



Robert F. Kennedy  
**Children's Action Corps**  
 RFK National Resource Center  
 for Juvenile Justice

## RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice E-Newsletter

### Policy Updates

#### **CONNECT Act Reintroduced - Bipartisan Legislation to Improve Outcomes for Dual Status Youth**

On May 8, 2017, Senators Gary Peters (D-Michigan) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) reintroduced the Childhood Outcomes Need New Efficient Community Teams (CONNECT) Act to the United States Senate. This important legislation (S. 1067) will assist states in addressing the unique challenges of youth who are involved with both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, known as dual status youth. The CONNECT Act will encourage child welfare and juvenile justice systems to work together to identify dual status youth early, to jointly assess and serve these children, and to provide the data necessary to understand what works to improve their outcomes and future prospects. To learn more about the #CONNECTAct, please visit our website: [rfknrcj.org/policy-update-connect-act-reintroduced/](http://rfknrcj.org/policy-update-connect-act-reintroduced/)

#### **House Passes Bill to Enhance Opportunity for Vulnerable Youth, Improve Juvenile Justice**

On May 23rd, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1809, the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2017 by voice vote. Introduced by Rep. Jason Lewis (R-Minnesota) and Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-Virginia), the bipartisan legislation reauthorizes and reforms the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) to help state and local leaders better serve juvenile offenders and at-risk youth.

To improve education and rehabilitation of at-risk youth and juvenile offenders, Rep. Lewis and Ranking Member Scott introduced the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2017. The bipartisan legislation includes reforms to:

- Provide states and local leaders greater flexibility to deliver services that meet the specific needs of delinquent youth in their communities.
- Promote opportunities for juvenile offenders to acquire skills necessary to grow into productive members of society.
- Help at-risk youth avoid the juvenile justice system by improving support for prevention services.
- Prioritize evidence-based strategies and long-term solutions for addressing juvenile delinquency.
- Improve accountability and oversight at all levels of the juvenile justice system.

To learn more and read the complete press release, please visit the Committee on Education and the Workforce's

### Quick Links

[Who We Are](#)  
[Our Work](#)  
[Contact Us](#)



### How Can We Serve Your Community?

To find out how we can support your community, please [Contact Us!](#)

### We're on Twitter!

RFK Children's Action Corps and RFK National Resource Center are on Twitter! [@RFKChildren](#)

Follow us on [twitter](#)

### New Partnership Focused on Improving Outcomes for Dual Status Youth

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, through the RFK National Resource Center, are pleased to announce the launch of an exciting partnership to enhance each organization's

website by [clicking here](#).

## On the Ground

### **New Sites Take on Probation System Reform through Grants Awarded by the State Justice Institute**

The State Justice Institute has awarded grants to Davidson County, Tennessee; Fairfax County, Virginia; and, Lancaster County, Nebraska to partner with us to conduct Probation System Reviews using the seminal framework detailed in the [Probation System Review Guidebook, 2nd Edition](#). The State Justice Institute has previously supported this important work in three jurisdictions in the state of Arkansas and recognizes the positive outcomes and system performance impact these jurisdictions can have by aligning best practices in their probation and juvenile justice system through this review process. The remarkable leadership and dedicated staff in each of these three jurisdictions have made these opportunities possible. The RFK National Resource Center applauds the State Justice Institute, specifically Jonathan Mattiello, Executive Director, and their Board of Directors for demonstrating such a strong commitment to the improvement of the lives of youth involved in the probation and juvenile justice systems in these states.

### **New Project: Probation System Review in Clark County, Nevada**

We are excited to announce that with the leadership of the Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services and their dedicated staff and affiliated agency personnel, we are partnering to conduct a comprehensive probation system review designed to produce findings and recommendations that will enhance policy, practice, service provision and outcomes for the youth and families involved with Clark County's Juvenile Probation Department and Juvenile Court. The project launched earlier this month with two full days of meetings, interviews and dynamic discussions with Clark County stakeholders.

### **Dual Status Youth Training Initiative Concluded in Nine Sites**

The inaugural Dual Status Youth Training Initiative recently concluded with its final training in Summit County, OH. Over the past eight months, RFK National Resource Center staff have visited nine sites to provide two days of training to local leaders and practitioners to help launch or enhance dual status youth reform in their jurisdictions. We applaud the communities of Augusta County, VA; Hall County, GA; Jefferson County, WI; Palm Beach County, FL; Pennington County, SD; Polk County, IA; Stearns County, MN; Summit County, OH and Tulsa County, OK for examining how to improve outcomes for this important population of youth. For information about how to bring Dual Status Youth Training to your community, please [visit our website](#) to **Contact Us**.

## From the Field - Recommended Resources

*The RFK National Resource Center highly recommends the following resources and op-eds, recently released by our partners in the field and authored/co-authored by members of our consulting team and [Practice Networks](#):*

### **Op-Ed: Why Juvenile Justice Reform Needs Child Welfare at the Table**

*By Melissa Blom*

impact in the field of reform efforts to better serve dual status youth. Through the continued development of innovative strategies and resources, this partnership will provide guidance to jurisdictions working collaboratively to improve outcomes for dual status youth, ultimately benefiting many of our most vulnerable youth and families. In partnership, CWLA and the RFK National Resource Center will develop new resources and publications, conduct workshops and webinars on dual status youth reform, and provide new opportunities for on-site training and technical assistance that target the challenges associated with dual status youth reform from the child welfare perspective. To learn more, please [click here](#) to visit our Newsroom.

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### **Check Out Our Updated Online Resource Library!**

All of our publications and tools are made available online to support jurisdictions undertaking reform, with or without technical assistance. In an effort to enhance that support, we recently updated our website to provide a more user friendly experience for accessing our practical and informative resources, as well as presentations and materials from our events.

*To access all of our Resources, please visit: [rfknrcjj.org/resources](https://rfknrcjj.org/resources)*

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### **Visit our Newsroom!**

The RFK National Resource Center's Newsroom features

Released by the Juvenile Justice Information Exchange and Youth Today ([click here](#) to access)

### **Op-Ed: Don't Be Traumatized by Trauma**

*By Robert Bermingham*

Released by the Juvenile Justice Information Exchange and Youth Today ([click here](#) to access)

### **Policy Brief: Assuring the Future of Developmental Reform in Juvenile Justice**

*By Thomas Grisso, PhD*

Released by Models for Change: Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice ([click here](#) to access)

### **Developing Service Delivery Systems for Evaluations of Juveniles' Competence to Stand Trial: A Guide for States and Counties**

*By Ivan Kruh, PhD and Thomas Grisso, PhD*

Released by the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice ([click here](#) to access)

news, media, and other announcements from the field. Be sure to check back often to learn about current activities and resources - such as Requests for Applications, Op-Eds and articles authored by members of Dual Status Youth and Probation System Review Practice Networks, and new research and tools!

[Click Here](#) to check out the RFK National Resource Center Newsroom!

## **About Us**

Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice, led by Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, uses proven models, frameworks, tools, resources and the best available research to serve local, state, and national leaders, practitioners and youth-serving agencies to improve system performance and outcomes for youth involved with the juvenile justice system. RFK National Resource Center focuses primarily on youth with prior or current involvement in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (dual status youth), the review and improvement of juvenile probation systems, and the use of a model framework to address the state and national laws and policies governing the exchange and sharing of data, information, and records for youth and families. To learn more about us and how we can serve your jurisdiction, please visit [www.rfknrcjj.org](http://www.rfknrcjj.org).

## **Every Child Deserves a Childhood**

Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps is a private, non-profit licensed child welfare agency providing community-based services, education, foster care and adoption, residential treatment, and juvenile justice programming to individuals and families in crisis. Our programs are focused on helping children and adolescents deal with past hurts, develop self-esteem, and have a chance for a brighter future as contributing members of society. All that we do at RFK Children's Action Corps is based on the belief that every child deserves the chance to lead a happy, healthy, and productive life. For more information and to get involved, visit [www.rfkchildren.org](http://www.rfkchildren.org).

## **Models for Change Resource Center Partnership**

Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice is part of the *Models for Change* Resource Center Partnership, established by the MacArthur Foundation to advance juvenile justice reform efforts throughout the country. To learn more, visit [modelsforchange.net/resourcecenters](http://modelsforchange.net/resourcecenters).

