

Juvenile Drug Courts: Strategies in Practice

- 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, no 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 effects that court proceeding 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 appropriated 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.