

Training Standards *for* Juvenile Justice Professionals

Juvenile Division Education Committee

Office of State Courts Administrator

Coordinating Commission for Judicial Education

Supreme Court of Missouri

Purpose & Statutory Basis

Orientation and continuing education for new and existing juvenile court professional personnel (including juvenile officers, deputy juvenile officers, and other personnel deemed necessary by the state courts administration) is described by State statute.

The State Court Administrator is specifically charged with developing standards for initial and on-going training (RSMo 211.326).

Each juvenile court is required to refer to those standards for its orientation and continuing education of its professional staff (RSMo 211.327).

The Juvenile Division Education Committee, under the auspices of the Coordinating Commission for Judicial Education and the Supreme Court of Missouri, was established to develop these training standards in collaboration with the Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA). The comprehensive, skill-based standards and competencies described in this document apply to all juvenile and family court personnel.

Core Skills & Competencies

The Juvenile Division Education Committee has identified ten knowledge and skill sets that contribute to well trained, highly effective juvenile and family court professionals. These Core Skills and Competencies provide an appropriate educational grounding in a professional's initial orientation as well as their long term continuing education:

- Courtroom Skills
- Knowledge of Statutes, Juvenile Code and Supreme Court Rule
- Ability to Communicate Effectively
- Interviewing Skills
- Knowledge of Community and Statewide Resources
- Case Management Skills
- Documentation—Ability to Prepare Written Reports
- Basic Computer Skills
- Professionalism
- Safety

Basic Curriculum *for addressing* **Core Skills and Competencies**

While each juvenile court is responsible for assuring their new employees are oriented according to these Core Skills and Competencies, the Committee and OSCA offer a basic training curriculum that may help courts provide some of the necessary training. The basic curriculum includes:

Six Month Training Standards & Links – The Committee has identified basic training standards, to be delivered to new staff within their first six months of employment, that contribute to meeting the Core Skills and Competencies. Training resources that fulfill some of these Standards are available through the Jewels On-Line Learning System (see below). The Six-Month training Standards include:

- Educational Requirements
- Function and Jurisdiction of the Courts
- Judicial Department Organizational Structure (State and Local)
- Office of State Courts Administrator
- Local Government
- Personnel Policy & Appointing Authority
- Sexual Harassment Awareness and Gender Fairness
- Confidentiality
- Missouri Supreme Court Rules and Code
- Liability Issues
- Ethics

JIS for Juvenile Justice – A number of web courses have been developed to assist staff in learning to use specific components of the Justice Information System. Available courses include:

JIS Detention—Activities	JIS Juvenile—Introduction to Juvenile Case Disposition
JIS Detention—Intake	JIS Juvenile—Juvenile Case Initiation
JIS Detention—Party Basics	JIS Juvenile—Medical Notes
JIS Detention—Release	JIS Juvenile—Person & Party
JIS Juvenile—Allegations	JIS Juvenile—Pre-Disposition Overview
JIS Juvenile—Assessments	JIS Juvenile—Programs/Services—CZAPROG
JIS Juvenile—Case Initiation—CMAINIT	JIS Juvenile—School Information
JIS Juvenile—Case Notes	JIS Juvenile—Using Milestones
JIS Juvenile—Caseload Inquiry	
JIS Juvenile—Disposing a Case Using CDADOCT	
JIS Juvenile—Disposing of an Event Overview	
JIS Juvenile—How to Dispose of an Event	

Fundamental Skills for Good Detention Practice – The curriculum for this five-day, classroom course is designed for juvenile and family court personnel who work within a secure or non-secure juvenile detention facility. College level Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are available. Course elements include:

- History
- Role and Function of Detention
- Missouri Laws Related to Detention, Including Juvenile Rights and Liability
- Behavior Observation and Daily Programming

- Documentation and Report Writing
- Suicide Prevention
- Balanced and Restorative Justice
- Behavior Management including Adolescent Development
- Verbal De-Escalation
- Positive Reinforcement
- Conflict Resolution
- Managing Mentally Disordered Youth
- Crisis Management
- Safety & Security

First Year Training Standards

Beyond the Core Competencies and the Six-Month Training Standards, the Committee recommends juvenile and family court personnel receive an additional tier of training within the first year of employment. This training is intended to build from the foundation laid by the Six Month Standards and develop a structural framework for understanding more complex juvenile justice issues and practices. The Committee has adopted training standards designed to achieve this goal, and offers the course 'Fundamental Skills in Juvenile Justice' to help juvenile courts meet these standards. The First Year Training Standards are:

- Juvenile Justice System Overview
- The Juvenile Officer Profession
- Cultural Diversity
- Adolescence and Delinquency
- Interpersonal Communication Skills
- Officer Safety
- Assessment Skills
- Special Issues and Challenges
(Ex., Child Abuse & Neglect, Substance Abuse, Suicide Prevention, Gender Issues)
- Pre-Dispositional Recommendations
- Writing the Recommendations
- Courtroom Presentations
- Supervision and Case Planning
- Managing Resources and Time
- Enhancing the Profession—Ethics
- Victim Awareness

Second and Third Year Training Standards

Within the second and third year of employment, the Committee has adopted the standard that juvenile officers receive a minimum of 24 hours of training each year, 12 hours each year must be related to the Core Skills and Competencies. The Committee offers courses in Officer Safety, Motivating Change (formerly Motivational Interviewing) and Child Abuse and Neglect to help meet these standards.

Intermediate Curriculum *for addressing First, Second and Third Year Training Standards*

Though responsibility for meeting training standards remains with the circuits, attendance at the Committee's 'Fundamental Skills in Good Juvenile Justice' course meets all of the First Year Training Standards. Circuits are welcome, however, to pursue any curriculum that meets the training standards. Likewise, the committee offers three standing courses that help circuits address the Second and Third Year Training Standards. These courses relate to specific Core Skills and Competencies; circuits may wish to pursue other learning opportunities that address other Competencies. Whatever training activities circuits assign to their juvenile and family court employees, they can be documented in Jewels. The Intermediate Curriculum offered by the Committee includes:

Fundamental Skills in Juvenile Justice - This four-day course provides a comprehensive curriculum in essential procedures juvenile justice professionals use in their daily work, as well as the historical and philosophical groundings behind the restorative justice approach used by juvenile & family courts in Missouri. College level CEU's are available. Course elements include:

- History of Juvenile Justice
- Missouri Juvenile Justice Structure
- Fundamental Case Law
- Missouri Statutes & Law
- Juvenile Programs & Services
- Case Management & Critical Procedures
- Courtroom Awareness
- Risk Scale
- Juvenile Probation Perspectives
- Strengths-Based Approach
- Community Supervision
- Cultural Competence
- The Principle Driven Professional
- Finding Balance

Juvenile Officer Safety - This course instructs juvenile and family court professionals on hazard avoidance, working safely and complacency issues. The course stresses being aware of ones surroundings, planning to be safe, and verbal de-escalation techniques that will effuse or re-direct an individual's hostile or aggressive behavior. Physical techniques, such as self-defense and restraint methods, are not part of the curriculum. The course is presented through a blended approach that combines a two-day classroom component with on-line material. Course elements include:

- Safety Facts & Statistics
- Mental Awareness
- Verbal Techniques & Listening
- Personal Safety
- Documentation

Child Abuse & Neglect - This course instructs juvenile officers on recognizing the characteristics of child abuse and neglect and explains how these cases are processed through the court system. Classroom discussions include reasonable effort considerations, best interest of the child, and permanency planning. Guest speakers from the Juvenile Court, Division of Social Services Children's Division, and Division of Legal Services STAT will share information on their roles and responsibilities in child abuse and neglect cases and the resources that are

available to assist practitioners with case preparation. The course is presented through a blended approach that combines a two-and-a-half day classroom component with on-line material.

Motivating Change in Children & Families - This course has been designed to help participants see their client through a new “lens” and utilize tools and techniques to partner with the client to improve the client’s situation. Rather than focusing on problems, the strengths-based approach relies on one’s ability to see the possibilities and then build on those strengths to help the client grow, develop, and ultimately change their own future for the better. The course is presented through a blended approach that combines a two-day classroom component with on-line material. The course gives participants the opportunity to:

- Practice utilizing solution-focused interviewing skills when gathering information from clients
- Better understand the importance of cultural sensitivity when interviewing
- Recognize and diffuse client resistance

Ongoing Training

After the first two years of employment, the Committee recommends juvenile justice professionals receive 24 hours of job-related training per year.

Advanced Curriculum *for* Juvenile Justice Education

While the Committee’s priority has traditionally been to use its resources to provide circuits with training opportunities for new staff, greater attention is being paid to the learning needs of seasoned officers. Experienced officers, however, have very individually specific training needs, making general course curriculums somewhat irrelevant. In addition, experienced officers with well developed caseloads may have difficulty dedicating large blocks of time for attending a course.

The Committee’s Advanced Curriculum for Juvenile Justice Education is actually a long list of flexible training opportunities delivered through multiple media, including classroom, webinar and teleconference presentations and recording of such, and web Courses. Some of these are produced by the Committee itself, some are simply available through Jewels.

It is important to recognize, however, that many learning opportunities for seasoned juvenile officers exist beyond what the Committee is able to offer, or what is available on Jewels. A national conference or a web course offered by a university, for example, may perfectly meet a professional’s learning needs. For each juvenile and family court, the critical element is that these training activities be **documented**. A court may choose to use its own localized system for documenting training. Jewels provides a convenient tool for recording all training activities, maintaining staff transcripts, assigning training and creating development plans for every employee (see below).

The Committee offers a number of training opportunities for seasoned officers of juvenile and family courts. These trainings are designed to be short, specific presentations relevant to experienced professionals. Offerings include:

Business Meeting Trainings – Twice each year, usually June and November, juvenile officers from each circuit meet to discuss timely issues relating to juvenile justice. Working

with OSCA, the Committee often offers a four hour classroom training course in conjunction with this meeting; usually on the afternoon of the first day. Because the business meeting is directed toward chief juvenile officers and family court administrators, these courses address supervisory and management issues. Recent course topics include 'Performance Measures', 'Employment Law' and 'Creating Learning Environments'.

Juvenile Justice Trends Presentations – These one-hour distance learning presentations are usually offered on the 2nd or 3rd Friday of each month via webinar or teleconference. The distance learning format enables professionals to receive training without leaving their office or incurring expenses, and takes minimal time away from their caseload. Many circuits gather staff together in a conference room to view the presentation, and in so doing foster comradery, discussion, mentoring and local perspective. Presentations are recorded and accessible through Jewels, so staff who were not able to attend the live webcast can still view the presentation later at their convenience. Attending the 'Trends' presentation each month satisfies 12 hours from a professional's required 24 hours of annual training without that professional leaving the office or costing one cent. Presentation topics are selected by the Committee based on suggestions and feedback from throughout the juvenile justice community. Recent topics include 'Engaging Parents in Juvenile Justice', 'Holiday Depression in Youth and Families', 'Youth and Technology' and 'Integrating Technology and Juvenile Justice'.

Regional Trainings – Funded through a special allocation from the Circuit Court Budget Committee, these one-day classroom trainings will be offered in multiple locations across Missouri, within easy driving distance of most juvenile and family courts. The regional concept will be designed to encourage in-person interaction between professionals from different circuits, without locating trainings so far away as to require intensive travel. Current plans are to focus these trainings on 'Safety and Complacency'.

Web Courses – The Committee uses Jewels as an on-line delivery vehicle for many course components of its basic and intermediate curriculums, including over two dozen web courses specific to learning the Justice Information System (JIS). OSCA's Judicial Education Division has also included on Jewels many more professional development courses that can specifically target the continuing education needs of an experienced juvenile officer. Courses fall into diverse categories including communication and computer skills, conflict resolution, stress reduction, management skills and leadership development. Web courses successfully completed on Jewels automatically become part of an individual's transcript, and can be assigned by a supervisor as part of a development plan. Web courses are another convenient and cost effective way to satisfy annual training requirements with a minimum of time away from caseload activities.

Missouri Juvenile Justice Association (MJJA) Education Conferences – The Committee works closely with MJJA on a variety of projects, including the Fundamental Skills courses offered through its basic and intermediate curriculums. MJJA holds two conferences annually (May and October), each with significant education components. Unlike many conferences that simply provide a platform for a wide range of presentations, the MJJA Education Conferences engage participants in multi-day seminars that provide in-depth training and discussion on specific issues. College level Continuing Education Units (CEU's) are available for many of these seminars. While not automatically tracked, participation in these seminars can easily be added to an individual's transcript in Jewels, as can any training activity, to conveniently document an individual's annual training hours.

JEWELS

The Jewels upgrade completed late in 2008 added a number of new features that greatly enhance its ability to facilitate professional development and enable juvenile and family courts to create an effective learning environment. These enhancements include:

- Easier registration for classroom and on-line training activities
- The ability to group multiple components into a single course curriculum, and track progress through each component
- Managers can create individualized development plans for their staff, assign trainings, and track each individual's annual training hours
- Trainings that are not part of Jewels can be manually added to an individual's transcript, enhancing the court's ability to document staff training activities.
- Collaboration Centers allow access to faculty, experts and peers through a threaded messaging format – dialog and answers to questions are automatically captured and stored in a searchable knowledge base that provides ongoing, continuing training and access to information.

As budget issues increasingly restrain the court's ability to accommodate travel for classroom training, and as more young professionals familiar with on-line learning join the juvenile justice community, the importance of Jewels for delivering education, and the complexity of its course offerings will only increase.