



# LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

To foster prevention and reduction of juvenile crime; respond to the needs of the victim; promote community safety, restoration and development; empower youth and their families through the interaction of the court.



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# **LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

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## **SUPPORT STAFF**

Annette M. Haftl	Stephanie L. Anewalt	Ramona Vreeland	
Jane E. Fenstermaker	Helen Rivera	Milagros Ruiz-Estremera	Lisa Whitcomb

## **COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE WORK SERVICE PART TIME POSITIONS**

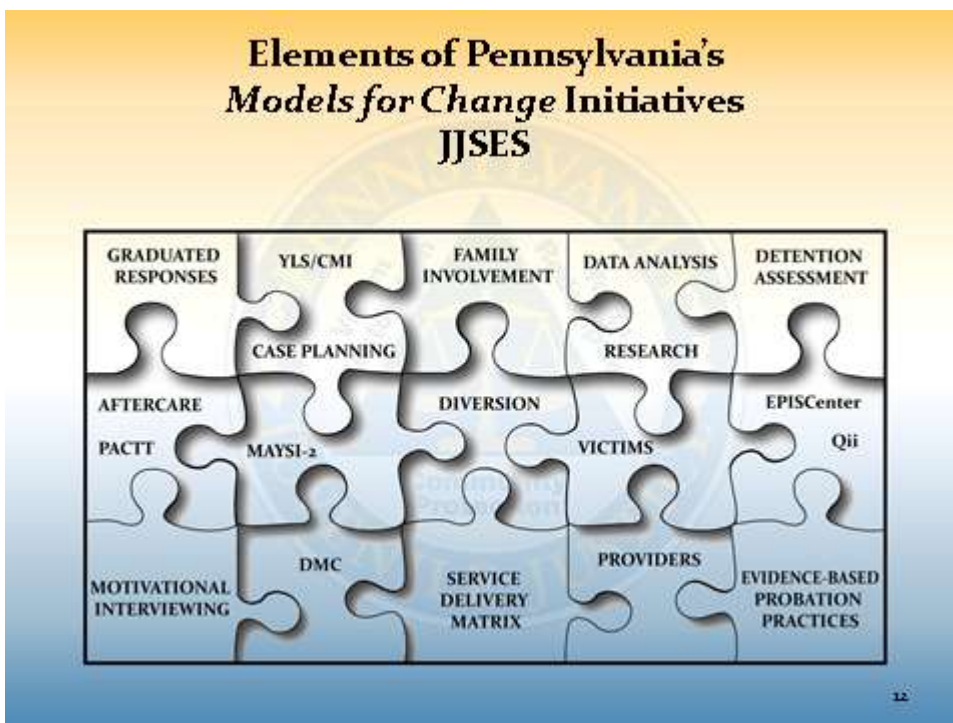
Donald J. Martin	Yazmin Ramos	Zachary Maslany	Ed Deitzer
Jerome Neely			

## 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

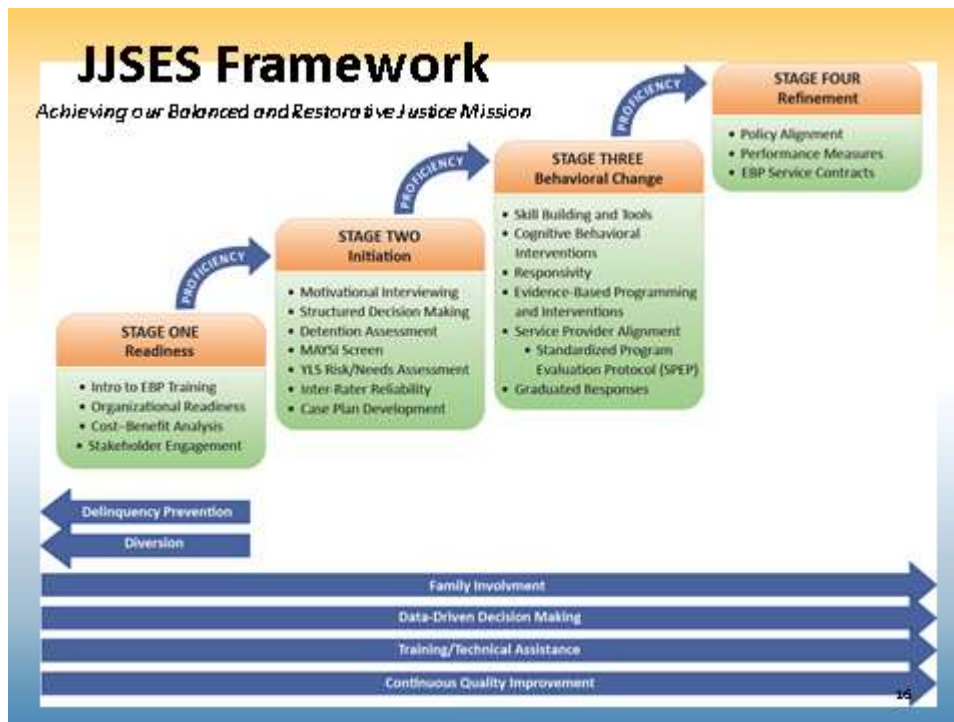
The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department was intensively engaged in many activities and initiatives during 2011. If we were uncertain about the sustainability of the system enhancements efforts previously, there was no doubt that these changes were here to stay. In addition to the initiatives, our department developed internal processes to not only improve in-house operations, but also to successfully implement the many Rules of Juvenile Court Procedures and other legislative changes made throughout the year.

Lehigh County is often considered one of the progressive leaders throughout the state and our contribution to the many moving pieces throughout our system only demonstrated our commitment and dedication to this reputation. At the same time, the significant amount of training that we had will only increase our proficiency in supervision strategies and enhance our outcomes.

Balanced and Restorative Justice remains the mission of the Juvenile Justice System. Its core principals of accountability, competency development and community protection are the framework for the work that we continue to do. Pennsylvania's work with the MacArthur Foundations Models for Change proved highly successful and had many moving pieces. Lehigh County Juvenile Probation was involved in many of these activities. As noted in the prior annual report our department was engaged in the following: YLS/CMI, Detention Assessment and JDAI work, Aftercare, Motivational Interviewing, Case Planning, attention to victims, and diversion efforts through the School Justice and Community Justice Panels. The introduction of evidence based probation practices propelled our department and the state toward the development of a framework in order to successfully train and implement the significant traction underway.



Our department, similar to other counties, struggled with the challenges these many moving pieces presented. How were we to transform the pieces into a comprehensive strategy, to include training and an understanding on the "why" for these changes? A state leadership team was formed and Lehigh County was represented as part of the team. This allowed our county to benefit from learning many of the strategies around organizational change. It also provided a structure as outlined in the framework below, for implementation of the various activities. Our department was fully entrenched in the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy underway in Pennsylvania.



Through training, awareness of the depth of research in the area of juvenile justice, and attention to quality assurance, our department embraced these changes, while asking the proper questions when necessary. We participated in the regional evidence based forum where county representatives learned about the latest research and the initiatives expected as part of our grant in aid process.

Our department has been instrumental in implementing policies and procedures to be successful in our Balanced and Restorative Justice Mission, and the newly developed JJSES mission statement:

***We dedicate ourselves to working in partnership to enhance the capacity of Pennsylvania’s juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative mission by:***

- ***Employing evidence based practices with fidelity at every stage of the system;***
- ***Collecting and analyzing the data necessary to measure the results, and with this knowledge;***
- ***Strive to continuously improve the outcomes of the decisions, programs, and services***

The Juvenile Probation Department formed an evidenced based practices steering committee, which developed an action plan with established goals to help move our department forward. Our department updated our mission statement:

***We are dedicated to working with juvenile offenders, their families, victims and the community by utilizing evidence based practices and balanced and restorative justice to build competencies, reduce recidivism, restore victims and protect the community.***

While actively involved in all of the JJSES work, we continued to improve our daily operational processes, some of which include:

- Designed training and evaluation methods to improve accuracy of data gathered;
- Improved the collection of data and outcomes of our case closing forms;
- Reviewed outcomes so as to make data driven decisions within department;
- Improved our nonpayment process;
- Continued efforts to advance better decision-making as it pertains to detention decisions;
- Improved upon use of Detention Risk Assessment;
- Advanced the use of Detention Alternatives;
- Continued system collaboration with Children and Youth, Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol, police departments, and local school districts;
- Continued attendance at truancy hearings with MDJ's;
- Continued evening patrols and curfew contacts with police;
- Reassessment of our Underage Drinking program;
- Continued focus on writing missing policies or updating to existing ones;
- Focus on victim notification;
- Increased focus on provider outcomes and incidents that occur while in placement;
- Transitioning of many documents to electronic format

We anticipate that 2012 will be as active a year as 2011, with an increased focus on data collection and evaluation; and attention to the subject of recidivism. The work in the various initiatives will continue.

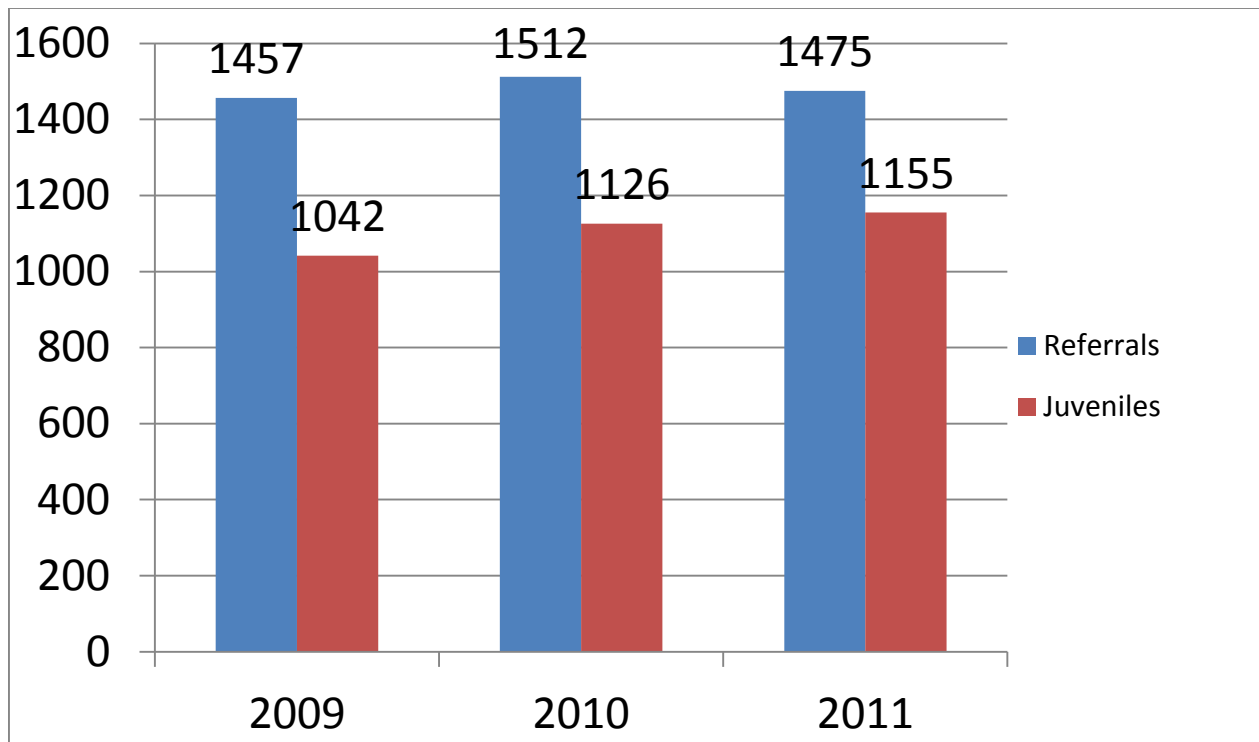
## **Data Collection**

As noted last year, the Juvenile Probation Department converted their data from a county operated system to the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS) in March of 2010. There was also a renewed effort to assure the accuracy of data entry in compliance with State standards. The Probation Department has made significant improvements in this area, and is pleased with the progress we have made with data entry. There is much more consistency and fewer mistakes. This has resulted in dependable reports that management can use in their decision making process. Support staff has done particularly well in improving the quality of data entered into the system.

One of the consequences of converting our old data to the new system and making corrections is that previously reported statistics have been changed and updated. For example, violations of probation were always included as a type of referral to the department in previous years. This year's report excludes violations from the total number of referrals and it amends the totals from previous years. We subtracted all the violation of probation youth from our totals too.

## **Number of Referrals vs. Number of Youth**

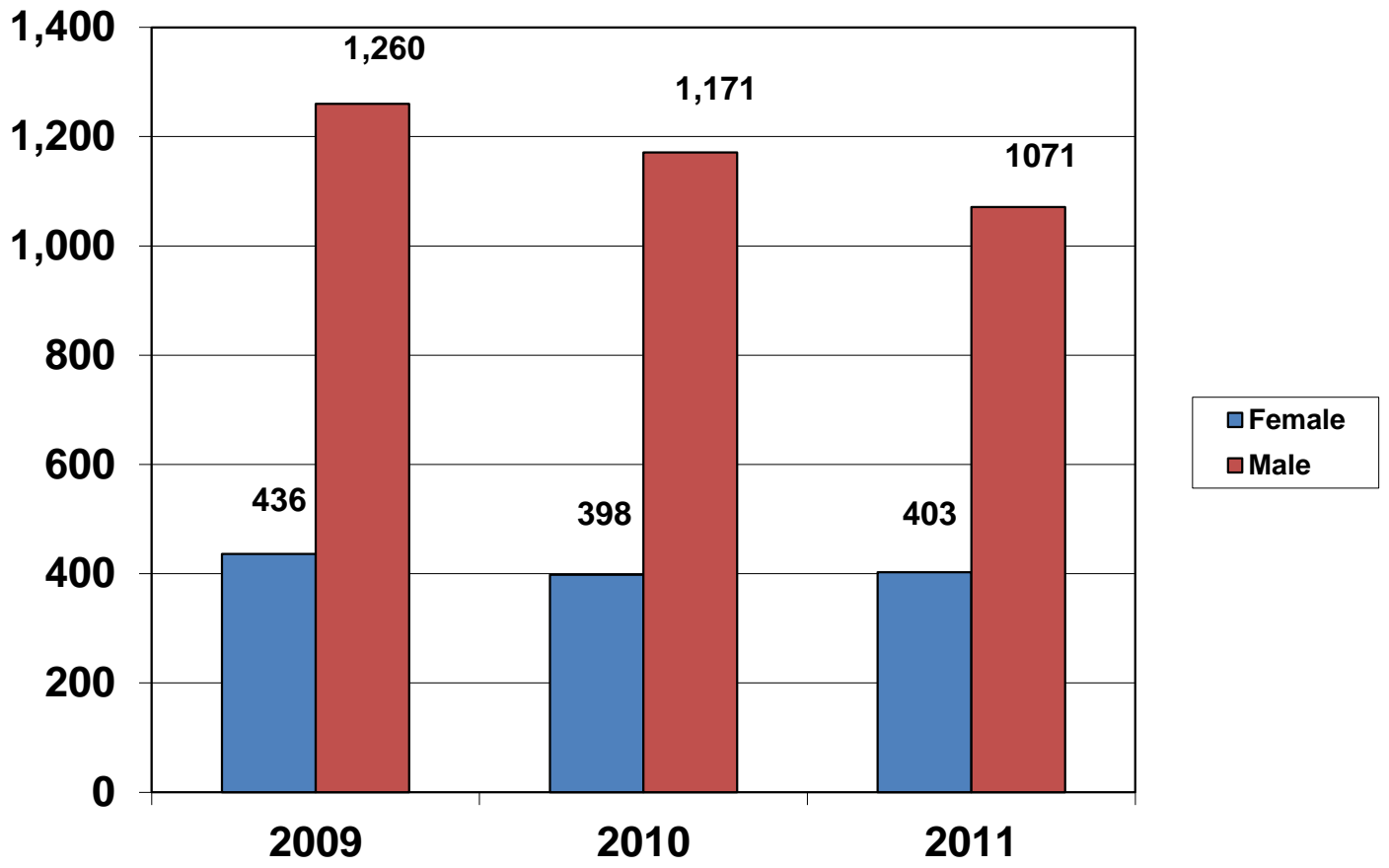
The following chart reflects the total number of cases and youths referred to our department for the past three years. Juveniles referred for multiple cases are only counted once. The number of youth referred to our department and the number of referrals reached their apex around 2004-2005 and have been trending down in subsequent years. Referrals were down slightly (-2%) from the previous year, but we received 29 more juveniles. As noted last year, the ratio between juveniles and referrals has consistently closed. Last year it increased to 78%, a 4-point gain, meaning we had fewer juveniles referred for multiple offenses in the same year. In 2005, this ratio was 61%.



### Number of Youth by Gender

The ratio of male to female clients does not fluctuate much from year to year. Therefore, the 2% increase in allegations for females is worth noting. Females were over represented in violent offenses like assaults on teachers (44%), disorderly conduct for fighting (45%) and harassment (31%). We also received referrals for nonpayment of fines on disorderly conduct for females at the rate of 49%. The other category of offense that teenage girls commit more than their male counterparts is retail theft. Last year, females were referred for 66% of all retail thefts.

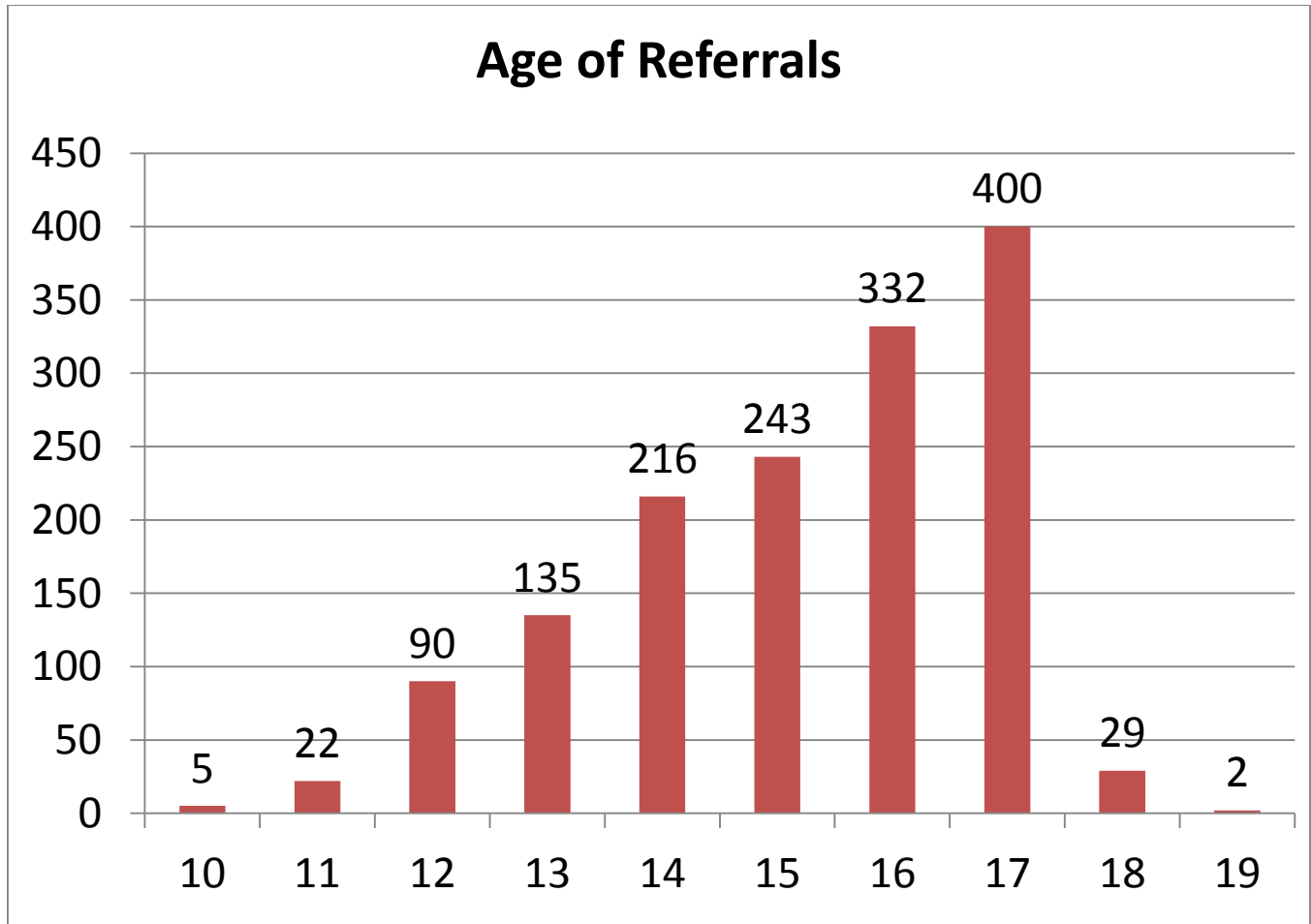
The numbers below previously included violations of probation. They no longer do.





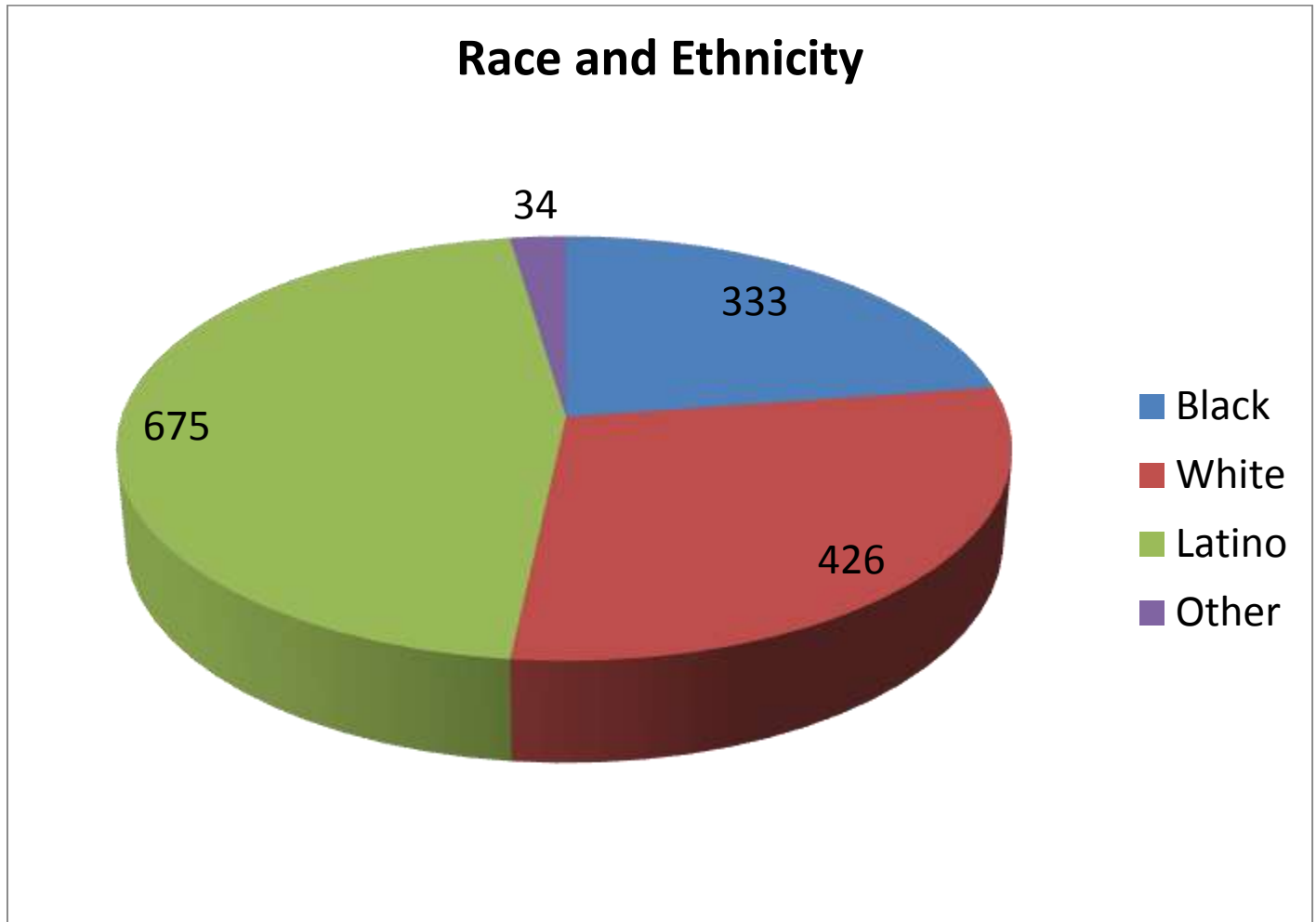
## Referrals by Age

The breakdown of youth referred based on their ages remains consistent. Sixteen and seventeen year olds constitute a little less than half of all our referrals. This is the same as the preceding year. We are especially interested in tracking the age of our most youthful offenders, the ten to thirteen age groups. Research indicates a higher risk to reoffend for youth engaged in delinquent activity at a younger age. Last year, this group accounted for 17% of all referrals; this just slightly higher than 2010. Lehigh County's percentages are very similar to those of the rest of the state.



## Race and Ethnicity

Our department has given more scrutiny to our demographics especially in comparing the percentage of minority youth being referred to the percentage of those detained, receiving services and placed. Last year, Latino youths represented 46% of all juveniles referred. This is identical to 2010. Referrals for White youth increased 2% to 29%, and the percentage of Black youth has remained relative unchanged for the past five years at 22 to 23%.



## Significant Offenses Referred

There was a 13% decrease in the offenses listed in the chart below from the previous year. The only crimes referred more frequently in 2011 compared to 2010 were aggravated assault (+6%), burglary (+44%), drug dealing (+8%), possession of drugs (+9%), and weapon offenses (+15%). In contrast, serious sexual offenses dropped off precipitously (-71%) from last year's aberration of 59 such offenses. Referrals for robberies offenses decreased by 30%. Simple assaults were down 19% and thefts by 24%.

## Significant Offenses Referred

Offenses	2009	2010	2011
<b>Aggravated Assault</b>	88	72	77
<b>Arson</b>	4	13	8
<b>Burglary</b>	58	50	72
<b>Criminal Mischief</b>	86	84	78
<b>Drug Dealing Offenses</b>	58	52	56
<b>Possession of Drug Charges</b>	136	168	183
<b>Robbery</b>	68	108	76
<b>Serious Sexual Offenses</b>	9	59	17
<b>Simple Assault</b>	319	335	270
<b>Terroristic Threats</b>	65	52	42
<b>Theft</b>	265	316	240
<b>Weapons Charges</b>	64	66	76
<b>Totals</b>	1220	1375	1195

## Referral Sources

The majority of police departments referred less juveniles last year compared to the preceding year. The Allentown Police Department is the primary source of referrals to our department. They referred 55% of all our police referrals last year. This was almost exactly the same percentage as the previous year. Whitehall Police provides the second most referrals, 10%.

Other departments showed significant change in cases referred to our department. South Whitehall referrals almost doubled, and Bethlehem Police returned to more average number compared to the previous year's spike in referrals. PSP Bethlehem sent approximately 50% more referrals last year. Interestingly, PSP Fogelsville referrals have decreased three consecutive years. We received 50% less referrals from them in 2011 compared to their all time high in 2008.

<b>Referral Source</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Alburtis</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Allentown</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>572</b>
<b>Berks Lehigh</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PSP-Bethlehem</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Bethlehem</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Catasauqua</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Coopersburg</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Coplay</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Emmaus</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>PSP-Fogelsville</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Fountain Hill</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Macungie</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Salisbury</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Slatington</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>South Whitehall</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Upper Saucon</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Whitehall</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>

## Types of Disposition

2009 and 2010 data for this section was taken from the Juvenile Court Judges Commission Disposition report. 2011 data was not available at the time of this report. Informal Adjustment increased primarily because of this being the primary way we disposed of nonpayment cases. Approximate two-thirds of the Informal Adjustments were for nonpayment cases. It should be noted that the placement data is based on the disposition of new allegations. It does not include placements that were the result of any type of review hearing. Another 47 placements resulted from review hearings. This typically means it was a consequence of a violation of probation.

<b>Disposition</b>	<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>		<b>2011</b>
<b>Informal Adjustments</b>	<b>246</b>		<b>217</b>		<b>240</b>
<b>Consent Decrees</b>	<b>155</b>		<b>191</b>		<b>177</b>
<b>Probation</b>	<b>382</b>		<b>352</b>		<b>392</b>
<b>Placement</b>	<b>173</b>		<b>154</b>		<b>149</b>

## Diversion Programs

First time offenders who are alleged to have committed less serious offenses are diverted to our Community Justice Panels. The panels are recruited, trained and facilitated by the Impact Project. Panels are comprised of community volunteers and serve in every part of the county, allowing juveniles to attend panels in their own communities. The panels handle both misdemeanor and summary offenses and referrals come from police, magisterial district courts and our department. School Justice Panels were initiated three years ago in the Allentown School District. The School Justice Panels utilize various professionals as panel members who assess each juvenile's circumstances and prescribe interventions to address their needs.

Referrals from our department to the Community Justice Panels decreased by 50%, but overall referrals increased. Like the previous year, the majority of referrals came directly from police departments. This may indicate that police departments have become more familiar with the panels and screening their own cases and determining if they are appropriate for diversion. The panels received 272 referrals overall.

It should also be noted that in March of this year we made a philosophical shift in how we supervise low-risk offenders. As such, we assigned one probation officer to manage these cases. These youth typically have one or two obligations to fulfill and then their case is closed. This probation officer initially supervised in excess of 60 youth who were primarily on Informal Adjustments and received 92 cases in the first year. However, as these youth quickly completed their requirements, this caseload became

much more manageable. The introduction of this position may also be contributing to our decreased referrals to the Community Justice Panels.

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>CJP cases referred</b>	<b># of cases accepted</b>	<b>Successful completions</b>
<b>2009</b>	104	96	49
<b>2010</b>	74	57	46
<b>2011</b>	37	30	26

## **Out of Home Services**

### **Detention**

Detention admissions continue to decline. There has been a 39% decrease in admissions during the span covered by the chart below. It is interesting to note that referrals to the department decreased by 15% during those same five years. The average time in detention increased by more than a day. One of the potential explanations is the increased use of electronic monitoring. There were 65 more youth placed on electronic monitoring last year compared to the preceding year. The 432 juveniles detained last year was the lowest number of juveniles admitted to secure detention since we began keeping records. Mental health cases continue to drive up the daily average.

<b>YEAR</b>	<b># of LCDH Placement</b>	<b># of Juveniles Represented</b>	<b>Average Time in LCDH (days)</b>
<b>2007</b>	706	551	16.70
<b>2008</b>	747	576	15.77
<b>2009</b>	670	529	15.57
<b>2010</b>	522	391	17.30
<b>2011</b>	432	329	18.42

## Placement

The table below represents juveniles in placement during a given year, not necessarily those committed those years.

	Private	State	Total
2011	221	138	337 (unduplicated youth)
2010	226	117	320 (unduplicated youth)
2009	206	93	299 (unduplicated youth)

## COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE WORK SERVICE (CAWS)

The Community Alternative Work Service Program has been in operation since 1983. The programs have gone through many modifications and additions since that time. Presently, the CAWS programs are organized as such: The CAWS I program represents the traditional concept of community service. We hold youth accountable for their offenses by the primary means. CAWS II is our Young Offenders Program. Youth who are under the age of fourteen participate in this educational program that highlights issues like personal responsibility, drug and alcohol use, and victim awareness. CAWS III is our restitution program. Juveniles perform community service and are credited for each hour they complete. Checks are sent to victims for this credited amount. CAWS IV is our competency development groups. Juveniles are assigned to our health care, culinary, 4-H, construction, and community activity groups that are led by our workcrew supervisors. Finally, we also operate a school suspension program. If a juvenile is suspended from school, they are expected to report to the department to perform community service.

### Highlights

CAWS has been the main vehicle by which our department has reached out and partnered with numerous organizations and municipalities over the years. The impression the community has of our department and its mission has generally been created through the efforts of our community service programs. Workcrews have been dispatched to all parts of the county. Hundreds of different worksites were utilized throughout the county to assure the completion of hours. Last year we employed 130 different worksites and projects to accomplish our goals.

We had 228 youth complete 3122 hours at the Allentown Recycling Center. That equates to almost 9 hours per day. Their hard work made it possible for us to generate over \$40,215 for our restitution program. This is approximately a 20% increase over the preceding year and is due to the improved recycling markets. As a result, the restitution fund presently stands at \$155,000.

The total amount of community service performed by juveniles who completed their community service this year was 24,199 hours. At the minimum wage, this would equate to over \$175,000 worth of labor that our youth gave back to the community.

Below are some of the more interesting projects completed this year:

- In 2011, 228 juveniles completed 3122 hours at the Allentown Recycling Drop-Off Center.
- Although a small number of juveniles completed their community service at the Mountainville memorial little league in 2011, they did a significant amount of work at that site. 284 hours were completed at the Mountainville Little League. Projects included field maintenance, custodial work, Allentown Fair set-up and working on their new playground
- Almost 200 hundred hours were completed at the Spring Valley Sportsman Club by thirty-four juveniles.
- Lehigh County Juvenile Probation very actively supports local food banks. WE continued to work at four local food banks: Grace Episcopal Food Pantry, Mosser Village Food Bank, Northern Lehigh Food Bank, Syrian Arab American Charity Association, 39 juveniles.
- 2011 saw the creation of the Juvenile Probation Summer Work Program in cooperation with the Children’s Home of Reading and the Delaware and Lehigh National heritage Corridor. This program would continue to work through the end of the summer of 2012.
- Sixty-nine juveniles completed 538 hours in the LCCC / CAWS 4 program.
- A significant amount of winter precipitation fell in 2011. “The Crew” winter snow removal program worked to remove snow from seniors' sidewalks and driveways.
- PO’s and juveniles on probation placed flags on the gravesites of deceased service members on Memorial Day. In addition, eleven juveniles participated in the Lehigh Valley Veterans History Project. This organization works to tell the stories of veterans through written and recorded media, keeping the stories and memories alive.
- PO Hammer supervised and coordinated the annual Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Clothing Drive.
- Twelve juvenile participated in the BAUM School of Art Program.
- Fifty-five juveniles participated in the Mentoring Program
- Fifty-six juveniles completed 729 hours of community service in the Stitches of Love program. The juveniles knit and loom hats and scarves for underprivileged families and newborn babies in need in Lehigh County.
- Sixty-nine juveniles completed the Young Offenders Program.

<b>CAWS TOTALS</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>ACCEPTED</b>	760	675
<b>CLOSED</b>	941	854
<b>HOURS COMPLETED</b>	28,112	24,199
<b>CAWS III TOTALS</b>		
<b>ACCEPTED</b>	89	74
<b>PAID \$</b>	\$25,436.70	\$23,511.37
<b># VICTIMS PAID</b>	98	105



## Department Programs

**College Mentoring:** Selected juveniles visit local colleges to receive help with homework, join activities, and learn about college enrollment.

**Community Justice on Wheels:** Community based probation officers have taken to the streets with a bicycle patrol to make home and school visits, enhances visibility in the community, and become more accessible for the neighborhood residents.

**Victim Advocate Unit:** Victim advocates address the needs and concerns of victims of juvenile crime and the juvenile probation officer assigned to the case.

**Community Outreach:** Juvenile probation representatives meet with civic and community organizations to provide information about services and encourage involvement from the community.

**Intensive Aftercare Services:** Private agencies assist the Juvenile Probation Department in supervising and counseling youth upon their return from a residential treatment program.

**School Based Probation:** Probation officers work in the schools and address issues related to academic performance and behavior and provide classroom presentations on the consequences for illegal behavior.

\*1992 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award\*

**Young Artist Program:** The Young Artist Program through the Baum School of Art provides art instruction to juveniles between the ages of 13 to 18 whom are under probation supervision in Lehigh County in order for them to realize their personal strengths and their self-esteem through their artistic talents. Under the direction of a professional art teacher, students engage in two hour art classes once a week for ten weeks.

**Firewood Program:** Selected juveniles are court ordered to perform their community service hours at the woodpile where they cut, split and stack firewood, which is then sold by the truckload. The proceeds are used to pay victims of juvenile crime.

**Alcohol and Drug Awareness:** Probation officers provide information in a group discussion setting concerning the social and legal implications of alcohol and drug abuse.

\*1998 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award\*

**S.P.O.R.E.:** Special Program for Offenders in Rehabilitation & Education is a collaborative program with the Lehigh County MH/MR Agency that provides both a probation officer and a mental health caseworker for youth in need of intensive supervision and MH/MR casework services.

\*1999 PA Juvenile Court Operated Program Award\*

## **Outcome Measures**

The Juvenile Probation Department has been recording and tracking outcome measures on closed cases since 2003. These outcomes serve somewhat as a report card on our department's activities. It enables us to ascertain how many juveniles completed probation successfully, how many were charged with direct file charges, how many juveniles violated their probation and how much restitution was collected, to name just a few of the areas. As we move forward, it is our intent to analyze this information more carefully, as well as a variety of other reports, in order to evaluate areas that need to be addressed or improved.

### **Outcome measures were completed on 688 juveniles last year**

- 79.1% of those juveniles completed supervision without committing a new offense
- 83% completed supervision without a judicial finding of a technical violation of probation
- Median length of time on supervision was ten months
- 91.5% of youth completed their community service obligation
- 64.1% made full restitution to their victims

## **Staff Training**

During 2011, the juvenile probation staff received training in the following areas:

- Evidence Based Probation
- The Carey Guides
- GPS
- CPR/AED/First Aid Training
- Gang Training
- Defensive Tactics Certification and Recertification
- YLS Booster Training
- Motivational Interviewing (large group, booster/small group work and tapes as well as supervisor coding training)
- Cyberstalking
- Excel Introduction
- Regional EGCIAGang Training
- New Trends in CBT
- Employment Law
- Employee Selection and Hiring Techniques
- Employee Discipline Process/RNS/ SPS/Office of Training
- Bath Salts
- Improving Effectiveness of JJ Programs and the SPEP
- JDAI trainings and webinars/various staff
- EBP Webinars
- EBP of Community Supervision
- JCMS trainings
- Systems of Care
- Control Tactics Instructors Course
- Managing Time and Priorities
- YLS Master trainer trainings