

# INFOCUS



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## Drug Courts

Substance abuse poses a significant threat to the well-being of the nation's youth and to the communities in which they live. According to the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health,<sup>1</sup> more than 20 million people age 12 and older had a substance use disorder related to their use of alcohol or illicit drugs in the past year.

Research presented in the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's (OJJDP's) Model Programs Guide estimates that 60 to 80 percent of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases involve addiction by a parent or guardian.

OJJDP-funded drug courts help youth and families overcome the effects of substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders. Since 2007, OJJDP has provided approximately \$143 million to establish or expand juvenile drug treatment courts, family drug courts, and tribal juvenile healing to wellness courts. To enhance program effectiveness, the funds also support research and training and technical assistance.

### Programs

#### Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Program

Funding under this program supports treatment and services for youth with substance abuse problems. The courts work to strengthen family engagement, address the root problems that may cause substance use and addiction, and empower young people to lead drug-free and crime-free lives.

#### Family Drug Court Program

This program serves parents and guardians who require treatment for a substance abuse disorder and who are involved with the child welfare system as a result of child abuse or neglect. Program goals are to strengthen parenting skills, to reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect resulting from addiction, and to provide services to the children affected.

#### Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Courts

Through this program, OJJDP enhances the capacity of tribal courts to respond to the substance use challenges of court-involved youth. The courts employ culturally informed approaches to promote accountability, healing, and tribal identity in youth younger than age 21.

### For More Information

Access more information about OJJDP's drug court programs at [ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/drug-courts](http://ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/drug-courts).

<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2019. *Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality.

### Funding

Between fiscal years 2017 and 2019, OJJDP awarded \$50 million to drug court programs nationwide. The funding allowed the courts to provide services for youth and families with substance abuse challenges, specifically those related to opioid abuse or co-occurring mental health disorders.

- ▶ Fiscal Year 2019—\$19.8 million
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2018—\$18.2 million
- ▶ Fiscal Year 2017—\$12 million

### From the Field

Guam launched the island's first family drug treatment court in November 2017 with funding from OJJDP. The Guam Family Recovery Program seeks to strengthen and reunite families by providing collaborative, culturally respectful, and family-centered treatment and services.

"We have witnessed a significant transformation in the parents' behavior," the grantee said. "Parents are holding themselves accountable and are committed to working toward the goal of sobriety and reunification with their children."



Office of Juvenile Justice and  
Delinquency Prevention  
[ojjdp.ojp.gov](http://ojjdp.ojp.gov)