

Running Head: INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION TO SERVE CROSSOVER
YOUTH

Interagency Collaboration in Efforts to
Serve Crossover Youth in Santa Clara County

by

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Abstract

This research qualitatively examined interagency collaboration between the Department of Family and Children's Services and the Juvenile Probation Department in cases where youth may have dual jurisdiction. A literature review on systems theory, intersystem collaboration and organizational culture advised that collaboration would be poor due to the nature of bureaucratic systems, varying organizational cultures, and lack of clear guidelines in this area of interagency collaboration. The sample consisted of twelve professionals involved in crossover cases, and the interviews were semi-structured in design. The research questions were 1) how do participants feel about interagency collaboration, 2) what are barriers to collaboration, and 3) what do participants suggest for improvement. The research found participants felt collaboration was weak. Barriers were identified in three practice areas of social work: micro, mezzo, and macro levels. At the micro level, quality collaboration appeared hindered by individuals' willingness to collaborate, and feelings of contempt for their co-collaborators. Mezzo level barriers were a serious lack of understanding of other agencies' rationale and logic that affected participants feelings of other agencies, and a flaw in the collaborative process of informal Team Decision Making meetings. At the macro level, identified barriers were faulty technology, and a lack of resources. Participants suggested the County dual status protocol allow for administrative 'middle ground' where dual oversight could permit holistic and creative interventions. This research strongly suggests the need for increased cross-training on agencies' policies, professional limitations, and specific crossover youth issues, and revamping the dual status protocol to reflect increased holistic treatment options for crossover youth.

Introduction

Historically, Welfare and Institutions Code separated juveniles involved in the child welfare dependency court system and juveniles in the delinquency court system. These separate populations could not concurrently receive services from both courts. This posed administrative problems as many youth had life situations that could be ameliorated by both systems. While delinquency and dependency systems treated their respective populations as unique, in actuality, a large number of foster youth become criminally involved. In fact, one of the key predictors to juvenile delinquency is involvement in the child welfare system (Child Welfare League of America, 2003). Unfortunately, youth served by these two systems have often fallen in the administrative space where jurisdiction has been called into question (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). This predicament has created a new term, *crossover youth*.

Both crossover youth and their providers experience problems in service delivery. Defining appropriate interventions and determining delivery often sparks confusion in appropriate jurisdiction. Typically, youth are pushed between child welfare and juvenile justice, and judges decide which will best serve the youth (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). Some unfortunate consequences of this “one or the other” approach to service delivery are the reduction of available resources for youths’ benefit as they leave one system of care for another, and the potential loss of valuable long term relationships to service providers and case managers. California lawmakers, concerned about this issue, updated the law regarding crossover youth and legitimized the need for comprehensive and holistic services provide by multiple partners. Assembly Bill 129, passed in 2004, allowed counties to provide services from both systems, creating a new

code, “dual status”, or “241.1”, and as long as a formal protocol outlined service delivery, and services were not duplicative (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007).

Considering the obvious challenges bureaucracies face with implementing systematic change, it is no wonder that several years since the passage of AB 129, many counties do not have a dual status protocol. The language of AB 129 is vague and leaves counties to their own devices regarding the research and implementation of a protocol (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). Child welfare and probation services are complex bureaucracies with unique and often mutually exclusive language, database systems, and philosophies. These variations in operations are not only potential barriers for the implementation of protocols, but significantly impact collaborative practice, which can adversely effects the youth’s treatment progress. In addition, there is no empirical research to better understand how interagency collaboration takes place between stakeholders and power brokers with regards to dual status protocols and their efficacy. The current study explored interagency collaboration by investigating professionals’ feelings of the collaborative process between the Juvenile Probation Department and the Department of Family and Children’s Services in Santa Clara County.

Relevance to Social Work

The young people caught between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems deserve the best care our society can offer. Foster youth are more likely to use drugs and alcohol, runaway from their homes, and experience problems in school than non-foster youth peers (Alltucker, Bullis, Close, & Yovanoff, 2006). Decreased life functioning may lead to juvenile delinquency. Youth survivors of childhood maltreatment are 47% more

likely to become juvenile delinquents than their peers with no abuse in their histories (Morris, 2006). Despite the high rate of dependent children involved in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, there is a lack of effective services or systematic action plans to serve youth simultaneously involved. Investment in front-end services for this population may avoid damage to society, loss of human capital, and the loss of significant tax dollars for incarceration. The cost of detention is often hundreds of dollars per day per youth (Urban Strategies Council, 2007). Examining interagency collaboration through the Santa Clara County Dual Status Protocol sheds light on avenues for improvement of services and collaboration between the two systems of care. Many counties struggle with the implementation of Dual Status Protocols, and this research can prove productive to their efforts towards self-improvement.

Literature Review

Systems Theory

This study is informed by Systems Theory to analyze interactions between the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems. The basis of systems theory is the distinction between ‘system’ and ‘environment’ (Villadsen, 2008). Luhmann (1982) posits organizations are self-describing and characterize themselves by what others in the environment are not. So as organizations construct themselves, they concurrently construct their environment (Luhmann, 1982, as cited in Villadsen 2008). Modern society has many ‘functional systems’ (Weber, 1946) each employing different criteria for observing and participating in the world (Luhmann, 1982, as cited in Villadsen, 2008).

These ‘functional systems’ have their own distinct communication media, logic and rationale (Luhmann, 1982).

Systems communicate through “fundamental distinctions or codes characteristic of each system” (Luhmann, 1982, as cited in Villadsen, 2008, p. 67). These codes are theoretical distinctions between systems but have no official boundaries as anyone can ‘activate’ them. Thus, inner and intra-system communication creates a specific media to employ system distinctions. Villadsen (2008) uses these examples of codes and distinctions: *judicial* systems utilize *laws* (legal/illegal); *economic* systems utilize *money* (to pay/not pay); *educational* systems utilize *learning* (true/untrue). These codes are at times mutually incomprehensible in that systems operating with a majority of highly trained professionals may remain insulated from other systems. Furthermore, once a particular distinction is employed to discuss a social problem, everything can be seen through that (often) binary code (e.g, the judicial system viewing all behavior as legal or illegal) (Luhman, 1992).

In addition, Luhmann (1982) states systems have their own rationality, and their media of communication perpetuates the system’s philosophy and logic. The media of inter and intra-system communication can be challenging when the codes and distinctions rationally contradict the other, as is the case between child welfare and juvenile justice systems. This can clearly be seen when the juvenile justice (JJ) system defines the delinquent child, as ‘perpetrator’, and the child welfare (CW) system defines the child as ‘victim’. In the case of children in both systems, the binary of victim/perpetrator is problematic. Often, services offered to probation and child welfare youth are very similar, but are accepted professionally as different (Morris, 2005), and Luhmann would

say, because they originate from divergent logical perspectives. CW protects children from harm; JJ protects the community from harm while rehabilitating youth offenders. These system distinctions are often at the heart of problematic collaboration, as each system defines itself by what the other is not.

Intersystem Collaboration

Crossover youth are often caught between two differing systems of care that may not understand the need for interagency collaboration, and further, may or may not know how to collaborate. Yet, the quality of collaboration between systems can have huge affects on service options and delivery to clients (Hines, Lee, & Osterling, 2006). Research on interagency collaboration has found that in order to be effective, agencies must have clear guidelines for how collaboration will be accomplished, and what outcomes are expected (Ingram, Bloomberg, & Seppanen, 1996; Kusserow, 1991). In a study on the effectiveness of collaboration between the substance abuse field and child welfare, Green, Rockhill & Burrus (2008) found that interagency collaboration increased the resources available to clients thus encouraging positives outcomes. In the case of dual status youth, despite their need for ameliorative services for both themselves and their families, very few states have clear protocols for governing agencies' roles and responsibilities in the matter of this needy population.

California's mandate for dual-status protocols only gives an outline for the document. Counties are encouraged to adopt either 'on-hold' or 'lead-agency', or 'concurrent services', for their protocols. The mandate does not define how collaboration should take place between these two systems, and what outcomes should be expected (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). However, child welfare and juvenile

probation agencies are sectorized systems that usually operate with one problem or area of concentration. Collaboration between these two systems is not automatically achieved even after policy recommendations. Green et al. (2008) also found that barriers to collaboration were long held feelings of mistrust, and a “lack of understanding of the other systems’ values, goals and perspectives” (p. 29). The American Bar Association (2008) predicts these same barriers to interagency collaboration exist between child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Bardach (1996) posited intersystem collaboration is especially complicated when it involves governmental agencies because their bureaucratic operating methods can stifle creative processes. Bardach also states, “governmental administrative systems...presuppose deliberate nonalignment” with other systems needing to collaborate (1996, p. 307). Furthermore, barriers to collaboration are plentiful. Collaboration may compromise funding streams, agency autonomy, and career goals that depend on defending that autonomy (Bardach, 1996).

Bardach claims tools for overcoming these barriers are also abundant. Leadership that offers a bandwagon with direction can create the space for professionals to feel comfortable approaching collaboration, can create legitimacy and mobilize social capital (Bardach, 2001). Also, forums offer unique and safe spaces for professionals to come together and exchange ideas (Timmons, Fesko, & Cohen, 2004), and could encourage the emergence of leadership in this area. A study on the process of interagency collaboration between child welfare and community professionals working with high-risk children in the Midwest, found that team satisfaction was predicated on respect and unity of purpose (Lewendowski & Glenmayer, 2002). This study “explored the dynamics of collaborative,

team based efforts to provide child welfare services in the context of a public/private service delivery” (Lewendowski & Glenmayer, 2002, p. 245, as cited in O’Keefe, 2006). They found social workers using decidedly cooperative styles had higher commitment levels (Lewendowski & Glenmayer, 2002). An article discussing teams conquering barriers to collaboration stated, “Because [the team] respected each other, communicated, built a relationship of trust and became friends through the process, it was much easier to overcome tensions and fundamental disagreements and to compromise (Lane, Turner, & Flores, 2004, as cited in O’Keefe, 2006). Interagency collaboration requires special arrangements and effort by the workers (Karjalainen, 1996), but the potentially positive impacts on clients are well worth the investment.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture theory offers a framework to understand the beliefs and assumptions present in any workplace. Schein (1992) characterizes organizational culture as “artifacts, espoused values and tacit assumptions of an organization” (as cited in Taylor, 2005, p. 641). ‘Artifacts’ are noticeable items like dress, behaviors, and language. ‘Espoused values’ are written statements of the organizations’ philosophy and mission as would be found in practice literature, mission statement, and internal communication, and ‘tacit assumptions’ are the values guiding those statements. While organizational culture has become a key topic in the management science, (Schein, 1984, 1986), it has not received due attention in social work literature (Yan, 2008).

While literature specific to organizational cultures of child welfare or juvenile probation systems could not be found for the purpose of this literature review, generalizations of organizational culture will help elucidate how these systems present

themselves in this regard. Social service agencies, like all organizations, develop their own personalities within their social environment (Mulroy, 2004; Schmid, 2004). Organizational culture, as evidenced by ritual behavior, serves as a tool of social cohesion (Schein, 1992). In the context of child welfare, the construction of organizational culture is heavily influenced by ideology, policies, and social work education. Some argue organizational culture establishes model behavior, and therefore social control over the workplace (Alvesson, 1993). In recent years, the accelerated shift from public to privately contracted agencies in the systems of care has put more emphasis on measured outcomes (Strom-Gottfried, 1997). This perhaps threatens the organizational culture of professional social workers' autonomy, particularly in child welfare (Yan, 2008). Standardization in these settings may suppress workers' innovations or efforts for anything beyond what is already asked of them. Particularly in areas without clear understanding of professional expectations, as is the case with crossover youth, many social workers might be apt to shy away from engaging other service providers or the client in question. Since child welfare professionals are trained to work with clients around issues of maltreatment and neglect where the victims are children, and in the case of crossover youth, the perpetrators of crimes have been victims themselves, that status might cause discomfort in the professional boundaries or roles of social workers (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007).

Furthermore, "the cultural values of social work itself are often at odds with the values of other professionals with whom social workers interact" (Yan, 2008, p. 318). While juvenile probation officers also work with youth and families to address systemic family problems, their general focus is on the individual functioning of the youth, which

currently is operates in a punitive trend with severe mandatory sentencing as adults (Rapp-Paglicci, 2004). The organizational culture of probation officers differs from child welfare social workers in that their professional boundaries are defined by the juvenile delinquency court system. Juvenile probation, an arm of this court, operates similarly to child welfare, but has a different view of their professional philosophy. Rapp-Paglicci (2004) found that probation officers saw themselves and their professional role as somewhere between police officer and change agent. The militaristic quality of police academies must influence the organizational culture of juvenile probation and might further the divide between these systems.

Research questions for this study were 1) *how do key players (Social Workers, Deputy Probation Officers, Attorneys, Judges) feel about the process of interagency collaboration in cases of crossover youth?* 2) *what are barriers to collaboration?* 3) *what are participants suggestions for improvement in interagency collaboration?*

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized the qualitative method of grounded theory. Given the limited research on this subject the researcher felt a qualitative method would be the most appropriate to explore interagency collaboration in cases of youth involved in both child welfare and juvenile justice. Grounded theory was chosen as it allows the researcher to explore the relationship between interagency collaboration and service delivery for crossover youth as well as generate research questions for further study.

Grounded theory is usually operationalized through a series of in-depth interviews with the participants, which are then analyzed for patterns, themes and categories (Rubin, Babbie & Lee, 2008). While the researcher may have some preconceived notions about the subject going into the study, this method invites the unexpected and encourages staying open to new discoveries (Rubin, Babbie & Lee, 2008).

Sample

Participants selected for this research were all professionals within Santa Clara County either working within the Department of Family and Children's Services, Juvenile Probation Department, Office of Dependency Counsel, and the Dependency Court. The type of sampling method was non-probability convenience sampling. Professionals were identified and approached by managers within each agency, or by this researcher, as having experience collaborating with other agencies in the matter or crossover youth. The total sample was twelve professionals: three social workers, three social work supervisors, four supervising probation officers, one attorney and one Dependency Court Judge.

Study Site

The site of this study was Santa Clara County. The interviews took place in confidential rooms located in the participants natural work settings, the Department of Family and Children's Services, Juvenile Justice Department, the Dependency Court, or the Office of Dependency Counsel.

Measurement and Themes

As is typical in grounded theory, this research used general interviews with open-ended questions as its qualitative instrument (Creswell, 2007). The initial sample of

participants were given open-ended questions such as: *How does the collaborative process take place between departments like dependency and delinquency regarding youth involved in more than one system? How do think the collaborative process goes between these departments? How do you imagine other departments feel about your agency or what it represents? What would you like other agencies to know about your agency or colleagues? How do you feel or perceive the other departments or agencies involved with crossover youth? What would you like to see change in the process of serving youth involved in these systems?* These questions initiated a discussion about the struggles of interagency collaboration. Based on the responses to these questions and the themes formed, more specific questions asked and added to these general questions. On the fourth interview, the questions, *What would you like to know about the [other] system? What do you want them to know about the system that you work in?* were added to the interviews.

Reliability and Validity

In qualitative research, it is up to the researcher to establish credibility with readers by checking their findings with other researchers. During the coding stages of data processing two researchers read the interview transcriptions and independently coded for themes. Themes were then compared, checked for similarities and repetition, which results in reducing bias. The researcher also used peer review, consulting with another researcher not involved in the study, asking her to review the procedural aspect of the project (Rubin, Babbie & Lee, 2008). However, the researcher did not use the negative case analysis. This involves searching for individuals that contradict the potential theory being formed and investigating the presumed anomaly. This is a potential

threat to internal validity. Other threats to internal validity include variance in the wording of questions across the span of interviews. The researcher also had an interactive interview style that could be considered leading or bias participants responses.

Human Subjects

This study involved human subjects and therefore was first approved by the institutional review board (IRB) to determine its ethics before practice. All participants of the study signed informed consent forms that included information about the study that could affect the proposed participant's decision to participate. These included such things as the procedures of the study and potential harm to the participant, such as emotional reaction to discussing their professional collaborative experiences with the researcher. It also guaranteed that the participant could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefit.

Confidentiality is usually a sincere concern for participants, as they share their thoughts and feelings that could have professional ramifications. Thus, the researcher assured the participants that only those involved in the research would know their identity, and the study would ask no demographic questions. The names of the participants were changed and thus their identities will not be disclosed in either published form or in presentations. Finally, all information was stored in a locked box, in a locked room in which only the researcher had access to.

Procedures

This study was conducted during the spring of 2009. The participants of the study met with researcher in the above-mentioned places, for the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were tape-recorded and the researcher also took notes on her observations

or impressions of the interview. The recordings were then transcribed and attached to the hand written notes for analysis.

Analysis of Data

Transcriptions and notes of the interviews were read for particular ideas that were categorized into more general themes in a process called open coding (Creswell, 2007). This process was done using two people to analyze the text individually and then collaboratively to discuss and compare answers. Once themes were agreed upon, a third person reviewed the results. This reduced bias and increased reliability.

Results

Professionals within these agencies reported varying feelings about the quality of interagency collaboration. Since the development of a dual status protocol within the County that started several years ago, interagency collaboration seems to be a topic receiving much attention. Several participants mentioned collaboration has improved some as a result of the protocol. A manager for JPD gave a historical perspective on collaboration before the development of a protocol. He stated, “Early on, I can say that collaboration was...almost non-existent...I think it’s changed”. Despite the on-going development of a protocol to address dual status cases, a large number of participants reported interagency collaboration as strained for various reasons. Since an overwhelming number of participants discussed myriad complications with interagency collaboration, the following results are presented thematically addressing the identified barriers to interagency collaboration as they affect individual, agency, and interagency practice, or micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social work. This is followed by suggestions for improvement that were identified by the participants.

Micro Level: Individuals' Willingness to Collaborate and Feelings of Annoyance

Both DFCS and JPD participants credited good or bad collaboration on the individuals involved and their personal willingness. Many participants had experiences with both willing and unwilling partners in collaboration. One social worker put it this way, "it depends on the person's personality", hinting that one's personality might both affect their own willingness to collaborate, and the willingness of others to collaborate with them. The social worker also went on to say, "[collaboration] depends on the person's willingness...If that effort is good then you get a good result out of it". Other participants repeated this idea as they stated some social workers and probation officers are "more invested than others". One probation officer hinted social workers are not always "willing to talk to us". There were stories from both agencies stating some personnel were difficult to get along with and increased negative feelings of the other system.

Many participants were frustrated by other professionals' decision making. This frustration was stated by both JPD and DFCS workers, however it was expressed in varying ways. Probation officers typically stated they wondered why so many of their probationers had long lists of child welfare referrals and allegations of child abuse, but had never been removed from their parents' or guardians' care. One supervising deputy probation officer recalled examining a family's past child welfare referrals, and was shocked by what he found.

"We sent off for records of how many times this minor was referred to CPS, and I'm like, how many? It was like fifteen times...Why didn't [they] do anything? ...There was something going on".

One social worker complained that probation officers, “probably have preconceived notions of what is going on...They see that they are either [defined as Welfare and Institutions Code] 300 or 600. They write reports quickly without investigating the full picture with what little information they have”.

Judgment of others’ professional decisions and feelings of annoyance were not exclusively expressed towards professionals within JPD or DFCS. Attorneys were also discussed with annoyance. One supervising deputy probation officer expressed his annoyance with public defenders encouraging specific placements, “Even though their just advocating for their clients, it’s still bothersome.” A supervising social worker stated her frustration with prosecuting attorneys that pursued legal consequences for consensual sex between same-sex adolescents at a group home. “This particular prosecuting attorney...does not understand the complicated psychological problems that might be related to the issue.” Judgment of professionals’ decisions was also expressed towards the police officers that may or may not site a youth for a crime after it was committed. Many social workers complained police officers do not hold crossover youth accountable. One social worker stated these youth know to tell the police officers, “I’m a foster kid, take me back to the shelter” and the police officers make the choice to take them to the Santa Clara County Children’s Shelter, instead of Juvenile Hall. This feeling of professional superiority toward police was voiced in another way by a different social worker who, when discussing errors made by police officer, said, “They [referring to the police] aren’t smart enough”. These feelings of professional superiority no doubt hinder interagency collaboration and keep professionals separate.

Negative feelings of other professionals involved with dual status cases were very apparent. Predicting that biases between the two systems existed, the researcher asked about overt biases. Probation officers repeatedly stated that other officers view social workers as “bleeding heart liberals” who “give out hugs and kisses.” Social workers often stated probation officers are “too busy to collaborate” and have “black or white thinking” that limits their understanding of the complexities of circumstances. No doubt these biases are likely to play out in interpersonal exchanges during interagency collaboration.

Mezzo Level: Differences in Agencies’ Rationale and Resultant Misunderstandings

Participants disclosed barriers to collaboration spanned the individual, and hinted at more midlevel system issues, or mezzo level issues. Miley, O’Melia, and DuBois (2007) state at this level of intervention, the “locus of change is within organizations and their formal groups” (p. 12). The following themes expose barriers to collaboration at the county level and their agencies. They are *differences in agencies’ rationale and logic*, *undermined trust within the collaborative process*, and *the process of coming to interagency decisions in Team Decision Meetings*.

Many participants discussed feeling a large division between the rationale and focus of DFCS and JPD. This was by far the most frequently occurring theme, perhaps because the differences are so stark. “JPD focuses on community safety,” said one social worker. “Social Services focuses on protecting the child,” stated a Supervising Deputy Probation Officer. While these professional distinctions are to be expected between governmental bureaucracies and may be functional in general, they seem to be problematic in this regard. Crossover youth need both protection from community influences and to be kept from offending community safety.

These differences in agency professional rationale and logic appear to lead to feelings of frustration and judgment about other professionals' choices, particularly in areas of department jurisdiction. One supervising social worker recalled with anger the many times foster youth on his caseload committed offenses without consequence from probation, "I could explain that this would be his eighth citation and he has broken the law this many times, and nothing ever happens...they'll say, 'Sorry you guys, we're not going to do anything.'" The repetition of varied logic and decision-making abounded. One supervising social worker stated,

"The mind set is, 'Dependency can do more. We can't do as much because we have all these kids. 80% of the time it's better if they have dependency because they can do better'. As long as they have that mind set, it's already difficult for us to collaborate, because they think we can do better."

Another supervising social worker stated that she had seen situations where she wanted to keep youth within the dependency system solely and JPD had wanted to make them 602, wards of the Delinquency Court.

A third Supervising Social Worker summed up the differences in logic by stating,

"I think one of the hardest things for our social workers is to understand that when juvenile probation makes recommendations, they're looking at a criminal behavior continuum. Which when we look at violence, there is no acceptable violence. There *is* no acceptable level of violence, of harm to others, of harm to property. And in terms of violence, they have a term called 'mutual combat' which often times covers the types of physical altercations our youth get into. And we may have a youth that hurts somebody and we're appalled, our social workers are appalled. And [JPD is] like, 'Well, it really wasn't that bad.'"

Social workers often complained about probation officers' rationale when they felt the youth needed consequences by the probation department in order to learn from their mistakes. Another social work supervisor stated, "They need to have logical consequences for [breaking the law]." Another social worker remarked dependent youth

often behave in self-injurious ways and espoused a status change to 602 might better contain them. “We’re talking about protection of the kid...in some cases it might be better for them to remain as a 602 because they are watched under probation,” he said.

However, probation officers often disagree with the severity of crimes typically committed by dependent youth. One probation officer recounted a dual status case on his caseload and remarked,

“...In the grand scheme of things, that’s not exactly the crime of the century. It was a very minor charge.”

Unfortunately, many social workers do not understand juvenile probation’s logic for making rational decisions. Many social workers reported being frustrated youth on their caseloads were committing crimes without any legal recourse or consequences. This is a concern for social workers that feel getting ‘away with’ criminal behavior can lead to unrealistic views of the criminal justice system. One social work supervisor complained when youth are not given consequences for their actions, it undermines the social workers’ credibility:

The whole time, you use it as a bluff or an inside threat...’You know, eventually you’re going to get caught, and eventually you are going to go to juvenile hall. And they are going to ask my opinion, and I’m going to ask them to throw the book at you’...and then they go and get released and your credibility is gone...Try working with a kid after that.”

Another social worker repeated this sentiment, “They get cut so much slack over and over and over again, while they [are] self destructive, community destructive, their criminality increases. They really start feeling like supermen.”

Participants generally misunderstood the differences in agency rationale and logic. Further, participants generally did not understand how the other system operated. One participant admitted, “I don’t know how [the other] system works.” Another

participant stated, “I’ve found that probation officers have no clue about what [social workers] do, really, and we have not very much of a clue as to what they do.” Many participants stated they only have assumptions as to why other professionals make the decisions they make. This lack of understanding of other professionals’ system limitations seems to deepen the divide between the two systems, and likely affects influence individuals’ willingness and ability to collaborate.

When disagreements between JPD and DFCS arise over the appropriate status of crossover youth, the departments conduct Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to aid agreements. While participants reported varying opinions on the value of MDT meetings, two participants from JDP believed the forum was an effective tool for appropriate collaboration, and five others reported that MDT process undermined their trust in interagency collaboration.

A probation manager stated that he thought MDT meetings were “the turning point of improving collaboration between DFCS and JPD.” A supervising probation officer said, “not all MDTs run smoothly, but that’s why you have that kind of setting to iron out and air all your problems surrounding the case.”

Others reported MDT meetings were often used as spaces to push youth back and forth between systems, not necessarily to create collaborate solutions for specific needs. One supervising probation officer compared MDT meetings to selling the other department on their viewpoint. “It’s like a sale and we’re pitching our product,” she said. “So it’s like...you’re trying to make the other understand you point of view and why what you think would best serve the minor. But everyone should have an open mind. Does it always happen?” she continued, implying, ‘no,’

Unfortunately, social workers had very little trust that decisions made in MDT meetings would hold as recommendations to the court. One social work supervisor surmised, “During the MDT...everybody did state what they had to say, but disregarded it as soon as we were out of the picture.” Another social work supervisor recounted an incident where social services was trying to convince juvenile probation to take the child after several citations and for dealing illegal substances. He stated he had been the child’s social worker since he was a small child and came into the dependency system. Now the child was a teenager, and the social worker had become the supervising social worker. He told the investigator he knew the probation officer wanted to keep the youth as a dependent, so an MDT was called. The players attending the MDT were the social worker, the supervising social worker, a mentor child advocate, and a professional from Legal Advocates for Children and Youth (LACY). The probation officer and supervising probation officer did not attend the MDT meeting. As reported by the supervising social worker and another supervising probation officer, the youth had asked if he could attend the MDT, and since he was in Juvenile Hall, the MDT needed to be held at the juvenile detention complex. They changed the venue and the youth attended the MDT to discuss his status. In order to make his case, the supervising social worker needed to list in chronological order the behaviors that he thought warranted delinquency status. According to both the supervising probation officer and supervising social worker, the youth was very angry to hear his past talked about in a room full of professionals. “And he looks at me, and you can see his jaw bone clenching because he is so angry. And he’s looking at each person talking about what a [screw up] he is,” reported the supervising social worker. Another participant reported, “He was so angry, I thought he’d need to be

restrained later when he got back to the hall.” During the MDT, the supervising social worker reported,

“The PO is listening to this and at the tail end he says, ‘Yes, I see that you’ve provided all these services including two ‘Wrap Arounds,’ all these level 14 group homes,’ so the social worker writes down, ‘PO you agree with us that he should go 602.’ We are all in that room and he says yes. Court is Tuesday. She wrote out the statement. The PO goes in there and say, ‘No, I don’t agree. I think that DFCS didn’t provide him with enough services. They should do more services.’

Many participants mentioned wanting to see formalized structure clearly outlining exactly what is expected of them, and ensuring the outcome of the agreements reached at the MDT meeting. One social worker mentioned,

“when [DFCS] ha[s] Team Decision Meetings, there is a formal facilitator. At an MDT, there is no formal facilitator to reach a conclusion....I’m writing a memo after our MDT for all to see and then I’m submitting it in the court report.”

Another supervising social worker recounted a different incident where MDT agreements were not kept.

“We had a big MDT, and they agreed that the child would remain in the home, and they would have wraparound services. They made a huge agreement with us and we said, ‘OK, go ahead’ ...and they made him a 602...and they promptly removed the kid from the home and it completely damaged the kid. He completely fell apart. I mean—that was not cooperation.”

Broken agreements from MDT meetings result in feelings of distrust for the other players. It is hard to rebuild trust with limited interaction, especially is face-to-face interagency interaction is relegated to MDT meetings.

Macro Level: Technologies and Funding for the Systems

Participants identified barriers to collaborations on a macro level, or an interagency and societal level. Miley, O’Melia, and DuBois (2007) state that macro level

problems rest in societal systems that contextualize agencies. This study identified macro level barriers as the use of unreliable technologies, and a lack of resources.

The theme of *faulty use of technology* came up in the majority interviews with JPD and DFCS. These agencies' staff reported they often left many telephone messages before receiving return calls, if ever receiving return calls. Many mentioned probation officers have such high cases loads they should not be held accountable to return calls in a timely manner. Two supervisors, one each from JPD and DFCS reported using a feature of the phone systems and pressing "0" to be transferred to an 'officer of the day', who could then provide immediate assistance. While this technology exists in most governmental agencies, it appeared as if very few professionals utilized this service.

Information sharing was another issue for participants. JPD professionals mentioned desiring easy ways of gathering child welfare referrals and histories besides waiting for a phone call or a fax transmission of information. DFCS professionals mentioned that JPD can always appear at the DFCS office and review files in person, but this was reported as unrealistic by JPD. DFCS also spoke of desires for an easier way to review new charges of criminal activity for their youth, but obtainment of that information hinged on whether or not the probation officer was able to call them back.

Fax transmissions seemed to be another area where technology hindered the collaborative process. When the agencies are recommending particular jurisdiction to the dual status judge, JPD submits a "Dual Status Report" or "241.1 Report" that has an attached DFCS amendment. Submitting and receiving 241.1 reports was a sore spot for many participants, as reports were submitted by fax, and probation professionals often stated that they do not always receive the reports, despite social workers adamantly

claiming they were faxed. There are many potential pitfalls with faxing documents: faxes received may or may not be handled by clerical staff that would distribute the faxes in a bureaucratic fashion, or the fax machine may malfunction or be out of paper. Faxing is not a guaranteed technology, and in this context, its efficacy is paramount. Social workers and probation officers stated that when 241.1 dual status reports are not received in time for submission to the dual status judge, the youth in question wait in juvenile hall for longer periods of time before being heard in court. They may or may not be receiving services at that point, and any delay in the process directly affects them. One supervising social worker stated that potential dual status youth may wait up to seven weeks for the resolution or outcome of their hearing. Smoothing the process of document sharing is vital for the youth's well being, and for federal compliance that youth are held in the least restrictive setting.

Another macro level barrier that emerged from this research is a *lack of resources*. An overwhelming majority of participants reported high caseloads hindered professionals' abilities to do the necessary work of collaboration. While high caseloads may seem like an agency issue, or mezzo level problem, funding for case management come from federal, state and county sources. Therefore, the following theme is identified as a macro level issue.

The busyness associated with high caseloads was summed up in the words of one industrious social worker, "We need to collaborate, but who has the time?" High caseloads were also attributed to an idea that the other jurisdiction denies the ability to provide services for the youth in efforts to keep their caseloads lower. This was reported as 'dumping.' One supervising probation officer summed up the sentiment by stating, "At

least from our standpoint, it looks like...they are trying to dump the kid on us.” Another Probation Officer put it this way, “Social Services seemed that they just wanted to dump the kid on us. And depending on the crime, it seemed that the crimes didn’t warrant taking the kid over to delinquency.” ‘Dumping’ was linked to scarce manpower and scarce resources. Another supervising probation officer put it this way, “We all have such high caseloads that we want to get rid of as many cases as we can...if we can push the kid to the other system, we can get rid of the case.”

The Dependency Court Judge stated the lack of resources “creates a lot of tension.” She stated, “DFCS has more funding streams...because of the huge Title IV-E reimbursement.” A JPD manager also mentioned funding. By stating, “One of the major hurdles for improving dual status has been the issue of...which agency, in terms of DFCS or JPD, is going to pull down that...money?” This funding issue is clearly linked to ‘dumping.’ This participant went on to state,

“...There are cases where you have delinquent behavior and such an overwhelming...need for dependency services. Those really need to be looked at for the benefit of that child, not to have to worry about funding streams and who is going to pull the money down.”

Yet determining services through funding metrics and not the best interest of the child seems to be the case, as most participants discussed the push and pull between systems associated with crossover youth. When budgets and caseload demands determine the rationale behind which agency has jurisdiction over a crossover youth, we fail as a system. This seemed a source of great frustration, and a thorn in the side of interagency collaboration.

Suggestions for Improvement

When participants were asked for their suggestions as to what would aid interagency collaboration in the arena, the typical response was a *desire for a middle ground between W&IC 300 and 600*. All the DFCS participants, social workers and supervisors, reported frustration that they are not able to provide youth services against their will. Participants also stated this frustration could be alleviated if there was some middle ground between the two systems. One supervising probation officer stated she wishes there was a more flexible system to “meet those needs,” because there are cases where, “we want to hold them accountable, but at the same time, they need all these services that social services can provide for them.” Yet, in the current informal dual status protocol for Santa Clara County, youth that need services from both departments are defined as “dual status,” but one agency dominates, while the other agency is on-hold. This research found that professionals involved in this topic felt that their hands were tied in what they could provide for crossover youth, and desired a middle ground with flexible treatment optimizing youth’s functioning in the least restrictive setting. The ‘dual status’ label is deceptive in current practices, but alteration could create a system where crossover youth truly have dual status between JPD and DFCS.

Discussion

This study found professionals from the Department of Family and Children’s Services and the Juvenile Probation Department generally felt interagency collaboration was strained in cases of crossover youth. Barriers to effective collaboration fell into all three levels of social work practice: micro, mezzo and macro. Micro level barriers were *individuals’ willingness to collaborate, and feelings of contempt for their co-*

collaborators; mezzo level barriers were a *lack of understanding of the different agencies' rational or logic*, and *undermined trust within the collaborative processes*.

Macro level barriers were the *use of faulty technology*, and a *lack of resources*.

Suggestion for improving collaboration was a *creating a middle ground between the two systems* or between W&IC 300 and 600.

These themes supported this researcher's hypothesis that interagency collaboration was poor in cases of crossover youth due to systematic limitations and differences in organizational culture. There were myriad identified barriers to productive and genuine collaboration. This research also found participants wanted increased system flexibility in dual status cases. Participants overwhelmingly requested a 'middle ground' between both systems or W&IC 300 and 600. These results were consistent with the application of three major theoretical frameworks reviewed: Luhmann's systems theory, Intersystem collaboration, and organizational culture theory.

Luhmann's systems theory states systems define themselves by what others are not (Luhmann, 1982). Clearly in the case of the governmental bureaucracies of DFCS and JPD, there are clear legal distinctions between them. DFCS protects minors from harm; JPD protects the community from harmful minors. Both systems have rehabilitative models, but in cases of youth that are both needing protection from harm and are harming the community, these distinctions are problematic. They are the perpetrator in some situations and the victim in other arenas. Luhmann (1992) posited systems often created binary codes that were mutually incomprehensible to other systems. For example, the judicial system uses the binary of *legal/illegal* that are written and codified. Social work, having a long tradition as an interdisciplinary social science,

does not necessarily operate with binary codes. Rather, it looks at individuals and groups social functioning according to culture, developmental and psychological theories. At times, social work can be in muddled conflict with the judicial system's codes, especially in cases of dual status youth. A great example, which presented itself in this research, is prostitution by foster youth. While the youth may be the perpetrator of a crime (prostitution), due to their age, the law recognizes them as a victim of a crime (statutory rape). This is extremely problematic when social workers are asking JPD to intervene and contain a youth who needs psychological and behavioral interventions. The judicial system sees them as a victim of crime and therefore out of their jurisdiction. Social workers are left to convince the minor that she needs help, but cannot force her into treatment. This is the crux of the 'dual status' problem: inflexible systematic distinctions. Bardach (1996) theorized interagency collaboration is even more problematic in governmental bureaucracies as their operating methods "presuppose deliberate non-alignment" (p. 307). The Dependency Court Judge exemplified this when she said, "I think policy is designed around keeping everybody in their disciplines, and it doesn't take into consideration the many doors the family enters, or the many parts of the family's issues."

The results also confirm organizational culture negatively affects collaboration in this case. As mentioned above, Schein (1992) defines organizational culture as "artifacts, espoused values and tacit assumptions of an organization" (as cited in Taylor, 2005, p. 641). The results show that the 'tacit assumptions' of the agencies mission and goals also conflict. This came up during interviews when participants stated their agency's ideas of

which agency would better serve the youth, and in their feelings of professional superiority.

Bardach (1996) identified barriers to collaboration as compromised funding streams, agency autonomy, and career goals that depend on defending that autonomy. These barriers unfortunately match up with the results of this study. Funding streams for both DFCS and JPD youth placed in out of home care come from federal Title IV-E money that is matched by the county and state. It is unclear to this researcher, and to the participants alike, how exact funding is allocated for agencies in dual status cases. It is uncertain if funding is actually compromised. However, real or not, many participants perceived funding to be a barrier to collaboration. Agency autonomy is obviously an issue as professionals within each system operate separately, only to join their reports at the end for the dual status judge to review. Further, with many participants disclosing bias against the other system or agency, this researcher believes career goals hinging on protecting agency autonomy are barriers to interagency collaboration.

Suggestions for Improved Collaboration

This research exposed many barriers to interagency collaboration between JPD and DFCS in cases of crossover youth. While these barriers exist at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels, interventions most appropriately fall into the mezzo and macro levels. Effective mezzo and macro level changes will likely bring about individual, or micro level changes. Therefore, these two social work practice levels thematically organize the following suggestions.

While the distinctions between the two systems are steadfast, and barriers to collaboration abound, Timmons, Fesko and Cohen (2004) suggest activities to aid

interagency collaboration at the mezzo level of practice. Thankfully, Santa Clara County is already engaged in some of these suggestions. Leadership can encourage collaboration by creating safe spaces for new approaches (Timmons, Fesko & Cohen, 2004). Santa Clara County has long been involved in the creation of a dual status protocol to allow for flexibility in treatments for crossover youth. However, this protocol does not outline clear guidelines of professional collaboration—expectations, and steps to achievement of this collaboration. Ingram, Bloomberg and Seppanen (1996) found that guidelines are vital to successful interagency collaboration.

Timmons, and colleagues (2004) also suggest forums for agencies to interface and exchange ideas can significantly improve collaboration. Forums allow professionals to venture out of their silos, build relationships, and exchange ideas. This already happens in Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, yet this is contentious space, because as the results show, professionals enter the MDT meetings with their minds made up, and proceed to persuade the others to agree with their assessment. It is not likely an effective tool at building relationships. In fact, this research suggests the MDT meetings might create more animosity between the systems. Perhaps if the MDT meetings had an objective facilitator, and the agreement reached was formally documented, participants would feel more comfortable to engage as partners, not adversaries. Further, if the dual status protocol clearly outlined how collaboration is supposed to take place, and what outcomes were expected, collaborators would have an understanding of their roles.

This research found both agencies had little understanding of each other and rational choices that they make. Training for both agencies would also increase collaboration. Agency trainings on general overviews of dependency and delinquency

systems and particular crossover issues are strongly suggested. The research showed a lack of understanding led to assumptions and feelings of professional superiority. Clearly training probation officers on the processes and professional limitations of the dependency system will not only help them understand how social workers generally approach cases, but further understand the meaning of their clients' past child welfare histories. Training social workers on how youth progress through the delinquency system will only increase understanding of the rational choices probation officers make in dual status cases. This training must be on-going, and should be used as a forum for interface and relationship building between these disparate agencies. The importance of training cannot be stressed enough.

Macro level suggestions for improvement include upgrading technology that limits collaboration. Expecting busy, overworked professionals immediate responsiveness to collaborate via telephone is unrealistic. In our modern technologically savvy society, our governmental agencies should be primarily expected to communicate via email. The agencies already have extra privacy provisions to ensure agency email is confidential, and this should encourage agency personnel to utilize this technology. Probation officers and social workers could exchange information via email attachments. This could relieve pressure to return calls, and fax time sensitive dual status 241.1 reports. After all, if the document is faxed over, there is no guarantee the document will reach its intended audience unless they are waiting at the fax machine. Emailed attachments are easier to control, there is accountability that it was received, can be accessed by any computer within the agency building, and can be printed as needed. If there is a question of trusting the document has not been tampered with, the agency could

delegate receipt of emailed attachments to the court officer, or another trustworthy appointed personnel. This easy change can be outlined in the protocol if it is found to be effective.

Another macro level suggestion for improvement is increasing the efforts and resources allocated to interagency collaboration and treatments for crossover youth. It should also be noted that piecing together autonomous reports is not enough collaboration for the needy population of crossover youth. Unfortunately, this is currently all that is expected under the informal dual status protocol. True collaboration in the case of dual status youth would be the exchange of ideas for the purpose of holistic treatment options. Research has shown that increased collaboration only increases resources available to clients (Green, Rockhill & Burrus, 2008). Current law allows dual status protocols to provide holistic services provided concurrently by both agencies through a “lead agency” model. The protocol must outline how collaboration will take place, how non-duplicative services will be provided, and how dependency and delinquency courts will communicate with each other (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). There is tremendous flexibility for the protocols in terms of how counties can provide services for crossover youth. There are really only two restrictions, they cannot allow for conflicting orders by different courts, and cannot offer simultaneous or duplicative services provided by different agencies (Administrative Office of the Courts, 2007). Santa Clara County’s informal protocol is an “on-hold” model. It suspends one status to accommodate another. It does not allow for possible creative interventions with concurrent and combined efforts because only one agency is providing services at a time (Administrative Office of the

Courts, 2007). It does offer seamless supervision as youth ‘cross-over’ from one agency to another.

Further, the protocol is only seemingly an improvement to historical intervention options for crossover youth, as participants reported it falls short in creating the type of holistic care AB 129 intended. Perhaps the leadership of Santa Clara County has identified the need for greater collaboration and oversight for the sake of crossover youth, but lacks the tools to achieve such collaboration. The Dependency Court Judge stated that Santa Clara County excels at creating solutions to problems, but the county “lacks[s] political will because of a larger lack of vision that these are *our* kids” [emphasis added]. The creation of a dual status protocol is a great step in the right direction, but the protocol needs to address how to improve interagency collaboration for the sake of holistic services, not just codify the status quo.

Results of this study found professionals involved with crossover cases overwhelmingly desired more flexibility in what they could offer youth and families with dual jurisdiction. Referred to as “middle ground”, most participants reported wishing they could provide aspects of both systems without having to choose one or the other. One supervising social worker stated that he wants to see a middle ground where he can team with probation to offer containment and treatment for youth that “does not trample on their rights.” Another supervising social worker disclosed she had a death on her caseload of a youth that badly needed containment. She also longs for ‘middle ground.’ “If we had had the capacity to hold her to where she couldn’t run, get her through some rough patches, she might have been alive today, but she’s not.”

Containment was the main issue reported as the impetus for a ‘middle ground.’ The frustrations that both probation and child welfare professionals expressed in this area were clear. “Sometimes [youth] are in between [systems],” said one participant. Another stated, “There needs to be some kind of alternative.” Another participant illustrated a Venn diagram and said, “Where they overlap, I hate to say this because it’s a bureaucracy, but there needs to be a third category.” She later stated, “If there could be a case plan to mandate them to get into drug treatment, but they could stay with me visiting them...it would be ideal.” Social workers were not the only ones to voice the need for some ‘middle ground.’ Probation personnel also desire a flexible administrative space for serving the best interests of the child in “the least restrictive setting possible.”

However, the County’s “on-hold” dual status protocol pushes the youth between systems and does not allow for collaborative treatment options. It is strongly suggested that the dual status protocol model be evaluated for effectively serving crossover youth in a holistic fashion and for professional satisfaction. This research found that the systemic process of interagency collaboration led to negative feelings of other agency professionals involved in crossover youth cases. It seems that the process of defining a youth as ‘one or the other’ imprecisely forces professionals (with complex understandings of the youth in the context of their family and community) to allow another agency to have complete oversight over the case.

While this researcher realizes this report is contextualized by a current state and federal fiscal crisis, adequate resource allocation for this needy population cannot be ignored. It was found defining resource allocation for dual status cases was confusing for participants. It is strongly suggested key players team up and investigate how to most

effectively gather federal Title IV-E money. The Administrative Office of the Courts (2007) offers a comprehensive guide to understanding the complicated issues associated with crossover youth and protocol development. This also outlines the regulations necessary for probation departments to gather Title IV-E funds in cases of dual status youth.

This study indicates the need for more research in the topic of interagency collaboration in cases of dual status youth. Possible further studies are suggested for the creation of best practices for treatment and interventions for dual status youth and trauma informed practice in delinquency interventions.

Limitations

Limitations for this study include an imbalance in the number of DFCS professionals interviewed versus the number of JPD professionals, despite this researcher's best efforts. Given that this researcher was concurrently interning at the Department of Family and Children's Services, they had more frequent interface with social workers and social work supervisors. They were therefore able to complete the anticipated number of DFCS interviews, three supervising social workers, and three social workers. They were not, however, able to complete an equal number of interviews with probation officers. In fact, all of the JPD interviews consisted of three supervising probation officers and one probation manager. While they had hoped to interview professionals from Legal Advocates for Children and Youth, the District Attorney's Office, and County Counsel, they were limited in their time and ability to contact willing participants.

Other limitations include not asking uniform questions across the spectrum of interviews. Due to the nature of semi-structured interviews, this researcher often let the participant discuss subject matter that generally related to topic of interest in varying ways. With time constraints, she was not always able to ask uniform questions across the board. Further, the researcher was not able to discuss the findings with the participants prior to completion of the study, possibly threatening internal validity.

Implications for Social Work from a Transcultural Perspective

The transcultural perspective can be applied to research as well as practice. The transcultural perspective supports five interrelated but distinct dimensions of diversity: 1) Cultural knowledge: recognizing the importance of culture in social work at all levels of practice; 2) Cultural competence: applying principles of cultural competence in practice; 3) Power, privilege and oppression: understanding dynamics of power, privilege, oppression, and structural contexts; 4) Positionality and self-reflexivity: maintaining an awareness of ones own cultural perspectives, values, and beliefs; and 5) Respectful partnership: demonstrating respect in interactions with client systems.

Research with a transcultural perspective requires knowledge of concepts and processes related to culture and how these intersect with social work concerns. This dimension of the transcultural model focuses on the discovery of key knowledge about the construct of culture as well as processes for how to locate knowledge about various cultural communities. Examining this research from this perspective raises implications for further practice. This research found very little understanding of the others' systematic processes and limitations. Implications for continued practice include extensive crosstraining for DFCS and JPD professionals. Increasing professionals'

knowledge of other organizational cultures with which they interface is vital to the purpose of quality interagency collaboration. Encouraging interagency collaboration will likely increase possible treatment options for crossover youth to encourage their rehabilitation and social functioning.

This inquiry addressed the transcultural model's dimension of power, privilege, oppression, and structural contexts. Examining interagency collaboration in the subject of dual status or crossover youth can help elucidate how this population is underserved in the community and society at large. These agencies need to devise relevant and effective encouragements for interagency collaboration in cases of crossover youth. This research found collaboration to be poor and in need of mezzo and macro level interventions. Both JPD and DFCS struggle with disproportionate representation of traditionally marginalized clientele—the indigent and people of color. These governmental institutions have the power to make lasting impacts on youth and families' typically marginalized lives. This research suggests macro level advocacy for structural change that would allow for greater information sharing, and dual oversight. After all, foster youth may have limited long-term connections to stable adults, and their relationships to social workers or service providers should not automatically be severed by obligatory institutionalized jurisdictions. The barriers identified in this research, if ameliorated, could address gaps in practice and service delivery. Resultant increased interagency collaboration might help this vulnerable population avoid the juvenile justice system all together. This could lessen juvenile hall populations, reduce recidivism, and possibly strengthen families.

Conclusion

This study qualitatively examined professionals' feelings about interagency collaboration in cases of crossover youth. It found participants did not feel interagency collaboration was strained and the barriers to effective collaboration were plentiful, but centered around personal willingness to collaborate, misunderstandings of agency's rationale and logic, feelings of professional superiority, undermined trust, use of faulty technology, and a lack of resources. Participants overwhelmingly desired an administrative 'middle ground' where both probation and social services can flexibly supervise youth without duplicative services. Suggestions for increased interagency collaboration include adequately training personnel in varying agency policies and professional limitations, issues specific to crossover youth, and how interagency collaboration should take place in case of dual jurisdiction. This research also suggests agencies utilize other technologies than fax and telephone, as these were found to be inadequate. Email suggests itself as an effective alternative. Further, the study found both DFCS and JPD personnel are unsatisfied with the current dual status protocol, it is suggested that Santa Clara County change the protocol model to reflect the need for more holistic service delivery. This will take political will and an increased level of collaborative thought at micro, mezzo and macro levels. As one participant stated, "No matter what system you've got, it takes all the ants to work. If the ants aren't willing to work, then the system doesn't work." In the words of another participant, "We need that vision—we need that leadership—we need that policy change."

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