

School Justice Partnerships

While specific steps may vary according to geographic location, resources and student needs, here are 10 steps that will help you reach your goal of reducing exclusionary discipline, arrests and referrals to Juvenile Court.



10 Steps for forming a School Justice Partnership (SJP)

□	STEP 1	<p>ASSEMBLE DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify core members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team leader (often Juvenile Court Judge) will facilitate discussions • Promote a shared voice in decision making ▪ Identify additional partners and emphasize diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential team members • May act as advisors ▪ Set tone for success during first meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared • Introduce the major issue(s) • Provide data to support effort
□	STEP 2	<p>DEVELOP A SHARED VISION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use first meeting to develop a clear vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a neutral and well-informed facilitator to manage discussion • Welcome conflicting thoughts as you work toward developing your vision and goals • Reassure members of their voice and values while steering the efforts to main goal(s) at hand ▪ Refer to the shared vision for subsequent planning
□	STEP 3	<p>UNDERSTAND THE ISSUE(S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collect and share data on exclusionary discipline, juvenile arrests and referrals, and student demographics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can serve as a baseline for data collection efforts • Look to different agencies for data, even if similar, to identify collection and focus gaps • Develop a shared space where team members can easily access data identified and collected ▪ Allow disparities, excessive use, and other findings to drive targeted efforts

□	STEP 4	<p>SET MEASUREABLE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specify data-driven goals, objectives, and performance measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define terms and share expectations for members • Goals and objectives should align with the vision of the SJP <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vision-Keeping kids in school and out of the criminal justice system ▪ Goal-Increase use of graduated consequences and restorative practices by school personnel and law enforcement ▪ Objective-Reduce the number of students referred to Juvenile Court by 50% ▪ Performance Measure-Number of school-based referrals to Juvenile Court
□	STEP 5	<p>IDENTIFY TARGETED ACTIVITIES & MAKE A TASK PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop targeted action steps to meet objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing resources that can support activities • Look to similar programs for replicable interventions and supports ▪ Prioritize action plan based on feasibility and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify task leaders and assign targeted activities • Plan to include targeted activities and expectations of respective partners in MOU
□	STEP 6	<p>HOLD INITIAL SJP TEAM MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify key components of MOU and partner responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-driven objectives and local needs drive meeting agendas ▪ Define the role of law enforcement in schools to be included in MOU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to state and national best practices against unintended harms ▪ Develop a system of graduated responses and restorative practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schools and districts may have these established through PBIS ▪ Identify quality control and accountability measures
□	STEP 7	<p>DRAFT AND FINALIZE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a comprehensive multilateral agreement that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines roles and responsibilities as defined by stakeholders • Clearly identifies areas of shared responsibility • Includes the purpose of the SJP, graduated response model to misconduct, quality control measures, and expected duration • Determines data collection and reporting efforts ▪ Living document subject to necessary revision as goals change or are met <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJP should may want to address problematic components or reasonably modify roles and responsibilities as needed ▪ The MOU is the buildout of the shared vision and an accountability tool

□	STEP 8	<p>TRAIN FOR PARTNERSHIP SUCCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop initial and follow-up training for partners based on the MOU-essential for success ▪ Training should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of your SJP's vision, goals, and objectives • Breakdown of MOU content • Policies and procedural expectations • Equity and implicit bias education • Data collection and sharing and related privacy and confidentiality concerns ▪ Develop an on-demand or regular training schedule for new employees and partners ▪ Provide refresher courses for partners including any new MOU and/or procedural changes
□	STEP 9	<p>DEVELOP PLAN FOR UPDATES & COURSE OF CORRECTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goals and objectives should drive progress monitoring efforts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify timeline for assessing progress (at least annually) • Assign responsibilities to members and agencies for data points • Allow for quantitative and qualitative measures • Survey partners for feedback and suggestions ▪ Use data collected and analyzed to drive MOU modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure goals, objections and performance measures are based on the shared vision as changes are made
□	STEP 10	<p>CREATE A DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A detailed implementation timeline will help members and partners stay on track ▪ Timeline should include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings and special ceremonies • Training schedules • Progress monitoring • Data collection deadlines ▪ Hold regular SJP meetings to address issues and revise resources as needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole team can meet every other month or quarterly • Identify smaller sub-committees to meet more regularly ▪ Goals and Objectives identified in MOU should determine implementation priorities and procedures

We'd love to connect with you! Visit us at gaappleseed.org to learn more about our work and how you can make a difference. Contact our Legal & Policy Director Caroline Durham at cdurham@gaappleseed.org for more information. Follow us on Facebook @GeorgiaAppleseed, Twitter @GAAppleseed and LinkedIn @ Georgia Appleseed Center for Law & Justice. Steps developed in part based on the "National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' School Pathways to the Juvenile Justice System Project: A Practice Guide".