YOUTH CRIME PREVENTION AND JUVENILE JUSTICE FUNDING: BACKGROUND

California spent more than $4.2 billion of federal and state funds on youth crime prevention and juvenile justice programs between fiscal years 2006/07 and 2008/09, according to information gathered by the Assembly Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review. During that period, the state spent more than $6.2 million annually on administrative costs.

In fiscal year 2008/09, the state spent more than $1.3 billion on these programs, with about 75 percent of the money coming from state funds, and the rest from federal funds. Programs included:

- School-based programs overseen by the Department of Education accounted for $999.3 million;
- Employment-related programs overseen by the Employment Development Department accounted for $13.4 million;
- Family and foster-care programs overseen by the Department of Social Services accounted for $5.9 million;
- Programs aimed at juvenile offenders overseen by the Corrections Standards Authority, a board within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, accounted for $297.5 million;
- Anti-gang programs overseen by the California Emergency Management Agency accounted for $11.5 million;
- And juvenile drug court and some schools-based programs overseen by the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs accounted for $9.9 million.

Despite these expenditures, the state has little ability to determine which programs have been the most effective at preventing youth crime and lowering recidivism rates among juvenile offenders. The reason for this is clear: 14 offices in eight different state departments administered between 38 and 42 funding streams during that period, making it difficult for any one office or person to advise policymakers on the best programs providing the most cost-effective results.

During the past year, both the Little Hoover Commission and the State Commission on Juvenile Justice have produced reports critical of the state's system, saying it lacked organization, leadership and imposed little accountability on programs. "State dollars are distributed from multiple funding streams at different times through different processes. Much is distributed with little or no way of knowing how it is spent," wrote the State Commission on Juvenile Justice, a 12-member commission comprised of gubernatorial and legislative appointees that published a review of the state's juvenile justice system in January 2009. (An executive summary of that report is included in this binder.)

A Committee investigation of the administration these funding streams found:

While many programs do some evaluation of effectiveness, the state does little analysis of the evaluations and does not base spending decisions on program effectiveness. Twenty-five of the 39 programs the Committee analyzed collect some information about outcomes, although some evaluation is based on participant surveys and very few programs conduct independent, scientifically-verifiable reviews. For example, the After-School Education and Safety Program collects some information on participant's school attendance and test scores, an independent evaluation of the program will not be released until 2011 – after the state will have spent nearly $3 billion. The Proud Parenting Program, which is administered by the Corrections Standards Authority, has been funded for 10 years without any evaluation. The Corrections standards Authority does collect re-arrest outcomes for its federally-funded programs, but told the Committee the format in which it reported the statistics to the federal government would be un-useable for the Legislature. One program that dramatically reduced juvenile recidivism, the Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Act, was de-funded in 2008/09.

State administrators of programs rarely de-fund or punish programs that are not effective. For example, since 2002, the Corrections Standards Authority has been allowed to eliminate funding for programs in the federal Title II funding streams if they are not meeting performance standards, but the CSA has never used that authority.

The state rarely requires programs to use evidence-based practices, despite growing national consensus on which practices are most effective. Almost no state-administered programs require the use of evidence-based programs. Some, such as the Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention Program and the Juvenile Justice Community Re-entry Challenge Grant, do provide grantee applications with incentives to use evidence-based practices, and some Department of Education programs recommend using evidence-based programs, but few require it.

There is inefficiency and duplication throughout the system. Three different funding streams – the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act, the Juvenile Probation and Camp Fund, and the Youthful Offender Block Grant - all go to county probation departments, but have different funding practices and different reporting requirements. Two school-based programs – the School Community Violence Prevention Program and the School Community Violence Prevention Block Grant – have virtually the same name and purpose, and many school districts receive money from both programs. The larger of the two, the block grant, requires virtually no accountability and some schools have used the funds to repair buildings or purchase non-educational equipment items such as golf carts and curtains.

Note: The Committee's inventory of funding streams is based on an inventory compiled and published by the Governor's Office of Gang and Youth Violence Policy earlier this year. Programs range from school-based funding that aims to prevent crime and substance abuse to juvenile halls and camps run by probation departments for youth who have entered the criminal justice system.

The Committee asked various state offices and department for:

- *Budget information for each program from Fiscal Year 2006/07 through Fiscal Year 2009/10;*
- *Annual administrative costs for each program; and,*
- *Whether the programs evaluated outcomes.*

Some programs were unable to provide administrative costs because the funding was intertwined with other programs. Some programs were unable to provide current fiscal year information because funding is distributed based on outcomes that have not occurred yet or due to impending changes with some federally-funded programs that could go into effect in the new fiscal year, which begins in October.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

There is increasing agreement among researchers and experts as to which youth crime prevention and juvenile justice programs are effective, and which aren't. The term "evidence-based practice" is generally defined as a program that has been independently evaluated, proven to be effective in studies comparing program participants to a control group, and then replicated by other agencies or groups with similar success.

Lists of specific evidence-based programs are now produced by multiple agencies or programs, including:

- **Blueprints for Violence Prevention.** Created by the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, the Blueprints program has endorsed 11 programs as "model programs" and 18 others as "promising programs." To be considered a "model program," the program must have shown participant improvement for at least one year beyond the treatment period in an independent evaluation and been replicated in other sites by other agencies, with similar results. Effective programs include Big Brothers Big Sisters, Functional Family Therapy, and the Nurse-Family Partnership. *www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints*
- **Washington State Institute for Public Policy.** Per direction from the Legislature, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy has maintained an ongoing study of the cost-effectiveness of various community-based and institution-based criminal justice programs, including programs for youth. The most cost-effective programs for youth include several family-based programs and Aggression Replacement Therapy. *www.wsipp.wa.gov*
- **U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.** This federal office maintains an on-line database of programs described as "exemplary," "effective," or "promising." Only exemplary and effective programs could be considered evidence-based practices. *www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov*

Some state-administered youth crime prevention and juvenile justice programs in California recommend the use of evidence-based programs, but few require such programs.

In contrast to California, legislatures in both Washington state and Oregon have begun to require evidence-based programs. The Washington Legislature approved the Community Juvenile Accountability Act in 1997, which funds only four specific evidence-based practices in its state-administered local juvenile justice programs. The Oregon Legislature in 2003 approved legislation that required a steady increase in the use of evidence-based programs, beginning with the requirement that 25 percent of funding would go toward evidence-based practices by 2007, 50 percent by 2009 and 75 percent by 2011.

Sources: State Commission on Juvenile Justice. January 2009. "Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan: Blueprint for an Outcome Oriented Juvenile Justice System."
Peter Greenwood. Executive Director, Association for the Advancement of Evidence-Based Practices. Fall 2008. "Prevention and Intervention Programs for Juvenile Offenders: The Benefits of Evidence-Based Practices." Published in the journal *The Future of Children.*

REMAINING PROGRAMS

The Assembly Committee on Accountability and Administrative Review is not currently proposing any changes to the following programs:

- School-based programs other than the two safety programs.
    - The Foster Youth Services Juvenile Detention Program, the Pupil Retention Block Grant, the CalServe Initiative, and the CalSAFE program are either federally funded or are not solely focused on youth crime prevention and have other primary objectives. CalSAFE for example, is geared toward helping pregnant students graduate from high school.
    - Healthy Start was a one-time only fund.
    - Safe and Drug Free Schools program is federally funded program that is within the No Child Left Behind Act, which is set to sunset within the next year.
    - After-school programs. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers and the After School Education and Safety Program are very similar, with the 21st Century Community Learning Centers funded by the federal government and the After School Education and Safety Program funded by the state. SB 638 was signed by the governor in 2006 and sought to alleviate overlap between the two programs and better coordinate them. Further changes to the After School Education and Safety Program, approved by voters as Proposition 49 in 2002, require a ballot initiative. The Legislative Analyst's Office in its 2008 Budget Analysis recommended an initiative that would allow the Legislature to cut the program's budget during difficult fiscal years, and the Legislature last year approved AB 1526, which would have created a ballot initiative to end the continuous appropriation within the current program. The legislation was vetoed by the governor.
- Employment Development Department programs. These programs are federally-funded, have specific federal rules, and are often performance-based, meaning programs are not funded until they have successfully kept participants in jobs for 90 days or more.
- Department of Social Services programs. Both the Wraparound program and the Kinship Support Services program are aimed at juvenile offenders who are at risk of being placed in foster care. Both programs appear to be properly located in the Department of Social Services, and both are based on evidence-based practices.
- Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs. The department uses 20 percent of the Safe and Drug Free Schools program to specifically target at-risk youth, such as foster care youth or youth who have guardians in substance abuse programs. The federal program is set to sunset within the year. Juvenile Drug Courts are funded along with adult drug courts and appear to be appropriately placed in this department; in addition, evaluations indicate the program is successful. The Friday Night Live programs are schools-based program designed to reduce substance abuse, include evaluations and appear to be appropriately placed in this department.