

# COMPREHENSIVE MULTI- AGENCY JUVENILE JUSTICE ACTION PLAN

COUNTY OF SAN BENITO



PREPARED BY SAN BENITO JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL  
MARCH 2013

# **SAN BENITO COUNTY LEADERSHIP**

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## Table of Contents

### Table of Contents

<b>San Benito County Board of Supervisors</b> .....	2
<b>San Benito County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council</b> .....	2
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	3
<b>Community Overview</b> .....	5
<b>San Benito County Juvenile Justice System</b> .....	6
<b>Vision</b> .....	7
<b>Mission Statement</b> .....	7
<b>Strategies and Focus Areas</b> .....	7
<b>Goal</b> .....	8
<b>Guiding Principals</b> .....	8
<b>Existing Continuum of Services for the Juvenile Justice System</b> .....	9
<b>Primary Service Providers</b> .....	10
<b>Assessment of Current Services</b> .....	12
<b>Modifications to Original CMJJP</b> .....	15
<b>New Collaborative- CAN</b> .....	16
<b>Modifications to the Existing Collaborations</b> .....	17
<b>Updated Programs of Primary Service Providers</b> .....	19
<b>Programs Designed to Identify Needs</b> .....	21
<b>Intervention</b> .....	21
<u>Early Intervention Program Description</u> .....	21
<b>Treatment</b> .....	23
<u>The Children’s Mental Health Services Act (WIC 5852)</u> :.....	23
<u>The Linda Mood Bell Reading Program</u> : .....	23
<b>Supervision</b> .....	24
<u>The Interagency Placement Team</u> : .....	24
<u>Truancy Program</u> : .....	24
<b>Suppression/Custody</b> .....	24
<u>Gang Intervention</u> :.....	24
<b>Program Description</b> .....	25
<b>Project Goal</b> .....	30
<b>Objectives</b> .....	30
<b>Strategies</b> .....	31



## **Community Overview**

Since 2000, San Benito County has made concerted efforts to meet growing challenges in the areas of juvenile justice despite prodigious population increases. While San Benito County is a small county (population size of 56,072), the Department of Finance reports San Benito County to be among the fastest-growing areas of California through the year 2011. In 2010, San Benito County was ranked as the fourth most Economically Distressed County nationally by the AP Economic Stress Index and was listed as the fifth most distressed county in the nation with unemployment climbing to 24% in 2011. San Benito County is primarily an agricultural county with a predominantly Latino population. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 56% of San Benito residents are Latino; 38% are Caucasian; and the other 6% are comprised of other race/ethnicity groups. Historically, Latinos have comprised 60.6% of youth enrolled in public school; 72% of the jail population; and 82% of the juvenile hall population.

In the past ten years, San Benito County demographics have changed. Part of the county has become a bedroom community for the Silicon Valley, as high-income workers seek a lower cost of living and affordable housing. As a result of this trend, there has been a rapid rise in the number of higher income, predominately Caucasian individuals living in the county. This trend has created the development of a border divide in the community in household income. In some areas, housing prices tripled during the real estate boom period, creating two separate and distinct groups of people living in this small county. Unfortunately, the development of these two different socio-economic groups has contributed to an increase in crimes and gang-related activities in the county. An increasing number of parents are commuting outside of the county for employment purposes, which results in less supervision of their children in the evenings.

San Benito County experiences a high degree of unsupervised youth, chronic truancy, and a low law enforcement presence related to a dearth of resources. As San Benito County continues to evolve from a rural community to a more suburban profile, the increasing pressures associated with urban growth are becoming more apparent. The severity of the gang problem in San Benito County is evident through several measures. San Benito County residents have identified gang issues as their single most pressing concern in the community, and the FBI's 2011 *National Gang Threat Assessment* confirms that the California's Central Coast is heavily gang infested. Local law enforcement identifies Hollister as home to a serious and violent multi-generational gang population, where children are raised to embrace and live the gang lifestyle.

### **San Benito County Juvenile Justice System**

Since 2001, San Benito County Juvenile Justice stakeholders have been committed to implementing evidence-based approaches and promising practices to promote positive youth development and juvenile delinquency. San Benito County recognizes that necessary components for reducing recidivism include: extensive work with the families of offending minors, counseling to change the thinking processes of offending minors, disrupting the at-risk minor's negative peer relationships, and improving the minor's participation in school and/or employment entities. To simultaneously address these areas minors must be immersed in services that promote positive values and diminish the delinquent influences in their lives. The aggregate approach of utilizing local community agencies and resources to positively affect minors and their families is the key to reducing the prospect of future failure.

Research indicates that timely and appropriate interventions with youthful offenders can reduce recidivism. Contemporary studies indicate that a brief but vital window of opportunity exists to intervene. By incorporating family and individual counseling, appropriate and prompt

consequences, consistent follow-up contacts, and the participation of all community stakeholders, the efficient and successful use of community resources can be significantly improved toward achieving reduced recidivism. It is important to recognize that prevention programs alone will not deter all youths from participating in delinquent behavior. Therefore, intervention programs that target existing juvenile delinquents and successfully intervene continue to be a viable solution. Successful early intervention can save enormous costs in arresting, convicting, and incarcerating serious offenders at a later date.

### **Vision**

The goal of the San Benito County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) is to develop the competencies, skills, and interests of “at risk” children, whereby lessening the lure of the gang culture.

### **Mission Statement**

To promote positive youth development and prevent juvenile justice delinquency through shared responsibility, collaboration, and coordinated action.

### **Strategies and Focus Areas**

- Prevention- Building positive services for youth to keep them from entering the juvenile justice system.
- Intervention and Treatment- Providing appropriate and necessary services and programs when youth enter the juvenile justice system to reduce recidivism.
- Supervision and Custody- Providing appropriate consequences, as well as safe and secure detention for youth escalating in the system and/or committing serious offenses.

- Shared Responsibility- Coming together as a collective team to develop cross-system communication, multi-agency partnerships, joint responses, services and policies that support youth no matter what door they enter in our county.
- Collaboration- working in partnerships with government entities and community organizations to maximize resources, eliminate duplication of services, and develop strength-based services to support youth in the communities throughout San Benito County.

### **Goal**

The Goal of the CMJJP is to offer responses that are: swift, certain responses to relatively minor offenses; intermediate sanctions to more serious and/or repeat offenders; and residential programs and secure correctional facilities for those persons posing a serious threat to public safety. Within this continuum, the CMJJP strives to remain dynamic in implementation; to continually assess programs and systems; and recognize the importance of being able to modify, adjust, and reprioritize goals to achieve results.

### **Guiding Principals**

The Guiding principles of the CMJJP to meet these goals include:

1. Immediate, certain, and consistent.
2. Based on individualized assessment of the youth's risk and needs.
3. Provide a continuum of graduated sanctions and treatment modalities that serve the juvenile's needs, enforce accountability, and ensure public protection.
4. The actions must involve and respond to the needs of victims, families, schools, and the community.



5. The actions shall offer the least restrictive response while remaining consistent with public safety.
6. The response shall employ a case management approach from intake through discharge.

### **Existing Continuum of Services for the Juvenile Justice System**

San Benito County has demonstrated an impressive pattern of unifying local juvenile justice resources in a highly collaborative and integrated manner. San Benito County created the Community-Agency-School-Team (CAST) in 1992 to facilitate the collaborative efforts of county agencies. This program provided the working foundation for development of policies, protocols, and programs and was comprised of representatives from education, law enforcement, health and social services. CAST formulated a strategic plan in 1993 to guide the county's juvenile crime enforcement and reduction efforts that resulted in many positive changes within the community.

The Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) was formed in late 1996 and coordinated community, agency and school plans that supported the implementation of a comprehensive delinquency prevention, intervention, suppression, and education program. Other early JJCC objectives included developing specific training plans directed at school and public agency staff and community representatives who assured implementation and evaluation of appropriate delinquency prevention strategies. The Local Action Plan (LAP) was developed to facilitate this collaborative effort as well as to assure a continuum of graduated appropriate sanctions, combined with corresponding graduated treatment services. The LAP attempted to provide a range of responses to juvenile crime in identified key areas that included prevention, intervention, incarceration, and suppression. San Benito County utilized the basic principles of the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Comprehensive Strategy for serious,

violent, and chronic juvenile offenders as a foundation for the LAP. The LAP was reviewed and updated until it evolved into the county's Comprehensive Multiagency Juvenile Justice Plan (CMJJP).

In May 2003, the Community Assistance Network (CAN) emerged from a strategic planning session held at San Juan Oaks in Hollister, California. CAN is an aggregate assemblage of San Benito education, business, government and non-profit entities. The Leadership Team, a volunteer group, is comprised of San Benito County agencies, organizations, and residential representatives that are devoted to policy and community change that will promote adherence to a collaborative approach to providing services for local youth and their families.

### **Primary Service Providers**

The current JJCC was formed by utilizing already existing positive, long-standing collaborative relationships amongst various service providers in San Benito County. These relationships include:

- **County Court system** consists of two judges who preside over the Superior Court's two departments and Juvenile Court.
- **District Attorney's Office** consists of the district attorney, three deputy district attorneys and two investigators.
- **The Probation Department** consists of Thirteen Probation Officers and three Probation Aids. The Probation Department's continuum of responses includes pre-sentence investigations, informal and formal supervision of offenders, and supervision of the Electronic Monitoring Program.

- **San Benito County Sheriff's Office** patrols and has investigation units that service the rural communities in San Benito County, such as San Juan Bautista and the smaller outlying areas.
- **The Hollister Police Department** is the host agency of a CAL GRIP grant and they partner with many local agencies on such programs as the Olweus Bullying Prevention and Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) in local schools. Since the economic downturn, several prevention programs such as the Juvenile Impact Program (JIP), Explorer's Program and the Graffiti Abatement Program have been placed on hold. The Hollister Police Department shows 198 service calls to the San Benito High School during the 2010 school year. Of these 198 service calls, 141 were for 415 (PC), peace disturbance that typically were gang related; 46 calls were for 242 (PC), assault and battery, and 11 calls for 594 (PC) vandalism.
- **San Benito County Behavioral Health Department** provides an excellent array of child service programs. Children's Systems of Care provides for continued collaborative efforts in case staffing and management of at-risk children. They provide substance abuse treatment and referrals, case management, and residential placement. They also provide an out-patient educational treatment program for substance-abusing youth and co-facilitate the Juvenile Hall Dual Diagnostic Group. They also provide a site for a 52-week Batterers' Intervention Class.
- **The San Benito County Health and Human Services Department** provides the Independent Living Skills Program, Cal Works Program, parenting classes, family and individual counseling services, The Pre-and Peri-Natal Services Program, A Peri-natal outreach and education program, sibling and group education, The Storks Nest program,

The Family Wellness Program, and The Public Health Substance Abuse Child Protective Services (PAC) Team for case management of substance abusing pregnant or parenting mothers. Child Protective Services provides case management services for youth in residential treatment who are dependents of the Court.

- **The San Benito County Office of Education** provided the School Attendance Review Board (SARB). SARB was the mechanism through which the San Benito Probation Department identified truants for the Probation Department Truancy Abatement Program (TAP) if the children were transferred to one of the three alternative schools. Young children were not appropriate for alternative school placement, and parents were not held accountable for their lack of compliance with education laws. The Probation Department had participated in the mediation process without funding or an ability to provide services to schools beyond those contracted with the Office of Education at the alternative schools. SARB was replaced by the District Attorney's Office Truancy Mediation Program in the 2002/03 school year.

### **Assessment of Current Services**

The Community's needs and priorities established by the CAN and the JJCC for application for the CMJJP are as follows:

1. **Diversion Programs:** Implement an early diversion program directed at first-time, low risk, non-violent offenders.
2. **Alternatives to Incarceration Programs:** Focus on reducing out-of-county placements and commitments through implementation of family preservation programs, life skills workshops, and counseling.

3. **Institutional Aftercare Program:** Develop a post-custody transitional program, to include a comprehensive individualized need assessment and a case management plan.
4. **Neighborhood/Community Activities:** Develop a strategic plan for creation of neighborhood youth services in high-risk neighborhoods.
5. **Community Counseling and Support Groups:**
  - a. Identify and collaborate with existing resources;
  - b. Facilitate life-skill workshops.
6. **After School Activities:** Develop affordable and accessible recreational activities.
7. **Parenting Skills and Support Services:** Design and Implement a collaborative adult education program in parenting skills.
8. **Youth Job Skills:** Develop and implement a job skills and search techniques program.
9. Address **Emerging Gang Problems** in our schools.

By identifying key issues and risk factors, several programs have been developed under the JJCC umbrella to effectively meet the community needs as listed above. Enumerated as the top priority was the need for a juvenile early diversion program for first time, low risk, and non-violent offenders. This led to the development of the JIP between the Hollister Police Department and the San Benito County Probation Department. The JIP targeted low-risk, first-time delinquent offenders or minors referred by the schools or parents due to behavioral difficulties. The minors and parents attending the JIP experienced a variety of activities, workshops, counseling, and field trips tailored to violence reduction, gang reduction, substance abuse reduction, and building positive leadership skills. An ongoing family wellness course that aimed to build positive communication skills was the core component of the JIP, as well as a mentoring program linking juveniles to successful members of the community. Unfortunately,

the JIP is currently suspended due to a lack of funding and staff shortages at the Hollister Police Department.

The Probation Department is currently operating a Juvenile Review Board (JRB) aimed to provide appropriate consequences to first time offenders. First time offenders are referred to the JRB by their Probation Officer once the minor and their parents or guardians have met with the Officer for an intake appointment. The Board, which is comprised of three members of the San Benito County community, is required to provide sanctions to the juvenile. These sanctions include appropriate punishments such as writing an essay, community service, monitoring school progress, and/or any necessary referrals to counseling. The Board also identifies concerning issues the juvenile and their family may be exhibiting, such as gang involvement. After the juvenile successfully completes their contract, their case is closed without the juvenile ever needing to attend a court hearing or becoming further entrenched in the delinquency process. The Juvenile Review Board has proven to be a successful diversion program and has reduced the number of juveniles who are adjudged Wards of the Court and placed on intensive supervision. In 2011, 90% of the cases were closed successfully and in 2012, 75% of cases were closed successfully. The Juvenile Review Board is often viewed as an earlier intervention than the EIP. Listed as the second priority was the need for alternatives to incarceration programs. The Probation Department's Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP) has been effective as an alternative to incarceration. The EIP was also developed due to the need of alternatives to incarceration. The EIP addressed current needs/gaps in the integrated approach by the community agencies in response to juvenile crime. As previously mentioned, the first principle in the CMJJP is that the response shall be immediate, certain, and consistent; the second principle is that the response shall be based on individualized assessment of the youth's risks and

needs. This is accomplished with individualized case plans for each minor following an in-depth assessment. The principle of graduated sanctions and treatment is adhered to with the use of community service, home supervision, and electronic monitoring. Emphasis is consistently placed on keeping victims informed and focused on reinstatement needs. The fifth and sixth principles are successfully dealt within the community since the care for all wards of the court begin with a case plan.

On December 14, 2000, the JJCC met to review the unmet priorities. It was felt that the EIP was an excellent method of meeting those remaining goals. The EIP continues to meet all of these priorities due to its emphasis on early identification of risk for resource allocation, comprehensive treatment matching for the entire family, and reduced caseload size for improved accountability. The family-focused case planning is particularly important given the parents' demonstrated inability to adequately supervise and discipline their children. In addition, youth are immersed in valuable programs and activities, and home supervision and electronic monitoring are utilized to provide incapacitation at a level that facilitated youth competency development. Funding for substance abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and tutoring based on individualized learning styles is provided as the prevalence of these issues with the EIP participants became more apparent.

In accordance with the guiding principles of the CMJJP, developing effective programs, such as the JIP and the EIP, expedited the implementation of intervention strategies identified as a service gap of the San Benito County's Juvenile Justice System.

### **Modifications to Original CMJJP**

Modifications and endorsements of the originally adopted CMJJP by the JJCC focused on low reading ability and tutoring. The Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) program was added for legal

education but was abandoned when JJCPA funding was reduced. The Probation Department has been operating a truancy abatement program with all minors transferred to the at-risk schools of Pinnacles Community Court School, Santa Ana Continuation School, and San Andreas Opportunity School made by contract with the County Office of Education. All primary grade truants and most middle school truants are not eligible for these services but would benefit from a probation case manager assessing school engagement issues before the children fall so far behind academically that they become marginalized into the negative lifestyles observed beginning at age 14.

### **New Collaborative- CAN**

Along with the development of new programs, there has been an ongoing effort by CAN members to reassess and reprioritize the community needs and risks. The synergy of CAN is driven by the premise that every child, regardless of race, creed, or economic standing deserves to live in an asset-rich community that is safe and supportive and that provides adequate basic needs such as food, shelter, health services, a sound education, and a supportive family system. CAN has selected the needs of youth and their families as its central focus. CAN is an aggregate assemblage of San Benito County agency and organization representatives that are devoted to policy and community change that will result in an ongoing collaborative approach to providing services for local youth and their families.

The CAN strategic planning process began with a grant to the San Benito County Office of Education from the California Department of Education Region V Health Start and After School Partnerships office. The purpose behind the planning process was to explore opportunities to develop comprehensive and systematic solutions of service delivery for the youth of San Benito County and their families, a need that is consistently resonated throughout the community.



Successfully maximizing the collective resources of the city, county, schools, community-based organizations and the businesses in order to streamline the provision of the programs benefiting youth and their families is timely and appropriate in our troubled economic times. CAN was formed and a collaborative approach, most important with regular information sharing, was adopted.

The JJCC has developed strong partnerships and committed agreements to work collectively and across systems on behalf of children and youth. Partners include, but are not limited to:

- Hollister Police Department
- Hollister City Council
- San Benito County Board of Supervisors
- San Benito County Probation Department
- San Benito County Sheriff's Department
- San Benito County District Attorney's Office
- San Benito County Behavioral Health
- San Benito County Health and Human Services
- Hollister Youth Alliance- Community Based Organization
- Hollister School Districts
- San Benito County Office of Education
- San Benito High School

### **Modifications to the Existing Collaborations**

Given shrinking resources, it became imperative that the JJCC collaborate more effectively in implementing the CMJJP. This required expanded partnerships with the CAN for recommendations and the advancement of strategies on juvenile justice policy. As a result, the

role of the JJCC, the Probation Department, CAN, and other partnerships adopt the following approach to strengthen public and private partnerships:

1. Develop a Comprehensive Multi-Juvenile Justice Plan (CMJJP):
  - a. Solicit input and participation from community partners and stakeholders.
  - b. Review relevant data to identify trend and gaps in the system.
  - c. Identify best practices, promising approaches, and evidence-based services and policies.
  - d. Develop priority strategies, focus areas, and services.
  - e. Develop outcome measures.
2. Ensure public participation, awareness, and support of the Juvenile Justice Plan:
  - a. Gain support from the media, business, grass roots entities, and others to convey the vision of CMJJP in as broad a manner as possible.
  - b. Develop appropriate and relevant means for sharing information and engaging communities.
3. Coordinate efforts with other initiatives serving youth and families:
  - a. Involve youth families in program design.
  - b. Develop and train probation staff in the use of evidence-based risk and needs assessments.
4. Develop a comprehensive Management Information Sharing System (MIS) for capturing and analyzing risk/needs assessment data:
  - a. Develop formal linkages, coordinate and collaborate with agencies and systems that provide services to at-risk-youth, i.e., Probation, Child Protective Services, Behavioral Health, Non-profit agencies, etc.

- b. Use existing or sponsor forums for youth to participate in planning and implementing services.
  - c. Promote expectations of healthy lifestyles to positively impact community norms using art, culture awareness, the media, and educational presentations.
5. Utilize federal, state, local partnerships, and collaborative efforts to highlight prevention and early intervention strategies and services:
  - a. Blend federal, state, and local funds to support staff positions related to the comprehensive strategy.
  - b. Partner with other government agencies to blend resources, maximize funding, and enhance and expand services.

### **Updated Programs of Primary Service Providers**

- **District Attorney's Office:** They began the Truancy Mediation Program in the 2002/03 school year. Prior to the implementation of this program, individual districts participated in a School Attendance Review Board (SARB) process that had no enforcement ability. SARB was the mechanism through which the San Benito Probation Department identified truants for the Probation Department's Truancy Abatement Program (TAP) if the children were transferred to one of the three alternative schools in San Benito County.
- **Probation Department:** The Probation Department utilizes community service monitoring and referrals, educational workshops, the JIP, the JRB, parenting classes, Thinking for a Change, and the EIP that includes a tutoring component. The Probation Department works closely with outside agencies to provide such services such as gang

awareness forums. The most recent one occurred in October of 2011 and was attended by approximately 600 community members.

The Probation Department also operates the Juvenile Hall for those youth pending court hearings or placements, and those offenders who are required to serve incarceration for a limited period. Other clients include those youth placed in group or foster homes, virtually all of which are located out-of-county, and those with commitments to the California Department of Juvenile Justice. The Juvenile Hall's many programs include Life Skills, year-round school, religious programs, substance abuse and mental health counseling, Planned Parenthood, an exercise/workout program, as well as NA/AA meetings. The Juvenile Hall's population is on the decline from 19 minors on average each day in 2009 to 14 minors on average in 2012. The intake total in 2012 was 162 minors, which is a steep decline from 265 minors in 2009.

The Probation Department utilizes an Interagency Placement Team approach to review out-of-home placements for appropriateness, level of care, and placement alternatives. The team is comprised of Child Protective Services, the Probation Department, Substance Abuse, CASA, and Mental Health program directors and department heads. In an effort to reduce out of home placements, the Probation Department operates a Juvenile Intensive Supervision Program (JISP), an intensive case management unit to keep children unified with their families whenever possible. This program has been effective as an alternative to incarceration. In addition, juveniles placed on JISP are given referrals to programs such as the Community Work Service Program; Hollister Youth Alliance programs such as: El Joven Noble and Familia; tutoring with Paula Norton using the Linda Mood Bell curriculum; as well as the Probation Department's Los Abuelos Program. The juvenile's parents are referred to a Redirecting Children's Behavior parenting course which is taught by Probation Officers.

- **San Benito County Sheriff's Office:** The Sheriff's Department has been contracted by San Benito High School to have a School Resource Officer on campus and they have also served San Andreas High School. The Sheriff's Department also operates a successful Explorer's Program, which is a program designed for career oriented young adults interested in becoming a member of law enforcement.
- **Hollister Police Department:** They are working on a Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) program and Teen Abuse Prevention (TAP) program along with local school districts and Community Solutions. The Police Department currently has a grant funded Gang Officer position and that officer will soon be providing on-site staff training and awareness/recognition at local schools. This officer will also begin visiting school sites regularly to support staff and provide gang forums to the community.

## **Programs Designed to Identify Needs**

### **Intervention**

#### EIP Description

The San Benito Probation Department prevention attitude is focused on replacing the attraction of gangs and at risk behavior with a sense of cultural pride, a sense of belonging, and knowledge of a world outside of their neighborhood that instills a hope for the future. Probation Officers have for many years assisted youth by providing transportation to attend a number of cultural events. Examples of these activities include the El Teatro Campesino plays, trips to college and university sites, the San Jose Tech Center, as well as to state prisons and employee preparedness events. In addition to the cultural events, the Probation Department provides gang presentations at local schools.

In the summer of 2008, the Probation Department began the Abuelos program, which is coordinated by 2 to 4 Probation Officers. These Officers teach workshops on such topics as nutrition, self-esteem and anger management. The juveniles also participate in a genealogical research component that is sponsored and aided by the local Church of Latter Day Saints.

Juveniles are able to use state of the art genealogical software to locate their ancestors and this research is included in a report based on their heritage. The theory behind the Abuelos Programs, which serves at-risk offenders placed on the EIP, JISP and general supervision caseloads, is that a cultural awareness and insight into one's heritage, family and background will help facilitate a positive change in the at-risk youth and their relationship with their family. A closer connection with family will help reduce their delinquent activity and gang affiliation. Parents and guardians of these juveniles participate in a parenting class taught by a Probation Officer and take part in a videotaped interview with their child regarding their upbringing. This program is funded on a limited budget and Officers flex their work hours, often donating time, to make the program a success.

A major part of the intervention process for the Probation department is the EIP funded through the State of California's Juvenile Justice Prevention Act. Two Probation Officers are assigned to this program and provide participants immersion in programs and activities to discover and bring out competencies and interests. The Early Intervention Program continues to provide supervision for approximately 15 minors who are 15 years of age or younger at the time they commit their first criminal act, and who have 3 or more profile factors that place them at risk of becoming chronic offenders. These factors include:

- **Family Problems** (abuse, criminal family members, a lack of parental supervision and control).

- **Significant Problems at school** (truancy, failing more than one course, or recent suspension or expulsion.
- **A pattern of drug and/or alcohol use.**
- **Delinquent peers, chronic runaway or a pattern of stealing.**

## **Treatment**

### The Children's Mental Health Services Act (WIC 5852)

The Children's Mental Health Services Act (WIC 5852) establishes an interagency system of care for children with serious and emotional behavioral disturbances. San Benito County's local Behavior Services Department implemented comprehensive system for the delivery of mental health services to children with seriously emotional disturbances ant to their families. The following members of the multidisciplinary services team was developed and includes Behavioral Health, San Benito County Probation Department, Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protective Services) and the Public Health Division; County Department of Education and all school districts within the County. This system serves to offer a full range of integrated behavioral, social, health and mental health services including applicable educational services to seriously emotionally disturbed and special needs children. Social Services Members meet once a week and are responsible for identifying the educational, health, or social services needs of a child and his or her family, and for developing a plan to address those needs. Members of the team are trained in the confidentiality and information sharing provisions under the law.

### The Linda Mood Bell Reading Program

A comprehensive reading program is currently in place which has been a tremendous success having not only increased individual reading levels but also provided confidence and willingness

to participate in other workshops and exercises. The largest challenge for the Probation Department was a **20% decrease** in funding by the state.

## **Supervision**

### The Interagency Placement Team

The Probation Department utilizes an Interagency Placement Team to review out of home placements for appropriateness, level of care, and residence location. The team is comprised of Child Protective Services, Probation, and Mental Health Staff members.

### Truancy Program

The San Benito County Probation Department previously had a full time Truancy Officer assigned to the Pinnacles Community School. This officer served as a liaison between the department and school officials and was responsible for ensuring that the probation youth attend school daily by providing daily transportation to and from school.

## **Suppression/Custody**

### Gang Intervention

In 2004/2005 the Grand Jury report identified the Probation Department as a leader in the San Benito County law enforcement circle. Several members of the Probation Department regularly participate in the Hollister Gang Task Force Meetings. Suppression is accomplished primarily through monitoring and searched of probationer's persons, residences, and vehicles. Each probationer is open to search by probation and law enforcement. The Probation Department is especially diligent when supervising gang-related individuals. Often time Probation Officers are contacted by local and outside law enforcement agencies for assistance when they are conducting gang related investigations.



## **Program Description**

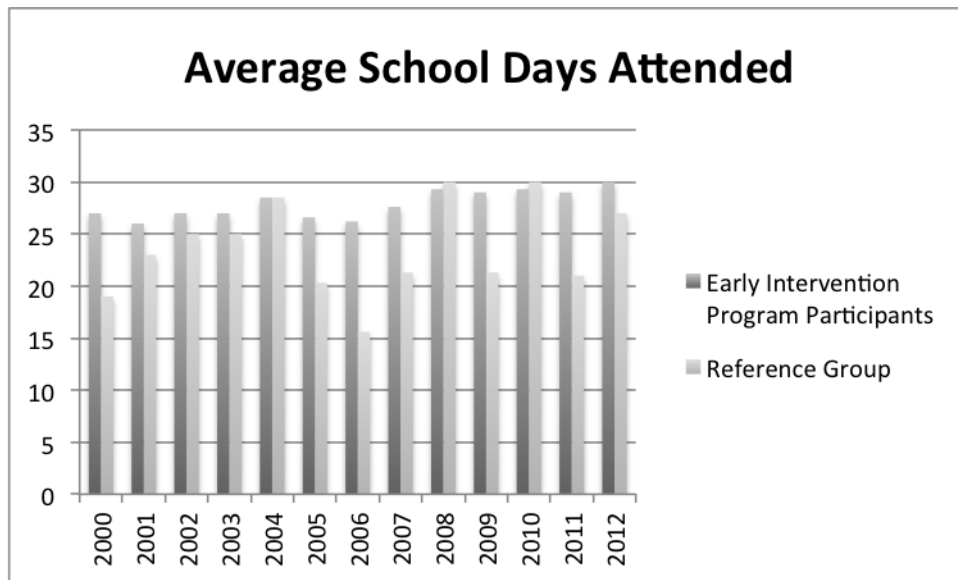
The proposed Early Intervention Program entails the CMJP's comprehensive criminal justice strategy and effectively utilizes community resources to successfully achieve the objective of reducing recidivism rates. The successful program that San Benito County would like to implement is based on the Orange County Probation Department's "8% Problem" study. Their corresponding *Early Intervention Problem* focuses not only on high-risk youth, but extends to the minor's entire family. This is particularly noted since the parent's inability to adequately supervise and discipline their children are a common factor amongst these minors. It was determined that even a small reduction in the rate of chronic juvenile recidivism could pay major dividends to individual families and the safety of communities for years to follow.

The overall philosophy and principles of San Benito County's Early Intervention Program is based on the Orange County's Program, nonetheless due to departmental size, available resources, and funding issues there will be some significant differences. One of those differences is that our program will not have a designated "site" facility. This may cause a somewhat different outcome from the Orange County's program however, the differences will be minimized considering that most of the minors will be attending the Pinnacles Community Court School and will therefore be at one site and easy to monitor. Another difference is that San Benito County strives to collaborate with local agencies and community based organizations to continue to create and strengthen programs that will impact this population of minors and their families.

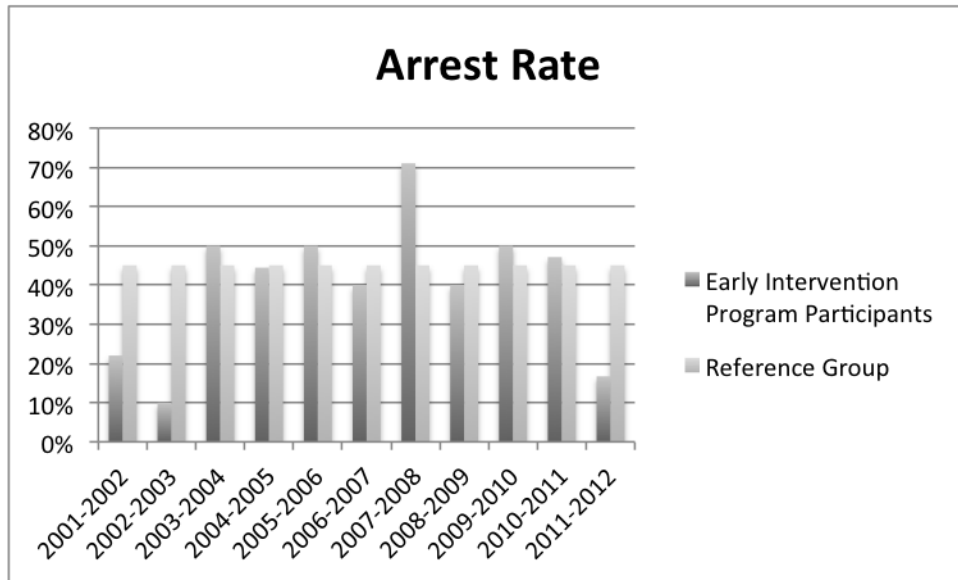
Since 1996, Orange County and seven other California Counties have been participating in a state-funded program to evaluate the effectiveness of the principles embodied in San Benito County's Early Intervention Program. The evaluation consists of a true experimental design in which eligible wards are randomly assigned to the program (treatment group) or to a standard

probation services (reference group). Statewide results for these wards, although still preliminary, indicate that this program is effective at meeting its desired principles. Locally, San Benito County has witnessed positive results.

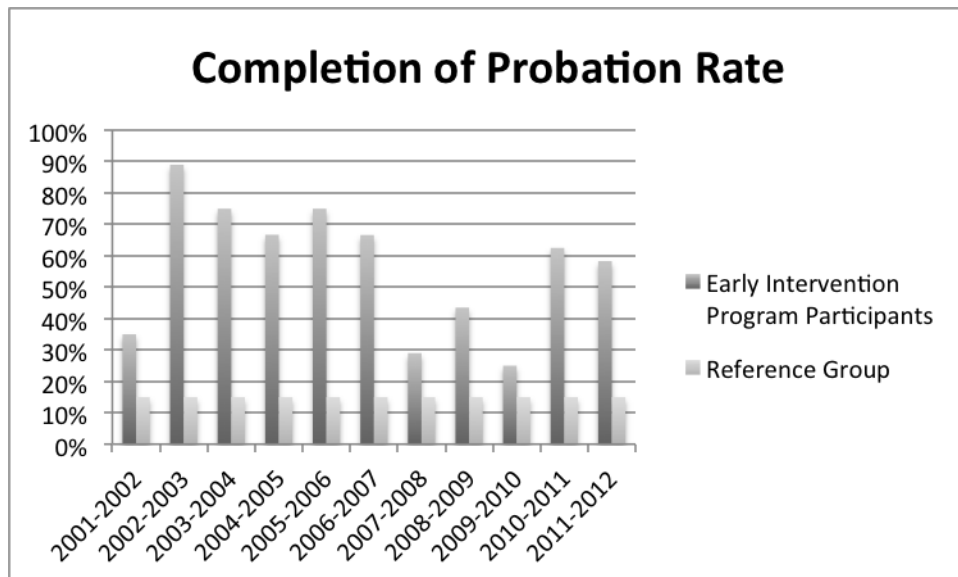
- **Increase in the average amount of schools days attended in the EIP group:** Since 2009, San Benito County has witnessed an increase in the average school days attended within the EIP participants relative to San Benito County's reference group as demonstrated below:



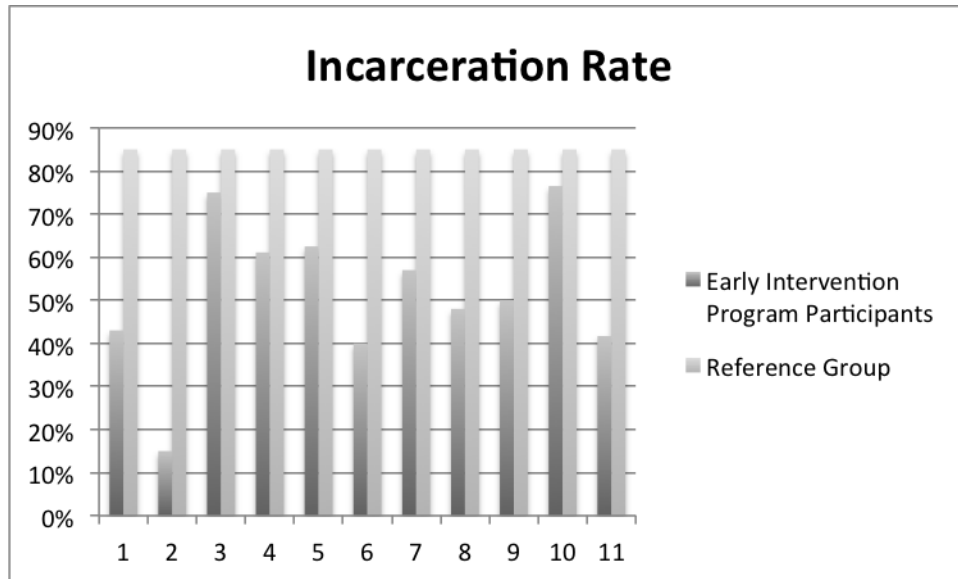
- **Reduction in Arrest Rate:** San Benito County has witnessed an extreme arrest rate reduction amongst EIP participants for the year 2012 in comparison to San Benito Counties reference group as demonstrated below:



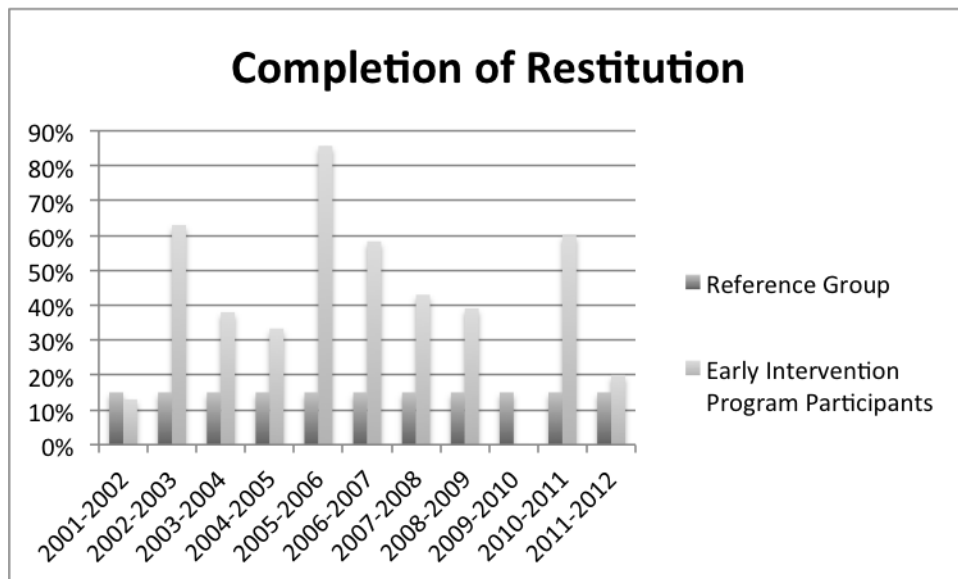
- Increase in the amount of EIP that successfully complete probation:** Since 2009, San Benito County EIP participants have also produced a higher percentage of juveniles who successfully completed their probation in contrast to San Benito County's reference group as demonstrated below:



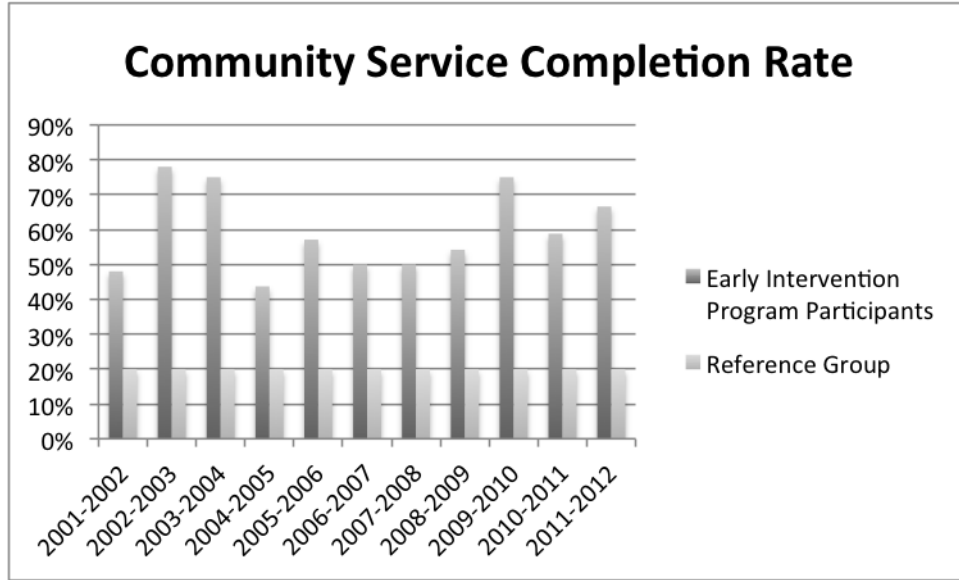
- Reduction in Incarceration Rate:** On average, EIP participants have produced lower incarceration rates relative to the reference group in San Benito County as demonstrated below:



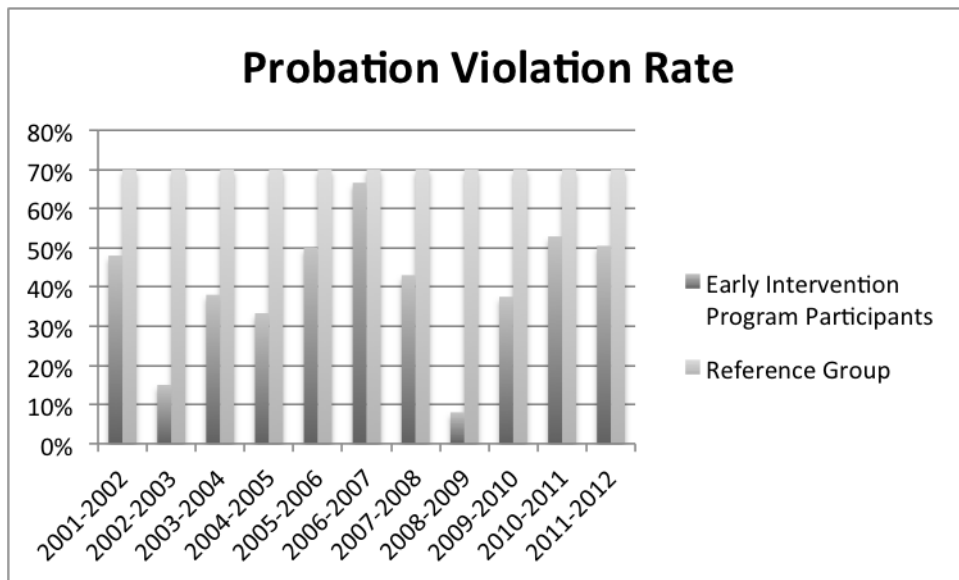
- Increase Completion of Restitution:** Over all, EIP participants have completed restitution conditions more consistently in comparison to San Benito County's reference group as demonstrated below:



- Increase of Completion of Court Ordered Community Service:** The EIP participant group has been more successful in completing their court-ordered community service relative to San Benito County's reference group as shown below:



- Decrease in the Probation Violation Rate:** San Benito County's EIP participants have produced a lower probation violation rate relative to the San Benito County reference group since 2009 as shown below:



**Selection Process:**

All minors referred to the Probation Department for criminal charges will be assessed at intake. Those minors who are on probation, who are living at home and are receiving their first or second referral for criminal charges will be evaluated to determine whether or not they meet the eligibility criteria for participation in the Early Intervention Program. The program will utilize an evidence based juvenile risk assessment scale. The risk/need tool will provide a uniform, validated method for identifying and addressing relevant case factors at the earliest practical point.

**Project Goal**

The goal of the San Benito County CMJJP is to reduce recidivism by developing a case plan strategy in the intervention arena with accentuation on strengthening the family, improving school attendance and academics, and teaching positive social values. The objective will continue to be to reduce the number of high-risk youth who become serious, chronic juvenile offenders.

**Objectives**

In reference to the state-mandated measurable outcomes, San Benito County will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Reduce arrests, incarceration, and probation violations by a minimum of 5% within this grant period.
- Reduce the failure to complete community service and restitution responsibilities by a minimum of 5% for this grant period.
- Reduce juvenile recidivism (in the Program) by a minimum of 5% for this year

- Increase school attendance days within the treatment group by a minimum of 5% for this grant year.
- Reduce school disciplinary referrals within the treatment group by a minimum of 5% for this grant year.
- Reduce school suspensions by a minimum of 10% for the treatment group within this grant period.
- The rate of completion of probation is not expected to change.

### **Strategies**

- Utilize the SMART objective to for program evaluation.
- The Multi-Agency team will assess each case and recommend the appropriate series to be included in the case plan.
- Probation officer flexible work schedules.
- Frequent home and school contacts.
- Conducting life-skill workshops and immersing minors in meaningful services and activities.
- The continuum of graduated sanctions will continue to serve as a strategy and aim to include community service hours, home supervision, and electronic monitoring. Incarceration will only be used as a last resort to protect the safety of the community.
- Drug and alcohol assessment by San Benito County Behavioral Health
- Drug and alcohol abuse counseling and/or drug testing by San Benito County Behavioral Health.
- Evaluations and follow-up services with the San Benito County San Benito County Behavioral Health.

- Health screenings and health education by the San Benito County Health Department
- Family counseling provided by Community Solutions or other community based organizations.
- Parenting classes provided by the San Benito County Probation Department or community based organizations.
- Programs, including recreation, life-skill classes, community service, etc. provided by the San Benito County Probation Department.
- Weekend Activities and participation in weekly homework clubs with available tutoring as needed, coordinated by the Probation Department.
- Vocation Skills from the “One Stop Job Services”.
- Employment preparation and employment opportunities from the Employment Development Department.
- Coordinated Information Sharing Systems: Each individual probationer’s suitability in the program and develop the case plans as necessary. A team of representatives from the San Benito County Probation Department, The San Benito County Office of Education, the San Benito County Mental Health Department, the San Benito County Substance Abuse Program, Community Solutions, and the Hollister Police Department will carry out these activities.

The Early Intervention Program will be managed by a Deputy Probation Officer I/II under the direction of the Probation Supervisor for interpretation of law, policy, and procedure. The Project will have oversight by the San Benito County JJCC.



Routine reports by the Chief Probation officer will be made to the JJCC. Additionally, the team's internal resources will be used to maintain open and continual communication with the various stakeholder groups affected by the program outcomes. The relatively small size of involved agencies, and personal contacts among professionals and community members, will serve to minimize communication faults commonly encountered in larger metropolitan areas. The Programs Coordinator will conduct the collection of client data, reports, assessments, and evaluations. Internal monitoring and appropriate tracking systems will be conducted at this level and directed by the supervising probation officer. Monthly summary reports will be forwarded to the Chief Probation Officer.