

## WHAT IS JDAI?

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) was launched in 1992 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The purpose of JDAI is to demonstrate that jurisdictions can establish more effective and efficient systems to accomplish the purposes of juvenile detention without jeopardizing community safety. JDAI is a process, not a conventional program, with a goal to make sure that locked detention is used only when necessary. In pursuing that goal, JDAI restructures the surrounding systems to create improvements that reach far beyond detention alone. JDAI is built on eight core strategies:

- Collaborating between juvenile justice agencies, governmental entities, and community organizations
- Using rigorous data collection and analysis to guide decision making
- Utilizing objective admissions criteria and risk-assessment instruments
- Implementing new or expanded alternatives to detention programs
- Instituting case processing reforms to expedite the flow of cases through the system
- Reducing the number of youth in detention
- Combatting racial and ethnic disparities
- Monitoring and improving conditions of confinement in detention facilities



[www.agimhood.com](http://www.agimhood.com)



[www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/jdai/jdaiconnect/](http://www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/jdai/jdaiconnect/)

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## STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

### OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### Bureau of Victim Assistance Children's Division



### Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

## **JDAI HISTORY**

When the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) launched JDAI, it had two goals in mind. First, was to demonstrate that reforms in the detention phase of the juvenile court process could reduce reliance on confinement significantly with no adverse impact on public safety and no additional net cost to taxpayers. Second, the Foundation hoped that success in detention reform would serve as a catalyst for broader reforms throughout the juvenile justice system. For some time now, the evidence has been overwhelming that JDAI is achieving the first of these goals – safely and substantially reducing detention populations in an ever-expanding number of participating JDAI sites. Increasingly, evidence is mounting that JDAI is also spurring broader reforms in juvenile justice systems.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation is devoted to developing a brighter future for millions of children at risk of poor educational, economic, social and health outcomes. ACEF's work focuses on strengthening families, building stronger communities and ensuring access to opportunity, because children need all three to succeed. AECF advances research and solutions to overcome the barriers to success, help communities demonstrate what works and influence decision makers to invest in strategies based on solid evidence.

Since 1948, these efforts have translated into more informed policies and practices and yielded positive results for larger numbers of kids and families.

## **JDAI IN MISSISSIPPI**

In December 2007, the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) awarded the Office of the Attorney General a grant to replicate the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in three Mississippi counties, with the county youth court as the lead entity. The pilot counties were Adams, Leflore and Washington Counties. In our effort to expand JDAI, Rankin and Harrison counties were added as JDAI sites with funding made available through a Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) from the Department of Public Safety Planning, Office of Justice Programs. Since the launch of the five JDAI sites, the counties of Desoto, Jackson, and Lauderdale counties have been included in training opportunities, site visits, and other JDAI activities.

In January 2012, the Annie E. Casey Foundation awarded the Attorney General's Office a planning grant to implement JDAI statewide. The plan for going to scale in Mississippi was defined as replicating JDAI principles in each county court jurisdiction with a juvenile detention facility. The pivotal goal of scale is to develop a statewide youth detention assessment tool, with the thought that the use of this tool would impact detention decisions on a statewide basis. The goal being that all youth, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual origin will be objectively assessed for risk, without bias, ensuring that only the right youth are detained.

## **JUVENILE JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE**

The JDAI strategy of collaboration is the catalyst for effective reform in any system. Through technical assistance from AECF and strong advocates for juvenile justice reform, the AGO has been successful in coordinating a strong, working statewide collaborative. The collaborative consists of representatives from the five JDAI sites, Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Department of Mental Health, Mississippi Department of Human Services/Division of Youth Services, Mississippi Supreme Court/Administrative Office of Courts, Association of Detention Center Administrators, County/Youth Courts, Youth Court Prosecutors, Youth Court Public Defenders, law enforcement, community-based providers, and other community stakeholders, working to bring about change in the juvenile justice system through policy and procedure changes and legislation. In January 2018, the JDAI statewide collaborative adopted the name Juvenile Justice Collaborative (JJC). The JJC has quarterly meetings.

Through the JJC: advocacy for juvenile justice reform impacted the passage of the Mississippi Juvenile Detention Facilities Licensing Act; the age of juvenile court jurisdiction was raised to include 17 year old youth charged with most felonies; and special education teachers were placed in each juvenile detention facility. These efforts proved that with the right stakeholders at the table, with a voice, positive reform can happen.