



RESEARCH AT A GLANCE

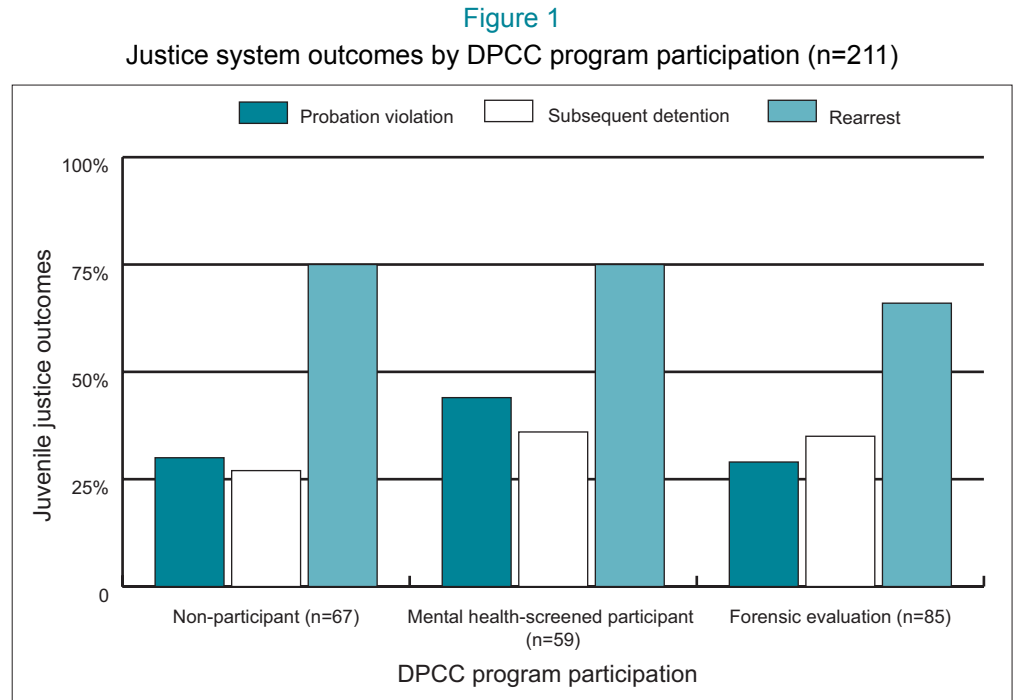
Impacts of probationer screening and services on probation success and future arrests

The Detention to Probation Continuum of Care (DPCC) program was developed by River Valley Detention Center (RVDC) mental health professionals to identify detained youth mental health needs, enhance compliance with conditions of probation, and reduce subsequent justice system involvement.

Serving youth in Kankakee and Will counties, the evidence-based program identified the mental health needs of detainees upon detention center admission and provided appropriate referrals to community-based treatment services upon release.

The DPCC program aimed to reduce youth offending and justice-system costs by targeting high-risk youth, structuring supervision, and offering an array of treatment. Identifying justice system-involved youth risk and mental health needs allows judicial orders to be tailored, resulting in increased compliance with sentencing conditions, reduced subsequent arrests, and ultimately lower justice-system costs.

Administrative data were examined for years 2003 through 2009 to assess the extent to which youth received DPCC services and to track their compliance with sentencing conditions, subsequent detention



admissions, and arrests. In a sample of 211 youth arrested and processed at RVDC, 40 percent received a court-ordered forensic evaluation. Of those youth, 60 percent completed community-based treatment services while under probation supervision compared to 42 percent of those who had a mental health screen and 31 percent among those released prior to meeting with mental health staff.

The study found youth ordered for forensic evaluation received the most treatment services. Youth screened for mental health issues received fewer services. Sampled youth who

did not participate in DPCC (no mental health screening or forensic evaluation) and youth who only received mental health screening had less successful probation outcomes (*Figure 1*). Community-based treatment services included psychiatric treatment, substance abuse treatment, anger management, and counseling.

In a follow-up period that averaged five-and-a-half years, sampled youth from the forensic evaluation group had a statistically significant reduction in arrests when compared to the non-participant and mental health-screened groups.