

# Models for Change: A Call for Action

## Models for Change

All young people should have the opportunity to grow up with a good education, get a job and participate in their communities. Creating more fair and effective juvenile justice systems that support learning and growth and promote accountability can ensure that every young person grows up to be a healthy, productive member of society.

*Models for Change: Systems Reform in Juvenile Justice*, a MacArthur Foundation initiative, began by working comprehensively on juvenile justice reform in four states, and then by concentrating on issues of mental health, juvenile indigent defense, and racial and ethnic disparities in 16 states. Through collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), *Models for Change* expanded its reach and is now working to replicate and disseminate successful models of juvenile justice reform in 35 states.

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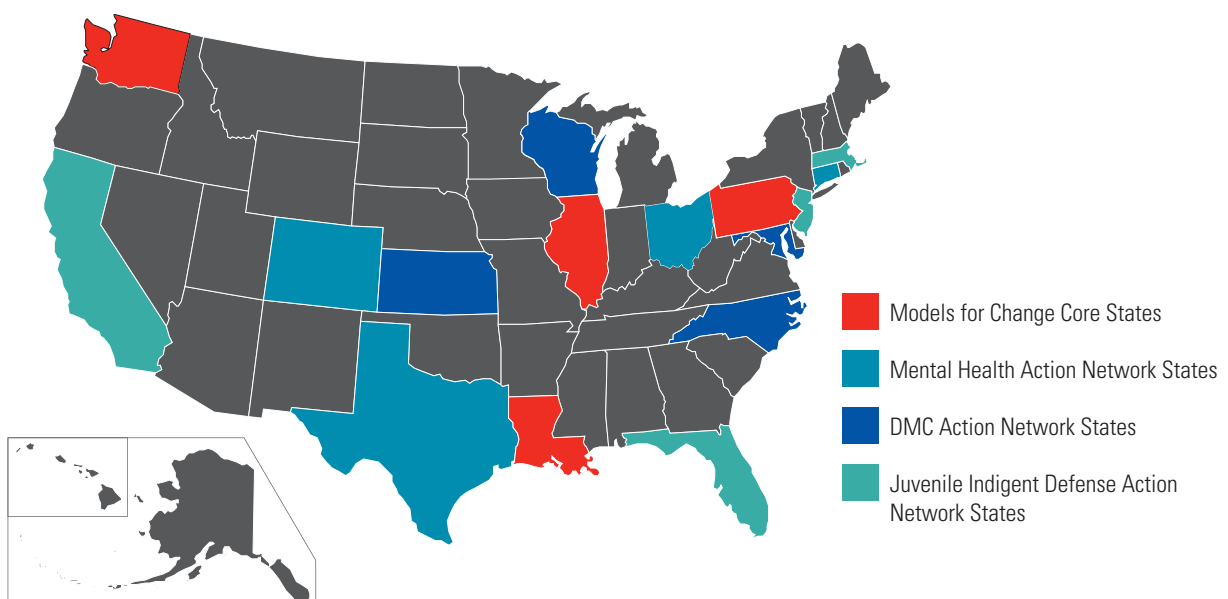
*Models for Change* is an ambitious multi-state juvenile justice system reform initiative, launched in 2004 by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation with the goal of guiding and accelerating the nation's progress toward more rational, fair, effective, and developmentally appropriate responses to young people in conflict with the law. During nearly a decade of supporting policy and practice reform activities in 16 states and more than 35 local jurisdictions, *Models for Change* has assembled a powerful network of committed reform partners, generated a large volume of practical learning and insights, and achieved an array of successes, from improvements in local practice to major reforms in state policy.

As of the close of 2013, direct funding for reform activities in the original *Models for Change* jurisdictions has mostly ended. Grants have been made to secure and sustain the practice and policy gains achieved, and to ensure that the work has been appropriately documented and studied. Now attention is turning to a wider effort to use what has been learned and achieved to expand and spread juvenile justice reform to new jurisdictions and audiences.

This brief will sketch out the various components of this effort: new training and technical assistance centers, new partners and strategic allies, and new on-line resources, all aimed at capitalizing on *Models for Change* innovations, learning and leadership networks to accelerate reform momentum in the nation as a whole.

## Tools for Change

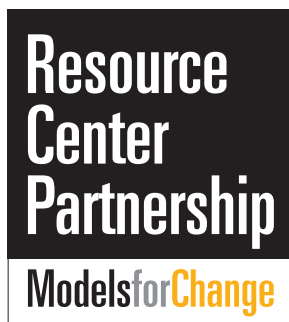
*Models for Change* has been the collective effort of a large network of grantees and other partners—researchers, judges, probation departments, defenders, prosecutors, state officials and agencies, and juvenile justice advocates and experts of all kinds—who have combined to create a striking mosaic of change in jurisdictions across the country. In the course of their work, they have developed an array of resources, tools, and practice models that address many of the most pressing needs of young people in trouble with the law. There are now more than 300 reports, articles, manuals, toolkits, training curricula, survey instruments, research summaries, policy briefs, and other useful materials posted at <http://www.modelsforchange.net>. Practitioners and policymakers engaged in system change efforts can download resources and tools covering the whole range of issues addressed by *Models for Change* work.



- Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.** The work of developing better approaches to identifying and meeting the behavioral health needs of youth, both in core states and Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network sites, has resulted in practice-informed guides to *training juvenile justice personnel* on mental health issues;<sup>1</sup> to developing *crisis intervention teams for youth* in law enforcement agencies;<sup>2</sup> *to strengthening the role of families*; and to creating diversion programs targeted at *youth with mental health needs in school settings*.<sup>3</sup> Also available are policy and procedure manuals for a *Responder Program* developed in Summit County, OH<sup>4</sup> and a *Front End Diversion Initiative Program* developed in partnership with the Texas Juvenile Probation<sup>5</sup> Commission; comprehensive information on *safeguarding self-incrimination rights* in connection with the mental health screening and assessment process;<sup>6</sup> and summaries of original research exploring such questions as *Does Mental Health Screening Fulfill its Promise?*<sup>7</sup> and *Mental Health Services in Juvenile Justice: Who Pays? What Gets Paid For? And Who Gets to Decide?*<sup>8</sup>
- Racial and Ethnic Fairness.** *Models for Change* work aimed at ensuring that youth are treated fairly regardless of their race or ethnicity, both in core states and in sites participating in the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Action Network, has yielded a set of adaptable *DMC Performance Measures* used by DMC Action Network members;<sup>9</sup> a report on the pilot testing of a data template for *Collecting and Analyzing Data on Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Peoria*;<sup>10</sup> some *Guidelines for State Courts Serving Limited English Proficient Youth and Family Members*;<sup>11</sup> and a report summarizing the results of research asking *Are Minority Youths Treated Differently in Juvenile Probation?*<sup>12</sup>
- Juvenile Indigent Defense.** Reform efforts aimed at safeguarding juveniles' rights and improving their access to qualified counsel, both in core *Models for Change* states and in jurisdictions participating in the Juvenile Indigent Defense Action Network, have yielded a rich variety of resources, including detailed checklists that spell out the collateral consequences of juvenile system involvement and adjudication in *Pennsylvania*,<sup>13</sup> *California*,<sup>14</sup> and *Florida*;<sup>15</sup> a *Guide for Lawmakers* seeking to develop competence standards for juveniles in delinquency proceedings;<sup>16</sup> a *Guide for Improving Communication and Understanding in Juvenile Court* developed by the Washington Judicial Colloquies Project;<sup>17</sup> and a comprehensive set of *National Juvenile Defense Standards*<sup>18</sup> and *Performance Guidelines for Quality and Effective Juvenile Delinquency Representation*.<sup>19</sup>
- Multi-System Youth.** Tools and resources generated by *Models for Change* efforts to increase collaboration and information-sharing among multiple agencies serving the same youth include a *Guidebook for Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System Coordination and Integration*;<sup>20</sup> an *Information Sharing Tool Kit* for jurisdictions seeking to improve their information and data sharing practices;<sup>21</sup> and a prevalence research report on *Doorways to Delinquency: Multi-System Involvement of Delinquent Youth in King County*.<sup>22</sup>
- Evidence-Based Practice.** *Models for Change* resources on aligning juvenile justice practice and programming with evidence on what works to change delinquent behavior include *Measuring Success: a Guide to Becoming an Evidence-Based Practice*;<sup>23</sup> *Turning Knowledge into Practice: A Manual for Human Service Administrators and Practitioners*;<sup>24</sup> *Review of Evidence-Based and Promising Risk/Needs Assessment Tools for Juvenile Justice*;<sup>25</sup> and *Risk Assessment in Juvenile Justice: A Guidebook for Implementation*.<sup>26</sup>
- Aftercare.** Efforts to improve the way youth in custody are educated, trained, and prepared for successful reintegration into their communities have generated a detailed *Educational Aftercare and Reintegration Toolkit for Juvenile Justice Professionals*;<sup>27</sup> a report on *Preparing Youth for Productive Futures* in Pennsylvania;<sup>28</sup> and a set of *Case Management Essentials for Youth in Placement*.<sup>29</sup>
- Diversion and Community-Based Alternatives.** Juvenile justice leaders have increasingly sought to develop mechanisms to hold young offenders accountable without formal processing under certain conditions. *Models for Change* tools and resources include the *Juvenile Diversion Guidebook*, providing a roadmap through the different types of effective diversion strategies. *The Guide to Developing Pre-Adjudication Diversion Policy and Practice in Pennsylvania* grew out of a desire to divert youth with mental health issues from formal processing but offers a formidable resource for

leaders and practitioners looking at both the process-oriented (i.e., providing alternatives to adjudications for alleged juvenile offenders) and programmatic (i.e., the services the youth receives in place of a formal adjudication) of diversion. Promising practices in the field are further summarized in *Innovation Brief: Using Diversion Fairly, Consistently, and Effectively*; *School-Based Diversion: Strategic Innovations from the Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network*; and *Intake Based Diversion: Strategic Innovations from the Mental Health/Juvenile Justice Action Network*.

This is only a tiny sampling of the resources available, and the list is still growing, as *Models for Change* partners and grantees continue to document their successes and failures and distill learning from their work.



## The Resource Center Partnership

Promotion and dissemination of *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations in new jurisdictions is being led by the *Models for Change* Resource Center Partnership—a consortium of centers of excellence that work to advance juvenile justice systems reform by providing state and local leaders, practitioners, and policymakers across the country with training, technical assistance, peer-to-peer mentoring and consultation, and sharing of tools and resources developed through *Models for Change*.

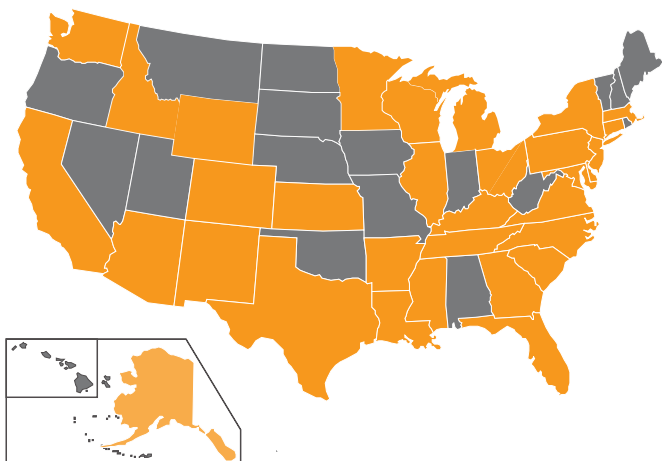
The success of *Models for Change* has always depended on its robust network of expert organizations, thought leaders, and practitioners in the field. This national coalition provides expertise broadly to the field and through technical assistance directly with sites. The Resource Center Partnership expands this coalition by creating four complementary, connected centers of excellence that address some of the most important issues in juvenile justice:

- **The Mental Health and Juvenile Justice Collaborative for Change:** A Training, Technical Assistance and Education Center: Led by the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice at Policy Research Inc., the Center provides training, technical assistance, and education designed to promote and support adoption of new resources, tools, and program models to help those in the field better respond to youth with mental health needs in the juvenile justice system. For more information, visit: <http://cfc.ncmhjj.com/>
- **The National Juvenile Defender Center:** The Center improves access to counsel and quality of representation for children in the justice system and bolsters juvenile defense by replicating field-driven innovations, facilitating adoption of new juvenile justice defense standards, and developing a corps of certified juvenile indigent defense trainers. For more information, visit: <http://njdc.info/resourcecenterpartnership.php>
- **The Status Offense Reform Center:** Led by the Vera Institute of Justice, the Center serves as a resource clearinghouse and assistance center for practitioners and policymakers in juvenile justice, with a focus on encouraging and showcasing strategies to safely and effectively divert non-delinquent youth and their families from the formal juvenile justice system. For more information, visit: <http://www.statusoffensereform.org/>
- **The Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice:** Led by the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, the Center focuses on improving system performance and cross-system integration by using proven models, frameworks, tools, resources, and the best available research. The RFK National Resource Center works with local, state, and national leaders; practitioners; and youth-serving agencies, focusing primarily on youth with prior or current involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems (known as dual-status youth) and on the review and improvement of juvenile probation systems. For more information, visit: <http://www.rfkrcj.org/>

To enhance the work of the Resource Centers and target assistance to the practitioners and policymakers who need it, the Resource Center Partnership includes strategic alliances with national organizations representing key professional audiences. These strategic allies include not only long-time

participants in *Models for Change*, but new partners such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Association of Counties, the National Center for State Courts, and the National League of Cities. The goal is to grow larger and stronger networks of juvenile justice reform leaders within and across each of these professional groups.

*Models for Change* has also established formal partnerships with the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in support of broader adoption of *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations. Each of these co-funded efforts has exposed a network of newly recruited jurisdictions to *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations, including mental health screening and risk/needs assessment; mental health training for the juvenile justice workforce; reducing racial and ethnic disparities; and juvenile justice and child welfare system coordination. *Models for Change* has extended its reach to 35 states and over 100 local jurisdictions.



## Online Resources

The *Models for Change* website (<http://modelsforchange.net>) continues to offer a comprehensive overview of *Models for Change* activities, tools and resources as well as current news from *Models for Change* partners. The site features the complete set of *Models for Change* Knowledge and Innovation Briefs, as well as policy analysis, state-based resources and working tools.

In addition, in order to connect *Models for Change* work with broader juvenile justice reform developments and leadership networks, a separate online “reform portal” has been created. The Juvenile Justice Resource Hub at <http://jjie.org/hub/> is a comprehensive online source of information and links to resources, experts, and technical assistance on juvenile justice issues and reform trends. The Resource Hub is intended to provide an accessible point of entry for practitioners, policymakers and the public, and to provide easy access to curated information and analysis on juvenile justice issues; relevant research, and best practice models; profiles of successful reform efforts; and links to the Resource Centers and other experts in the field.

Still to come in 2014 will be the launch of the Juvenile Justice Geography, Policy/Practice and Statistics website. Currently being developed by the National Center for Juvenile Justice, the site will provide basic statistical and practical information on the juvenile justice systems of all 50 states, track significant changes in law, policy, and practice across the country, facilitate progress comparisons across states, and serve the field as a comprehensive national juvenile justice reform monitoring system.

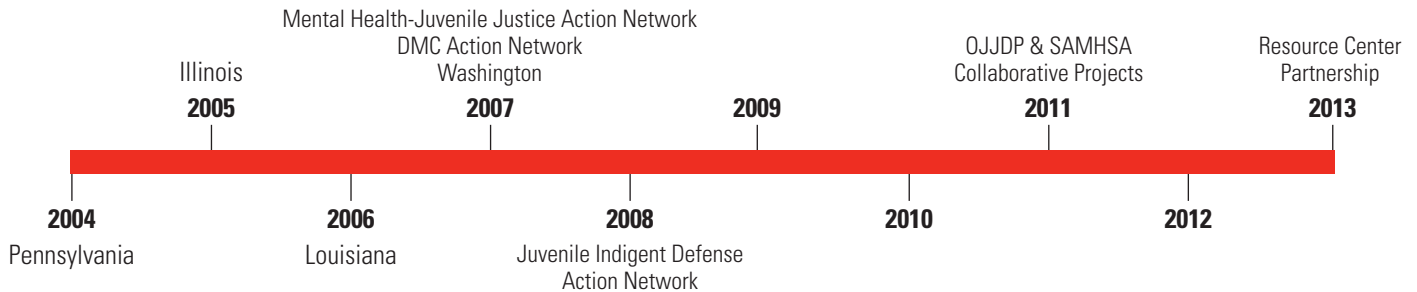
## Conclusion

Though a decade of *Models for Change* investments supported reform work in specific states and localities, the initiative’s goals were always bigger than that—to raise the priority and urgency of juvenile justice reform everywhere, and to contribute direction and momentum to a national reform movement. These larger goals are at the forefront now and call for action.

The strategies described here—the new vehicles and structures for sharing tools and learning, making connections, and building partnerships—are intended to spread and amplify the impact of the last decade of reform work. In that way, it is hoped, *Models for Change* will continue well into the future to contribute to the establishment of a more fair, effective, and developmentally sound system of justice for youth.

## Models for Change Timeline

*Models for Change* had a rolling start, with core states joining the initiative in each year from 2004 through 2007. Action Networks were created in 2007 and 2008. The Federal agency collaborations began in 2011 and will continue into 2014. The Resource Center Partnership was created in 2013.



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