



Juvenile Court Diversion in New Hampshire



**AN OVERVIEW FOR
POLICE STANDARDS AND TRAINING**

Diversion Works: Case Study #1



Threatening/Simple Assault/Bullying

- Two sisters, age 14 and 15, were arrested for assault against their mother.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #1



...during the intake, it was learned that **the mother was severely addicted** to alcohol and other drugs and the girls had intervened during a **violent episode trying to keep younger siblings safe from the mother** (who called police in retaliation of their interference).

With help from their local diversion program, the **father has full custody** of the children, and they are once again **attending school regularly** and **connected with services** to help them get back on track. The contract of consequences for the girls included connecting with a local **mediation** program, **attending counseling** and gathering information on how to **stay safe from domestic violence**. The **mother was referred to residential treatment** for her addiction.

Diversion Works: Case Study #2



Disorderly Conduct

A 12-year-old boy and his friend were shooting a pellet gun out his bedroom window and hit a young girl that was playing outside in front of his apartment building.



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Diversion Works: Case Study #2



... during diversion, the program learned that the boy and his mother both had significant delays. His mother did not allow him to play outside because he would be assaulted almost every time he played outside unsupervised.

Through a variety of consequences and referrals:

- the mother reached out to the boy's guidance counselor at school to address the "bullying" issues;
- the boy wrote an apology letter to the victim;
- completed a variety of peer pressure exercises and processed them with program staff;
- enrolled in structured activities after school.

Diversion Works: Case Study #2



The boy and his mother expressed their thanks to the diversion program for the **better quality of life** they both had begun to experience simply from learning about and taking advantage of the abundance of resources available in the community.

Diversion Works: Case Study #3



Possession of Drugs

A young lady, age 15, had significant prescription drug and alcohol issues...

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Diversion Works: Case Study #3



As part of her contract, she needed to meet with the Diversion staff for a **total of 5 months**. Although, very **stubborn and resistant** she wrote the following note as she agreed to begin clinical treatment:

Diversion Works: Case Study #3



“Please don’t ever give up on any person or family no matter how many problems they have or how much they don’t want to be helped... I know how it feels to be helped and then push that person away that’s helping me.

I wish I wouldn’t have, because I wanted to be helped even though sometimes I didn’t always see it. Deep down inside they do want the help and how ever much they push you away keep trying to help because **I don’t want anyone else’s family to feel or go through the things me and my family did. SO PLEASE PROMISE YOU’LL NEVER GIVE UP ON ANYONE OR THEIR FAMILY... Thanks.”**

Diversion Works: Case Study #4



Possession of Alcohol

Police arrested a 14-year-old girl for bringing a vodka-filled water bottle to a rival school's sporting event.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #4



- During her intake, the Dad acknowledged for the first time that his wife had an alcohol problem. He shared his fear that his daughter was following the same path.
- Her contract included an **alcohol and other drug assessment**, which revealed that an **education group** would be helpful, as she was not yet addicted. The family was linked with **AA and Alanon** for support and the daughter enrolled in **counseling** to address her high-risk behavior.

Diversion Works: Case Study #5



Shoplifting/Theft

Two girls – who were new friends – were caught together stealing from a store.



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Diversion Works: Case Study #5



... the girls were telling their story in a group class. The first girl shared that it was the **first time she tried to steal** because the prom was coming up and she couldn't afford to buy clothes for the prom.

She didn't want to ask her parents because their family business was failing and would probably close soon. Her parents had been arguing over the past few months about finances, to the point of possible divorce. She ended by breaking down crying.

Diversion Works: Case Study #5



The second girl claimed that she was very proud of the fact that she had been **stealing for years**, she had stolen for friends, and that most of what she was wearing was stolen.

She went on to tell the group that she had been stealing mainly from one store over the years, which was a different store than the one that lead to her getting caught. She continued saying that she had brought friends to that same store to steal also.

She went on to talk about how brain dead and stupid the store owners were and how easy it was to steal from them.

Diversion Works: Case Study #5



When the facilitator asked the name of the store she'd been stealing from, the first girl yelled,

“That’s my parents store! It’s because of YOU that they may be getting divorced and we are losing our house.”

The girls’ friendship ended that day. All the other kids in the class that day were able to put a face to the human consequences of shoplifting.

Diversion Works: Case Study #6



Trespass/Mischief

A 10-year-old boy was caught after spraying graffiti under a bridge, marking an RV with a Sharpie pen, shoplifting energy drinks and candy from a local pharmacy, stealing chrome tire valve stems off cars, and stealing change from unlocked cars.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #6



...Given the age of the child, the police and elementary school asked their local diversion program to accept these young children.

Several difficulties at home, at school, and in the community were identified. He was out on the street until late hours of the night, because he was afraid to go home to his single parent household with struggling family dynamics. At school, he was having academic difficulties, was not doing his homework, and was fooling around in the classroom, showing off to his friends. He was unsupervised and spending his time on the streets.

Diversion Works: Case Study #6



As part of his extensive action plan he:

- arrived at school every day on time;
- participated in Little League, since he is enthusiastic about baseball and is good at it;
- couldn't miss a game or practice;
- attended an after-school homework program;
- was referred for a full psychological evaluation and counseling at a local provider;
- connected with a summer camp that provided male mentoring for boys;
- made restitution, including \$1.98 for stolen gum;
- wrote a letter of apology.

Diversion Works: Case Study #7



Fire Setting

Two 15-year-old boys were using matches to light leaves on fire in the backyard. The fire got out of control very quickly and ended up damaging the neighbor's barn.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #7



Through diversion, the boys were able to:

- learn more about the crime of arson and its many consequences;
- hear from the neighbor and understand the distress that the neighbor faced over the damaged barn;
- learn of the dangers of fire play;
- make better choices because of what they learned during the process.

Diversion Works: Case Study #8



A 16-year-old girl was arrested for waving a knife at her mother's boyfriend. While this was outside the boundaries of a normal referral, the police department knew there had to be more to the story so the program agreed to take the case.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #8



...during the intake it was learned that she:

- had dropped out of school to babysit her young half-siblings;
- had a poor relationship with her mother who refused to talk to her even though they were living in the same house.
- was brought to the program by the man she was accused of assaulting because her mother refused to bring her.

Diversion Works: Case Study #8



After completing a family assessment her 3-month contract of consequences included:

- get involved in outpatient counseling,
- look into earning her GED,
- community service at a local non-profit to help connect her to the community and introduce her to positive role models,
- to volunteer on a future court diversion panel.

Diversion Works: Case Study #8



- Through her continued contact with the Court Diversion staff members, it was learned that she was being sexually assaulted by her mother's boyfriend and had threatened him on the night of her arrest to protect herself.
- The staff followed up with this and made a report to the local child abuse and neglect agency.

Diversion Works: Case Study #8



- During her monthly check-ins, the program was able to help her seek out an uncle who offered to have her come live with him in another state so that she could earn her GED and attend college.
- After completing the program she went to live with her uncle and received her GED.

Diversion Works: Case Study #9



- Sexting

A 16 year old male was caught after sending nude pictures to two younger girls. He had also made a request of them to send pictures of themselves back to him.

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Diversion Works: Case Study #9



...He was in all other ways an outstanding youth, academically doing really well in school, participating in community activities, and had very supportive and involved parents. Given his age, and the type of offense, it was imperative to make an impact with him regarding the ramifications of his actions both socially and legally.



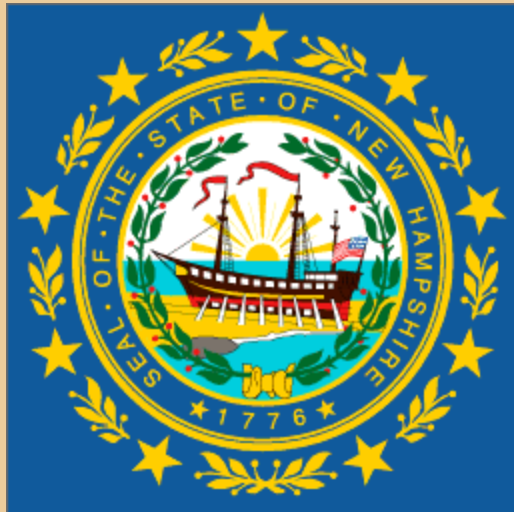
As a part of the contract developed for him he had to:

- Speak with a local expert about domestic violence, respect for women and sexual coercion, then write a comprehensive summary detailing his understanding of how this applied to his behavior and the impact it had on his victims.
- Interview a detective regarding the steps a convicted sexual offender would have to take when moving into a new area & discuss the legal and social consequences of being a sex offender. Prepare a written statement of your findings



- After doing the above tasks, he was asked to make a sizable donation to the YWCA.
- This youth voluntarily increased the amount of the donation required by \$100 after realizing that his “behavior and attitudes may have caused these girls to feel violated, disrespected and cheap.” “I am embarrassed and ashamed about my behavior.”

Questions?



New Hampshire Juvenile Court Diversion Network

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