

Models for Change

Legacy Strategy

The Juvenile Justice Program is proposing a “legacy phase” of *Models for Change* grantmaking aimed at (1) securing and sustaining juvenile justice reform progress achieved by the initiative in our core states and (2) capitalizing on that progress to contribute momentum to a broader wave of national juvenile justice reform.

Why a Legacy Phase Makes Sense Now

Models for Change was launched to stimulate a new wave of comprehensive juvenile justice reform in America. The Foundation’s entry into the field was prompted by a series of regressive and fear-driven policy and practice changes that had swept the nation during the 1980s and 1990s. These changes threatened to erase the boundaries between juvenile and criminal justice, reorient juvenile sentencing and corrections in a starkly punitive direction, and abdicate adult responsibility for the rehabilitation of young people who violate the law. The Foundation responded in 1996 by funding the MacArthur Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice which oversaw a number of high-profile research studies establishing the profound developmental differences between adolescents and adults and exploring the justice implications of those differences. Starting in 2004 with the *Models for Change* initiative, the Foundation began a long-term effort to translate these findings into fair, effective, developmentally informed juvenile justice practice.

While *Models for Change* aimed to bring about change that was national in scope, there is no “national” juvenile justice system to work on. The *Models for Change* strategy had to take into account the complex state and local variations in the juvenile justice landscape, and the necessity of developing multiple reform approaches suitable to a range of conditions. Accordingly, the initiative worked in partnership with a diverse handful of bellwether states. It met these state systems where they were, collaborating with them to address their own reform priorities. It took advantage of naturally occurring opportunities and existing structures. And by supporting state and local reformers in a variety of settings, working in a variety of issue areas, and taking a variety of approaches, it helped to generate a broad and flexible range of system reform models.

To date, eight years into the initiative, the Foundation has invested more than \$100 million in support of policy and practice reform activities in 4 core states—Pennsylvania, Illinois, Louisiana, and Washington—as well as 12 additional Action Network states and over 35 local jurisdictions. It has an extensive network of committed partners and a long list of success stories, from local practice improvements to major reforms in state policy, funding and organization. Most important, it has developed practical models that address many of the most pressing needs of young people involved with the system, including better ways of:

- Holding them accountable without harmful, wasteful, and unnecessary confinement;
- Safeguarding their access to qualified counsel;
- Identifying and meeting their behavioral health needs;

- Increasing collaboration and information-sharing among multiple agencies serving them;
- Ensuring that they are treated fairly, regardless of their race or ethnicity;
- Protecting their safety and that of the public; and
- Preparing them for successful reintegration into their communities.

Models for Change has reached the point where it has something of value to share. Having invested heavily in developing reform models, in assembling powerful reform networks, in showing that reform progress is possible, the Foundation and its partners are ready to spread that progress beyond the states in which the initiative has worked, and to raise the priority and urgency of juvenile justice reform nationwide. Based on the initiative's experience and related efforts, there is good reason to believe that the field will be receptive to this stimulus, and that in fact this may be a unique historical opportunity to regenerate juvenile justice in America. The legacy strategy offers a way to take stock of our accomplishments, evaluate our approaches, analyze opportunities to advance the work, and prepare to seize new opportunities.

Legacy Phase Activities

One set of legacy grants will be aimed primarily at shoring up *Models for Change* progress in the jurisdictions in which the initiative has worked, ensuring an orderly transition away from direct Foundation support, and harvesting achievements and learning. Legacy grants of this kind will support the following activities:

- **Orderly succession** in core states, to ensure that the fruits of *Models for Change* investments are not lost as direct Foundation support ends and state and local partners assume ownership of the work.
- **Continued learning** from *Models for Change* work in core and partner states, through follow-on research and evaluations that will help to solidify the evidence base for specific reform models, as well as a large-scale summative evaluation of the *Models for Change* strategy as a whole.
- **Branding, packaging and dissemination** of *Models for Change* accomplishments, products and outcomes, in order to stimulate interest in and support for reform and facilitate replication of reform models.
- **Maintenance of action networks** of juvenile justice practitioners as a primary mechanism for ongoing reform leadership and diffusion in core and partner states.

Other legacy grants will seek to capitalize on *Models for Change* progress, products, learning and leadership networks to expand and spread reform. Legacy grants of this kind will support the following activities:

- **Targeted outreach** to key audiences in the juvenile justice field, making use of *Models for Change* successes, learning, goodwill and spokespersons to enlist support for reform principles and adoption of model practices among such specialized groups as judges, prosecutors, police, probation, corrections, service providers, etc.
- **Communications** aimed at state and local media and trade outlets and designed to highlight *Models for Change* successes, tools, and advances, emphasize their connection to the evidence base and values of the initiative, and raise the profile of *Models for Change* leaders and partners.

- **Mechanisms to support replication and adaptation** of *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations in new sites, including peer-to-peer mentoring and consultation using the *Models for Change* network of partners, sharing of tools and techniques through an on-line help desk, and possibly competitive access to an “innovation fund.”
- **New and expanded public-private partnerships** with federal agencies in support of broader adoption of *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations.
- **Leadership engagement and development** efforts that will mentor and support emerging leaders and change and broaden the group coming into field, as well as the skills and attitudes they bring and the things they hope to accomplish.
- **An expanded *Models for Change* “reform portal” website** that, while continuing to promote *Models for Change* resources, evidence and products and sustain *Models for Change* leadership networks, will also
 - Actively monitor and promote broader juvenile justice reform developments in line with *Models for Change* principles, wherever and however they arise, and
 - Serve as a hub for juvenile justice reform leadership networks, activities and products nationwide.
- **An expanded national convening** of juvenile justice reform leaders in 2012 that will include, in addition to those involved in *Models for Change* work, representatives of every major progressive movement in juvenile justice, and will begin the work of making connections, sharing tools and learning, and building partnerships capable maximizing the impact of our reform work.
- **A comprehensive national juvenile justice reform monitoring system** that will track significant reforms in law, policy, and practice and continuously assess their impact. The monitoring system will serve the field by collecting and continuously updating state-level juvenile justice information, detecting the ways in which reform affects outcomes, and enabling progress comparisons across states.

Legacy Content Areas

To simplify promotion and dissemination in new jurisdictions, *Models for Change* legacy work will be organized around a handful of core content areas, corresponding to the primary issue areas in which *Models for Change* partners have worked. Legacy work in each content area—including targeted outreach to key audiences, training, technical assistance and other mechanisms to support replication and adaptation of practice and policy innovations— will be coordinated in such a way as to maximize the impact of legacy resources. For each content area, a standard package of *Models for Change* practice and policy innovations, lessons, guidelines, and tools will be assembled, distilling into usable form all that *Models for Change* partners have learned that may benefit the field and stimulate further reform. Legacy content areas will include:

- Mental Health
- DMC
- Defense
- Multi-System Coordination and Collaboration

- Reintegration (including academic and career training for court-involved youth)
- Alternatives (including diversion, funding incentives, and handling of status offenders)

Legacy Vehicles

Legacy phase grants will finance the creation of a range of mechanisms to support the spread of reform, which may include:

- Certificate programs
- Training and technical assistance resource centers
- Leadership institutes
- Action networks
- Public-private partnerships

National Communications, State Policy Reform and the Legacy Strategy

The legacy activities described above will both support and be supported by:

- A **legacy communications** strategy to strengthen how we present our successes;
- A **national communications campaign** to raise general interest in juvenile justice; and
- The **national campaign to reform state juvenile justice systems** with support from multiple funders, including the Foundation, focused on policy advocacy.

A legacy communications strategy is being developed to share Models for Change successes and resources more broadly with important audiences, in and beyond Models for Change states, who could either adopt our models or advance policies supportive of reform. A separate national communications campaign is being developed to build and maintain momentum with stakeholders and media to amplify the need for juvenile justice reform across the United States. The national communications campaign will focus on the big picture and target opinion leaders and audiences outside the juvenile justice field, using traditional and social media and outreach, to make the case that reform is not only desirable but within reach and imminent.

The national campaign to reform state juvenile justice systems now operating in multiple states is accomplishing significant reforms and rallying potential partners. It is providing stories of success that will feed the communications efforts and further the case that now is the time for sweeping national reforms.

Reform Portal

We are exploring options for establishing a web portal to serve as an authoritative starting point for anyone seeking more information about juvenile justice reform. This portal would provide curated paths for specific audiences and individual issues leading from general background information to more comprehensive models, tools and resources from across the reform community. The portal would also

create linkage between field professionals and reformers and provide a broader view of reform activity than any current site.

Legacy Strategy Outcomes

If the legacy strategy succeeds, gains made after years of work will be secured and institutionalized in *Models for Change* states. However, *Models for Change* was never intended to be judged solely by its impact in *Models for Change* states. Rather, the announced goal of the initiative was to “raise the priority and urgency of juvenile justice reform as an issue for citizens and policymakers alike, create nationwide demand for a range of sensible and achievable policy reforms, and achieve such reforms in a majority of states.”

The proposed legacy strategy will accordingly use what has been learned and achieved through *Models for Change* to contribute direction and momentum to a national reform movement. That movement is clearly already in progress, and a successful legacy strategy will support and reinforce a number of striking trends apparent in many states—including the increased use of alternatives to short-term detention, reductions in long-term commitments and the closing and downsizing of unneeded facilities, the increasing reliance on and funding for evidence-based treatment, and the widespread adoption of scientific screening and assessment tools to structure decision-making and identify needs. By helping to support and spread these and other reforms—with evidence, success stories, speakers and presenters, and practice models, tools and techniques—the legacy phase of *Models for Change* will contribute to the establishment of a more fair, effective, and developmentally sound system of justice for youth.