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# The Effect of Parental Support on Juvenile Drug Court Completion and Postprogram Recidivism

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## Abstract

Juvenile drug courts (JDCs) have grown exponentially in the last 15 years. JDCs typically require more parental participation than do other community correctional options as a source of social support for juveniles. Using official data and offender case files, this study examined client behavior and parental support through various phases to determine factors that contribute toward successful program completion and postprogram recidivism reduction. Family support was a significant predictor of both graduation and of postsupervision rearrest. Time spent in the drug court program and client age were additional predictors of rearrest, while less prior adjudications were an additional predictor of whether a youth would complete the drug court program. Policy implications to increase parental support are discussed.

## Keywords

drug court, parental support, juvenile justice, recidivism

Juvenile drug courts (JDCs) were established as community-based treatment programs to help youth with substance abuse problems related to delinquency. JDCs, modeled after drug courts for adults, have long been viewed under a therapeutic jurisprudence model as both rehabilitative and restorative (Fulkerson, 2009; Stinchcomb, 2010). Therapeutic jurisprudence generally examines how the court system affects the psychological well-being of defendants through using behavioral modification and consequences for behavior that ultimately provides leverage for behavior change. Recent estimates are that 467 juvenile and 343 family drug treatment courts exist throughout the United States (National Drug Court Resource Center, 2010). Key drug court components include a coordinated

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