



WHAT'S WORKING

A Message From DJJ Director Andy Block

Nov. 17, 2015

The Faces Behind The Numbers

Research Team Generates Data That's Critical To Agency Success

The more we know about the residents we serve, the better ... and the easier it is to understand and analyze the information we have, the more effective we can be in providing the services and support our residents need to become successful.

That's the basic premise DJJ's research and data reporting unit of the Legislative and Research Department has always kept in mind when gathering and assembling the information they publish in DJJ's official reports. With untiring attention to detail, this team of dedicated employees design and coordinate a wide variety of reports, executed via an exhaustive examination of available data and a thorough review of the most up-to-date literature and best practices in the juvenile justice field.

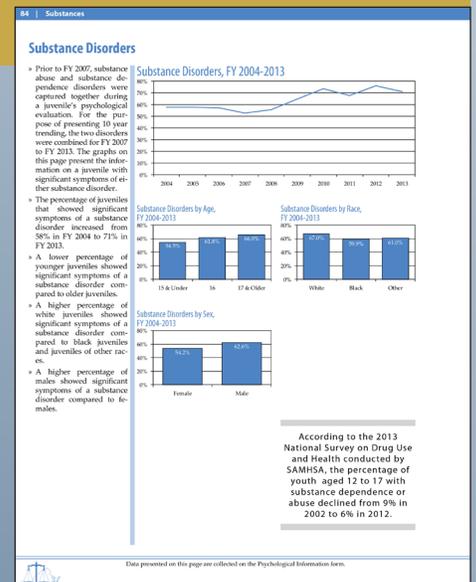
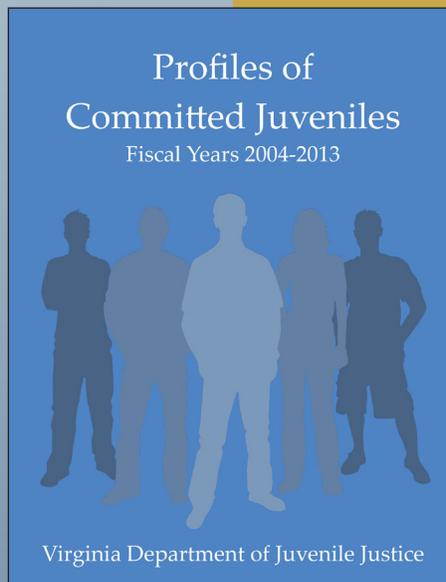
The recently-released "Profiles of Committed Juveniles Fiscal Years 2004-2013" is just the latest example. A version of this document that reports on the characteristics of committed juveniles is produced every five years, and has served the agency well, says Research Supervisor Jesse Schneider.

"Thanks to the staff in the juvenile correctional centers (JCCs), an immense amount of information is collected during the evaluation phase of a juvenile's direct care stay, and this report uses that data to portray a picture of the residents we serve," Schneider says.

But she also points out that this version of the report contains many "firsts," as well as some features designed to make the data easier to digest, especially for the general public.



Above, from left: Research Analyst Rebecca Smith, Research Supervisor Jessica Schneider, and Senior Research Analyst Jared Miller led the way in producing DJJ's latest edition of the "Profiles of Committed Juveniles." Below: The edition contains lots of new information that can provide an even clearer picture of our residents. Easy-to-read graphs and charts show trends up to 10 years.





Standing, from left: Courtney Warren, Policy Analyst; Jared Miller, Senior Research Analyst; Ken Davis, Executive Assistant. Seated, from left: Jessica Schneider, Research Supervisor; Rebecca Smith, Research Analyst; Lara Kate Jacobs Todd, Education Administrative Hearings Specialist; Huafeng Ding, Research Economist. Not pictured: Kristen Secor, Research Analyst; Christina Hall, Policy Analyst; Fang Qian, Data Analysis Unit Supervisor; Michael Favale, Legal Specialist; Lindsey Smith, Data Analyst.

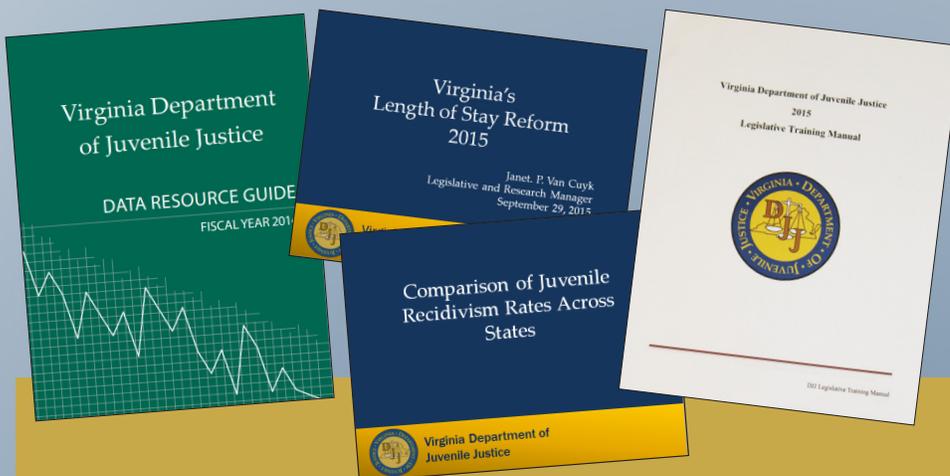
“We attempted to retain the best features of the previous reports as well as add new levels of analysis,” Schneider says. “In addition to long-term trends, this report presents for the first time statistically significant differences between sexes, races, and ages. The reader can focus on different chapters, such as education,

mental health, and social history, to learn more about the experiences and challenges our residents face.”

Graphs and charts also have been simplified for ease of interpretation. “Each page presents the 3-, 5- or 10-year trend for a variable, followed by demographic breakdowns where statistically significant differences

were found,” Schneider says. “In previous reports, only basic percentages were presented with little emphasis on long-term trends or differences between groups. Instead of wordy bullets, data is now presented in visual graphs wherever possible.”

“The Annie E. Casey Foundation has told us that we have some of the best data of any juvenile justice agency in the country, and some of the best people collecting, analyzing, and sharing it,” noted Director Andy Block. “We are indeed fortunate to have the talented team of researchers that we do. The challenge for all of us in the department is to take full advantage of this information and knowledge when determining how best to focus our time, talent and resources.”



A sampling of the reports and publications produced by DJJ's Data and Research Unit.