

**AN EXAMINATION OF IOWA'S SCHOOL
LIAISON PROGRAM**

Iowa Department of Human Rights
Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning and
Statistical Analysis Center

Richard Moore, Administrator

Researchers:

Kelly M. Howard
David Huff, Ph.D.

This research has been supported in part by grant #1999-JR-VX-K002 from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Findings here do not necessarily represent the official policies of the Iowa Department of Human Rights or U.S. Department of Justice. This report may be found on the internet at www.state.ia.us/dhr/cjpp.

Introduction

School Liaison Program History

In the early 1990's the Chief Juvenile Court Officers (JCOs) and other key players desired to provide services, such as school support, family support, and community support to both juvenile court and at-risk youths within the school setting. With strong support from both Iowa's Attorney General and Governor the Iowa State Legislature first appropriated funds for school liaisons in 1994. The liaison program is currently funded with 75 percent state dollars appropriated to the Department of Human Services and a minimum of 25 percent match from the local school districts. In some cases the schools do not actually match funds with "school money," rather they may utilize community money from other sources, such as the local decategorization process.

In 1994, the state legislature funded this effort at \$400,000. Since that time the amount has grown to more than \$3,000,000. In the early years there were just a handful of liaisons working in a few school districts, but by the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year there were 304 schools served by 147 liaisons. The cost per liaison, including salary and benefits, was estimated at approximately \$34,324 including both the DHS and school contributions.

It was a desire of the Chief JCOs to place the liaisons under the school districts and thus allow them to be independent of the juvenile court. Agreements were developed between the schools and juvenile court regarding employee status, funding, information sharing, and other such issues.

Research Methods

In an attempt to provide useful and meaningful data to the Chief Juvenile Court Officers, the Attorney General's Office, school liaisons, school administrators and staff, and other key players, CJJP devised a three-part research strategy that included surveying the liaisons, interviewing the liaisons and key players, and conducting interviews with participants and parents and guardians. In addition to describing each of these activities, the following report presents some preliminary data from an effort on the part of the Chief JCOs to collect demographic and referral information regarding the student participants in the program.

The first phase of the assessment involved the School Liaison Survey that was distributed to every school liaison in the State of Iowa during the 1999-2000 school year (see Attachment A). The purpose of the survey was to collect demographic and background information about the school liaisons in addition to collecting information about the services they were providing to students in their schools.

The second phase of the assessment included several over-the-phone interviews with a select group of school liaisons and key players from school districts, juvenile court services, and law enforcement agencies (see Attachment B and Attachment C). CJJP chose to interview two liaisons from each of Iowa's eight judicial districts. One of the liaisons chosen from each judicial district was from a rural community and the other was from an urban community. This distinction was made after discussion with the Chief Juvenile Court Officers revealed that many school liaison programs in rural communities were more established than those in urban communities. The reason for this is because other services offered through juvenile court, such as tracking and monitoring and day treatment, have been more widely distributed in urban communities. Therefore, several of the Chief JCOs committed funding for school liaison programs to rural communities that did not have as much access to resources for at-risk students¹ and juvenile offenders². The purpose of the school liaison interviews was to collect follow-up and additional information to what had been provided on the School Liaison Survey.

The liaisons that completed and returned the School Liaison Survey (n=127) provided CJJP with a contact from the school district and juvenile court. These individuals were indicated to be key players in the school liaison program by the liaison working in their community. CJJP contacted these individuals for brief over-the-phone interviews subsequent to the phone interviews with the school liaisons. The purpose of the key player interviews was to obtain information regarding how individuals other than the liaisons interact within and affect the school liaison program.

¹ An at-risk student is a juvenile who has been identified as being at-risk for delinquent behavior, but who has not been charged for committing a law violation.

² A juvenile offender is a juvenile who has been adjudicated as an offender in the juvenile justice system due to one or more law violations, and is under the terms of an adjustment agreement with Juvenile Court Services (restitution, community service, probation, etc.).

The third and final phase of the assessment involved face-to-face interviews with students who are involved in the school liaison program (see Attachment D). For this phase, CJJP asked a select group of liaisons to choose 2-4 students with whom they work who would be willing to answer a few questions about their involvement in the liaison program. CJJP also conducted over-the-phone interviews with the students' parents and guardians (see Attachment E). For this phase of the assessment, CJJP joined efforts with the Attorney General's office to develop a "Consent to Participation Form" that had to be signed by students, parents, and the school liaison (see Attachment F). CJJP distributed the consent forms to the liaisons in each community that was visited. Liaisons assisted CJJP staff by handing out the forms to parents and guardians and ensuring that the forms were signed and returned before the interviews took place. Liaisons also assisted by setting up the interviews with the students and making arrangements for CJJP to speak to parents either in person or over the phone.

In addition, CJJP has been assisting the Chief JCOs with the collection, analysis, and reporting of a school liaison contact form originally created by the Chief JCOs (see Attachment G). The form was designed to capture demographic and outcome data from the liaisons about the students that they're working with. The liaisons are required to complete the "Client Statistical Summary Form" for each student with whom they come in contact. Every liaison in the state has been provided with a uniform set of instructions for completing the form (see Attachment H).

School Liaison Findings

Demographics

The study's findings (as presented in Table 1) show that the school liaisons were primarily Caucasian and between the ages of 22 and 39. The table also shows that slightly more liaisons were female than male.

Table 1: School Liaison Characteristics

RACE*	N	%
Caucasian	106	83.5
African American	11	8.6
Hispanic	1	0.8
Native American	0	0.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0.8
Mixed/Other	2	1.6
SUBTOTAL	121	95.3
SEX	N	%
Male	61	48.0
Female	66	52.0
SUBTOTAL	127	100.0
AGE*	N	%
22-29 years old	60	47.2
30-39 years old	48	37.8
40-49 years old	16	12.6
50 years old and up	2	1.6
SUBTOTAL	126	99.2
STATE TOTALS	127	100.0

* There were 6 cases (4.7 percent) in which the race was unknown and 1 case (0.8 percent) in which the age was unknown.

Number of Schools Served

Findings show that the average number of schools in which a liaison served ranged from one to three³. It was found that many liaisons working in a middle school or junior high school might also work in the high school. A few communities have expanded school liaisons' duties to include working with elementary school students.

Caseload Issues

The average caseload of school liaisons ranged from as few as six to as many as two hundred students per month. However, it is important to note that each liaison may use different criteria for determining which students are and are not on his/her caseload.

³ There was one liaison that reported serving as many as 12 different schools, and three that reported serving 6 or more schools.

For example, some liaisons only include juvenile offenders who are on probation when defining their caseloads, but other liaisons include at-risk or other groups of students as a part of their caseloads.

Activities and Services

Through open-ended questioning and various discussions with the liaisons, CJJP was able to form a list of activities and services offered through school liaisons programs. These activities and services were organized into five major categories:

- **School Support**
- **Juvenile Court Services Support**
- **Family/Parent Support**
- **Community Support**
- **Documentation and Reporting**

It is important to note that at the time of the survey, CJJP simply wanted to know what services were being offered by the school liaisons (see Table 2). There was not an attempt to distinguish between the services directly provided by the liaisons and those to which students were referred by the liaisons. CJJP created the list of services to be an overview of the major types of activities that the liaisons are involved with rather than an exhaustive list of all services. Some additional services and activities that liaisons are involved with are fairly common among school districts, while others are unique to specific school districts or schools.

As can be seen in Table 2, a large majority of school liaisons address school support issues such as attendance, conflict resolution/crisis intervention, tardiness, and behavior modification. In almost all locations, the liaisons offer the most support to juvenile court services by providing supervision to students who are on juvenile probation.

Over 95 percent of the liaisons maintain regular contact with their students' families and parents through either telephone or home visits, and a majority offer additional family support in individual counseling and referral to family-based services. The liaisons provide community support mainly by arranging and/or supervising community service activities, and most of the liaisons engage in documentation and reporting activities by maintaining student files and student progress reports.

Table 2: School Liaison Services Provided or Referred

ACTIVITIES	SERVICE	YES		NO	
		N	%	N	%
SCHOOL SUPPORT	Attendance Issues	124	97.6	3	2.4
	Conflict Resolution/Crisis Intervention	120	94.5	7	5.5
	Tardiness Issues	116	91.3	11	8.7
	Behavior Modification	105	82.7	22	17.3
	Tutoring/Study Sessions	84	66.1	43	33.9
	After-School Activities	73	57.5	54	42.5
	Recreational Activities	63	49.6	64	50.4
	Group Counseling/Peer Support Groups	61	48.0	66	52.0
	Drug Free Programming	53	41.7	74	58.3
	Services for Drop-Outs	43	33.9	84	66.1
	Health Care	42	33.1	85	66.9
JUVENILE COURT SERVICES	Supervise Juvenile Probation	116	91.3	11	8.7
	Transportation for JCS Activities	79	62.2	48	37.8
	Tracking/Monitoring Services	69	54.3	58	45.7
	Life Skills	62	48.8	65	51.2
	Facilitate CINA Process	42	33.1	85	66.9
FAMILY/PARENT SUPPORT	Parent Contact/Home Visits	121	95.3	6	4.7
	Individual Counseling	115	90.5	12	9.5
	Family/Parent Resources	104	81.9	23	18.1
	Family Counseling	75	59.1	52	40.9
	Parenting Skills	42	33.1	85	66.9
	Family Education Programs	16	12.6	111	87.4
COMMUNITY SUPPORT	Community Service Activities	92	72.4	35	27.6
	Transition from School District to School District	75	59.1	52	40.9
	Transition from Treatment Facility to Community	71	55.9	56	44.1
	Career Planning/Job Shadowing	52	40.9	75	59.1
	Big Brothers/Big Sisters – Mentors	44	34.6	83	65.4
	School-to-Work Programs	26	20.5	101	79.5
DOCUMENTATION & REPORTING	Maintaining Student Files	121	95.3	6	4.7
	Progress Reports	109	85.8	18	14.2
	Accountability System	28	22.0	99	78.0

Daily Activities and Involvement

Every liaison who was interviewed reported dealing with attendance and/or truancy issues on a daily basis. Most of the liaisons handle unexcused absences by making phone calls to the students' homes to "check in" with the parents and guardians. A few even reported acting as a "taxi service" by locating and transporting missing students to school. Other daily work-related activities included:

- classroom presentations;
- crisis intervention and/or mediation services, including anger management groups and other groups focused on behavior modification;
- visiting placement sites with Juvenile Court Officers;
- participating in school-based committees;
- facilitating informal counseling to discuss students' issues (behavior, grades, attendance, etc.);
- acting as lunchroom and/or hallway monitors;
- sending and receiving progress reports to and from teachers and parents and guardians and distributing pamphlets of community resources;
- handling transition issues (from another school or from placement);
- coordinating after-school and/or summer activities, both social and academic;
- coordinating and conducting community services activities for students on probation and/or at-risk students involved in after-school activities;
- distributing information about college and career opportunities to students to assist in career planning efforts;
- handling disciplinary issues;
- providing mentoring services or referring students to Big Brothers/Big Sisters;
- and, completing paperwork that includes quarterly, semester, and/or annual reports.

Level of Support

Every school liaison and key player who was interviewed expressed adequate and appropriate support from schools and communities in carrying out the duties the school liaison program requires of them. Several liaisons expressed particular support from the parents of the students they work with, stating that the parents “like having someone looking out for their kids.” School districts have become increasingly willing to provide equipment and materials to their liaisons because “they want to see students succeed *in* the school setting.” Both groups believe that the money being used for the school liaison program is being adequately and appropriately managed to link families, schools, the juvenile court system, law enforcement agencies, and the communities together.

Interaction with People and Agencies

School liaisons reported working regularly with a vast number of people and agencies outside of Juvenile Court Services (JCS). Most liaisons maintain close communication with the Department of Human Services (DHS), as well as several treatment facilities in their communities. Liaisons reported working with officials and staff from law enforcement, Area Education Agencies (AEA), hospitals, drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, County Attorneys, mental health services, alternative school programs, day treatment programs, local government officials, and various community agencies, such as the Salvation Army and Boys and Girls Clubs.

According to several liaisons, the most important reason for keeping contact with a variety of people and agencies is so that students do not get “doubled-up” on services.

For example, if a student who comes in contact with a liaison is already receiving in-home services through DHS, it is unnecessary for the liaison to use time and resources to refer this student for in-home services that he or she is already receiving. The liaison may not know that the student is receiving these services if he or she does not make an attempt to maintain open communication with DHS and other services providers. It is equally important for DHS and other service providers to be responsive to the liaisons' requests for information.

The key players who were interviewed had varying levels of interaction with the school liaisons in their communities. School contacts, such as teachers, guidance counselors, and principals, reported having more daily interaction with school liaisons than JCOs do, mainly because they work in the same location as the school liaisons. School personnel check in with the liaison and vice versa to discuss the behavior and progress of students. JCOs also check in with school liaisons for progress and behavior reports on their juvenile probation clients, but this is not necessarily daily interaction.

Program Findings

Perceived Strengths of the Liaison Program

School liaisons and key players who were interviewed agreed that a major strength of the school liaison program is the liaisons' opportunity to form personal relationships with the students and their parents. One liaison stated that the liaison program works in "the best interest of the families" and several other liaisons stated that parents and students view the school liaisons as being less "scary" and "threatening" than school personnel and law enforcement officials. Overall, liaisons agree that parents generally feel more comfortable talking to them than to juvenile court, law enforcement, and/or school officials. For example, one of the parents whose daughter had been arrested for possession of alcohol and drinking under age told CJJP staff that, "I have never been through anything like this...I mean, my kids have never been in trouble with the law before. [The liaison] listened to me and my concerns, and he explained the process to me and helped me get through it." Additionally, CJJP staff heard from several other parents/guardians who view the school liaison as a confidant.

Other program strengths mentioned by liaisons and key players included:

- accountability issues for students and families;
- the ability to link at-risk families with outside agencies and resources;
- keeping the focus on prevention rather than reaction;
- bridging the gap between juvenile court and the schools;
- relieving undue stress to teachers and other school officials by keeping disciplinary issues out of the classroom;
- providing counseling or mentoring services to students who might otherwise not have access;
- and, having the opportunity to share ideas among different areas of the community.

Perceived Weaknesses of the Liaison Program

The main program weakness noted by liaisons and key players alike is the feeling that liaisons are "spread too thin." Many of the school liaisons that were interviewed serve in two or more schools, and report feeling "ineffective," "overwhelmed," and "inconsistent" at times. Liaisons and key players both would like to see each liaison serve one school only so that he/she is not forced to split his/her time, therefore being able to devote more time and energy to smaller groups of students.

Another weakness noted was that liaisons "need to be working with younger students" to promote prevention before students become involved in the juvenile justice system, and notice signs of at-risk behavior before it becomes a primary concern. However, since these interviews took place, CJJP has learned that a few communities have expanded their liaisons' duties to include services for elementary school students.

Referral Sources and Issues

Principals, teachers, guidance counselors, and other contacts from the schools play an important role in the liaison programs by acting as a source of referral for students who appear to be at-risk for negative behavior. These key players observe student behavior within the school setting (e.g., classroom, hallway, cafeteria) and inform the liaisons of any “red flags” in student behavior and/or interaction. Contacts outside of the school (e.g., parents, juvenile court) have also been informative to liaisons when working with students.

Juvenile Court Officers (JCOs) are responsible for overseeing the activities of students that are on juvenile probation. They keep liaisons informed of activity that is taking place in the juvenile court system with new and existing cases, and often refer students involved in the court system to the school liaison program. According to the key players in the juvenile court system, school liaisons take on the duty of acting as “the eyes and ears” of JCOs who are not always able to check in regularly with students that are on probation during the school day.

About half of the liaisons interviewed reported having a formal referral process through the school and Juvenile Court Services (JCS) that involves the completion of a referral form before meeting with a new student. The other half indicated that school referrals come through word of mouth, observation, or meeting with guidance counselors and administrators. Of the liaisons who reported not having a formal referral process through the school, all but one indicated a formal process of referral through JCS.

Referrals came from several different sources, including but not limited to: JCS, Department of Human Services (DHS), guidance counselors, teachers, principals, law enforcement, and parents. A few liaisons indicate that students are occasionally self-referred or referred by other students.

The two main reasons for referral were for delinquent behavior and behavioral issues. Delinquent behavior was defined as any law violation that resulted in an arrest. Behavioral issues refer to a number of different problems such as attendance, truancy, and tardiness. Other reasons for referral included:

- academic issues;
- family issues;
- lack of appropriate social or life skills;
- mental health issues;
- transitions from placement;
- and, prior involvement with DHS.

Table 3 shows that the main sources of referral came from school personnel (e.g., teachers, guidance counselors, and principals) and Juvenile Court Services (JCS). A small percent of the students were referred by DHS, family members, other students, or were self-referrals.

Table 3: Referral Data

	N	%
REFERRAL SOURCE		
Department of Human Services (DHS)	24	0.9
Juvenile Court Services (JCS)	1074	42.4
School Personnel	1119	44.2
Mixed/Other	95	3.7
Unknown	222	8.8
TOTAL	2534	100.0
REASON FOR REFERRAL		
Academic Issues	246	9.7
Behavioral Issues	948	37.4
Family/Home Problems	64	2.5
Juvenile Delinquency	1014	40.0
Lack of Social/Life Skills	55	2.2
Mental Health Issues	27	1.1
Transition from Placement	23	0.9
DHS Involvement	10	0.4
Unknown	147	5.8
TOTAL	2534	100.0

Student Findings

Demographics

During the summer of 2000, CJPJ collected some demographic data from seven of the eight judicial districts. CJPJ used only those cases in which liaisons reported having 5 or more contacts with a student within a 60-day period. The findings for these cases show that about sixty-eight percent of the students served by school liaisons during the 1999-2000 school year were male and about thirty-one percent were female (see Table 4). Over eighty percent were Caucasian, and about eleven percent were non-white. The majority of the students served by the school liaisons were between the ages of 13 and 17 years old (73.9 percent).

Table 4: Sex, Race, and Age of Students

	N	%
SEX		
Male	1711	67.5
Female	794	31.3
Unknown	29	1.2
RACE		
Caucasian	2110	83.3
African-American	141	5.6
Hispanic	93	3.7
Native American	10	0.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	20	0.8
Mixed/Other	19	0.7
Unknown	141	5.6
AGE		
Under 10 years old	26	1.0
11-13 years old	681	26.9
14-17 years old	1611	63.6
18 years old and up	112	4.4
Unknown	104	4.1
TOTAL	2534	100.0

Table 5 shows that over half of the students served during the 1999-2000 school year were in 8th, 9th, or 10th grade (50.9 percent). Seventy-eight percent were in 7th-11th grade, with a small percent in elementary school and a few high school seniors.

Table 5: Grade Level of Student Participants

	N	%
GRADE LEVEL		
Kindergarten-5 th grade	106	4.2
6 th grade	195	7.7
7 th grade	324	12.8
8 th grade	423	16.7
9 th grade	428	16.9
10 th grade	438	17.3
11 th grade	362	14.3
12 th grade	208	8.2
Unknown	50	1.9
TOTAL	2534	100.0

CJJP conducted interviews with a small number of students considered by liaisons to be a part of their caseloads. Fifteen students were interviewed in three different schools. While there was no attempt to conduct a random sampling for the interviews or to conduct interviews statewide, CJJP felt it was important to gather student and parent and guardian perceptions about the liaison program.

All the students that were interviewed were Caucasian. About half of the students were males and about half were females. Every student interviewed indicated that he/she was from a single-parent home or blended family, most of which had some very complicated family relationships and situations (e.g., several half- and step-siblings living in different areas of the state or country, non-custodial parents living in different areas of the state or country).

Although the students participating in the interviews were demographically similar, their reasons for involvement in the school liaison program varied greatly. The students' reasons for involvement ranged from truancy issues to anger management issues to serious drug and alcohol dependency issues. In addition, a majority of the students CJJP interviewed had current or prior delinquency offenses and had been involved in the juvenile court system.

Student Perceptions of the Liaison Program

Students were asked to describe:

- their peers' opinion of the school liaison;
- the activities they are involved in with the school liaison;
- their like or dislike of the school liaison program;
- what the school liaison could do differently to be more helpful;
- whether or not they feel comfortable talking to the school liaison about their problems;

- the changes they have made in their lives as a result of being involved in the school liaison program;
- and, whether or not they would refer a friend who was having problems to the school liaison (see Attachment E).

When speaking with the students about their involvement with the school liaison program, three major themes surfaced. The themes from these interviews were (1) that the students were very positive about their involvement with the liaisons; (2) that the liaisons were often too busy with transportation, crisis intervention, court, other students, and telephone calls; and (3) students viewed the liaisons as a trustworthy and honest adult with whom they feel comfortable discussing their problems.

In addition, the students that were interviewed generally indicated that other students in their schools may not know who the liaison is unless they are involved in the liaison's programming. Considering the number of different people in the school setting these days (e.g., social workers, resource officers, drug counselors, and trackers), this statement is not inconsistent. However, through observation and conversations with liaisons and school personnel, CJJP learned that liaisons are typically visible in the hallways or cafeteria before and after school. In addition, the majority of liaisons that CJJP spoke with have an "open door" policy. Therefore, students may get used to seeing different people in the school, but may not know their functions.

Several students indicated that they generally feel more comfortable talking to the school liaison about their problems rather than going to the school's guidance counselor. A few students indicated that they would talk to the school liaison about their problems even before they would talk to their parents/guardians about those problems.

CJJP staff heard from several different students who indicated that involvement in the liaison program was a positive experience even though they were not proud or happy about the way they came to be involved with the liaison. For example, one student said, "I wish I didn't do what I did to become involved, but I like [the liaison] and I like being involved in the [liaison] program." Another student told CJJP staff that, "I don't like the way I came to be involved, but [the liaison] is cool! I don't mind being involved."

Parent and Guardian Perceptions of the Liaison Program

Parents and guardians were asked to describe:

- the frequency of their communication with the school liaison;
- how the school liaison keeps them informed of their child's progress;
- how their child's attendance, behavior, attitude, and/or grades has changed as a result of their involvement with the school liaison;
- and, what the school liaison could do to be more helpful to the family (see Attachment F).

Similar themes evolved from conversations with the students' parents and guardians that surfaced when speaking with students. The themes from the parent and

guardian interviews were: (1) the parents and guardians were very positive about their children's involvement with the liaisons; (2) many parents and guardians viewed the liaison as a confidant; (3) parents and guardians were very supportive about seeing the school liaison program continue; and (4) almost all parents and guardians indicated that they observed major changes in their children's behavior and attitude.

Although the information CJJP has obtained through conversations with student participants and their parents and guardians has been very positive, it is important to mention that this feedback is not necessarily representative of all liaison programs, students, or parents and guardians involved in the liaison programs. Since liaisons were asked to choose students with whom CJJP could talk to about their experiences, it is likely that the students chosen were students with whom liaisons had the closest and most positive relationships.

In addition, CJJP encountered two communities in different areas of the state whose participants chose not to talk about their involvement in the school liaison program. It is possible that these students were worried about providing negative feedback about the school liaison in their school, and therefore refused to be involved in this process so that they did not have to provide any feedback. It is also possible that students and their parents and guardians misinterpreted or misunderstood CJJP's role in the assessment, viewed CJJP as an agency that could impact the student and refused to participate because they were afraid of the consequences of doing so.

Closing Statements and Recommendations

Although the school liaison program is still a relatively new program, it seems clear that the liaisons are providing services to schools that would otherwise not be available. At the same time, however, there is a sense that liaisons are spread too thin and that they may be performing some duties that would better be performed by other school personnel. Overall, the school liaison program is seen across the state as a beneficial and positive programming initiative. The students that were interviewed were very positive about their experiences with the school liaisons, and parents and guardians report seeing major changes in behavior and attitude among their children.

Through discussions with school liaisons, key players, student participants, and parents and guardians, it is clear that school liaisons are doing different things in different communities, even within the same areas of the state. Since not all communities, schools, students, and/or families have the same needs, this may be an indication that the liaisons are addressing the needs that are unique in their own communities and schools.

With the continued effort of juvenile court services staff, the Chief JCOs, school liaisons, and CJJP staff, outcome data is being collected from the Client Statistical Summary forms that are being collected for the 2000-2001 school year⁴. CJJP staff developed the statistical form that the school liaisons are using and conducted training sessions across the state to teach the school liaisons how to correctly complete the form.

At the time the School Liaison Survey was conducted, there was not an attempt to distinguish between services provided by liaisons and the services to which liaisons were referring students. However, there are currently efforts in place to collect information that distinguishes between these types of services. This effort is included in the Client Statistical Summary form, where the liaisons are asked to determine if specific services that they were involved in with a student were services that the liaison actually provided (counseling, anger management group, providing transportation, etc.) or were services to which the liaison made a referral (professional counseling or treatment, arranging transportation, etc.).

Finally, CJJP recommends that the Chief JCOs and school liaisons devise an on-going system for collecting qualitative information from students involved in the liaison program. This could provide valuable insight into the perceptions and attitudes of students who are involved in the liaison program. CJJP recognizes that the interviews that were conducted with the 15 students do not necessarily represent statewide perceptions about the liaison program but believes it would be beneficial for each judicial district to begin collecting similar data from students in each school being served by a liaison. This data could be collected as part of a process schools may use to collect student information about academic courses or other school activities.

⁴ Data for the 2000-2001 school year will be available Fall 2001.

ATTACHMENT A

School Liaison Survey

Conducted by the Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning

Spring 2000

BACKGROUND:

School liaison name: _____ Sex: _____

Race: _____ DOB: _____ Phone: _____

Name of school(s) served: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

How long has your program been in existence (start date mm/dd/yyyy): _____

What is your average caseload per month? _____ **OR** per school quarter? _____

Instructions:

Below, you will find a list of services separated into five different categories (school support, Juvenile Court Services, family/parent support, community support, and documentation/reporting). Please read through these services and check the specific services that you provide to students in your assigned school(s). Feel free to add to the services already listed, or move services into different categories (i.e., school support, Juvenile Court Services, etc.) that you find to be more appropriate.

After you have completed this survey, please return it to the Chief Juvenile Court Officer in your judicial district. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Kelly Howard at the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (515)242-5492. Thank you for your cooperation and assistance!

SCHOOL SUPPORT

- Attendance issues
- Tardiness issues
- Conflict-resolution/Crisis Intervention
- Individual counseling services
- Family counseling services
- Group counseling services
- Referral services
- Health care
- Tutoring/Study sessions
- Recreation/Leisure activities

After-school activities
Peer support groups
Services for drop outs
Drug-free programs
Behavior modification issues
OTHER: _____
OTHER: _____

JUVENILE COURT SERVICES

Supervise students on juvenile probation
Tracking/Monitoring services
Transportation for JCS-related activities
Life Skills
Facilitate CINA process
OTHER: _____
OTHER: _____

FAMILY/PARENT SUPPORT

Parent/family resources
Parenting skills
Parent contact/Home visits
Family education program
OTHER: _____
OTHER: _____

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Big Brothers/Big Sisters/Mentors
Career exploration/Job shadowing/Career planning
School-to-Work programs
Community service activities
Transitions from treatment facility to community
Transitions from school district to school district
OTHER: _____
OTHER: _____

DOCUMENTATION/REPORTING SERVICES

Progress reports
Accountability system (point system)
Maintaining client files
OTHER: _____

Please provide a contact from each of the following:

School district

Juvenile Court

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Law enforcement

Other

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Any additional comments (feel free to continue on the back of this sheet or attach another piece of paper if needed):

***Please note that you may be contacted to participate in a brief interview with CJJP concerning your perceptions about the school liaison program.**

ATTACHMENT B

School Liaison Interview Questions

1. What are the strengths of the school liaison program operating in your community?
2. As a school liaison, explain what you do in a given day.
3. Do you feel that you have adequate and appropriate support from the school and community to carry out the duties of your job? Explain.
4. What type of education/experience/credentials do you have?
5. How many youth do you come in contact with in one day? One week? One month? Do you have a regular caseload?
6. Other than Juvenile Court Services, tell us about the people and agencies you interact with on a daily or weekly basis (DHS, private providers, etc.). Who are they? How are they involved? How should they be involved?
7. If money were not an issue, what would you change about your program? Would you do anything different?
8. What philosophy/strategy/activities do you employ? Does your philosophy/strategy/activities change with the target population (sex, race, age, etc.)?
9. Is your program a school-year program or a 12-month program? What do you do during the summer? How do activities differ in the summer? Do you work with the same group of youth or a different group of youth? How are they similar? Different?
10. How do you typically become aware of youth who need your services?
11. Who is your "other" contact? What specific agency is he/she from?

12. Do you have a procedural or policy manual?

13. Specific examples of each item checked:

- Attendance issues:
- Tardiness issues:
- Conflict-resolution/Crisis Intervention:
- Individual counseling services:
- Family counseling services:
- Group counseling services:
- Referral services:
- Health care:
- Tutoring/Study sessions:
- Recreation/Leisure activities:
- After-school activities:
- Peer support groups:
- Services for drop-outs:
- Drug-free programs:
- Behavior modification issues:
- Other:

- Supervision of students on juvenile probation:
- Tracking/Monitoring services:
- Transportation for JCS-related activities:
- Life Skills:
- Facilitate CINA process:
- Other:
- Parent/family resources:
- Parenting skills:
- Parent contact/Home visits:
- Family education program:
- Other:

- Big Brothers/Big Sisters/Mentors:
- Career exploration/Job shadowing/Career planning:
- School-to-Work programs:
- Community service activities:
- Transitions from treatment facility to community:
- Transitions from school district to school district:
- Other:

- Progress reports:
- Accountability system:
- Maintaining client files:
- Other:

ATTACHMENT C

Key Players Interview Questions

1. How familiar are you with the school liaison program?
2. What is your specific involvement with the school liaison program?
3. Do you feel that the school liaison program receives adequate and appropriate support from the school and community? Explain.
4. How often do you communicate with the school liaison in a given week?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the school liaison program operating in your community?

ATTACHMENT D

Student Interview Questions

Introduction

We are from the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP). CJJP is a research center that receives funding from a number of different sources in order to measure the success of different programs, and we recently received funding to measure the success of the school liaison program. Schools all over the state have liaisons that provide similar services to the students in their schools. We have had an opportunity to talk to the school liaisons about their opinions of the school liaison program, and now we want to talk to students to find out your opinions of the school liaison and the services he/she offers.

We want you to feel free to talk to us openly and assure you that we will not share anything you say with your school liaison. When we complete our research, we will be including the information in a report, but we will not be including any names, schools, or any other information that could lead anybody to identifying you. Please remember that your involvement with this interview is voluntary and your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

1. How do you think other students in your school feel about the school liaison?
2. How do you think the teachers and principal in your school feel about the school liaison?
3. What activities does the school liaison do (after-school activities, tutoring, etc.)?
4. Do you like being involved with the school liaison, or is it just something you do because your family, the school, etc. is making you do it?
5. How is the school liaison different from your Juvenile Court Officer? the principal? the school counselor? your teachers?
6. What could the school liaison do differently to be more helpful to you?
7. Are you comfortable talking to the school liaison about something that might be bothering you, or is there another adult you would go to before going to the school liaison (teacher, counselor, etc.)?

8. How often do you meet with the school liaison?

9. Has your involvement with the school liaison been positive or negative? Why?

10. What kind of changes have you made in your life because of your involvement with the school liaison?

11. Do you think the school liaison program is a good and helpful program? Why or why not?

12. Would you suggest that a friend who was having problems talk to the school liaison? Why or why not?

ATTACHMENT E

Parent and Guardian Interview Questions

Introduction

We are from the Iowa Department of Human Rights, Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP). CJJP is a research center that receives funding from a number of different sources in order to measure the success of different programs, and we recently received funding to measure the success of the school liaison program. Schools all over the state have liaisons that provide similar services to the students in their schools. We have had an opportunity to talk to the school liaisons about their opinions of the school liaison program, and now we want to talk to families/parents of youth involved with the school liaison to find out your opinions of the school liaison and the services he/she offers.

We want you to feel free to talk to us openly and assure you that we will not share anything you say with the school liaison. When we complete our research, we will be including the information in a report, but we will not be including any names, schools, or any other information that could lead anybody to identifying you or your child. Please remember that your involvement with this interview is voluntary and your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

1. How often do you communicate with the school liaison?
2. How does the school liaison keep you informed of your child's progress or difficulties?
3. How has your child's attendance/grades/behavior/etc. changed as a result of being involved with the school liaison?
4. How do you think your child feels about the school liaison?
5. What could the school liaison do differently to be more helpful to your child/family?
6. Do you think the school liaison program is a good and helpful program? Why or why not?

ATTACHMENT F

**Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning
School Liaison Study**

Consent to Participation in the School Liaison Study

I hereby consent to my participation and the participation of my child, _____, in the School Liaison Study being conducted by the
(Please Print Full Name of Child)

Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning, Iowa Department of Human Rights. I agree that the researchers conducting this study may interview my child outside of my presence.

I understand that the purpose of the study is to examine and describe the differences and similarities among the School Liaison programs for planning and administrative purposes. I also understand that my participation in this process is voluntary and that whether or not I chose to participate in this study, my child's name will not be revealed in any report that CJJP prepares for the public.

This consent will remain in effect until June 30, 2001. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time prior to the above date by notifying in writing: David Huff (Justice Systems Analyst) with CJJP, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319.

This consent form has been discussed with me, and I have had an opportunity to ask questions I have about the form or the School Liaison Study.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Youth

Date

Signature of Witness (School Liaison)

Date

Parental/Guardian Consent Form 7-0

ATTACHMENT G*

**JUVENILE COURT SCHOOL LIAISON
CLIENT STATISTICAL SUMMARY**
Prepared by the Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning
321 E. 12th Street Des Moines, IA 50319 Ph: (515) 242-5823 Fax: (515) 242-6119

JCSL: _____ SCHOOL DISTRICT: _____
JUDICIAL DISTRICT: _____ COUNTY: _____

I. CLIENT & REFERRAL INFORMATION

NAME: _____ SEX: MALE RACE: CAUCASIAN
AGE: _____ FEMALE AFRICAN AMERICAN
DOB: _____ HISPANIC

SCHOOL NAME: _____ NATIVE AMERICAN
(please note if alternative or elementary school) ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER
MIXED/OTHER

CURRENT GRADE LEVEL: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONSHIP: PARENT(S) – FOSTER PARENT(S) – RELATIVE – CUSTODIAN – OTHER: _____

FIRST "MEANINGFUL CONTACT" DATE: _____

REFERRAL SOURCE: JCS – DHS – SCHOOL – CLIENT – FAMILY – OTHER: _____

TITLE OF REFERRAL PERSON: _____

DHS/JCS WORKER: _____ FROM: JCS DHS

FOCUS OF INTERVENTION (check all that apply and write a 1 next to the primary focus of intervention):

- ATTENDANCE ISSUES GRADE POINT AVERAGE/ACADEMIC ISSUES
- TRUANCY ISSUES TARDINESS ISSUES
- DISCIPLINARY/BEHAVIORAL ISSUES MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
- LAW VIOLATIONS: _____
- OTHER: _____

II. PRE & POST PERFORMANCE MEASURES (complete Column A after 5 contacts within a 60-day period and complete Column B when the case is closed or at the end of the school year)

REPORTING BY: QUARTERS – TRIMESTERS – SEMESTERS – OTHER: _____

	COLUMN A	COLUMN B
	School's PREVIOUS reporting period	School's RECENT reporting period
ATTENDANCE – each recorded excused absence counts one – list missed days only		
TRUANCY – each recorded unexcused absence counts one – list missed days only		
TARDIES – each recorded tardy (attended class, but was late) counts one		
SUSPENSIONS – each day missed to in- or out-of-school suspensions counts one – list missed days only		
LAW VIOLATIONS – each recorded law violation (police report) counts one		
GRADE POINT AVERAGE – school's recorded grade point average)		
OPTIONAL A: (for an area of special or local interest)		
OPTIONAL B: (for an area of special or local interest)		

WAS THE CLIENT ENROLLED IN AN EDUCATION PROGRAM WHEN THE CASE CLOSED? YES NO

EXPLAIN: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (use back of sheet if necessary):

ATTACHMENT H*

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE "IOWA JUVENILE COURT SCHOOL LIAISON CLIENT STATISTICAL SUMMARY" FORM

Prepared by the Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning

JCSL:	Write in the name of the Juvenile Court School Liaison completing the form.
JUDICIAL DISTRICT:	Write in the judicial district number.
SCHOOL DISTRICT:	Write in the name or number of the school district in which the school is located.
COUNTY:	Write in the name or number of the county in which the school is located.

I. CLIENT & REFERRAL INFORMATION

NAME:	Write in the first and last name of the student.
AGE:	Write in the student's age.
DOB:	Write in the student's date of birth.
SEX:	Circle the sex of the student.
RACE:	Circle the race of the student.
SCHOOL NAME:	Write in the name of the school that the student attends. Please note if the school is an alternative or elementary school.
CURRENT GRADE LEVEL:	Write in the student's current grade level.
PARENT/GUARDIAN RELATIONSHIP:	Circle the relationship between the student and his/her parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian includes a step-parent, circle "other" and explain in the space provided.
FIRST "MEANINGFUL CONTACT":	Write in the date of the first "meaningful contact" with the student. If the liaison has been working with the student continuously, write in the first day of the school year as the first "meaningful contact" date.
REFERRAL SOURCE:	Circle the most appropriate source of referral.
TITLE:	Write in the title of the person who referred the student to the liaison.
DHS/JCS WORKER:	Write in the name of the student's DHS or JCS worker.
FROM:	Circle DHS or JCS to indicate which agency the DHS/JCS worker is from.
FOCUS OF INTERVENTION:	Check all that apply and write a 1 next to the primary focus of intervention.

II. PRE & POST PERFORMANCE MEASURES (complete Column A after 5 contacts within a 60-day period and complete Column B when the case is closed or at the end of the school year)

The "previous" reporting period (Column A) is the quarter/trimester/semester prior to beginning working with the student. The "most recent" reporting period (Column B) is the quarter/trimester/semester in which the school liaison finished working with the student.

REPORTING BY:	Circle "quarters," "trimesters," "semesters," or "other," based on the school's reporting period.
ATTENDANCE:	Each recorded excused absence counts one. List missed days only.
TRUANCY:	Each recorded unexcused absence (truancy) count one. List missed days only.
TARDIES:	Each recorded tardy (attended class, but was late) counts one.
SUSPENSIONS:	Each day missed due to in- or out-of-school suspension counts one. List missed days only.
LAW VIOLATIONS:	Each recorded law violation (police report) counts one.
GRADE POINT AVERAGE:	Write in the school's recorded grade point average for the student.
OPTIONAL A & B:	For an area of special or local interest. Write in the option after the colon and fill out Columns A & B. If the school records grades as pass/fail, or only records credits earned, leave GPA blank and use this area to report.
EDUCATION PROGRAM:	Circle "yes" if the student was enrolled in ANY education program (e.g., in placement, GED). Circle "yes" if the case closes at the end of the school year and the student is expected to return for the following school year. Circle "no" if the student dropped out of school or was expelled.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	Write in any additional comments. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kelly Howard or David Huff at 515-242-5823 at the Iowa Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning.

* **Note: The Client Statistical Summary Form and Instructions attached to this document is the version currently being used by school liaisons in the state of Iowa and not the original version. The form was changed based on a vote of the Chief Juvenile Court Officers after the 1999-2000 school year. For a copy of the original form, please contact CJJP at 515-242-5823.**