

# Crossover Youth

Presented by  
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Summit County Juvenile Court



# What is a Crossover Youth?

- Also referred to as a dually involved or dually adjudicated youth
- Involved with both the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare System
- Can be a youth who engages in delinquent behavior while involved with child welfare
- Can be a child who is adjudicated delinquent and is then discovered to be abused neglected and dependent
- Both scenarios create challenges for the Court, Probation Staff, Child Welfare Worker and the Guardian ad Litem

# Learning Objections

- To gain understanding of the increased risks of youth in the child welfare system of becoming involved in the Juvenile Justice System
- To learn strategies to assist youth who are at risk of “crossing over.”
- To learn practices that Courts and parties can engage in to best serve crossover youth.

# What do we know about crossover youth?

- They are often in the child welfare system for *long periods of time*.
- They are more likely to be *female* as compared to the general delinquency population.
- *Minorities*, particularly African Americans, appear to be overrepresented.
- Most are *placed out of the home* and often experience multiple placements.
- They are often *truant* and/or *performing poorly in school*.

# GOALS:

- Increased communication among agencies.
- Increased cooperation, coordination, and integration of
- Increased use and development of joint assessments.
- Increased collaboration in case planning and case management.





# GOALS:

- Increase family and youth engagement.
- Improve school attendance and performance.
- Decrease recidivism in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems.
- Decrease length of stay in detention.
- Decrease disproportionate minority contact.
- Reduce of out-of-home placement.



# Why Do Youth Crossover?



- There is a link between maltreatment and delinquency
- Trauma
- Numerous placements can lead to delinquency
- Kinship vs. Foster Care vs. Group Home

## Treatment upon Delinquency Adjudication

- Youth in the custody of a child welfare agency are less likely to go home
- Less likely to be placed on probation
- More likely to be sent to a residential placement/facility





How can we  
approach  
youth as a  
system?



- Interagency Collaboration:
  - Child welfare
  - Juvenile Justice
  - Behavioral health treatment providers
  - Schools
  - Legal Defenders
  - Prosecutors

# What are some things that can help?



- Communication between systems when possible
- One judicial officer assigned to handle all cases involving a single family
- Conferences to assure that all agencies are aware of what others are doing so that youth and family receive clear directives

# All Cases Heard by a Single Judicial Officer



- Goal is to have dually involved youth have their delinquency and dependency, neglect & abuse court hearings conducted before **one Judge** (or Magistrate).
- The approach allows judicial officers to become thoroughly familiar with the needs of the children and families, the efforts made over time to address those needs and the complexities of each family's situation.
- Families benefit by having greater familiarity with the judicial decision maker and courtroom; as well as, from not having to repeatedly share their stories with a series of changing judicial officers.
- Consistency in expectations
- Avoid duplication of requirements of youth and family

# How does the CASA fit in?



- The CASA is the voice for the best interests of the child
- The CASA may have the best relationship with the child
- The attorney for the child has a different function and the CASA can provide assistance and support in assuring an outcome that is in the best interests of the child
- The CASA is not responsible for representing the child in the Delinquency case---that is the job of defense counsel

# The CASA/GAL Role

The CASA/GAL role in Crossover cases (DN/DL) is very similar to the role in Dependency cases(DN)

- Continue monthly visits
- Complete a court report
- Advocate for the child's best interest
- Attend meetings for the case
- Be prepared to participate in the meeting and discuss the youth's strengths, weaknesses, services, and areas that need improvement



# What does the Court want to learn from the CASA?



- Is there a parent or guardian who can assist the child?
- What is the stance of child welfare as to the offense and consequence?
- Pre-Adjudication: Are the decisions that the child is making in his or her best interests?
- Disposition:
  - What does the child need to be rehabilitated?
  - What supports does the child have?
  - What has assisted/not assisted in the past?
  - What happened to this child that may assist all involved in understanding their behavior?
  - What is the CASA recommending regarding custody?



# What should a CASA be asking?



- Will I be notified if a child I am representing receives a delinquency charge? By whom?
- What kind of information can I gather in the scope of my appointment?
- What can I share with law enforcement? The prosecutor? The defense attorney?
- Can I discuss the charges with the child and/or parents?

# What should I do if..



- What can I do if I see signs that the child may be engaging in or considering unruly and/or delinquent conduct?
  - Advocate for counseling services that will assist the child
    - Trauma focused care
    - Treatment for substance use
    - Advocate for pro-social activities for the youth
    - Ask for a Court Review Hearing or and in camera interview to provide information to the Court who may be able to Order services through the Child Welfare case
    - Is there a kinship placement that might reduce the risks of delinquent behavior
    - Is the youth in the proper educational setting?

## Some things to think about:

- The information a youth provides to his/her attorney is protected by attorney-client privilege. Communications with the GAL are not.
- I can make recommendations but the decision as to how to resolve a delinquency complaint is up to the child.
- The Juvenile Justice System favors informal processing whenever possible. How do I advocate for diversion for a child?
- What does the current placement need to continue to provide a safe and stable environment for the child?

Questions?

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# Some Resources:

- Crossover Youth Practice Model, Georgetown University
  - <https://cjjr.georgetown.edu/our-work/crossover-youth-practice-model/>
- Dually Involved Youth, Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice
  - <https://rfknrcjj.org/resources/dual-status-youth/>