



**CAMPAIGN OF THE NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY
PREVENTION COALITION**

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Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) Fact Sheet Series

Using Evidence-Based Programs and Practices

BACKGROUND: The week of December 10, 2018, Congress passed [H.R. 6964](#), the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 (the Act) with overwhelming bipartisan support. The President signed the bill into law on December 21, 2018, amending the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) after years of collaborative efforts among juvenile justice organizations and advocates across the United States.

Below, please find a summary and impact of the provisions related to using evidence-based programs and practices in the bill:

WHAT'S NEW¹: The reauthorized JJDP A expands the use of effective and evidence-based programs and practices by providing technical assistance to states on research, evaluation, and sharing of practices and programs in the areas of:

- delinquency prevention,
- intervention,
- mental health,
- behavioral health and substance abuse treatment,
- family services, and
- services for children exposed to violence.

It also supports the use of trauma-informed, evidence-based or promising programs and practices for at-risk youth, including requiring states to give priority to entities that meet the criteria for evidence-based or promising programs when disbursing funding received under Title II of the Act.

Definitions: The JJDP A defines, among others, “evidence-based” and “promising.”

The Act defines “evidence-based” as “a program or practice that is demonstrated to be effective when implemented with fidelity; is based on a clearly articulated and empirically supported

¹ The amendments to the core protections made to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act by this law will not apply until the beginning of Fiscal Year 2020.

theory; has measurable outcomes relevant to juvenile justice, including a detailed description of the outcomes produced in a particular population, whether urban or rural; and has been scientifically tested and proven effective through randomized control studies or comparison group studies and with the ability to replicate and scale.”

The JJDP Act defines “promising [practices and programs]” as a “program or practice that is demonstrated to be effective based on positive outcomes relevant to juvenile justice from one or more objective, independent, and scientifically valid evaluations, as documented in writing to the Administrator; and will be evaluated through a well-designed and rigorous study, as described in paragraph 34(d)².”

Finally, the updated law (Sec. 502) defines a “delinquency prevention program” as a “delinquency prevention program that is evidence-based or promising and that may include alcohol and substance abuse prevention or treatment services; tutoring and remedial education, especially in reading and mathematics; child and adolescent health and mental health services; recreation services; leadership and youth development activities; the teaching that individuals are and should be held accountable for their actions; assistance in the development of job training skills; youth mentoring programs; after-school programs; and coordination of a continuum of services,” as well as “other data-driven evidence-based or promising prevention programs.”

OJJDP Report: The JJDP Act (Sec. 207) requires the OJJDP Administrator to provide an annual report to the President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President pro tempore of the Senate that includes a description of the criteria for evidence-based and promising programs; a comprehensive list of Administrator-approved programs that meet such criteria in both rural and urban settings; a description of the evidence-based methods that will be used for mental health and substance abuse screenings administered upon request, need, or initial screenings, for those held for 24 hours in a secure facility.

OJJDP Training: The JJDP Act (Sec. 208) requires the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to provide technical assistance and training to States implementing evidence-based and promising programs and practices. Technical assistance includes training on core requirements, current protocols, and best practices for achieving and monitoring compliance, and information sharing regarding relevant OJJDP resources.

To read more about the new training requirements, click [here](#).

Youth PROMISE Grants: The JJDP Act re-names and reauthorizes a competitive grant program under Title V, the Youth Promise Grants.

- States receiving a grant shall sub-grant funds and give a priority to those applicants that demonstrate ability in developing data-driven prevention plans, employing evidence-based prevention strategies, and conducting program evaluations to determine impact and effectiveness.

² Paragraph 34(d) states that an evidenced-based practice or program includes a practice or program that “has been scientifically tested and proven effective through randomized control studies or comparison group studies and with the ability to replicate and scale.”

- Sub-grantees must spend funds to implement a plan to carry out delinquency prevention programs in the community, which includes the evidence or promising evaluation on which such delinquency prevention programs are based.

To read more about prevention programs covered under the law, click [here](#).

Accountability: The JJDPa requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study that examines, among other things, whether “the evidence-based information used to justify such delinquency prevention programs was used with fidelity by local entities in accordance with the approach used to find the evidence.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Government Evidence-Based Clearinghouses

- The National Institute of Justice’s [CrimeSolutions.gov](#) is a web-based clearinghouse of programs and practices that uses rigorous research to inform practitioners and policymakers about what works in criminal justice, juvenile justice, and crime victim services.
- The U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention hosts a [Model Program Guide](#) that contains information about evidence-based juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs.
- The youth.gov [Program Directory](#) features evidence-based programs whose purpose is to prevent and/or reduce delinquency or other problem behaviors in young people.

Non-government Evidence-Based Clearinghouses and Directories

- The Pew-MacArthur [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#) brings together information on the effectiveness of social policy programs from nine national clearinghouses.
- [Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development](#) provides a registry of evidence-based positive youth development programs designed to promote the health and well-being of children and teens.
- [Social Programs That Work](#) maintains a list of programs with credible evidence from well-conducted randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of important effects on people’s lives.

This fact sheet was prepared by:



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