***PTI/CPRC Examples of Support for Justice-Involved Youth***

**SPAN (**[**spanadvocacy.org**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cjwils%5CDocuments%5C_CPIR%5COther%20Edited%20Docs%5CJuvenile%20Justice%5Cspanadvocacy.org)**)**

SPAN has worked with families involved in the Justice System in a variety of ways. They provide technical assistance and referral to families that call the warm line. The types of issues addressed on these calls are:

* Truancy
* Police action/involvement
* Court issues
* Juvenile detention
* Weapons offenses

Often calls are addressing multiple issues, not just one isolated concern. SPAN has seen a 17% increate in calls over the past year. SPAN collects and analyzes the data regarding incoming calls and referrals to inform their staff development activities.

Additionally, they provide technical assistance to Family Support Organizations, CASA, and other community based organizations who may be working directly with families and/or youth.

SPAN conducts trainings on the health and educational rights of youth in the Juvenile Justice system that are funded in part by the New Jersey Bar. These presentations are delivered to two key audiences: parents and youth. The parent/family presentation is focused on helping the participants to better understand how the justice system works, particularly for youth, while providing tools and strategies for families to be more involved, especially regarding access to educational services and appropriate health care services. The youth presentation is also focused no helping participants to understand the justice system an dhow they can effectively advocate for themselves to ensure access to appropriate health care and educational services. The youth sessions are activity driven rather than the typical seminar or workshop presentation. The youth work independently and in small groups to learn:

* key terms used in the justice system (i.e., status offense, misdemeanor, adjudication, disposition, restorative justice, etc.)
* how JJ cases are handled and their rights at each level
* risk and protective factors
* resources to help.

SPAN is in discussion with juvenile detention facilities to provide the youth presentation as part of exit planning to increase the likelihood of positive reintegration into the community for soon to be released youth.

SPAN has partnered with the ACLU of NJ to provide their resources (“Know Your Rights” pamphlet) and contact information as part of their training materials.

Additional training for families includes Healthy Families, Positive Behavior Supports, Discipline and Procedural Safeguards, Transition to Adulthood, and Trauma Informed Care. SPAN also provides Professional Development to all newly hired staff in NJ’s Child Welfare system, providing information on the rights of justice involved youth and how professionals can provide information and support to this population.

A SPAN Fact Sheet—"The Rights of Youth in the Juvenile Justice System”—is currently being developed.

SPAN has also been actively involved with community, state, and national partners in advocacy efforts to improve the supports for justice-involved youth. They belong to *Youth Justice New Jersey* ([**http://www.youthjusticenj.org/**](http://www.youthjusticenj.org/)), a coalition of research, advocacy, academic, direct service, and grassroots organizations dedicated to improving the NJ Juvenile Justice system. They have been active in campaigns to stop the use of solitary confinement, close secure institutional facilities in lieu of juvenile detention alternatives, and reduce the disproportionate confinement of minority youth.

SPAN staff serve on county-based JDAI Family Engagement quarterly meetings providing resources, information, and partnering to provide parent presentations. They look forward to sharing information from the CPIR Juvenile Justice Tool Kit with their partners and to increasing their capacity to support justice-involved youth and their families.

**Mission Empower (**[**missionempower.org**](http://missionempower.org/)**)**

Over the last several years, Curtis Jones has been working in the areas of both adult and juvenile justice. He is and has been a part of several organizations and efforts both in our local area of Erie, PA as well as nationally. For the last 16 years, he has been a part of a team of men that goes into their local County Prison on a weekly basis. They conduct classes and do mentoring with adult men and juvenile age male youth that are incarcerated. He also continues to mentor and encourage many of them once they are released from prison.

Curtis participates in a court advocacy program that works with youth that have to go to court on how to properly dress and present themselves in the courtroom. They also work with their families to support them in this effort. He serves on a local taskforce called Unified Erie (<https://www.unifiederie.org/>) that works predominately with Justice involved youth in the community. They work in the areas of prevention, Reentry and they work to see that when enforcement is necessary that it is done appropriately. They look to provide opportunities for Restorative Justice practice to be used with youth in their community.

Curtis also initiated a community service program with a local Ministry where he serves. This allows them to be on a list of locations where individuals both youth and adults can fulfill their Community Service requirements so that they can move on in their lives and learn some healthy life principles as well. He also served as an Executive member of an organization called The Gathering for Justice (<http://www.gatheringforjustice.org/>). This is an intergenerational, intercultural organization that was started by Mr. Harry Belafonte to work on the issue of Juvenile Justice in general but in the area of Youth Incarceration specifically. They do a lot of trainings, Activism, and policy work on local, national, and international levels.

Curtis is currently becoming more involved in his local area to make sure that the educational needs and rights of youth that are incarcerated or are involved in the Justice System are being adhered to and met at the highest levels possible.

**Family Resource Center on Disabilities (**[**frcd.org**](http://frcd.org/)**)**

Family Resource Center on Disabilities (FRCD) has partnered with Roosevelt University, Mansfield Institute for Social Justice and Transformation (MISJT), to work in the Cook County Juvenile Probation, Diversion Division. Youth with disabilities are being arrested at disproportionate rates in Illinois. A central reason is that they are not receiving the services they need in the schools and are facing push out, often through direct arrest in the schools. The youth and their parents/Guardians need support advocating for evaluations, IEPs, and for the school to follow the IEPs so that they may stay in school and avoid recidivism. FRCD staff has worked with MISJT to provide appropriate training on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to Probation Officers and staff at Diversion Office in Cook County, Juvenile Probation. In addition, FRCD works with youth and their families who are court-involved to help them understand IDEA and how to communicate effectively with schools.