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DSG to Help Translate Juvenile Justice Research Into Practice *Justice Department's Creator and Custodian of Two Evidence-Based Libraries Knows the Field*

BETHESDA, MD.—Development Services Group, Inc. (DSG), has been selected by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to conduct the Juvenile Justice Evidence Translation project, an effort to take the significant discoveries juvenile justice researchers have made over the past quarter century and turn them into policy and practice. The Latin American Youth Center and Healing City Baltimore will assist DSG with the work. The three-year cooperative agreement officially kicked off Oct. 1.

Elizabeth Spinney, DSG's director of state and local program initiatives, who will spearhead the project, says DSG has proposed the following five topic areas:

1. Implementing quality diversion programs for at-risk youths before they reach court involvement.
2. Improving access to and quality of community-based mental health supports for at-risk and system-involved youth.
3. Incorporating trauma-informed approaches throughout the continuum of care.
4. Using credible messengers with high-risk youths living in the community.
5. The role of Medicaid in providing services to youths after leaving residential care.

"OJJDP will ultimately decide which topics are the most pressing current needs for practitioners," Spinney remarked, adding, "We suggested these five because they span the juvenile justice continuum, and we think they align with OJJDP's priorities."

With oversight from OJJDP, DSG will undertake a systematic curation of juvenile justice research and knowledge in those areas and in emerging topics.

A Natural Fit to Do This Work

The Maryland-based woman-owned small business is a natural choice to conduct this work. More than 20 years ago DSG built OJJDP's *Model Programs Guide* (the MPG), an evidence-based repository that contains summaries on programs that meet specific methodological criteria and adhere to a strong theoretical base, and has maintained it ever since. OJJDP also tapped DSG in 2011 to build *CrimeSolutions*, a similar evidence-

based library of adult programs and practices. DSG updates *CrimeSolutions*, now under the purview of the National Institute of Justice, almost daily.

The curation DSG will do for the Evidence Translation program will build on and expand the *MPG* and *CrimeSolutions*, capturing not only rigorous empirical research but also other credible knowledge.

How They'll Do It

"We will develop carefully tailored translational tools and other resources on what works in juvenile justice, based on a diversity of different knowledge bases," explained Project Director Spinney. "The resources will be accessible, comprehensible, action-oriented, and user-friendly, to ensure that *nonresearcher* practitioners and lay persons can apply the information to create and sustain positive change across the juvenile justice continuum."

She went on to explain that topical areas, content, and delivery mechanisms all will be developed with input from youths who have lived experience in the juvenile justice system, from their families, and from other stakeholders.

DSG will follow a six-step process for developing each resource:

1. Identify and prioritize juvenile justice focus areas.
2. Curate current research and knowledge.
3. Scope and delineate the specific types of knowledge.
4. Develop tools, materials, and resources.
5. Conduct a usability review.
6. Develop a strategy for organizing, promoting, and distributing new resources.

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About DSG: DSG is a woman-owned research and consulting firm headquartered in Bethesda, Md. Since its founding in 1977, it has been leading the way in finding, assessing, and applying what works in justice, behavioral health and wellness, education and development, and international development. DSG is dedicated to providing federal, state, and local governments and other organizations with the highest-quality products and services in research and evaluation, training and technical assistance, management consulting, communications, and website and application development. Visit www.dsgonline.com for more.

