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The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Treatment Courts

A Dissertation Presented

by

Pamela Lee Linden

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

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The Graduate School

Pamela Lee Linden

We, the dissertation committee for the above candidate for the

Doctor of Philosophy degree,

hereby recommend acceptance of this dissertation.

**Linda Francis, Ph.D., Dissertation Co-advisor
Visiting Faculty, Senior Lecturer, University of Akron
Formerly Assistant Professor, Stony Brook University
School of Social Welfare**

**Shelly Cohen, Ph.D., Dissertation Co-advisor
Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare**

**Carolyn Peabody, Ph.D., Chairperson of Defense
Assistant Professor, Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare**

**Joseph A. Puccio, MD, FAAP, Outside member
Assistant Professor of Pediatrics
Chief, Division of Adolescent Medicine
Stony Brook University Medical Center**

This dissertation is accepted by the Graduate School.

Lawrence Martin
Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract of the Dissertation

The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Treatment Courts

by

Pamela Lee Linden

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The past decade has witnessed a substantial increase in the use of Juvenile Treatment Courts as an alternative to out-of-home placement for youth adjudicated as Juvenile Delinquents and Persons in Need of Supervision. While formal process evaluations have contributed to an understanding of court program structures and processes, few studies have examined the ways in which youth experience critical program components, such as intensive judicial supervision, sanctions, rewards, prosocial development programming and substance abuse treatment.

The primary data source for this qualitative study was audiotaped face-to-face interviews with thirty-seven current and former youth participants in various phases of court participation. A semi-structured interview protocol inquiring about experiences in major life domains – home, school, court, treatment, and peers- was used to elucidate youth perspectives. Data triangulation was achieved through official court record reviews and a “member check” focus group with a second cohort of eight current Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants.

Using Grounded Theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), youth were categorized into four groups: turning point, reluctant complier, active resister and

first timer. Theoretical constructs derived from Stryker's (1987) Structural Identity Theory and Heise's (2007) Affect Control Theory are used to offer an explanation of the mechanisms underlying increased prosocial identity salience for turning point participants.

The findings suggest that court programs facilitate prosocial identity salience through (1) reflected appraisals, (2) consequence and reward structures, and (3) increased opportunities for interactional and affective commitment to a prosocial identity. Experiencing successes in major life domains while performing in a prosocial identity served to increase youth self-efficacy. The study also served to illuminate the youth perspective of peer networks in supporting abstinence.

The findings have important implications for the development of court program policies and procedures. Juvenile justice policy implications and recommendations for future research are discussed.

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Writing a qualitative dissertation is a laborious task. At times, feelings of being overwhelmed resulted in motivational peaks and valleys; it was my commitment to understand and to share the perspectives of these young men and women that sustained me. I am grateful to all of the youth, and their parents/guardians, for sharing their life stories with me.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

David is a tall, slim, dark haired young man, dressed in pressed black dress pants and wearing a starched white collared oxford shirt with a conservative black tie and polished black loafers. He hears his name called and rises up to walk to the podium in the courthouse conference room. His footsteps echo on the shiny tiled floor. The quiet room is filled to over capacity and the walls are lined with standing guests. He adjusts the microphone, clears his throat and begins to read from the paper he brought with him. He says:

Judge, a year and a half ago I stood before you in handcuffs and shackles. I was out of control. I never thought I'd be up here. I didn't care about anything. I want to thank the drug court for sticking by me. I want to thank everyone who helped me when I was doing bad things. I want to thank my mom and my sister for giving me rides here and supporting me through the past year. And to my probation officer, I never thought I'd be thanking you, but I do. Thank you to my drug court case manager for believing in me when I didn't believe in myself. You gave me a chance to change my life. Thank you. I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for you. I'll write to you from college.¹

His words circulate throughout the large room and are heard by the row of other youth graduates and the parents, grandparents, siblings, judge, probation officers, case managers, law guardians, presentment attorneys and visitors present. A catered luncheon awaits the new graduates and their guests in the adjoining room and after the final graduate makes her speech, the Juvenile Drug

¹ This is a compilation of the actual words spoken by several graduates at a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court graduation ceremony that I observed.

Court coordinator steps up to the microphone and speaks to the new graduates, “You now have a duty to show by your example that there is an alternative. We are very proud of each one of you. Keep in touch.” The atmosphere turns celebratory. The people in the room erupt into applause and whistles and each graduate stands and turns to the onlookers with broad grins and a few take a bow.

Any visitor observing the graduation ceremony of a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court can’t help but be emotionally moved by the speeches made by new graduates. The youth, usually dressed up for the special occasion, make individual speeches summarizing their transformations, describing their hopeful, productive futures and thanking those who were their cheerleaders throughout their Juvenile Drug Treatment Court journey. Visitors may be surprised to see youth shaking hands and hugging the Judge while giving thanks for believing in them, for giving consequences when they were needed, and for giving them a second chance.

This dissertation research is an exploration of the lived experiences of current and former Juvenile Treatment Court participants. It is a unique piece of research because the primary data source is the voices of 37 Juvenile Treatment Court² youth participants from four New York State courts.

Plan of this Report

In Chapter I, I present a summary of the research problem, purpose and significance of the study. Chapter II presents a review of the relevant literature. Implications for the current study are also discussed. Chapter III details the research methodology and rationale for use in the present study. Information about data collection methods, data management and data analysis are presented.

² I use the term “Juvenile Treatment Court” when referring to all of the four courts where interviews were conducted. Three of the courts were Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts and one was a Juvenile Intervention Court. There are numerous structural differences between the two types of courts, but the most salient difference is that the Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts specifically target drug using or abusing youth, while the Juvenile Intervention Court does not specifically target drug using youth. In fact, none of the five youth I interviewed in the Juvenile Intervention Court were drug involved.

Chapter IV presents the participants and settings involved in the study. Chapter V describes the study's results and Chapter VI is a discussion of the results and future implications for social work policy, research and practice.

Background

Moffitt (1993) suggests that experimentation with delinquency and substance use seems to be a natural part of the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Drugs are a pervasive part of adolescent culture, with wide availability. Garnier and Stein (2002) found that "55% of adolescents have used an illicit drug, 65% have tried cigarettes, and 80% have tried alcohol by the time they leave high school" (p. 45). In a 2005 survey of high school students, 25% reported that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property. In 2006, 84.9% of high school seniors reported that they could obtain marijuana 'fairly easily or very easily' (Dinkes, et al., 2006). Two-thirds (66.5%) of high school seniors reported alcohol use in the past 12 months (45.3% in the last 30 days); 31.5% admitted to marijuana use in the previous 12 months (18.3% in the last 30 days). These self-report figures "may under-represent drug use among people of this age because high school dropouts and truants are not included, and these groups may have more involvement with drugs than those who stay in school" (Johnson, et al., 2006).

The 2005 National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health found that 112 million Americans age 12 or older (46% of the population) reported illicit drug use at least once in their lifetime; 14% reported drug use within the past year and 8% reported drug use within the past month (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2006).

Adolescent involvement with drugs or alcohol increases the likelihood of continued and serious contact with the juvenile justice system (CASA, 2002). Previous research suggests that the earlier the age on onset of substance abuse, the greater the likelihood of severe and chronic offending (Loeber, Green, Lahey,

Frick, & McBurnett, 2000). Dembo, Warren & Schmeider (2007) found that there is substantial overlap between delinquency and substance use, such that the presence of each behavior may increase the risk for the expression of the other. Four of every five children and teen arrestees in state juvenile systems are under the influence of alcohol or drugs while committing their crimes, test positive for drugs, are arrested for committing an alcohol or drug offense, admit having substance abuse and addiction problems, or share some combination of these characteristics (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2002).

National arrest data obtained from Uniform Crime Reports indicate that overall, the percentage of juveniles arrested between 1993 and 2002 decreased 11%; however, the number of juveniles arrested for drug abuse violations during this same time period increased 59% (Snyder, 2004). Even among youths not arrested for drug- or alcohol-related offenses, substance use is a persistent problem; with estimates suggesting that up to 78% of arrested youths were alcohol or drug involved at the time of arrest (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 2004).

Juvenile Delinquent (JD) and Person In Need of Supervision (PINS)

When a person who is under 16 years old, but is at least 7 years old, commits an act which would be a "crime" if he or she were an adult, and is then found to be in need of supervision, treatment or confinement, the person is called a "juvenile delinquent". The act committed is called a "delinquent act."

A child under the age of 18 who does not attend school, or behaves in a way that is dangerous or out of control, or often disobeys his or her parents, guardians or other authorities, may be found to be a Person In Need of Supervision or "PINS." In 2005 the New York State legislature increased the eligible age of PINS from 16 to 18. All juvenile delinquency and PINS cases are heard in New York State Family Courts.

Final judicial options for youth found to be a Juvenile Delinquent can include probation supervision, Adjourment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD), and Conditional Discharge or Restitution. The judge may also remand youth to a New York State Office of Children and Family Services facility. Several types of facilities are available for those adjudicated delinquents, ranging from a short-term physically unrestricted environment (unsecure) to the long-term very restrictive atmosphere (secure).

There have been historically few dispositional options beyond out of home placement for substance using, justice-involved youth. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) is the state agency responsible for the incarceration or placement of juveniles (children under age 16 at the time of arrest)³. A youth confined in an OCFS placement facility may be transferred to an adult prison at age 16 at the discretion of a judge or at age 18 at the discretion of the Office of Children and Family Services. At age 21, a youth is automatically transferred to the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) to serve the rest of his or her time in adult prison.

As of March 31, 2007, there were 2,610 children – 2,224 boys and 386 girls – incarcerated in New York State juvenile institutions. Of those 2,610 incarcerated youth, 612 (23%) were 15 years or younger, and 2,344 (90%) were adjudicated as Juvenile Delinquents (90%). At intake, youth in OCFS-operated facilities are screened for service needs. Of the 1,292 youth in OCFS – operated facilities⁴, 1,292 (78%) evidenced substance abuse needs, 919 (55%) mental health, 393 (24%) special education and 818 (49%) health-related needs.

³ New York is one of two states in the country (along with North Carolina) where the legal upper age for juveniles is 15. Youth arrested at age 16 or older are tried in adult court and confined in adult jails and prisons.

⁴ Sixty-nine percent of youth in state custody were in OCFS-operate facilities and the remaining 31% were in facilities operated by voluntary child welfare agencies.

The vast majority of boys and a significant proportion of girls are rearrested after release from OCFS. A 1999 OCFS recidivism study found that 81% of boys and 45% of girls released from OCFS custody were rearrested within 36 months. Three-quarters (75%) were arrested for a felony or misdemeanor, and 62% had at least one arrest leading to a conviction (Frederick, 1999).

Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts

The purpose of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court programs is to “deliver court supervised substance abuse treatment for nonviolent, drug-involved offenders that meet certain eligibility guidelines (described below). Drug courts seek to reduce recidivism by using the authority of the court process to coerce offenders into stopping their use of illegal drugs, and providing offenders with treatment and services to support a drug-free lifestyle” (Butts & Roman, 2004, p. 55). Juvenile drug treatment courts target delinquent adolescents with substance use disorders.

The first Adult Drug Treatment Court program was established in Miami, Florida in 1989. Currently, drug courts exist in every state in the nation and have served over 140,000 individuals. New York State offers 175 Adult Drug Courts – more than any other state in the United States.⁵

The first Juvenile Drug Court program opened in Key West, Florida in 1993 (Harrison & Scarpitti, 2002). Although the Juvenile Treatment Court model is gaining in popularity by court jurisdictions interested in addressing the multiple, complex needs of youth entering the Juvenile Justice system, their rate of growth has lagged behind that of Adult Drug Courts. As of February 28, 2008, New York State has 20 operational Juvenile Treatment Courts.⁶

Juvenile Treatment Court programs are designed to be implemented by a cohesive team, usually consisting of a judge, presentment attorney, law guardian,

⁵ As of February 28, 2008, at 153, California has the next highest number of Adult Drug Courts and Florida follows with 110.

⁶ Juvenile Treatment Courts in other states have experienced similarly slow growth, with 50 offered in California and 30 in Florida.

coordinator, probation officer, educational representative, and mental health/substance abuse treatment professional. Some programs link with community service organizations to provide youth with prosocial development activities, such as mentoring, community beautification, arts and adventure-based programming.

The criteria for admission for many Juvenile Treatment Courts include drug involved male or female juveniles between the ages of 13 – 16 with non-violent, misdemeanor offenses who are experiencing significant problems in their home or school environments. The participant and their family must be willing to fully participate in the program.

Juvenile Drug Court Strategies in Practice

The aim of this research study is to explore Juvenile Treatment Court programs from the perspective of the youth participants. An understanding of the desired outcomes of non-participant system stakeholders presents a context in which to conceptualize youth experiences. In 2003, the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance partnered with system stakeholders – program practitioners, researchers and policy analysts – to develop a guide to planning, implementing and operating a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court program. Many Juvenile Treatment Court programs integrate most, if not all, of the following recommended sixteen strategies (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003).

The sixteen strategies presented below demonstrate the current thinking from the perspective of system stakeholders regarding those components deemed critical to designing effective Juvenile Treatment Courts. These strategies emphasize parental involvement, collaborative interagency partnerships to provide expanded opportunities for youth and families, and modification or reinforcement of youth behaviors through sanctions and rewards. The Sixteen Strategies do not address the role of peer networks in the lives of youth.

Sixteen Strategies

1. Collaborative Planning. Engage all stakeholders in creating an interdisciplinary, coordinated, and systemic approach to working with youth and their families.
2. Teamwork. Develop and maintain an interdisciplinary, non - adversarial work team.
3. Clearly Defined Target Population and Eligibility Criteria. Define a target population and eligibility criteria that are aligned with the program's goals and objectives.
4. Judicial Involvement and Supervision. Schedule frequent judicial reviews and be sensitive to the effect that court proceedings can have on youth and their families.
5. Monitoring and Evaluation. Establish a system for program monitoring and evaluation to maintain quality of service, assess program impact, and contribute to knowledge in the field.
6. Community Partnerships. Build partnerships with community organizations to expand the range of opportunities available to youth and their families.
7. Comprehensive Treatment Planning. Tailor interventions to the complex and varied needs of youth and their families.
8. Developmentally Appropriate Services. Tailor treatment to the developmental needs of adolescents.
9. Gender-Appropriate Services. Design treatment to address the unique needs of each gender.
10. Cultural Competence. Create policies and procedures that are responsive to cultural differences and train personnel to be culturally competent.
11. Focus on Strengths. Maintain a focus on the strengths of youth and their families during program planning and in every interaction between the court and those it serves.
12. Family Engagement. Recognize and engage the family as a valued partner in all components of the program.
13. Educational Linkages. Coordinate with the school system to ensure that each participant enrolls in and attends an educational program that is appropriate to his or her needs.
14. Drug Testing. Design drug testing to be frequent, random, and observed. Document testing policies and procedures in writing.
15. Goal-Oriented Incentives and Sanctions. Respond to compliance and noncompliance with incentives and sanctions that are designed to reinforce or modify the behavior of youth and their families.
16. Confidentiality. Establish a confidentiality policy and procedures that guard the privacy of the youth while allowing the drug court team to access key information.

Progressive Phase Structure

Most Juvenile Treatment Courts have a progressive phase structure through which youth are required to advance in order to graduate. The phases are sequential; however, non-compliance events (NCE) may result in the sanction or consequence of phase demotion. At a minimum, Juvenile Treatment Court programs require youth to abstain from drugs and alcohol, attend school (mainstream or an alternative school), achieve passing grades, to abstain from receiving school suspensions, and follow parents or guardian's rules at home. Some programs require youth to request phase advancement by submitting an essay; other programs may ask parents or guardian's to submit a letter to the court endorsing the youth's request for phase advancement.

Youth who relapse while in a phase will often remain in that phase until they have obtained 30 continuous days of sobriety/clean time. This period is measured from the first day in which a clean drug test is obtained following the date of the relapse. Respondents who are in phase 2 or phase 3 may have their phase reduced to phase 1 and will not be given credit for any clean/sober days prior to the relapse. A relapse is defined as using or being in possession of drugs or alcohol, misusing prescription medication, or knowingly being in the presence of people who are openly using or possessing drugs or alcohol or who are misusing prescription medication.

The following provides a brief description of each phase of Juvenile Treatment Court programs⁷.

Phase 1⁸. (30 to 90 days). The court uses its legal leverage to limit youth freedom through extensive external controls by strictly monitoring youth through house

⁷ Phase requirements are similar for Courts A, B and C; the client handbook for Court C is the source of cited requirements.

⁸ Most Juvenile Treatment Court programs are designed to be completed in 12 months. These time frames are suggested, not required.

arrest, electronic monitoring, requiring that youth request that classroom teachers complete a school “runaround sheet,” attend weekly court appearances with their parent/guardian, and submit to a minimum of weekly drug testing. If they are on probation, probation officers make unannounced periodic home visits. Youth are also required to attend school and, if applicable, work, meet with a case manager and attend individual and group substance abuse counseling for up to four times a week. Youth may also be required to keep a feelings/behaviors log of daily activities and be able to elaborate on goals and objectives of their treatment plan.

Phase 2. (90 to 272 days). Largely based on compliance and abstinence during phase 1, youth incrementally earn their freedom back. Drug tests continue, they must continue academic or vocational training, have successfully engaged family in the treatment program, develop a positive support network of peers and family, demonstrate the ability to identify feelings, and identify how they can give back to the community. Curfews may be extended; court appearances are reduced to bi-weekly and substance abuse treatment may be reduced to one or two days per week. Youth have the opportunity to establish relationships with positive adult role models in the form of Alcoholics Anonymous sponsors, adult mentors, court program staff and substance abuse treatment professionals. Youth may be required to write an essay detailing what they have worked on during this phase and outline why they believe that they should be advanced to phase 3.

Phase 3. (270 – 365 days). Youth in phase 3 must have maintained abstinence for 90-180 days and continue to submit to regular random drug tests, maintain academic and/or vocational performance at the highest level possible, attend monthly court appearances, develop an aftercare plan with their treatment provider and identify and elaborate on their relapse prevention plan. In order to graduate, youth must secure the permission of their treatment provider and the court program coordinator. Youth must submit a self-evaluation paper on their experiences in the court program.

Graduation Requirements. Youth must be drug and alcohol free for a minimum of one year, be enrolled and in good standing with a school or vocational training program, or be gainfully employed. Youth must have established a solid and positive peer group, have a thorough and working knowledge of recovery, have a 12-step sponsor or a therapist, have complied with all court orders and pass a graduation evaluation with the drug court team.

Upon graduation, some court programs give permission to youth to apply for an order vacating the underlying adjudication and for expungement of the records of adjudication. The presiding judge determines the final disposition of the adjudication record.

If youth participants continue substance use, commit an act of violence, are convicted for any new crime, do not comply with orders or conditions of the court or do not participate in their treatment program, they may face expulsion from the program.

Different from Traditional Juvenile Court Processing

Juvenile Treatment Courts are problem-solving courts. These specialized court programs embrace the ethos of therapeutic jurisprudence- “the study of the effect of laws and legal processes on well-being” (King, 2007). “Mainstream courts focus primarily on the legal outcome such as a sentence or judgment. Any related problems are left to others to resolve. Problem solving court programs are concerned with producing a legal outcome but also promote the resolution of underlying problems. They seize upon a moment when people are open to changing dysfunctional behavior – the crisis of coming to court – to give them the opportunity to change” (King, 2007).

Juvenile Treatment Court procedures differ from traditional juvenile court processes in several ways. King (2007) explains the differences between traditional, or mainstream, courts and problem solving courts. “In a conventional courtroom, communication is mainly between the judicial officer and counsel.

The processes are formal and focus on a determination of the facts, the law and appropriate legal outcomes. Communication between judicial officer and a party and the party's involvement in the process is limited except where the party is unrepresented. The outcome is a court order-- a mechanism of control - such as an order to pay money or a sentence of a community based order or imprisonment. A distinctive feature of problem-solving courts is the interaction between participants and the judicial officer - not simply through additional appearances, but also in the length and nature of the interaction. Commonly at the start of each appearance, the judicial officer will greet the participant and inquire as to the participant's well-being. They may ask clarifying questions or repeat some of what the participant has said back to them to show they have listened and understood. Their approach will be less formal and more conversational. They will acknowledge any feelings the participant has expressed concerning their situation. If the participant has made progress, the judicial officer will praise them. If there are problems, the judicial officer will ask the participant what has happened and express empathy for their situation. The judicial officer may then ask the participant what they have done to resolve the matter and, if the strategy is sound, praise them for their initiative and support their ability to implement the strategy. If the strategy is problematic, the judicial officer may raise concerns and ask the participant for suggestions and/or offer suggestions for their consideration. The prosecutor and defense counsel may also contribute suggestions. The judicial officer will solicit the participant's commitment to implement an agreed strategy and mention that at the next court appearance the judicial officer will ask the participant about their progress. Here the judicial officer demonstrates an ethic of care towards the participant and takes a problem-solving approach. This is cooperative and facilitative, rather than an adversarial and control-based, approach to court processes” (King, 2007).

“Traditional court processes involve dispute resolution, adversarial processes, adjudication emphasis, the role of the judge as arbiter, backward-looking, precedent-based, formal and legalistic with few stakeholders. ‘Transformed’ processes displayed in problem solving courts are problem-solving dispute avoidance, therapeutic outcomes, collaborative processes, people-orientes, interest or needs-based, interpretation and application of social science, judge as ‘coach,’ forward-looking, wide range of participants/stakeholders, interdependent, common-sensical, informal and effective” (Warren, 1998).

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the Juvenile Treatment Court process involves the issue of protection of due process rights for juveniles because of its use of immediate sanctions without a hearing. These specialized court programs are challenged to balance due process rights when imposing court ordered sanctions in a therapeutically beneficial (and timely) way. For example, when a youth violates their conditions of probation by producing a positive drug test, traditional juvenile court procedure dictates that a formal violation of probation petition be filed by either the probation department or the county attorney. A hearing is held to determine the validity of the petition. The law guardian argues a defense and the judge makes a determination of disposition. If the violation petition is substantiated, the judge may order a consequence, or sanction.

In contrast, an integral aspect of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court programs are a series of sanctions, or consequences, (ranging from verbal admonishment to placement in secure detention) immediately imposed on the youth for non-compliant events. Positive behaviors are likewise responded to with immediate praise or tangible rewards. It is thought that the therapeutic benefit of sanctions and rewards relies heavily on the timeliness of the court’s response. The traditional filing of a violation petition may take days, weeks or even months to occur. Some Juvenile Treatment Court programs have addressed the problem of delays in administering therapeutic sanctions and rewards by asking youth and

their law guardians to contractually agree to a Waiver of Filing of Violation Petition. In essence, the courts are asking youth to waive their right of due process. Under this arrangement, it is possible that a youth may be ordered by the judge to be lawfully detained in a secure detention center without first holding a hearing to determine whether or not the violation had actually occurred. The due process issue is generally resolved on a local level and negotiated by court team members.

The U.S. Department of Justice has placed a high priority on drug courts; since 1995, the U.S.D.J. Drug Courts Program Office provided \$56 million in funding for development and research (Belenko, 1998). In 2006, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment awarded \$7.5 million in new federal funding that increased capacity and access to treatment services in seven states - Massachusetts, Michigan, Wyoming, California, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Texas. In announcing the new funding, the Acting Director of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration said, "We have seen time and time again how drug treatment courts can turn around the lives of adolescents with drug or alcohol problems who are in trouble with the law" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2006).

In reality, there has been little empirical evidence to support the claim of long term beneficial effects of Juvenile Treatment Court programs. "Neither general treatment research nor drug court evaluations have produced definitive information on juveniles" (National Institute of Justice, 2006). In "*Juvenile Drug Courts and Teen Substance Abuse*," Butts & Roman (2004) explain the paucity of Juvenile Treatment Court outcome data. "As often happens in the justice system, juvenile drug courts became popular long before evaluation researchers were able to demonstrate that they were effective. In fact, researchers have only begun to test whether juvenile drug courts "work," in the sense that they stop or reduce

substance abuse more effectively than the current approaches used for similar youth. Such evidence is hard to assemble, and it takes lengthy research studies with long-term follow-up periods to generate real proof of program effectiveness.”

The Present Study

Fueled by the belief that the handling of juvenile cases could be improved throughout the state, the goal of the New York State Unified Court System is to establish a Juvenile Treatment Court in each of New York’s 62 counties. Although numerous courts attended the federally-sponsored Juvenile Drug Treatment Court training series, few New York State counties actually implement them after completing the training.

In response, in 2003 the Bureau of Justice Assistance provided funding to the New York State Unified Court System’s Office of Court Administration to conduct ‘best practice’ research at operational Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts throughout the state. The findings would be used to develop a training curriculum for Juvenile Drug Treatment Court teams. The Office of Court Administration contracted with the Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare’s Child Welfare Training Program to conduct the research and to develop the curriculum.

The original research protocol called for on-site interviews at four operational court programs with key stakeholders, including judges, court program coordinators, case managers, probation officers, law guardians, presentment attorneys, treatment providers and any other team members involving in the planning and operation of Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts. Parent/guardian focus groups at each of the four courts would lead to a greater understanding of issues facing family members of youth participants. In addition to parent focus groups, the original protocol called for focus groups with youth participants. This writer was involved in the project from the beginning and saw the opportunity to conduct individual interviews with youth at each of the four courts as part of her

doctoral dissertation research. The present research study was planned and conducted with approval from the New York State Office of Court Administration.

The goal of the present study is to elucidate and gain understanding of the meanings of the lived experiences of Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants. “To find meaning, researchers must put away the test booklets and delve deeper using qualitative research methods to explain instead of measure, to seek meaning instead of quantifying, and to understand instead of generalizing” (Zambo, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

There is a growing interest on a state and federal level in implementing Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts as an alternative to out of home placement for justice-involved youth. These court programs use the court’s legal leverage to coerce youth into substance abuse treatment. Examining these new court programs with a social justice lens requires that we conduct an inquiry into the perceptions of those who are most affected by these policies- the youth themselves- particularly in light of the degree to which these court programs rely on loose interpretations of due process rights for children in order to be effective.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the meaning of the Juvenile Treatment Court program from the perspective of the participants, thus informing future Juvenile Justice policies and contributing knowledge to specialized court program planners. In addition, the findings from this study will be incorporated into a training curriculum for planning and operational Juvenile Treatment Court program teams in New York State.

Significance of the Study

Previous research on Juvenile Drug Court programs focused on the structure of the program and relied on quantitative methods to describe participants and their course trajectories through analyses of drug test results, attendance records of

court appearances, treatment program and schools. Although these quantitative methods may contribute to an understanding of correlates of success and failure for court participants, no previous studies have examined the effect of these programs on the lives of youth participants through the lens of participants themselves. In other words, quantitative studies present the court program entity from the juvenile justice system perspective – addressing concerns of the juvenile justice system. The results of this study may serve to illuminate the ways in which the program affects the lives of the individuals the programs serve.

The following chapter presents a review of the literature regarding theoretical orientations involving human behavior change in an effort to explain the process of change described by youth participants.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Adolescents enter the court program because they are engaging in delinquent and/or incorrigible behavior which, for most youth, has not been ameliorated through participation in standard community supervision/diversion programs, such as Intensive Juvenile Probation Supervision. The explicit, overarching goal of a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court program is to change the behavior of youth participants. Thus, this literature review presents previous research on human behavior change.

Stages of Change

The theoretical foundation of most Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts is Prochaska & DiClemente's (1983) Stages of Change. In fact, many of the court programs' Phase advancement tasks are directly derived from this transtheoretical model. Behavioral change is understood to occur in a series of discrete stages - precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, and maintenance.

In the precontemplation stage, the individual has no intention of changing their behavior in the foreseeable future. An individual is classified in the precontemplation stage if they do not seriously intend to change the problem within the next six months. Statements on the Stages of Change measure that identify precontemplators are "As far as I'm concerned, I don't have any problems that need changing" and "I guess I have faults but there's nothing that I really need to change."

In the contemplation stage, the individual is aware that a problem exists that they are seriously thinking about overcoming. They have not yet made a

commitment to take action, but are seriously considering changing problem behavior in the next six months. Contemplators endorse the items “I have a problem and I really think I should work on it” and “I’ve been thinking that I might want to change something about myself.”

The preparation stage combines intention and behavioral criteria. Individuals are intending to take action in the next month and have unsuccessfully taken action in the past year. While they have made some reductions in their problem, they have not yet reached a criterion for effective action. They are intending to take such action in the near future.

In the action stage, individuals modify their behavior, experiences, and environment in order to overcome their problems. Action involves overt behavioral changes and requires considerable commitment of time and energy. Modifications of the problem behavior made in the action stage tend to be most visible and receive the greatest external recognition. Individuals are classified in the action stage if they have successfully altered the dysfunctional behavior for a period from one day to six months. Individuals who are in the action stage endorse such items as “I am really working hard to change” and “Anyone can talk about changing; I am actually doing something about it.”

In the maintenance stage, people work to prevent relapse and consolidate the gains attained during the action stage. Being able to remain free of the problem behavior and to consistently engage in a new incompatible behavior for more than six months is the criteria for considering someone to be in the maintenance stage. Endorsed items are, “I may need a boost right now to help me maintain the changes I’ve already made” and “I’m here to prevent myself from having a relapse of my problem.”

The final stage is termination. The individual has completed the change process and no longer has to work to prevent relapse. This stage is defined as total

confidence or self-efficacy across all high risk situations and zero temptation to relapse (Prochaska & Norcross, 2001).

Stage status and movement between stages are thought to be influenced by (a) the perceived pros and cons of a problem behavior (and the decision balance between them); (b) self-efficacy (i.e., confidence in one's ability to change the problem behavior); (c) temptations to revert to the problem behavior; and (d) ten "processes of change," which are basic coping mechanisms used to modify a problem (Prochaska & Velicer, 1997). In several fields, the model is being used to guide interventions and determine who gets what kind of treatment.

Stages represent both a period of time as well as a set of tasks necessary for movement to the next stage. The stages of change are considered to be an ordered sequence of discrete states. Although stage status changes over time, at any given moment a person is assumed to be in a single stage; hence, the stages are thought to be mutually exclusive (Martin et al, 1996). "Individuals 'pass through' each stage in an orderly fashion. Although this progression is not usually linear -people relapse and cycle through the stages more than once- stage skipping is not expected (Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, 1992).

Although the Stages of Change Model may be useful to clinicians in identifying where in the change process the individual may be, it is an intrapsychic model that does not explain the underlying mechanisms of human behavior change.

Identity Transformation Research

Travisano (1970) conducted research on religious identity conversion. He outlines the sequence of transformation to a deviant identity as (1) tension, (2) problem solving, (3) turning point, (4) severing negative ties, and (5) immersion with other "true believers."

Similarly, in "Becoming an Ex: The Process of Role Exit," former Catholic nun Helen Ebaugh describes the experiences of adults who have made the decision to exit a role, describing it as "The process of disengagement from a role that is

central to one's self-identity and the re-establishment of an identity in a new role that takes into account one's ex-role" (Ebaugh, 1988). She outlines four theoretical stages of Role Exit: (1) first doubts, (2) seeking alternatives, (3) turning point and (4) creating the ex-role. She defines a 'turning point' as "a point in the role-exiting process at which the individual makes a firm and definitive decision to exit" (p. 123).

The focus of previous research on the concept of identity transformation has focused on the voluntary, purposeful pursuit of self-change by the individual. I argue that these theoretical constructs do not explain the process of identity change for individuals who are not themselves actively seeking to change.

Structural Identity Theory

Stryker's (1968, 1980, 1987) Identity Theory can be used to elucidate the mechanisms of identity change and stability (Cassidy & Trew, 2001; Serpe, 1987). The theoretical orientation is rooted in the symbolic interactionist perspective and in original thought by James (1890), Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934). "The concept of identity salience has its roots in James' (1950 [1890]) notion of multiple selves and the varying degree of value placed on each. James argued that, for practical purposes, we have as many selves as distinct groups whose opinions we care about. These "selves," or identities, are differentiated with respect to their importance for defining ourselves" (Hoelter, 1984). In 1902, Cooley wrote:

In a very large and interesting class of cases the social reference takes the form of a somewhat definite imagination of how one's self--that is any idea he appropriates--appears in a particular mind, and the kind of self-feeling one has is determined by the attitude toward this attributed to that other mind. A social self of this sort might be called the reflected or looking glass self - each to each a looking-glass Reflects the other that doth pass."

For Cooley, one's conception of one's self emerges from the projected image of the self one perceives others having of his or her self. Therefore, depending on the persons with whom one associates, one's image of one's self could change quite radically.

Wells & Stryker (1988) argue that identity change occurs only in the event of major change in social circumstances which affects the social network in which an identity is embedded. Identity Theory predicts that change in the person's social network relationships and interactions will lead to change in identity.

Structural Identity Theory (Schwartz & Stryker, 1970) further asserts that (1) persons seek to create and maintain stable, coherent identities, (2) persons prefer to evaluate their identities positively; (3) identities serve to motivate behavior; (4) identities develop in the processes of social interaction; (5) behavior is a function of a role-making process; and (6) identities are stabilized by commitments. Identities are motivational factors (i.e., they cause behavior), and identities develop in a process of social interaction (emerging from relationships with others). "Persons will construct their social relationships in the image of their selves, reproducing the social arrangements that permit them to manifest behaviorally the structure of their identities insofar as social organization provides the opportunities for them to do so...as social relationships change, changes in self follow. The social process is one of construction and reconstruction of self and of social relationships, and, through these, of the larger system of social organization in which these are embedded" (Stryker, 1987, p. 93).

Identity Theory locates identities within the organizational structures of social relationships to which we belong. Thus, Stryker's definition of identity tends to focus on concrete social roles, such as mother, sister, and teacher. These multiple identities are organized into an "identity salience hierarchy," defined by the likelihood that an identity will be activated across a variety of situations. Identities that are near the top of the hierarchy are more likely to be invoked in a

particular situation and therefore are more self-defining than those near the bottom of the hierarchy.

Salience, in turn, depends on (1) interactional commitment - the number of relationships owing to a given role identity, and (2) affective commitment – the strength of ties to others involved in the role identity. Commitment to social relationships affects identity salience (Stryker, 1987, p. 89). Stryker (1980) suggested a causal chain whereby the more extensive one's social network and the more intensive one's emotional ties to that network with respect to enacting a particular role identity, the more committed the person will be to that role identity and, thus, the more prominent the role identity. In turn, this prominence will be reflected in role-related behaviors.

As mentioned above, Structural Identity Theory refers to the extensiveness of one's social network as 'interactional commitment' and intensiveness of emotional ties as 'affective commitment.' Interactional commitment represents the extensiveness or number of social relationships associated with a role identity, whereas affective commitment is conceptualized as the intensiveness of that tie, or affect associated with the loss of any given identity (Serpe, 1987). Stryker (1968) defines commitment as "the degree to which one's relationships to specific others depend on one's being a particular kind of person...In this sense, commitment is measured by the 'costs' of giving up meaningful relationships" (Hoelter, 1984).

Reflected appraisals have been found to serve as an acceptable proxy for affective commitment (Stryker & Serpe, 1994). The concept of reflected appraisals is defined as how others see one. Reflected appraisals are related conceptually to the notion of reflexivity. "Reflexivity refers to the process of an entity acting back upon itself" (Rosenberg, 1990).

As discussed earlier, Mead (1934) and Cooley (1902) showed clearly that reflexivity among human beings is rooted in the social process, particularly the

process of taking the role of the other and of seeing the self from the other's perspective. As a result of this process, the organism develops an awareness of self (Rosenberg, 1990). Essentially, self awareness is a function of reflexivity – of seeing oneself from another's perspective.

“Identity theory introduces social structure as a constraint on interaction...The immediate social structural setting in which interaction occurs and selves are formed is the interpersonal network – the particular set of persons who come together in particular kinds of interactions. It introduces the concept of commitment to refer to these networks, since *commitment is defined by the relationships formed as a consequence of having a particular identity...* It visualizes self as being organized by patterns of commitment, and changes in self as reflecting changes in those patterns of commitment” (Stryker & Craft, 1982, p. 175-176). “The conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism warns against a static, ‘fixed’ conception of social structure. In the present context, that warning urges a dynamic view of commitment, that is, seeing commitment as a matter of a person's progressive involvement with or disengagement from particular others (Stryker & Craft, 1982, p. 176). Hoelter (1984) examined potential determinants of identity salience. Using data collected on identity salience, commitment (to role) and role evaluation for the roles of student, friend, son/daughter, worker, athlete, religious person and dating person. His research supported the hypothesis that identity salience is positively affected by (1) the degree of commitment to its respective role (Stryker, 1968; 1980) and (2) the degree to which its respective role is positively evaluated with regard to one's performance (Hoelter, 1984).

Affect Control Theory (ACT)

Affect Control Theory (ACT) is a sociological social-psychological theory which incorporates relationships between identity, behavior, and emotion in social interactions (Heise, 1979, 1989; Smith-Lovin & Heise, 1988). ACT suggests that as we engage people through specific identities, we “expect lived experience to

confirm our sentiments about how good or bad, how powerful or powerless, how lively or quiet such people are supposed to be (Heise, 1999).

We create experiences that are most likely to produce such confirmations (Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 1992). In other words, actions confirm identities. Heise (1999) suggests that “emotions emerge partly from the identities of the people involved” and “emotions are tied closely to the identities that we invoke in a situation, our emotions broadcast our situational definitions of self and others, thus, emotions also arise from actions.

“ACT elaborates the idea that people avoid events which create ‘tension’ in affective associations. Selecting low-tension behaviors yields normative action for people in specified roles. Selecting roles (instead of behaviors) to minimize tension corresponds to social labeling processes in which identities are assigned to people on the basis of their actions. Emotion reflects the amount and kind of tension produced by an experience” (Heise, 2007).

In other words, according to ACT, “individuals in a social situation allocate identities to each other and then perform identity-appropriate actions in order to confirm sentiments associated with the identities and actions” (Heise & Lerner, 2006). Sentiments are enduring affective associations; impressions are transient affective associations emerging from observed events (Heise, 1979). Events confirm or disconfirm sentiments about entities in an event by creating impressions of the entities that match or differ from the sentiments about the entities (Heise, 2007).

According to ACT, identities, emotions and behavior are parallel to each other on the three dimensions of evaluation, potency, and activity. Thus, evaluations of both identity and behavior would be similar (Heise, 1979).

Heise (2007) argues that “humans act to maintain meanings, including their sentiments about themselves and others. A structural emotion is the emotion you experience when you are in a specific identity, your partner is in a complementary

identity, and your interaction together is confirming each individual's identity as much as possible.”

Deflection arises when impressions produced by an event differ from sentiments. “When a conflict or “deflection” occurs, the person is motivated to seek explanation and to find some means of returning the conflict to a confirmation of sentiments. Thus, people seek for ways to qualify the situation and remove the deflection” (Francis, 2003, p. 126). Francis (2003) suggests that Heise (1979) has demonstrated that the size of the deflection – that is, the degree of difference between transient emotions and established sentiments – is a fundamental factor in explaining severity of emotion. Stryker (1987) and Thoits (1991) argue that an additional crucial predictor of severity is the salience of the identity being affected.

Francis (2003) argues that if a deflection occurs affecting a salient identity, it will generate a more intense emotion than will a similar deflection in a less salient identity since salient identities are more positively evaluated, and disconfirming negative events create larger deflections (Heise, 1979).

A highly salient identity is one to which a person is highly committed and which they frequently enact with others. If a negative event occurs which compromises the enactment of this identity, it will have wide repercussions for the individual. In a sense, the deflection will be reinforced each time the individual encounters a situation where he or she would normally depend on that identity for interactional purposes. Francis (2003) argues that to cope with this kind of “persistent” deflection, the person has two choices: to resolve the deflection through redefinition, even if it means altering the identity affected (up to and including self-labeling; or to escape the deflection by avoiding interaction that produces commitment to the affected identity. Francis (2003) warns that “it is, however, not likely to be an easy endeavor to redefine situations involving a highly salient part of the self. She goes on to say, “When a negative event occurs

affecting a salient identity and producing a deflection from established sentiments, the result is liable to be very negative, stressful emotions” (p. 129).

Heise (1977, 1979) showed how identity meanings acted as a reference signal to control behavior. The emphasis was on how stable identity meanings, acquired through past experiences in one’s culture and evoked through definitions of social situations, were compared to current impressions that were produced by social interaction. The central premise of the theory was that people acted to maintain the alignment of their identity meanings with the impressions created by the local social interaction, either through actions or through cognitive reinterpretation of events (Smith-Lovin, 2003, p. 168). Heise (1999) explains Affect Control Theory:

- You (and every individual) create events to confirm the sentiments that you have about the identities of yourself and others in the current situation.
- Your emotions reflect your sentiment about yourself and the kinds of validations or invalidations that you are experiencing at the moment.
- If your actions don’t work to maintain your sentiments, then you re-conceptualize the identities of others or yourself.
- Confirming sentiments about your current identity actualizes your sense of self, or else produces inauthenticity that you resolve by enacting compensating identities.
- In the process of building events to confirm your sentiments, you perform social roles that operate the basic institutions of society.
- A person’s definition of the situation provides a self identity and an identity for other;
- Those identifications set sentiments that should be reflected in experiences.
- The person builds events to push experiences in a direction that affirms the sentiments associated with situational identities.
- If something happens to deflect experiences away from identity confirmation, then a person builds corrective events to get social interaction back on track.

Second-order control of meaning arises in social interaction in the occasional circumstance where experiences cannot be made to fit the current definition of the situation.

- In that case a person redefines the situation in terms of some set of identities that is confirmed by the experiences, so that experiences reflect meanings as usual.

Self-Sentiments

Heise (2007) explains “Your self-sentiment also enters into the process of defining situations. You choose identities as a way of expressing yourself, of affirming the kind of person you are, even when fitting in with requirements of social institutions. Given a choice, you prefer social institutions that allot you identities with sentiments matching your self-sentiment. Within a given social institution, you prefer to take identities with sentiments closest to your self-sentiment. Encountering another individual, you prefer an identity that expresses your self-sentiment and you try to cast the other into a complementary identity.”

Heise (2007) suggests that “affect ‘does the work’ of choosing behaviors. Behaviors that best confirm your sentiments become psychologically available, and you select from this relatively small set the behavior that is most sensible in the circumstances and individuals try to confirm the sentiments of their identities (p. 44).

People choose behaviors that are close to sentiments (Heise 2006). When engaged in social interaction, you create actions that confirm the affective meanings of your own and others identities. Other interactants in the situation operate the same way as you do, choosing actions that validate their sentiments about the entities they discern in the situation. Sequences of social interaction emerge as you and other individuals act on each other, transforming impressions of yourselves, all trying to consummate their sentiments in their experiences”(Heise, 2006). He continues, “Occasionally some event prompts a need to adjust your sentiments, and you deliberately open yourself to sentiment change (p. 45).

Heise (2007) suggests that deviants are individuals occupying negatively evaluated identities. The focus of this research is adolescents adjudicated as

Juvenile Delinquents and Persons in Need of Supervision who are participating in a novel social structure specifically designed to alter traditional interactions between youth involved in deviant acts and the juvenile justice system. As previously described, the aim of Juvenile Treatment Court programs is to change the behavior of youth through social interaction with the judge, court program staff and treatment providers.

For the purposes of this study, I contend that Structural Identity Theory and Affect Control Theory are more useful than the static Stages of Change theory because they provide explanations for interactionally-bound identity change. This study will explore the meaning of the court program structures and processes for youth, for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the ways in which youth participants experience these novel court programs.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

“Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.”

Albert Einstein

American (German-born) theoretical physicist
(1879 - 1955)

This chapter presents the methodology used in this study to explore the lived experiences of Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants. First, the study description and methodology is presented. Next, the research questions are presented. The research setting, participant selection, data collection, data management methods, and data analysis follow. The chapter concludes with a discussion of validity issues and how they were addressed and the plan for the presentation of results.

Description of Study and Methodology

This study explored the youth participant experiences in four juvenile drug treatment court programs in New York State. Using a semi-structured interview format, qualitative inquiry addressed four major topic areas presented in the “Research Questions” section of this chapter. Court chart reviews and observations of court appearances contributed to data triangulation, serving to substantiate or contradict statements made by participants. In addition, opinions regarding the results of the 37 individual interviews with current and former Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants were solicited from a second cohort of current Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants in a focus group setting.

Qualitative research methods were chosen because they are the most appropriate for uncovering the quality and type of information disclosed by

individuals in an experiential context. “The primary objective is to secure an up-close, first-hand, intimate understanding of the social world, issues, and/or processes of interest, particularly as they are experienced and understood by the individuals studied” (Snow, 1999, p. 98). Using qualitative methods of observation and interviews, data is presented in the context of participant’s experience, adding richness and credibility to the results. Marshall & Rossman (1999) suggest that the quality of interview data is dependent on the purpose of the study. “When the researcher is using in-depth interviews as the sole way of gathering data, she should have demonstrated through the conceptual framework that the purpose of the study is to uncover and describe the participant’s perspectives on events – that is, that the subjective view is what matters” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 110). They explain that the fundamental assumption of qualitative research that “the participants’ perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it” (p. 108).

Individual audio taped interviews with youth provided the primary source of data. “Combined with observation, interviews allow the researcher to understand the meanings that people hold for their everyday activities...studies making more objectivist assumptions would triangulate interview data with data gathered through other methods” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 110). For the present study, data triangulation was achieved through court case record reviews, observations of court hearings, and a “member check” focus group with a second cohort of eight current Juvenile Treatment Court participants.

The qualitative approach assumes an “emphasis on the world of experience as it is lived, felt, undergone by social actors...what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 236). In other words, what participants perceive as real is a construction of their minds. Individuals can have multiple, often conflicting constructions, and all of these can

provide understanding for them regarding life circumstances” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). To find meaning, researchers must listen to the words of the participants. The aim is to understand the participants’ experiences rather than to generalize and to use the words of the participants to illustrate concepts. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest, social phenomena are investigated with minimal a priori expectations in order to develop explanations of these phenomena.

To accomplish this, this study utilized a modified grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), which focuses on description and discovery, rather than theory testing or verifications (Hoshmand, 1989). Through this grounded theory methodology, new constructs are allowed to emerge from the data, and researchers are able to give voice to those who thus far have gone unheard. The goal of this qualitative study was to generate knowledge to inform social policy and to improve practice with adolescents participating in Juvenile Treatment Courts.

Statement of Research Questions

Given the exploratory nature of the primary research question, research questions were minimally structured.

- How do youth experience intensive judicial monitoring, weekly drug testing, intensive probation monitoring of school and home and, in some cases, electronic monitoring?
- How do the youth participants experience sanctions and rewards dispensed by the Juvenile Treatment Court program?
- How do the youth participants experience interpersonal relationships with juvenile treatment court staff, including the judge, case managers, treatment providers, and mentors?

Subjectivity and the Researcher’s Lens

In an effort to address potential personal bias as relevant to this study, I submit the following personal reflections. I am a female licensed master social worker

who has over a decade of experience working with adults with severe and persistent mental illness. I have never worked with adolescents, nor have I ever had personal or professional contact with the juvenile justice or adult criminal justice systems.

I used a journal to detail my impressions and emotional responses after each interview, thus separating out my beliefs and values from those of the youth and to maintain surveillance on my emotional reactions to youth stories. In the course of one of the 37 interviews, I became aware of maternal, protective feelings. After recognizing my feelings, I consciously checked them and listened to the interview tape in an effort to identify what occurred in the interaction that stimulated those strong feelings in me. I realized that the youth portrayed him/herself as an unjustly victimized and helpless individual, to which I responded with strong maternal feelings.

Settings

Youth interviews took place in small, private rooms usually used by attorneys and clients in the four courthouses in diverse geographic regions of New York State. Throughout this document, these courts are referred to as “Court A,” “Court B,” “Court C” and “Court D.” Courts A, B and C were Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts and had very similar eligibility criteria, policies and procedures. Court “D” refers to a Juvenile Intervention Court program. This court’s target population is low status, first time offenders who may or may not have substance abuse issues. The policies and procedures of Court D are more similar to traditional Juvenile Court than to Juvenile Treatment Courts in that there are fewer court appearances and the judge rarely speaks directly with the youth participant. Court D is similar to Juvenile Treatment Courts A, B and C in that Court D links youth with an active in-house youth development/community service program.

Participants

Participants were 37 current or former youth who have been screened and accepted into one of four Juvenile Drug Treatment/Intervention Courts in New York State. The youth participants ranged in age from 13 – 18; parents/guardians consented to participate in the study. In regard to race, 24 were Caucasian and 13 were African American.

Data Collection

The study protocol received approval from the Stony Brook University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CORIHS) (see Appendix C for a copy of this approval). Subsequent to approval notification, the researcher obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality (COC) from the United States Department of Health and Human Services National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (See Appendix D for a copy of this approval).

Three separate consent forms were developed for the interview portion of this research study. Participants over the age of 18 at the time of the interview reviewed and signed the Informed Consent Form- Adult form. Participants under the age of 18 reviewed and signed the Youth Assent Form and their parent/guardian reviewed and signed the Parent/Guardian Consent Form. Parent/guardian consent and youth assent was secured before any data collection took place (copies of the consent and assent forms are in Appendix E). The signed original consent forms were secured in a locked file cabinet, accessible only to the doctoral student researcher and the dissertation sponsor, in the researcher's locked file cabinet.

Data Sources

Data were collected from the following sources: 37 interviews with youth, the researcher's participant observation field notes and journal entries, and a review of youth court records. In addition, a second cohort of eight current Juvenile

Treatment Court youth participants from Court C participated in a member check focus group.

Interviews

To ensure ecological validity, the interviews were conducted at the four courthouses. In an effort to facilitate youth comfort with sharing their thoughts, feelings and experiences honestly and without fear of consequences, the researcher: (1) explained the purpose of the federal Certificate of Confidentiality from the Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Drug Abuse, (2) demonstrated a warm, caring demeanor, (3) dressed in a neat and casual manner, (4) used humor, (5) made eye contact and smiled, and (6) explained the purpose of the interview as an opportunity for their voices to be heard. In an effort to alleviate concern that the youth might perceive the interview as an assessment or interrogation, youth were reminded that they did not have to answer any questions that they did not feel comfortable answering. The goal was to create an interview experience with them in the role of “expert.” The researcher used visual markers (e.g. keeping an organizer/clipboard with the university name written in large, clear letters in a conspicuous space on the table in full sight of the youth) to emphasize that the researcher was not a part of the “court system.”

Interviews were only conducted in English. Therefore, participants who were unable to communicate in the English language were not eligible to participate in the study. The 21-item semi-structured interview guide explored youth major life domains, including home, school, court, social networks and treatment services. Probing questions and prompts clarified responses and generated new inquiries based on the youth narratives. The open-ended questions aimed to explore the youth perception of the specialized court from several vantage points. At the start of each interview, youth were asked, “Tell me about yourself; what kind of things do you like to do with your time, as hobbies or interests.” This opening provided

the opportunity for youth to present themselves to the interviewer as other than a “delinquent” or a “PINS.” By choosing not to ask them about themselves as the subject of a court disciplinary action, youth had the opportunity to present themselves in any way they chose to. The next questions explored with whom they lived. These items revealed information on family makeup and family relationships. Social networks were explored by asking youth to talk about friends. Similarly, in order to understand their school experiences, youth were asked, “Tell me about school.”

Youth were asked to “Tell me the story of how you became involved in the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court.” Youth narratives were replete with descriptions of how they saw themselves and how they believed others viewed them. If they did not offer it in their narrative, probes were used to explore youth perspectives. Youth were asked from whom they first heard about the Juvenile Treatment Court program, how they learned that the court program was an option for them, and if they consulted with anyone before making the decision to participate.

Inquiries were made regarding relationships with court staff – probing for perceptions of the judge, coordinator, case manager, probation officer, treatment provider, and mentor. Youth were asked if they felt that the judge knew them personally. This line of inquiry provided the opportunity to understand how the youth believe that the judge views them. Follow up questions focused on youth perceptions of court processes, such as reports on drug tests, as well as home and school attitude and behavior reports.

At the end of each interview, each participant was asked if there was anything else that they would like to share that they had not been asked about. The aim was to ensure that youth had the opportunity to share anything that they felt was relevant to their experiences with the court program. Finally, all interviewed youth were asked if anything about the interview was upsetting to them (see Appendix B for a copy of the semi-structured interview guide).

Access to youth was facilitated by the Office of Court Administration's "best practices" research study, of which the present study is a part. The Director of Grants and Special Programs provided a letter of support granting access to youth. The grants manager at the Office of Court Administration made first contacts with the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court coordinators and judges to inform them about the study and asked for their cooperation in identifying youth to volunteer to be interviewed, providing access to the courthouse for the researcher, securing space for youth interviews and recommending a local store accessible to youth to purchase gift certificates for interviewees.

The parameters of the research study were explained to Juvenile Treatment Court program coordinators and the CORIHS-approved recruitment flyers were distributed (see Appendix G). The coordinators told potential study participants and their parent/guardian about the study when they came into the court for regularly scheduled court appearances. They were instructed to state specifically state, "A researcher from Stony Brook University is conducting private research interviews with Juvenile Drug Treatment Court participants about their experiences with the Court. The interviews are between one and two hours long and will take place in a private area of the courthouse. They are giving anyone who participates a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods store or a music store." Recruitment and scheduling activities varied from court to court due to time constraints. Interviews at Courts A and B were geographically far from the University. The project coordinator from the Office of Court Administration scheduled separate one week trips to geographically distant courts. Therefore, court coordinators in those courts set up a schedule of youth interviews based on the requested criteria: a mix of youth in various Phases, including terminations, as well as variation in gender and race. Courts C and D were within fifty miles of the researcher's office, resulting in flexibility in scheduling interviews. The

coordinator scheduled interviews with youth in Court C according to the same criteria for Courts A and B above.

In Court C, the first four youth met with the researcher, but the next several scheduled youth did not show up. The researcher carefully considered conducting interviews with youth at their respective treatment agencies to decrease the transportation and scheduling burden for youth and their families. The researcher received CORIHS approval for a protocol modification allowing interviews at the treatment agencies; however, this researcher was uncomfortable with the notion of interviewing youth at their respective treatment facilities because the youth were being interviewed *due to their involvement in the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court*, not because they were participants in a treatment program. In addition, the treatment agency administrators required that they obtain a copy of the signed informed consent form. The researcher decided not to interview youth at their treatment agency due to the concerns noted above. The researcher and the coordinator agreed to attempt a new recruitment wave during times when the largest number of youth would be at the courthouse with their parents.

Contact and demographic information, such as age, race/ethnicity, education and type of housing, was extracted from charts. Additional data extracted included course trajectory information, such as dates and types of petitions, frequency and outcomes of urinalysis tests, frequency and types of sanctions and rewards imposed by the court, mental health diagnostic information, substance use, abuse and diagnostic information, educational and treatment participation and compliance. The data collection instrument only used de-identified code numbers and chart data were stored separately from the hard copy of the interview transcript and audio cassette tape.

The researcher took field notes during and after each court visit. Notes included thick descriptions of the setting, each youth's appearance and demeanor, dress, mannerisms, conversational style and interpersonal nuances. Personal journal

entries documented my thoughts, beliefs, hunches and ideas at the end of each field visit.

Chart Record Review

The researcher reviewed the official court record for each interviewed youth after the interview was completed. In this way, the researcher did not have information a priori regarding specific details of the youth's situation, thus reducing the potential for the researcher to ask biased questions. Youth had the opportunity to share their own story unobstructed by a priori knowledge on the part of the researcher. The chart review supported the validity of the data by substantiating claims made by youth. When a youth indicated that they initially presented with positive drug screens and then experienced a turning point and said that they were 'clean,' court urinalysis test data confirmed youth self-reports. The data extracted from court records included contact information, date of birth, current phase and urinalysis results.

Participant Focus Group

Two years after the final individual youth interview was completed, the results were presented to a second youth cohort of eight current Juvenile Treatment Court program participants to elicit their opinions regarding the results of youth interviews.

Data Management

Interviews were audio taped to new, high quality audiotapes. Respondent code numbers and date of each interview were noted on each tape before the interview took place. At the completion of the interview, the cassette tape and tape housing were marked with de-identified code numbers. The researcher transcribed the first six audiotaped interviews using Panasonic Standard Cassette transcriber Model RR-830 into a Microsoft Word document. The remaining audiotaped interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber. The researcher reviewed and compared all audiotapes and transcripts for several reasons: first, to verify that the

transcripts were accurate, and second, the researcher continued preliminary analysis by listening to the audiotapes and reviewing field notes.

The tapes were delivered to a professional transcriber. The researcher entered the transcribed interviews into the qualitative data analysis software program Qualrus for analysis. Transcribed interviews were produced in a portable storage device and paper form; each were labeled with date of interview and the de-identified code number. The hard copy transcription along with the corresponding audio cassettes were stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet. Electronic versions of the transcriptions were stored in a separate folder in the researcher's password-locked hard drive and backed up onto the researcher's flash drive. The Excel file created that links the de-identified codes with participant identifiers was saved onto a diskette/portable storage device and erased from the computer hard drive. The diskette and the only paper copy of the file was placed into a sealed envelope and placed into the researcher's locked file cabinet. This information was necessary so that the researcher could contact the youth participants to schedule a follow up focus group. The informed consent form included a paragraph indicating that the participant may be contacted for follow up studies.

Data analysis

Each transcript was carefully read twice before beginning any formal coding, during which time impressions and initial tentative descriptive codes were noted in the transcript margins. "Patterns or themes in the data must also be found- they do not imply 'emerge.' Rather, storable patterns and themes- assertions that make generalizations about actions and beliefs that were observed - must be searched for repeatedly within the total data corpus, in a process of progressive problem-solving" (Erickson, 2004, p. 486). The guiding question during this stage of what Erickson called the 'progressive problem-solving' process was 'What is this an instance of?'

Using Qualrus qualitative analysis software, Miles & Huberman's (1994) analysis procedures were used as a guide to the coding process – initial descriptive coding, interpretive coding and identification of pattern codes. Initial coding - “attributing a class of phenomena to a segment of text” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 57) - served the purpose of data reduction. Each line of text was read and assigned a descriptive code. These initial codes helped to delineate youth experiences at a very basic, descriptive level (see Appendix G).

Using the descriptive codes, individual youth biographies were developed to map course trajectories, leading to interpretive coding of youth categorization. Next, pattern codes identified interactions described by youth in various categories. Pattern coding led to theoretical coding – a process of constant verification between interview data and theoretical constructs.

Validity of the Qualitative Research Method.

Qualitative validity refers to the trustworthiness of the piece of research and its reported findings, and is composed of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Credibility, or truth value, as defined by Maxwell (1996) is the correctness of a description, conclusion, explanation or interpretation. Credibility is parallel to internal validity and provides assurances of the fit between respondent's views of their experiences and the researcher's reconstructions and representation of the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In order to enhance credibility, the researcher used verbatim responses generously. In addition, the interpretation of findings, or the results, was presented to a second cohort of Juvenile Treatment Court participants in order to solicit their opinions regarding the researcher's interpretations.

Transferability, parallel to external validity, addresses the issue of generalization in terms of case to case transfer. The researcher makes no claim to the generalizability of the findings from this study; the findings may or may not be transferable to other settings. Feedback regarding the interpretation of findings

from a second cohort may or may not lend credence to the notion of transferability.

Dependability, an aspect of trustworthiness, refers to whether or not the process of the study is consistent and reasonable over time and across researchers and methods (Berg, 2001). Dependability is parallel to reliability and shows that the process of inquiry is logical, traceable and documented (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Triangulation was used to establish validity by comparing across three data sources: interviews with youth, chart reviews and field notes. To further enhance dependability, the researcher facilitated a focus group with a second cohort of eight youth from one of the court programs where initial interviews were conducted. The preservation of the transcripts served as another determinant of dependability; the transcripts were “preserved unobscured” (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Confirmability, parallel to objectivity, establishes the fact that the data and interpretations of the inquiry have logical and clear linking associations (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Data analysis decisions are weaved throughout the results section, thus are available to future researchers. The researcher has, in this document, left an ‘audit trail’ of evidence so others could “reconstruct the process by which the investigators reached their conclusion” (Morse, 1994, p. 230).

Analytic Decision Making and Alternate Hypotheses

Analytic decisions were made in an attempt to provide a cogent, credible and trustworthy interpretation of youth narratives using grounded theory methodology. The initial coding scheme resulted in youth status categorizations based on how youth ‘defined the situation.’ The next stage of analysis, youth’s thick descriptions explaining their perception of their own turning points “I’m not the same anymore” led to a close review of Sheldon Stryker’s (1980) Structural Identity Theory. The next stage of coding weaved in concepts from Structural Identity Theory and they seemed to make logical sense of the data- there appeared

to be congruence between the theory's propositions and the data. In time, however, Structural Identity Theory did not adequately capture the degree of affective bonding that was observed in youth narratives, leading to a review of theoretical constructs of Heise's (2007) Affect Control Theory (ACT). A third level of analysis ensued, this time using propositions from Affect Control Theory to code data.

Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher "the researcher is constantly making choices about what to register and what to leave out, without necessarily realizing that- or why - one incident is being noted but another is not" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). They suggest that the researcher be explicitly mindful of the purposes of one's study and of the conceptual lenses you are training on it- while allowing yourself to be open to and reeducated by things you didn't know about or expect to find.

CHAPTER IV
PARTICIPANTS AND SETTINGS

In an effort to understand the entire court process, this study set out to capture Juvenile Drug Treatment Court participant experiences at four phases:

- (1) anticipatorily – Upon introduction to the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court;
- (2) currently – Upon intensive participation in the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court;
- (3) retrospectively-graduation – Upon successful graduation from the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court experience; and
- (4) retrospectively-termination – Upon termination from the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court.

The proposed target sample was to recruit ten youth from each of the above four categories. Due to interview no-show's and limited youth availability on interview days, the actual Phase distribution of interviewed youth is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Participant phase at interview, by court.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Graduate	Failed	Total
Court A	3	5	2	-	-	10
Court B	2	2	-	4	1	9
Court C	1	7	3	2	0	13
Court D⁹	4			1		5
Total	6	18	5	7	1	37

⁹ Court D is not structured by a system of Phases. Active Court D youth were most similar to youth in Phase 2 from Courts A, B and C.

In sum, 37 youth from four courts were interviewed. The mean age of the youths was 16.05 years (range = 13 – 18 years SD = 1.224). Specific court data on gender, race, legal status and age are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Youth interview study sample characteristics (n = 37).

	Court A	Court B	Court C	Court D
Gender				
Male	7	4	5	2
Female	3	5	8	3
Race				
Caucasian	8	4	12	-
African American	2	5	1	5
Status				
Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS)	-	5	5	-
Juvenile Delinquent (JD)	10	4	8	-
Petitioned	-	-	-	5
Mean Age	15.8	16.2	16.5	14.3
TOTAL	10	9	13	5
				37

Legal Status

Ten of the 37 youth interviewed for this study were adjudicated as Person’s in Need of Supervision (PINS). As mentioned in Chapter I and repeated here for clarity, this refers to an individual less than eighteen years of age who does not attend school in accordance with the education law or who is incorrigible, ungovernable, or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of a parent or other person legally responsible for such child's care, or who possesses or uses illegal or controlled substances.

Twenty-two youth were adjudicated as a Juvenile Delinquent. This refers to a person between the ages 7 and 16 who commits an act which if had been

committed by an adult, would have been a crime. The act committed is called a "delinquent act."

The five interviewed youth from Court D had been petitioned to appear before a judge for a low level offense (such as graffiti, fighting in school, vandalism). Actual charges included possession of a weapon (a cigarette lighter) and criminal mischief in the fourth degree.

Court A does not accept PINS youth, therefore each of the ten youth were adjudicated as a Juvenile Delinquent (JD). Of the 9 interviewed youth in Court B, 4 were PINS. Six of the 13 interviewed youth from Court C were PINS. New York State law prohibits courts from placing status offenders, like PINS, in secure detention facilities. Therefore, unless a person adjudicated as PINS had previously been adjudicated as a Juvenile Delinquent, they had not personally experienced placement in a secure juvenile detention facility.

Family Life

Of the 37 interviewed youth, 12 lived with both their biological mother and father, 15 lived with their biological mother only, 2 lived with their biological father only, 4 lived with their biological mother and step-father/mother's boyfriend, 1 lived with biological father and step-mother, 1 lived with a foster family, and 2 lived with a grandparent. Three reported having a parent incarcerated.

School

Seventeen youth were currently enrolled in a mainstream school; 7 were taking GED classes; 10 were attending alternative schools or BOCES trade school; two were attending community colleges and one was being home tutored because they were caught selling drugs in school. Six of the interviewed youth had changed schools as a result of being in the Juvenile Treatment Court program.

Choice to Enter the Court Program

Each of the 37 Juvenile Treatment Court youth described first hearing about the specialized court program while they were in ‘problematic situations’ - as they were being held in detention or at a court appearance. With few exceptions¹⁰, nearly all were given the choice of participating in the Juvenile Treatment Court program after violating conditions of probation – usually by presenting with positive drug tests.

Participation in Juvenile Treatment Court programs is officially voluntary, as Butts & Roman (2004) explain: “Youth found appropriate for drug court are advised of the voluntary nature of their participation, the court requirements and any other expectations that could factor into their ability to graduate successfully from the program” (p. 71). Although the court program is described both verbally and in the literature as “voluntary,” some did not believe that they had a choice, but rather believed that they had been placed into the program by the Judge or probation department. For most, the primary consideration when deciding to enter the program was the opportunity to stay at home rather than be placed in a long term residential facility. A typical comment heard from youth is “it was this or detention, so of course I chose this.” Two atypical youth entered the court program because they felt that they needed help in order to stop using drugs.

Setting

Although geographically distinct, the four courthouses where the interviews were conducted were very similar. All visitors to courthouses in New York State must pass through a security center staffed by uniformed New York State court officers. Cell phones with camera capability are confiscated by court officers and bags are placed on a small conveyor belt to be examined by an x-ray machine while the visitor walks through a metal detector. In the event that the metal

¹⁰ All five Court D youth.

detector “goes off,” the visitor is motioned aside and asked to extend their arms out while the court officer traces the perimeter of the person’s body with a hand-held metal detector.

The Juvenile Treatment Court program staff offices are inaccessible to visitors in all but one of the observed courts. In Court B, the case manager’s office is accessible to visitors just off the hallway on the floor where the Juvenile Treatment Court part is located. In this office, a poster depicting two smiling African American girls warns readers not to drink alcohol while pregnant. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous posters adorn the walls and a bucket of snicker bars and almond joy miniatures are offered to visitors.

Outside in the court hallway, an assortment of people of all ages, genders and colors stand or mostly sit in small groups talking quietly among themselves. A small line forms at the glass reception window where clerks answer questions and hand out paper forms. Family members sit with teens on benches. On this day, some of the boys are dressed in khaki pants and shoes – not sneakers- and neatly pressed shirts. Several parents are dressed in sweat pants and shirts; other parents wear jeans and sneakers.

Court B purposefully uses “open” court based on the “court as theatre” notion. They feel that it is beneficial for youth to witness other youths’ consequences and successes. A Juvenile Treatment Court program graduate recalled:

If someone gets away with something, you kind of look at it like hmmm, ok, and that’s kind of why you’ve got to stand in front of everyone. Because that does show that they’re (the court) not messing around, that you will get punished.

In an effort to maintain order and keep youth separated, youth nametags are placed on chairs in the gallery of the courtroom. Higher Phase status translates into more freedom; youth in Phase One may not leave the courtroom while court

is in session, however, youth in Phase Two are allowed to come and go while court is in session.

On the observation day, the first youth's name is called. He stands with his law guardian at the podium with his mother waiting nearby. The present issue is that the youth has been missing school. The judge addresses the youth directly and asks, "Did you mess up?" The youth answers "Yes." The judge asks "How come?" The judge listens patiently to the explanation – that he missed school because of treatment and court. The judge says, "I want to talk to your mother." The judge reviews the youth's "runaround sheet" – a form used to track youth school attendance and performance. Each of the youth's teachers sign the form every day indicating that the youth has attended the class and provides comments on their school behavior and performance. The judge notes that the youth's runaround sheet is not filled out completely. The judge tells the youth, "I expect you to respect teachers and follow the rules at school. I want to see your report card." The mother addresses the judge and says, "I have his report card in my pocket." The judge asks the mother "Am I going to like what I read on the report card?" The mother answers, "No."

The report card states that the youth has had extensive absences in each class and "does little class work." The judge asks the youth, "Can't you do better than this?" The mother speaks up for her child. She says to the judge, "He was in lockup." The judge becomes angry – his voice gets a little louder and he leans forward toward the youth - and tells the youth in a stern voice, "That's no excuse for you to not be there listening, obeying and doing your work. You must be in your house unless you are physically with your mother, in school, in court or at treatment." Then the judge says to the other youth in the room, "Let's give a round of applause to encourage him." The youth in the gallery half-heartedly applaud.

The next case comes up to the podium. He is shifting from one foot to another and seems to be avoiding eye contact with the judge. The judge asks, "How's it going at school?" as he reviews the runaround sheet. The youth asks, "Are you pleased?" The judge says, "Of course." He tells the youth "Avoid triggers. You're doing fine. Keep it up." The judge starts to clap and youth in the gallery join in.

The next case appears at the podium. The presentment attorney stands next to the boy and his mother. The judge learns that the youth had been found with marijuana. He says to the youth, "You know this disappoints us." The prosecutor addresses the judge and says, "We've given him enough last chances. For society's protection, he needs detention or placement." The judge addresses the youth and says, "You know, we care about you." The judge learns from the boy's mother that a psychiatrist has started him on antidepressant medication. The judge tells the mother that the youth "has potential." The probation officer explains to the mother that he is going to detention. The youth puts his hands behind his back to be handcuffed and leaves without saying goodbye to his mother or to the judge. Neither he nor his mother looked at one another. The other youth watch as he is escorted out by a court officer.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

“If people are good only because they fear punishment,
and hope for reward, then we are a sorry lot indeed.”

Albert Einstein

American (German-born) theoretical physicist
(1879 - 1955)

Youth Participant Categories

Grounded theory analysis led to the identification of four categories of youth at the time of the interview - “turning point,” “reluctant complier,” “active resister” and “first timer.” Initial descriptive coding led to the identification of youth “doing well” or “not doing well” in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. The “doing well” group members were complying with court requirements and presenting with negative drug tests (verified through court record reviews). This group made direct statements that indicated a positive perception of the court program.

Youth in the “not doing well” group either presented to the court with positive drug tests, generally were not complying with program requirements (verified through court record reviews), or made direct statements that indicated a negative perception of the court program. Members of this group were categorized “active resister.”

Interpretive coding of the narratives of the “doing well” group revealed key differences in attitudes regarding the judge and court program staff, their self-concept, and explanations regarding their decision to comply with court program

rules. These differences provided the criteria for categorization as “first timer,” “reluctant complier” and “turning point.”

“Reluctant complier” youth indicated that they complied with court rules only to avoid consequences. “Turning point” youth made direct statements that they had changed their self-concept as result of being in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. Lastly, “first timers” indicated that they had a positive self-concept when they entered the program. The members of this group had no previous contact with the juvenile justice system.

It is important to note that none of the turning point youth were in Phase 1 at the time of the interview. Their recollections of their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors upon entering the court program mirrored those of youth categorized as “active resisters” at the time of the interview. Many turning point youth described starting off as active resisters, then transitioning to reluctant compliers, and then to turning point. Some of the reluctant compliers were program graduates, illustrating the point that reluctant compliers can, and do, change their behavior without changing their self-concept.

A more thorough description of youth categories is presented in the following section with case studies of typical first timer, active resister, reluctant complier and turning point youth. These case studies provide in-depth illustrations of the definitions of the self-concepts, treatment court experiences and social environments of each of the main categories of youth. The final case study – Charlie¹¹- demonstrates the experience of a youth who failed out of the court program and subsequently had a turning point.

First timer

First timer youth did not have previous contact with the juvenile justice system. They were the five youth from Court D who were petitioned to appear

¹¹ Naturally, all names are pseudonyms.

before a judge for a low status offense (e.g., vandalism, graffiti). This group expressed emotions such as fear, regret and remorse while describing the events leading up to their involvement in the court program. None of the five had a drug or alcohol problem.

The case study of Jasmine is presented below to illustrate a typical experience of a “first timer” youth.

Case Study: Jasmine, First timer, Graduate, Court D

Jasmine’s interview took place during the summer before entering 11th grade and two weeks after she completed the court program. She likes to read, and says “I’m really into getting my education and completing school.” In her spare times, spends time with her extended family. Her father was killed when she was young and she lives with her mother and an older sister.

Jasmine explained that she became involved in the court program after she and her sister were involved in an altercation with a schoolmate on school grounds. She admits to having had other fights off of school grounds that did not result in trouble for her. She says

I never had a fight in school. I was never suspended, never called into the principal’s office. I’ve come late to school, but that wasn’t on an everyday basis. I got good grades, I always made it to honor roll. I get the very good grades and I like school, so it’s not like I’m somebody that just goes to school because I have to. I go to school because I enjoy learning.

The other person pressed charges against both she and her sister. The school conducted an investigation and called in law enforcement. She says that when the police came into the office, she was “nervous and kind of scared.” Her case was referred to the Juvenile Intervention Court. She says, “We didn’t even know about any of these types of smaller court systems or whatever.” She appeared before the Juvenile Intervention Court judge and was told that she would be on probation

supervision for six months and would perform community service at the court's in-house program. She explains that after two months of "superintendent suspension" at a one-room school for suspended students, she was not allowed to return to her home school; instead she was placed in a lower quality school. She says:

I got placed in a school...the schools like, horrible it was a failing school, it's a title one school, a failing school, so, what they had to move me up a grade already. I was a freshman, so they put me in tenth grade because they couldn't accommodate me on a ninth grade level. I was just sitting there all day doing the work but then bored for the rest of the period because I had nothing to do. So I wasn't able to go back to a good school.

Jasmine tells me that she had never been in a police car before and that "I don't even get in trouble at home so I'm not used to being in trouble." She says, "I didn't feel like a juvenile delinquent because I know that's not who I am. My behavior, I think of it as a mistake and...if I could go back then I would change my actions." She continues:

When all the papers says Juvenile Delinquent, in the case of juvenile delinquent, but, in my eyes, I don't ...like to this day I don't think I'm, I'm not a juvenile delinquent, I'm not, that's not who I am...That was a bad experience I had couldn't believe that I been arrested. It's not like I'm some out of control teenager, ignoring all the directions and is outside using drugs and drinking and stuff. That's not who I am, I couldn't believe that I was arrested.

Jasmine felt badly that her mother and grandmother had to see her in the precinct house because she knew that they were disappointed in her. She felt that "if I would've made better decisions, then nobody would need to have their

feelings hurt.” Jasmine shared that after leaving the precinct, she and her family, including her grandparents, went to dinner and “talked about what happened and everything. They’re not judging me on what happened. They’re just helping me. That’s what they, well, in my eyes, that’s what they’re supposed to do.” Jasmine describes how she at first perceived her situation. She says:

I didn’t really want to have to do courts, so I came in with a really negative attitude. After I got to see what this court was really about, I changed my whole perspective on everything about it, like as far as staff and everything.

Reflecting on her court program experiences, Jasmine says that she got a lot of good out of an otherwise bad experience. The court program got her involved in a community service program which she enjoyed on Saturdays from 11:00am – 1:00pm. She helped to make anti-violence shirts that they later sold at a fundraiser. She also participated in and HIV/AIDS education project and participated in the AIDS Walk. Jasmine continues to volunteer in the program’s Youth Court,¹² receiving a small stipend.

When asked where she sees herself in a year, Jasmine says, “I see myself in school, just trying to get to college and be successful but whatever I put myself to I just make sure my grades still stay good.” In five years, she expects to be out of college and she sees herself as a financial analyst in the future.

Jasmine made lasting connections with court program staff, most especially with the program case manager. She says “She was wonderful, she helped us out with finding schools, she talked to us, she was really a nice person...they’re very nice people.” Jasmine describes the judge as “very nice, very fair.” She reflects:

¹² Youth Court cases are presided over by a true jury of peers—teenagers from the neighborhood who have been trained to perform the roles of judge, jury and attorneys. In effect, the young people who serve on the Youth Court are articulating—and enforcing—standards of acceptable behavior for their peers (<http://www.courtinnovation.org>).

Looking at my school records, he [the judge] can see that that really wasn't me, so I think that was good. I think he was a very good person.

Jasmine appeared before the judge three times in the six months of participation in the program and met with a probation officer twice a month. The ways she explains it is “they gave us six months to prove to them that we weren't bad kids, like we weren't delinquents, so that was going to school on a regular [basis], getting good grades, following any probations that we had to...appointments we had, going to the program they assigned us to.” Jasmine had her picture taken with the judge when she graduated. She received an award and says that when she completed the program “I was happy that somebody realizes that what I was labeled to be, this monster child, that's not who I really am, so I felt glad.”

First timer youth did not have a delinquent self-identity when they entered the court program. They did not engage in delinquent role behaviors while in the program and increased the salience of their prosocial identities through prosocial youth development activities. They described efficacious future plans.

Active Resister

Youth categorized as active resisters made it very clearly known throughout the interview that they did not want to be involved in the court program at all. Direct statements included “I hate this place,” “this place sucks” and “they ruin your life.” Themes and patterns that emerged from these youth narratives were *mistaken identity, punishment and unfairness*. Out of the 32 interviewed youth from Courts A, B and C, 6 were categorized as ‘active resisters.’ Of these 6, four were in phase 1 and two were in phase 2.

Some active resisters shared a fundamental belief that there is nothing wrong with doing drugs and they resented the court program for keeping them from doing what they want to do. The case study of Mark presented below illustrates the experiences of an active resister youth.

Case Study: Mark, Active Resister, Phase 1, Court A

Mark is 15 years old. He has been clean for four weeks and is in phase 1 after ten months in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. Mark attributes his four weeks clean time to not wanting to be placed back in rehab and figures that he'll run away if he's sent there because "it sucks."

Mark blames his involvement in the juvenile justice system on his mother's decision to pursue a PINS petition on him at age 12. He lives with his mother and his younger brother, who is also in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. He has been in and out of detention facilities, which he calls "a place for bad kids" since age 12, explaining, "they put me away so I got out they put me away again so I got out and then they put me in this."

Mark wishes that he would have just gone away for a year because, "this sucks. This is stupid. You should just have to go to a probation officer and get drug tested. I wouldn't mind going there every month." Mark knows that he needs to "stay clean and do good. Sounds easy but it really isn't because you do the littlest thing and they'll throw you away." When I asked Mark if he would recommend the program to another youth in his situation, he says:

No. Because its no good. It just ruins your life. I'll probably think about this forever I guess, you know, cause I like threw away all my adolescent years, you know, ever since I was like fifteen. You know like that's supposed to be like your funnest time. I guess not for me, though. I had to deal with this shit every week.

Mark says "I wouldn't mind getting drug tested either its just I don't like coming to court every week. And I just don't like being here all the time." Mark thinks that having to go to three treatment groups a week is "stupid." He believes that the groups "don't do anything for you at all."

He tells me that his girlfriend is “on this shit too” and wishes that he had taken the one year out of home placement like she did. Mark has not severed ties with his drug using social networks – who he says are “more like acquaintances” rather than friends; he has not talked with them about his need to stay clean and sober. Mark becomes animated for the first time in the interview when I ask him if he talks with his peer group about drugs. He nearly shouts:

No. It's no big deal to get high really, it's just not what everybody thinks it is, that doesn't really do it, its just it's just something to make you feel better it's not like you don't even know what the hell you're doing. Its just you do it cause it makes you feel better. It's just what it does, I don't know.

When I ask Mark why he thinks that the court program sucks, he says “You can't use, you can't do nothing, I mean there ain't even really nothing bad to it actually everybody's an addict really I mean if you drink coffee in the morning you're an addict cause you need that cup of coffee to wake up in the morning you need that coffee and if you smoke cigarettes you're an addict. It's stupid, how're you going to punish someone for what they like?”

Despite appearing before the judge every week for ten months, Mark does not think that the judge knows him. He identifies the judge as a disciplinarian, saying “I just think he's just there to discipline me I guess; I don't know....that's what he gets paid for.” He tells me that the case manager is “cool” but that no one there cares about him. He tells me, “Everyone's here to get paid...It's their job, they don't care.” He tells me that his brother was “thrown away” by this judge and that it was hard for him because “he was gone for like nine months, I didn't see him.” At the end of the interview, Mark declines the gift card, asking me to give it to “someone else.” He finally takes the gift card after I ask him to take it, telling him that if he doesn't want it he is welcome to give it to someone else.

Active resister youth demonstrated negative emotions regarding the court program. They continued to engage in delinquent role behaviors and perceived the court program as adversarial. They did not have efficacious future plans.

Reluctant Complier

The reluctant complier youth generally were meeting the behavioral expectations of the Juvenile Treatment Court program; however, they did not describe any indication of lasting change in self-concept. Many of the reluctant compliers attributed their behavior change to their desire to avoid consequences – out-of-home placement and loss of freedom. Some reluctant compliers indicated an intention to use drugs or alcohol after they “served their time” in the program. Themes and patterns that emerged from the narratives from this group were *threat of placement/detention* and *wanting to stay home*. Out of the 32 interviewed youth from Courts A, B and C, 12 were categorized as ‘reluctant compliers.’ Of these 12, two were in phase 1, six were in phase 2, two were in phase 3, and two were graduates.

Case Study: Nikki, Reluctant complier, Graduate, Court C

Nikki is a 17 year old young woman who graduated from the Juvenile Treatment Court program one month prior to the interview. When I ask her about her interests and hobbies, she says, “I don’t know, I like to have fun, I guess...hang out with my friends.”

Nikki lives with her mother, step-father and one brother. Her mother “kicked out” her other brother “for bringing weed and alcohol into the house when he wasn’t supposed to.” She tells me that it is his fault and she doesn’t feel bad for him.

Nikki explains that in ninth grade “I never went to school. I think out of the year I had fifteen full days of school.” By tenth grade, she was placed on PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision) and, because she continued to be truant, she was put on probation. After being “sent away” to residential treatment programs, she

ran away, resulting in an arrest warrant for her. Nikki blames her early troubles on immaturity. She says “nobody could tell me anything...I knew everything.”

While facing out-of-home placement for running away and chronic truancy, Nikki’s probation officer suggested getting a drug test; if the test was positive, and she admitted to a drug problem, she would have the choice to participate in the Juvenile Treatment Court program with one year of outpatient treatment. She believed that she would be sent to long term placement if it was decided that she did not have a drug problem, so she “kind of made it sound like I did more drugs than I did...I wasn’t going to go away for a year.” Nikki does not believe that she really had a choice, saying “And then I got stuck in this for a year.”

After attending one year of outpatient substance abuse treatment and graduating from the court program, she maintains that she did not have more of a drug problem than she thought at the time. However, Nikki admits that she ultimately made the right choice and agrees that she’s in “a better place” now. She would recommend the court program to others, saying “why would you want to go away from everyone you know on lockdown for a year?”

Nikki’s peer network remains the same as when she started in the court program – males who are her age or older regularly use drugs. She says that although her friends would “try to look out for me,” she would still use drugs while in the court program. Nikki was drug tested weekly in Phase One, biweekly in Phase Two and monthly in Phase Three. She did not have any positive drug tests while in the program – saying that there is “always a way around something.” When I asked her if she found a way to cheat the drug tests, she said “Of course.”

Nikki did not develop relationships with anyone in the court program, saying of her court program case manager “I only see her when I come to court.” Of the judge, she says “he was mean at first...like he would talk down to me. But he was cool, though. I knew what he was trying to do. You know? Like trying to get me

to be scared of him so then to scare me straight.” When asked if she ever considered that he could place her, she says “No, because I was always doing good.” She does not think that the judge knew her as a person, but rather that she was just another case on his calendar. She describes her perception of interactions with the judge:

Judge: How are you [name]?

Youth: Fine.

Judge: Doing what you need to do?

Youth: Yeah.

Judge: Alright. See you next week.

Youth: Alright. Bye.

Nikki reports that her relationship with her mother is better - they are more open with one another. Her mother consistently attended family nights at the substance abuse treatment program where Nikki received her treatment. Nikki spoke positively about the treatment facility, saying “I really felt that they were good there. From any place that I’ve ever been to.” In particular, Nikki shares that her substance abuse counselor would tell her that she knows that “I’m going to get off of it [Juvenile Treatment Court program].” She credits her treatment program with helping her to see things more positively rather than negatively all the time.

Nikki thinks of herself as being the same, albeit somewhat more knowledgeable, as when she started in the program. She says, “You know, I’m still me, you still can’t tell me anything so I’m going to do what I want. But I think like I definitely took that and learned from it, but that’s it.” When I asked her if she felt that she deserved to be in the court program, she said:

Yeah. I think I did. Because I needed something. Like sending me away to live somewhere else wasn’t going to change me...they let me stay where I’m at, do what I need to do and just like work with

me through it. So I think it was more or less fair, a fair consequence.

Despite presenting herself as not having a relationship with Juvenile Treatment Court program staff, Nikki said that the most helpful aspect of the court program was “them being on top of me from the beginning.” She says that the weekly drug tests kept her from using drugs until she was near graduation. The threat of being sent away, discovered through drug tests, changed her behavior. She says:

Until like I was almost done with it I didn't use like because they would just like I was scared, not like I was scared but like I had my mind set when I first started like I had it in my head like I'm not going away for like smoking weed, cuz that's all I really did you know what I'm saying I just smoked. And like I was like I'm not going away for that. That's crazy. So I'm just gunna do what I need to do. And like them being like constantly like on top of me about it like helped. You know like just stay away from it.

When asked what aspect of the Juvenile Treatment Court program didn't work for her, she said, “When they started trusting me. And started leaving me alone with it.” Nikki ran into trouble when the Juvenile Treatment Court program gave her freedom back to her before she was ready. She says “And then its like, well can I get away with it? You know what I'm saying? Can I beat the system, you know, and like, that's how I get.”

Nikki did change her behavior at school, experiencing academic success while in the court program. Recalling that Nikki first got involved in the justice system because of school truancy, she says “since I started court, like drug court or whatever, I haven't missed school at all. Like I think last year I think I have like four absences. And like this year I don't know I haven't had that many.” Nikki attributes the changes in her school attendance to “I don't know, just like, because

like I grew up, you know? I was in ninth grade. I still had three years before you know what I'm saying? Like now it's like getting that time where I have to do what I have to do." I asked Nikki how things are different now. Nikki explained that she changed schools- she is no longer attending the regular school that had placed the PINS petition on her. She explains:

When I first started, right after I ran away, they sent me to BOCES...its not like high school were you could just leave and do what you want and cut class. Like once you're in school, you're there for the day. Where you gonna go?...And that school is like really good...because like that's the type of person I am. Like unless you're on top of me telling me to do something I'll either forget or I won't do it. And like they're like on top of me, making sure I get done what I have to do.

I asked Nikki where she thinks she'll be in a year. She says, "I don't know. I have no idea. I'm going to school for like plumbing and heating but I don't know if like I want to like set my life on that." When I asked if she has any dreams, any hopes, she says, "Just have money."

Reluctant complier youth had a delinquent identity when they entered the court program. They did not experience an identity change. They resisted involvement in opportunities to interact with others while in a prosocial identity. Further, they conveyed a sense of "faking it" so they could get through the program. Reluctant compliers were motivated to avoid consequences.

Turning point

Ebaugh (1988) defines a 'turning point' as "an event that mobilizes and focuses awareness that old lines of action are complete, have failed, have been disrupted, or are no longer personally satisfying and provides individuals with the opportunity to do something different with their lives (Lofland and Stark 1965; Lofland, 1966). The individual makes a firm and definitive decision to exit...old

obligations and lines of action are diminished or seen as undesirable and new involvements are seen as possible (Ebaugh, 1988).

Turning point youth described experiencing a transformation in their attitude and behavior that is congruent with a prosocial identity. A prosocial identity is defined here as ‘behavior that conforms to the acceptable patterns of society.’ The criteria used to identify turning point youth included (1) direct statements expressing a change in self-concept, (2) a minimum of two months ‘clean time,’ (3) compliance with Juvenile Treatment Court requirements.

Turning point youth offered a variety of explanations for why they changed. These are presented below and further analyzed in the section following the typical case studies. Youth explanations included:

- Imagining themselves as different from who they were and who they wanted to be;
- The judge being strict, but caring;
- Warm feelings and respect toward the judge;
- Seeing the court program as a place to get better instead of a place to punish them;
- Severing ties with deviant peer networks;
- “Getting honest” with themselves and others through treatment
- Developing a close relationship with parents
- Newly formed self-pride and believing in oneself
- Realization that others were proud of them and not wanting to make those others go back to being not proud of them;
- Making changes in living, learning and social environments
- Having people around them that cared about them.

Direct statements indicating subjective change in self included “I care now,” “I changed,” “I don’t want to be a loser no more” and “my attitude ain’t the same no more.” Turning point youth described being different from who they were when they first entered the court program.

Emergent themes from the narratives of turning point youth were *being different from before, now others are proud of me, experiencing successes, forming emotionally close relationships, and developing efficacious future plans.*

Nearly all of the turning point youth expressed appreciation for the strict monitoring and consequences imposed by the judge when they violated. Out of the 32 interviewed youth from Courts A, B and C, 14 were categorized as ‘turning point’ youth. Of these 14, six were in phase 2, three were in phase 3, four were graduates and one had failed out of the program¹³. A typical example is Kelvin, a graduate of the Juvenile Treatment Court program. He explains the way in which he changed as a result of being in the court program:

My attitude is different...I’m more optimistic...my approach on life is different from going through stuff...I just have like a different approach and different attitude and like my beliefs are different... I’m like more honest and...I can thank all that to being placed and because of drug court and being clean and stuff.

Case Study: Erin, Turning point, Graduate, Court B

Erin is an 18 year old graduate of the Juvenile Treatment Court program. She proudly tells me that the court program gave her a “little party and a certificate.”

At the beginning of the interview, Erin responds to a question about her interests and hobbies by telling me that she has been working part time cleaning rooms at a hotel. She plans to become an ITT technician, so she attends computer technology classes at night. She shares that in the summertime she likes to swim, she enjoys writing poetry, and she is “pretty good at computers.” Erin lives with, and helps to care for, her ailing grandmother and her uncle, who raised her along with her two older brothers. She has never met her biological father and she tells me that her mother is currently incarcerated for four to nine years. Erin is working toward getting her driver’s license so she will be able to visit her mother in prison.

¹³ Charlie failed out of the court program and was sent to inpatient to substance abuse treatment. His retrospective account of why he did not comply with the court program provides theoretical support for the concept of commitment to a delinquent self-identity.

Prior to entering the court program, Erin was placed in a juvenile detention facility after violating the conditions of her probation. She was told that if she agreed to go to the Juvenile Treatment Court program, she would be released that day “into the hands of drug court.” Her only other option was to get placed for eighteen months. Having known others who had gone away to placement, including her older sister, she decided to enter the court program. She did not feel prepared for all of what would be required of her. She recalled, “They told me that it’s a pretty easy program as long as you just cooperate with the judge ...do what you [sic] supposed to do. So I was just like ‘ok.’” I asked her if it turned out to be easy. She laughs and says, “Not at first.” She explained that at first she did not trust anyone involved with the court program. She says:

When you’re fresh and new into the program it seems like everybody’s against you because you don’t really know what’s going on. You got the judge talking the counselor and the counselor talking to the prosecutor and you think that they’re all against you, like, ‘Yeah, we want to put her away or send her here and there’...You hear ‘this person missed her probation and didn’t go to school and didn’t complete her program.’ And it just seems like everybody’s against you at first.

It was hard for Erin to go from sitting in detention all day to attending to all of the requirements of the court program. She went to weekly court appearances where “the judge was telling me to do something different. Go do this program or do that program and I was like...it was too much at that time.” The judge instructed Erin to go to outpatient treatment and to get involved in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous.

When Erin did not cooperate, the judge used short-term detention stays as a sanction. Erin recalls, “It took the judge like every other two weeks or every week...to put me in a detention center from three to seven days. Every other week

I would be in [a] detention center.” Detention lockups became a way of life for her. The judge also sanctioned her with community service hours. She cleaned at a nursing home – although she frequently walked off the job. She says “Sometimes in the middle of everything I just go to the point, like, this is boring. I don’t want to do it, and I never showed up.”

Erin recalled what she was thinking when she resisted the court program. She says that she wanted to smoke [marijuana] all of the time and she did not care about anything; she thought that no one could tell her what to do. She says:

I had the attitude like I don’t care, you can’t tell me nothing. I mean, you’re just a joke kind of thing and that’s the attitude I ran for almost the whole beginning of when I started drug court and ...it got to the point where I would come to this building and know ‘Oh, I’m getting locked up today.’

When asked what turned things around for her, Erin takes a deep breath, sighs, and says that as her mind cleared when she was in detention, she began to think about the court program’s weekly Adventure-based youth program. Although attendance was mandatory, she often found ways to get out of going. She recalled:

You go, you play games...you have fun, eat dinner with a whole bunch of people...having fun, going to trips and stuff like that. I thought about it and I was like that sounds like fun. It gets me out of the detention center and back home. This is when my mind said ‘I’m going back home and not getting ...going back to the detention center.’

Erin reflects that she started trusting the people in the court program after she “started listening” and realized that “half the people are there saying ‘We should give this person a chance.’” Erin shared that she wishes that the court program had intervened with her earlier than they did, saying “I think if they would have took more action, been more stricter and stuff from the beginning...it would have took a lot less time to switch me over at the beginning.” When I ask Erin if she feels that

the judge knew her- not just her name, but the person that she is- she says, “Yeah, I think so. I think that’s probably why he was so strict with me.” Erin reflected that the judge’s interaction with her was the reason why she changed her attitude. She says:

I think with me, why I changed my attitude, was definitely the judge being strict with me. But, not in like a cruel, torture way, but...he was strict enough to kind of like scare me into the program.

Erin described changing her definition of the judge from punishing toward developing what she calls “a friendship.” Although she has graduated from the program, she wants to continue to have him in her life. She explains:

Today I’m out of drug court and every chance I get I call the judge on the phone, or I’ll be like there’s a meeting and the judge is going to be there, I’ll show up. Like me and the judge have a friendship now, and before he was like my worst enemy. The worst person I hated in all my life, you know what I mean?

Erin explains that the court program matched her with a mentor with similar interests. She “really connected” with her mentor; they went to the movies and played games together. She emphasizes that it wasn’t all fun and games, though, saying that her mentor challenged her by promising to take her out on a fun activity if she did well in school. They went on picnics, talked together and their relationship continues today. She says:

That kind of helped me, too, because knowing that kids have the connection with another person, because I was the type that I wouldn’t talk to nobody. I’d just keep everything bottled up ...once I got that connection with my mentor, because today, I still talk to my mentor.

For part of her time in the court program, Erin lived at an adolescent substance abuse residential center. Erin grew “really, really attached” to her counselor at the center. Although she “hated it at first,” she came to the realization that it is not a detention center, but rather, “a center to help me get better...I met a lot of friends there. Half the friends that I do have now are from the residence.”

Although she was not sure if she was “mentally ready” to leave the structure of the residential program, she talks to her mentor every day and has started going to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and has an Alcoholics Anonymous sponsor. When she feels like she could use a meeting, she will “sit down in a quiet room and just start reading the AA book or the NA book or pamphlet...or call my sponsor.” Erin has a large sober support network and has friends who support her efforts toward maintaining her sobriety. She feels that the relationships with her mentor and AA sponsor were “very important” to her success.

After graduating from the program, Erin moved in with her sister, in close proximity to her grandmother. When asked who her cheerleader was as she went through the court program, she names her sister and grandmother. Her grandmother makes sure that Erin goes to her outpatient substance abuse treatment and mental health treatment sessions (she was diagnosed with depression while at the residential treatment program).

Erin believes that her change in self-concept occurred while in detention. She tells me that she “sat down and let it kick into reality and sit there and think about it.” She came to the realization that she was making it harder on herself and describes experiencing successes after she began to cooperate. Specifically, she recognized that others were proud of her, she was believing in – and being proud of – herself. She reflected:

Once I started cooperating and going, I mean, I got to like it...all the fun games... I found myself doing better in school, so I was just like... and my grandmother was really proud of me for my grades

and all that stuff. So I was like look at me, I can give this a try. And when I actually sat down and just tried and not have a nonchalant attitude about everything, everything started to fall in place.

Turning point youth entered the court program with a delinquent self-identity. They initially enacted an inauthentic identity in response to court sanctions. They received rewards when they enacted prosocial behaviors. Turning point youth redefined the court program from adversarial to helping and caring about them. They actively engaged in opportunities to enact a prosocial identity and formed close relationships with prosocial others. They experienced positive emotions and graduated with efficacious future plans.

Reluctant Complier: Prove them Wrong about Me

Two youth were unique because while they did not have any violations while in the program, they each demonstrated attitudes and beliefs more similar to those in the active resister category than to turning point youth. The reason stated by both for agreeing to participate in the program was “to prove them wrong about me.” One youth explained his reason for following the rules of the court program. He says:

Cause I wanted to prove the judge wrong...cause the judge said, judge said ‘You will mess up.’ He said it is a given. Everybody makes mistakes. You will mess up. And he goes, ‘if you didn’t I’d be astounded or shocked or something’ and I’m like you know what, prepare yourself cause, I ain’t gonna mess up.

Two reluctant complier youth did not enter the court program with a delinquent identity. Although they described high frequency poly-drug use before entering the program, they stopped using drugs (verified through chart reviews) and complied with all court program requirements. Interestingly, both of them said that they changed their pre-program delinquent behavior in order to “prove

them wrong about me.” The case study of Sam illustrates the self-concept and perspective of the Juvenile Treatment Court program of youth who set out to disabuse the court program of the perception that they are “bad.”

Sam: Reluctant Complier - Prove them Wrong about Me

Sam has been in the Juvenile Treatment Court program for ten months. He likes to play sports and video games and he works part time at a retail food establishment. He lives with his mother, father and siblings. Sam says “I got screwed really bad through this whole thing.”

Sam tells me that this is his first involvement in the juvenile justice system. He says “they gave me a year of drug court” after he was caught stealing six test tubes from his school. When he was caught, he told the police that he used the tubes to smoke marijuana. He thinks that it is “fucking ridiculous” that he got put on a year of probation for stealing test tubes when he “never did anything wrong [before].” Although Sam never received formal charges before, he was smoking a lot of marijuana, frequently cut classes and was doing poorly in school. Nevertheless, Sam says, “I don’t feel like I did that much wrong.”

When he first entered the court program, Sam advised the case manager that he hated it, saying “I was a dick to her. I didn’t care.” Although Sam has experienced successes such as attending school and getting good grades, he says “I guess it [the court program] was a plus. I still hate this place though...It was such a waste of time. I guess it helped, I stopped smoking and I’m doing better. I have more money.” Despite his successes, Sam tells me that he feels the same about himself, saying “I feel satisfaction every time I go and see him [the judge] and he says “‘Have a nice day.’ Instead of saying ‘you did bad.’” When the judge told him that he has the highest grades of anyone in the program, Sam said, “There was satisfaction. Like, why am I here then? I can do that good. I’m honestly not that bad.” I ask Sam if he thought that people saw him as a ‘bad kid’ when he was arrested. He says:

Yes. Automatically if you come here you get judged. I don't care what they say. Because if you didn't come here they feel like, why are you here if you're good.

When the judge admonished him for staying at a friend's house after an argument with his parents, he says "It means nothing. I really don't care what he says."

Sam received substance abuse treatment before his arrest. The counselor told police that he was failing. Sam recalls that he was smoking five times a day, every day and that stopping was "easy." He spoke positively about the substance abuse treatment program that the court program referred him to, saying that the twice a week groups were better than his previous treatment experience where he did not like his counselor.

When I ask him to tell me about his friends, he says that he's known them since the 3rd grade and that "they all smoke." Sam continued to hang out with his friends every day, where they "smoked around me...I hang out with them every day and never get the urge. Sometimes I think about it but I will never do it. Until I get off this...I would do it less. I'll say that. If I was gonna do it." Of smoking marijuana, he says:

I loved doing it. It was just I had to stop, I'll stop. Just to prove them wrong. Because they don't think you're going to stop. They want you to fail deep down inside, I swear to God...Fail your drug test. They want you to fail. They don't care about you.

Sam does not believe that the judge either knows him personally or cares about him. When the judge required him to write an essay, he "bullshitted my way through it. I doubt they even read them." He says "the judge doesn't care about you, so how does the main person not even care but everyone else does...the case workers, they're alright. It's not like they call to check up on you. They only care

when you're here and after you're gone they don't say 'Uh, he's doing good.' They don't care. They only care when they have to."

Since being in the court program, Sam has been getting A's and B's in school. I asked him what he attributes this change to. He says "proving them wrong...If he [the judge] thinks that I'm so bad, why would I be doing good in school? If I'm such a bad kid, why would I stop smoking? I don't get in trouble. I'm just in this to prove them all wrong." His probation officer visited his school three times and he gave the judge his report cards and school progress reports. When I ask Sam what the most challenging part of the program has been for him, he says:

Proving them wrong...but it's yet been the easiest. Because all I have to do is really stop smoking and prove them wrong. It helped by getting the good grades, just coming here whenever I have to. Showing up with a fake smile. They think everything's alright.

Sam complains that the judge does not let him speak, therefore, "I just say Yup, everything's alright...even if the worst would happen, I wouldn't tell him." Sam does not believe that the judge would care because "he has a hundred more cases that day....He doesn't really look at you in your eyes when he's up there. He'll look at his papers, say your doing good, have a nice day...and I have to be polite to him saying yes sir whatever, but he doesn't even look in your eyes."

The two "prove them wrong" youth were reluctantly complying with program rules, however, they had negative emotions. They did not have a delinquent identity when they first started in the program, however, they did have negative emotions. They experienced successes while in the program, however, they did not increase the salience of a prosocial identity.

Charlie: Failed, Retrospective Turning Point, Clean for Two Years

Charlie is 17 years old and in the tenth grade. He grew up with his grandmother and now lives with his aunt. He shares that his biological parents had no part in

raising him. Charlie explains that where he comes from, youth expect to spend their summers in detention. He was caught selling drugs and was placed in secure detention after the police caught him stealing a car. He says that when he first heard about the court program, he felt it was a 'set up.' He says,

Like, you don't, when they be doing all the fast talking and stuff you don't, you don't see like you got to still be in the, in the system, you still got to come to the court, the court area and stuff around like down here and still be around jail, polices, judges and stuff like that. Still be in the system, like tied down. They don't explain that stuff to you.

Charlie agreed to participate in the court program because he believed he would get out of detention quickly. He says, "I think they were trying to use reverse psychology and make you pick that just cause us being, we was young, they throw it at you like 'Yeah you can get out fast so you might as well pick it.' And then you still can be like underneath their armpit for a couple of more years or something and they still could play puppet with you."

He did get out of detention quickly and the Juvenile Treatment Court judge placed him on "honesty house arrest," meaning that he did not have an electronic monitor. The lack of strict monitoring contributed to his continued delinquency. He recalls, "That's why it was more like a setup like, how could you put a child on house arrest and don't give him a bracelet and send him home and tell him that he can't go outside and you not there watching him. It's like putting a bowl of candy in front of a whole bunch of kids and telling them they can't have none and turn your back." Charlie was caught stealing another car and terminated from the Juvenile Treatment Court program. He says, "They violated me and kicked me out and sent me back to lockup."

Charlie's retrospective explanation of why he failed suggests that he was highly committed to a delinquent identity. He says, "At that time I wasn't seeing

that, I still was smoking and all that, and I was like they trying to make me come to court and be in a program, I didn't want to do that. I was like I had a cloudy head and negative stuff. And it was like I wasn't taking in the positive energy they was giving off because I was ignoring them and I didn't really care what they was saying in court and none of that." He says that he was "too into the streets" and that the program "didn't scare me."

Charlie explains that the police now have him labeled as a delinquent, to the point that he can't even stand on a street corner without the police stopping to question him when they see him. He says, "Because it's like when you in the system, you can't really do the things you want, like, I used to go, I could stand on the corner of my street and just, just the police could ride by, they won't stop you, they won't harass you or nothing. Right now I could stand on the corner, they'd stop, call me by my first and government name and stuff like that, tell me to get the fuck out of here and like, you get too familiar with them pulling you in and when you get in the system you always gonna live in a jail mind frame, it's gonna keep pulling you in. And your life couldn't be good like that." When Charlie was asked if the police start to see him as a criminal, he says, "Yeah. The way they think of you, you gonna fit to that. And not even know it....Could end up becoming it."

Charlie still sees members of his former drug using social network. He credits them for helping him to stay clean by not allowing him to go with them when they went to another location to do drugs. He says that it feels good to have people in his life who care about him.

When asked what the court program could have done differently to help him, he takes responsibility for failing out. He says, "Now that I look back and see, I wasn't seeing a lot of stuff like that was going on....I never liked it, but I could I think I could have like benefited from it." He continued, "I think I lost a lot in running away from drug court too. I could have had a good job probably by now,

and been working for a while, getting raises. I had a lot of people who wanted to help me. And I screwed it up.”

Charlie describes his early attitude toward the court program, saying “I always got an ‘I don’t care’ attitude, but now it’s like, I can slow down and look like, take my time and like think of the consequences and stuff like that. Cause I wasn’t caring like kids wanted to go to lockup, I think, because I definitely was like, I didn’t care if they send me there go ahead, that don’t scare me.”

Charlie has experienced a turning point. Of being in detention, he says, “The simple fact that you’re there like you have no business being there. It’s no place for a kid. No place. I’ll never go back though.” After failing out of the Juvenile Treatment Court program, Charlie was placed in out-of-home placement with the New York State Office of Children and Family services. He ran away and ended up back in court a year later. He was sent to a substance abuse rehabilitation facility and has been clean for the past two years. Charlie plans to finish high school and go on to college where he plans to play basketball.

Charlie’s case study illustrates how a strong commitment to a delinquent identity can result in building events to confirm that identity, resulting in program failure. Charlie did not view the court program as trying to help him. As he described, “I was too into the streets.”

Conceptual Framework

In the preceding case studies, the potential for each youth to reach a change in self-concept is evident. However, only among turning point youth has that potential been realized. The question this analysis attempts to address is ‘What are the factors within Juvenile Treatment Court programs that increase the likelihood of prosocial identity salience for youth participants?’ Theoretical coding grounded in youth narratives suggest that these factors involve constructs derived from Stryker’s (1980) Identity Theory and Heise’s (2007) Affect Control Theory (ACT). Specifically, I argue that turning point youth re-define themselves from

delinquent to prosocial by first re-defining their sentiments regarding the non-traditional, problem solving court program. This is accomplished through reflected appraisals during frequent interactions with the judge, increased interactional commitment through court mandated activities and affective commitment through forming close emotional bonds with one or more prosocial others. This process results in successes while enacting a prosocial identity, thus leading to the development of efficacious future plans. The emergent conceptual framework is presented below.

- I. Many youth enter the court program committed to a delinquent identity;
- II. Youth define the court program as adversarial and believe that the court program perceives them as delinquents;
- III. Youth confirm this self-sentiment through non-compliant performance;
- IV. Strict monitoring quickly identifies non-compliant events (NCE);
- V. Reflected appraisals in the form of consequences for behavior enacted in delinquent identity;
- VI. Increased interactional commitment through expanded prosocial networks;
- VII. Increased affective commitment to one or more relevant and meaningful prosocial others;
- VIII. Reflected appraisals in the form of rewards for behavior enacted while in the prosocial identity;
- IX. Re-definition of other as caring and trying to help them;
- X. Re-definition of self through experiencing successes while in the prosocial identity;
- XI. Self-efficacy and future plans.

Evidence for each of the theoretical statements in the conceptual framework is presented in the following sections.

I. Many youth enter the court program committed to a delinquent identity.

“The pragmatic philosophy that undergirds identity theory argues that mind emerges in response to problematic situations met in the course of social conduct. Thus, the cognitive activity and the emergent self to which identity theory gives overriding import occur in the degree that situations are problematic, which is simply another way of saying in the degree that humans are faced with choice” (Stryker & Serpe, 1987). Regardless of “choice,” acknowledgement that youth are

always performing under the threat of out of home placement is critical to understanding the youth perspective. Once admitted into the program, youth do have the choice to comply or not to comply with program requirements. It is this choice that is the focus of this analysis.

Self-Identity: History of Failure in Multiple Life Domains

According to symbolic interaction, “meanings motivate behaviors; persons are presumed to strive to enact the behaviors that symbolize the kinds of people they are. Thus, from this point of view, if we wish to predict the behaviors of the persons we observe, we must know the content of their self-concepts; this implies that we must know the meanings they attach to themselves” (Stryker & Craft, 1982, p. 164).

If behaviors are reflections of self-meaning, then most interviewed youth entered the court program with a delinquent self-identity. They described delinquent behavior, and chronic failures, in major life domains – home, school, court, treatment and peers. Rick’s pre-program behavior is typical for interviewed youth:

I was about 12, used to sneak out at night, get drunk and steal stuff out of cars. I got caught by the cops one time. I didn’t get charges but my mom, she put a PINS on me and then I just kept violating and violating, I went to detention about six times...I didn’t come home or I used [drugs] or something like that, fighting, arrested and then ah, I kept on, I was doing good for a little bit then I’d mess it up, kept messing up.

Rick, JD, Phase 2, Reluctant Complier, Court A

The types of behaviors that garnered the attention of the Juvenile Justice system described by youth include serious physical altercations with a parent, selling drugs at school, robbery, stealing cars, using excessive amounts of drugs and alcohol, stealing property (including weapons) from family members, chronic school truancy and school suspensions, blatant disregard for parental authority,

staying out all night and running away from home. Further, many youth described themselves as “messing up” all of the time, repeatedly failing at probation, experiencing academic failure and school expulsion. Hope describes behaviors typically described by a PINS youth. She recalls:

When I was like almost thirteen I did whatever I wanted to do, left the house came home at like 3:00 in the morning, 4:00 in the morning whenever I wanted to come home. If I wanted to stay out I did. Ha, I would be gone for three days. So my dad put me on PINS, and then from there I didn't learn anything and I stayed out again and I got put on probation and then I kept failing drug tests and everything. I failed for weed and coke. And they were going to send me away but they put me in drug court instead.

Hope, PINS, Phase 2, Turning point, Court C

One turning point youth recalled his delinquent behavior enacted with his deviant peer group. He says that he was “was getting into trouble all the time” and that he stole his father's car and “there was a lot of drugs in there, too. I got caught with a lot of drugs.” He describes his behavior with his friends:

We were the crazy group in school...five kids...we used to run around and rip stuff out of the walls- the plaques and stuff - and collect them just to show everyone 'Look what we did'... and there's holes in the walls all over the school and we'd break the windows and just show everyone that we couldn't be stopped...we just, well out of control, but there was drugs every...we experimented with as many drugs as we could as much as we could and get as high and as messed up as we could.

James, JD, Reluctant complier, Graduate, Court B

Derek, a turning point graduate, says that when he first entered the court program, he had a delinquent attitude. He says “When I started hustling and stuff and being on the streets and that's when my attitude had changed toward

everything. I had no respect for nobody. I didn't care about nothing. A lot of things, I just had the fuck-its."

Most, but not all, Juvenile Treatment Court youth described heavy drug and alcohol use. Jessica skipped school with her friends to use drugs, sometimes with her friends' parents, during the school day. She did not care if she failed at school. She recalled that she was drinking alcohol and smoking weed, and taking acid and pills. At first, she says that she was using drugs a couple times a week, and after a while "I was using all the time." When I asked Jessica if she thought that she was addicted, she said:

I can't say I was addicted to anything. I mean...I didn't drink frequently. I smoked all the time and it might have been a mental addiction for me but no I wasn't physically addicted so I could say I was addicted thinking...I could have stopped if I wanted to I looked at it like that but I needed help because when you live a lifestyle for so long and you get in the patterns of doing something so frequently it becomes a part of you.

Jessica, PINS, Turning point, Graduate, Court B

The theme of being mentally addicted to drugs was echoed by Carlos, a turning point graduate. He found abstinence difficult due to the widespread use of drugs and alcohol by his peers. He says, "It's a hard time like to not use. You know? Everyone's drinking. It's just like those years that everyone's drinking in high school, you know, smoking pot. It's like a normal thing in high school." On the other hand, Rachel, new to the court program and an active resister, tells me that she smokes marijuana because she wants to; and further, that she does not believe that she should be punished for it since she thinks that everyone else is doing it. She says:

This thing is not working for me. I think it's stupid. For me to have to come here once a week, every week is just not necessary. All these people in the world, doing drugs, and not going to school and

they pick me to come here once a week...I guess
I'm the only one who got caught.

Rachel, PINS, Court C, Phase 1, Active resister

Sarah is an active resister in phase 2 who, similar to Rachel, believes that her involvement in the court program is a case of mistaken identity. She was previously on PINS, then was accused of selling prescription medication in school and “for that and they put me on drug court even though I wasn’t selling my medication. Like they didn’t have any proof.” The court program sent Sarah to a treatment program for two months after she was caught drinking alcohol. She denies using drugs, saying “They said I was either getting sent away for a year or I was getting put on drug court. Even though I’m not a candidate for it. So I never failed a drug test, I don’t even do drugs (laughs). I only drink, that’s it, well, I don’t drink anymore obviously.” She returned home on house arrest.

The first timers did not enter the court program with a delinquent self-identity. For them, the precipitating event was their first contact with the juvenile justice system. As Jasmine’s case study demonstrated, these youth did not consider themselves to be delinquent. They took responsibility for their actions, expressed remorse and made it known that they are not the type of young person who gets into trouble all of the time.

II. Youth define the court program as adversarial and believe that the court program perceives them as delinquents.

The theme that the court program is against them and sees them as “bad” emerged from all but the first timer interviews. Many youth entered the court program expecting to be “thrown away or locked up” by the judge. This expectation was partly informed by pre-program personal experiences with a judge, because a friend or sibling had been placed by a judge or because they thought that if the judge didn’t like them, they would “lock them up.”

Amanda, a turning point youth, shared that her former (not Juvenile Treatment Court) judge would say “Lock her up cause she’s never gonna learn.” Similarly, one turning point youth reflected, “I was looking for the easy way out and I thought that if he (the judge) didn’t like me, he’d lock me up.”

One turning point youth explained that when she first started in the Juvenile Treatment Court program, she was “looking for the easy way out.” She had a past experience with another judge who treated her like “scum” and at first she expected the same from the Juvenile Treatment Court judge. She says “I was like you know what pretty much he’s going to be an asshole he’s going to do what he wants you know if he doesn’t like me he’s going to lock me up real easily.” When asked if he disagreed with anything that the court program has done, John, a reluctant complier, says “They wanted to lock me up for a year, but my mom got them to think otherwise.” Sam says:

I love doing it. It was just I had to stop, so I’ll stop.
Just to prove them wrong. Cuz they don’t think
you’re gunna stop. They want you to fail deep down
inside, I swear to God.

He continues:

Because they think they’re right. They think I’m a
bad kid. Now he might have a perception on me,
that I’m a bad kid. So I’ll prove them wrong. It’s
my one goal in all this.

When I ask Sam what he attributes his ‘turn around’ to, he says:

When I graduate this thing and just looking at them
and saying good bye...I am good...just to do a little
laugh at them. To smile at them. I’ll feel like I won
the World Series.

John, an active resister, expresses his sentiment regarding the role of the judge. He says “I just think he’s just there to discipline me I guess I don’t know...that’s what he gets paid for. That’s why we’re all here, right?”

III. Youth confirm delinquent self-sentiment by non-compliant performance.

All but two youth described not wanting to change when they first entered the Juvenile Treatment Court program. Nearly all continued to engage in the behavior that got them into the court program, such as using drugs and alcohol and continued school truancy.

As Derek, a turning point graduate, explained, “For most people when you first get into drug court you ain’t going to want to do it.” Many youth said that although they had agreed to perform certain behaviors (going to school, abstain from drugs and alcohol), they actually had no intention of following the rules. With the exception of first timers, youth said that when they first entered the court program, they were “out of control,” “flaunting the rules,” and “doing whatever I wanted to do.” One turning point youth describes her attitude early in the program:

I had the attitude like I don’t care you can’t tell me nothing I mean you’re just a joke kind of thing and that’s the attitude I had for like almost the whole beginning.

Most youth believed that the Juvenile Treatment Court program would be “a piece of cake” and “I thought I would just skate through it.” They expected to be truant and use drugs. One youth explained her initial belief that she could continue her delinquent behavior. She says:

The mentality I was in then was so the easiest thing to get out of the system, and do what I wanted to do. I thought that it was going to be easier. I thought if they saw me once a week I can get away with a lot.

James says, “[The coordinator explained] there was a structure and it wasn’t going to be easy but at that time I really didn’t care. I didn’t want to be locked up. And drug court was a way that I could, you know, get out of trouble and everything and stay living with my parents and stay out of lockup.” James recalled that at the time he was “invincible mentally like they can’t stop me that you know I can do whatever I want you know ah and I’m going to be like I’m going to be who I want and this and that. But truly that’s not who I wanted to be I mean the drugs kind of helped me, helped that illusion.” The one exception was a turning point youth who said that he entered the court program because he wanted to change. He says, “I chose to stop using. I knew I needed help. I wanted to change. I didn’t want to be a loser anymore.”

Rachel, an active resister in phase 1, is new to the court program. She entered the program after violating PINS probation and “the judge said he’s going to put me in drug court.” Rachel did not know that she would have to come to court every week. Similarly, the requirements came as a surprise to Lori, an active resister in phase 2 in Court C. Lori was smoking marijuana every day for about nine months and has been clean for eight months. She says, “I don’t think I had a drug problem that I needed drug court that bad.” Lori says that the reason that she stopped using drugs is “Because I don’t want to go away again. I just want to get away from this as far as possible.” She says, “I thought I won’t have a really early curfew, won’t have to do all this crap, then it is like a lot of crap with it...the drug tests, like that’s not bothering me, like the treatment part is just ridiculous to have to go so much.” Lori believes that she was placed in the court program. She explains:

Youth: I don’t even know what was going on. I can’t even understand the judge. But like, I went in there and he said they’ll put me back into custody or something. It’s kind of forced on me that I said I was going to be on probation, but then when I came

outside some lady was like, waving the drug court papers around again and I was just like, alright.

Interviewer: So the whole thing was not real clear to you?

Youth: No, not at all. I didn't think it was going to be this horrible.

Lori, PINS, Court C, Phase 2, Active resister

Carlos, a turning point graduate, explains that he was placed in a rehabilitation center after getting caught stealing money from his parents. He did not want to stop using, so he “manipulated everyone” and was kicked out after he was caught buying drugs from another youth. Carlos entered the Juvenile Treatment Court program, where he was advised “don't use and nothing will happen, like bad.” Although the judge threatened to “put me away,” he continued to use drugs, got into a fight and was sent to a treatment center, but was kicked out after getting into a fight. He didn't use drugs for eight months after returning home and starting outpatient treatment. After Carlos relapsed with peers, he tried to cheat the drug test by switching urines with another youth. He stole coins belonging to his parents that were valued at \$5,000 and he pawned them for \$100. He was remanded to jail for one week “it's horrible.”

Carlos decided to get clean after a few months in placement. He says, “I decided I wanted to get clean because of all the stuff I put my parent through...they care about me so much and if it wasn't for them I wouldn't even be here.” He returned home after nine months and returned to the Juvenile Drug Court program. “I started coming to drug court every two weeks, getting urine tests, seeing the judge. Everything was going well and eventually they let me graduate...its like they try to keep kids in line but the kids aren't going to stop using unless they want to. I go to NA meetings almost every night. NA is the best thing like it helps me so much....scaring kids, it's not helping the kid.” Carlos

says, “I decided to get clean because if I didn’t get clean my parents wouldn’t let me be at the home...it was just screwing up my life.”

IV. Strict monitoring quickly identifies non-compliant events (NCE).

The strict monitoring by the court program quickly discovers and responds to non-compliance events (NCE). The types of strict monitoring employed by court programs include drug testing (urinalysis), weekly school attendance and participation reports, weekly treatment progress reports and parent reports on youth behavior at home during weekly court appearances. Youth are drug tested during phase one by a court officer or case manager just before their weekly court appearance in front of the judge. One youth explained the degree of monitoring that the court program employs:

Juvenile [Treatment] court they kind of like they go into every area and every aspect of your life they don’t just want to know if you’re doing drugs and if you’re going to school. They check for everything. They check and see how your relationships are with your parents and stuff. If you’re being noncompliant at home and need to see if you’re doing well in school and how your teachers and principals think you are and how if you’re like how you’re acting and how you’re doing. They check your job. If you’re keeping up with that and if you know your responsible and if you’re not doing anything illegal on the job. They check everything.

One turning point graduate recalled that the intensive supervision employed the Juvenile Treatment Court program discovered that she continued to be truant from school. Although the court coordinator had informed her that they would be checking up on her at school, she still believed that she would not get caught. She planned to go to the class, get the attendance form signed, go to the bathroom and not return to class. The court program called the teachers “even if they had the [signed] sheet.”

Many youth were surprised by the intense level of supervision by the Juvenile Treatment Court. For most, they said that they simply did not listen to their parents/guardians and that their pre-program experiences with probation led them to believe that they would not get caught. Delinquent behaviors were not ameliorated by traditional juvenile probation interventions. Many described doing well under probation supervision for a short time, then repeatedly violating probation, most frequently by presenting with positive drug screens or continued school truancy.

Although nearly all of the youth, with few exceptions, had multiple violations while on probation, they did not experience any consequences that were meaningful to them. They also indicated that the probation officer's interest in them was limited to whether or not they were going to school or doing drugs. One youth described their experience with probation monitoring:

I think that [Juvenile Treatment Court] helps you a lot because it's not just like probation. Because probation is just you go and you see your officer. They make sure you're not cutting school. They make sure you're not doing drugs and that's it. That's all they care about. If you get arrested they're going to violate you.

Carlos echoed this sentiment regarding probation, saying "that was nothing really that's just like... I didn't even get in trouble when I was on PINS I don't know it was kind of easy...they weren't hard on you, you know what I mean?"

Generally speaking, probation supervision involves periodic drug tests, unannounced home or school visits and regular office visits. The frequency of probation monitoring varies according to the level of supervision the youth is assigned to by the probation department. Probation monitoring did not change the behavior of the youth that I interviewed. Some commented that "Probation did nothing when I violated" and "I didn't care about probation."

A reluctant complier explains the experience of having an electronic monitor ankle bracelet. He says:

Interviewer: Until when is the ankle bracelet on?

Youth: If I don't screw up in the next three months it will come off.

Interviewer: How do you feel about that, what's it like for you?

Youth: I hate it. I really do.

John, JD, Phase 1, Court A, Reluctant complier

Turning point youth and reluctant complier youth tended to acknowledge that the strict monitoring "keeps them in line." One reluctant complier said that although he does not like having to urinate for the drug screen while someone is standing behind him or having a case manager come to his home or his school, he says that it "keeps me online, keeps me on task, so I do it." He says that knowing that he has to go to court or see his probation reminds is "like a system...a little step by step plan that can keep you motivated to do what you got to do. And I just do what I got to do."

An important aspect of monitoring are the behavior and attitude reports that the judge receives from parents and guardians of youth in Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts. An active resister youth perceived such monitoring as an unwanted intrusion in his life. He says:

Interviewer: What is that like for you to listen to your mom giving a report to the judge?

Youth: Yeah, it sucks because my mom doesn't like answering to people either...answering to people, like telling people, it's really none of their business what I do. I don't judge their lives; I'm not around them to crawl up their ass every week. You know?

Despite the court program's efforts to closely supervise participants, some youth described using drugs while in the program and not getting caught. These youth recognized that not getting caught made them vulnerable to relapse. A

turning point youth retrospectively acknowledged that believing that he could get away with a drug test made him vulnerable to relapse. He said:

They just didn't screen me one week... I got lucky that time but it wasn't good for me because it showed me that you know hey I can get away with this. And then I did it again and they got on my case and they knocked me to Phase one and in rehab I was in Phase two and they were really...they threatened me with lockup. I shudder at the thought of it.

Lori, an active resistor, says, "I don't feel like anybody supports me, I feel like they're just trying to catch you like, doing something wrong." Her advice to another person would be: "I would say do it if you feel like a challenge and you're not gonna mess up because if you mess up, that's it."

V. Reflected appraisals in the form of consequences for behavior enacted while in the delinquent identity.

Interviewed youth described violations as presenting with positive drug screens, getting suspended from school, school lateness, continued truancy, missing court days or treatment days, having a bad attitude at home and not obeying parents.

Juvenile Treatment Court programs provide corrective reflected appraisals to youth through a graduated system of sanctions (consequences). They have wide discretion in determining how youth non-compliance events are addressed. Consequences can include writing an essay, a short detention stay, verbal admonishment from the judge, loss of freedom/increase in external control such as earlier curfew, having electronic monitoring installed and house arrest. One of the most severe sanctions that courts use are short detention stays for youth adjudicated as Juvenile Delinquents. Many turning point youth thought that these short detention stays were effective. In fact, when asked what their theory was on why they changed, several said that they got tired of getting locked up.

A reluctant complier described his experience of receiving detention as a consequence. He says:

Cause I relapsed one time, they didn't lock me up but they had me write a letter instead. I kept smoking during the week, came back, my levels were high on my urine sample and they locked me up.

John, JD, Phase 1, Court A, Reluctant complier

Juvenile Treatment Courts also use the strategy of 'keep them guessing.' Youth are constantly reminded of the potential for the loss of freedom by the court. When youth were asked what might happen if they relapse, most indicated that they weren't sure, but that they might get a "second chance." This ambiguity about who gets locked up for which type of violation "keeps them in line."

One youth recalled that he got a second arrest while in the program and the Juvenile Treatment Court judge sent him to detention. He says, "I was like 'Wow, this isn't a joke. I just got in like serious trouble.' Getting a consequence forced him to realize that the court program wasn't "messaging around." Another youth explained that the judge gets a report from "all the different areas" and will tell you how you're doing. "He'll say you're either doing good or you're doing bad. He'll tell you to clean up or something will happen or you're doing really good."

A theme from turning point narratives was the notion that the court program clarifies expectations of behavior and communicates what the consequence will be if they don't comply, as well as what the reward will be when they do comply.

Ellen explains:

When I do good the judge will really tell me you're doing good, keep up the good work. I'm proud of you, stuff like that like. [He's] a really good judge, I think. [Case manager] is a good case manager too because if you're doing something stupid, she'll let you know straight out and she'll tell you what's gonna happen if you keep messing up you're gonna get sent away. That's how the judge is, like he told

me if you screw up if your school doesn't give me a report next time, you're going upstate. That simple. So I do good in school.

Jessica describes being asked by the case manager before her court appearance whether her drug test will be positive or negative. Knowing that it would be positive, she lied, thinking that if she said it was negative, she might not have to take the drug test. When she learned that she would have to take the test, she thought "Oh no." She describes getting sanctioned by the court program:

Then I'd get the drug test and she would call you back up there even after your name was called and say well what do you think we should do about this? And if I had a curfew he would drop it back down to house arrest and say you know it was a relapse, you can fix this, you just need to try, talk to your outpatient but the last time if I you have so many you know times you're going to keep doing something you know there is only so much they can do it. You know it's not like they sent me away, you know? They saw that I didn't have a behavior problem; it was a drug problem so they sent me to a rehab.

Some court programs ascribe to the "court as theatre" approach whereby all youth on the calendar sit together in the courtroom and watch court appearances. Watching other court participants get handcuffed and led away to detention for violating program rules served as potent reminders to youth to comply if they don't want to get placed. One turning point youth reflected on her experience watching other youth get sent to detention for violating. She recalled, "It was good because I would see what the other kids did and I would know kind of what my consequences would be if I were to use or if I were to be out past the curfew."

VI. Increased interactional commitment through expanded prosocial networks.

Juvenile Treatment Court programs are in a unique position to use their legal powers to coerce youth into spending time in activities with prosocial others. All court program participants were exposed to the possibility of new prosocial relationships due to court mandated requirements of frequent court appearances, substance abuse treatment, school attendance or GED classes (or employment), linking with prosocial adult mentors, Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous sponsors, community service programs and other youth development activities. One court linked youth with a boys and girls club as well as a unique youth-led weekend community service program that focuses on promoting positive interaction and building self-esteem. Youth in the latter program developed a variety of public service publications and a well-received documentary on their community. Court D makes specific recommendations to youth to explore summer employment and recreational opportunities, linking young people with a community boy's club, adult mentors, and a drug and alcohol prevention program.

Another creative court collaborated with a community treatment agency to provide Juvenile Treatment Court youth with an adventure-based program. Immediately following court each week, youth who were 'doing well' would participate in the program with court staff, including the judge. The adventure program provided the opportunity to engage in a fun, prosocial role without being "policed." James recalls participating in the Adventure-based program:

Ah, well, it was fun...they had all these different activities that you could participate in and you know it its fun because they're not all like policing you. The whole thing isn't punishment it's like you know the structure and then you get to cut loose sometimes and they'll take you like out to Adirondacks or they'll take you different places,

you can go camping, and you can rock climb and rappel, or whatever and do this stuff.

James, JD, Reluctant complier, Graduate, Court B

Sandra, a turning point youth in phase 2, was linked with an after school program that she enjoyed. She describes the program:

It's a boys and girls club. It's like something that would keep me out of trouble like prevent what happened before. And they just take us like on trips and stuff when we go there after school. If we got homework we do homework. And they have people coming there from different places and talk to us. And Thursdays we go to a sculpt a sculpture park. And we makin stuff.

Sandra, JD, Phase 2, Turning point, Court A

Turning point youth increased the size of their prosocial network through participation in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. They described actively seeking out ways to continue interactions with new prosocial others, including mentors, treatment providers, support groups, new prosocial social networks and court staff. Debra, a phase 2 turning point youth, works 32 hours a week in food retail, attends GED classes, participates in substance abuse treatment twice a week and attends Alcoholics Anonymous meetings several nights a week. She plans to start college classes after completing the requirements for her GED. Another youth plans to continue attending the Boys and Girls Club that the court program mandated her to after her time in the court program ends. Yet another turning point graduate continues to be in close contact with the mentor she was connected with through the court program. One turning point graduate recalls enjoying a weekly group specifically for the girls in the court program:

There was a woman's group so all the girls in drug court and all the... women that work there too like once a week or every other week we'd have women's group where we'd all sit around and have snacks and just talk about things. And that was really cool. I liked it. They should have done it for

the guys but they figured that they guys wouldn't have been into it as the girls were. Like we went out to eat sometimes and, I don't know, it was fun. I liked it.

Briane, JD, Court B, Graduate, Turning point

Matt is a phase 3 turning point youth who made the choice to enter the court program because he wanted to change. He recalled smoking marijuana all day, every day, selling drugs, and hanging out with people who robbed houses. He recalled, "The reason I got drug court is because I smoked marijuana. I smoked too much. I have been smoking since I was nine. I'd wake up smoking smoke all day, before I go to sleep, smoke and then go to sleep I sometimes I even wake up and I still feel like I'm high. It's like whoa. ...I'd smoke 15 20 times a day. But now, I don't even want to smell that stuff." Matt has been clean for a year and describes his life now:

I know who's the right people, who are the wrong people, who are the losers, who's the crack heads, all that stuff. Cause I used to.. hang out with the wrong people. But now I stopped now. I really don't hang out with no one. I'm all about my family, my girlfriend, and work.

Matt, JD, Court C, Phase 3, Turning point

Matt told his mother "I gotta stop [using drugs]. I don't want to be a loser for the rest of my life. Like everybody else in this town...I choose to stop using drugs. To stop hanging out with people I hang out to people I hang out with. Stop doing all the bad things and start doing the right things. Start working, get a job." As part of the court program, the judge required that Matt go to school. He explained to the judge that he gets into fights at school. The judge allowed him to drop out of school and pursue a General Equivalency Diploma. Matt has not had any violations while he has been in the court program. He says, "Not once. I never got in trouble. I never violated not once since I've been on this and I'm the only kid for 2004 to 2005 that has not violated for a whole year." Matt credits his

relationship with his mother and non-drug using girlfriend of one year for his turnaround. He says, “My mom helped me a lot....we would do a lot more stuff together that we normally do. I’d go help her. And my girlfriend helped me a lot. She kept me out of trouble. Instead of going hang out with my friends, I hung out with my girlfriend instead, which is much better.” He says that he gets along better with his parents, his girlfriend and his whole family. He says, “Because everybody thought I was a loser but now everybody’s like lets hang out with [youth name].”

Reluctant complier youth did not increase the size of their prosocial network while in the court program. Active resisters tended to not be involved in any activities. In fact, several said that they “sit at home and do nothing all day.” One active resister was home with nothing to do because he was expelled from school and had not been accepted into an alternative school yet. In addition, he did not have health insurance coverage for substance abuse treatment and there was a time delay in getting Medicaid approval. Since many were in Phase One, many active resisters are on house arrest - they are only allowed to leave home in the company of a parent or guardian and their movements are monitored by probation officers. The active resisters had little to no opportunities for interactional commitment to develop.

Some of the turning point youth were placed in residential substance abuse facilities by the Juvenile Treatment Court program. Most said that they liked the structure of the residence, learned a lot about themselves and their use of drugs and alcohol, and they formed close bonds with both staff and residents. Some expanded their prosocial network by forming friendships with other youth there. One of the interviewed youth got close to the family of another resident at the residence and ultimately moved in with them as a foster family when he left. He expressed appreciation that the Juvenile Treatment Court judge allowed him to move in with this new family. He said that he is very close to them, particularly

the mother of his friend. He thinks of them as family and told me that he is excited to be going on vacation to Disneyland with them over the summer.

Role of Peer Networks in Delinquency

A common adage within the chemical abuse treatment field is that in order to achieve and maintain sobriety, an individual must “change people, places and things.” That is, to avoid environmental cues that may initiate relapse. How does this adage apply to adolescents in Juvenile Treatment Court settings?

Adults have the autonomy to change living location, jobs and communities. Adolescents have little, if any, control over where they live and go to school. The role of peers is different for adolescents than it is for adults. Adolescents spend much time with their friends, attribute great importance to them, and are more strongly influenced by them during this period than at any other time in the life course (Brown, 1990).

Studies have consistently found that the delinquency of a person’s friends is among the strongest correlates of his or her own delinquent behavior (Glueck & Glueck, 1950; Haynie, 2001; Warr, 1993). Delinquent peers have been implicated in initial use of drugs in preteens, with curiosity, external influences and a desire to conform interacting in a complex dynamic (McIntosh, et al., 2003). Affiliation with deviant peers has also been shown to predict the development of substance use disorders (Moss, Lynch, and Hardie, 2003). Social pressure from peers, along with withdrawal and negative affect, has been found to play a role in relapse after treatment, with close to two thirds of adolescents relapsing within six months of discharge (Cornelius et al., 2003). In contrast, Bauman & Ennett (1996) recommend a “more critical look at the power of peer influence” (p. 194), suggesting that peer influence plays a more limited role in adolescent drug use and that selection and influence make equal contributions to drug behavior homogeneity of peer groups.

During the transition into adolescence, adolescents spend increasing amounts of time alone and with friends, and there is a dramatic drop in time adolescents spend with their parents (Larson & Richards, 1991). Adolescents choose friends with similar behaviors, attitudes, and identities (Akers, et al 1998, Hogue & Steinberg, 1995), and peers are considered to be among the strongest proximal influences of substance abuse (Fite, et al., 2006).

Youth described a variety of reasons for using drugs and/or alcohol, including to cope with family strife and relationship problems, to cope with negative feelings after being physically hit by a parent, to make them feel better, as a stress reliever, as a form of self-medication to relax them so they could concentrate in school, and the enjoyment of the feeling of being high. Although all of the youth participants in Courts A, B and C met the programs eligibility requirements of drug and/or alcohol use or abuse, not all youth considered themselves chemically addicted. Active resister youth did not believe that they had any problem with drugs or alcohol. In fact, they did not believe that there is anything wrong with using drugs.

Linden & Hackler (1973) found that delinquents may have the same beliefs as do conventional adolescents, but that contact with deviant peers might make delinquency involvement more likely among those who have only weak ties to the conventional order, one of the factors conducive to delinquency involvement is attachment to deviant peers. For the adolescent who does not have strong ties to the conventional order, ties to deviant peers may facilitate involvement in delinquency.

Several noteworthy themes regarding Juvenile Treatment Court participant peer group interactions emerged from the youth narratives, but the most prevalent theme was frequent community exposure to drugs and/or alcohol. For some abstaining youth, severing deviant network ties and establishing new, non-drug using peer groups supported abstention efforts. However, abstinence

reinforcement also emerged in the form of youth perceptions of protective functions of drug using peers. Youth described several types of social network relationships, from emotionally close friendships to superficial, acquaintance “clique” groups.

Role of Peer Networks

Although Juvenile Treatment Courts receive detailed reports on youth behavior in their major life domains – home, school and treatment, they do not inquire or receive information on youth peer group networks. This lack of emphasis on youth social networks is intriguing because youth describe first using drugs and alcohol while with members of their social network. They also report that they are with their friends when they relapse. House arrest is the closest form of monitoring of social networks, but some youth reported ways in which they got around house arrest, sometimes with parent complicity.

Peer Influence: Exposure to drugs and alcohol

All but 15 interviewed youth reported opportunities to use illegal drugs by spending time with drug using peers throughout their participation in the court program. When abstaining youth were asked if it was hard to maintain sobriety, many indicated that it was hard for them at first because they were frequently exposed to drugs and alcohol. As one youth said:

Interviewer: Was it hard being clean, getting clean?

Youth: At first, just because all my friends were using.

Some youth described continued involvement with pre-treatment friendship networks with drug using peers. This reported abstinence in the face of frequent exposure to drug and alcohol use by friends suggests that youth select and maintain peer networks on the basis of other factors than solely shared drug and alcohol use.

Intuitively, the Juvenile Treatment Court setting should provide a ready-made sober support group for participants because they are all under the same court mandated expectation of abstinence. Seven interviewed youth provided unsolicited comments regarding other court program participants, indicating a suspiciousness of others' motivation to abstain from drugs and alcohol, commenting "Cause I like I know a lot of kids who just are in this just to get it over with," and "A lot of them there like pretend that they're gonna stop doing drugs and stuff like that and then they like really do coke like half the week and stuff like that." One turning point participant spoke about others who cheat drug tests, saying:

There are a lot of people who are on drug court who cheat on their tests, who drink every night or something and just don't drink before they come to court or something...there's always going to be people who try and cheat the system and stuff.

A reluctant complier graduate reflected, "They were all still getting high. The kids that I knew that were in it, they were all still doing their thing, on the low." One youth, who graduated from the court program one week previous to the interview, shared his expectation that many youth graduating from the program go on to use drugs again. He said, "I guarantee you at least fifty percent of those kids [graduated] already used since a week ago...a kid right next to me was like 'yeah, I'm smoking tonight.' Right after he graduates, and I'm just like 'what an idiot.'" Another youth, about to graduate and who had no violations throughout the court program, conspiratorially shared with the interviewer the secret to cheating drug tests, saying:

Honestly, I gotta tell the truth, alright? Going to court every three weeks, ok, you know a lot of kids could just smoke weed and come back clean. All they have to do its smoke as soon as they get out of court that night. They could probably do some the

next day too and be able to come back dry as a bone.

Sam, JD, Phase 2, Reluctant complier, Court A

He believes that “there was a little bit of an addiction.” He described smoking weed, drinking a lot, taking pills, cocaine and smoking weed laced with coke “all the time.” He still has a hard time seeing someone drinking alcohol, saying, “it’s hard, but I’m pretty much content not to do it anymore, but like you know it’s still, you feel the urge to do it just to let go it’s kind of an escape so you know when things are rough you know it’s real easy to say ‘Fuck it’ you know.” After being clean for one year, James relapsed. He attributes his relapse to spending time with friends who use drugs. He explained:

Interviewer: So do you have a new group of friends that you hang out with now?

Youth: Ah, not now. I don’t really I mean I got a new group of friends but they’re (laughing) also like the bad crowd and I ended up getting into more trouble after drug court... then started drinking again here and there with this one kid who was going to drug court and...we got into so many drugs and we came back and got into more trouble. ...I need to remember what I learned just stay away from the bad crowds and try and you know try and stand on your own two feet instead of relying on friends for a while and rely on family.

James, Court B, Reluctant Complier Graduate

Severing Ties with Drug Using Peer Network

Of the 37 interviewed youth, 14 made the conscious decision to sever ties with drug using peers altogether, citing reasons including not wanting to get into any more trouble, not wanting to jeopardize their own recovery, and the conscious recognition of the destructive role peer drug use has on their own recovery. Some youth said that they “cut off whole groups of people” to reduce the

temptation to relapse and others shared that they severed ties because they no longer wanted to belong to a deviant peer group.

One turning point youth agreed with her mother's sentiment that she "was with the wrong people." She said that although she still sees the people that she used to do drugs with, she doesn't spend time with them. Rather, she spends her time with non-drug using friends. She explained her decision to sever ties: "Well, it's just easy because, I don't know, I just don't want to do it no more -I don't want to get in trouble." Another turning point youth shared concerns about getting into trouble by being with friends who use alcohol and other drugs. He said:

I already had my strikes, I'm already in trouble. I can't afford to get in trouble again. I don't want to say you know the friends I chose to have are bad but you know everybody has you know knows somebody that's a little wild, you know...because the people you surround yourself by, you know, rub off on you so. Just stick to myself and if I do you know like I'll talk you know, I mean I do associate myself with them, but not like how I used to.

Carlos, a turning point graduate sober for one year, said, "I always had friends. I just hung out with the wrong crowd you know? Sooner or later you're going to start doing what they're doing. Just a matter of time." One youth shared that he "made connections for drugs while I was in detention." Another abstaining youth, whose mother moved to a new community while she was in a substance abuse rehabilitation facility, expressed her fear of relapsing if she continued to interact with her pre-treatment social network. She said:

Like it's really hard to make new friends and stuff but it was good because it got me away from people that I got in trouble with, because I know if I was back home hanging out with the old people, I'd probably get talked into going shoplifting or drink or something like that.

Debra, Phase 2, PINS, Court A, Turning point

Abstaining youth who severed ties with pre-treatment peer groups described them as “using me for drugs,” and described those relationships as “acquaintances” rather than “friends.” These relationships were not based on mutual caring. Youth said that those friends “don’t care” if they do drugs or not. A reluctant complier said that his friends are “more like acquaintances.” When asked what he thought he needed to do to stay clean, one youth struggling with sobriety recognized that he needed to sever ties with delinquent peers who he believed did not have his best interests in mind. He explained:

Youth: Stay away from my friends no matter how much you know I want to hang out with them or talk to them or whatever. If I need friends here I got to find new ones. I can’t be hanging out with the same people or else I’m going to be dragged back in.

Interviewer: Do the friends that you hang out with now, do they know you are trying to stay clean?

Youth: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do they care? I mean, do they still smoke in front of you?

Youth: Well, I don’t go around them anymore. They would be, they would be smoking in front of me.

Interviewer: They would smoke in front of you.

Youth: Yeah. So, they’re not really friends.

Selecting New Peer Group

Nine of the interviewed youth severed ties with their former drug using peer networks and established new non-drug using friendships. Two youth found satisfying new peer relationships with individuals they met through AA and NA meetings. One youth explained:

Interviewer: Now the people that you started using with, are you still friends with that crowd?

Youth: No. I’m not friends with any of them...they really never even called me like when I went to rehab, you know? They really weren’t real friends.

They were just kids I got high with. You know and most of them now are doing cocaine you know they're not smoking pot anymore. And that probably would have been me if I kept going down that road...I have a lot of friends from the meetings...It's awesome. We go out to dinner, go out to eat you know my friend [from the meetings] has a Mustang...We have fun in it.

Carlos, PINS, Court C, Graduate, Turning point

One youth explained her expectation that her new peer group would disapprove of her using drugs. Implicit in her statement was the belief that her new friends would have her best interest in mind. She said:

So I don't hang out with people that I know are going to influence me in a bad way. I mean any of my friends, if they even found out that I smoked weed right now they wouldn't even talk to me. Because they know what kind of situation I'm in.

Several youth expressed direct assertiveness when confronted with peers offering them drugs or alcohol. One youth told peers, "No, man, I don't do that shit." Another youth described assertiveness by making sure that "When I want to date a guy I make sure they're not doing drugs. I don't care if it's smoking weed or drinking everyday." Many described finding new non-drug using friendship networks in which they spend time doing enjoyable non-drug using activities.

Nature of Peer Relationships

While those abstaining youth who severed prior relationships described these as superficial acquaintances based on mutual drug and alcohol use, youth who made the conscious decision to maintain pre-treatment social networks described those relationships as "tight," "caring," and "best friends." One youth in Phase Two of the court program said that it's "a little bit hard" for him to stay clean. He shares that he got into legal trouble when he and his friend were caught with a

large amount of marijuana and a scale. He differentiates between close friends and acquaintances, saying:

Interviewer: Are you still friends with folks you hung out with at that time or no?

Youth: Yeah. They tell me I'm not supposed to, but those are my friends. I only got like two good friends I consider, or everybody else I don't care about. ...And then, then a lot of people that I hang out with. I know, I know a lot of people. I don't consider them friends.

Other youth described protective emotionally close dyads, such as a romantic partner or "best friend" who does not use drugs or alcohol, as integral to the maintenance of their sobriety.

I had more groups of friends than pretty much anybody I know. I hung out with this group, I hung out with that group, and I hung out with every group of people. So I just stopped that. Pretty much the only people I hang out with is my girlfriend and my best friend that lives next door. We have been friends since we were kids little kids. We lived next door to each other my whole life and his whole life.

One youth explained that her best friend warns her not to use drugs or alcohol, saying:

My best friend...she doesn't do drugs and before she used to be like "You're gonna go to jail, get sent away again." Like she's always been there like she's a big sister kinda like, looking out for me. So and like a few weeks ago we were watching a football game at her friends house and everybody was around us smoking weed and stuff, and [she] doesn't smoke weed and she was like "you guys, can you guys go smoke weed in the next room so we can watch the game, You know?" she's like "[She] doesn't want to be around this, I don't want to be around this" so then they... like she's looking out for me all the time. She's a good friend.

Retaining Drug Using Acquaintance Groups

Five youth stated that although it was recommended that they change their friends, they made the decision to retain those friendships, believing that their peer networks were ‘protective’ of them. One youth who graduated from the court program said:

Interviewer: Was it hard being clean, getting clean?

Youth: At first, just because all my friends were using and I refused, I totally refused to change my friends. But the whole time, the whole time I was clean, it was hard at first but after like about the first month I was fine. I didn’t care...cause like in treatment they try, they suggest you change like the places you go to and you change your friends and all that but I wouldn’t change my friends because I didn’t feel like I should have to you know I didn’t want to change everything. I changed parts of my lifestyle like my behavior but I just I couldn’t leave my friends cause they’re a part of the reason, you know people who were helping me. Yes, they were using but like they would go into a different room or they would like, they were proud of me I could tell they were proud of me even though they were still using.

Youth believe that their drug using friends supported their efforts toward sobriety and engaged in physical, cognitive and emotional ‘protections.’ Youth understood peer behaviors as protective when friends announced their intention to use drugs, thus giving the youth a warning and the opportunity to remove themselves and by stating their intention to leave the area themselves to use drugs with the expectation that they youth would not join them. Some youth expressed the expectation that ‘protective’ friends would verbally warn them not to use drugs and remind them of the severe consequences they would receive as a Juvenile Treatment Court program participant.

Briane reported that she was 'clean' throughout her involvement in the court program despite being exposed to drugs through her peer network. When asked if it was hard for her to stop using, she says, "At first, just because all my friends were using." Her treatment program suggested that she change places she goes to and her friends, but "I refused, I totally refused to change my friends." She says, "I didn't want to change everything. I changed parts of my lifestyle like my behavior but I just I couldn't leave my friends cause they're a part of the reason, you know people who were helping me." She admits that her friends were using drugs, but she describes her friends being 'protective' of her recovery by going into a different room to use drugs. Interestingly, Briane says, "they were proud of me I could tell they were proud of me even though they were still using... they'd like brag to other people how long I'd been clean for and that kind of stuff and so like they made me feel good." Another youth shared:

Most of them, mostly everybody I hang with now, they all know, like they be telling me, like before when I was like lying and smoking and stuff, they was telling me like, 'Man you gonna get in trouble, you better stop.' Then like the people I hang with now but like the people that was smoking with me while I was on probation I don't hang with them no more because they knew I was on probation but they were still you know [smoking with me].

Charlie, the young man who was terminated from the court program and has since maintained two years of sobriety described stopping by the park to say hello to long-time drug using friends "like cause we all, all grew up friends, we best friends, like we all grew up together." He reported that when his friends go to smoke marijuana, they let him know first. When asked if his friends know that he's being trying to get clean, he said:

They used to like, have like help me strive for... Like when they smoke they'd be like, 'we about to go outside and smoke' they'll leave or something

like that, like `we going around the corner to go smoke' and I be like all right...when I be like I wanna come with them. They be like nah man... [my parents] thinks that my friends like pulling me into doing negative stuff. And they're not. They like, they keep me out of most of this stuff that I should be getting in trouble for.

Severing Ties: Changing Schools

Most of the interviewed youth experienced either academic failure, chronic suspensions or had school-initiated PINS petitions for chronic truancy. Several described being held back from school for one or more years and others had been expelled from school altogether. One youth describes his history of school suspensions:

I'd get suspended for stupid stuff, talking back to teachers and stuff, stupid stuff, getting in trouble all the time. Every time I went back to school from a suspension, I'd be there for like two days and get suspended again.

Other youth described feeling unsafe at school, citing episodes of bullying and fighting among students. One youth said, "I almost fought like 30 kids already and there's this one kid that really wants to fight me now." Another described being kicked out of her school district for excessive tardiness and excessive unexcused absences, saying "I got kicked out of my district. ...I never went, or I went to school and never went to class and I'd leave like right after lunch and go to the mall or something. I never wanted to be there. I go to [alternative school] now."

Recognizing that many youth had poor academic histories and even worse behavioral histories at their school of origin, the court program facilitated a transfer to a new school for several youth. This provided the opportunity to sever

negative ties with other pupils, teachers, administrators and security personnel who identified them as delinquents.

Several youth said that even if they tried hard in school, their reputations as “troublemakers” preceded them, resulting in them feeling like they didn’t have a chance to succeed in the school environment. One youth said “The teachers, administration, security, everyone that went there just looked at me as a troublemaker.” Describing the personnel at her former school, one youth said, “Oh they hated me. They called me the wanderer because I was never in class and nobody could ever find me if they needed to.” She transferred to an alternative school and says that she has formed a bond with the new school’s guidance counselor. She says, “I have my school counselor that I tell everything to and I live in her office.”

The change in schools increased youth interactional commitment to a prosocial identity by increasing the size of the interpersonal network, describing new non-deviant friendships and liking their new teachers.

Turning point youth described new, or renegotiated, close emotional bonds with a non-deviant close friend while; others described developing emotionally close, honest and trusting relationships with parents. When asked who their cheerleader was as they went through the program, the majority of turning point youth named their mother, other family members, the judge, treatment and court staff as well as friends. Many named more than two cheerleaders in their lives. Amy, a turning point youth in Phase 2, says of her treatment counselor, “I don’t know if I want to end it or not because I just like to go (laughs). I like my counselor she’s a sweetheart and there’s not that many people I like but she’s a sweetheart.”

Reluctant complier and active resister youth did not describe emotionally close relationships related to their prosocial identity. In fact, when one reluctant

complier was asked who her cheerleader was as she went through the program, she named only herself.

VII. Increased affective commitment to one or more relevant and meaningful prosocial others.

Turning point youth described forming affective bonds with prosocial others through participation in the court program. Briane increased her prosocial network and formed affective bonds with court program staff. She says, “Everyone in drug court was extremely nice and I made friends and I had a good time. I didn’t mind ever going, never minded going.” Briane shares that the courts’ adventure based program was “a lot of fun.” She names a court program staff as her cheerleader, saying:

Me and her got really close too and she set me up with a mentor and everything so like I was just like, loved everybody there I never had a problem with any of the staff so it was good...She was always there and she was always proud of me and she always asked how my grades were, asked how things were going, asked how things were at home and...for the women’s group she always made sure I was going to women’s group so, yeah, she was my little cheerleader.

Another turning point youth developed an affective bond with the court program coordinator. He recalled going on overnight camping trips with the court program, saying, “When we was on the camping trips we’d have like Daddy to kids relationships. We’d talk, we used to talk every night like get deep with it instead of hiding your feelings and stuff you bring ‘em up. We’d really talk.” He also felt close to the other youth in the program. He recalled “It felt like they was my relatives. Like brothers and sisters. Look over you make sure you’re doing the right thing because when I was out there by myself I wasn’t going to school or nothing like that.”

One of the court programs collaborated with a community mentoring agency to provide adult prosocial role models for Juvenile Treatment Court participants. These youth described forming close emotional bonds with their mentors. The Juvenile Treatment Court program matched Jessica with a mentor with whom she is still in contact with. Jessica developed an affective bond with her mentor. She says, “Like the person I had I got really close with her and I still keep in contact with her cause she moved to Ohio a little while ago but she writes I write her back.”

A critical difference between active resister, reluctant complier and turning point youth was their sentiments regarding the judge. When asked if they felt that the judge knew them – not just their names, but the “real” them, active resisters unequivocally said ‘No.’ One thought that judge saw too many youth on his caseload to be able to know him personally, while others thought that the judge fundamentally did not care about what happens to them. In contrast, Matt, a turning point youth, felt that the judge really knew him. He says:

Yes. [The judge] very really knows me, I know him personally. I hung out with the man for a day...the judge he used to referee. And he asked me to come play on their team...He picked me up from my house...I played basketball for the day. Then we got tickets and watched the [local baseball team] right behind the behind the court house. He picked me up and my girlfriend...I never did anything bad. I never violated. I never said anything wrong. I guess it was a great relationship between me and him. It's been great for the past year.

Matt, JD, Court C, Phase 3, Turning point

Rachel, an active resister in phase 1, does not believe that the judge knows her, saying “He just assumes that he knows everything, but he really doesn't.” Matt described his experiences with substance abuse treatment, saying:

It didn't really do much. It was just very boring. It wasn't exciting, it didn't really, if anything it

wanted made me smoke more...It just, it would be more boring and when I first started I just wanted to smoke. This is so retarded. I just want to sit in my house, smoke weed, and play Playstation. And go play cards or do whatever. I don't want to be here.

Matt, JD, Court C, Phase 3, Turning point

Matt felt that the court program truly cared about him. He says: "They definitely did. Every time I come in there they always said hi and they really care, I think they cared a lot that I was actually doing what I had to do. And they didn't see me want to get in trouble." Amy, a turning point youth in phase 2, says:

It's not a bad, it's not bad, it's good. All the people here are nice and they help you out like they don't like you can you can tell when someone's trying to hate on you or when somebody is just there to help you and they're just here to help you can really tell that.

Amy, JD, Phase 2, Turning point, Court A

VIII. Reflected appraisals in the form of rewards for behavior enacted while in the prosocial identity.

Court programs have wide discretion in determining how, if at all, youth behavior changes are recognized and reinforced. The decision, in part, is determined by the types of prosocial behavior that the youth demonstrates, such as school attendance and participation, respecting the rules at home, and abstinence from drugs and alcohol.

The types of rewards that Juvenile Treatment Court programs use can include tangible rewards such as t-shirts, gift certificates, and small gifts such as a journal or a basketball. Other rewards include verbal praise and applause from the judge and court staff. Interviewed youth spoke about rewards in terms of getting more freedom back by having a later curfew, removal of their electronic monitoring anklet, having to come to court less frequently, and advancement to the program's

next Phase. Since rewards are perceived as earning freedom back, youth translate this into the court trusting them.

The court's positive evaluation of youth while performing in a prosocial identity serves to motivate youth to increase the salience of the prosocial identity. Reliance on the positive evaluations of relevant and significant others serves to motivate youth to continue to perform in the prosocial role. Ellen explains the effect of positive appraisals on her motivation to continue to do well. She reflects:

I think they're (rewards) important...I think it's good because if you're doing good you should be getting ...rewards because it makes kids feel good about... that if they do good and you show no interest in them doing good then they're like 'What the hells the point?' Like no one even is happy with me doing good like what's the point, you know? ...But when I go in there and I'm doing good and like last time when I got clapped for and everything, seeing my parents smile and stuff like that makes me feel good so it makes me want to keep up the good work you know?

Another youth explained that while the tangible rewards are appreciated, the reflected appraisal from the judge and court staff are more important to him. He describes what it is like for him to experience a positive reflected appraisal when he had few other similar appraisals in his life. He explains:

Well, they [rewards] really is materialistic things I mean it is, it makes me feel happy but all I really want is you know the rewards is good but for me really it's not the uhm rewards that really count. It's the words. The encouragement....It make you feel like for some kids that parents have been on drugs its like it makes you feel like it feels like that little missing spot inside because your parents you know your parents on drugs they don't really tell you yeah, you're doing good in school, I love your report card, here's your reward for this, here's your

reward for that. You know stuff like that and its like when they do it its like you would have expected your parents to have them did it so its just like that little empty space is filled now. It make you feel joyful.

Jessica was surprised when the judge came to her graduation from the residential substance abuse treatment program. She says, “He was like “So am I going to your graduation at Park Ridge?” And I’m like ‘Sure.’ He came, brought me a book and everything and talked for like ten minutes so it was nice. And he talked to me afterwards and just said you know come by drug court anytime you want and it’ll be a good influence on the kids there cause a lot of them I know you know.” She explains her perception of how the judge treated her, saying:

I can say for me he respected me. He never said anything that was disrespectful or you know. He never talked down to anyone it seemed like he had his moments you know where he had to be the tough judge and say you know you can’t do this anymore, you’re being sent to this place or that place because you can’t do it on your own. But other than that he was just a good guy. If you followed the rules he would you know grant you with things kind of like he would give you a gift certificate or a t-shirt.

Jessica had a close relationship with her Juvenile Treatment Court program case manager and shares a story about receiving a “reward” when she graduated from her treatment program. Jessica recalls, “She would you know give me things she’d be well I just happened to find this \$40 gift certificate to this hair place.”

IX. Re-definition of ‘Other’ to perceiving them as caring and trying to help them.

“Preliminary to any self-determined act of behavior there is always a stage of examination and deliberation which we may call the ‘definition of the

situation.’ And actually not only concrete acts are dependent on the definition of the situation, but gradually a whole life-policy and the personality of the individual himself follow from a series of such definitions” (W.I. Thomas, 1923). Heise (2007) suggests that “situations are defined” by the individual’s perception of (1) time – scheduled allocations of time to specific institutions; (2) the physical setting- designated places where the institutions activities properly occur; (3) selves- the individual’s self-sentiment; and (4) attributing traits to others in the situation – characteristics that they have” (Heise, 2007).

As previously discussed, most Juvenile Treatment Court youth enter the program perceiving that the court program is adversarial. Turning point youth re-defined the court program from adversarial to perceiving the judge and court staff as caring about them. Reluctant compliers did not re-define the situation. One turning point youth described his attitude as “I don’t want to be forced to do anything, hostile stage.” When the court program “forced me to be in rehab, forced me to be in probation, it was hard for me.” He complied because he wanted to stay out of jail. He says that he believes that the court program was “helpful” when he started to talk, saying “they were able to help me more.”

Turning point youth described the judge’s interaction style as “caring.” Ryan has conversations with the judge “if everything’s going good and there’s nothing to be worried about...small talk, something like that, you know, we would give him conversations.” In response to the question of whether or not Ryan thinks that the judge cares about him, he said:

Yeah, it’s not like ‘Oh, I’m the judge and if you screw up I’m going to do this. You know, he’ll try to work with you; he seems like he cares like, what happens to you and stuff like that.

In contrast, John, a reluctant complier, does not see the court program as a potential source of help for him. He says:

In the past, like the consequences got me going for a little bit, but then I just said screw it, I smoked and got in trouble, but, its not really like they do anything. I mean they do but they don't I mean I just come down here, take a drug test, go see the judge and leave.

John, JD, Phase 1, Reluctant complier, Court A,

The theme of interacting with youth in a prosocial, encouraging and caring manner dominated many turning point youth interviews. In other words, they redefined the judge from an adversarial and disciplinarian role to a helping and caring role. According to youth narratives, the redefinition was achieved by the way in which the judge treated them – including dispensing consequences as well as rewards. The judge did not treat them like they were bad, or as juvenile delinquents, but rather with respect and caring jurisprudence. One turning point youth said:

I: Do you feel like the judge knew you...not just a young woman, but the person that you are?

R: Yeah, I think so. I think that's probably why he was so strict with me

Debra, a turning point youth in phase 2, says “So you know the way the judge interacted with me, he gave me those chances...put a hand out to me almost to give... to help me.” Despite at first expecting the judge to treat her like “scum,” she changed her definition of him. She explains, “he [the judge] was just a good guy and you know I started to have respect for him and the people who worked with me through drug court and even when I started messing up and everything I knew I was changing like cause I started to see I can't do this cause its wrong because you know I would think about drug court and you know I don't want to be remanded to detention.” Similarly, Jessica, a turning point graduate, says that the court staff was always respectful to her, but firm in setting expectations and administering consequences. She says:

They were respectful...if you respect them they'll respect you but if you're you know breaking the rules they're going to treat you like you're breaking the rules- not look down upon you but say well these are your options I hope you learn from this and I mean they try to they're not in some court the judge I had before [this Judge] she was kind of the type to look down upon you like you're scum because you're in court. [My Judge] is a good guy. I can say that he is a great guy and if it wasn't for drug court I don't know where I'd be.

Jessica, PINS, Turning Point, Graduate, Court B

Turning point youth described re-defining the judge after he interacted with them in unexpected ways. When youth were asked about the judge, some described sharing non-traditional out-of-court time with the judge. For example, one judge invited a youth to a baseball game, another to a concert and another judge attended a youth's graduation from a substance abuse rehabilitation program –bringing her a book as a gift. Debra commented on seeing her judge outside of the court environment. She says:

Interviewer: Do you think that the judge really got to know you?

Youth: Uh-huh. Yeah, definitely cause like I don't know he wouldn't be just like OK is she doing good and then just like talk to me you know what I mean like how are you and then like when we were at the Adventure based program he would come over and talk to everybody and say hi to everybody. Like the first time I went there he came over and shook my hand and was like good job because we had a rock climbing thing so I love the judge too I never had a problem with him ever. And I was glad he was my judge. So it was good.

Debra, JD, Phase 2, Turning point, Court A

Alex also interacted with the judge in a non-traditional setting. He describes his perspective on the judge:

It's I don't know it's fun, I feel like me and the judge has got a good relationship so, yeah, its fun going up there cause he jokes with me and stuff like that I feel like we got a good relationship. I feel like cause it feels like even though he's a judge it feels like more on a personal level because I've seen him outside of court, like I've seen him at like these shows or whatever. Like I sat next to him at like this like musical, it was last Christmas and it was like downtown somewhere at the theatre I think it was and I sat next to him and his wife. I met his wife and everything so I felt like we got a pretty good relationship. And he buys me stuff, like he bought me a CD.

Alex, JD, Phase 1, Turning Point, Court B

Interacting with the judge in a non-traditional way was powerful for reluctant compliers as well. Rick, who believes that the judge knows him and cares about him “maybe a little bit,” describes the unexpectedness of seeing the judge walking around the courtroom. He recalls his reaction to seeing the judge in his ‘regular clothes.’ He says:

Youth: They had they had like a like a party one time like food and stuff in the court room and he was walking around in his regular clothes, talking to people. That was pretty weird.

Interviewer: What was weird about it?

Youth: It's the judge in the courtroom that I came in so many times with shackles and stuff.

One turning point youth said, “When I first went into the drug court its like every time he (the judge) called my name, my heart would just drop. Now I just be waiting for him to call my name.” He explains how he used to “look at it like man, they just doing it to get money off me.” He came to realize that they were “doing it to keep me out of trouble.” He began to realize that they “try to help you

get a job and stuff, talk to you, put you on programs and stuff if you need it.” He realizes that he was in trouble and that they “looked at me as a kid that needed help, needed to be listened to and they did whatever was needed to help me out.”

Nearly all of the turning point youth did believe that the judge got to know the “real” them; those that did not indicated that they had formed a close bond with another prosocial adult. Another judge interacted with youth at an adventure based program.

Youth: Ah, man it’s crazy now cuz I’ll be joking with the judge. The judge be joking with me it seems like I’m not cuz how I learned from my experiences and like now how I talk to people and stuff like when I go into court now it’s now like even I having court it’s like a meeting or something like that where we just talk, talk and see if I got any problems that goes quick cuz I ain’t having none right now, some minor stuff but nothing for me to bug out over. But like now we just like joke most like half of the time in the court room cuz like me and the judge got so close cuz me doing good and trying and stuff so.

Interviewer: So you feel like the judge knows who you are?

Youth: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you feel like he really knows who the person that you are?

Youth: Yeah, yeah, I think he know the real me now.

Interviewer: How do you think he had the opportunity to learn who the real you was and is?

Youth: By me coming down here, talking about my problems and him helping me with them and seeing how I reacted to the advice. That’s about it.

One turning point youth explained that the caring people that she had around her contributed to her success, saying, “I had people around me who I knew cared

about me...friends, people I can trust and I can confide in. Just the fact that the people I met throughout the whole thing and the fact that I like stuck to it.”

Carlos, a turning point graduate from Court C explained that the court program is stressful, but that “they help... [court case manager] he just tried to keep me in line and he helped, you know?”

Interviewed youth described how their affective bond with the judge developed over time. Kelvin, a turning point youth about to graduate from the court program expressed sadness at the prospect of the court program not being a part of his life anymore. He said:

I feel like I feel like I know my judge like a dad almost. It's like because I've been seeing him for the past like year and a half and it's like drug court becomes like a part of your life. It's not like court for me anymore. Like not having drug court's going to be kind of weird, like I'm going to be like 'Wow I don't have to go back,' you know, it's going to be like in a way you're going to miss it because it's kind of that sounds kind of weird because it's like why would I miss drug court but in a way you are because your kind of like 'Wow I'm never going to have to come here again.'

When I asked if he could get support from the court program since he is a graduate, he says, “They're there to help you. They're not there to punish you know they're so I'm sure they would help me.” James explained that the Juvenile Treatment Court program saw him as a person in trouble, rather than as “bad.” He explains:

Drug court just knew that I was in trouble and that I was going to lock up or doing this and you know that's criminal stuff and they looked at me as a kid that needed help you know and needed to be listened to and you know they did whatever was needed to help me out.

Debra relates her own behavior toward the judge to how she believes that the judge thinks that she is doing. She says, “When I went to court before, I looked down the whole time. Now that I’m doing good, I joke with the judge, there’s smile and congratulations.” Debra has re-defined the judge’s identity into a person who cares about her. She says:

I got in trouble and he called for a meeting in the back with me, him, and my law guardian but he just talked like regular people and it really like showed me that he cared one, and that he really knew who I was. He knew where I was coming from because he’s been doing it for a while and what he said to me one thing is I just want to, he goes, I consider everyone of my children, I just want to be able to help you, I want to hear you come back to me, how you have a family one day and you know your doing alright. And that meant a lot to me. It was good.

Matt, a turning point youth in Phase 3 described being invited to a baseball game with the judge, and that the judge picked him and his girlfriend up to attend the game. He felt that the entire court team cared about him, saying “they definitely did. Every time I come in there they always said hi and they really care, I think they cared a lot that I was actually doing what I had to do. And they didn’t see me want to get in trouble.”

John, a reluctant complier, believes that the judge doesn’t really know him because the judge “goes through so many people.” When I asked him if he would feel better about the court if he felt that the judge really knew him, he said, “Uh-huh. I mean, the only time he sees me is when I go to court. He doesn’t know me outside of court.”

James believes that the Judge knows him personally and that the judge personalizes his interactions with youth. He says that the judge asks personal questions and that the judge knew that he liked the Yankees baseball team. The

judge would talk about how the team was doing and about the last game played. When the judge learned that he was trying to quit smoking cigarettes, the judge “set me up through this program with this guy who you know helps you quit or whatever and he got me some tobacco lies football.” When I asked James how he thought the judge would describe him, he said, “He knows the kids. He’d probably say like I’m somewhat of a shy person reserved and you know I can be content but I can also be really lax and stuff. He’d say I’m a good kid.”

Ellen is a reluctant complier who shares her thoughts about the judge who gave her a second chance. She says:

I was supposed to go upstate for like two years. Then he [judge] gave me a, I mean I really respect Judge -- a lot. I think he’s a really good judge because he’s hard but he does the right thing, like if he sees that you really can turn around, it think he gives you like, he gets you right to the point where like he knows where like you know you’re gunna be able to do it. Like but if he sees no hope in you he’ll send you away for a long time. Like if I mess up one more time I need to go away for two years. Because if I haven’t learned my lesson now then there’s something wrong with me, you know? He gave me a lot of chances.

Lori, an active resister, suggests that she engages in impression management with the judge. When asked what it is like for her when the judge tells her that he is proud of her, she says, “kinda makes you feel happy and like, ok, now I got him on the good side.”

A barrier to re-defining the court program as caring and helpful is not getting a reward when they are told that they would get one, and they believe that they deserve one. Youth come to expect a reward for accomplishments and are disappointed when the court does not recognize when they do particularly well.

One reluctant compliant youth complained that he never got a reward from the court for getting 'the best report card ever.' He says:

Youth: I would say if I had the best grades and I've been clean, shouldn't I get a reward? Never got nothing. They said you get baseball tickets and shit like that.

Interviewer: Did you ever get anything?

Youth: Got nothing. I never heard of anybody getting anything.

X. Re-definition of 'Self' through experiencing successes while in the prosocial identity.

A dominant theme within the turning point narratives was that their interactions with others while in performing in a prosocial role led them to re-define themselves. Alex, a turning point youth, says, "The judge, he gave me so many chances and that's one thing I think about when I go up there, like he's given me so many chances I can't mess up, or why I'm not messing up."

Turning point youth described successes such as earning back parents' trust, doing better in school, talking and being more honest with a parent, earning freedoms back, being clean and sober, and getting a job. One interviewed youth said, "Now I am making something of myself." Another shared, "I got the best report card I've ever gotten." One turning point youth said that since she re-defined the judge and can now "talk to him," she re-defined herself. She explained:

Interviewer: What do you think the difference is because of?

Youth: Because I changed, I'm not like before. I used to not be home at all. I didn't have a job. I didn't go to Juvie classes or anything. No school. Like I just sat home, got in trouble, did drugs. And now I'm actually making something of myself, so then I like I can talk to them I guess.

Matsueda (1992) theorizes that self-concepts may be affected and developed through “reflected appraisals,” or perceptions of others’ attitudes toward the individual. Both Cooley’s “looking glass self” and Mead’s “self as an object” consist of actual appraisals, reflected appraisals, and self appraisals (or self-concept). Reflected appraisals may be thought of as causing self appraisals, according to Matsueda (1992), and both of these appraisals are affected by actual appraisals made by others (Brownfield & Thompson, 2005).

A dominant theme in turning point narratives was that believing that other’s were proud of them led them to re-define themselves. One youth said of his turning point - his change in behavior- “I don’t want people to not be proud of me anymore.” This sentiment was echoed by several turning point youth. One said:

Youth: Like before, when I was getting in trouble like I would sit there and like be really quite and I just looked down and now like I look all over the room and I smile and I’m like “ya im doing good” and you know like, I don’t know it’s different. Like cuz people are really proud of, I think that’s why I don’t do drugs now. Cuz like before as I don’t know why I did it before but like now like I don’t want to like make people not proud of me anymore. You know? Like I’m actually making something of myself and my mom’s finally proud of me, people around me are finally proud of me so might as well you know not do drugs.

Interviewer: Are you proud of you?

Youth: Yeah, I guess. You know? I’m getting my G.E.D I’m gunna start college, I got my first job, I’m gunna get a car soon. I’m a buy my own stuff.

Debra, Phase 2, PINS, Court A, Turning point

One youth shared the experience for him when his mother was proud of him for performing in a prosocial role. He names her as his cheerleader as he went through the program. He says:

Um, my mother. Cuz she like man she be getting happy happier then me in most of the situations and when I followed on with the phase 2 and stuff like she was just crazy happy and I was happy but not as happy as she was. So I would have to say my mom. She's always been there for me so, so got to be my mother.

Carlos, a turning point graduate, described gaining his family's trust back after a period of time of not being trusted by them. He recognizes that his family no longer sees him as a delinquent; that changes in himself lead to changes in the ways that others perceive him. He shares:

Feels really good. You know I can finally, I'm starting to get trust back and it's nice. Like my mom can leave her pocket book on the table and go up to bed knowing that I won't take it, you know? We don't fight...I'm doing what I need to do and they can't really hassle me all the time. And my family just trusts me a lot more to because I'm not doing bad things...It's a lot better because they know I'm not doing anything wrong. They can give me more freedom and stuff it's just its just more rewarding. Like they don't have to tell me to be home certain time because they know I'm not out doing anything wrong.

Carlos, PINS, Court C, Graduate, Turning point

One week after graduating from the Juvenile Treatment Court program, Carlos smiles while saying:

I'm going to get my GED in about a week or two...I'm looking at a car...Getting my license...and we just got a puppy that I love. A little Shitzuh this big.

Carlos, PINS, Court C, Graduate, Turning point

Another turning point youth commented on a better relationship with his family, saying, "My mom took it kind of hard like she wouldn't be able to deal

with a lot at a time but at times she would be like you know I'm really proud of you and this and that and my dad would take me to every meeting or whatever or wherever I needed to go and regardless of work or whatever...he wanted me to get better and everything and so he'd be there for everything and you know help me out and we kind of gained a friendship."

Matt commented that he gets along better with "my mom, my girlfriend, and my whole family. Because everybody thought I was a loser but now everybody's like let's hang out with [youth]." He continues:

They are always cheering for me. Every time I come home and I got good news, my mom hears good news. My mom tells everybody, everybody gives me...my whole family gives me a call. I'm telling you, that's great. And my girlfriend, she's always happy. I can count on my friend [name]... my girlfriends' family, they all love me. So it feels good.

Matt, JD, Court C, Phase 3, Turning point

Several interviewed youth made the point articulated by Mike's opinion. He says:

If somebody really come here and they got it on they mind that they not going to stop smoking, they not going stop smoking just because somebody threatened them with locking them up. If they really want to smoke...you can't really force nobody to do nothing.

Mike, JD, Phase 3, Turning point, Court A

XI. Self-Efficacy and Future Plans

A major difference that emerged from the narratives of interviewed youth was how they imagined their potential futures. In a study by Oyserman & Markus (1997), 13 – 16 year old adolescents were given the opportunity to generate their own expected, hoped for and feared possible selves. The more delinquent youth claimed “depressed,” “alone,” or “a junkie” as expected selves. Their fears focused on being involved in crime or drugs and their hopes ...involved relatively few mentions of school or school-related activities or alternative achievement selves such as jobs. In contrast, the non-delinquent youth generated achievement-related selves, expecting and hoping to get along in school, and fearing not getting along or failing in school” (p. 122).

In the present study, youth were asked where they saw themselves in one-year and in five years. Most turning point youth described well conceived, efficacious and hopeful future plans for themselves. Briane has specific, feasible future plans. She plans to graduate from high school, then go to college for business and open a specialty shop in a few years. Charlie, who thought that he would not graduate from high school, is applying to colleges. Interestingly, many youth expressed an interest in the helping professions, such as working with kids in trouble, social work or the criminal justice field. All interviewed youth expressed a plan to either finish high school or earn a General Equivalency Diploma, and many were interested in attending a community college after high school.

Alex, a turning point youth, is in a job readiness program where he is working on his GED and is in a job readiness program. He says that, among other occupations, he wants to be a chemical dependency counselor. Carlos, a turning point youth, said, “Hopefully I have a girl friend...have a better job than what I have now. Maybe, hopefully selling cars. I’d love to sell cars...maybe open up my own dealership one day. Take part owner of a Nissan dealership something

like that. And I want a house eventually.” Jessica, a turning point youth, said that her plans include education and employment in the criminal justice field. She says:

I know that I want to start off at a two year college because if I get a GED I have to start off at a community college but I want to go to a four year like school and I know that I kind of want to major in criminology. I don't know if that's where its going to lead me like when I start off in college or what I want to do exactly yet. Something with people though.

Jessica, PINS, Court B, Graduate, Turning Point

John, a reluctant complier, is interested in “Auto mechanics or something with computers, either one of the two.” Sam, a reluctant complier who set out to prove that he is not a “bad kid” is due to graduate from high school in one month. He plans to work and go to college to study to be a social worker “ or just a guidance counselor. Like help kids because I've been through bullshit. I can tell them, you know, and give them another point of view.”

Several reluctant compliers and active resisters expressed the hope that they will be abstinent and would not be in the court program anymore in one year, saying, “I hope I won't be in here” and “hopefully I'll be clean.” Diane, an active resister who recently AWOL'd from the treatment facility that the judge mandated her to, says:

Graduating high school, starting college maybe, clean, hopefully, I mean these are just, I don't think that far ahead. I'm wondering what I 'm going to do tomorrow, or what am I going to do today, but I don't know.

Diane, PINS, Court B, Phase 1, Active resister

Rachel, an active resister in phase 1, says “I never really thought about it.” Lori, an active resister, says, “I'm in high school still, just, I don't know. I kind

of see myself upset because I can't get a job now to save up for a car, so I'm never going to get a car. That's how I feel, but then I see myself in twelfth grade going to school and then like, walking somewhere to work. I want to be a teacher. And maybe hopefully I'll be married then."

Self-esteem is defined as "an individual's sense of his or her value or worth or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself" (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).

Harter (1990) defined self-esteem as "how much a person likes, accepts, and respects himself [sic] overall as a person" (p. 255). She presented two different theoretical views of self-esteem that both she and Rosenberg (1989) supported in their separate research. The first is from William James who viewed self-esteem as a ratio of a person's perceived success in a certain domain to the importance the person attaches to success in that domain. The second theoretical view is that of C. Horton Cooley who considered self-esteem as originating with the person's perceptions of how significant others viewed the self.

Low self-esteem has been correlated with low life satisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, resentment, irritability, and depression (Rosenberg, 1985). High self-esteem has also been correlated with academic success in high school (O'Malley & Bachman, 1979), internal locus of control, higher family income, and positive sense of self-attractiveness (Griffore, et al, 1990). Bandura (1977) argued that individuals create and develop self-perceptions of capability that become instrumental to the goals they pursue and to the control they exercise over their environments.

Member Check Focus Group: Second Cohort

Purpose. The aim of the focus group is to strengthen the validity of the interview study by soliciting feedback on the results of interviews with a second cohort of current Juvenile Treatment Court participants.

Methods

Participants. The original research protocol included a plan to solicit opinions regarding the results of interview analyses from up to 14 previously interviewed youth from Court C¹⁴. Upon completion of the qualitative data analysis, the researcher attempted to contact five previously interviewed Court C youth and found that their telephone numbers had been disconnected with no further information available. The decision was made to solicit feedback on results from a second cohort of current Juvenile Treatment Court participants in Court C. The protocol modification was submitted and approved by the Stony Brook University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CORIHS).

The court coordinator was given preferred focus group youth characteristic parameters, including both Juvenile Delinquents and Persons in Need of Supervision adjudications and youth in diverse Phases – including “beginners in Phase 1” as well as “about to graduate/Phase 3.” Youth volunteered to participate with parental permission, and thus were self-selected. In all, eight youth participated in the focus group. Of the eight, six were male. Phase distribution included 4 in Phase One and 3 in Phase Two (one did not indicate). Four participants had been in the court program for two months or less, one for five months and another for seven months. Seven were adjudicated as Juvenile Delinquents (one did not indicate); a few indicated previous adjudication as Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS). At the conclusion of the focus group,

¹⁴ Researchers chose Court C for the member check focus group because (1) geographical convenience, and (2) Court C produced the most interviewed youth and it was thought that this would increase the likelihood of securing a large number of focus group participants.

researchers provided pizza and soda as well as a \$10.00 gift card to a sporting goods store to each participant.

Setting. Weekly court appearances occur one afternoon a week. The court coordinator set aside private space in the courthouse and invited youth to volunteer to participate in the focus group after their appearance before the judge. The 4th floor conference room where the focus group was held offered ample space and privacy for the eight participants and two facilitators.

Focus Group. Parent/Guardian informed consent and youth assent was obtained prior to the focus group. Participants were informed verbally and in writing of the voluntary nature of participation and of their prerogative to not answer any questions that they did not want to answer, without being asked for their reasons. Two researchers conducted the audiotaped focus group, the author and one other member of the larger ‘best practices’ research team; the author facilitated while the other was primarily responsible for note-taking and noted the order in which participants spoke. Each researcher wore prominent name tags with the University logo in an effort to separate researchers from the court program. Participants were assured that the audiotape of the focus group would not be heard by anyone in the court program. The focus group lasted for one hour.

Participants agreed to keep comments made by other participants confidential. The researcher adopted a non-judgmental, friendly demeanor in an effort to create a safe place where participants felt at ease. Throughout the focus group, the facilitator attempted to moderate dominant participants by encouraging input by quiet participants.

The purpose of the focus group was explained and the nine theoretical statements underlying the conceptual framework were presented in easy to understand terminology. Before youth left the room, the facilitator individually handed out gift cards. The researcher asked each participant privately if the discussion during the focus group was upsetting to them in any way. None of the

youth indicated that they had been upset by the discussion. In fact, several said that it was a good experience.

Analysis. The focus group audiotape was transcribed and compared with the notes taken during the focus group. Youth statements in response to theoretical statements were summarized. The researchers drew comparisons between focus group and individual interview statements.

Results

With the exception of one individual, most youth actively participated in the group discussion. One was very quiet, several attempted to dominate by frequently interjecting personal experiences and another's input was consistently negative and, at times, distracted from the topic. Youth responses to each theoretical statement are presented below.

Many youth enter the court program committed to a delinquent identity. Although four of the participants said they had no prior contact with the juvenile justice system, several said either they were not caught or that previous contact with law enforcement did not result in a case disposition. Three youth agreed that when they first enter the court program, most kids think of themselves as delinquents, disagreeing with the statement "I am basically a good kid that just got into trouble." Two said "I didn't think I did anything wrong," inspiring another to comment "That's what they all say." Another said "I thought I just made mistakes." Later in the focus group, one youth asked "Who else feels like a failure sometimes?"

Immediately following this discussion, many youth described behaviors that resulted in legal involvement. Among these activities were robbery, robbery and assault, and one robbed a house while "drunk and high." Three were drunk and/or high when they were arrested; another tested positive at the time of arrest. One was suspected of selling drugs in school. Youth descriptions included:

~ “I used to steal from every store, I got kicked out of every store in my neighborhood and so I could never get a job in any of those stores.”

~ “I stole from my own job! I used to steal from my own cash registers.”

~ “I used to steal from my mom.”

~ “I used to steal from my friends.”

Youth define the court program as adversarial. Five of the participants agreed that the court program is not trying to help them. One said “It is not there to help me” and another said “Yeah, everyone thinks it’s [the court program] out to get them. You really have to be in it a long time to change your mind.”

Youth confirm this self-sentiment through non-compliant performance and strict monitoring quickly identifies non-compliant events (NCE). Five participants believed that the court program would find out if they didn’t follow the rules; three disagreed. Three thought that they would not get caught if they did things that they “usually got away with.” Youth commented:

~ “I thought that up to a certain extent where I could maybe do something for maybe two weeks before and maybe get away with it, but from today’s trial, it didn’t work out.”

~ “The whole month I kept smoking and I had a bag of piss taped to my leg and the shit fell on the floor when I was trying to fill the cup and they made me actually pee in the cup.”

~ “The day before I drank one of those herbal detoxifiers to clean my system out and it didn’t work.”

Reflected appraisals in the form of consequences are delivered in caring, encouraging style. Although all eight participants agreed that “the judge really tries to understand what I’m saying when I talk to him,” none thought that the judge still cares about them when he gives them consequences.

Increased interactional commitment through expanded prosocial networks. Five youth believed that their friends support their efforts to stop using drugs and/or alcohol. One youth said, “I’ve stopped using drugs and alcohol and avoid persons,

places and things that are negative.” Another said “I need to stop hanging out with the wrong people. I changed a lot because now I don’t give feedback to parents and I can’t hang out with anyone.” Youth responses described severing deviant network ties, but none indicated forming, or expanding, prosocial networks.

Increased affective commitment to one or more relevant and meaningful prosocial others. Seven youth felt close to at least one person who believe that they will do well in the court program. None indicated that they had developed a close relationship with the judge or other prosocial adult. However, there was discussion around the judge smiling at them, with some youth saying:

~ “I caught him smiling for the first time last week.”

~ “He smiled at me, too, he said “Good job, good job” and I was like I’m not doing anything wrong.”

~ “He thinks I’m a good kid. He told me ‘Listen, I think you’re a good kid.’”

~ “He said he’s proud of me.”

~ “He looked at me and said “I can see that there is some good in you.”

~ “That means you have to change and try to be good.”

~ “He said that to me, too. He’s a bullshitter, y’all.”

Reflected appraisals in the form of rewards for behavior enacted while in the prosocial identity. None of the participants said that they had received a reward while in the program. One said “I’m in Phase 2. He’s like the first time I tested negative he said ‘You’re on a good path. When we move you into Phase 2, you’ll get a reward.’ I’ve been in Phase 2 for like three weeks and I haven’t gotten nothing. I’m pissed.”

Re-definition of other to perceiving them as caring and trying to help them. Focus group participants did not perceive the judge as caring and trying to help them. One youth said “He [the judge] said ‘I expect you to do good,’ but he just winked at me. He wants me to mess up.” Another said “On a bad day he just takes it out on you. “ When asked if the judge knew him as a person, he said “He don’t

know us. You know how many clients he got.” Another said “He doesn’t know me. He just reads the sheet to see how I’m doing. If the piece of paper didn’t spark his memory, he wouldn’t know me. He wouldn’t even remember my name if it wasn’t for the last time.” Youth comments regarding the judge included:

- ~ “He is very mean sometimes.”
- ~ “He was nice to me the first time. “
- ~ “He’s nice to me. He just doesn’t like the way I dress.”
- ~ “He’s [the judge] a bum.”
- ~ “Depends on if he likes you.”
- ~ “If he doesn’t like you he’s going to send you away, especially if you in a gang, he going to send you away.”
- ~ “If you walk in and you got a red flag hanging out of the back, he’s going to be like ‘You going upstate.’”
- ~ “He’ll be nice to you, unless you get high, he’ll give you another chance.’
- ~ “Every judge is judgmental. If you’re in a gang, he wouldn’t like you.
- ~ “No, I think that he just judges people unless they do what they’re supposed to do.”

Re-definition of self through experiencing successes while in the prosocial identity. Seven youth agreed that they feel proud when the judge says that they are doing well and three shared that the judge smiled at them. One of the focus group participants envisioned the possibility of a new self-identity, saying:

- ~ “Sometimes I believe that I got caught and I’m here for a reason, like I got a purpose or something to not doing drugs and fucking up my life.” He continued:
- ~ “I have started to believe that maybe I can get through this without a hassle. Because now I realize the consequences for my actions.”

Self-efficacy and future plans. All but one youth said that they expect to have successful futures and expect to graduate from high school.

Original Focus Group Theme: Inauthentic Presentation

Youth described efforts to “fake it” with the judge, saying “act as if you really care” and “bullshit them. Act as if.” Another admitted that he “sucks up to the judge.” One suggested that by dressing nicely for the judge “You can totally hide your whole personality or ego. You can totally change your whole outlook or your

whole personality by just wearing a suit instead of your regular baggy jeans and like baggy clothing.”

When asked if they thought that they had changed while in the court program, youth shared:

- ~ “I been not smoking for a while because I’ll go to jail.”
- ~ “I really haven’t changed.”
- ~ “I don’t use drugs anymore because I don’t want to get into trouble.”
- ~ “I have changed by doing good at home and following rules because I’m back on my meds.
- ~ “I changed cause now I think before I do something. I changed because of [a treatment program].

Discussion

The aim of the focus group was to solicit feedback on interview analyses from a second cohort of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court youth participants in Court C. This goal was minimally achieved through this focus group. The findings provide soft support for the theoretical statements that focus on initial perceptions of Juvenile Treatment Court processes – initial delinquent identity, initially defining the court as adversarial, and attempts to continue delinquent behavior while in the court program. Participant feedback to theoretical statements that required a retrospective lens was limited due to the short amount of time the majority of youth had been in the program.

Using youth categories developed from individual youth interviews, all but one of the focus group participants were either active resisters or reluctant compliers because those that said that they have changed, did so to avoid consequences; others indicated a case of ‘mistaken identity,’ - that they did not really belong in the court program. These themes echoed those revealed by active resisters and reluctant compliers during the individual interviews.

The statement from one youth who said, “I have started to believe that maybe I can get through this without a hassle, because now I realize the consequences for

my actions” was consistent with narratives of turning point youth. This youth also said, “Yeah, everyone thinks it’s [the court program] out to get them. You really have to be in it a long time to change your mind” and “the judge telling you you’re doing good makes you want to change.”

The major contribution of the focus group was the identification of efforts to “fake it” for the judge. This is understood, in Goffman’s (1959) terms, as “that part of the individual’s performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance” (p. 22). When youth said that by wearing a suit rather than one’s “regular” clothing, the judge will perceive them as different from who they really are, they may be creating a “personal front” (Goffman, p. 24).

Limitations. There were several limitations to this focus group which may affect the findings: (1) It was difficult to sustain the youth’s attention toward opinions regarding the theoretical statements because most participants appeared eager to interject their personal stories. At times, youth appeared to be presenting a front stage version of their identity (Goffman, 1959), speaking over one another and bragging about their delinquent behavior, including their efforts to cheat drug tests; (2) Youth may have been distracted by the aroma of hot pizza during the 3:30pm. - 4:30pm hour; (3) Facilitators faced an unforeseen time constraint of one hour because the bus transporting youth out of the courthouse planned to leave at 4:30pm; (4) Newcomers to the court program were overrepresented in the focus group. Since youth were largely newcomers to the court program, this may have limited their ability to offer agreement or disagreement to the theoretical statements. It is possible that had the researcher provided youth characteristic parameters of primarily Phase 3 youth, there may have been more substantial contributions. In retrospect, it is logical that Phase 1 youth were overrepresented because only youth in Phase 1 are required to appear before the judge weekly. Most likely, the researcher’s interest in reducing demands on court staff to ensure

access privileges essentially led to decreased control over the formation of this focus group.

The course trajectory for interviewed Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants is graphically illustrated in the Figure 1 above. First timer youth are already committed to a prosocial identity, therefore they continue to enact prosocial role behaviors. The court program strictly monitors them and these behaviors are reinforced through encouragement - reflected appraisals from the judge and court program. They actively get involved in prosocial opportunities like boys and girls clubs and fun community service projects. They continue to have close emotional bonds with prosocial adults – such as parent(s), extended family and teachers. They experience successes and experience positive emotions. They successfully graduate with efficacious future plans.

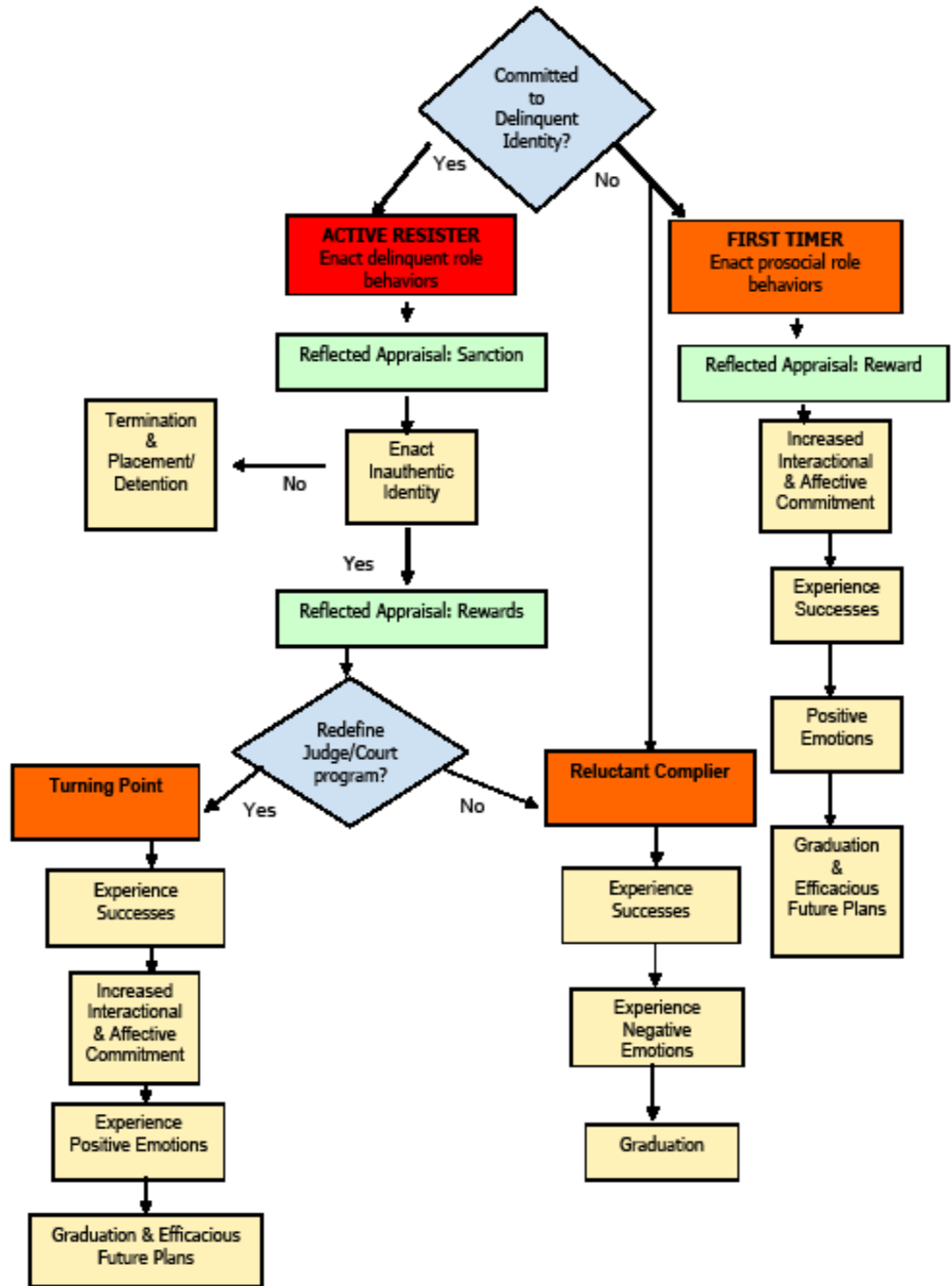
Youth enter the court program highly committed to a delinquent identity as active resisters. They continue to enact delinquent role behaviors. The court provides negative appraisals in the form of sanctions. Youth enact an inauthentic identity to cope with the deflection arising from receiving meaningful consequences. Youth begin to perform prosocial role behaviors and the court program rewards them with positive appraisals.

The expressions of caring and interest taking by the judge and court staff gives rise to a deflection. Turning point youth redefine the judge and court program from adversarial to realizing that they care and want to help them. The turning point youth increase interactional and affective commitment that increases the salience of a prosocial identity. They experience positive emotions and graduate with efficacious future plans.

Reluctant compliers interpret the judge and court staff as disingenuous, however, they are motivated to continue to enact positive role behaviors because they believe that they will be sent to long term placement if they do not. Therefore, they enact an inauthentic identity. They do not increase interactional

and affective commitment while enacting a prosocial identity. They experience negative emotions, but go on to graduate.

Figure 1. Process of Increased Salience of Prosocial Identity in Juvenile Treatment Court



CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from this study support Stryker's (1987) Identity Theory predictions that change in an individual's social network relationships and interactions leads to change in identity. This study supported Francis' (1997) findings that individuals create and maintain identities during interaction. These findings also contribute to an understanding of how individuals change identities through interaction. Specifically, judge/court staff-youth interactions are key factors in facilitating positive identity change for Juvenile Treatment Court youth participants.

The experiences of first timer youth demonstrate the concept of primary deviance. They do not have a delinquent self-identity and the precipitating event is the first contact with the juvenile justice system. Active resister, reluctant complier and turning point youth entered the court program highly committed to a delinquent identity, corresponding with the concept of secondary deviance. Essentially, they have accepted the label of deviant (Lemert, 1974).

First timer youth are already committed to a prosocial identity, therefore they continue to enact prosocial role behaviors. The court program strictly monitors them and these behaviors are reinforced through encouragement - reflected appraisals from the judge and court program. They actively get involved in prosocial opportunities like boys and girls clubs and fun community service projects. They continue to have close emotional bonds with prosocial adults – such as parent(s), extended family and teachers. They experience successes and

experience positive emotions. They successfully graduate with efficacious future plans.

Most young men and women enter the court program highly committed to a delinquent identity as active resisters. Their peer groups were using drugs and engaging in illegal behavior (robbing houses, stealing cars); most were well-known as truants, troublemakers and failures in school. They most frequently and consistently interacted with a deviant peer group that reinforced enacting delinquent behaviors. Youth's stable negative identity meanings - acquired through past experiences and culturally held sentiments - were compared to current impressions produced by interactions in the Juvenile Treatment Court program. These unexpected, novel events produced a deflection. Deflections arise when impressions produced by an event differs from sentiments. "When a conflict or "deflection" occurs, the person is motivated to seek explanation and to find some means of returning the conflict to a confirmation of sentiments. Thus, people seek for ways to qualify the situation and remove the deflection" (Francis, 2003, p. 126). Perhaps the most difficult crisis that is produced by deflection comes about when their delinquent self-identity is disconfirmed by the judge. The youth must re-identify the behavior, the judge, or themselves to restore a confirmation of sentiments.

At first, youth define the court program as adversarial and believe that the court program perceives them to be delinquents. Youth first attempt to reduce the deflection by confirming their self-sentiment by continuing to enact delinquent role behaviors. Youth highly committed to a delinquent identity present positive drug tests to the court, attempt to cheat drug tests, remain truant from school, cut classes and engage in behavior that results in school suspensions (e.g. insubordination, fighting).

According to Structural Identity Theory, the principle of reflected appraisals suggests that "self-definitions and evaluation are determined in part by others'

views of us or the way we perceive others to view us” (Hoelter, 1984). As described in youth narratives, Juvenile Treatment Court programs focus extensive efforts to monitor participant’s lives. They solicit and receive detailed reports on youth’s attitudes and behaviors at home, school and treatment. The strict monitoring, weekly court appearances and frequent drug tests quickly identifies delinquent role behaviors enacted by participants. The court program immediately provides reflected appraisals in the form of consequences in response to non-prosocial behaviors that reflect youths’ delinquent identity.

Receiving consequences is a novel event and youth enact an inauthentic identity to cope with the deflection arising from receiving meaningful consequences. “On observing an event that disconfirms their sentiments about the associated elements of that event (behaviors, identities, etc.), individuals will experience “deflections” – emergent affective meanings that deviate from their fundamental understanding of the definition of their situations. The greater the deflection felt, the more an individual is motivated to return the situation (either cognitively or behaviorally) and confirm expected sentiments” (Herman & Francis, 2005).

At this point, they realize that their delinquent behavior will no longer work to maintain their self-sentiment. The negative responses and sanctions begin to overwhelm the fun and the positive affirmations from delinquent peers. The crisis is substantial because youth believe that they are facing out-of-home placement, as evidenced by youth saying “if you mess up, you’re going away.” Recalling that youth participants entered the program because they believed that their only other option was being sent away for up to a year, the deflection creates negative emotions. According to ACT (Heise, 2007), “Re-definition of the situation may follow an event that causes large deflections which cannot be resolved by reinterpreting the behavior. In this case, observers assign new identities that are confirmed by the behavior.”

Affect Control Theory (Heise, 2007) explains the process by which youth reacted to information that contradicted their culturally (and personally) held sentiments regarding judges and Juvenile Treatment Court programs. According to ACT, people act to maintain the alignment of their identity meanings with the impressions created by the local social interaction, either through actions or through cognitive reinterpretation of events (Smith-Lovin, 2003, p. 168).

Culturally held sentiments held by youth regarding the judge/court program *a priori* to entering the court program informed their transient impression; they held an expectation that the judge would enact role behaviors that would confirm those sentiments. Previous ACT research has found that a judge is evaluated on the EPA dimensions as “good, very powerful, and a bit quiet” (Heise, 2007).

Youth sentiments were further informed by prior personal experiences with judges and other aspects of the juvenile justice system (e.g. probation). These prior experiences led them to expect the judge to treat them negatively (e.g. send them away, lock them up, and give up on them). Several interviewed youth knew other people who had been sent to placement by the judge. In fact, a brother of the active resister in phase 1 for ten months was sent to placement for nine months by the same presiding judge.

The sentiment regarding the judge/court program was disconfirmed when, because of the non-traditional structure of the court program, they were confronted with unexpected events. These events involved an unexpected intensity of supervision and close monitoring, as well as novel judge/court staff-youth interactions. Youth narratives revealed that these novel interactions included engaging in weekly dialogue directly with the judge (in direct contrast to traditional juvenile courts), the judge/court staff listening to them, caring about them and encouraging them. The non-traditional and unexpected interactions with the judge outside of the courtroom further disconfirmed sentiments (e.g. at the adventure-based program, going to a ball game, being invited to play basketball

with the judge, attending a concert with the judge, the judge visiting them at the treatment facility and giving them books, CD's and t-shirts). In addition, the experience of receiving meaningful consequences for delinquent role behavior and rewards for prosocial role behavior came as a surprise to the youth participants.

In this study, active resisters had not yet re-defined the judge's action of applying consequences from adversarial to helping. Recalling that all but one of the active resister's was in phase 1 at the time of the interview, they defined the judge according to their culturally and personally informed sentiment. Their cognitive interpretation of the event is that the judge is there to punish them.

Since first timers did not have a salient delinquent identity and they continued to enact prosocial behaviors, they did not need to redefine the judge. There was no deflection because the judge confirmed their positive self-sentiment.

According to Affect Control Theory (Heise, 1977), "identity meanings act as a reference signal to control behavior." Youth entering the court with a negative, delinquent identity experience intense negative emotions. Individuals who realized a turning point – increased the salience of a prosocial identity – at first dealt with the deflection as active resisters: "I hated the judge more than anybody in my whole life." They realize, through receiving consequences (a novel event), that redefining the judge in this way does not reduce the deflection. This is because they are highly motivated to remain at home rather than be put into long term placement. The judge interacts with them in a novel way – with encouragement and belief – this unexpected event (second chances rather than being "thrown away") creates a new deflection. Turning point youth re-define the judge/court program as "caring and trying to help."

Once they do this, they experience positive emotions and re-define themselves as efficacious, valued individuals. The increase in salience of their prosocial identity follows because they begin to comply with court mandates – engaging in

boys and girls club, developing emotional bonds with mentors, court staff, treatment providers, and family members.

Reluctant compliers attempt to reduce deflection by re-defining the judge's acts as "trying to scare me." They perceive this as disingenuous ("the judge has so many cases; he can't possibly know me personally"). Reluctant complier youth do change their behavior in order to retain their freedom ("I'm not going away for smoking weed"). Reluctant complier youth engaged in "inauthentic reidentification." In the words of a focus group participant, they "fake it" and "act as if." They suggested that they create the impression of a compliant individual by choosing to wear a suit rather than baggy pants and "telling them what they want to hear." Reluctant complier youth perceive the judge as "faking it," so they "fake it" as well.

The two youth who said that they were in the program to "prove them wrong" had a positive self-sentiment when they entered the program. These youth experienced some successes in the program, however, they experienced negative emotions and did not increase the salience of a prosocial identity. These youth continued to hold a negative sentiment regarding the judge and court program.

Active resister youth maintained stable delinquent identities at the time of the interviews did so because they had not yet increased interactional or affective commitment to their prosocial identity. They did not increase the size of an interactional network in which they enact a prosocial identity, nor did they develop affective bonds with others while in a prosocial identity. They did not form emotional attachments to mentors, AA sponsors, treatment providers, the judge or court program staff. In fact, they maintained affiliations with non-affective, drug using peer groups who did not support youths' abstinence efforts.

Turning point youth decreased the salience of delinquent identities by severing deviant network ties and transferring to a new school environment that afforded the opportunity to enact a prosocial identity (and experience successes). They

increased interactional commitment to a prosocial identity by actively engaging in substance abuse treatment and participating in satisfying prosocial group activities (e.g. adventure based program, boys and girls clubs, camping, church, volunteering and employment). Turning point youth developed affective commitment to a prosocial identity by developing emotionally close, meaningful relationships with prosocial adults (e.g. mentors, treatment providers, judge, court staff, and rebuilding close family relationships).

In focus groups with court team staff, Bryan, Hiller & Leukefeld (2006) found that [Juvenile Treatment Courts] “are very different from traditional juvenile court experiences, which are adversarial, and often are greeted with mistrust and suspicion by the youth, possibly preventing therapeutic benefit” (p. 102).

Propositions within Affect Control Theory (Heise, 2007) explain turning point youth identity transformations. Upon entering the Juvenile Treatment Court program, most youth were highly committed to a delinquent identity which empowers them. Consistent with this self-sentiment, they create confirming events by performing delinquent behaviors. They view the court program as adversarial and therefore expect the court program to perceive them similarly. Youth in the active resister stage experience emotions such as anger because of invalidations to the delinquent sentiment. Affect Control Theory (ACT) suggests that youth who self-identify as ‘bad’ have their self-sentiments confirmed by the actions of the judge when he reprimands them. Heise (2007) writes, “Deviants in sub-cultures acquire positive sentiments about the sub-cultures special identities and actions. Then those identifies elicit the characteristic behaviors of deviants, not because the identities and behaviors are bad, but because they are good! That is, sub-cultural deviants do not feel that they are engaging in despicable actions. They define themselves and their actions as positive.”

Turning point youth narratives suggest youth first redefine the judge as bad, powerful and active, which generates fear and disempowers them from their

empowering deviant identity. When they comply out of fear, and receive positive responses from the judge, they can then redefine him as good too. Through reflected appraisals, they deal with this deflection by redefining the judge as “good, very powerful and active,” reflecting the more active role of the Juvenile Treatment Court judges compared to judges in traditional family courts. This gives them a new path to doing powerful, active and good things themselves.

Youth then actively engage in opportunities to increase interactional and affective commitment to a prosocial identity. Stryker (1980) suggested a causal chain whereby the more extensive one’s social network and the more intensive one’s emotional ties to that network with respect to enacting a particular role identity, the more committed the person will be to that role identity and, thus, the more prominent the role identity. In turn, this prominence will be reflected in role-related behaviors.

Turning point youth formed strong emotional bonds with one or more prosocial others as a direct result of being in the Juvenile Treatment Court program, supporting Structural Identity Theory’s argument that commitment to social relationships affects identity salience (Stryker, 1987, p. 89). Typically, turning point youth described an emotional bond with the judge; others identified a treatment counselor, the Juvenile Treatment Court program coordinator, or a mentor assigned to them while in the program.

Youth’s new prosocial self-sentiment is confirmed and validated by relevant and meaningful others (judge, treatment, family, peers) pride in them. Turning point youth described imagining themselves differently as a result of disconfirming self-sentiments from the judge and court program. As one youth said, “I don’t want to be a loser anymore.” The new self- and other-identifications result in building events to affirm these new sentiments. For example, they start going to school regularly, abstain from using drugs, and improve relationships with family members. These successes affirm the positive self-sentiment.

Essentially, some youth are highly committed to a delinquent identity when they first enter the court program as demonstrated by chronic failure in multiple life domains. They interact in deviant social networks, with limited affective commitment to prosocial others. Their delinquent self-sentiment is disconfirmed when the judge and court program treat them as though they need help, rather than as “bad kids.” This creates a deflection, leading to a crisis for the youth. Since nearly all of the youth were facing out-of-home placement as a consequence of not re-defining themselves, they are essentially forced to find another means to return to a confirmation of sentiment – even if it means re-defining themselves.

Francis (2003) suggests that Heise (1979) has demonstrated that the size of the deflection – that is, the degree of difference between transient emotions and established sentiments – is a fundamental factor in explaining severity of emotion. Stryker (1987) and Thoits (1991) argue that an additional crucial predictor of severity is the salience of the identity being affected.

Francis (2003) argues that “a highly salient identity is one to which a person is highly committed and which they frequently enact with others. If a negative event occurs which compromises the enactment of this identity, it will have wide repercussions for the individual. In a sense, the deflection will be reinforced each time the individual encounters a situation where he or she would normally depend on that identity for interactional purposes.” Active resister youth described not even wanting to be in the court building and complained about “having to come to court every week.” This deflection was reinforced each time they came to the court program.

Implications for Social Policy

Juvenile justice goals involve reducing criminal recidivism and drug involvement among adolescents. The findings from this study show that Juvenile Treatment Courts can be an effective mechanism in achieving these goals. The

following policy recommendations would support these unique problem solving court programs.

Alternative to Detention. Given that Juvenile Treatment Courts are being utilized as an alternative to out-of-home placement, social policy should review detention utilization data to explore more effective means of identifying adolescents who may benefit from participation in Juvenile Treatment Courts. There are significant economic and social costs of detention policies toward substance-involved juveniles. New York State spends over \$150 million a year to incarcerate youth in juvenile institutions (New York State Executive Budget Documents, 2007-2008). In 2006, it cost over \$127,000 a year to incarcerate child in a secure OCFS facility.¹⁵ Long term detention placement has not been shown to be an effective method for rehabilitating youth (cite). This was echoed by one interviewed youth who said “I made connections for drugs in detention.” Another youth explained why detention will not help youth. He said:

A kid he takes his parents car and he crashes it...he shouldn't get arrested, he shouldn't get locked up for that...some probation, paying back the people's car, community service. That's something that could be worth it but putting him away for a year, that's not gunna make him better, you know, by get locking him up....when they get locked up they're locked like a animal and they don't know how to live. They don't know how to act because when they're there they trying to survive so when they come back out they like they don't know how to say hi to somebody they would just know how to look at the person to see if they were gunna attack them.

Commitment to Problem Solving Justice. First, court programs need to implement fundamental problem-solving court principles, as detailed in the

¹⁵ This figure is based on per diem rate of nearly \$348 for secure facilities. New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), Administrative Directive 06-OCFS-ADM-06, November 17, 2006.

Sixteen Strategies (BJA, 2003). It is critical that court teams agree to develop creative strategies for consequence and reward structures to provide immediate, individualized reflected appraisals to youth. Court programs need to embrace a creative approach in developing opportunities for novel judge/court staff-youth interactions in order for youth identity change to occur, including out-of-court interactions. Briane, a turning point graduate, endorsed the effectiveness of non-traditional out-of-court judge-youth interactions. She says:

If the judge has more time but it would have been like nice to see him more like at the adventure based program cause he did come there a couple times but not enough for the kids to really like talk to him you know and if I think if he would have came like a little bit more that he wouldn't have let the kids look at him as a judge like more of a like normal person rather than a judge.

Briane, JD, Turning Point, Graduate, Court B

Training in Adolescent Development and Substance Abuse. Court programs must place a high priority on on-going training. Exciting new findings from research on adolescent development and evidence-based substance abuse treatment is available. Court teams should work to bridge research and practice by requiring court team members (including judges, probation officers, defense attorney's/law guardians, presentment agency staff, treatment providers, case managers and coordinators) to participate in annual training conferences.

Treatment Services Designed for Adolescents. A range of treatment modalities, including intensive residential treatment, should be in place to meet the needs of Juvenile Treatment Court adolescent participants with different types and levels of severity of drug involvement. Treatment should be specifically designed to address the needs of adolescents.

These recommendations will require an outlay of funds from probation departments, court administration, and federal substance abuse treatment

agencies. The results of this study suggest that it will substantially pay off for taxpayers through reductions in costs of long term detention, as well as saving the future cost of addiction and crime. State legislators, treatment providers, juvenile justice policymakers, and judicial officials should foster the development, implementation, and evaluation of Juvenile Treatment Court programs. The federal government has played an important role in the past through making funding streams and training available to jurisdictions. They should continue to do so.

Implications for Social Work Practice and Juvenile Treatment Court Practitioners

The following suggestions for social work practice and Juvenile Treatment Court practitioners provides a framework for creating environmental conditions that will increase the likelihood of invoking a prosocial identity for Juvenile Treatment Court participants.

Judge. The findings of this study suggest judges presiding over Juvenile Treatment Court programs should (1) volunteer for the assignment because they genuinely like to work with adolescents and families – thus providing consistency rather than rotating the assignment through a variety of judges; (2) be willing to engage, encourage and interact directly and respectfully with young people; (3) be willing to step outside the traditional role of ‘judge’ by actively listening to young people, express genuine caring, and make themselves available to interact with youth outside of the courtroom; (4) receive training in adolescent development and substance abuse/misuse; (5) increase the potential for youth to experience successes by engaging the local community on the Juvenile Treatment Court team.

School Transfer Opportunities. The findings from this study show that for many youth, the environments of their school of origin constrain opportunities to enact a prosocial identity. Juvenile Treatment Court programs need to explore alternative

educational opportunities for youth (e.g. alternative schools and General Equivalency Diploma preparation pathways). Teams should conduct outreach to local school districts, engaging them in developing prosocial opportunities for youth.

Aftercare Services. Research on adolescent substance abuse treatment suggests that relapse after discharge from treatment and eventual re-admission are common (Godley, et al, 2002; Lash, et al, 2007). Godley (2002) explains that aftercare provides the opportunity to serve a variety of functions: 1) increased level of therapeutic contact with the participant after primary treatment that appears to be of significant benefits to positive outcomes; 2) a monitoring function that provides an incentive for abstinence to be maintained especially if urinalysis is part of the monitoring; 3) reinforcement of attendance at self-help meetings which research validates assures the maintenance of sobriety for the long-term, and 4) more efficient re-entry back into primary treatment when relapse occurs and research documents that the more subsequent treatment someone receives, the better their long-term outcome.

Carlos, a turning point youth, expressed the need for aftercare for program graduates, saying “the real test is when you get out of this treatment court and you’re on your own...That’s like real... [in the program] it’s mandatory for you to stay clean. You know when you’re out of here most of the time you have your own choice if you want to use or not.”

Post-graduation Support. Juvenile Treatment Court programs need to develop mechanisms to support youth interactional commitment to a prosocial identity after they leave the court program by linking them with long term, prosocial, community-based opportunities. Although youth may increase the salience of a prosocial identity while they have access to prosocial others, they are vulnerable when the program ends. Briane endorses this recommendation. She says:

Once you get out you don't really have anything to do. If they would set everybody up or at least help somebody find something to do afterwards I think that would help a lot. Like whether its help them find a job or help them find a camp to go to or help them just get to a program of some type, like for their hobbies or whatnot.

Briane, Court B, JD, Turning Point, Graduate

Juvenile Treatment Court teams can use these practical strategies derived from youth interviews that may facilitate youth identity changes. At program entry, judges and court staff can acknowledge that youth may not feel that they belong in the court program. Conveying this to youth may increase trust by communicating that the court program hears, values and understands them. One theme that emerged from youth interviews is that when youth have a negative self-concept, they do not feel comfortable conversing with the judge and may appear sullen and uncommunicative. In previous research, court teams recognized the youth “talk and become engaged” after Juvenile Treatment Court participation (Bryan, Hiller & Leukefeld, 2006). Court programs should recognize that for most youth, the process of identity change takes time.

One youth made the suggestion that courts should take the time to carefully review a youth's situation before ordering detention as a final disposition. He suggests that courts not write off kids quickly. He points out that judge's receive case files shortly before hearings and asks courts to take time before ordering a young person to detention.

Court teams should make efforts to individualize dialogue between the judge and youth. An example is that if a court program is aware that a young person has a big test coming up, the judge can wish them good luck on the test, and follow up at the next court appearance by asking how the test went. These individualized interactions convey caring sentiments to youth.

Similarly, court programs should individualize consequences and rewards. For example, ordering that community service hours be performed at an animal shelter for a young person with an interest in animals. An individualized reward might be a basketball for a youth interested in sports, a journal or sketchbook for an artistic youth or a t-shirt with the logo of their favorite sports team. There was agreement among interviewed youth that if court programs indicate that they give out tangible rewards, they should follow-through. Otherwise, this generates a negative perception of the court program. Individualized, tangible rewards do reinforce positive behaviors, as long as they are conveyed with sincere recognition.

Court teams should solicit feedback from youth on how things are going for them at their treatment program; if possible, the judge and court team should visit the treatment programs to see it for themselves. Youth indicated variations in the quality of substance abuse treatment experiences. A few youth reported changing treatment providers because they were unsatisfied. By asking youth about their experiences, the court program conveys a genuine interest in making sure that they are getting the help they need.

Encouraging language should be embedded into the culture of problem-solving court programs. Youth benefit from hearing that relevant and significant others believe in them. Support self-efficacy by conveying confidence in their ability to make decisions that are in their best interest. In the same vein, court teams should model respect for others – youth, families, and others. Courts should support parents in setting limits with youth.

Many interviewed young people expressed interest and talent in the arts. A few were poets, others writers, painters, singers and songwriters. Juvenile Treatment Court programs should collaborate with community based agencies that have the capacity to offer youth opportunities to express themselves artistically. Organized activities such sports, school clubs and performing arts have been linked to

enhances self esteem (Marsh & Kleitman, 2003), reduced rates of school drop-out, criminal arrest (Mahoney, 2000), drinking alcohol, using illegal drugs, skipping school (Eccles & Barber, 1999).

Identifying the Target Population. Should Juvenile Treatment Court programs accept first timer youth into the program? If one does not have a delinquent self-concept because they have strong interactional and affective commitment to a prosocial identity, but whose behavior garners the attention of the juvenile justice system, should they participate in an intensive supervision monitoring program such as a Juvenile Treatment Court?

One of the goals of the juvenile justice system should be prevention and early identification of youth at risk for creating highly salient delinquent identities. “Early intervention holds promise of cost-effectively reducing the probability troubled youths will continue criminal and high-health-risk behavior into adulthood” (Klitzner, Fisher, Stewart, & Gilbert, 1991). Although mechanisms for early identification are important, these findings suggest that routine assessment of adolescents entering juvenile justice systems should be a universal practice.

As these findings demonstrate, first timer youth entered the court program with a highly salient prosocial identity and exited the program with a highly salient prosocial identity. Although they agreed that the program helped them, they were not necessarily future threats to society that warrants the level of supervision and monitoring required for youth highly committed to a delinquent identity.

Role of Peer Networks. Research on normal adolescent development suggests that primary groups shift during adolescence from family and parents to peer networks. The development of a separate identity is a major task while youth are going through this normal developmental process. The finding in this study that that nearly half of interviewed youth reported being exposed to drug use by their social networks while in the Juvenile Treatment Court program should be a concern to courts.

Although the role of parents and families are emphasized in the Sixteen Strategies (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003), these data show that social networks play a major role in youth substance use and relapse episodes. While court programs strictly monitor youth behavior at home, school, treatment and community supervision, most Juvenile Treatment Court's do not explore with youth their thoughts about their social networks. Youth interviews suggest that friendship networks can be understood to be risk factors for relapse and continued delinquency or protective, depending upon the degree of emotional closeness that the individual experiences in these relationships. Courts should consider conducting a social network analysis with youth upon entering the court program and routinely ask youth who they are spending time with.

In keeping with Piquero et al's (2005) recommendation, the identification of positive peer arenas and of ways to promote involvement in these arenas as opposed to delinquent peer networks. Court programs should increase opportunities for youth to form and maintain affective bonds with prosocial others, increase random court and community based drug screens and to turn attention toward youth interactions with deviant peer networks in an effort to achieve juvenile justice goals.

Some Juvenile Treatment Courts have formed partnerships with youth development organizations such as mentoring and adventure based programming in addition to mandated chemical abuse treatment services. They should continue to use their legal powers to mandate youth participation. The findings from this study demonstrate that exposing Juvenile Treatment Court participants to prosocial youth development opportunities is a key component leading to increased salience of a prosocial identity.

Support parental authority. Courts need to work harder to partner with parents and family members to support youth commitments to a prosocial identity. Parents not only are not only required to closely monitor, supervise and report on their

children's activities, but they can be encouraged to take a more proactive role in expanding prosocial opportunities.

Future Research Recommendations

Juvenile Treatment Courts should conduct more sophisticated process and outcome evaluation research. This research design should include follow-up data collection at 6-, 12- and 24-months post-graduation to track long term outcomes, such as recidivism/new arrests, post-program sobriety or substance use, post-program treatment service utilization, frequency of continuing outpatient care, and educational and vocational status. Follow-up research should also include a qualitative component to explore participant perspectives on program satisfaction and solicit suggestions for program improvement.

Juvenile Treatment Court programs should conduct sociometric assessments at intake, and periodically throughout the program. Ideally, an instrument would be used to document the size of their prosocial interpersonal network and used as an assessment tool to mark progress. This assessment instrument could be used to identify, and offer increased support to, youth with sparse prosocial networks and limited opportunities to form affective bonds while enacting a prosocial identity. .

In keeping with the results from this study, program evaluation designs should incorporate measures of self-concept to facilitate salience of a prosocial identity. These measures should be conducted at intake, periodically throughout program participation and upon program exit (graduation or termination).

Conclusion

Using qualitative methods, this study gave voice to 37 individual and eight focus group adolescent participants in four Juvenile Treatment Court programs in New York State. This analysis of their perspectives contributed new insight into the process of identity change for drug involved adolescents participating in Juvenile Treatment Court programs. The flexibility, creativity and dedication of

court teams should be supported by social policy and resource allocation. Failure to identify and treat adjudicated, drug involved adolescents is likely to result in further problems for the adolescents and future costs to society.

These programs are an innovative alternative to traditional juvenile case processing. The results of this study indicate that there is reason to hope that these programs can intervene positively in the lives of youth.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study included:

1. The study was limited to four counties in one large northeastern state.
2. The study explored youth perspectives in only three Juvenile Drug Treatment Court programs (Courts A, B, and C) and one Juvenile Intervention Court (Court D).
3. The study included only one youth who failed out of the Juvenile Treatment Court program. This group was essentially unavailable because unless they ran away, most youth who fail end up in detention facilities and would therefore be inaccessible to the researcher.
4. Due to time and resource limitations, a follow up study of long term youth outcomes could not be conducted.
5. Sample selection. Constraints by the larger study of which this is a part restricted the ability to engage in constant comparison or seeking negative cases. There is a considerable risk of bias toward selecting youth who would be most likely to say positive things about the Juvenile Treatment Court. I went to great lengths to self-identify as a researcher from Stony Brook University so Juvenile Treatment Court staff and youth would not mistakenly believe that I was from the Office of Court Administration or had any influence over the outcomes of their legal cases. "Rigor in case selection involves explicitly and thoughtfully picking cases that are congruent with the study purpose and that will yield data on major study questions. This sometimes involves a two-stage sampling process where

some initial fieldwork is done on a possible case to determine its suitability prior to a commitment to more in-depth and sustained fieldwork” (Patton, 1990).

6. A major limitation of this study is that a single researcher coded the transcripts. Double coding may have served to evaluate interrater reliability and contribute to the validity of the results.

7. According to Structural Identity Theory (Stryker, 1987), in order to increase the likelihood of invoking a specific identity, the individual must establish affective commitment to others while enacting that identity. Some youth described traumatic life experiences that may limit opportunities to do this. These include parental substance abuse, witnessing domestic violence, parental incarceration, physical and emotional abuse by a parent and parental abandonment.

8. Single in-depth interviews with youth preclude drawing conclusions regarding the potential sequential process of identity change through the court program. Although retrospective accounts of initial attitudes and behaviors of turning point youth correspond with current active resister accounts, further research is needed to verify if reluctant compliance is an intervening stage for youth who ultimately realize a turning point.

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Appendix A. Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

In an effort toward clarity and understanding of commonly used terms throughout this document, the following glossary of frequently used terms is provided.

Affective Commitment - The strength of ties to others involved in the role identity. Commitment to social relationships affects identity salience (Stryker, 1987, p. 89).

Assessment – The process of examining multiple areas of the clients’ life and social systems to identify strengths and weaknesses relevant to his or her problem (Ellis & Sowers, 2001).

Case management – A method of practice in which the worker performs multiple functions in the process of linking the client to needed resources in the community (Ellis & Sowers, 2001).

Chemical Dependence - A psychological, and sometimes physical, need to use alcohol or other drugs that doesn't go away even when using them causes negative consequences.

Deflection- Deflections are the distances in the EPA space between transient and fundamental affective meanings.

Drug Screen/Drug Test - May be collected from hair, urine, saliva or sweat. See also *Urinalysis*.

Electronic Monitoring - A transmitter attached to the individual’s ankle sends signals relayed by a home telephone to the supervising office during the hours the individual is required to be at home.

EPA Rating- An affective meaning, or connotation, that varies along three dimensions: evaluation — goodness versus badness, potency — powerfulness versus powerlessness, and activity — liveliness versus torpidity.

General Conditions of Probation - Specific supervision requirements prescribed by the court as part of the probation disposition to assist the probationer in leading a law-abiding life.

EPA – A concept of Affect Control Theory, whereby affective meanings can be measured with semantic differentials yielding a three-number profile indicating how the concept is positioned on evaluation, potency, and activity (EPA).

Graduated Sanction - Providing swift and appropriate punishment to youth offenders based on the gravity of their offense and an assessment of the potential risk for re-offending, coupled with appropriate treatment to reduce the risk of recidivism.

Identity – “Reflexively applied cognitions in the form of answers to the question ‘Whom am I?’ These answers are phrased in terms of the positions in organized structures of social relationships to which one belongs and the social roles that

attach to these positions. More- or- less discrete 'parts' of the self-internalized positional designations that represent the person's participation in structured role relationships" (Stryker & Serpe, 1987).

Identity Commitment – "The degree to which the person's relationships to specific sets of others depends on his or her being a particular kind of person, i.e., occupying a particular position in an organized structure of relationships and playing a particular role (Stryker & Serpe, 1987).

Identity Salience – "Represents one of the ways in which the identities making up the self can be organized. Identities are conceived as being organized into a salience hierarchy...defined by the probabilities each of the identities have of being invoked across a variety of situations. The location of an identity in this hierarchy is, by definition, its salience" (Stryker & Serpe, 1987).

Identity Salience Hierarchy - The likelihood that an identity will be activated across a variety of situations (Stryker, 1987).

Intake – The initial stage of juvenile court processing. Information is gathered to determine whether the youth will be released, diverted, processed or waived to criminal court (Ellis & Sowers, 2001).

Interactional Commitment - The extensiveness or number of social relationships associated with a role identity, whereas affective commitment is conceptualized as the intensiveness of, or affect associated with, the loss of any given identity (Serpe, 1987).

Juvenile Delinquency– When a person who is under 16 years old, but is at least 7 years old, commits an act which would be a "crime" if he or she were an adult, and is then found to be in need of supervision, treatment or confinement, the person is called a "juvenile delinquent". The act committed is called a "delinquent act". All juvenile delinquency cases are heard in Family Court.

Law Guardian - A person, usually a lawyer, selected by the judge and assigned to represent the children in a court matter.

Mentor – An adult volunteer that serves as a friend and role model.

Outpatient – Treatment that occurs in the office of the practitioner, usually once or twice each week for about one hour per session (Ellis & Sowers, 2001).

Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) – A child under the age of 18 who does not attend school, or behaves in a way that is dangerous or out of control, or often disobeys his or her parents, guardians or other authorities, may be found to be a Person In Need of Supervision or "PINS". All PINS proceedings are heard in Family Court.

Probation – The release into the community of an individual adjudicated by a court of law under certain conditions, such as paying a fine, doing community service or attending a drug treatment program.

Prosocial – Conforming to the acceptable patterns of society.

Recidivism – Habitual relapse into crime.

Residential treatment - Treatment in which the youth is removed from his or her home and required to reside at the treatment facility. “Residential programs have varying levels of security, from low secure to high secure” (Ellis & Sowers, 2001).

Reward – Reinforcement of positive accomplishments.

Role – In the Identity theory perspective, a role is “A set of expectations prescribing behavior that is considered appropriate by others” (Simon, 1992).

Sanction – See *Graduated Sanction*.

School suspension – A temporary debarment as a punishment.

Self –Concept – The sum total of a being's knowledge and understanding of his or her self.

Self – Efficacy - A conscious awareness of one's ability to be effective, to control actions or outcomes.

Self – Esteem - An individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991).

Self- identity – Set of meanings we hold for ourselves when we look at ourselves.

Sentiment - A stable affective meaning derived either from personal experience of from cultural inculcation.

Stages of Change – Trans-theoretical model of human behavior change developed by DiClemente & Procheska (1983).

Treatment – Used to describe actions designed to interrupt or change problematic symptoms or behavior.

Turning Point – An event that mobilizes and focuses awareness that old lines of action are complete, have failed, have been disrupted, or are no longer personally satisfying and provides individuals with the opportunity to do something different with their lives

Urinalysis – Also referred to as drug test, drug screen. The analysis of collected urine to detect the presence or absence of illegal substances.

Violation of Probation (VOP) – Failure to abide by any of the conditions of probation. Usually results in being brought before the sentencing judge.

Appendix B. Semi-structured Interview Guide

YOUTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What kinds of things do you like to do- skills/talents/hobbies/interests?
- How old are you now?
- Where do you live/with whom do you live? Who else lives in the house?
- Tell me the story of how you became involved in the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court.
- What phase are you in now?
- What has been the most challenging part of going through the JDTC?
- What is most helpful for you as you go through the JDTC?
- What do you think would be more helpful?
- What is it like for you when you meet with the Judge?
- What is it like for you when the Judge rewards/sanctions you?
- Do you feel like the Judge knows you-the person who you are?
- Tell me about your friends. What kinds of things do you do together? Are they close friends or acquaintances?
- Tell me about school.
- Would you recommend the JDTC to other youth in similar circumstances?
- How do you think that your mom/dad/judge would describe you to someone who doesn't know you?
- To what extent do your parents/guardians let you make your own decisions about how you spend your time (curfew, who you hang out with, where you go)?
- Who is your cheerleader? Who in your life is rooting for you?
- Was there anything upsetting to you in this interview?
- Are you willing to be contacted in 6 or 12 months to follow up with you?

Appendix C: Stony Brook University CORIHS approval



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Berger".

*Office of the Vice President for Research
Research Compliance*

TO: Candyce Berger
FROM: Office of Research Compliance
SUBJECT: Approval for Research Involving Human Subjects (APP)
DATE: 1/8/2008

The project referenced below was reviewed by the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (FWA #00000125) and approved on: 12/19/2007. Attached is a copy of the approved consent form and the human subjects application with the endorsement of CORIHS and the Institution. This approval is valid for one year.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Inclusion of minors in this study is acceptable in accordance with 45 CFR 46.404.
2. Parental permission and minor assent is obtained in accordance with 45 CFR 46.408.
3. Consent forms signed by subjects in this study must be kept by the investigator for 6 (six) years or indefinitely if indicated in the consent form.

Federal regulations require that:

1. all research involving human subjects be reviewed at least once annually. You will be sent a notice for renewal of CORIHS approval two months prior to the anniversary date.
2. any modifications in the project as approved by this Committee involving changes in the selection of subjects, the means for obtaining informed consent, the wording of the approved consent form(s), or in the risk to subjects be sent to the Committee for review and approval prior to initiation.
3. the Principal Investigator must keep consent forms with patient/subject signatures in a locked file to ensure confidentiality.

This approval is subject to recall if at any time the conditions and requirements of the CORIHS are not met.

This is for the protection of all parties: the subjects, the investigators, the University and CORIHS.

If this research involves the use of University Hospital patients, facilities or services, it is your responsibility to obtain UHRC approval from Dr. William Greene prior to initiating your research activities.

Description of Study:

Project ID: 20075573

Approval Period: 12/19/2007 - 12/5/2008

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court



Betsy Baron

*Office of the Vice President for Research
Research Compliance*

TO: Candace Berger
FROM: Office of Research Compliance
SUBJECT: Approval for Research Involving Human Subjects (APP)
DATE: 1/8/2008

The project referenced below was reviewed by the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (FWA #00000125) and approved on: 12/19/2007 . Attached is a copy of the approved consent form and the human subjects application with the endorsement of CORIHS and the Institution. This approval is valid for one year.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Inclusion of minors in this study is acceptable in accordance with 45 CFR 46.404.
2. Parental permission and minor assent is obtained in accordance with 45 CFR 46.408.
3. Consent forms signed by subjects in this study must be kept by the investigator for 6 (six) years or indefinitely if indicated in the consent form.

Federal regulations require that:

1. all research involving human subjects be reviewed at least once annually. You will be sent a notice for renewal of CORIHS approval two months prior to the anniversary date.
2. any modifications in the project as approved by this Committee involving changes in the selection of subjects, the means for obtaining informed consent, the wording of the approved consent form(s), or in the risk to subjects be sent to the Committee for review and approval prior to initiation.
3. the Principal Investigator must keep consent forms with patient/subject signatures in a locked file to ensure confidentiality.

This approval is subject to recall if at any time the conditions and requirements of the CORIHS are not met.

This is for the protection of all parties: the subjects, the investigators, the University and CORIHS.

If this research involves the use of University Hospital patients, facilities or services, it is your responsibility to obtain UHRC approval from Dr. William Greene prior to initiating your research activities.

Description of Study:

Project ID: 20075573

Approval Period: 12/19/2007 - 12/5/2008

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court

Appendix D: DHHS NIDA Certificate of Confidentiality



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

National Institutes of Health
National Institute on Drug Abuse
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

AMENDMENT NO. 01

CONFIDENTIALITY CERTIFICATE NO. DA-05-01

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT STONY BROOK

conducting research known as

“THE YOUTH PERSPECTIVE OF JUVENILE DRUG TREATMENT COURT”

In accordance with the provisions of section 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. § 241(d)), this Amendment to the original Certificate is issued in response to the request of the Principal Investigator, Linda E. Francis, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Pamela L. Linden, MSW, Research Support Specialist, State University of New York at Stony Brook, School of Social Welfare, HSC L2-093, Stony Brook, NY 11794, to protect the privacy of research subjects by withholding their identities from all persons not connected with the research. Dr. Francis and Ms. Linden are primarily responsible for the conduct of this research, which is supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, New York State Unified Court System.

Under the authority vested in the Secretary of Health and Human Services by that section, all persons who--

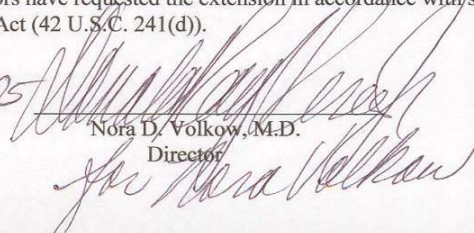
1. are employed by the State University of New York at Stony Brook and its research sites, contractors, and cooperating agencies; and
2. have, in the course of that employment, access to information which would identify individuals who are the subjects of a research project referred to as, “The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court,”

are hereby authorized to protect the privacy of the individuals who are the subjects of that research by withholding their names and other identifying characteristics from all persons not connected with the conduct of that research.

The purpose of this Amendment is to (a) modify the initial study protocol by adding a participant focus group for the purpose of reviewing the study’s findings with previously interviewed study subjects and (b) extend the study’s expiration date from the end of September 2005 to the end of May 2006. The Principal Investigators have requested the extension in accordance with section 301(d) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241(d)).

Date:

December 6, 2005


Nora D. Volkow, M.D.
Director

Appendix E: Consent Forms

**Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center**

School of Social Welfare

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A FOCUS GROUP
RESEARCH PERMISSION FORM
(for Parents/Guardians of Minor Subjects)**

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

The child under your care (hence called "your child") is being asked to take part in a focus group. You are being asked to allow your child to be a volunteer in a focus group.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are doing a study to learn about individuals' experiences in the Juvenile Intervention Court program. We are conducting a focus group to share the results of a study in which we interviewed about 45 youth participating in Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts throughout New York State. We are interested in finding out from youth their opinions about the results that we found. We are collecting information for research purposes. Your child is eligible to participate in this focus group because he/she is/has been a participant in a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court in New York State.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you and your child agree, your child will be part of a focus group. Your child will meet with the researcher and other youth for approximately one and one-half to two hours at a date, time and location that is convenient to youth. This focus group will involve the researcher sharing the results of interviews with youth and asking focus group participants about their opinions about the findings.

The focus group will be audiotaped. His/Her name or other identifying information about him/her will not appear on the audiotapes. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

Stony Brook, NY 11794-8231
Tel: (631) 444-2138



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CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

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During and after your child's participation in this focus group, your child may be asked to consider participating in other research studies in the future. Your permission will be requested before any study is begun until your child reaches the age of 18 years. In each case your permission and consent will be required before any study is begun.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your child's participation in this focus group. Your child will be asked to disclose their personal, and sometimes private, opinions about the results of our study. Your child may find this stressful or displeasing and he/she may have unpleasant reactions to the questions. If your child does not want to answer any questions, he/she does not have to. All responses will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

Please note that even though we will not identify your child by name in our report or in notes we take during the focus group, your child's responses and input during the focus group will be made in the presence of other focus group members, some of whom may know your child. At the beginning of the focus group we will verbally remind all focus group participants to respect one another's privacy by not telling others who do not participate in the focus group what other participants said during the focus group.

BENEFITS: There is no benefit to your child as a result of being in this focus group.

COMPENSATION: Your child will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in this focus group.

COSTS TO YOU: There are no costs to you as a result of your child's participation in this focus group.

CONFIDENTIALITY The following procedures will be followed in an effort to keep your child's personal information confidential in this study: Your child's identity will be held confidential; i.e. your child's identity will be coded by a number, not by your child's name. The linking information is kept separate in a locked file and identifiers will be destroyed when the focus group is complete. All data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your child's identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation of the results of this research.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; your child's personal information may be disclosed if required by law. This means that there may be rare situations that require us to release personal information about your child, e.g., in case a judge requires such release in a lawsuit or if your child tells us of his/her intent to harm him/herself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

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Expiration Date: 9/22/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

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To ensure that this research activity is being conducted properly, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHP (Office for Human Research Protections) have the right to review study records, but confidentiality will be maintained as allowed by law.

SUBJECT RIGHTS Your child's participation in this focus group is voluntary. You do not have to allow your child to be in this focus group if you don't want him/her to participate. You have the right to change your mind and remove your child from the focus group at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. Any new information that may make you change your mind about allowing your child to be in this focus group will be given to you. You will get a copy of this Permission form to keep. You do not waive any of your or your child's legal rights by signing this permission form. Participating or not participating in this focus group will not influence your child's status with the juvenile drug treatment court.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT If you have any questions about the focus group, you may contact Dr. Linda Francis at 631-444-3174 or Ms. Pamela Linden at 631-444-3696. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a research subject, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, (631) 632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this permission form, and you would like your child to participate in this focus group.

Subject Name

Subject Signature Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

IRB Approved: 10/7/06
Expiration Date: 9/27/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

**YOUTH ASSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A FOCUS GROUP
RESEARCH PERMISSION FORM (for Minor Subjects)**

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

You are being asked to be in a focus group.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are doing a focus group to share the findings of our research in which we interviewed about 45 youth in four Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts in New York State. We are interested in your opinions about the findings of this study.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you and your parent/guardian agree, you will participate in one focus group that will last approximately one and one-half to two hours. We will ask you questions about your opinions of our findings. The focus group will take place on a date, time and location that is convenient for you.

The focus group will be audiotaped. Your name will not be on the audiotapes. You will be given a code number instead of using your name. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

You may be asked to participate in other research studies in the future. Your permission and your parent/guardian's permission will be requested before any study is begun.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Please note that even though we will not identify you by name in our report or in notes we take during the focus group, your responses and input during the focus group will be made in the presence of other focus group members, some of whom may know you. At the beginning of the focus group we will verbally remind all focus group participants to respect one another's privacy by not telling others who do not participate in the focus group what other participants said during the focus group.

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Tel: (631) 444-2138



IRB Approved: 10/17/06
Expiration Date: 9/22/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

1

To ensure that this research activity is being conducted properly, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHRP (Office for Human Research Protections) have the right to review study records, but confidentiality will be maintained as allowed by law.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your participation in this focus group. You will be asked to talk about personal, and sometimes private, opinions about the results of our study. You may find this stressful or displeasing and you may have unpleasant reactions to the questions. If you do not want to answer any questions, you do not have to. Everything you say during the focus group will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

BENEFITS: There is no direct benefit to you as a result of being in this focus group.

COMPENSATION: You will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in the focus group.

COSTS TO YOU: You will not have to pay anything to be part of this focus group.

YOUR RIGHTS: The fact that you are in this focus group will be kept a secret. You don't have to be in this focus group if you don't want to be. You can change your mind at any time and leave the focus group without any problem and without telling us why. Participating or not participating in this focus group will not influence your status with the juvenile drug treatment court.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this focus group, you can ask your parents, or talk to the study investigator, Dr. Linda Francis, 631-444-3174. If you want to talk to someone about whether or not you have to be in this focus group, or about other things about this focus group that you don't want to talk over with your parents or the study investigator, you can call Ms. Judy Matuk, 631-632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read this form and you would like to be in this focus group.

Subject Name

Subject Signature Date

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Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

IRB Approved: 10/27/06
Expiration Date: 9/27/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook 3

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

**CONSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A FOCUS GROUP**

CONFIDENTIAL

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

You are being asked to be in a focus group.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are conducting a focus group with current and former Juvenile Drug Treatment Court participants to share the findings of our interviews with about 45 Juvenile Drug Treatment Court youth. We are interested in learning the opinion of current and former Juvenile Drug Treatment Court participants regarding the findings. You are eligible to participate in this focus group because you are, or have been, a participant in a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court in New York State.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you agree, you will be part of a focus group. You will participate in a focus group with other current or former Juvenile Drug Treatment Court participants. The focus group is expected to take approximately one and one half to two hours. It will be held at a date, time and location convenient to you.

The focus group will be audiotaped. Your name or other identifying information about you will not appear on the audiotapes. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

During and after your participation in this focus group, you may be asked to consider participating in other research studies in the future. Your permission will be requested before any study is begun.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your participation in this focus group. You will be asked to talk about your opinions regarding the findings of the study. If you do not want to answer any questions, you do not have to. All responses will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

Please note that even though we will not identify you by name in our report or in notes we take during the focus group, your responses and input during the focus group will be made in the presence of other focus group members, some of whom may know you. At the beginning of the focus group we will verbally remind all focus group participants to respect one another's privacy by not telling others who do not participate in the focus group what other participants said during the focus group.

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BENEFITS: There is no benefit to you as a result of participating in this focus group.

COMPENSATION: You will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in this focus group.

COSTS TO YOU: There are no costs to you as a result of your participation in this focus group.

CONFIDENTIALITY Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. This means that there may be rare situations that require us to release personal information about you (e.g., in case a judge requires such release in a lawsuit or if you tell us of your intent to harm yourself or others, including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse). The following procedures will be followed in an effort to keep your personal information confidential in this focus group: We will not write your name on any forms related to the focus group. Your identity will not be revealed in any report regarding the focus group.

To ensure that this research activity is being conducted properly, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHP (Office for Human Research Protections) have the right to review study records, but confidentiality will be maintained as allowed by law.

SUBJECT RIGHTS Your participation in this focus group is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this focus group if you do not want to. You have the right to change your mind and remove yourself from the focus group at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. Any new information that may make you change your mind about being part of the focus group will be given to you. You will get a copy of this permission form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. Participating or not participating in this focus group will not influence your status with the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court program.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT If you have any questions about the focus group, you may contact Dr. Linda Francis at 631-444-3174 or Ms. Pamela Linden at 631-444-3696. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, (631) 632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this consent form and you would like to participate in this focus group.

Subject Name

Subject Signature Date

IRB Approved: 10/17/06
Expiration Date 9/27/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

IRB Approved: 10/17/06
Expiration Date: 9/27/07
CORIHS, SUNY Stony Brook

Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
RESEARCH PERMISSION FORM (for Parents/Guardians of Minor Subjects)**

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

The child under your care (hence called "your child") is being asked to take part in a research study. You are being asked to allow your child to be a volunteer in a research study.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are doing a study to learn about individuals' experiences in the Juvenile Intervention Court program. We are collecting information for research purposes only from a total of 45 juvenile intervention court petitioners in four courts in New York State - Suffolk County, Harlem, Erie County and Monroe County. Your child is eligible to participate in this study because he/she is currently a Juvenile Intervention Court petitioner.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you and your child agree, your child will be part of a research study. Your child will be interviewed one time for approximately one and one-half to two hours. This interview will involve questions about your child's experiences with the juvenile intervention court that he/she is currently participating in. We will conduct the interview in a private area of the courthouse. Information about your child will also be obtained from official court records.

Your child's interview will be audiotaped. His/Her name or other identifying information about him/her will not appear on the audiotapes, but rather will be labeled with code numbers instead. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

During and after your child's participation in this study, your child may be asked to consider participating in other research studies in the future. Your permission will be requested before any study is begun until your child reaches the age of 18 years. In each case your permission and consent will be required before any study is begun.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your child's participation in this study. Your child will be asked to disclose private details about him/herself. Your child may find this stressful or displeasing

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and he/she may have unpleasant reactions to the questions. If your child does not want to answer any questions, he/she does not have to. Your child may take breaks. All responses will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

BENEFITS: There is no direct benefit to your child as a result of being in this study, but the information obtained from this study may help to improve services to juvenile court petitioners in the future.

COMPENSATION: Your child will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in the interview.

COSTS TO YOU: There are no costs to you as a result of your child's participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY The following procedures will be followed in an effort to keep your child's personal information confidential in this study: Your child's identity will be held confidential; i.e. your child's identity will be coded by a number, not by your child's name. The linking information is kept separate in a locked file and identifiers will be destroyed when the study is complete. All data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your child's identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation of the results of this research.

To help us protect your child's privacy we have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality (COC) from the National Institutes of Health. A COC is needed because sensitive information will be collected during the course of the study. This certificate will help researchers avoid involuntary disclosure that could expose subjects or their families to adverse economic, legal, psychological or social consequences. With this Certificate, the researchers cannot be forced to disclose information that may identify your child, even by a court subpoena, in any federal, state, local or civil criminal, administrative, legislative or other proceedings. The researchers will use the Certificate to resist any demands for information that would identify your child from individuals not associated with the conduct or monitoring of the research study, except as explained below.

The Certificate cannot be used to resist the demand for information from personnel of the federal Department of Health and Human Services used for auditing or evaluation of federally funded projects.

You should understand that a Certificate of Confidentiality does not prevent your child or a member of your family from voluntarily releasing information about him/herself or your child's involvement in this research. If an insurer, employer or any other person obtains your written consent to receive research information, then the researchers may not use the Certificate to withhold that information.

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The Certificate of Confidentiality does not prevent the researchers from disclosing voluntarily, without your consent, information that would identify your child as a participant in the research project under the following circumstances:
If your child tells us of his/her intent to harm him/herself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

As a result of being in this study identifiable health information about your child may need to be used, generated, and/or reported for the purposes outlined in this consent form, and/or as required by law. Federal law protects your right to privacy concerning this information. As such, there is certain specific information you need to know.

Individually identifiable health information (IIHI) under the federal privacy law is considered any information from your child's medical record, or obtained from this study, that can be linked to your child and that relates to your child's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition. The following IIHI will need to be used, generated or disclosed (reported) for the purpose of this study: Information from your child's court record, including dates and types of petitions, frequency and outcomes of urinalysis test, frequency and types of sanctions and rewards imposed by the court, mental health diagnostic information, substance use, abuse, and diagnostic information, educational and treatment participation and treatment compliance.

Your child's IIHI will be shared with any person or agency when required by law, and with:

- the research team for this study;
- Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, and/or applicable officials of SBU; and/or
- the federal Office of Research Protections for the purpose of assessing compliance associated with the conduct of this study.

Use and disclosure of your child's health information will be necessary for an indefinite period of time. You need to know that some of the individuals or groups referenced above may not be obligated to protect the confidentiality of your child's IIHI under certain federal laws and your information could be shared with others without your permission, if required by law.

You have the right to revoke (withdraw) your authorization for the use or disclosure of your child's IIHI at any time in writing. If you revoke this authorization, your child may no longer participate in this research activity. Revoking your authorization means that all access to, and collection of, your child's IIHI will be halted, unless the information concerns an adverse event (bad effect) your child experienced related to the study. Your child's IIHI that was collected before you withdrew your authorization can continue to be used and reported.

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When you sign the consent form at the end, it means that you have read this section and have authorized the use and disclosure of your child's individually identifiable health information in the manner explained above.

SUBJECT RIGHTS Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to allow your child to be in this study if you don't want him or her to participate. You have the right to change your mind and remove your child from the study at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. Any new information that may make you change your mind about allowing your child to be in this study will be given to you. You will get a copy of this permission form to keep. You do not waive any of your or your child's legal rights by signing this permission form. Participating or not participating in this study will not influence your child's status with the juvenile intervention court.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH

SUBJECT If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Linda Francis at 631-444-3174 or Ms. Pamela Linden at 631-444-3696. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a research subject, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects at (631) 632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this permission form, and you would like your child to participate in this study.

Subject Name

Subject Signature Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

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Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

**YOUTH ASSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
RESEARCH PERMISSION FORM (for Minor Subjects)**

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

You are being asked to be in a research study.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are doing a study to learn about people's experiences in the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court program. We will be interviewing about 45 youth in four Juvenile Intervention Court programs in New York State.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you and your parent/guardian agree, you will be interviewed one time for approximately one and one-half to two hours. We will ask you questions about your experiences with the Court, school and home. The interview will be done in a private area in the courthouse. We will also get some information about you from official court records.

The interview will be audiotaped. Your name will not be on the audiotapes or on any of your interview forms. You will be given a code number instead of using your name. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

You may be asked to participate in other research studies in the future. Your permission and your parent/guardian's permission will be requested before any study is begun.

At any time you may choose not to participate in this study without any negative consequences to you. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Participating or not participating in this study will not influence your status with the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your participation in this study. You will be asked to disclose private details about yourself. You may find this stressful or displeasing and you may have unpleasant reactions to the questions. If you do not want to answer any

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questions, you do not have to. You may take breaks. Everything you say will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

To ensure that this research activity is being conducted properly, Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects and/or applicable officials of SBU, OHP (Office for Human Research Protections) have the right to review study records, but confidentiality will be maintained as allowed by law.

BENEFITS: There is no direct benefit to you as a result of being in this study.

PAYMENT TO YOU: You will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in the interview.

COSTS TO YOU: You will not have to pay anything to be part of this study.

YOUR RIGHTS: The fact that you are in this study will be kept a secret. You don't have to be in this study if you don't want to be. You can change your mind at any time and leave the study without any problem and without telling us why.

QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions about this study, you can ask your parents, or talk to Dr. Linda Francis at 631-444-3174 or Ms. Pamela Linden at 631-444-3696. If you want to talk to someone about whether or not you have to be in this study, or about other things about this study that you don't want to talk over with your parents or Dr. Francis, you can call Ms. Judy Matuk at 631-632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read this form and you would like to be in this study.

Name

Signature Date

Name of Person Obtaining Assent Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent Date

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Stony Brook University
Health Sciences Center

School of Social Welfare

**CONSENT
TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

Project Title: The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court
Principal Investigator: Linda Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, School of Social Welfare
Co-Investigators: Pamela Linden, MSW, Doctoral Candidate, School of Social Welfare

You are being asked to be in a research study.

PURPOSE OF STUDY: We are doing a study to learn about individuals' experiences in the Juvenile Intervention Court program. We are collecting information for research purposes only from a total of 45 juvenile intervention court petitioners in four courts in New York State - Suffolk County, Harlem, Erie County and Monroe County. You are eligible to participate in this study because you are, or have been, a Juvenile Intervention Court petitioner.

STUDY PROCEDURES: If you agree, you will be part of a research study. You will be interviewed one time for approximately one and one-half to two hours. This interview will involve questions about you experiences with the juvenile intervention court that you are a petitioner in, or you have been a petitioner in. We will conduct the interview in a private area of the courthouse. Information about you will also be obtained from official court records.

This interview will be audiotaped. Your name or other identifying information about you will not appear on the audiotapes, but rather will be labeled with code numbers instead. Only the researchers will have access to the audiotapes. The audiotapes will be stored in the researcher's locked file cabinet at Stony Brook University. The audiotapes will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study by crushing and shredding.

During and after your participation in this study, you may be asked to consider participating in other research studies in the future. In each case, your permission and consent will be required before any study is begun.

RISKS / DISCOMFORTS The following risks/discomforts may occur as a result of your participation in this study. You will be asked to disclose private details about yourself. You may find this stressful or displeasing and you may have unpleasant reactions to the questions. If you do not want to answer any questions, you do not have to. You may take breaks. All responses will remain confidential except where the law may require disclosure.

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Tel: (631) 444-2138



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BENEFITS: There is no benefit to you as a result of being in this study, but the information obtained from this study may help to improve services to juvenile court petitioners in the future.

COMPENSATION: You will be given a \$10.00 gift certificate to a sporting goods or music store for participating in the interview.

COSTS TO YOU: There are no costs to you as a result of your participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY The following procedures will be followed in an effort to keep your personal information confidential in this study: Your identity will be held confidential; i.e. your identity will be coded by a number, not by your name. The linking information is kept separate in a locked file and identifiers will be destroyed when the study is complete. All data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation of the results of this research.

To help us protect your privacy we have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality (COC) from the National Institutes of Health. A COC is needed because sensitive information will be collected during the course of the study. This certificate will help researchers avoid involuntary disclosure that could expose subjects or their families to adverse economic, legal, psychological or social consequences. With this Certificate, the researchers cannot be forced to disclose information that may identify you, even by a court subpoena, in any federal, state, local or civil criminal, administrative, legislative or other proceedings. The researchers will use the Certificate to resist any demands for information that would identify you from individuals not associated with the conduct or monitoring of the research study, except as explained below.

The Certificate cannot be used to resist the demand for information from personnel of the federal Department of Health and Human Services used for auditing or evaluation of federally funded projects.

You should understand that a Certificate of Confidentiality does not prevent you or a member of your family from voluntarily releasing information about you or your involvement in this research. If an insurer, employer or any other person obtains your written consent to receive research information, then the researchers may not use the Certificate to withhold that information.

The Certificate of Confidentiality does not prevent the researchers from disclosing voluntarily, without your consent, information that would identify you as a participant in the research project under the following circumstances:
If you tell us of your intent to harm yourself or others (including reporting behaviors consistent with child abuse).

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As a result of being in this study identifiable health information about you may need to be used, generated, and/or reported for the purposes outlined in this consent form, and/or as required by law. Federal law protects your right to privacy concerning this information. As such, there is certain specific information you need to know.

Individually identifiable health information (IIHI) under the federal privacy law is considered any information from your medical record, or obtained from this study, that can be linked to you and that relates to your past, present or future physical or mental health or condition. The following IIHI will need to be used, generated or disclosed (reported) for the purpose of this study: Information from your court record, including dates and types of petitions, frequency and outcomes of urinalysis test, frequency and types of sanctions and rewards imposed by the court, mental health diagnostic information, substance use, abuse, and diagnostic information, educational and treatment participation and treatment compliance.

Your IIHI will be shared with any person or agency when required by law, and with:

- the research team for this study;
- Stony Brook University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, and/or applicable officials of SBU; and/or
- the federal Office of Research Protections for the purpose of assessing compliance associated with the conduct of this study.

Use and disclosure of your health information will be necessary for an indefinite period of time. You need to know that some of the individuals or groups referenced above may not be obligated to protect the confidentiality of your IIHI under certain federal laws and your information could be shared with others without your permission, if required by law.

You have the right to revoke (withdraw) your authorization for the use or disclosure of your IIHI at any time in writing. If you revoke this authorization, you may no longer participate in this research activity. Revoking your authorization means that all access to, and collection of, your IIHI will be halted, unless the information concerns an adverse event (bad effect) you experienced related to the study. Your IIHI that was collected before you withdrew your authorization can continue to be used and reported.

When you sign the consent form at the end, it means that you have read this section and have authorized the use and disclosure of your individually identifiable health information in the manner explained above.

SUBJECT RIGHTS Your participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. You have the right to change your mind and remove yourself from the study at any time without giving

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any reason, and without penalty. Any new information that may make you change your mind about being part of the study will be given to you. You will get a copy of this permission form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. Participating or not participating in this study will not influence your status with the juvenile intervention court.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY OR YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Dr. Linda Francis at 631-444-3174 or Ms. Pamela Linden at 631-444-3696. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Ms. Judy Matuk, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, (631) 632-9036.

If you sign below, it means that you have read (or have had read to you) the information given in this consent form and you would like to participate in this study.

Subject Name

Subject Signature Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent _____
Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent

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Appendix F. Participant Recruitment Flyer

**The School of Social Welfare at
Stony Brook University is looking for
volunteers to be interviewed for a
research study:**

**YOUTH PERSPECTIVE OF JUVENILE
DRUG TREATMENT COURT**

MUST BE:

- 12 - 22 YEARS OLD
- A CURRENT OR FORMER JUVENILE DRUG
TREATMENT COURT PARTICIPANT
- ENGLISH SPEAKING

**IF UNDER 18, PARENTAL/GUARDIAN
CONSENT NECESSARY**

**EACH INTERVIEWED PERSON WILL
RECEIVE A \$10.00 GIFT
CERTIFICATE TO A SPORTING
GOODS OR MUSIC STORE**

If interested, call:

**Pam Linden at Stony Brook University
631-444-3696 OR 631-444-3697**

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Appendix G. Preliminary Codes

Linden Initial List of Codes "The Youth Perspective of Juvenile Treatment Courts"

Activity	I changed/different now
Affective commitment	inauthentic behavior change
changed schools	Interactional commitment
cheat drug test	judge
cheerleader	keep them guessing
continued drug/alcohol use	limit testing
continued violations before jdtd	new prosocial bonds
deflection	person
deflection-solution	place
Delinquent behavior	Potency
deviant peer group protective	previous court experience
deviant peer network	recommend jdtd
deviant social norms	reflected appraisal
drug addiction/abuse/use	Salience
enter court choice	second chance
Evaluation	self esteem
expectation of adult responsibility	Self-sentiment
failure in school	sever deviant ties
family makeup	still around drugs
Family strife	successes
future aspirations	turning point
hobby/activity	