



**Second Judicial District Court**  
**Gun Violence Intervention Programs**  
**Albuquerque, New Mexico**

Presentation by:  
Tanya Tijerina, LCSW and Lindsey Jones

# Two Programs Currently Addressing Gun Related Offenses

Community Gun Violence Intervention Program (CGVIP)

- ▶ Juvenile Offenses (2021)

Juvenile Drug Treatment Court (JDTC)

- ▶ Adjudicated cases (1998)

The Lens:

Adolescents' ongoing brain development, particularly in areas related to impulse control and decision-making, makes them more amenable to treatment and behavioral change.

Not only is change possible, it is expected and inevitable.

# Community Gun Violence Intervention Program

## **Program Description**

In response to national trends, the **Second Judicial District Court (SJDC)** launched the **Community Gun Violence Intervention Program (CGVIP)** in **2020** as part of the **Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)**.

**CGVIP** is a **16-week psycho-educational intervention** designed for **justice-involved adolescents and young adults** with firearm-related offenses. The program aims to reduce gun violence through a multidisciplinary approach rooted in **education, engagement, treatment, and peer support**.

- ▶ Guns are the leading cause of death among children and teens in New Mexico
- ▶ The New Mexico DA's office reported a 57% increase in juvenile gun crime from 2022 to 2023
- ▶ Juvenile gun deaths in New Mexico rose 45% between 2010 and 2019
- ▶ 299 Juveniles were detained for a gun related offence from September 2023 to September 2024
- ▶ From January 1 through August 4, 2025, there were 42 homicides, compared to 51 in the entirety of 2024 and 68 in 2023.

<https://www.governor.state.nm.us/gun-violence-dashboard/>

<https://www.cabq.gov/police/crime-statistics/homicide-statistics>

# The CGVIP program is comprehensive, trauma informed and follows a restorative approach

## **Trauma and Mental Health**

- ▶ Assess for PTSD, complex trauma, anxiety, depression — many youth charged with gun crimes have been victims of, or exposed to, violence.
- ▶ Grief and loss — especially if peers or family members have died due to violence.
- ▶ Coping strategies — teach emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and safe expression of anger and fear.

## **Self Identity, Peer Influence and a Sense of Belonging**

- ▶ Gang/Cartel Culture or affiliation (even loosely) — motivations, pressure, identity, and sense of belonging.
- ▶ Peer dynamics — loyalty, retaliation culture, peer validation.
- ▶ Masculinity and power — explore how youth understand manhood, respect, fear, and control.

## **Impulse Control, Emotional Regulation, & Decision Making**

- ▶ Brain development — help them understand how adolescent brains process risk, rewards, and consequences.
- ▶ Impulse control — addressing reactivity, poor foresight, and thrill-seeking.
- ▶ Problem-solving skills — practicing real-life scenarios.

## **Family & Environment**

- ▶ Family structure and involvement — role models, support systems, supervision, or lack thereof
- ▶ Exposure to community violence — normalize or glamorize guns in an unhealthy form
- ▶ Poverty, housing instability, systemic racism — root causes and historical trauma

## **Motivation & Engagement**

- ▶ Strength-based approaches
- ▶ Non-judgmental dialogue
- ▶ Motivational interviewing
- ▶ Culturally relevant practices

## **Gun Culture, Access, Normalization & Desensitization**

- ▶ Why carry a gun? For protection, status, power?
- ▶ How did they get the gun? Explore gun access and systemic failures.
- ▶ Desensitization to violence — media, music, environment
- ▶ Beliefs about safety — is carrying a gun seen as the only way to survive?

## **Legal Consequences**

- ▶ Understanding the legal system — what charges mean, what's at stake, how trials and probation work.
- ▶ Impact of a felony conviction — on housing, education, employment, voting, and long-term life trajectory.
- ▶ Restorative justice concepts — where possible, help them see harm, accountability, and repair.

## **Social Justice Awareness**

- ▶ Help them understand how systemic inequities (e.g., over-policing, economic disparity, underfunded schools) may have shaped their circumstances.
- ▶ Encourage critical thinking about their identity, agency, and role in the community.

## **Rehabilitation, Social Support**

- ▶ Mentorship — credible messengers, people who've "been there."
- ▶ Community connections — pro-social outlets like sports, arts, or job programs.
- ▶ Relapse prevention — planning for triggers, risky situations, or peer pressure.

## **Education, Vocational, Career, Skill Building & Future Opportunity**

- ▶ Connection to school or work — often there's disconnection or dropout history.
- ▶ Hope for the future — help them build a vision beyond street life.
- ▶ Strengths and goals — what are they good at? What do they care about?

# Community Partnerships

CGVIP is supported by a network of committed partners, including:

- ▶ **Albuquerque Fire Department (AFD)**
- ▶ **Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO)**
- ▶ **Youth Development Incorporated (YDI)**
- ▶ **Albuquerque Public Schools Resource Officers**
- ▶ **Various city and county agencies**
- ▶ **Peer Support Workers**

This collaborative effort ensures that participants not only receive education and intervention but also benefit from community-based resources, mentorship, and pathways to rehabilitation.



# CGVIP Data

- ▶ Total program referrals: 197
- ▶ Total participants that completed the program: 117
- ▶ New gun charges of those that completed the program: 22 of 117
- ▶ Recidivism 18.8%

# Juvenile Drug Treatment Court (JDTC)

## **Program Description**

The Second Judicial District Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Program (JTDC) was implemented in August of 1998 to address the concern of substance use amongst juveniles in Bernalillo County, New Mexico.

The JDTC is a **strength-based program** that aims to reduce drug use among participants through an **outpatient treatment program** coupled with **frequent judicial oversight** and **intensive supervision**. The program works through **incentives, sanctions, and therapeutic enhancements**.

The mission of the JDTC program is to **rehabilitate juveniles** with substance use disorder through treatment, support, and supervision. The JDTC program strives to **strengthen family relationships, promote positive community ties, and encourage a commitment to education**. The program seeks to **promote public safety, encourage positive youth development, and provide a continuum of quality treatment services**.

# JDTC Supervision & Treatment

**Treatment:** Integrated treatment specific to trauma related disorders and brain development of young adults

## **Accountability/ Intense Supervision**

- Five phases
- Weekly office visits and judicial oversight
- UA testing
- Office reporting
- Treatment
- Employment/Education
- 8 -24 months

**Consistency:** Weekly court appearances, staffing and roundtable discussions

# JDTC Requirements

The program is designed to guide participants step-by-step through important milestones, helping them build healthy habits, stay accountable, and grow in a positive direction.

- **Individualized Treatment Goals:** Participants develop and work toward goals with their treatment team in each phase.
- **Counseling and Group Therapy:** Attendance at therapy sessions, both individual and group, is based on their treatment plan. Participation is expected.
- **Teaching Responses:** Throughout the program participants are assigned life skills, learning assignments and recovery worksheets to help them learn coping skills to be successful in their recovery.
- **Case Plan Goals:** Participants work with their supervision officers to identify and achieve personal goals. These goals are designed to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors that are identified through comprehensive assessments done in the beginning of the program.
- **Phasing Plans:** At the beginning of each phase the participant works with their family, treatment team and supervision officers to identify individualized action steps specific to each participant to help them reach phase objectives related to their recovery.

# JDTC Data

- ▶ Total program referrals: 644
- ▶ Total participants that completed the program: 259
- ▶ Program Recidivism for FY23: 30%

\* JDTC Program paused accepting referrals from February of 2023 to July 2024

# New Approach to Youth Gun Violence

## Juvenile Drug Treatment Court- Gun Violence Intervention Track

### **Program Description (What):**

The Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Gun Violence Intervention Track is an intensive, court-supervised diversion and treatment program tailored specifically to adolescents involved in gun-related offenses and may also have a substance use disorder. This initiative balances community safety with rehabilitative strategies, **integrating therapeutic intervention, behavioral modification, and high accountability and supervision.**

# Target Population (Who):

This specialized intervention track is designed for high-risk adolescents within Bernalillo County who meet the following criteria:

- Youth facing gun-related charges who are not detained at the Youth Detention Center
- Youth currently on juvenile probation for a firearm-related offense
- Youth who have not received a long-term incarceration sentence at the time of conviction
- Youth assessed as high risk for reoffending and high need for behavioral health treatment, educational support, and wraparound social services
- **Youth referred as part of a court-ordered probation agreement**
- Youth who have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder and/or a substance use related co-occurring disorder.

# Key Components Include:

- Weekly court appearances before a dedicated juvenile court judge for close progress monitoring
- **Enhanced supervision through collaboration with supervision officers and law enforcement partners, including home visits, school checks, and curfew enforcement**
- Frequent and randomized drug testing and supervision check-ins
- Individualized treatment plans targeting mental health, substance use, trauma, emotional regulation, and self-control
- Evidence-based behavioral interventions and life skills training
- Family engagement and access to wraparound services
- Public safety risk assessments to inform case planning and modifications
- Collaboration with law enforcement to support deterrence and promote community accountability
- Increased opportunity for vocation, educational and job skill development



# Program Duration (Timeframe):

Program engagement spans up to 24 months, with structured phases that are adapted to individual progress, risk level, and compliance with court-ordered requirements.

## Goals:

- **Enhance community safety** by decreasing reoffending among justice-involved youth
- Promote youth accountability and meaningful behavior change
- Improve behavioral health, educational, and social outcomes
- Support successful community reintegration through coordinated supervision, support, education and opportunity
- Strengthen inter-agency collaboration to provide a seamless continuum of care

# Target Population

## **Eligibility Criteria:**

- Youth ages 14–18 in Bernalillo County
- Charged with gun-related offenses (possession, unlawful use, or associated crimes)
- Not sentenced to long-term incarceration
- Not currently held at the Youth Detention Center
- High-risk/high-need youth as determined by validated assessments
- Court-ordered participation following adjudication or probation violation involving a firearm
- May be diagnosed with a substance use disorder and/or substance use related co-occurring disorder

# Exclusion Criteria:

- Youth with acute psychiatric needs requiring inpatient or residential psychiatric care
- Youth with pending adult criminal charges (evaluated case-by-case)
- Youth sentenced to the Youth Diagnostic Development Center (YDDC)

# Conclusion

The Community Gun Violence Intervention Program and the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court currently address critical challenges within our community. By adding a specialized Gun Violence Intervention Track to the existing treatment court, the program will more effectively address the root causes of youth firearm offenses through a comprehensive approach that combines accountability, therapeutic intervention, and community-based support—aimed at breaking the cycle of violence and promoting long-term public safety. To ensure these programs remain relevant, effective, and sustainable, continued and dedicated funding is essential.