

12-29-2016

The Importance of Interagency Collaboration for Crossover Youth

Emily M. Wright

University of Nebraska at Omaha, emwright@unomaha.edu

Ryan E. Spohn

University of Nebraska at Omaha, rspohn@unomaha.edu

Joselyne Chenane

University of Nebraska at Omaha, jchenane@unomaha.edu

Nicholas Juliano

nick.juliano@boystown.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/criminaljusticefacpub>

 Part of the [Criminology Commons](#)

Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

Wright, Emily M.; Spohn, Ryan E.; Chenane, Joselyne; and Juliano, Nicholas, "The Importance of Interagency Collaboration for Crossover Youth" (2016). *Criminology and Criminal Justice Faculty Publications*. 28.

<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/criminaljusticefacpub/28>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Criminology and Criminal Justice Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

The Importance of Interagency Collaboration for Crossover Youth: A Research Note

Emily M. Wright*
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Nebraska Center for Justice Research
University of Nebraska, Omaha
6001 Dodge Street, 218 CPACS,
Omaha, NE 68182-0149
emwright@unomaha.edu
(402) 554-3898

Ryan Spohn
Nebraska Center for Justice Research
University of Nebraska, Omaha
6001 Dodge Street, 218 CPACS,
Omaha, NE 68182-0149
rspohn@unomaha.edu
(402) 554-3794

Joselyne Chenane
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
University of Nebraska, Omaha
6001 Dodge Street, 218 CPACS,
Omaha, NE 68182-0149
jchenane@unomaha.edu
(402) 554-3589

Nicholas Juliano
Sr. Director Community Impact
Father Flanagan's Boys' Home
13603 Flanagan Blvd
Boys Town, NE 68010
Nick.Juliano@BoysTown.org
(402) 498-1907

*Corresponding author

Abstract

Crossover or dually-involved youth are youth enmeshed in the child welfare (CWS) and juvenile justice systems (JJS). Given their dual status and high needs, attention has recently focused on how to best respond to them in an integrated, interagency fashion. The Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) is designed to facilitate interagency collaboration between the CWS and JJS in order to enhance services and diversion to these youth. This study reports on the benefits and challenges that the JJS and CWS, as well as the personnel working within them, experience by participating in a CYPM effort in a Midwestern county, and provides recommendations for continued improvements in interagency collaborations for crossover youth.

Keywords: Crossover youth, dually-adjudicated, juvenile justice, child welfare, qualitative

Introduction

Children enmeshed in the juvenile justice system or the child welfare system are high-risk for developing detrimental behavioral, educational, and health-related outcomes, but those who are involved in *both* systems may be at even greater risk for a wide range of short- and long-term problems (Ryan, Williams, & Courtney, 2013; Widom & Maxfield, 2001). These “dually-involved” or “crossover” youth are higher-risk for exposure to violence and/or abuse, familial dysfunction, substance use, congregate or group home placement, school dropout, poor grades, truancy, mental health and/or substance use problems, and adult criminality (e.g., Halemba, Siegel, Lord, & Zawacki, 2004; Herz & Ryan, 2008; Widom & Maxfield, 2001; Young, Bowley, Bilanain, & Ho, 2015). They are also at-risk to incur more juvenile, adult, and violent arrests (Ryan et al., 2013; Widom & Maxfield, 2001) and to be perceived as high-risk by system personnel (Morris & Freundlich, 2004). It is not surprising, therefore, that they are highly represented at deep levels of the juvenile justice system (e.g., comprising out-of-home placement cases), and they tend to receive harsher sanctions or congregate care placement more often than non-dually involved youth (Halemba et al., 2004; Ryan, Herz, Hernandez, & Marshall, 2007; Young et al., 2015).

Responding to crossover youths’ needs in the child welfare system, while balancing accountability and risk-reduction in the juvenile justice system, can present a host of problems, but neither system appears to be adept at keeping crossover youth out of trouble: justice-involved children are highly likely to recidivate and come into contact with the system again (Herz, Ryan, & Bilchik, 2010), while youth enmeshed in the child welfare system have a very high likelihood of justice involvement and further maltreatment referrals (Huang, Ryan, & Herz, 2012; Johnson, Ereth, & Wagner, 2004; Ryan et al., 2013). Yet, fostering collaboration and information sharing

between the systems in order to better respond to crossover youth is rarely done, largely because there are very few policies in place that require the two systems to work together (Herz et al., 2012; Wylie, 2014). This is complicated by the fact that many actors in these agencies hold different perspectives of youths' needs, with those in the juvenile justice system often seeing the youth as a perpetrator in need of rehabilitative services, while child welfare actors may view the youth as a victim in need of care and protection (Lutz, Stewart, Legters, & Herz, 2010).

Ultimately, the lack of coordination, communication, and information sharing between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems has implications not only for the two systems, but also the staff and the crossover youth (and their families) as well. From a systems perspective, two distinct systems responding to a crossover youth with the same or similar services duplicates efforts, which increases costs. The duplication of services also means that system personnel are used inefficiently (i.e., their services are duplicated as well), wasting scant resources and increasing costs. Given the different perspectives each system brings to crossover youth (rehabilitation versus protection), they might provide different treatments to the youth and family, causing confusion and frustration for the youth and family, as well as expending additional resources. There is also some indication that crossover youth are not necessarily at higher risk for misbehavior, but have more unmet "needs" (perhaps stemming from significant family problems), which makes them vulnerable to criminogenic outcomes (Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Andrews et al., 1990; Ryan et al., 2013); in these cases, diversion or increased services - but not punishment - is needed, and doing otherwise may again waste scant system resources. Moreover, responding to a youth who has a multitude of problems that have resulted in both child welfare and juvenile justice involvement with a single-systems approach is limited in scope and likely fails to address the core problems that resulted in dual-involvement in the first place.

The Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM; Lutz et al., 2010) was developed in part to address these problems and enhance service delivery and/or diversion to crossover youth. The goal for the model is to identify these crossover youth, coordinate and inform decisions made by both child welfare and juvenile justice systems regarding the youth and their families, and provide enhanced, evidence-based services to them in order to divert them from further entrenchment into the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. To achieve these goals, the CYPM promotes collaboration between juvenile justice and child welfare personnel and provides techniques to inform decision-making between the two agencies in order to better serve crossover youth. As a “practice model,” it provides a conceptual map and organizational ideology regarding how staff can collaborate with families and system personnel to provide effective services to at-risk youth (Lutz et al., 2010), but can be tailored to the needs and goals of each jurisdiction in which it is adopted.

The CYPM in this study was adopted and implemented in 2012 in an urban county in a Midwestern state with technical assistance from the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University. Agencies involved in the CYPM initiative include the county attorney’s office, Department of Health and Human Services, juvenile assessment center (diversion), probation department, private welfare provider, a family advocacy center, a youth advocate, and a facilitator. Representatives from these agencies come together every week to consider crossover cases in the county. Ultimately, the county attorney, with input from the above mentioned team members, makes decisions to: nolle pros, file charges, provide enhanced child welfare services, or divert the case. The team then works collaboratively to provide appropriate services and interventions for each youth until the case is closed. A large component of this effort is that the youth and family have “a voice” in the process as well. This study summarizes

themes from interviews with CYPM team members referenced above to understand the benefits and challenges of interagency collaboration that are experienced by bringing professionals from different justice and welfare agencies (e.g., child welfare, juvenile justice, probation, juvenile courts, etc.) together to improve responsiveness for crossover youth.

The Crossover Youth Practice Model Approach

In the broadest sense, “crossover” youth refers to any youth who has experienced maltreatment and engaged in delinquency (Lutz et al., 2010), although these youth may not be formally known to either child welfare or juvenile justice systems. Alternatively, dually-involved youth are youth who have some level of involvement in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, while dually-adjudicated youth refer to those youth who are formally involved and adjudicated in the delinquency system (Herz et al. 2012)¹. The primary intended outcomes of the CYPM include reductions in pre-adjudication detention, group, foster care, or out-of-home placements, recidivism, re-identification as “crossover” youth, disproportionate minority representation, and an increase in diversion from the juvenile justice system (Bilchik & Tuell, 2011; Lutz et al., 2010). These outcomes are possible due to increased collaboration and information sharing between systems personnel, the youth, and their families (Lutz et al., 2010).

The model is implemented in three phases that span various decision points across the juvenile justice system. Phase I encourages increased and informed collaboration between juvenile justice and child welfare personnel when making detention and charging decisions (Lutz et al., 2010). Once a youth is arrested, justice representatives check child welfare records to determine if the youth is also involved in the child welfare system. Upon learning that the youth is dually-involved in both systems, justice staff are then granted access to and receive all relevant

¹ Throughout this study, we use the term “crossover youth” to refer to all categories of crossover youth, including dually-involved and dually-adjudicated youth.

child welfare case information (in the county under study, shared information is done via cooperative Memoranda of Understanding [MOUs] between agencies), and are also in direct contact with the child welfare case worker. Next, “diversion meetings” (referred to as “Crossover Staffings” in the county in this study) are held between the youth, his/her family, the child welfare social worker, the juvenile justice personnel, attorneys, and other service providers, to explore the feasibility of diverting the youth from further involvement in the juvenile system. Team members review and share their assessment information at the meetings (e.g., child welfare background, current child welfare services, law enforcement referral information, school/education status, etc.). The county attorney considers the input provided at the meeting to make his or her decision to nolle pros, file charges, provide enhanced child welfare services, or divert the case. The team then works collaboratively to provide appropriate services and interventions for each youth until the case is closed.

If the case is not dropped or the youth is not successfully diverted, Phase II focuses on continued collaboration between the welfare case worker and the justice case worker throughout the case assignment and case planning stages. These personnel are expected to jointly assess the youth and create an integrated, evidence-based case plan that is best suited to the youth’s needs. Phase III involves coordinated case planning/management, planning for youth permanency, transition, and case closure. The goal of coordinated case supervision is to reduce recidivism and improve the well-being of the youth. In this phase, the CYPM professionals work collaboratively to deliver services, assess the youth’s progress, and to find and transition the youth into a permanent, safe, secure, and loving environment for the closure of the case (Lutz et al., 2010).

The Importance of Interagency Collaboration

Given the challenges experienced by crossover youth (e.g., truancy, living in a group home, substance use) and their families (Herz & Ryan, 2008; Young et al., 2015), interagency collaboration between the juvenile justice and child welfare systems is vital to the success of CYPM. Yet, challenges to successful collaboration exist on multiple levels. For instance, Herz and colleagues (2012) identified various barriers to interagency collaboration between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, particularly for crossover youth. First, the two systems often lack infrastructures that facilitate communication, collaboration, or information-sharing; for instance, they are housed separately and often have different (sometimes competing) goals and mandates. In addition to differing philosophies about serving and responding to crossover youth, Herz et al. (2012) also suggested that often personnel in one system lack an understanding about the objectives and duties of personnel in the other system. They list a variety of pitfalls from this lack of collaboration, including ineffective service delivery, lack of engagement with educational and behavioral health systems, and failed family engagement (Herz et al., 2012).

Given the difficulty of interagency collaboration of this nature, it is unsurprising that very few studies have examined the challenges and perceived benefits of child welfare and juvenile justice systems' collaboration for crossover youth (but see Haight, Bidwell, Marshall, & Khatiwoda, 2014). The early evidence, however, seems to suggest positive perceived outcomes from those involved in such multi-systems collaborations, including the ability to offer a broader range of services to youth and families that would not have been available through one system alone, improved procedures and legal mandates for sharing information across departments, and improved interagency relationships (Haight et al., 2014).

As mentioned, however, the CYPM is a model that is meant to follow certain practices, but can also be tailored to meet the needs and concerns of each jurisdiction. Therefore, it is likely

that the model “looks and feels” slightly different in each jurisdiction, and accordingly, it may be perceived differently by agency professionals as well. Our study contributes to the small, but growing, focus on crossover youth and the importance of across-agency collaboration between child welfare and juvenile justice for these youth by expanding on the challenges experienced at multiple levels of interagency collaboration (e.g., system and personnel levels). Further, we expand upon existing data regarding the benefits of such collaborations and we draw from our findings to provide recommendations for overcoming these barriers in practice.

Methods

Data

The CYPM under study was implemented in November 2012. A two-year process and outcome evaluation of the initiative began on September 1, 2014. This paper focuses on the lessons learned from the process evaluation portion of the evaluation – that is, the CYPM team members’ notions of the benefits and challenges of implementing the CYPM in the study site.

Interviews. Data for this research are the responses to semi-structured interviews of all thirteen CYPM team members (100 percent participation rate) who represented the organizations which signed a Memorandum of Understanding as a collaborative CYPM partner in the county. Interviews occurred in March and April 2015 and lasted approximately one hour with each team member. See Table 1 for a full list of participants.

(Insert Table 1 About Here)

Interviews were conducted by the first or second author at the worksite of each interviewee. The semi-structured interviews were guided by an 18-question interview protocol that included follow-up questions and probes for more complex areas of inquiry. Prompts included general questions regarding the process, successes, and challenges faced by the CYPM,

as well as prompts about how participating in CYPM has affected the team members personally and professionally. The authors had spent significant time with the initiative attending working group meetings, stakeholder meetings, subcommittee meetings, and witnessing CYPM staffings, which provided the background and context for additional probes and dialogue that elicited richer information than is possible with a formalized, structured interview process.

Analysis. Each interview subject consented to tape recording of the interview. The resulting digital audio recordings were subsequently transcribed and coded for themes. Data analyses were conducted using MaxQDA software (version 11) and a grounded-theory approach (Strauss, 1987). Transcripts were then coded by each principal investigator and inter-coder reliability was compared (reliability was high, reaching approximately 90 percent). Any discrepancies were discussed for substantive meaning to increase inter-coder reliability in the final coding process. Themes were then analyzed to determine both the number of professionals who mentioned each theme and the number of times, total, each theme was mentioned. The findings that follow were guided by this thematic analysis.

Results

Several distinct but related themes emerged from our analyses (see Table 2), many of which underscore previous findings and confirm anecdotal stories of prior interagency collaborations (Haight et al., 2014; Herz et al., 2012). We summarize the themes below.

System-Level Challenges and Benefits of Interagency Collaboration

Differing Philosophies about Crossover Youth and the Difficulties of Implementing Change within the Realities of the “System.” One of the challenges presented in successfully implementing and sustaining the CYPM under study was the recognition that the two systems in which crossover youth are embedded do indeed have differing views and philosophies about the

youth: the child welfare system views the child primarily as a victim who is in need of services, while the juvenile justice system views the youth primarily as an offender in need of rehabilitation and accountability (Herz et al., 2012). This theme was mentioned 73 times (by 11 people). While the state's juvenile court is rehabilitative in nature, fundamental differences exist in the way each system perceives and responds to youth. These different philosophies may lead to conflicting priorities and even different definitions of success (Dickerson, Collins-Camargo, & Martin-Galijatovic, 2012); thus, it is not surprising that team members did not always agree on a best course of action for the youth. These rifts often fell along agency lines and could create frustration between CYPM members. For instance, some team members viewed other members as too punishment-oriented, while others felt that collaborators had a tendency to "give in" too much to families, particularly when the families had not demonstrated that such "chances would be beneficial." Finding a balance between service and empowerment to crossover youth and their families *with* accountability for wrongdoing required "finesse" by team members. Getting team members back on the same page often required reminding them of the broader goal of CYPM, which was to better serve youth, with the mantra of "we're in this together for the same reasons."

In addition, there are some realities of working in "the system" that the professionals recognized might influence the CYPM initiative over time. This theme involved getting past "institutional histories" where agencies had not historically been collaborative, as well as competition over resources, especially when collaborating agencies could not agree on who was to pay for services to crossover youth. Team members also reported concerns with turnover amongst team members, noting that promotions, dropping out, or "burnout" might play a problem (cited by three team members). They worried about the sustainability of the CYPM, given that high turnover in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is simply "going to be a

reality.” Finally, two professionals also acknowledged that the system is not very “family friendly,” despite efforts to reduce this problem. They noted that while professionals working in child welfare and juvenile justice typically work regular work-day hours, problems endured by crossover youth and their families do not necessarily only happen during those time frames.

(Insert Table 2 About Here)

Better Responses to Crossover Youth because Decision-makers get a More Complete Picture of the Youth; the Reduction in Information Silos Increases Positive Outcomes and Reduces Costs to the System. Despite the challenges above, CYPM team members identified key benefits that they believed each system gained by interagency collaboration. First, and perhaps most importantly, they believed better decisions were made at various touchpoints in the system (e.g., charging, service delivery, etc.) because of interagency collaboration and information sharing (mentioned by five team members). Prosecutors indicated that they gained more insight about the youth’s case and surrounding circumstances by participating in the weekly team meetings to discuss each case, and this often went beyond the information they were able to get from a police report. They also noted that hearing from social workers, youth advocates, and the youth and family themselves provided a deeper understanding of the situations that may have precipitated the youth’s misbehavior. Team members felt that obtaining information from multiple sources who had access to different databases and information fields, and from various professional backgrounds, simply provided better quality information. Getting a better sense of the “whole picture” of what was going on in the youth’s life from multiple sources also made the attorney feel more confident about the case decision.

Second, and similar to Haight et al.’s (2014) findings, team members in our study also routinely indicated that their relationships with professionals in other agencies involved in

CYPM have become stronger over time. In fact, 11 team members mentioned improved interagency relationships a total of 37 times. Team members noted that better relationships had improved the flow of information across agencies, as well as increased their understanding of what other agencies can (and cannot) do for crossover youth. Further, the increased flow of information between agencies also likely reduced the duplication of services that were offered to the youth. Team members suggested that this may in turn lead to reductions in costs for each case, which they expected to, in turn, benefit each system².

Team members also viewed the initiative as doing something different from the status quo of juvenile justice, particularly by allowing the youth to have “a voice” by telling the team about the event that brought them to the attention of authorities (e.g., what led up to their misbehavior, why they misbehaved, etc.). Importantly, the youth voice aided the team in understanding how outside events influenced the youth, and was not considered being lenient, but instead, was seen as helping the team identify and better respond to the youth’s needs – “getting to the root of the problem,” as one team member said. This, in turn, led to reductions in duplications of services across systems, and more often resulted in outcomes such as diversion, or enhanced services for those youth who “don’t belong” in the juvenile system, but could benefit from alternative interventions and/or community resources. Finally, team members also noted that such positive benefits for the youth would likely translate into benefits for the juvenile justice system, such as lower caseloads for system personnel, lower associated costs with case filing and processing, fewer court fees, and related expenses (mentioned 79 times by 10 people).

Interagency Collaboration: Personnel-Level Challenges and Benefits

² An outcome evaluation is currently being conducted on the CYPM in this study. Thus, the potential outcomes (e.g., reduced recidivism, reduced costs, etc.) discussed throughout this study are those perceived and anticipated by the study participants (the professionals involved in the CYPM in the county), but have not yet been empirically demonstrated at the site.

Limited Resources, Frustration with Others, and Concerns about Sustainability over Time.

An issue that concerned most (12) team members (noted 115 times) was that CYPM is not institutionalized in the county – it has no formal financial backing, no “central hub of management,” and currently relies on the relationships between team members to keep the initiative moving forward. While each team member participates in the CYPM, no agency has a dedicated “crossover” budget or staff, though many team members have shifted much of their caseloads to crossover youth. These team members recognize the time, effort, and energy that CYPM takes, and hope to see the program become institutionalized with a formal structure and financial backing in the county. Relatedly, while “mission drift” is a constant threat to reform initiatives, CYPM members indicated that it may present an even bigger challenge to this initiative because of the lack of a formal “leader.” Team members noted that because every team member, in a sense, volunteers their time to CYPM, when disagreements or factions arise, it can be more disruptive because the team does not have a “boss” to keep everyone in line. To address this, team members suggested that “succession planning” is needed for long-term sustainability. While some turnover in team membership is viewed as inevitable, there are some key positions in the team that are vital for stability and sustainability purposes. In particular, team members noted that the chair and co-chair are key positions that, if (and when) turnover in these positions occurs, mission drift and momentum change are likely, so planning is needed to make sure someone is ready to step in. Team members likely saw these positions as most vital to sustainability because the co-chairs often act as the “leadership team.”

Finally, agency professionals involved in CYPM also cited issues in time, effort/energy, and resources as major challenges faced in working on the initiative (this was the most-often cited problem – noted 176 times by 11 people). For the most part, team members acknowledged

that their work on the initiative was meaningful and worth it, but nonetheless time consuming and (at times) draining. For others, collaborating across agencies for crossover youth entailed new, different, and sometimes complicated duties, such as communicating with multiple agencies. No doubt these efforts took more time and energy to complete. Simply meeting with the youth and family each week sometimes presented scheduling problems for the professionals and families involved, due to families' transportation needs, school schedules, and work obligations. A couple of team members also expressed frustration with youth and their families who do not seem to want to be there and or do not want help. Despite the group's best intentions, they are nonetheless representatives of the juvenile justice and child welfare systems – systems which are tainted by persisting negative stereotypes by most involved youth and families, and there may be long-standing views of “the system” from citizens that are difficult to break.

Increased Trust between Professionals and Their Agencies leads to Improved Responsiveness to Crossover Youth and Better Outcomes. Despite the challenges described above, CYPM team professionals suggested that getting to know the professionals from partnering agencies has benefited them in personal and professional ways. For instance, child welfare professionals often work very closely with probation officers in this program, which has led to increased trust between their personnel (“increased trust and better relationships with other team members” was noted 16 times by ten team members). Subsequently, this had led to some cross-agency trainings on the issues of crossover youth, trauma, and related topics. Such initiatives likely would not have been created if it were not for their collaboration through CYPM (see also Haight et al., 2014). Seeing the same people “at the table” each week not only increased trust, but also effectively led to sustained inertia to continue the collaboration. Although the CYPM

program initially brought the professionals together, over time, the collaborations between members have led to increased commitment to the program itself, as well as continued commitment to each other. While this may not be enough to sustain the initiative over time, it has seemed to create short-term inertia amongst the team members.

Finally, professionals involved in the CYPM program believed that it directly impacted crossover youth and their families in a positive way as well. Team members identified positive outcomes for the youth which they believe will be evident over time: longer time to recidivate, reduced severity of offenses, and less trauma and stigma to the youth. As noted, they also believed that such positive outcomes for the youth would likely translate into benefits for both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems in the form of lower caseloads for system personnel, fewer duplicated services, fewer court fees, and so forth.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The call for interagency collaboration to improve information sharing, services, and responsiveness to youth is not new. However, the identification and focus on crossover or dually-involved youth across the child welfare and juvenile justice systems is a relatively new frontier. Collaboration between these two systems is difficult to accomplish for a variety of reasons, including differing infrastructures, information privacy policies, and competing priorities (Herz et al., 2012), and as such, is not often accomplished. Very few studies have investigated these interagency collaborations, but their results suggest that there may be positive outcomes such as better identification of crossover youth, more efficient service delivery, and improved interagency relationships as a part of CYPM efforts (Haight et al., 2014).

Our study uncovered similar themes in terms of better decision-making and improved interagency relationships between personnel, but our findings also expanded upon the challenges

of interagency collaboration and identified different levels at which challenges and benefits were experienced. Our findings suggest that interagency collaboration is impeded by differing philosophies about crossover youth, as well as the realities of “system” work, such as high turnover and burnout. Team members identified ways to overcome challenges, suggesting that successful collaboration can have far-reaching effects, benefitting each agency or system with more informed decisions, and cost reductions due to more efficient processing and less duplication of services. While system personnel overwhelmingly experience challenges regarding time, resources, and sustaining practices, they also reported improved relationships and satisfaction with the collaboration. Further, team members were proud to be a part of something that fostered engagement (“having a voice”) among the crossover youth and their families.

Based on our findings, we believe that practitioners can address many of the challenges of interagency collaboration for crossover youth. First, we suggest that leaders and CYPM professionals should not try to change members’ philosophies about crossover youth, but instead, should endeavor to understand the challenges these different philosophies present. It is important to respect others’ philosophies and viewpoints in “team” situations, and administrators can create points of commonality between members by focusing on what is in the best interest of the youth and family, despite differing philosophies. And though it is tough to change the challenging working conditions of child welfare and juvenile justice systems (e.g., burnout, turnover, promotions, etc.), it is possible for initiatives like the CYPM to manage the disruptions these kinds of events can create. Succession planning may be needed to achieve this. We suggest that practitioners can: a) create and maintain policy and procedure manuals so that even new members can “learn the ropes” quickly, b) have multiple persons in leadership positions (like the chair and co-chair in this study) in case turnover occurs, and c) provide adequate resources to

crossover positions to make these positions desirable as long-term careers. To the latter point, we recommend that administrators consider treating crossover positions as specialty positions –the complexities of the cases and dual involvement truly necessitate a deeper understanding of the issues involving trauma, abuse, family dysfunction, and delinquency. As such, crossover staff should be trained to tackle these issues and provided an understanding of the other system(s) in which the youth is involved. A specialty position (one of commensurate pay, benefits, and the necessary training and education) may have less turnover than other staff positions.

Regarding the personnel-level challenges we identified, our focus on sustainability and dedicated resources remains relevant. In addition, we suggest that administrators consider specialized caseloads of only crossover cases for these positions, including judges, attorneys, and child welfare and juvenile justice management and supervision staff. Staff with specialized caseloads would gain expertise about crossover youth through hands-on experience and collaboration, as well as additional interagency trainings. Over time, staff working on these cases would become more knowledgeable and efficient, and handling crossover cases would become less burdensome, frustrating, and time consuming.

In short, policy makers, agency administration, and those working hand-in-hand with youth would be well-served to formalize efforts like CYPM which seek to reduce silos and move toward multi-systems collaboration. Sharing information about cases not only leads to better, more well-informed decisions, but the process also strengthens working relationships among those involved. Our findings suggest that the challenges experienced in multi-systems collaboration such as the CYPM are worth the effort when it comes to crossover youth.

Table 1. Team Members CYPM

	N
County Attorney	2
Juvenile Judge	1
Community Service Provider	2
Department of Health and Human Services Worker	1
Child Welfare Case Worker	1
Family Services Provider	2
Probation Officer	1
Juvenile Justice Personnel	2
CYPM Staffing Facilitator	1

Table 2. System-Level and Personnel-Level Challenges and Benefits of CYPM

	# Times Mentioned	# CYPM Team Members
<u>System-Level</u>		
Challenges		
Philosophies	73	11
Realities of the System		
Institutional histories	5	3
Turnover/Burnout	5	3
Workday Hours/Family Friendliness	3	2
Benefits		
Better Decisions	6	5
Improved Interagency Relationships/Collaboration	37	11
Reduced Cost/Increased Efficiency	79	10
<u>Personnel-Level</u>		
Challenges		
Sustainability/Leadership	115	12
Resources/Time	176	11
Frustration with Crossover Youth and Families	11	4
Benefits		
Positive Relationships/Trust	16	10
Better Responses to Crossover Youth	6	5

References

- Andrews, D. A., & Bonta, J. (2007). *The psychology of criminal conduct* (4 ed.). Cincinnati: OH: Anderson.
- Andrews, D. A., Zinger, I., Hoge, R. D., Bonta, J., Gendreau, P., & Cullen, F. T. (1990). Does correctional treatment work? A clinically relevant and psychologically informed meta-analysis. *Criminology*, 28(3), 369-404.
- Bilchik, S., & Tuell, J. A. (2011). *Improving delinquency outcomes for abused and neglected children: Changing the paradigm through multi-system collaboration*. Paper presented at the Fair and Equal Justice: Alternative Sentences and Sanctions for Youth, Coalition for Juvenile Justice Annual Spring Conference.
- Dickerson, J. G., Collins-Camargo, C., & Martin-Galijatovic, R. (2012). How collaborative the collaboration? Assessing interagency collaboration within a juvenile court diversion program. *Juvenile & Family Court Journal*, 63(3), 21-35.
- Haight, W. L., Bidwell, L. N., Marshall, J. M., & Khatiwoda, P. (2014). Implementing the Crossover Youth Practice Model in diverse contexts: Child welfare and juvenile justice professionals' experiences of multisystem collaborations. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 39, 91-100.
- Halemba, G. J., Siegel, G., Lord, R. D., & Zawacki, S. (2004). Arizona dual jurisdiction study: Final report. Pittsburg, PA: National Center for Juvenile Justice.
- Herz, D., Lee, P., Lutz, L., Stewart, M., Tuell, J. A., & Wiig, J. (2012). Addressing the needs of multi-system youth: Strengthening the connection between child welfare and juvenile justice. Washington, D.C.: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.
- Herz, D., & Ryan, J. (2008). Exploring the characteristics and outcomes of 2411 youths in Los Angeles County. San Francisco, CA: California Courts, The Administrative Office of the Courts.
- Herz, D., Ryan, J., & Bilchik, S. (2010). Challenges facing crossover youth: An examination of juvenile justice decision-making and recidivism. *Family Court Review*, 48(2), 305-321.
- Huang, H., Ryan, J., & Herz, D. (2012). The journey of dually-involved youth: The description and prediction of rereporting and recidivism. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(1), 254-260.
- Johnson, K., Ereth, J., & Wagner, D. (2004). Juvenile delinquency among children involved in a child maltreatment investigation: A longitudinal study. Madison, WI: Children's Research Center.
- Lutz, L., Stewart, M., Legters, L., & Herz, D. (2010). The Crossover Youth Practice Model: Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.
- Morris, L., & Freundlich, M. (2004). Youth involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Washington, DC: CWLA Press.

- Ryan, J., Herz, D., Hernandez, P., & Marshall, J. (2007). Maltreatment and delinquency: Investigating child welfare bias in juvenile justice processing. *Children and Youth Services Review, 29*, 1035-1050.
- Ryan, J., Williams, A. B., & Courtney, M. E. (2013). Adolescent neglect, juvenile delinquency, and the risk of recidivism. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 42*(3), 454-465.
- Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.
- Widom, C. S., & Maxfield, M. G. (2001). *National Institute of Justice research in brief: An update on "the cycle of violence"*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice.
- Wylie, L. (2014). Closing the crossover gap: Amending Fostering Connections to provide independent living services for foster youth who crossover to the justice system. *Family Court Review, 52*(2), 298-315.
- Young, D., Bowley, A., Bilanain, J., & Ho, A. (2015). Traversing two systems: An assessment of crossover youth in Maryland: Department of Justice.