Since 1999, the NCJFCJ has conducted 50 trainings in Maryland for more than 4,016 judges, magistrates, commissioners, attorneys, and other juvenile and family court-related professionals. In addition to its national work, the NCJFCJ supports Maryland’s efforts to improve the juvenile and family courts. The following activities were undertaken by the NCJFCJ over the past 12 years to support and enhance widespread systemic reforms and facilitate the achievement of better outcomes for Maryland’s children and families.

DEMONSTRATION PILOT SITES: The NCJFCJ has a number of national initiatives focused on improving practice, policy, and court-agency-community collaboration in the areas of child protection, juvenile justice, and family violence. Each initiative includes demonstration pilot sites, training, and outreach at the local, state, and national levels. The NCJFCJ provides various forms of training, technical assistance, and research directly to these demonstration sites. Because successful practices, policies and reforms developed locally are shared nationally, these demonstration sites play a critical role in shaping national policy and best practices. Maryland has one demonstration site.

- **The Child Victims Act Model Courts Project** focuses on improving the governmental response to children and families in the child welfare system to ensure safe, timely, and permanent homes for children. In September 2008, Baltimore City was welcomed as a new Model Court transitioning from a contracted Model Court. Among its many accomplishments and significant systems improvements, the Baltimore City Model Court, under the leadership of Judge Bonita J. Dancy, has:
  - Provided in March 2010 multidisciplinary training with speakers from the Center for the Study of Social Policy to discuss disproportionality of minority children in the child welfare system. A separate training on bias in decision-making was conducted for the judicial officers as a part of the foundation training in preparation for the Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard.
  - In June 2010, a second training was provided to both the judiciary and stakeholders on institutional racism utilizing the Race: The Power of an Illusion video and a facilitator from the Center for the Study of Social Policy. In 2009, Baltimore City Model Court provided multidisciplinary training including a presentation on Consulting with Children presented by Judge Margaret Turner and a panel of service providers presenting positive paths to independence for transitioning youth with disabilities.
  - Established a multidisciplinary committee tasked with reducing the backlog of Termination of Parental Rights Cases in the juvenile court. This has been accomplished with the assistance and cooperation of all professionals involved in TPR cases and the work of several retired judges.
  - Established a multidisciplinary committee tasked with developing a method of implementing the one family-one judge best practice model. The committee evaluated issues related to case flow management, questions of ethics, and concerns related to calendaring, and developed a pilot model that was implemented in January 2007.
  - Partnered with the University of Maryland, School of Social Work to begin court-based research development to evaluate the One Family, One Judge, Termination of Parental Rights Backlog and the Alternative Dispute Resolution initiatives.

- **The Contract Model Courts Project** focuses on improving the governmental response to children and families in the child welfare system to ensure safe, timely, and permanent homes for children. In recent years, a
number of jurisdictions have approached the NCJFCJ with a desire to become a Model Court through the Child Victims Act Model Courts Project. Therefore, many jurisdictions with independent funding have expressed interest in contracting as Model Courts to benefit their jurisdiction’s abused and neglected children. In 2011, the Maryland Foster Care Improvement Program secured one Contract Model Courts in Prince George’s County. This is the Prince George’s County Model Court’s second term as a contract Model Court. Under the leadership of Judge Larnzell Martin, Jr. The Prince George’s County Model Court has:

- Continued to implement the best practices recommended in the RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases. The training on the RESOURCE GUIDELINES was held in August 2011.
- Visited the Austin Model Court to observe and learn the practices implemented in Austin as well as to exchange and share information about innovative practices.
- Developed and implemented a consistent system whereby each parent is identified and, if living, is located through use of the parent litany form by the worker for shelter care, at adjudication and disposition, and during permanency planning purposes.
- Developed and implemented the best practice of time-certain calendaring, ultimately resulting in each case being scheduled and called at a specific time during the hearing day.

The Charles County Model Court has participated in the Model Courts Project as a contract Model Court since 2006. Under the leadership of Judge Amy Bragunier, the Charles County Model Court has:

- Developed and implemented the Family Recovery Court with a three-year grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention of the U.S. Department of Justice. The program began accepting its first participants as of January 2011.
- Developed and implemented a consistent system whereby each parent is identified and, if living, is located through use of the parent litany form by the worker for shelter care, at adjudication and disposition, and during the permanency planning process.
- Developed and implemented the best practice of time-certain calendaring, ultimately resulting in each case being scheduled and called at a specific time during the hearing day.
- Been promoted to Mentor Court status in Maryland to assist other jurisdictions on replicating the Model Court process for systems improvement.
- Developed its collective mission statement and began developing action plans to move its mission forward.

THE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (AOD) DIVISION recognizes the impact which alcohol and other drugs have on the youth and families who come before our nation’s justice system. NCJFCJ’s Alcohol and Other Drugs Division has developed cutting edge trainings, publications, and technical assistance opportunities to assist courts in dealing with this issue. The goal of the AOD Division is to work with jurisdictions at a local level to create programs that provide opportunities for youthful offenders and their families to reduce substance use, abuse and criminal behavior; strengthen family and community ties; and improve educational opportunities within a framework of strength-based services that promote responsible citizenship and public safety. In Maryland: 11 jurisdictions have participated in juvenile drug court training; 3 AOD-related trainings have been held; 3 jurisdictions have received on-site juvenile drug court technical assistance, most recently in December 2009 in Charles County.

PAST PROJECTS:

- THE SAFE START INITIATIVE focused on the development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention and intervention strategies for young children exposed to violence in their homes, schools and communities. Baltimore was a “Safe Start” demonstration site from 1999 until the project’s end in 2005, receiving technical assistance, training, and resources from NCJFCJ on issues related to family violence and child protection.

JUDICIAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING ACTIVITIES: The NCJFCJ sponsors a variety of training activities tailored to meet the needs of individual jurisdictions or states. These may include site visits or cross-site visits to jurisdictions with innovative programs, training presentations on specific topics or programs for local jurisdictions or states, full-day programs on a variety of topics, or strategic planning sessions for sites.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of Programs Conducted</th>
<th># Participants Trained</th>
<th>Topic Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>ICWA, evaluation of court improvement efforts, ASFA, collaboration, and improving court practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>Multi-generational substance abuse, AFSA, management information systems, family drug courts, and judicial leadership; juvenile justice; agency coordination and cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>Improving court practice and recruiting and retaining foster families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>Ensuring the best physical and mental outcomes for children and how to effectively advocate for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>Model Courts; hosted national conference on women, addiction, and recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>Domestic violence issues; alternate dispute resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>Domestic violence issues, best practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Child abuse and neglect, dependency issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>Issues affecting children 0-3; child abuse and neglect, dependency issues; court improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Domestic violence; juvenile drug courts, drug testing, incentives and sanctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>Disproportionality in child dependency cases; court improvement; racial equity; enhancing judicial skills in domestic violence cases; child welfare; domestic violence and peace orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>Disproportionality and disparity in child welfare cases; family courts; domestic violence; substance abuse; enhancing judicial skills in domestic violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES:** The NCJFCJ provides a wide range of technical assistance to local communities and states to assist in their efforts toward improving juvenile and family courts and related systems. Technical assistance may include provision of topic-specific materials from our extensive library of resources; publications related to innovative programs, best practices, and practical tools; resource contacts for exploration of solutions in other jurisdictions; and in-depth, on-site assistance for strategic planning, needs assessment, or other identified focus areas.

Technical assistance is the process of providing help to resolve a problem and/or create innovative approaches related to juvenile justice, delinquency prevention, child abuse and neglect, and family violence. Products and services include:

- **Publications** – Special educational curricula or topic-specific publications for juvenile and family court-related professionals.
- **Expanded assistance** – Focused technical assistance for a jurisdiction’s targeted areas of need can be arranged to include on-site and cross-site visits. Such visits may include observation of court hearings, interviews or meetings with stakeholders, research, information sharing, and strategic planning.
- **Conference materials** – At a variety of programs and meetings, the NCJFCJ provides additional resource materials to the participants.

Since 1999, the NCJFCJ has fulfilled 1,533 requests for technical assistance from judges, lawyers, and other juvenile and family court-related professionals in Maryland. Topics of interest include implementation of federal law (e.g., ASFA, ICPC, ICWA), court improvement programs, the intersection of family violence and child abuse cases, family drug courts, foster care, Model Courts, judicial leadership, educational outcomes, permanency planning, adoption, best practices, family violence, custody and visitation in domestic violence cases, juvenile delinquency, infant mental health, and representation of children and parents in the dependency system. The NCJFCJ also continues to provide technical assistance to, and collaborates with, state-based agencies throughout the nation, including State Court Improvement Projects in each state. A wide variety of information is also available via NCJFCJ’s Web site (www.ncjfcj.org), where publications and other materials can be accessed and/or downloaded. During 2011, there were more than 70,000

*Includes information through 12/31/11.*
downloads of materials from NCJFCJ’s Web sites by juvenile and family justice professionals and others from around the country and the world.

**RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:** The NCJFCJ is committed to evidence-based practice and informed policy development. To this end, the NCJFCJ provides research services through its Reno offices and its National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) in Pittsburgh, Pa. Research and process and outcome evaluation services to courts and related programs to assess best practice and policy implementation, program outcomes, and the consequences of various system reforms for the court, allied agencies, and most importantly, children and families. In addition to providing concrete policy and practice recommendations to the specific jurisdictions and communities, these research and evaluation activities often result in nationally-disseminated publications that present findings on program and policy effectiveness and outcomes. One of NCJJ’s many activities is maintaining the State Juvenile Justice Profiles Web site (http://www.ncjj.org/stateprofiles), which provides detailed descriptions of each state’s juvenile justice system. The site has become a mainstay for federal and state officials, as well as the media, to understand and compare the states on basic legal dimensions, such as provisions for transfer to criminal court and the placement of juvenile court jurisdiction. Recent NCJJ research activities have included the following:

- **NCJJ awarded a National Juvenile Justice Data Analysis contract to Maryland researchers studying school violence.**
- **Presented the latest juvenile trends and transfer research to the Casey School of Journalism, University of Maryland.**
- **Provided a member of a state level juvenile justice system reform task force detailed information concerning how other states have encouraged the development of community-based alternatives to juvenile corrections and approaches to limiting the time youth wait in detention for placement.**
- **Provided staff from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services examples of how other states and jurisdictions provide parental support to the parents of youth in placement.**
- **Provided a custom analysis of Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement data (custody rates for detailed and committed populations).**
- **Assisted the Maryland General Assembly with juvenile arrest information and population data.**

**LEADERSHIP AND OUTREACH:** Judicial officers and experts from many states have participated in committees and activities to influence changes in policy and practice in their states and nationwide. For example, judicial officers and experts may serve on subcommittees designed to address policy and practice issues in a wide range of topic specific areas, or they may serve on multi-disciplinary drafting committees to create policy statements or develop foundational best practice documents, training materials, and topic focused curricula. Many also serve as faculty. In almost every case, the successes of the local jurisdictions are integrated into these various activities and resultant materials.

A State team led by Chief Judge Robert Bell, Maryland Court of Appeals, participated in the 2005 National Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children, “Justice for Children: Changing Lives by Changing Systems,” held in Minnesota. Teams included chief justices, appellate and trial judges, court administrators, child welfare directors, and state court improvement representatives, which came together to develop policy and practice-based state plans for improving practice in child abuse and neglect cases, implementing the best practices of the NCJFCJ’s RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases and the recommendations of the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, and expediting the appellate process for child welfare cases in their jurisdictions.

**MEMBERSHIP:** NCJFCJ has 22 members in Maryland, including Judicial and Associate memberships.