



LEHIGH COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION 2010 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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2010 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Juvenile Probation Department continued its transition to a new supervisory team during 2010. The staff continued to demonstrate its commitment and dedication to the mission of the department and was actively involved in departmental improvements. We adjusted quite well to the relocation of our new office space on the seventh floor and we continued to refine our understanding of our new case management system, JCMS. 2010 required us to evaluate many of our internal business processes, clarify how we collect data and develop reports to closely align with many of our new practices.

It became clear during 2010 that many of the changes or enhancements occurring within the juvenile justice system were going to be significant and affect not only our internal operations, but challenge what had been a consistent philosophical approach since 1996. Intensive focus was given to educating our staff on new methods to supervision of offenders, and on evaluating the most effective ways to meet our goals of community protection, accountability and competency development.

The implementation of the risk needs instrument continued through 2010. Lehigh County was one of the first ten counties to pilot the instrument. Training on the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) has been intensive and assisted by the National Youth Screening and Assessment Project. The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers were actively involved in the implementation strategies of this tool, which we soon understood would be the foundation to developing effective treatment plans for our youth. One of the many benefits to using a risk needs assessment is the ability to respond to the risks or criminogenic needs that are most closely associated with the risk of re-offending. We are proud that our county has been an active participant in piloting the YLS/CMI, and have identified several master trainers within the department to help guide this process.

Enhancements to our automated case plan were underway in 2010, and we expect to see this continue in the upcoming years. However, staff continued to be trained on the importance of good case planning. By prioritizing these domains from the assessment into a case plan, developed along with the juvenile and parent, this will have the greatest impact on future delinquent behavior while appropriately matching services.

During 2010, our department embarked upon embracing and implementing Motivational Interviewing. Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a communication style that assists people to resolve their ambivalence about change by focusing on their internal motivation and commitment. MI is a collaborative, person-centered form of guiding to elicit and strengthen motivation for change. Motivational Interviewing prepares youth and their families for change. MI will continue to be a major part of training in 2011.

The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department continued its work with the MacArthur Foundations' Models for Change initiative. In 2009, we received funding through the Foundation to develop School Justice Panels in the middle schools of the Allentown School District. During 2010, we educated many stakeholders about the panel process. This includes local police departments, magisterial district judges, and other system partners, many who participate as panelists. These panels, once fully implemented, will provide a pre-adjudication diversion where youth are held accountable but avoid penetration further into the juvenile justice system. The School Justice Panels will nicely complement the already existing, and highly successful, Community Justice Panels.

The Juvenile Probation Department successfully wrote a grant and received funding through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for the development of an Evening Reporting Center, which will be utilized as an alternative to secure detention. The Children's' Home of Reading was selected as the provider to operate the ERC and program implementation began during 2010. There is much work to be done to develop this program to its fullest capacity and this will be enhanced during 2011. Additionally, the concept of alternatives to detention is one that will require attention over the next several years, in order fully embrace the concept. Efforts will be made to demonstrate

that a reduction in secure detention can be done without compromising public safety and still hold youth accountable. ERC's in the Commonwealth have shown great promise to reduce secure detention numbers while providing programming. As part of the grant requirements for the ERC, the department began utilizing a detention risk instrument to provide a consistent, structured, and uniformed method to make our detention decisions. We are early in the process of understanding the impact of this detention risk assessment.

A significant part of the work done in our department during 2010 was our participation as a pilot county in the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers initiative, related to the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative. This opportunity was funded through the Annie E. Casey Foundation. JDAI promotes changes to policies, practices, and programs to reduce reliance on secure confinement, improve public safety, reduce racial disparities, save taxpayers' dollars, and stimulate overall juvenile justice reforms.

Although 2010 focused a great deal of attention on system changes, there was an equal amount of department improvements. Some of the work done during 2010 is highlighted below:

- Continued participation and facilitation of the Lehigh County Youth Crime and Violence Task Force. The mission of the task force is to facilitate a broad based approach to youth crime and violence issues in Lehigh County; that includes prevention, intervention and law enforcement, through communication, education and collaboration;
- Collaboration with the Allentown School District and the Office of Children and Youth in development of the Truancy Prevention Program within Lehigh County;
- Development and facilitation of the Shared Case Protocol for CY/JPO shared cases;
- Increased attention on accountability and quality assurance within the department;
- Awareness of the importance on data collection and development of various reports to assist in making data driven decisions;
- Presentation to the Lehigh County School Superintendents on educational challenges for youth who are system involved;
- Evaluated methods to improve budgetary operations and a cost- benefit analysis to make sure we are maximizing our placement funding by review of contracts, hourly vs per diem rates, and to increase our quality assurance with our residential and community based programs;
- Began cross training of staff and development of specialized manuals;
- Refining and improving the work done in collaboration with victim advocates and juvenile probation, in order to improve outcomes for victims;
- Development of a caseload policy and new format, to provide more consistent review and structure to the caseload review process;
- Continued work on developing an Expungement policy

We are proud of the hard work of our staff during 2010, in accepting the many challenges related to system changes, and in looking at opportunities for professional growth.

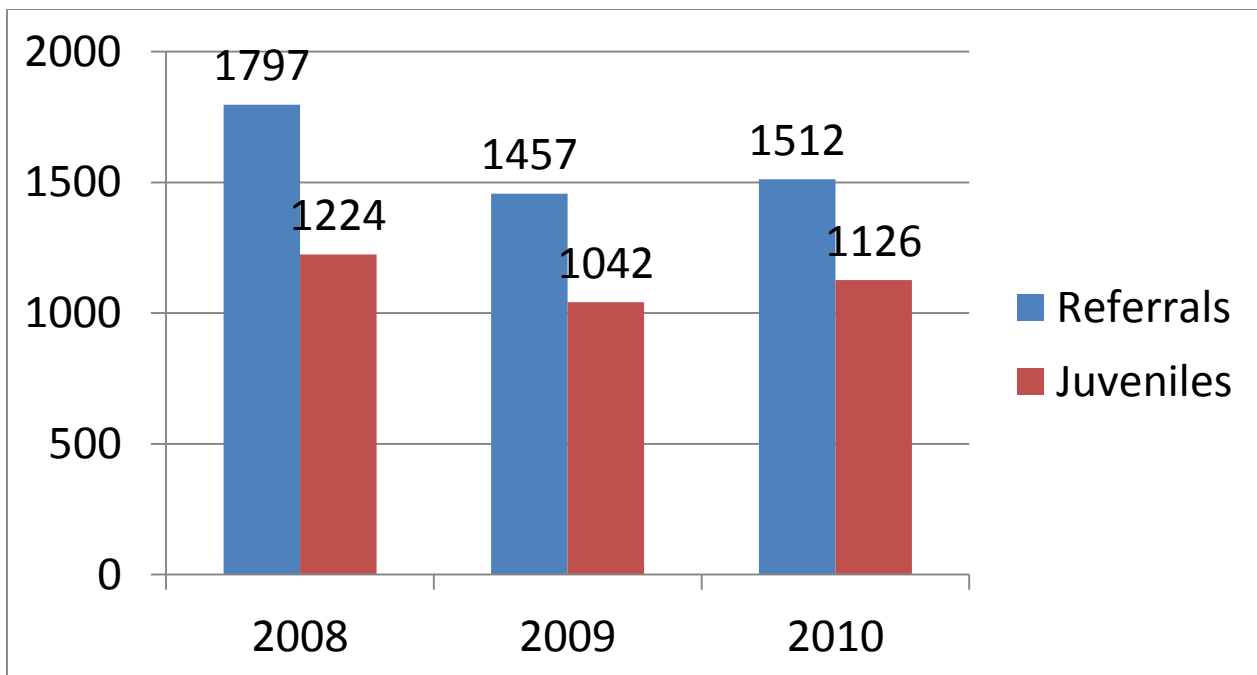
Data Collection

It should be noted that the Juvenile Probation Department converted their data from a county operated system to the Pennsylvania Juvenile Case Management System (JCMS) in March of this year. The implementation of this system and the greater attention paid to data entry has been impactful in a number of ways. First, it has caused us to reevaluate the manner in which some of the data was being collected and recorded. Second, it has brought Lehigh County into conformity with how data is being collected from other counties. Third, there has been a renewed effort to assure that data is entered correctly understanding the significance this data has for management in their decision making process. This requires constant vigilance and cannot be overemphasized. Too much depends upon this.

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. There was a slight increase in cases and juveniles in 2008. However, in 2009 our referrals decreased by 19%, and the total number of juveniles referred fell by 15%. In 2010, the number of referrals increased slightly, 4%, but the number of juveniles decreased by 8%. This seems to be trend that will be worth watching. It means that fewer juveniles are committing multiple offenses within the same year. In 2005, the ratio between juvenile and referrals was 61%. This has increased consistently. Last year it was 74%. That is very significant.

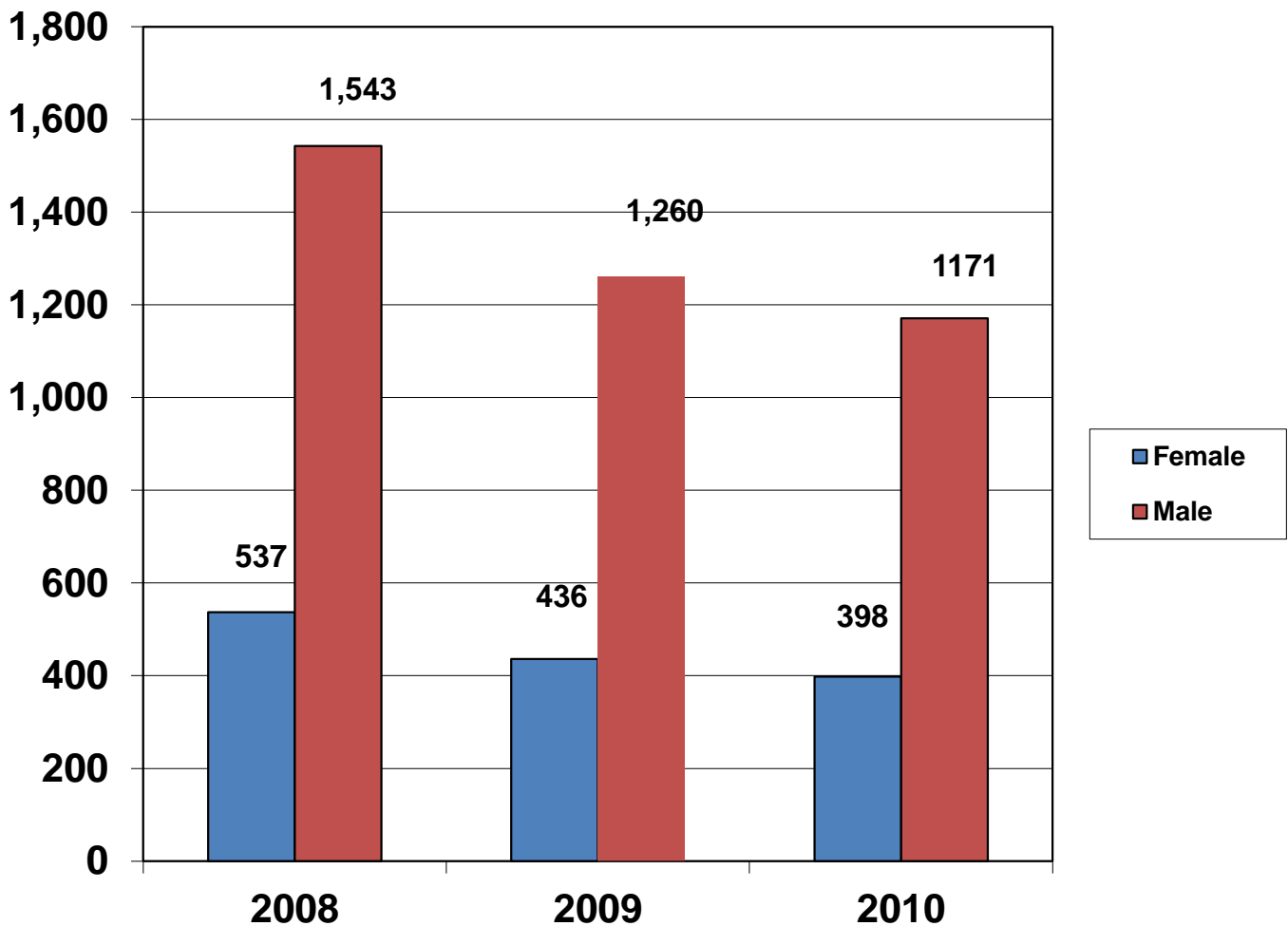


Number of Youth by Gender

The ratio of male to female clients has remained relatively unchanged the past couple of years. It is typically 75% males and 25% females, and that held true in 2010. It should be noted that the figures below are based on the gender of each referral. Juveniles who are referred on multiple occasions are counted for each case.

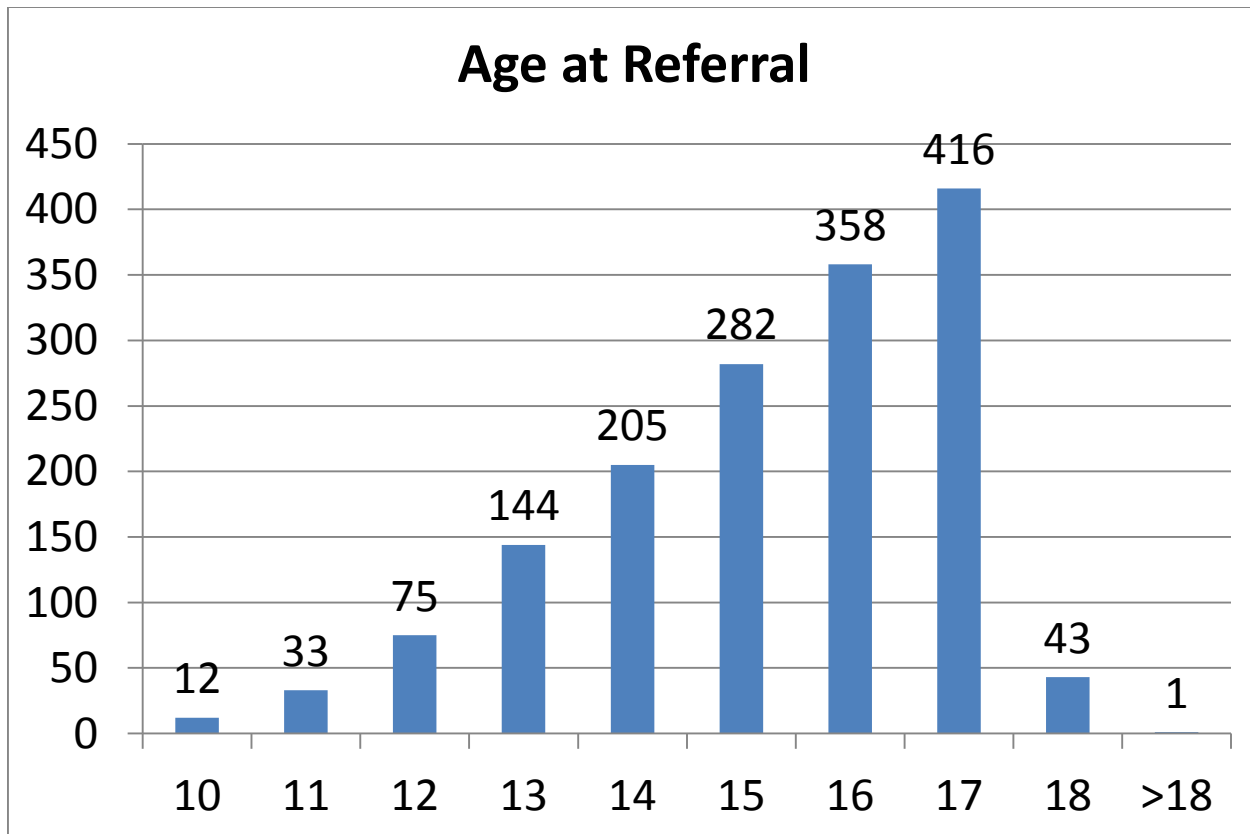
The percentage of females became elevated when we began receiving more referrals for Non-Payments. The male/female ratio was consistent, 80% male and 20% female. However, females are referred for Non-Payments of Costs, Fines at a higher rate compared to other offenses, and we received 361 of these types of referrals in 2010.

The numbers below are inclusive of all referrals including violations of probation.



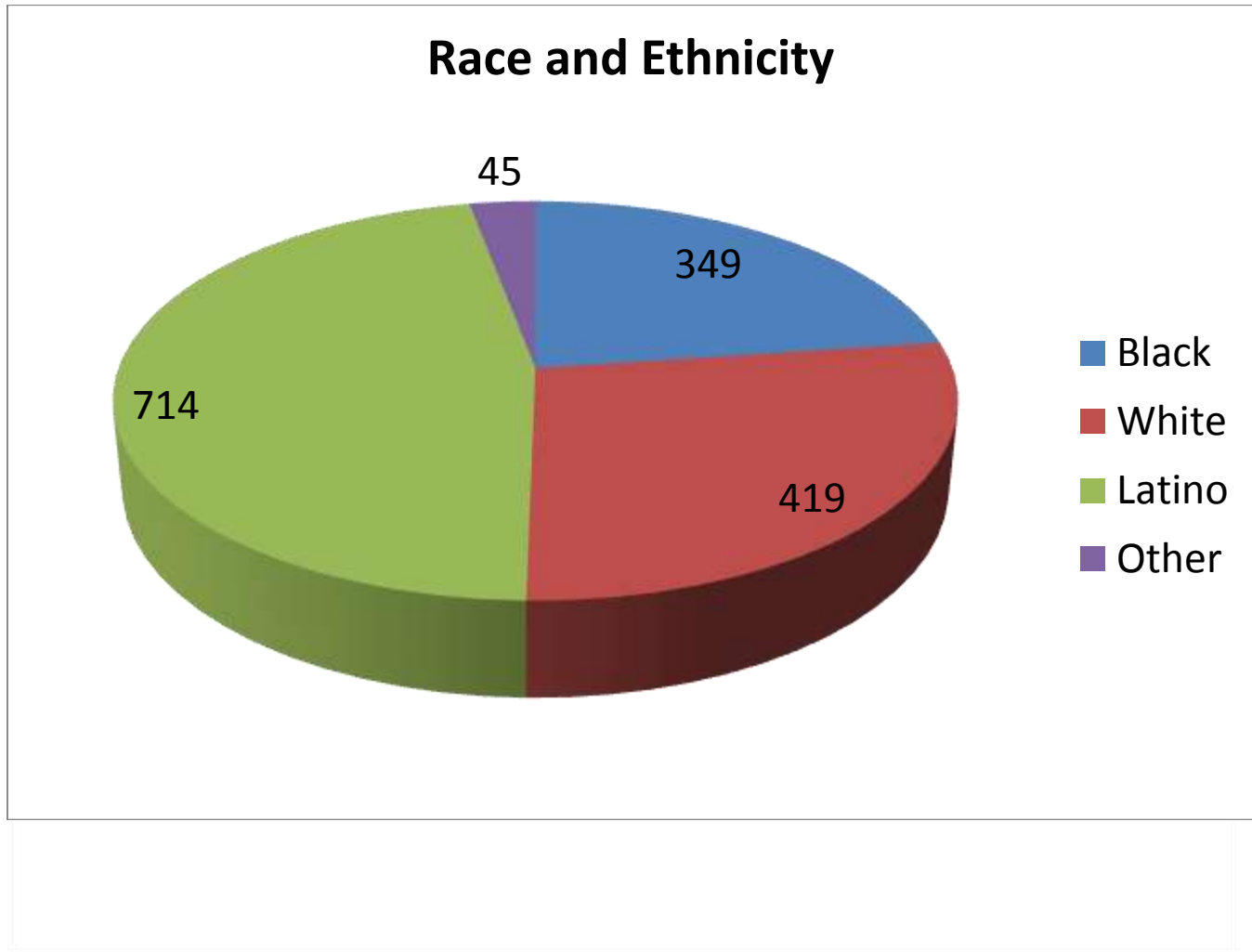
Referrals by Age

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, 49% last year. This is only 1% higher than 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 almost 17% of all referrals. This was a 1% decrease from 2009. Lehigh County's percentages are very similar to those of the rest of the state.



Race and Ethnicity

In recent years, the state has changed the categories of how race is reported by removing "Hispanic" as a choice. Hispanic/Latino is reported as a juvenile's ethnicity. Last year, Latino youths represented 46% of all juveniles referred compared to 27% for White youths and 22% for Black youth. The percentage of Black youth has remained unchanged for the past four years. There was a 3% increase in Hispanic youth from last year. White youth were referred 8% less than the previous year.



Significant Offenses Referred

There was a 13% increase in the offenses listed in the chart below from the previous year. This was attributed to significant increases in three offense categories. Robbery allegations increased 59% last year, and that is after posting a 66% in the previous year. Serious sexual offenses recorded the second highest total ever, and arson offenses were at their highest in five years, but it was still well off the all-time high of 54. Theft charges also showed an increase, but these numbers do tend to fluctuate from year to year. The concern for an increase in the types of crimes outlined above is that the juveniles who commit these offenses pose a greater risk to the community and typically require a long-term investment of our placement budget.

Significant Offenses Referred

Offenses	2008	2009	2010
Aggravated Assault	81	88	72
Arson	5	4	13
Burglary	68	58	50
Criminal Mischief	210	86	84
Drug Dealing Offenses	78	58	52
Possession of Drug Charges	151	136	168
Robbery	41	68	108
Serious Sexual Offenses	44	9	59
Simple Assault	351	319	335
Terroristic Threats	75	65	52
Theft	292	265	316
Weapons Charges	71	64	66
Totals	1467	1220	1375

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 54% of all our police referrals last year. This percentage of all police referrals increased 3% from the previous year and 1% from the year before that. Whitehall Police provides the second most referrals, 11%.

Other departments showed significant change in cases referred to our department. Bethlehem Police referred almost 80% more youth last year than in the previous year. The only other significant change from the previous year was the 38% decrease in referrals from the South Whitehall Township Police and 48% less from Slatington.

Referral Source	2007	2008	2009	2010
Alburtis	1	10	3	3
Allentown	712	653	507	554
Berks Lehigh	14	19	12	11
PSP-Bethlehem	62	31	40	45
Bethlehem	30	44	44	79
Catasauqua	16	20	19	15
Coopersburg	5	0	3	3
Coplay	1	2	4	6
Emmaus	54	66	40	42
PSP-Fogelsville	66	76	58	55
Fountain Hill	3	13	10	6
Macungie	4	7	7	2
Salisbury	27	44	18	13
Slatington	15	13	25	13
South Whitehall	89	59	61	38
Upper Saucon	36	21	22	14
Whitehall	132	124	95	113

Types of Disposition

The data in the chart below is based on dispositions on new allegations. It does not include these types of dispositions if they occurred at any type of review hearing. 2009 and 2010 data for this section was taken from the Juvenile Court Judges Commission Disposition report. There was a slight increase in Informal Adjustments, Consent Decrees and Placements last year compared to the previous year.

Disposition	2008		2009		2010	
Informal Adjustments	213	14%	218	14%	217	15%
Consent Decrees	181	12%	152	10%	191	13%
Probation	404	26%	382	25%	352	24%
Placement	240	16%	123	8%	154	10%
Totals	1525		1554		1473	

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 two 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 29%. The majority of referrals came directly from police departments. In previous years, most referrals came from our department. 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 238 referrals overall.

YEAR	CJP cases referred	# of cases accepted	Successful completions
2008	118	89	71
2009	104	96	49
2010	74	57	46

Out of Home Services

Detention

Detention information is another area that has been updated with the introduction of our new computer system. Thus, previous year's totals have been adjusted. Detention admissions continue to decline. There has been a 35% decrease in admissions during the span covered by the chart below. The average time in detention increase by approximately a half day. It is interesting to note that referrals to the department decreased by 20% during those same five years. 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.

YEAR	# of LCDH Placement	# of Juveniles Represented	Average Time in LCDH (days)
2006	801	619	15.03
2007	706	551	16.70
2008	647	485	17.26
2009	572	436	16.75
2010	522	391	17.30

Placement

The table below represents juveniles in placement during a given year, not necessarily those committed those years. The percentage of State vs. Private placement has stayed relatively the same. Total placements decreased almost 24% from the previous year. It should also be noted that weekend sanctions were utilized 14% less last year.

	Private	State	Total
2008	263	128	391 (unduplicated youth)
2009	206	93	299 (unduplicated youth)
2010	226	117	320 (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. It is the primary means by which we hold youth accountable for their offenses. 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.

CAWS has been the main vehicle by which our department has reached out and collaborated 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 336 youth complete 5591 hours at the Allentown Recycling Center. That equates to over 15 hours per day. Their hard work made it possible for us to generate over \$33,000 for our restitution program. There was much more stability in the recycling market this past year. At the year's end, our restitution account had approximately \$150,000.

The total amount of community service performed by juveniles who completed their community service this year was 28,112 hours. At the minimum wage, this would equate to over \$200,000 worth of labor that our youth gave back to the community.

We initiated the CAWS IV program to provide an opportunity for our youth to improve their competencies, expose them to unique experiences and positive role models. Early feedback has been very favorable and the department intends to continue to develop similar programs.

CAWS TOTALS	2009	2010
ACCEPTED	998	760
CLOSED	997	941
HOURS COMPLETED	24,889	28,112
CAWS III TOTALS		
ACCEPTED	96	89
PAID \$	\$54,415.91	\$25,436.70
# VICTIMS PAID	214	98

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, 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 517 juveniles last year:

- 80.9% of those juveniles completed supervision without committing a new offense
- 80.7% completed supervision without a judicial finding of a technical violation
- Median length of time on supervision was nine months
- 95% of youth completed their community service obligation
- 59.7% made full restitution to their victims

Staff Training

During 2010, the juvenile probation staff received training in the following areas:

- Educational Law
- PACTT
- JCMS
- Solutions Oriented counseling
- Defensive Tactics Certifications and Recertification
- SORNA
- YLS training
- Detention Risk Assessment
- Interstate Compact
- Motivational Interviewing
- National Summit on Gang Violence
- UAD training
- Communication: the Art of Influencing
- Sex and Drugs/various
- Youth Love Affair with Alcohol
- Evidence Based Probation
- The Carey Guides
- GPS
- CPR/AED/First Aid Training
- Gang Training
- Defensive Tactics Certification and Recertification
- YLS Booster Training
- Motivational Interviewing