

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE: Approval of an Agreement between the City of Shoreline and the Center for Human Services for the Referral of Juvenile Offenders through the Juvenile Intervention Program.
DEPARTMENT: Police and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
PRESENTED BY: Denise Pentony, Police Chief Rob Beem, Assistant Director

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

The City of Shoreline has the opportunity to be more effective in the way we deal with certain first time juvenile offenders. To do this, the City proposes to join with the Center for Human Services to operate the Juvenile Intervention Program. This action allows the two organizations to share necessary criminal and treatment information about the program participants

The JIP provides for family assessments and follow up counseling or treatment for certain juvenile offenders and the family members. This approach has been shown to be an effective way to deter youth from further criminal activity in a cost-effective manner. Operation of the JIP requires the Police to release "criminal history record information" to the Center for Human Services.

Often times a juvenile's first offense is a strong signal that the youth and quite possibly the family are facing issues and stresses that they are not able to effectively address. Over the years police, courts and the community have observed that intervention, support and counseling which get to the root of the problem, represent the most effective response. The Shoreline Police, in cooperation with the Center for Human Services, has developed agreements that allow them to replicate the Juvenile Intervention Program in Shoreline and equip our police with this effective tool in addressing criminal behavior in our youth.

This program was initially developed by the Bothell Police and Northshore Youth and Family Services with strong support from United Way, the Northshore/Shoreline Community Network and the King County Organizing Project. JIP has been operating successfully in Bothell since 1999. Closer to home, Lake Forest Park adopted the program in 2002. In the years that JIP has been operating, the recidivism rate of program participants is less than 3% compared to 27% for youth that proceed through the more traditional court process. The program has been so successful that the Northshore/Shoreline Network and the Shoreline Public Schools principles of JIP have been applied to students who are at risk of suspension in Shoreline's middle schools with similar positive results.

When the victim, the arresting officer and the youth's family agree, the offender and their families are referred to the JIP as an alternative to facing formal criminal charges. The family and youth agree to undergo an assessment by the Center for Human Services and to abide by the recommendations of that assessment. These recommendations could call for counseling, drug/alcohol treatment and the like. If the family complies with the recommendations then the City agrees not to pursue criminal prosecution in this case.

Close coordination and communication between the Police and the Center for Human Services are essential for the JIP's successful operation. The two organizations must be able to fully share information about the case and family. The Police are allowed to share this information when the juvenile and the juvenile's parents voluntarily enter the intervention program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None. The costs of assessments and counseling are being paid for by the Center for Human Services through grant funding from the Northshore/Shoreline Public Health and Safety Network and other agency funds.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that Council approve a motion to authorize the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with the Center for Human Services for the referral of juvenile offenders.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney 