



## **IMPACT (Intensive Mentoring/Parents and Children Together) Program Concept Paper**

### **Purpose**

The following Concept Paper is a precursor to the forthcoming IMPACT (Intensive Mentoring/Parents and Children Together) Program Request for Proposal (RFP). IMPACT is a community-based program designed to meet the specialized needs of adolescents who are sentenced to probation (primarily) through Adult Criminal Court. More specifically, IMPACT is designed to help youth who are primarily sentenced as Juvenile Offenders (JOs) or Youth Offenders (YOs) address issues related to their wrongdoing through two main components—in-home family services and mentoring. Through the upcoming RFP, the Department of Probation (DOP) will be seeking an appropriately qualified vendor to provide a community-based program—grounded in evidence-based principles—to adolescents who are sentenced to probation supervision in Adult Court.

### **Background**

#### **NYC Probation Population**

With approximately 26,000 people currently on probation in New York City, DOP is one of the largest local probation departments in the country and the City's largest alternative to incarceration.

Among the 26,000 clients, DOP supervises three groups of adolescents who are prosecuted in Adult Court:<sup>1</sup> 1) Juvenile Offenders (JOs)—13, 14, and 15 year-olds who would be petitioned as juveniles if not for the serious nature of the charges against them; 2) Youthful Offenders (YOs), 16-18-year olds whose convictions are set aside in favor of adjudication status, relieving them of a criminal record;<sup>2</sup> and 3) 16-18-year olds who do not receive YO status. Relatively speaking, adolescent clients represent a small proportion of clients on adult supervision on any given day—approximately 1,000 out of 24,000 adults overall.<sup>3</sup> That said, the number is still substantial, and DOP recognizes the importance of expanding its current adolescent service continuum. Not only is there research that shows that the risks and needs of adolescents differ greatly from those of adults; even when the general needs are the same, programming for adolescents must take into consideration differences in their development and maturity level, how they make decisions, and their amenability to treatment and change.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adult court includes both Criminal and Supreme Court.

<sup>2</sup> JOs can be granted YO status as well.

<sup>3</sup> Approximately 125 of these are JOs. The remainder are 16-18 year-olds with or without a YO status.

<sup>4</sup> Harrison, B. & Schehr, R. C. (2004). Offenders and post-released jobs: Variables influencing success and failure. *Journal of offender Rehabilitation*, 39(3), 35. Retrieved June 30, 2008, from ProQuest database; Colgan, Beth A. A Reexamination of Youth Involvement in the Adult Criminal Justice System in Washington: Implications of New Findings About Juvenile Recidivism and Adolescent Brain Development (2009); Steinberg, L., & Scott, E. (2003). Less guilty by reason of adolescence: Developmental immaturity, diminished responsibility, and the juvenile death penalty. *American Psychologist*, 58, 1009–1018.

The importance of establishing programming tailored to these adolescents is underscored by recidivism trends for this population. National research has repeatedly demonstrated that adolescents in the adult system reoffend at a higher rate than those in the juvenile system,<sup>5</sup> and New York City data show that they also reoffend at a higher rate than other adults. Among 16-19 year-olds who were arrested in 2009, for example, 41 percent were rearrested within a year of their first arrest, and 17 percent were rearrested for a felony.<sup>6</sup> The corresponding rates for individuals 20-24, in turn, were 35 percent and 14 percent, and they continue to decrease as age increases.<sup>7</sup>

## **DOP Agency-Wide Reform**

DOP is helping to build stronger and safer communities by supervising people on probation, fostering positive change in their decision-making and behavior, and expanding opportunities for them to move out of the criminal and juvenile justice systems through meaningful education, employment, health services, family engagement and civic participation.

To accomplish its mission, DOP has embarked upon an ambitious agency-wide reform agenda. The New York City Model of Probation advances public safety and improves communities by adopting a Justice Reinvestment framework. Justice Reinvestment is a two-part approach that focuses resources on individuals on probation who pose the highest risk to public safety and reinvests in the communities where people on probation live. Research shows that focusing attention on people with the highest risk of re-offending is the most effective way to positively impact public safety. Therefore, DOP is increasingly focusing resources on higher-risk individuals during the first six to 12 months that they are on Probation, which is the time period they are most likely to reoffend. To accomplish this, DOP is implementing a variety of evidence-based measures, including:

- Administering validated risk and need assessments
- Expanding the continuum of care
- Utilizing incentives such as early discharge to reward positive behavior for adult clients
- Diverting appropriate juvenile cases from formal court-processing
- Significantly reducing technical violations of probation

Another aspect of DOP's new probation approach is to decentralize service delivery to the neighborhood level. The vehicle for DOP's neighborhood-based strategy is the Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NeON).<sup>8</sup> At the heart of the NeON is a network of partners – individuals and organizations, public and private – working together to improve public safety by linking

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<sup>5</sup> Redding, R.E. (2010). Juvenile Transfer Laws: An Effective Deterrent to Delinquency? U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency: Washington, D.C.

<sup>6</sup> *Criminal Justice Indicator Report, Summer 2013*. New York City Office of the Mayor, Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on the NeON's, please visit the DOP website at: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/prob/html/neon/neon.shtml>

people on probation to quality opportunities, resources and services and by strengthening community capacity to find solutions to complex challenges.

Under the NeON umbrella, DOP is using a variety of strategies to build on clients' strengths and reduce their involvement with criminal and juvenile justice systems. Probation Officers work at NeON offices that are co-located with community-based organizations in neighborhoods where a high concentration of people on probation live, (Brownsville, Harlem, Jamaica, East New York, Staten Island and the South Bronx – with Bedford-Stuyvesant anticipated fall 2013). In other cases, probation staff based at borough offices meet with clients in community settings. Key components of the NeON model are: (1) DOP joins and expands local networks of educators, businesses, social service providers, community groups and residents; (2) probation staff and clients work together in a community-setting; and (3) DOP staff and clients engage in efforts to benefit the neighborhood. Key to DOP's strategy is to help build capacity in the neighborhoods where people on probation live. DOP is working closely with community leaders to ensure that NeONs win local support, build on existing assets, and reflect client and neighborhood needs.

Also among its reforms, DOP has put a great deal of effort into building services and programming for adolescents who are adjudicated in Family Court. Specifically, the agency has put in place a number of community-based programs to meet a range of needs that exist among juvenile clients. This continuum within DOP is embedded in a larger continuum of that exists citywide. However, up until this point there have not been as many programs and services available to adolescents who go through the Adult Court system. While DOP has been operating two programs for JOs—Juvenile Home Placement Services and the Kings Juvenile Offender Program (KJOP)—for a number of years, they have only been able to serve a small segment of JOs under adult supervision,<sup>9</sup> and even fewer adolescents arrested over the age of 15. This means that services and programming available to the majority of these young people are the same services and programming available to the general population of adults. The contract awarded through the IMPACT RFP would expand the current continuum of services to include the much needed evidence-based and community-rooted programming for JOs and other adolescents sentenced to probation supervision in Adult Court.

## **IMPACT: An Evidence-Based Model**

### **Target Population**

The primary target population for IMPACT is adolescents between the ages of 14-18 who are sentenced to probation by the Adult Court and are recommended by DOP for the program during the investigation stage, as clients who would benefit from an enhanced level of services and supervision. Specifically, the program is designed to serve the following groups who meet these criteria:

- Juvenile Offenders (JOs): 13-, 14-, and 15-year-olds who would be petitioned as juveniles if not for the serious nature of the charges against them<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> KJOP serves only JOs in Brooklyn—approximately 40 youth at any given time.

<sup>10</sup> The large majority of JOs sentenced to probation in New York City are granted YO status.

- Youthful Offenders (YOs): 16-18 year-olds who are legally under Adult Court jurisdiction but who are given an adjudication status (along with an opportunity for a clean criminal record following completion of the disposition).
- Other 16-18 year-olds who are not adjudicated as YOs

JOs and YOs can enter IMPACT in one of two ways. First, they can be assigned as part of their original sentence (as a form of enhanced probation supervision). They can also be “stepped up” to IMPACT while they are in pre-violation status, or following a violation of probation, in cases that DOP feels are not serious enough to warrant incarceration.

While the primary target population is adolescents whose crimes/criminal cases are processed in Adult Court, a small proportion (up to ten percent) of program slots will be reserved for adolescents whose cases are processed in Family Court (JDs), youth under the age of 16 at the time of the delinquent act. These slots will be reserved mainly as a safety net for JDs who have been assessed as appropriate for community supervision but not for any of the alternatives-to-placement options that exist for adolescents in Family Court. Program suitability for this group of adolescents will be conducted by the Department of Probation’s ATP Assessment Unit.

### **Key Program Elements**

IMPACT is designed to help adolescents address issues related to their wrongdoing through two main components—family services and mentoring—that follow from a thorough assessment process designed to ensure that those who enter the program have a need for and will benefit from these services. All program services will be delivered in close collaboration with the client’s probation officer; who will remain the primary person responsible for managing and overseeing the case.

Upon referral to the program,<sup>11</sup> participants would first go through the intake process which will be facilitated by the contractor’s Intake Staff. Intake staff would be responsible for interviewing participants and family members (or caregivers), reviewing initial paperwork and requesting any additional documentation, as needed. Participants would then be assigned a field counselor and mentor upon completion of the initial intake and orientation process.

Family services and mentoring, in turn, will begin once a youth is officially enrolled into IMPACT. The family services component will assess, address, and restructure the ways that parents and adolescents interact—specifically, by identifying and building on family strengths, and encouraging/improving communication between family members. These therapeutic services will be delivered to the family as a whole by the Field Counselors, who would also provide ongoing case and crisis management (again, in collaboration with the probation officer). This approach is similar to evidence-based programs like Functional Family Therapy and Multi-

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<sup>11</sup> Referrals will be made pre- and post-sentence. Adolescents referred to the program post-sentence will not be sentenced directly to IMPACT. While youth in Family Court would be given a disposition to an ATP program, adolescents referred to the IMPACT program would have the program listed as a condition of a probation sentence. However, the contractor would still comply with a mandatory “no reject/no eject policy”, and would not be able to reject participants who are determined eligible for the program or eject participants, without first conferencing the case with DOP.

Systemic Therapy,<sup>12</sup> (for more information on these programs see the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Program Guide)<sup>13</sup>, but will not be required to rely on the same programmatic model. Instead the contractor may propose the specific techniques and activities used to enhance family dynamics.

Towards the end of the intensive therapeutic portion of the program, the mentoring component would begin. Each mentor can be assigned up to four young people and will meet with them individually and/or in various two to four mentee combinations as indicated. Using an approved evidence or research informed theory of practice; mentors will be recruited, trained, and supervised to mentor participating youth. Mentors would be asked to commit to mentoring relationships that will last at least six months, with mentors meeting with youth two to four times a month. Mentors would assist youth in further developing their academic, personal, social and vocational goals that were established during their time in the therapeutic component of IMPACT. In order to effectively establish a meaningful connection with participants, mentors should be familiar with the communities in which they live and have knowledge of community resources as well as challenges that exist in the community. It is expected that the recruitment plan for hiring mentors would include outreach to qualified neighborhood residents. Furthermore, mentors would remain in communication with the clinical staff and Probation Officer, as well as the youths' family during the intervention.

It should be noted that the family services and the mentoring components provided by IMPACT will be embedded in a range of other services and supports provided by the Probation Officers themselves, including interactive journaling, Thinking for a Change, and other cognitive techniques designed to change attitudes that are favorable toward criminal activity; and the development of individualized achievement plans (IAPs) designed to address criminogenic risks and needs that are most salient for each individual.

### **Staffing**

It is anticipated that the IMPACT program would include the following key staff positions: a Program Director, Field Counselors, and Mentors as well as Intake and Administrative Staff.

*The Program Director* would be responsible for overseeing the day to day management of the IMPACT program and the ongoing development of the direct service intervention. It is anticipated that the Program Director would have five or more years of post-graduate experience with clinical and/or social work background, and have extensive experience working with at-risk and/or juvenile justice-involved youth and their families.

As described above, *Field Counselors* would deliver therapeutic service to families, as well as ongoing case and crisis management. It is anticipated that Field Counselors would possess a Master's Degree and nine years accumulated experience (internships through post graduate) providing direct services to youth and their families in their homes and communities.

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<sup>12</sup> The effectiveness of both of these programs has been demonstrated repeatedly by research, and both have been named as evidence-based models by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

<sup>13</sup> The Model Program Guide can be accessed at <http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/>

*Mentors* would be “credible messengers”, who are well respected, invested in, and trusted in the communities in which the probation clients reside. Further, they would have the ability to effectively relay the components of the programs to the participants, must be culturally appropriate, with a strong understanding of the target population and their unique challenges, and must demonstrate a high rate of success in working with and in reaching the target population.

*Intake staff* would be responsible for interviewing youth and caregivers to verify youth eligibility for the program, reviewing initial paperwork, and requesting additional documentation as needed. Intake staff would possess a Bachelor’s Degree with one to three years of experience working with at-risk, court-involved or incarcerated youth.

*Administrative staff* should have legal and/or criminal justice experience, in particular with the day-to-day operations of a program similar in nature.

### **Site Location**

It is anticipated that much of the interaction with participants and their families would occur in the field as the participants needs dictate. However, the contractor would maintain at least one site location that would accommodate the Program Director, and other administrative functions, staff, and participant interactions as needed. It is anticipated that desk space should be available for Probation Officers, as needed. In addition, the site(s) should be accessible citywide by public transportation to participants referred from all five boroughs.

### **Proposed outcomes**

- 75% of youth would successfully complete the program
- 80% of youth would not receive a Violation of Probation (VOP) while in the program
- 70% of participants would not be arrested while in the IMPACT program
- 80% of participants would not be arrested for a felony while in the IMPACT program
- 90% of participants would not be arrested for a violent felony while in the program
- 80% of participants would gain employment, re-engage in school, enroll in job training, *or* begin GED classes during the program
- 80% of youth advance in education during the program (definition of “advance” will depend on youth’s status at start of program)
- 100% of participants are positively connected to a mentor (as assessed by both mentor and youth) upon program completion

### **Reporting Requirements**

The contractor will be required to work closely with DOP to measure and report regularly on program outcomes. DOP will require monthly and quarterly reports from the Contractor, including but not limited to specific information about participant enrollment and attendance, mentor contact hours, and participant progress. The Contractor will also be required to track and report on participant outcomes.

### **Contract Term/Funding/Anticipated Payment Structure**

It is anticipated that the contract term will start October 1, 2014 and end on September 30, 2016 with an option to renew for up to three additional one year periods.

The anticipated annual funding for the IMPACT Program is approximately \$3.3 million. This amount must cover all operational costs associated with delivering the program. It is anticipated that the payment structure for the contract awarded will be based on line-item budget reimbursement.

### **Service Levels**

It is anticipated that IMPACT will serve up to 175 participants per year referred from all five boroughs. The anticipated cost per participant ranges from \$15,300 to \$18,800. Proposers would have the opportunity to indicate their capacity beyond 175 participants and the cost per participant associated with serving additional clients above the base of 175. It is anticipated that one contract will be awarded citywide from the IMPACT Program RFP.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Proposals will be evaluated pursuant to criteria that are specified in the RFP. This will include the quality of the proposer's approach and program design for each key service area comprising the IMPACT program. In addition, the evaluation will assess the proposer's successful, relevant experience providing similar services. Proposals will also be evaluated based on the organization's staffing model and organizational structure as it relates to capacity to deliver these services.

### **Procurement Timeline**

DOP anticipates releasing the IMPACT RFP in Winter 2013.

### **Use of HHS Accelerator**

To respond to the forthcoming IMPACT RFP and all other client and community services (CCS) Requests for Proposals (RFPs) released Fall 2013 and later, vendors must first complete and submit an electronic prequalification application using the City's Health and Human Services (HHS) Accelerator System. The HHS Accelerator System is a web-based system maintained by the City of New York for use by its human services Agencies to manage procurement.

### **Required Service Prequalifications**

The forthcoming IMPACT RFP will be released through the HHS Accelerator system. Only organizations with approved HHS Accelerator Business Application and Services Applications for one or more of the following will be able to propose:

- Life Skills
- Parenting Services

- Case Management
- Alternative Justice Management
- Conflict Resolution/Mediation
- Preventive Services

Providers who are approved in HHS Accelerator to provide any of these services will be able to submit proposals for the IMPACT procurement.

In addition to the Department of Probation, the following City agencies that administer CCS contracts will be users of the HHS Accelerator system: Administration for Children's Services, Criminal Justice Coordinator, Department for the Aging, Department of Corrections, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Human Resources Administration, Department of Homeless Services, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Department of Youth and Community Development and Small Business Services.

Once a provider is prequalified in a service area, it will then be prequalified to submit proposals to procurement opportunities in that service area from the 11 above-listed CCS City Agencies. HHS Accelerator will also allow providers to manage CCS budgeting and invoicing through this common user interface. To submit a Business and Service application to become eligible to apply for this and other CCS RFPs, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/hhsaccelerator>.

**Contact Info/Deadline for Questions/Comments**

Comments are invited by no later than November 8, 2013. Please email [acco@probation.nyc.gov](mailto:acco@probation.nyc.gov) and indicate IMPACT Concept Paper in the subject line of the email. Alternatively, written comments may be sent to the following address:

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