

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Results from a Survey of Practitioners in Allegany County

RURAL JUSTICE INSTITUTE

*William Hall, Principal Investigator*

*Karen L. Porter, Co-Investigator*

*Sebastian White, Research Assistant*

The Rural Justice Institute surveyed local professionals in Allegany County to assess the possibilities for creating a coordinated, regional network of agencies to deal with the problems of youth violence.

The work began in early 2002 with a series of focus groups with representatives from law enforcement agencies, the courts, probation, social services, and victim services.

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

73 agencies located in Allegany County were contacted for the survey. They represent the following fields:

- ⌘ Law Enforcement
- ⌘ Probation
- ⌘ Local and County courts
- ⌘ Legal Services
- ⌘ Social Services
- ⌘ Victim Services
- ⌘ Health Services

---

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

703 questionnaires were distributed to administrators, supervisors, and direct service practitioners in 73 agencies (including 31 Town/Village Courts).

144 were returned for an overall response rate of 20%

### RESPONSE RATES

Social Services	63%
Probation	30%
Health Services	25%
Law Enforcement	17%
Courts/Legal Services	15%

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

In full-time position	92%
In administrative/supervisory positions	34%
Prepares a budget for department/division	25%
Works with adolescents/teens	82%
Works with adults	77%
Works with children	58%
Works exclusively with one age group	21%
Works with only two out of three age groups	42%

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Respondents answered questions about:

- ✦ Characteristics of the clients they serve
- ✦ Opinions of the causes of youth violence
- ✦ Intake tools used to gather data on clients
- ✦ Interagency collaboration
- ✦ Points of contact with other agencies in the county
- ✦ Specific needs of the agency in its efforts to prevent youth violence

---

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

When gathering information on cases or clients, we asked,  
“what tools do you use?”

	<u>% of sample using each tool</u>
⊕ Specific Form	87%
⊕ Client Interview	86%
⊕ Documents from other agencies	79%
⊕ Parent Interview	78%
<hr/>	
⊕ Contact Probation Department	70%
⊕ Contact Schools	54%
⊕ Contact Local Police	49%
⊕ Contact Health Care Practitioner	37%
<hr/>	
⊕ Other	14%

---

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Respondents were asked to consider the following list and rank each item from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) in terms of priority they would assign the items in order for their agencies to be as effective as possible in preventing youth violence.

The following table reflects the percentage of the sample assigning level 4 or level 5 to each item:

---

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

This table reflects the percentage of the sample assigning level 4 or level 5 to each item:

---

⌘ Countywide Task Force	74%
⌘ Specific training programs for the identification of high risk youth	61%
⌘ Specific training for mandated child abuse reporters	58%
⌘ Specific training for the identification of domestic violence victims	53%
⌘ Increased opportunities for case management	50%
⌘ Regional conference on youth violence	42%
⌘ Protocol development	41%

---

---

---

## PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

This table reflects the percentage of the sample assigning level 4 or level 5 to each item:

---

⌘ Workshops in writing grants to fund programs	40%
⌘ Workshops in effective collaboration dealing with "turf issues"	38%
⌘ Clearinghouse for data profiling County youth and families	38%
⌘ Common computerized database	36%
⌘ Facilitator for "single point of entry" approach to services	35%
⌘ Workshops in computer and information technology	25%

---

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

## MODES OF INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Making Referrals for my case/clients to other agencies	69%
Sharing Information on clients in case management meetings with members of other agencies in the County	45%
Attending other types of interagency meetings (other than case management meetings) in the County	34%
Using writing protocols (documents formally recognizing the responsibilities of each agency involved in responding to a case/incident or dealing with a client)	30%

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

## MODES OF INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

Sharing information and/or resources with agencies in adjacent counties 22%

Sharing information and/or resources with state agencies 20%

Participating in cross-training sessions to learn how other agencies operate and about the processes/procedures other agencies employ 13%

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WITH FORMAL CONTACTS BY AREA  
(Percentage of respondents with informal contacts by area in parentheses)

Abuse Services: Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Rape, and Assault  
72% (70%)

Children and Youth Services  
72% (60%)

Education Services: literacy, GED, preschool, tutoring, vocational,  
continuing education, mentoring, work experience, remedial/special education  
61% (57%)

Public and Private Schools  
57% (65%)

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WITH FORMAL CONTACTS BY AREA  
(Percentage of respondents with informal contacts by area in parentheses)

Family and Parenting Services: parenting education, family planning, foster care,  
Child care, family support, case management, and respite care  
64% (65%)

Legal Services and the Courts  
73% (56%)

Substance Abuse Services  
57% (62%)

Mental Health Services  
72% (59%)

Law Enforcement  
68% (62%)

---

---

# PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WITH FORMAL CONTACTS BY AREA  
(Percentage of respondents with informal contacts by area in parentheses)

Community Churches and Religious Groups  
28% (74%)

Hospitals  
#% (#%)

Colleges and Universities  
#% (#%)

Local Businesses  
34%

Media Outlets, including newspaper and radio  
#% (#%)