



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
EDUCATION AND THE ARTS
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE
INFRASTRUCTURE AND
TRANSPORTATION
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
LAW AND BUSINESS
NATIONAL SECURITY
POPULATION AND AGING
PUBLIC SAFETY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
TERRORISM AND
HOMELAND SECURITY

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis.

This electronic document was made available from www.rand.org as a public service of the RAND Corporation.

Skip all front matter: [Jump to Page 1](#) ▼

Support RAND

[Browse Reports & Bookstore](#)

[Make a charitable contribution](#)

For More Information

Visit RAND at www.rand.org

Explore the [RAND Corporation](#)

View [document details](#)

Limited Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law as indicated in a notice appearing later in this work. This electronic representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only. Unauthorized posting of RAND electronic documents to a non-RAND website is prohibited. RAND electronic documents are protected under copyright law. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please see [RAND Permissions](#).

This report is part of the RAND Corporation research report series. RAND reports present research findings and objective analysis that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors. All RAND reports undergo rigorous peer review to ensure high standards for research quality and objectivity.



Los Angeles County Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act

Fiscal Year 2011–2012 Report

Terry Fain, Susan Turner, Sarah Michal Greathouse

This research was prepared for the Los Angeles County Probation Department and conducted in the Safety and Justice Program within RAND Justice, Infrastructure, and Environment.

The RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis. RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

Support RAND—make a tax-deductible charitable contribution at www.rand.org/giving/contribute.html

RAND® is a registered trademark.

© Copyright 2013 Los Angeles County Probation Department

Permission is given to duplicate this document for personal use only, as long as it is unaltered and complete. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of our research documents for commercial use. Unauthorized posting of RAND documents to a non-RAND website is prohibited. RAND documents are protected under copyright law. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please visit the RAND permissions page (<http://www.rand.org/publications/permissions.html>).

RAND OFFICES

SANTA MONICA, CA • WASHINGTON, DC
PITTSBURGH, PA • NEW ORLEANS, LA • JACKSON, MS • BOSTON, MA
DOHA, QA • CAMBRIDGE, UK • BRUSSELS, BE

www.rand.org

Summary

In 2000, the California state legislature passed the Schiff-Cardenas Crime Prevention Act, which authorized funding for county juvenile justice programs and designated the Board of Corrections (BOC) the administrator of funding. A 2001 California Senate bill extended the funding and changed the program's name to the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). This effort was designed to provide a stable funding source for juvenile programs that have been proven effective in curbing crime among at-risk and young offenders.

JJCPA provided funds to counties to add evidence-based programs and services for

- juvenile probationers identified with needs for more special services than those received by routine probationers
- at-risk youth who have not entered the probation system but who live or attend school in areas of high crime or who have other factors that potentially predispose them to participating in criminal activities
- youth in juvenile halls and camps.

Each juvenile is assigned to one or more JJCPA programs according to an assessment of the individual's need for services.

Administration of the JJCPA program is currently the responsibility of the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), formerly called the Corrections Standards Authority (CSA), formed in July 2005 by merging the BOC and the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (CPOST). BSCC is required to submit annual reports to the California state legislature measuring the success of JJCPA. The legislation identified six specific outcome measures (the "big six") to be included in annual reports from each of the individual JJCPA programs. These outcome measures are arrests, incarcerations, completion of probation, completion of restitution, completion of community service, and probation violations. Each county can also request that supplemental outcomes be measured for locally identified service needs.

JJCPA in the Context of Los Angeles County Probation Department Programs

JJCPA is one of the major vehicles to provide services to juveniles. JJCPA programs are administered by the Los Angeles County Probation Department (hereafter called the Probation Department or, simply, Probation), whose mission is to promote and enhance public safety, ensure victims' rights, and facilitate the positive behavior change of adult and juvenile probationers. In fiscal year (FY) 2011–2012, the state initially allocated approximately \$23.7 million to Los Angeles County for JJCPA programs and services. JJCPA funding represents roughly

15 percent of juvenile field expenditures, or about 5 percent of all expenditures for programming for juveniles.

JJCPA programs are grounded in social-ecological research. The central tenet of this approach is that behavior is multidetermined through the reciprocal interplay of the youth and his or her social ecology, including the family, peers, school, neighborhood, and other community settings. The primary goal of JJCPA programs is to optimize the probability of decreasing crime-producing risk factors and increasing protective factors, with the capacity to intervene comprehensively at the individual, family, peer, and school levels and possibly the community level as well. The use of JJCPA and other resources allows the deputy probation officer (DPO) to shape a plan that builds on the strengths of each youth and is uniquely responsive to service needs. In collaboration with school officials, parents, and community partners, JJCPA DPOs are able to coordinate service plans that include various school- and community-based resources.

The Probation Department submitted program evaluation designs to BOC that used quasi-experimental methods. These designs were subsequently approved by BOC. Whenever possible, comparison groups included youth with characteristics similar to those of program youth—either routine probationers, probationers in non-JJCPA programs, or at-risk youth receiving Probation services. If no appropriate comparison group could be identified, a pre/post measurement design was used. Generally, outcomes for program participants are measured for a six-month period after starting the program (for community programs) or after release into the community (for camp and juvenile hall programs). In addition to the big six, the Probation Department, working with BOC (and later with CSA and BSCC), defined supplemental outcomes specific to each program, which are also reported to BSCC annually.

Some discussion of the big six is in order. BSCC does not rank the relative importance of these measures, nor is there any universally accepted method of determining relative importance of these measures of recidivism. For its planning purposes, Los Angeles County has ranked these in order, from most important to least important, in the view of Probation Department standards: successful completion of probation, arrests, probation violations, incarcerations, successful completion of restitution, and successful completion of community service. An ideal outcome would be for no program youth to be arrested, incarcerated, or in violation of probation and for all to complete probation and (if applicable) community service and restitution. However, because, for most JJCPA programs, the big six outcomes are measured for only six months after entry into the program¹ and because most youths' terms of probation last 12 to 18 months, in practice, a 100-percent completion-of-probation rate is not a realistic expectation. For all the big six measures, the most important metric is whether program youth performed significantly better than comparison-group youth, not the absolute value of any given outcome.

Youth Involved in JJCPA Programs in FY 2011–2012

In FY 2011–2012, 31,781 youth received JJCPA services. Of these, 12,916 (40.6 percent) were at risk and 18,865 (59.4 percent) were on probation. Youth in one or more JJCPA programs

¹ For programs based in juvenile camps or halls, the big six outcomes are measured for the six months after the youth returns to the community, rather than from program start.

receive services, often provided under contract by community-based organizations (CBOs), as well as supervision by a probation officer.

Los Angeles County JJCPA programs are organized into three initiatives: Enhanced Mental Health Services, Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth, and Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services. Table S.1 lists the JJCPA programs in each initiative in FY 2011–2012 and the number of participants who received services in each program. Table S.2 shows the number of youth in each program for whom big six outcomes were reported, the comparison group used for the program, and the number of youth in the comparison group.²

Research Designs and Limitations

We note that pre/post comparisons, as well as comparisons between program youth and those not accepted into the program but deemed comparable to program youth, are weak designs, and such comparisons should be interpreted with this weakness in mind. In particular, pre/post comparisons for probation-related outcomes, such as successful completion of probation, do not take into account whether the youth was on probation prior to program entry. This potentially tips the scale in favor of better performance on all probation-related outcomes other than probation violations after program entry than prior to program entry. Thus, findings of improved probation-related outcomes in programs using a pre/post design should be viewed with this limitation in mind.

Outcomes

Because youth in the Mental Health Screening, Assessment, and Treatment (MH) program represent 90 percent of all youth in the Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative for whom big six outcomes were reported, the results for the initiative as a whole will necessarily be primarily influenced by those for the MH program. JJCPA youth in the Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative completed probation and community service at significantly higher rates than comparison-group youth. Comparison-group youth were significantly less likely to be arrested than those in the Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative, primarily because youth in the MH program, which accounts for 90 percent of all participants in this initiative, had a higher arrest rate than the previous year's participants, who made up the comparison group for this program. The two groups were not significantly different in incarceration, completion of restitution, or probation violations. Supplemental outcomes for all three programs in the Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative that qualified for statistical testing were significantly improved in the six months after program entry compared with the six months before entering the program.

Program youth in the Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth initiative had significantly higher rates of completion of probation, restitution, and community service than

² The near misses used in comparison groups for Multisystemic Therapy (MST) and Special Needs Court (SNC) were youth who had similar characteristics to program youth but who were not accepted into the program, usually because of language barriers or lack of MediCal coverage needed to cover the cost of program participation.

Table S.1
Programs in the Three JJCPA FY 2011–2012 Initiatives and Number of Youth Who Received Services

Initiative and Programs	Abbreviation	Participants
Enhanced Mental Health Services		
Mental Health Screening, Assessment, and Treatment	MH	8,537
Special Needs Court	SNC	71
Multisystemic Therapy	MST	155
Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth		
Youth Substance Abuse Intervention	YSA	438
Gender-Specific Community (including Young Women at Risk)	GSCOMM (including YWAR)	700
High Risk/High Need Youth	HRHN	1,932
Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services		
School-Based Probation Supervision for Probationers and At-Risk Youth	SBHS-PROB (high school probationers)	4,685
	SBMS-PROB (middle school probationers)	129
	SBHS-AR (high school at-risk youth)	1,237
	SBMS-AR (middle school at-risk youth)	962
Abolish Chronic Truancy	ACT	8,532
After-School Enrichment and Supervision	PARKS	1,487
Housing-Based Day Supervision	HB	116
Inside-Out Writers	IOW	2,800
Total		31,781

NOTE: The number of participants in a given program is determined by who received services during the fiscal year, which goes from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012. To allow a six-month eligibility period for recidivism, however, the number for whom outcomes are reported uses a reference period of January 1, 2011, through December 31, 2011. The youth whose outcomes can be reported during the fiscal year must enter the program in time to have six months before the end of the fiscal year, so the number of participants will not match the number for whom outcomes are reported.

comparison-group youth. Differences between the two groups in rates of arrest, incarceration, and probation violations were not statistically significant. The relevant supplemental outcomes for GSCOMM and HRHN participants were significantly improved in the six months after entering the program compared with the six months before entering.

Youth in the Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services initiative had significantly better outcomes than the baseline period or comparison group on four of the big six measures. Although comparison-group youth had significantly fewer arrests and incarcerations, program youth had significantly higher rates of completion of probation, restitution, and community service and lower rates of probation violations. For the programs that used educational measures as supplemental outcomes, school attendance improved significantly in

Table S.2
Programs in the Three JJCPA FY 2011–2012 Initiatives and Number of Participants for Whom Outcomes Were Reported

Initiative and Programs	Participants	Comparison Group	Comparison-Group Members
Enhanced Mental Health Services			
MH	1,539	FY 2010–2011 MH participants	868
SNC	44	SNC-identified near misses	32
MST	126	MST-identified near misses	85
Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth			
YSA	254	FY 2010–2011 YSA participants	352
GSCOMM (including YWAR)	748	FY 2010–2011 GSCOMM participants	470
HRHN	1,779	FY 2010–2011 HRHN participants	2,181
Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services			
SBHS-PROB	3,034	Routine probationers	2,554
SBMS-PROB	77	Routine probationers	274
SBHS-AR	694	FY 2010–2011 SBHS-AR participants	792
SBMS-AR	560	FY 2010–2011 SBMS-AR participants	735
ACT	5,035	Pre/post comparison	5,038
PARKS	869	Pre/post comparison	869
HB	60	Pre/post comparison	60
IOW	1,943	FY 2010–2011 IOW participants	1,400

NOTE: The number of participants in a given program is determined by who received services during the fiscal year, which goes from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012. To allow a six-month eligibility period for recidivism, however, the number for whom outcomes are reported uses a reference period of January 1, 2011, through December 31, 2011. The youth whose outcomes can be reported during the fiscal year must enter the program in time to have six months before the end of the fiscal year, so the number of participants will not match the number for whom outcomes are reported. Near misses for MST and SNC were limited to those with characteristics comparable to those of program participants. Routine probationers used as comparison groups for SBHS-PROB and SBMS-PROB were statistically matched to program participants. Outcomes for MH were reported only for youth who received treatment.

the term following program entry as compared with the previous term, and there were significant reductions in school suspensions and expulsions. All other supplemental outcomes that had enough successful outcomes to allow statistical testing showed significant improvement, except for special incident reports (SIRs) in the IOW program, in which there was no significant difference in rates between the two periods measured. HB housing-project crime rates were lower in FY 2011–2012 than in FY 2010–2011, but significance testing between the two rates is not possible.

Historical and Contemporaneous Comparison Groups and Pre/Post Comparisons

Programs with contemporaneous comparison groups showed mixed results. SBHS-PROB program youth had significantly better outcomes than comparison-group youth in all of the probation-related big six outcomes except for arrest rates, for which the two groups were not significantly different. Big six outcomes for SBMS-PROB youth were significantly better than those of the comparison group for successful completion of probation, while the sample size was too small for statistical testing in successful completion of community service, and there was no significant difference between the two groups in the other four big six outcomes. The much smaller programs MST and SNC showed no significant difference in big six outcomes from their respective comparison groups, with several outcomes having sample sizes too small to allow for statistical testing.

Programs that used historical comparison groups also showed mixed results. MH participants were significantly more likely to complete probation than their FY 2010–2011 counterparts but had a significantly higher arrest rate. Other MH big six outcomes did not differ significantly between the two groups. The two SBHS-AR and SBMS-AR cohorts had no significant differences in rates of arrest or incarceration. The FY 2011–2012 cohort of HRHN participants had significantly higher rates of completion of probation, completion of restitution, and completion of community service than their FY 2010–2011 counterparts, but the FY 2010–2011 cohort had a significantly lower arrest rate. The two cohorts did not differ significantly in rates of incarceration and probation violations. There were no significant differences between the FY 2010–2011 and FY 2011–2012 cohorts of YSA youth. FY 2010–2011 GSCOMM (including YWAR) participants had significantly higher rates of completion of probation than the FY 2011–2012 cohort. The two groups did not differ significantly for the other big six outcomes. FY 2011–2012 IOW participants had significantly higher rates of arrest and incarceration than the FY 2010–2011 cohort, while the other four big six outcomes did not differ significantly between cohorts.

In the three programs that used a pre/post design (ACT, HB, and PARKS), most outcomes had a sample size too small to allow for statistical testing. The only exception was arrest rate in ACT, for which there was no significant difference between baseline and follow-up rates.

Supplemental outcomes, which varied from program to program, were almost always more positive in the reference period after starting the program than in the comparable period before beginning the program. School attendance, in particular, improved markedly for those programs that used attendance as a supplemental outcome measure. For these programs, school suspensions and expulsions were likely to decrease as well. Programs whose supplemental outcomes were not school related also tended to show positive results in the measures used. Measures of risk, strengths, and barriers improved significantly for all four school-based programs.

Difference-in-Differences Analyses

A difference-in-differences analysis basically compares the *change* in the current year's cohort and the *change* in the previous year's cohort—in this case, comparing outcomes in the six months before and those in the six months after JJCPA program entry.³ A simple comparison makes the implicit assumption that the two cohorts are basically comparable, whereas difference-in-differences analysis tests that assumption by looking at outcomes both before and

³ For MH and IOW, programs administered in juvenile halls, outcomes are measured in the six months prior to hall entry and six months following hall exit for the hall stay during which program services were received.

after program entry. If the two cohorts have different baseline risk profiles, this method will control for such differences. If the two cohorts being compared have the same baseline profile, then a simple comparison works well. However, if the baseline profiles of the two cohorts are not comparable, then a difference-in-differences analysis is more informative than a simple comparison between the two cohorts.

Out of 34 outcomes for the seven programs that used the prior year's cohort as a comparison group (six outcomes for GSCOMM/YWAR, HRHN, IOW, MH, and YSA and two outcomes for SBHS-AR and SBMS-AR), participants met expectations in 26 outcomes, exceeded expectations in five outcomes, and failed to perform up to expectations in three outcomes. In two of the three programs that failed to perform up to expectations with respect to arrest rates, the FY 2011–2012 and FY 2010–2011 cohorts differed significantly in baseline arrest rates. This suggests that these programs may have accepted higher-risk participants in FY 2011–2012 than in FY 2010–2011, but we have no independent corroboration that this was the case.

JJCPA Per Capita Costs

A total of 31,781 youth were served in Los Angeles County JJCPA programs in FY 2011–2012, at a total cost of \$23,733,705, or \$747 per participant.⁴ As one might expect, some programs had lower per capita costs than others. In general, the larger programs, such as ACT, had lower per capita costs, whereas the programs that, like SNC, offered more-extensive services to a smaller population with higher risks and needs had higher per capita costs. Table S.3 shows the total budget for each program, the number of youth served in FY 2011–2012, and the cost per program participant. Overall, the cost per youth in the Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative in FY 2011–2012 was \$526, whereas the Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth initiative cost \$2,013 per youth served, and the Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services programs spent \$649 per youth.

Juvenile Justice Costs

Although Table S.3 shows the costs of delivering JJCPA services in the various programs, other costs are also incurred for JJCPA participants. These include the cost of supervision for those on probation, the cost of juvenile hall for those who spend time in the halls, the cost of juvenile camp for those assigned to camp, the cost of receiving a technical violation of probation, and the various costs associated with being arrested. In our analysis of overall JJCPA costs, we have attempted to estimate each on a daily basis or unit cost to calculate the actual cost of each individual participant.

It should be emphasized that these are estimated costs, based on the best information available at the time of this writing. Most involve calculations using estimates provided by Probation or from publicly available data. These analyses are intended not to provide exact costs

⁴ The number of youth served in FY 2011–2012 is greater than the number of youth for whom outcome measures were reported to BSCC because the time frames are different. Because the cost estimates in this chapter include arrests during the six-month eligibility period mandated for big six outcomes, the number of program youth matches the number used to report outcomes to BSCC, not the total number served during the fiscal year.

Table S.3
Estimated Per Capita Costs, by JJCPA Program, FY 2011–2012

Program or Initiative	Youth Served	Budget (\$)	Per Capita Expenditure (\$)
Enhanced Mental Health Services	8,763	4,606,784	526
MH	8,537	3,218,666	377
SNC	71	336,808	4,744
MST	155	1,051,310	6,783
Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth	3,070	6,179,342	2,013
YSA	438	788,626	1,801
GSCOMM/YWAR	700	794,623	1,135
HRHN	1,932	4,596,093	2,379
Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services	19,948	12,947,579	649
SBHS-PROB	4,685	7,098,869	1,515
SBMS-PROB	129	169,566	1,314
SBHS-AR	1,237	1,517,446	1,227
SBMS-AR	962	1,413,413	1,469
ACT	8,532	310,845	36
PARKS	1,487	1,598,613	1,075
HB	116	641,038	5,526
IOW	2,800	197,789	71
All programs	31,781	23,733,705	747

NOTE: Total budget for an initiative might not equal the sum of budgets of its programs because we have rounded to the nearest dollar.

but to give an indication of approximate trends for each program and to allow comparisons for program participants in the six months after entering JJCPA programs versus the prior six months.

Total Cost of Programs and Initiatives

Table S.4 shows the mean total cost per participant in JJCPA programs in FY 2011–2012. Baseline costs are calculated for the six months prior to program entry, while follow-up costs are calculated for the six months after program entry.⁵ Weighted averages are also shown for each initiative. It should be noted that the costs for each initiative are largely driven by the costs of the program or programs in that initiative that serve the most participants. Thus, MST and SNC costs have very little influence on the overall costs of the Enhanced Mental Health

⁵ For programs administered within juvenile halls (MH and IOW), we measure costs during the six months prior to hall entry and six months following hall exit for the hall stay during which program services were received.

Table S.4
Mean of the Total Estimated Cost per Participant, by JJCPA Program, FY 2011–2012 (\$)

Program or Initiative	Baseline			Follow-Up			Participants	Difference
	Mean	95% CI		Mean	95% CI			
Enhanced Mental Health Services	12,284	11,944	12,624	22,782	22,295	23,269	8,831	-10,498
MH	12,187	11,845	12,528	22,877	22,384	23,371	8,661	-10,690
SNC	43,419	32,184	54,654	27,778	18,892	36,664	44	15,641
MST	8,048	6,093	10,002	14,480	12,580	16,380	126	-6,432
Enhanced Services to High-Risk/ High-Need Youth	16,351	15,569	17,133	11,426	10,833	12,019	2,781	4,925
YSA	10,874	9,070	12,677	12,869	10,742	14,997	254	-1,995
GSCOMM/YWAR	938	671	1,206	2,094	1,844	2,345	748	-1,156
HRHN	23,614	22,424	24,804	15,144	14,274	16,014	1,779	8,470
Enhanced School- and Community- Based Services	5,524	5,321	5,726	5,550	5,352	5,749	12,275	-27
SBHS-PROB	9,522	9,062	9,983	6,859	6,476	7,243	3,034	2,663
SBMS-PROB	6,974	5,247	8,700	7,048	4,161	9,935	77	-74
SBHS-AR	139	27	251	856	631	1,081	694	-717
SBMS-AR	99	13	185	496	378	615	560	-397
ACT	6	1	10	46	35	56	5,038	-40
PARKS	753	404	1,103	1,138	892	1,384	869	-385
HB	809	306	1,312	5,536	3,761	7,310	60	-4,727
IOW	19,296	18,253	20,339	22,828	21,744	23,912	1,943	-3,532
All programs	9,283	9,097	9,470	12,605	12,387	12,823	23,887	-3,321

NOTE: CI = confidence interval. A positive number in the "Difference" column indicates that mean costs were lower in the six months after beginning the program than in the six months before beginning. A negative number indicates that mean costs were higher after entering the program than before entering.

Services initiative because the vast majority of youth served within that initiative are in the MH program.

As one might expect, mean overall juvenile justice costs for JJCPA participants were generally higher in the follow-up period (\$12,605) than in the baseline period (\$9,283), primarily because of the cost associated with administering the programs. Most of the JJCPA programs, however, produced average cost savings in arrests, and several programs also reduced camp and court costs, some by a substantial amount. If these cost savings were accumulated over a longer period of time, they might offset the relatively high initial investment made in program costs. We are not able to extend the time frame to measure changes, however, because not enough time has elapsed to allow us to obtain data beyond a six-month period. With a longer follow-up period, the initial program costs may be offset by reductions in subsequent arrests and court appearances.

We note also that savings in juvenile justice costs for arrests, camps, and juvenile halls do not take into account potential savings associated with improved family and community relations. Because we have no data on the value of such improvements, we are not able to include these factors in our estimates of cost differences between the baseline and follow-up periods.

Juvenile Justice Cost Savings, by Initiative

For each of the three FY 2011–2012 initiatives, Table S.5 shows the mean net cost for each juvenile justice cost—i.e., the mean difference between the cost in the six months before entering the program and the six months after entering. As one might expect, there are noticeable differences in mean costs among the three initiatives. The Enhanced Mental Health Services initiative, which serves only probationers, showed lower arrest costs but much higher camp, juvenile hall, and court costs after entering the program than before entering. The Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High-Need Youth initiative, which targets a large number of at-risk youth, saw the bulk of its expenses in program costs, whereas costs for juvenile hall, camp, and court were lower in the six months after entering the program, with camp costs averaging \$6,073 less in the follow-up period than in the baseline period. The Enhanced School- and

Table S.5
Mean Net Costs for Initiatives, FY 2011–2012 (\$)

Juvenile Justice Cost	Enhanced Mental Health Services	Enhanced Services to High-Risk/High Need Youth	Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services
Program	-455	-1,875	-514
Supervision	-272	-89	-208
Arrest	213	-43	127
Juvenile hall	-3,335	390	-33
Camp	-5,606	6,073	-89
Court	-1,044	468	474
Total	-10,498	4,925	-27

NOTE: A positive number in this table indicates that mean costs were lower in the six months after beginning the program than in the six months before beginning. A negative number indicates that mean costs were higher after entering the program than before entering. Total costs for the four school-based programs in the Enhanced School- and Community-Based Services initiative also include savings resulting from improved school attendance. Because of missing data for some costs, total cost might not equal the sum of the individual costs.

Community-Based Services initiative, which targets a combination of probationers and at-risk youth, showed increased program, supervision, juvenile hall, and camp costs during the follow-up period but lower arrest and court costs than in the baseline period.

Conclusions

As with any evaluation, there are inherent limitations in our assessment of the JJCPA program in Los Angeles County. Quasi-experimental designs construct comparison groups using matching or other similar techniques and then compare the performance of the treatment population with that of the comparison group. Such comparison groups are always vulnerable to the criticism that they are somehow not comparable to the program group such that observed differences are not due to the program but rather to differences between the groups. For some programs, our difference-in-differences analyses for JJCPA programs that used the previous year's cohort as a comparison group brought into question the assumption that the two cohorts were comparable with respect to arrest rates.

Data used to compute outcome measures were extracted from databases maintained by Probation. Probation has worked with RAND in an attempt to maximize the quality and amount of data available. Data for the big six come from official records and are relatively easy to maintain and access. Data for supplemental outcomes are sometimes more problematic because Probation's data are only as good as the information obtained from CBO service providers, schools, and other county government departments.

Data for some programs were relatively complete. In other programs, only a small fraction of program youth had data available for supplementary measures, calling into question the appropriateness of any findings based on such a small subsample. RAND will continue to work with Probation to increase the amount of data available for supplemental outcomes for all JJCPA programs.

The severe recession that began in late 2007, as well as budget issues specific to California, continued to affect JJCPA funding in Los Angeles County in FY 2011–2012. Funding since FY 2009–2010 has averaged about 30 percent lower than in previous years. This trend continued in FY 2011–2012. In recent years, Probation has adjusted the criteria for participation in some JJCPA programs and made other changes that have allowed approximately as many youth to receive JJCPA services as during the years of higher funding. The level of JJCPA funding for future years remains uncertain.

FY 2011–2012 was the 11th consecutive year for which outcomes were reported to the state and to the county. Results reflect the continuing collaboration between the evaluators and Probation to modify programs based on the integration of evaluation findings and effective juvenile justice practices. Differences in outcomes between program participants and comparison-group youth are relatively small, but consistent enough that they appear to be real differences rather than statistical anomalies. County-developed supplemental outcomes tend to be more favorable than state-mandated big six outcomes. Los Angeles County expects to continue to receive JJCPA funding on an annual basis and to report outcomes to BSCC annually.