

Alachua County Strategic Plan  
for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Paying Attention to Early Indicators.....  
with Effective Intervention

**Our Vision:  
Prevent Youth Delinquency  
in Alachua County**

Alachua County Juvenile Justice Council  
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## **Background**

The Strategic Plan for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a ten year partnership plan for our community to reduce juvenile crime. This plan was developed as a collaborative effort led by the Alachua County Juvenile Justice Council and is meant to provide a strategic focus for the full array of both government and non profit agencies in Alachua County that are committed to preventing juvenile delinquency and to reducing repeat delinquency.

This planning process began to solicit input and ideas in 2007, through the use of surveys and a review of current juvenile delinquency research. Input and participation has been solicited from a large working group including leadership from the juvenile justice system, elected officials from local governments, public school system staff, community based youth serving agencies, citizen groups and law enforcement from Alachua County to ensure that this plan reflects a shared commitment to preventing juvenile delinquency and reducing violent crime.

Participants in this planning process have reached consensus that effective prevention aimed at the areas of:

- 1. Truancy prevention**
- 2. Teenage pregnancy prevention,**
- 3. Drug/alcohol/substance abuse prevention;**
- 4. Juvenile violence and property crime prevention;**
- 5. Mental Health**
- 6. Academic Tutoring/Mentoring**
- 7. Other: Parenting skills, Job Skills, recreational programming**

supports healthy growth and development of children and is effective in reducing the risk of future delinquency. We recognize that many agencies<sup>1</sup> in Alachua County have a primary responsibility to provide health, welfare, and intervention services for children and families. We support increased attention to, and investment in, *early prevention strategies and effective intervention*. Our commitment is to create a strategic plan that does not end up on a shelf, or that was simply a lengthy exercise in processing ideas. Our commitment to all the people who helped to create, edit, or fund any piece of this Strategic Prevention plan is this:

1. Keep selected and universal prevention approaches outcome and action focused: *To prevent, and offer early intervention to, juvenile delinquency* - setting the stage for implementation.
2. Develop strategies over the continuum of youths' involvement with the justice system.
3. Identify replicable, cost effective, and successful strategies to create a measurable impact.
4. View every contact with juveniles as an opportunity to build on youths' strengths.
5. Plan and deliver services with respect for differences in culture, income, gender, race and special population needs.
6. Develop a culture of collaboration among governmental and non-profit agencies, school professionals, community members and youth.
7. Attend to youths' needs which are linked to criminal behavior while imposing consequences for unacceptable behavior.
8. Work within the established priority frameworks of Dept. of Juvenile Justice, area Law Enforcement Agencies, United Way, and the Alachua County School system
9. Look for "leverage points" to stimulate systemic changes and ensure sustainable change in systems and services that serve at risk youth.
10. Develop sustainable agreements among key partners, who serve the age groups 0-5, 6-12, and 13-18.
11. Ensure data is collected and analyzed to determine measurable results from the strategic plan.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix of a listing of Prevention Intervention Services for Juveniles in Alachua County

### Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Prevention

- Primary prevention efforts are aimed at preventing youth violence *before* it occurs.
- Secondary prevention is the immediate response *after* initial victimization has occurred to deal with short-term consequences. Examples: Child Advocacy Center and the Child Protection Team services.
- Tertiary prevention is long-term responses *after* youth violence has occurred to address the long-term consequences of violence. An example of tertiary prevention could include therapy and treatment for youthful offenders.

Prevention programs are most effective when they are comprehensive, delivered at a high “dosage” and intensity and offered at specific times of need. Likewise, effective prevention programs that are supported by strong organizations with low turnover rates and well trained staff, have the highest rates of success. Use of these systematic approaches to preventing juvenile delinquency/crimes provided the guiding blueprint for the strategic plan.

**Our focus is on increasing the number of effective delinquency prevention efforts that address Protective Factors, those factors that may reduce vulnerability to delinquency and risk for perpetration.** The Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Plan is using the public health model and the ecological model as guiding principles in the development of this primary prevention plan. The public health approach focuses on four principles: (1) health of the public; (2) data-informed decisions; (3) cultural competency - understanding ethnic, minority, and under-served populations; and (4) prevention. This Plan emphasizes efforts and strategies in the first three areas of the ecological model areas: (1) *individual*, (2) *relationship*, (3) *community*, and (4) *societal*.

Individual Protective Factors *decrease* the likelihood that an individual will become a perpetrator based on an *individual's* life experiences, core values, and beliefs.

- Examples include:
  - strong and healthy child-caring relationships
  - healthy parent relationships and conflict resolution skills to support healthy relationships
  - family support
  - the ability to strengthen knowledge and skills
  - resistance to negative peer pressure and potentially dangerous situations

Relationship Protective Factors *decrease* the likelihood that an individual will engage in juvenile delinquency because of *relationships* with peers, intimate partners, family members, etc.

- Examples include:
  - positive peer relationships
  - courageous bystanders
  - clear boundaries and expectations
  - teaching parents to address attitudes and anti-social behaviors that contribute to sexual or physical violence or property crimes

Community Protective Factors *decrease* the likelihood that an individual will become a perpetrator of juvenile delinquency based on *community* environments such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

- Examples include:
  - zero tolerance of partner violence
  - positive school environment
  - strong leaders, role models/mentors that foster coalitions and networks
  - a caring community made up of supportive networks
  - policies against bullying, sexual harassment, and dating violence
  - promoting equality and reducing poverty
  - fostering media coverage about the underlying risk factors and solutions to delinquency

Prevention strategies are often developed based upon the *group for whom* the intervention is intended. Using this type of approach, delinquency interventions can further be divided into the following three categories:

## **Prevention: Who is It For?**

**UNIVERSAL** approaches are designed for *everyone* in the population of interest, regardless of risk, and are *designed to impact individual factors that increase the likelihood of being a perpetrator* of juvenile violence or property crimes. (CDC, 2004).

Examples of Activities Using the Universal Approach:

- developing a curriculum on dating violence
- implementing a faith-based youth education program with sessions that teach about juvenile delinquency/violence and dispel rape myths, attitudes, and beliefs that condone sexual or physical violence or property crimes
- implementing a program for little league and soccer coaches to build/develop skills that condemn a climate of bullying and harassment
- partnering with a local Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to implement a program for parents to address attitudes and behaviors in the children that increase school engagement
- implementing environmental safety measures such as adequate lighting and emergency call boxes
- educating and enforcing policies in our schools, workplace, and youth on how to be a courageous bystander
- establishing policies for middle and high schools to provide peer mediation education to students and staff
- using data to determine where, when, and to whom school drop out prevention/intervention should be focused

**SELECTED** strategies focus on those populations who are at *heightened risk* of becoming perpetrators of youth violence (CDC, 2004).

Example of Activities using Selected strategies:

- developing an awareness campaign for parents that dispel myths, beliefs and attitudes that support teenage pregnancy, truancy, sexual/physical violence or property crimes
- implementing a program for middle and high school students to address alcohol and drug use, and to refuse, or give and receive clear consent before engaging in, sexual activity
- programs that address high-risk components of "Gang life"
- implementing a skill-building program for parents of youth to address attitudes and beliefs that promote sexual or physical violence or property crimes
- using mass media to promote societal norms that support sexual/physical violence/property crimes Prevention

**INDICATED** strategies focus on those who have been victims or perpetrators (CDC, 2004). Individual Indicated Approaches are addressed through INTERVENTION. They are designed for those who are *perpetrators* of sexual or physical violence or property crimes and affect the *individual* factors that increase the likelihood of revictimization or re-perpetration.

**Vision:**  
**Prevent Youth Delinquency in Alachua County**

**Mission:**

*The mission of Alachua County's youth violence prevention partners is to collaborate with and empower organizations and individuals to eliminate juvenile delinquency in our county through education, advocacy and effective service delivery.*

**Broad Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Plan Goals:**

Goal 1. To increase knowledge and awareness of delinquency prevention across the lifespan.

Goal 2. To increase social norms that contribute to strong and healthy parent/child relationships, school engagement, and non–violence.

Goal 3. To advance policies that promote human equality, respect and safety.

Goal 4. To increase capacity\* to prevent youth violence.

Goal 5. To increase funding for youth violence prevention and intervention.

Goal 6. To improve and increase access to youth violence risk factor data and prevention and intervention program data.

## Goal 1

Strategies to increase knowledge and awareness of delinquency prevention across the lifespan:

1.1 a) Reach populations of all ages with: **Truancy; Teenage pregnancy, Drug/alcohol/substance abuse; Juvenile violence and property crime; Mental Health and Mentoring/Tutoring/Job Skills** prevention education programs;

b) Provide age-appropriate resources designed to increase knowledge and awareness of prevention efforts.

1.2 a) Increase the ability of acting out, at risk, and delinquent youth to access alcohol/drug, mental health, and other services addressing delinquency behavior, by community based organizations with an emphasis on home based models of intensive services.

b. Provide age-appropriate, culturally appropriate educational programs, materials, and messages for youth in the community at heightened risk of delinquency.

c) Extend **Truancy; Teenage pregnancy, Drug/alcohol/substance abuse; Juvenile violence and property crime, Mental Health issues, and a need for Mentoring/Tutoring/Job Skills** and offer intensive prevention education programs designed to address the needs of younger siblings of DJJ youth,

1.3 Develop sustained print, TV and radio media campaign tied to Juvenile Prevention awareness Efforts

1.4 Establish/offer screening/training on conflict resolution and effective discipline techniques for parents of youth on DJJ probation.

## Goal 2:

Strategies to increase social norms that contribute to strong and healthy parent/child relationships, school engagement, and non-violence.

Set high expectations for youth, that promote mutual respect and improve conflict resolution skills for youth and parents.

Adopt/adapt and disseminate selected prevention materials for use in Alachua County, to strategic plan partners.

2.1 Review risk and protective factors associated with sexual/physical violence or property crimes perpetration and victimization.

Identify areas or settings of increased risk for delinquency/sexual violence or property crimes.

2.4 Reduce peer support for intimate partner violence among youth in Alachua County.

2.5 Increase youth awareness of, and reporting of, family and intimate partner violence, and provide free follow up support services

2.6 Within 5 years, the steering committee and lead community agencies will adopt at least four youth violence-related Public service messages in their agency, communities, or at the state level, as documented by the written text of the policy and the date of enactment or revision.

Develop messages targeting Juv. prevention areas. Track and disseminate efforts to get PSA messages adopted by churches, crime watch neighborhoods, parents, media, and business owners. \*Messages are examples only, have not been adopted.

a. Want respect? Stay in School.      b. My job as a Parent? Decide what Matters.

c. I make it my business to be a role model... ..For my child...For my community.

d. My pledge to my child: I pledge to help you grow up healthy and safe.

e. Every child is a reason to celebrate family, community, and culture

## Alachua County Strategic Plan for Juvenile Delinquency Prevention

### Goal 3:

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| Strategies to advance <u>policies</u> that promote human equality, respect and safety.  |
| 3.1 Increase the ability of schools to address academic needs of youth at risk, particularly youth of color. a. Annually Review rates and utilization of school suspension policy   |
| 3.2 Expand the number of successful alternative school placements for at risk/acting out youth at elementary, middle, and high school levels.   |
| 3.3 Increase job readiness and self-sufficiency skills of high risk youth and link to regional industry/economy needs.  |
| 3.4 Increase the number of weekly contacts of adults who are trained mentors, helpers or role models in the lives of at risk youth.   |
| 3.5 Increase opportunities for youth and parents/adults to work together in community service projects.   |
| 3.6 Identify youth at greatest risk of dropping out of school.  |
| 3.7 Increase school support for intimate partner violence prevention curriculum.  |
| 3.8 Implement DJJ Blueprint Commission recommendations<br>Rec.2: Every circuit shall have a full Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) that is based on a model that includes substance abuse and mental health screening, comprehensive assessments with follow-up services, detention screening and intake services, educational assessment, community-risk assessments, transportation services, security services, health services, and administration.<br>Rec 9: As an alternative to committing youth to the Department of Juvenile Justice collaborate with the Department of Children and Families, to identify, and establish additional community based health, mental health and substance abuse programs for youth, to allow for judicial placement of youth as a condition of probation.<br>Rec 21: Provide regional workforce boards general revenue earmarked for juvenile justice involved youth employability skill development, residential programs and post commitment. Increase Florida High School/High Tech programs serving juvenile justice involved students with disabilities as well as employer incentives and matching funds to enhance recruitment and retention of juvenile justice involved youth by local business partners. |

### Goal 4:

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| Strategies to increase <u>capacity*</u> to prevent youth violence.  |
| 4.1: Identify, recruit and train <u>leaders</u> for involvement in juvenile delinquency prevention initiatives.   |
| 4.2: Develop, review, and implement annual government agency and community <u>activity work plans</u> for juvenile delinquency prevention.<br>a. Build capacity to intervene promptly with juveniles who commit status offenses.  |
| 4.3: Train and encourage church leaders and volunteers to help prevent juvenile delinquency in the <u>community</u> through church bulletin announcements, youth group discussions, and guest speakers.   |
| 4.4: Expand the number of city, county and state collaborative partnerships that address juvenile justice educational programs<br>DJJ Blueprint Rec 25: Expand use of technology in juvenile justice education programs to include distance learning, access to Florida Virtual High School and post-secondary education within and after school through shared working agreements between school district and the Department of Juvenile Justice. Ensure education technology grants and career academy funding available from the Department of Education are available to juvenile justice educational programs with mobile student populations. |



4.5 Increase ability of service providers to integrate violence prevention into their curriculum.

## Goal 5:

Strategies to increase funding for youth violence prevention and intervention.

5.1 Resources for health, mental health and substance abuse services, as well as oversight of these services within the Juvenile Justice should be adequately funded in Alachua County.

a. Prioritize “gap” areas in local prevention service delivery and develop strategy to address funding issues.

5.2 Expand the number of city, county and state collaborative partnerships that address juvenile prevention

5.3 Collaborate with Partners In Prevention of Substance Abuse (PIPSA) to develop funding request for substance abuse prevention and early intervention services.

5.3 Implement DJJ Blueprint Commission recommendations.

Rec. 23: Recommend the Children and Youth Cabinet direct DJJ, DOE and DCF, in consultation with the Department of Financial Services, create a model template designed to integrate education and treatment services, funded through separate agencies, within a juvenile justice program serving youth with multi-agency needs.

5.4 Present Prevention Plan to Alachua County School Superintendent/ School Board, United Way, and DJJ, DCF, Partnership for Strong Families, City/County officials to request adoption for specific gap areas.

## Goal 6:

Strategies to improve and increase access to youth violence risk factor data and prevention and intervention program data

6.1 Formalize policy and procedure to share local data amongst intervention and prevention providers

6.2 Distribute information to juvenile violence prevention partners on an annual basis.

6.3 Inform lead community agencies about available sexual or physical violence or property crimes prevention and intervention data sources and links, at least once per quarter.

6.4 Create and Identify centralized location for data resources.

## What Services and programs are currently Available, and What is Needed

\* Refer to Appendix for more detailed description of program services offered.

| <b>Goal 1: What is available/What is Needed</b>   | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public school based programs for ages 0-5 include: Head Start and the Fearnside Family Service Center; for 6-12 year old students Steps to Respect and Too Good for Drugs prevention, and academic tutoring are offered at several Elementary schools, through grants. Two middle schools offer Peer Mediation, and Teen Zone is available at 4 Middle school sites. A Quinn Jones and Horizon are designated schools for at risk youth. The ACCEPT program is available to pregnant teens. Two Attendance officers funded for 29,000 public school students.</li> </ul> | ACPS  |
| <p><i>What is Needed:</i></p> <p>The <b>SECOND STEP<sup>1</sup></b> program provides engaging lessons and activities that teach essential life skills, such as problem solving, anger management, impulse control, and empathy. The <u>elementary</u> and <u>middle school lessons</u> are easy to teach and require minimal teacher preparation time. Extension activities tie the lessons to academic learning requirements—health, science, math, social studies, and language arts—helping teachers build on what they are already doing in the classroom.</p>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Learning Coalition</li> <li>Boys and Girls Club</li> <li>Job Corps</li> <li>Dignity Project</li> </ul>   | Boys & Girls Club<br>Job Corps of Gainesville                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Challenge Day program is designed to help stop the violence and alienation that youth face. This 2 day program is offered to various middle and high schools.</li> </ul>   | Private Sponsors  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2007-08 United Way funding will provide 4,200 mentor hours for 350 at-risk youth. 2,500 youth shall receive and participate in DELTA, a healthy relationships, anti-dating violence program in collaboration with the public school system.</li> </ul>   | United Way, Peaceful Paths  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Abuse Prevention Project</li> <li>Meridian Behavioral Healthcare</li> <li>Corner Drug Store</li> <li>Teen Court</li> </ul>   | CAPP<br>Meridian Behavioral Healthcare<br>CDS<br>Alachua County Sheriff |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through Planned Parenthood, 600 at-risk female teenagers educated about reproductive health and family planning</li> </ul>   | United Way, Planned Parenthood  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SARB: School Attendance Review Board is a multi-agency review board that meets monthly to provide acknowledgement of and support to truant children and their families.</li> </ul>   | Multi-Agency Truancy Review Board                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teen Parenting Programs, substance abuse program</li> </ul>  | SBAC/Lofton HS  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Young women on the Rise</i> – Mentoring program for girls 10-14.</li> </ul>   | Focus on Leadership   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Monitor One</i> – Youth Basketball for kids 9-16 provides additional training by providing seminars. Athletes talk to youths about making positive choices, drug and alcohol abuse, and self respect.</li> </ul>  | Focus on Leadership   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Mentorship Program</i> – Targets middle school girls ages 10-15 from Alachua, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, and Newberry.</li> </ul>  | Focus on Leadership   |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HITT uses improvisational theatre as a means for teens to discuss and explore issues such as drugs, teen pregnancy, safe sex, STDs, and violence.</li> <li>• The Reichert House is an after school program designed for youth who are in need of assistance in making the transition from adolescence to adulthood.</li> <li>• At Risk Youth Summit is a day-long program that provides the youth on juvenile probation who are at risk for committing violent crimes with information relating to crime prevention, attaining college education, individual empowerment, and health care.</li> <li>• PACE Center For Girls intensive educational and therapeutic services to these girls for 12-15 months in an effort to help them make better choices and turn their lives around.</li> </ul> | <p>Hippodrome State Theater</p> <p>Gainesville Police Department</p> <p>Multi-Agency Group</p> <p>PACE/DJJ</p> |
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<sup>1</sup>The SECOND STEP program received the prestigious "Exemplary" award from the U.S. Department of Education's 2001 Expert Panel on Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools. Surpassing all others in its class, the SECOND STEP program was the only violence prevention curriculum to be given this top rating. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) selected the SECOND STEP curriculum as a Model Program to be listed in their National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP). The National Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) registry features programs that "decrease or prevent substance abuse and other high-risk behaviors." The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention selected the SECOND STEP curriculum as a Model Program with an "Effective" rating to be included in their Model Program Guide and Database in the "Prevention" category.

| <b>Goal 2: What is available/What is Needed</b>   | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>   |
|---|--|
| <p>Develop links to Prevention information topics, on the SBAC, DJJ, DCF, Health Dept, United Way, and Chamber of Commerce Website and make available to students and parents through the school newsletter and principal bulletin.</p> <p>Include prevention information displays during school sponsored fall festivals and open houses</p> | <p>Drop Out Prevention<br/>SBAC and PTA's<br/>Peaceful Paths</p> |
| <p><b>Review DJJ PACT data for Alachua County</b><br/>Area Law enforcement and school based personnel to review data for incident reports</p>   | <p>DJJ<br/>JJ Council, Area<br/>LEA's,</p>                       |
| <p>By the end of 2008, 80% of students who attend violence prevention trainings will report a decrease in peer support for intimate partner violence, as measured by pre-post test surveys.</p>   | <p>DELTA, Peaceful<br/>Paths</p>                                 |
| <p>By the end of 2008, 5 new community partners will join the Coordinated Community Response (CCR).</p>   | <p>DELTA, Peaceful Paths</p>                                     |

| <b>Goal 3: What Policies are available/What Policy is Needed</b>   | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>    |
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| Track and analyze data on students with early warning signs of dropping out of school.<br>What is Needed:<br>1) <i>Four Additional School Attendance officers are needed to adequately follow up and address truancy in the 44 schools in Alachua County</i><br><i>Increase the number of Middle School Peer Mediation and Mentoring</i> | SBAC                  |
| <i>By the end of 2008, 50% of Alachua County middle and high school administrative representative will participate in informational meetings about how the program could be implemented at their school.</i>   | DELTA, Peaceful Paths |

| <b>Goal 4: What is Available/What is needed</b>   | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>       |
|---|--------------------------|
| By the end of 2008, 3 community trainings for service providers on violence prevention will be conducted.   | DELTA, Peaceful Paths    |
| Involve School Board of Alachua County, Chamber of Commerce, Children's Campaign, United Way, Junior League, YMCA, Rotary, PTA's/SAC, City/County Parks Dept., Rotary, Gainesville Community Foundation, all local LE Juvenile Relations Bureaus, Alachua County Juvenile Justice Council, and others | Juvenile Justice Council |

| <b>Goal 5: What is Available/What is needed</b>  | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>       |
|--|--------------------------|
| ACJJC Chair appoints committee to develop draft funding recommendations and present to Alachua County Juvenile Justice Council | ACJJC                    |
| Present Prevention Plan to the Circuit 8 Juvenile Justice Board and request support for funding in specific gap areas.         | Juvenile Justice Council |

| <b>Goal 6: What Data is Available/What Data is Needed.</b>   | <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey</b> (alcohol, cigarette, marijuana, Binge drinking, other): collected biannually<br><b>County truancy and suspension data</b> Key Indicators: poor grades in core subjects, low attendance, failure to be promoted to the next grade, disengagement in the school.<br><b>Teen Pregnancy Rates</b> (by age/race):<br><b>PACT: Domain 7B Parental family structure</b><br><b>Juvenile Detention monthly census reports</b> (Alachua only)<br><b>Annual Juvenile Offense data:</b><br><b>Juvenile Mental Health referrals</b> by age/gender and race: Meridian BHC<br><b>Annual county Child Abuse/neglect and maltreatment reports</b> | Alachua County Public Schools<br>Alachua County Public School Drop Out Prevention<br>Public Health Dept.,<br>Dept. of Juvenile Justice,<br>State Attorney Office,<br>Meridian,<br>Meridian, |
| Prevention Program Providers Service Delivery outcomes. Develop/utilize simple data collection for prevention partners to share for data collection purposes   | ALL   |