Disorganization

	At school, there are adults I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	At school, there are adults who I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	At school, there are adults who help me with practical problems, like helping me get somewhere or helping with a project	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	There are people in my family I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	There are people in my family I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	There are people in my family who help me with practical problems like helping me get somewhere or help me with a job or project	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	I have friends I can talk to, who care about my feelings and what happens to me	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	I have friends I can talk to, who give good suggestions and advice about my problems	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	I have friends who help me with practical problems, like how to get somewhere or help me with a job	0. Not at all 1. Some 2. A lot	Social Support
	In the last 30 days, how many times have you...  Thrown something at someone to hurt them	1. Never 2. 1-2 times 3. 3-5 times 4. 6-9 times 5. 10-19 times 6. 20 or more times	Aggression- Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression

	Been in a fight in which someone was hit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Threatened to hurt a teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Shoved or pushed another kid	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Threatened someone with a weapon (gun, knife, club, etc.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Hit or slapped another kid	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Threatened to hit or physically harm another kid	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, physical aggression
	Insulted someone's family	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, non-physical aggression
	Teased someone to make them angry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, non-physical aggression



	Put someone down to their face	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, non-physical aggression
	Gave mean looks to another student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, non-physical aggression
	Picked on someone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, non-physical aggression
	Didn't let another student be in your group anymore because you were mad at them	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression
	Told another kid you wouldn't like them unless they did what you wanted them to do	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression
	Tried to keep others from liking another kid by saying mean things about him/her	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression
	Spread a false rumor about someone	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression
	Left another kid out on purpose when it was time to do an activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression

	Said things about another student to make other students laugh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Aggression-Problem Behavior Frequency, relational aggression
	Been on suspension	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Stolen something from another student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Snuck into someplace without paying such as movies, onto a bus or subway	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Skipped school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Cheated on a test	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Taken something from a store without paying for it (shoplifted)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Written things or spray painted on walls or sidewalks or cars where you were not supposed to	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	Damaged school or other property that did not belong to you	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Never</li> <li>2. 1-2 times</li> <li>3. 3-5 times</li> <li>4. 6-9 times</li> <li>5. 10-19 times</li> <li>6. 20 or more times</li> </ol>	Self-Reported Delinquency
	People from my racial group are more likely to be unfairly stopped and questioned by the police	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Disagree</li> <li>3. Agree</li> <li>4. Strongly Agree</li> </ol>	Perceived Injustice

	Police treat young people worse than old people	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree	Perceived Injustice
	Police treat rich people better than poor people	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree	Perceived Injustice
	Police treat people from my racial group worse than people from other racial groups	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree	Perceived Injustice
	Police treat males worse than females	1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree	Perceived Injustice
	Told you that people of different races should try to understand each other so they can get along.	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Egalitarian
	Told you that because of opportunities today, hardworking minorities have the same chance to succeed as anyone else.	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Egalitarian
	Told you that you should try to have friends from all different races.	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Egalitarian
	Told you that you can learn things from people of different races	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Egalitarian
	Told you learning about (pipe your racial and ethnic) history/heritage is not that important.	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Negative
	Told you it is best to act like whites	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Negative
	Told you that being (pipe race/ethnicity) is nothing to be proud of	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Negative

	Told you white businesses are more reliable than minority businesses	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Negative
	Told you that minorities are not as smart as other races	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, Negative
	Told you that some people think they are better than you because of their race	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial barrier
	Told you that ethnic minorities have to work twice as hard as Whites to get ahead	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial barrier
	Told you that some people may dislike you because the color of your skin	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial barrier
	Told you that some people tried to keep ethnic minorities people from being successful	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial barrier
	Been involved in activities that focus on things important to (pipe race/ethnicity) people	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial pride
	Talked with you about (pipe race ethnicity) History	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial pride
	Told you that you should be proud to be (pipe race/ethnicity)	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial pride
	Told you never to be ashamed of your (pipe race/ethnicity) features (hair texture, lip shape, skin color, etc.)	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, racial pride
	Gone with you to (pipe race/ethnicity) cultural events (plays, movies, concerts, museums)	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization

	Gone with you to cultural events involving other races and cultures (plays, movies, and concerts)	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Went with you to organization meetings that dealt with (pipe race/ethnicity) issues	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Bought you books about (pipe race/ethnicity) people	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Bought you (pipe race/ethnicity) toys or games	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Told you that you are somebody special, no matter what anybody says	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Told you to be proud of who you are	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Told you that skin color does not define who you are	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	Told you that you can be whatever you want to be	0. Never 1. 1-2 times 2. More than twice	Racial Socialization, behavioral socialization
	What zip code do you currently live in		Demographic Info
	If you think about your neighborhood and the people living within a mile of your house – what percent of those people would you say are White, African American, Hispanic, Other	White _____% Black (AA) _____% Hispanic _____% Other _____%	Neighborhood diversity
	How many different cultures are in your neighborhood	0. None 1. A few 2. Many	Neighborhood diversity

	<p>Have you ever interacted with the following people:</p> <p>Police officer</p> <p>Detention Staff</p> <p>Public Defender</p> <p>Prosecutor</p> <p>Judge</p> <p>Probation Officer</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>You were treated worse than other people</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>You were treated with less courtesy than other people</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>This person acted as if they were better than you</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>You were called names or insulted</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>You were treated with less respect than other people</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>This person acted as if they thought you were dishonest</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>This person acted as if they thought you were not smart</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>
	<p>This person acted as if they were afraid of you</p>	<p>Answer Yes or No</p>	<p>Racial Socialization</p>

	You were threatened or harassed	Answer Yes or No	Racial Socialization
	I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I feel a strong attachment to my ethnic group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me, in terms of how to relate to my own group and other groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group and its accomplishments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic background	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means to me	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI

	I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I really have not spent much time trying to learn about the culture and history of my ethnic group	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I often spend time with people from ethnic groups other than my own	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I am not very clear about the role of my ethnicity in my life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	I am involved in activities with people from other ethnic groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I enjoy being around people from ethnic groups other than my own	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I don't try to become friends with people from other ethnic groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, OGO
	I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strongly disagree</li> <li>2. Somewhat disagree</li> <li>3. Somewhat agree</li> <li>4. Strongly agree</li> </ol>	MEIM, EI
	What is your sex?	<p>Male</p> <p>Female</p>	Demographic



	What grade are you in?	6 <sup>th</sup> 7 <sup>th</sup> 8 <sup>th</sup> 9 <sup>th</sup> 10 <sup>th</sup> 11 <sup>th</sup> 12 <sup>th</sup> Other	Demographic
	Are you of Hispanic/Latino origin?	Hispanic/Latino Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino Don't Know	Demographic
	What is your race? You may choose more than one	White/European American Black/African American American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Other	Demographic