MONTGOMERY COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH / JUVENILE JUSTICE INITIATIVE [BHJJ]

BHJJ is a diversion program for juvenile justice-involved youth ages 10–18 with mental health or substance abuse issues. In lieu of detention, youth are diverted into local, evidence-based behavioral health treatment.

1,754 youth enrolled in BHJJ
2006—present

50% were non-white
54% were male

Mental health assessments revealed:

- 48% of females talked about suicide and 24% attempted suicide at least once.
- Common DSM diagnoses included ADHD, ODD, cannabis disorders, and depressive disorders.
- The majority of youth had a history of mental health and substance use issues in their families.

Treatment outcomes indicated:

- 61% of youth completed treatment successfully
- BHJJ led to a 51% reduction in risk for out of home placement
- Treatment led to significant improvements in problem severity and functioning
- Grades improved and school suspensions/expulsions were greatly reduced
- Youth reported significant reductions in trauma symptoms and substance abuse
- Over 98% of youth were NOT sent to an ODYS institution following services

1,754 youth enrolled in BHJJ
15.5 years old—average age

50% were non-white
54% were male

Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education

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