

CENTER
FOR
COURT
INNOVATION

ANNUAL REPORT



Photo: Lauryn Gerstle

2012

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The Center for Court Innovation is a public-private partnership that works to reduce crime, aid victims, and improve public trust in justice. It pursues these goals through demonstration projects that test new approaches to justice, through hands-on training and technical assistance with criminal justice reformers around the world, and through the dissemination of cutting-edge research and ideas about how to improve the justice system. This report highlights some of the Center's key accomplishments in 2012, focusing on the Center's three core areas of work: demonstration projects, research, and expert assistance.

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

The Center's demonstration projects work to solve local problems and show new ideas in action. While these projects cover a broad range of topics—from juvenile delinquency to the reentry of parolees into society—the approach is always the same: rigorous, collaborative planning and an emphasis on using data to document results and ensure accountability.

Gun Violence

Trained mediators and former gang members intervened in over 44 cases of potential violence in 2012 as part of **Save Our Streets Crown Heights**, an anti-violence project that treats outbreaks of violence like epidemics of disease. The program, part of the **Crown Heights Community Mediation Center**, held over 20 peace marches, rallies, and events involving over 1,000 people and was featured by *CNN*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *The New York Times*. The Center's research department completed a comprehensive evaluation of the program, to be published in early 2013. With the help of the New York City Council, the Center also made strides toward launching a replication of the program in the South Bronx.

The **Brownsville Community Justice Center** launched the **Brownsville Anti-Violence Project** in August. A collaboration with Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, the New York Police Department, the Brownsville Partnership, and other agencies, the Anti-Violence Project organizes monthly “call-in” forums, where high-risk,

justice-involved individuals receive a targeted message that future violent behavior will be rigorously prosecuted at both the state and federal levels. Members of the community also attend the call-ins, explaining that individuals who need help integrating into the community as law-abiding citizens will be supported by the community, faith groups, and social service providers.

In September, the Anti-Violence Project was one of 15 programs to receive funding through the federal Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program. Denise E. O'Donnell of the U.S. Department of Justice, announced the grant at a press conference in Brownsville alongside New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York Loretta E. Lynch, and Brooklyn D.A. Hynes.

"Hot spots account for a disproportionate amount of crime and disorder in many communities," O'Donnell said. "Brownsville is a prime example of that dynamic and [the Brownsville Anti-Violence Project] is an innovative approach to address that problem."

The Brownsville Community Justice Center partnered with the New York City Department of Probation and Groundswell, an organization that uses art as a tool for social change, to design and paint a mural in a local park, and the project was featured in *The New York Times*; the Justice Center also hosted a visit from New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg during National Night Out Against Crime.



Photo: Gene Sorkin

New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly speaks at a press conference about the Brownsville Anti-Violence Project. Listening are, from left, Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, Bureau of Justice Assistance Director Denise E. O'Donnell, and U.S. Attorney Loretta E. Lynch.



The banner at the Red Hook Community Justice after Superstorm Sandy.

Photo: Brett Taylor

Red Hook

After Superstorm Sandy hit New York City, the staff of the **Red Hook Community Justice Center** was displaced from the building, which took on more than five feet of water. While cases were temporarily moved to the downtown courthouse, many staff members stayed in the neighborhood to participate in recovery efforts.

In a community where thousands of people were without water, heat, or electricity for weeks, the Justice Center helped keep local residents updated on the efforts being made to restore utilities and other services. Members of the **New York Juvenile Justice Corps**, the Center's AmeriCorps program, alongside volunteers from near and far, partnered with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, the New York City Housing Authority, the New York City Police Department, the Red Hook Initiative, the National Guard, and others to distribute food and water to residents in need.

The neighborhood's recovery was ultimately a collaborative, community-wide effort. In an open letter, Red Hook Community Justice Center Judge Alex Calabrese noted that "the people of Red Hook came together as a real community and assisted each other in every possible way ... sharing precious supplies of food, candles, water, and flashlights, and going door to door just to check on each other." Unlike some other areas affected by the storm, Red Hook did not suffer an increase in crime in the weeks that followed. With the help of New York City's Department of Citywide Administrative Services, the Justice Center was renovated over the course of several weeks and is now fully operational again.

Peacemaking

In 2012, the Red Hook Community Justice Center brought a traditional Native American approach to resolving conflicts in southwest Brooklyn. The Justice Center's new **Peacemaking Program** emphasizes restoring relationships by bringing together community volunteers, family members, and nonviolent offenders to discuss the problem and decide on an appropriate response. The program was informed by extensive research, including a national roundtable of tribal and state court practitioners.

In the fall, community volunteers underwent several months of training, including a two-day workshop led by peacemakers from the Navajo Nation. The program is expected to accept its first client in early 2013.



Photo: Robert V. Wolf

Navajo peacemakers Gloria Benally and Raymond Deal, second and third from right, train volunteers for the Peacemaking Program in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The new initiative applies a traditional tribal approach to cases referred by the Red Hook Community Justice Center.

Youth Programs

In an effort to improve the judicial response to 16- and 17-year-old offenders, the Center for Court Innovation helped the New York State Court System pilot the **Adolescent Diversion Program**. Currently, New York is one of only two states where 16- and 17-year-olds are treated as adults, even for non-violent offenses. Launched in nine counties, the Adolescent Diversion Program assigns cases to judges in criminal court who have received special training and have access to an expanded array of dispositional options, including age-appropriate services.

In New York City, the program built on the Center for Court Innovation's existing demonstration projects. For example, the community courts in Midtown, Red Hook, and the Bronx had already assembled networks of community-based, nonprofit partners that could serve as a foundation for the new initiative. In Queens and Staten Island, the initiative made use of **Queens Engagement Strategies for Teens (QUEST)** and the **Staten Island Youth Justice Center**, two Center demonstration projects that offer a range of youth and family engagement services—including specialized mental health programming—to young people charged with delinquency in family court. In Brooklyn, cases were screened first in Brooklyn Criminal Court and then referred to the Red Hook Community Justice Center, where adolescent clients received extensive services and monitoring.

From January 2012 to June 30, 2012, the Adolescent Diversion Program served 1,505 adolescents at the nine pilot court sites; researchers found that Adolescent Diversion Program participants were significantly less likely than comparison cases to be re-arrested for a felony. "The goal is to encourage non-criminal dispositions so ado-



New York City
Mayor Michael R.
Bloomberg in
Brownsville,
Brooklyn.

Photo: Ben Smith

lescents aren't saddled with permanent criminal records," said Judge Judy Harris Kluger, the court system's chief of policy and planning, who oversaw the pilot parts. The key is "to recognize that these are still kids, and there's a chance we can turn them around if we treat them in a different way."

Also in 2012, the **Youth Justice Board**, the Center's after-school program that brings together New York City high school students to study and propose solutions to public safety challenges, produced "Talking It Through: A Police-Teen Dialogue," a video that shows how positive communication can build stronger relationships between youth and law enforcement.

The Center runs seven community-based **Youth Courts** that train teenagers to serve as jurors, judges, and attorneys, handling real-life cases involving their peers. With support from the law firm of Skadden Arps, the Center hosted two training symposia to help teachers and administrators start youth courts in New York City high schools. And the **Attendance Achievement Program**, which works to improve the performance of chronically truant students, expanded into three new schools in the South Bronx.

Reentry

The **Parole Reentry Court**, at the **Harlem Community Justice Center**, has been responsible for a 19 percent reduction in recidivism among participants and, in 2012, it continued to help ex-prisoners reenter society. The court partnered with the Interfaith Center of New York to recruit volunteers. The court also established a new drop-in program as well as a new family component, which attempts to engage the family members of parolees as positive forces in the reentry process. And, in June, U.S. Department of Justice's Director of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Eugene Schneeberg gave the keynote speech at the graduation ceremony for 36 successful Reentry Court participants. The **Harlem Justice Corps**, a component of the New York City Young Men's Initiative, began working with justice-involved young people in September. The Corps is an intensive career development and service program; each participant is supported by a "life coach" as they work on community projects, life skills, and education.

Domestic Violence and Trafficking

Working to rethink the judicial response to women arrested for prostitution was an area of special focus for the Center in 2012. For example, at the **Midtown Community Court**, the Center's psycho-educational initiative works to help women escape exploitation and avoid re-arrest. Among other things, participants in the program use art to express what "the life" is really like. In 2012, the Museum of Modern Art displayed artwork from the participants as part of a special exhibition. Building on the Midtown model, planners from the Center helped to implement similar programs in the Bronx and Queens.

Mental Health

In 2012, the Urban Institute released an independent evaluation of the **Brooklyn Mental Health Court** that found that mental health court participants are significantly less likely to recidivate than similar offenders with mental illness who go through conventional court processing. The Mental Health Court celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2012; since opening, it has worked with 871 participants.

RESEARCH

Research, evaluation, and dissemination play an essential role in the Center for Court Innovation's brand of justice reform. The Center shares its knowledge in a variety of formats, from academic publications geared to a research audience, to how-to manuals for busy frontline justice system professionals, to op-eds intended for the general public.

Researchers from the Center completed a number of studies in 2012, including *The Impact of Integrated Domestic Violence Courts on Case Outcomes*, a statewide evaluation of New York's efforts to improve the judicial response to victims of domestic violence. A report on **QUEST Futures**, *Mental Health Services for Justice-Involved Youth*, found that the program—designed to reduce repeat offending by young people with mental illnesses by providing mental health assessments, treatment planning, service coordination, and family support—helped improve school attendance and behavior, as well as family and interpersonal relationships.



Photo: Groundswell

New York City Probation Commissioner Vincent Schiraldi speaks at the unveiling of a mural co-sponsored by the Brownsville Community Justice Center.

Publications

Articles and monographs by Center for Court Innovation authors that appeared in 2012 include:

TRIBAL

- The Indian Child Welfare Act: Improving Compliance through State-Tribal Coordination
- Peacemaking Today: Highlights of a Roundtable Discussion Among Tribal and State Practitioners
- Widening the Circle: Can Peacemaking Work in Non-Tribal Communities?

JUVENILE JUSTICE

- Youth Court Planning Guide
- Youth Court Training Curriculum
- Creating a Youth Court Operations Manual and Operations Manual Workbook
- The Adolescent Diversion Program in New York: A Reform in Progress
- The Police-Youth Action Plan
- Reducing Juvenile Detention: Notes from an Experiment on Staten Island

MENTAL HEALTH

- Mental Health Services for Justice-Involved Youth: A Process and Outcome Evaluation of QUEST Futures

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE

- Procedural Justice From the Bench: How Judges Can Improve the Effectiveness of Criminal Courts
- The New York State Residents Survey: Public Perceptions of New York's Courts

COMMUNITY JUSTICE

- Minding the Elephant: Criminal Defense Practice in Community Courts
- New York City Community Cleanup: The Impact of a Program for Low-Level Offenders
- 'The Public Wants to be Involved': A Roundtable Conversation about Community and Restorative Justice

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Prostitution Diversion Programs
- The Impact of Integrated Domestic Violence Courts on Case Outcomes: Results for Nine New York State Courts



The Center's Tribal Justice Exchange works to promote information sharing between tribes and state courts.

- The Suffolk County Integrated Domestic Violence Court: Policies, Practices, and Impacts
- The Erie County Integrated Domestic Violence Court: Policies, Practices, and Impacts
- Litigant Perspectives in an Integrated Domestic Violence Court: The Case of Yonkers, New York

REENTRY

- Reentry Court Tool Kit: A Guide for Reentry Court Practitioners

DRUG COURTS

- Multi-Site Evaluation Demonstrates Effectiveness of Adult Drug Courts
- The Nassau Juvenile Treatment Court: Program Outcomes and Impact Evaluation
- Addiction, Treatment, and Criminal Justice: An Inside View of the Brooklyn Treatment Court
- The Impact of Adult Drug Courts on Crime and Incarceration: Findings from a Multi-Site Quasi-Experimental Design

INTERNATIONAL

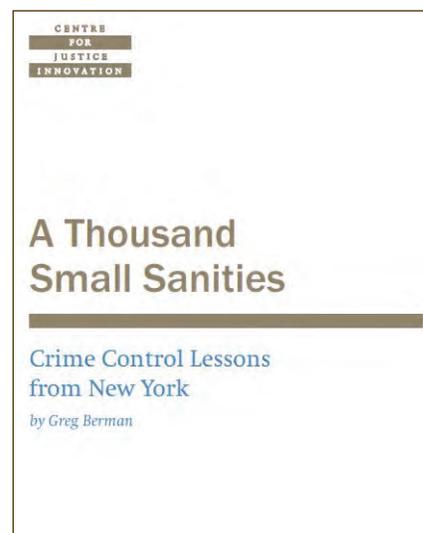
- A Thousand Small Sanities: Crime Control Lessons from New York
- Going It Alone: The Story of the Intensive Alternative to Custody Pilots
- From the Ground Up: Promising Criminal Justice Projects in the U.S. and the U.K.
- Payback with a Purpose
- Combining Research and Practice: The Center for Court Innovation's Approach to Justice Reform

CRIME PREVENTION

- Diverting Shoplifters: A Research Report and Planning Guide
- Law Enforcement and Public Health: Sharing Resources and Strategies to Make Communities Safer

Podcasts

New Thinking, the Center's award-winning podcast series, profiles innovative reform projects and creative practitioners and academics from across the country and around the world. In 2012, interviews with judges, researchers, and other practitioners in the field covered topics such as community restitution, prostitution diversion, and crime prevention through social network analysis. New Thinking episodes in 2012 included interviews with Yale sociologist Andrew Papachristos on gun violence, Heather Munro of the London Probation Trust on the challenges facing probation in England, and Mara Schiff of Florida Atlantic University on restorative justice.



A Thousand Small Sanities was the first publication released by the Centre for Justice Innovation in England.

EXPERT ASSISTANCE

The Center for Court Innovation provides hands-on, expert assistance to reformers around the world—judges, attorneys, criminal justice officials, and community organizations.

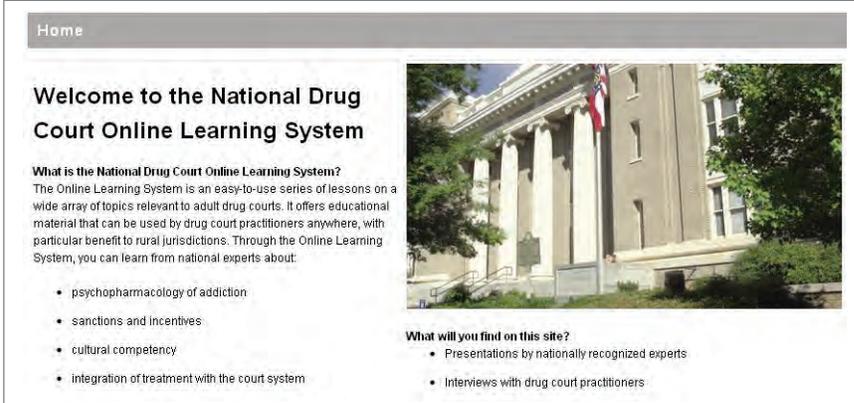
Community Courts

In February, the Center partnered with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance to convene Community Justice 2012: The International Conference of Community Courts. The conference drew over 300 attendees from seven countries and 75 cities to Washington, D.C. to learn about criminal justice reform strategies and research. Speakers included Assistant Attorney General Laurie O. Robinson, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy R. Gil Kerlikowske, Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance Denise O’Donnell, and Yale Law Professor Tom R. Tyler.

Center staff provided on-going assistance to a range of jurisdictions across the country, including the Washington, D.C. Superior Court, which adapted the community court model for the whole city. Center staff provided support to a planning team from several government and non-profit agencies—including the District of Columbia Superior Court, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and the Pretrial Service Agency—on such topics as engaging individual communities across the city, assessing client needs, streamlining court processes, facilitating community service in neighborhoods affected by crime, linking offenders to services, and measuring results.

Drug Courts

Aiming to make training accessible from anywhere, the Center created the National Online Learning System (www.drugcourtonline.org), an easy-to-use series of lessons on a wide array of topics relevant to adult drug courts. The system features virtual tours, interactive exercises, and videos from national experts on topics such as the psychopharmacology of addiction, sanctions and incentives, cultural competency, and the integration of treatment with the court system.



Home

Welcome to the National Drug Court Online Learning System

What is the National Drug Court Online Learning System?
The Online Learning System is an easy-to-use series of lessons on a wide array of topics relevant to adult drug courts. It offers educational material that can be used by drug court practitioners anywhere, with particular benefit to rural jurisdictions. Through the Online Learning System, you can learn from national experts about:

- psychopharmacology of addiction
- sanctions and incentives
- cultural competency
- integration of treatment with the court system

What will you find on this site?

- Presentations by nationally recognized experts
- Interviews with drug court practitioners

Created in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance, drugcourtonline.org provides free training at the click of a mouse.

Domestic Violence and Trafficking

In 2012, the Center became a technical assistance provider for the Office on Violence Against Women’s Court Training and Improvements Grant program. Center staff provided on-going technical assistance to 13 jurisdictions, including Atlanta, Georgia; St. Cloud, Minnesota; Dallas, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; and Ada County, Idaho.

The Center's annual Domestic Violence Court Open House took place in New York City in May. Participants visited Brooklyn's Integrated Domestic Violence Court and Family Justice Center. Forty-five participants from the following jurisdictions attended: DeKalb County, Georgia; Spring Valley, New York; the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Solano Superior Court; 17th Judicial Circuit Court of Winnebago County, Illinois; Thurston County, Washington; Northern California Tribal Court Coalition; Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation; Summit County Court of Common Pleas; and Dade County/Clayton County, Georgia.

International

The Center's London affiliate, the Centre for Justice Innovation, sought to promote local innovation in England, Wales, and Scotland.

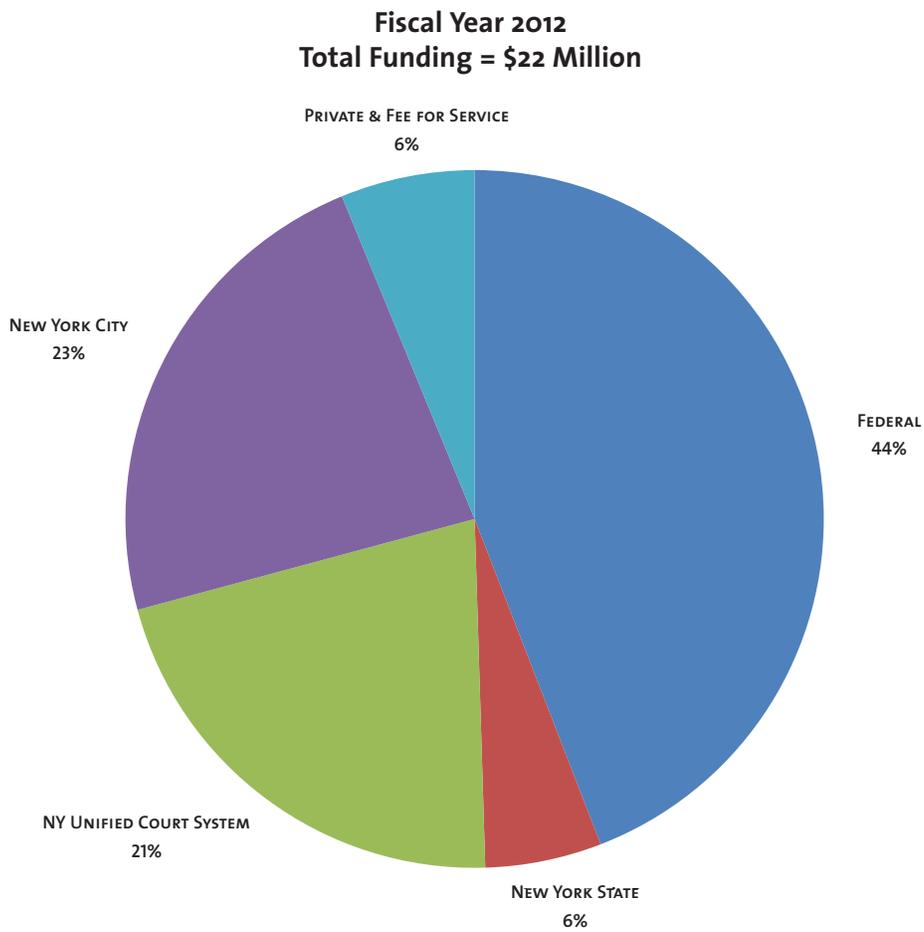
Through publications, consultations, and conferences, Centre staff translated lessons from justice practitioners in the U.S. for a British audience. *A Thousand Small Sanities: Crime Control Lessons from New York* outlined a series of public safety lessons for British reformers and was the subject of a conference in Scotland. *Payback with a Purpose* discussed the experience of practitioners in delivering more meaningful community restitution projects for offenders.

In October, the Centre hosted a four-day visit to New York by the London Probation Trust. The trip, which was designed to share best practices in probation supervision, included site visits to a number of the Center's demonstration projects, as well as to the New York City Department of Probation.

In addition to its work in the U.K., the Center entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Australian Centre for Justice Innovation, a project at Monash University Law School, to help support cutting-edge research and training in Australia.

FINANCES

The Center for Court Innovation is supported by a mix of government and private funding. See below for a breakdown of the Center's revenues.



Center for Court Innovation
Fiscal Year 2012 (October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012)
Statement of Expenditures

Demonstration Projects

Adolescent Diversion Program	29,000
Attendance Achievement Program	90,000
Bronx Child Witness Support Program	107,000
Bronx Community Solutions	1,203,000
Bronx Futures	124,000
Brooklyn Mental Health Court	480,000
Brownsville Community Justice Center	762,000
Crown Heights Community Mediation Center	1,175,000
Greenpoint Youth Court	133,000
Harlem Community Justice Center	1,923,000
Midtown Community Court	1,900,000
Newark Community Court	839,000
New York City Community Cleanup	185,000
Queens Alternatives to Detention/QUEST	610,000
QUEST Futures	554,000
Red Hook Community Justice Center	1,566,000
NYC Juvenile Justice Corps	638,000
South Bronx Save Our Streets	1,000
Staten Island Youth Justice Center	662,000
Westchester Court Education Initiative	114,000
Youth Justice Board	158,000

Subtotal **13,253,000**

Technical Assistance, Training, and Research

Domestic Violence & Family Courts	2,484,000
Drug Courts	1,588,000
Community Justice	1,279,000
Centre for Justice Innovation	351,000
Courtroom Communication	208,000
Trial and Error Project	326,000
Tribal Justice	765,000
Youth Justice Programs	462,000

Subtotal **7,463,000**

Administration

Project Safe Neighborhoods	216,000
Core Administration	1,040,000

Subtotal **1,256,000**

TOTAL EXPENDITURES **21,972,000**

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