

Promoting Positive Behavioral Health in Children and Youth

Unleashing the Power of Prevention

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Unleashing the Power of Prevention!



An Action Plan to Advance
Prevention Practice and Policy

Objectives

- To understand the history and evolution of preventive interventions for behavioral health problems in the United States
- To understand recent and current evidence pertaining to the effectiveness of school, family, community, and environmental prevention programs
- To identify the action steps necessary to advance preventive interventions for behavioral health

What are the most common behavioral health problems among young people?

Anxiety

Depression

Alcohol,
tobacco, other
drug use

Risky
driving

Aggressive
behavior and
conduct
problems

Delinquent
behavior

Violence

Self-
inflicted
injury

Risky
sexual
behavior

School
dropout

Why is Prevention Important?

- Behavioral health problems cause harm in childhood and adolescence
 - Problems established in adolescence often persist into adulthood
- Preventing behavioral health problems can reduce mortality and morbidity over the life course

Prevention is critical for health
and well-being!

The Origins of Prevention

- Information about drugs, crime, and their effects
- Fear arousal
- Affective education
- Just say "no"

Results from Early Prevention Efforts

- Knowledge and attitude changes
- Ineffective: No decreases in drug use, delinquency, or other outcomes
- Some information programs *increased* drug use (Tobler, 1986)

Lesson: Untested good ideas can sometimes make things worse!

Paradigm Shift: A Public Health, Risk-Focused Approach to Prevention

- To prevent a problem before it happens, address its predictors
- Advances in etiological research on individual and social determinants of behavioral health have identified malleable risk and protective factors as potential targets for preventive intervention

Risk Factors for Behavioral Health Problems: Potential Prevention Targets

Community

Risk Factors

Community

	Substance Abuse	Teen Delinquency	School Drop-Out	Pregnancy	Violence	Depression & Anxiety
Availability of Drugs	✓				✓	
Availability of Firearms		✓			✓	
Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use, Firearms, and Crime	✓	✓			✓	
Media Portrayals of Violence					✓	
Transitions and Mobility	✓	✓		✓		
Low Neighborhood Attachment and Community Disorganization	✓	✓			✓	
Extreme Economic Deprivation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Family

Family

Family History of the Problem Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Family Management Problems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Family Conflict	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Favorable Parental Attitudes and Involvement in the Problem Behavior	✓	✓			✓	

School

School

Academic Failure Beginning in Late Elementary School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lack of Commitment to School	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Individual/Peer

Individual/Peer

Early and Persistent Antisocial Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alienation and Rebelliousness	✓	✓		✓		
Friends Who Engage in the Problem Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Favorable Attitudes Toward the Problem Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Early Initiation of the Problem Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Constitutional Factors	✓	✓			✓	✓

Protective Factors for Child and Adolescent Problem Behaviors by Level of Influence

Individual Factors

Emotional self-regulation

High self-esteem

Communication and language skills

Positive attitude

Temperament

Low childhood stress

Interpersonal Factors

Family Factors:

Reliable support and discipline from parents or caregivers

Family provides structure, limits, and predictability

Caring relationships with siblings

Attachment to parents or caregivers

Support from extended family members

Protective Factors for Child and Adolescent Problem Behaviors by Level of Influence

School Factors:

- Support for early learning
- Access to supplemental educational services
- Positive teacher expectations
- Effective classroom management
- School practices and policies to reduce bullying
- High levels of school engagement

Peer Factors:

- Ability to make friends and get along with others
- Relationships with positive and prosocial peers

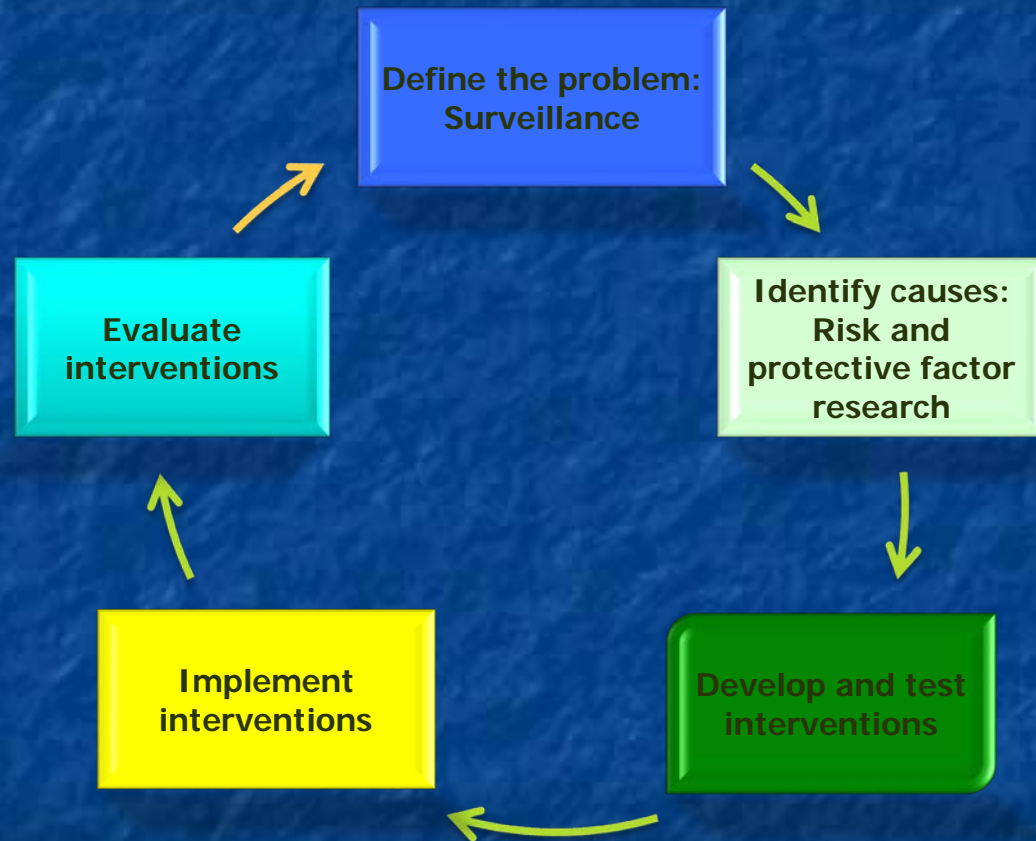
Environmental/Community Factors

- Opportunities for education, employment, recreation
- Presence and availability of mentors
- Positive social norms about behavior
- Physical and psychological safety

This table is adapted from Jenson, Alter, Nicotera, Anthony, & Forrest-Bank (2013); Jenson & Fraser (2011); and O'Connell, Boat, & Warner (2009).

A Foundation for Effective Prevention

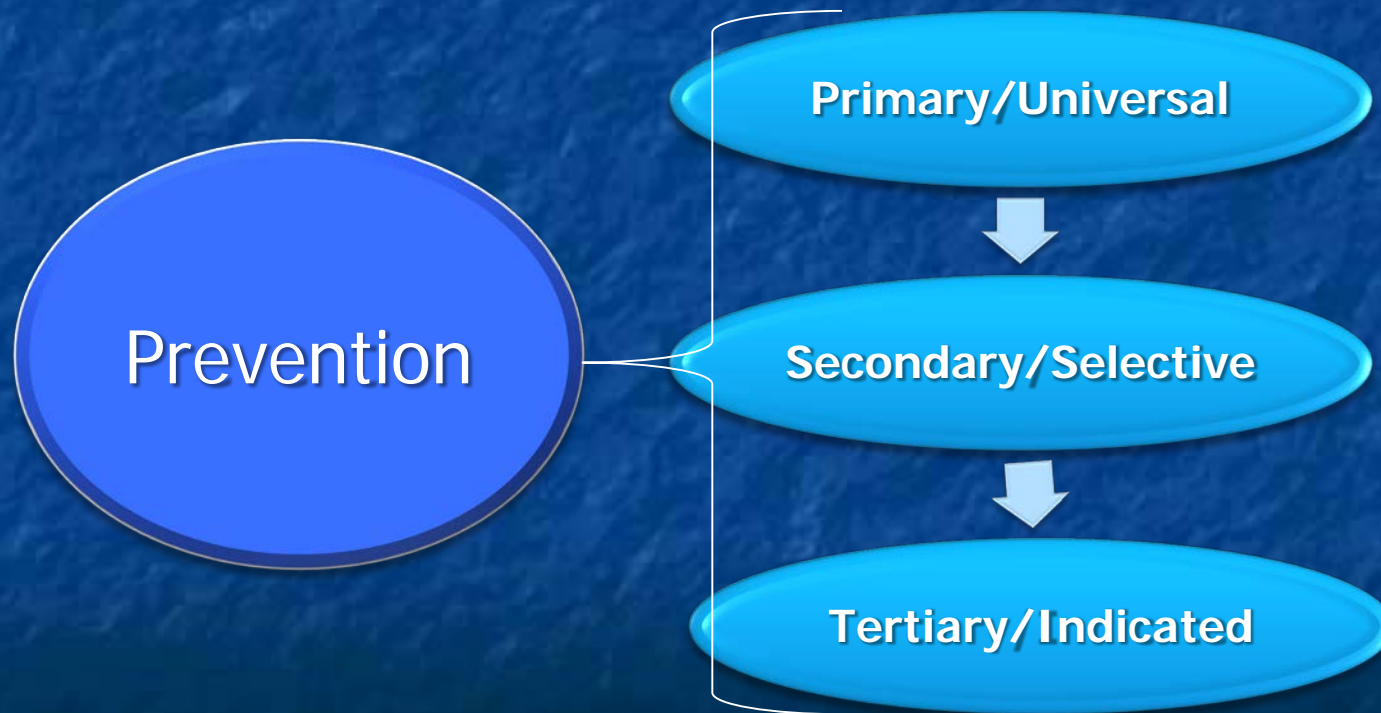
*A Public Health
Approach to
Prevention*



Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/>

Levels of Prevention in the Context of a Public Health Approach

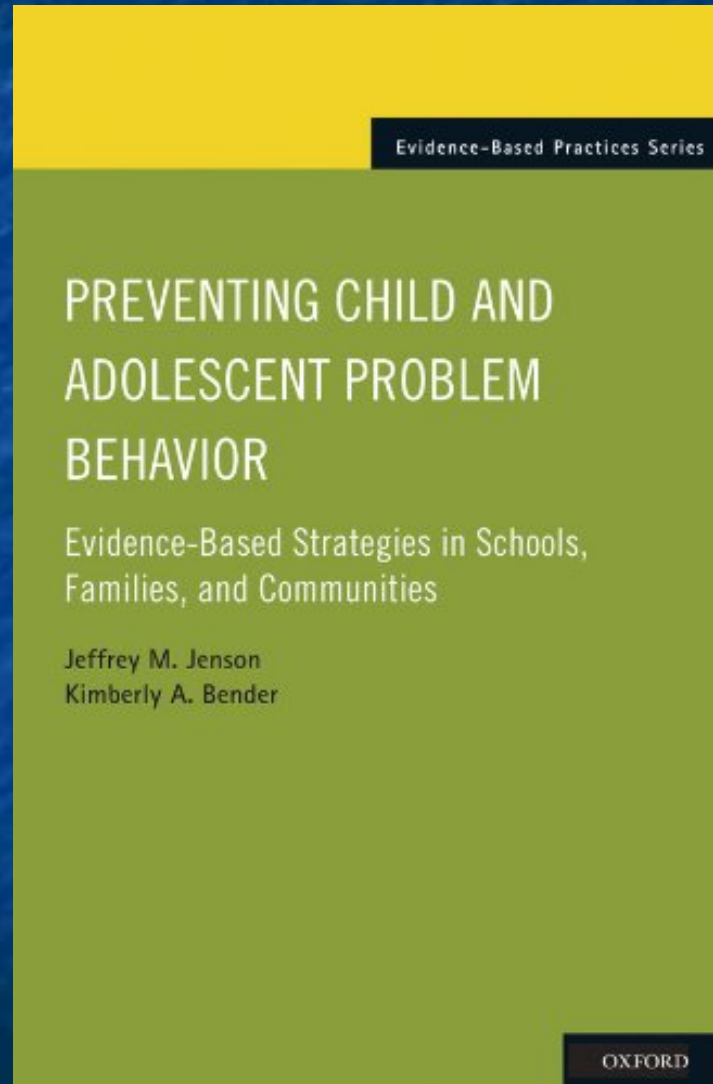
- Interventions based on a public health approach apply risk and protective factors at three levels of implementation



Progress: 35 Years of Research

- Controlled trials have identified **over 60** effective policies and programs for preventing adolescent behavioral health problems including substance abuse, depression, anxiety, violence, and delinquency
- **Effective programs:** www.blueprintsprograms.com
- **Effective policies:** Anderson et al. 2009, Catalano et al. 2012, Hingson & White 2013, Vuolo et al., 2015
- **Effective prevention saves money:** www.wsipp.wa.gov/
Lee, S., Aos, S., & Pennucci, A. (2015). *What works and what does not? Benefit-cost findings from WSIPP.*

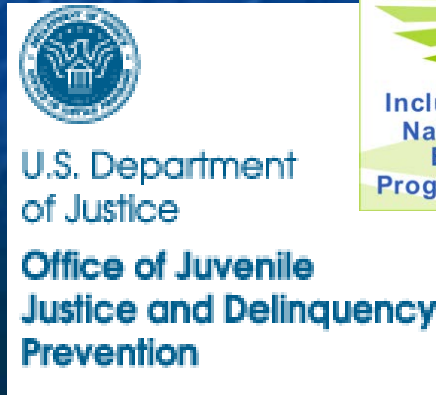
Progress: 35 Years of Research



Some Programs Prevent Multiple Behavioral Health Problems

- Many problems share common risk factors
- Addressing shared risk factors can prevent multiple problems
- Some programs prevent multiple problems, resulting in increased efficiency and cost savings

Agency Recognition of Effective Prevention Programs



All these behavioral health problems
have been prevented in controlled trials!

Anxiety

Depression

Alcohol,
tobacco, other
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Aggressive
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Despite this progress...

- Tested and effective interventions for preventing behavioral health problems are not widely used

In fact...

- Prevention approaches that do not work or have not been evaluated are more widely used than those shown to be effective (Ringwalt, Vincus, et al. 2009)

*Solution: Unleash the
Power of Prevention...*

*to ensure behavioral health of children
through action grounded in research
advances*

Ensuring Healthy Development for All Youth



Grand Challenges
for Social Work

Unleashing the Power of Prevention!



The Coalition for the
Promotion of Behavioral Health

What is *Unleashing the Power of Prevention?*

- A summary of evidence pertaining to behavioral health problems and an action plan aimed at increasing the widespread use of preventive interventions
- Developed by the *Coalition for the Promotion of Behavioral Health*
 - Published as a Discussion Paper by the National Academy of Medicine
 - Selected as a Grand Challenge initiative by the Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare in January, 2015



Unleashing the Power of Prevention

10 Year Goals!

- Reduce the incidence and prevalence of behavioral health problems in the population of young people from birth through age 24 by 20%
- Reduce racial and socioeconomic disparities in behavioral health problems by 20%

Action Steps

1. Increase public awareness of the advances and cost savings of effective preventive interventions that promote healthy behaviors for all
2. Increase the percentage of all public funds that are spent on effective prevention programs
3. Implement capacity-building tools that guide communities to assess and prioritize risk and protective factors, and select evidence-based prevention programs

Action Steps

4. Establish criteria for preventive interventions that are effective, sustainable, equity-enhancing, and cost-beneficial
5. Increase infrastructure to support the high-quality implementation of preventive interventions
6. Monitor and increase access of children, youth, and young adults to effective preventive interventions
7. Create workforce development strategies to prepare practitioners for new roles in promotion and preventive interventions

Initiatives

1. Collaborate with states to improve community-level prevention capacity and state-level backbone coordination and infrastructure
2. Implement and test healthy parenting programs in primary care settings
3. Work with universities, states, and communities to develop a prevention workforce

What is possible in a decade?

Pennsylvania's evidence-based prevention programs in 1999...

Map Layers ✕

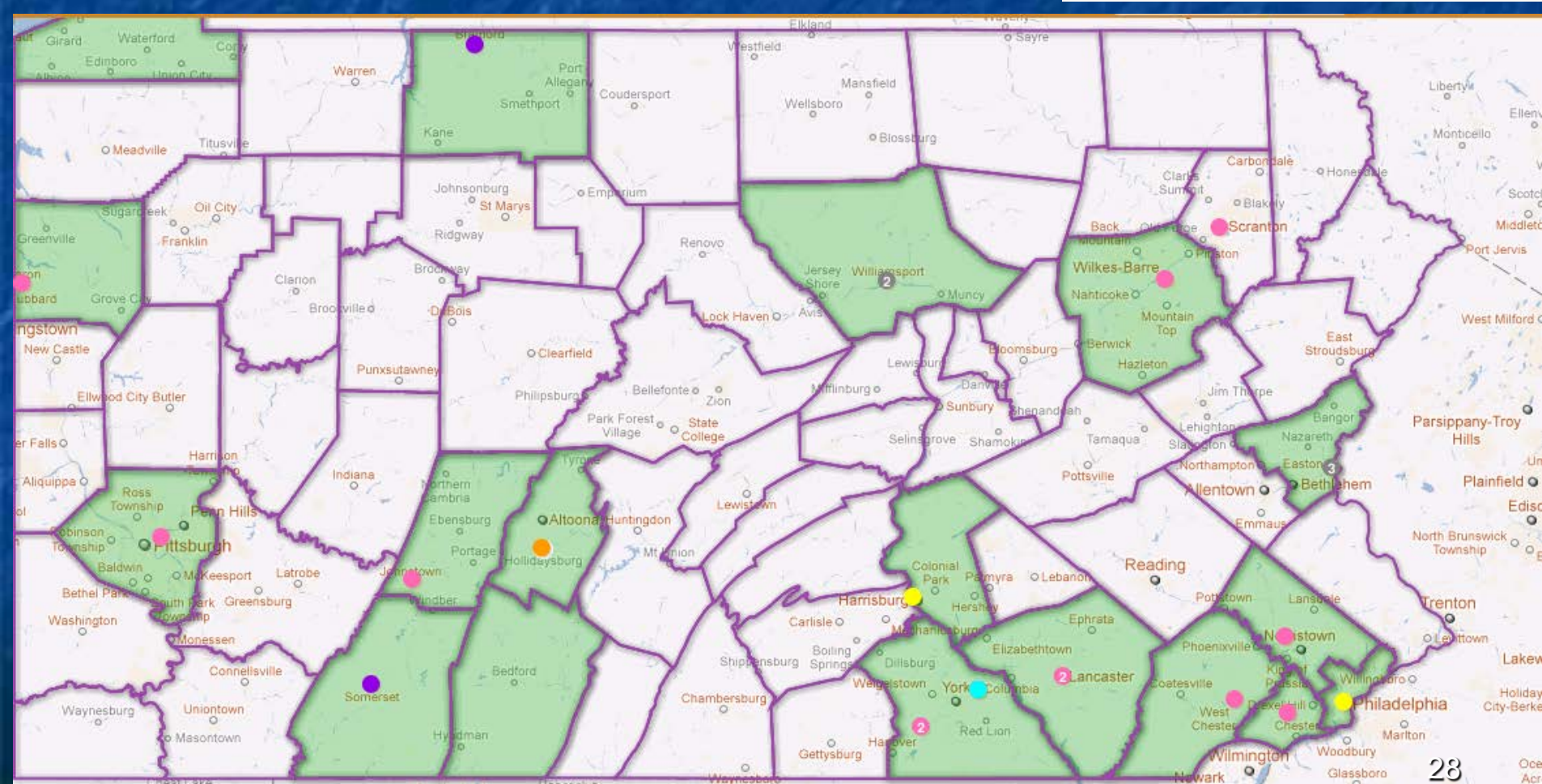
Grant Programs

- Select all types
- BBBS MTFC FFT IYS LST
- MST OBPP PATHS SFP Other

Numbers within markers indicate the number of grants awarded to the agency. Markers without a number indicate agencies with only 1 grant.

Boundary Layers

- Counties State House Districts
- School Districts State Senate Districts



Pennsylvania's evidence-based prevention programs in 2015...

Map Layers

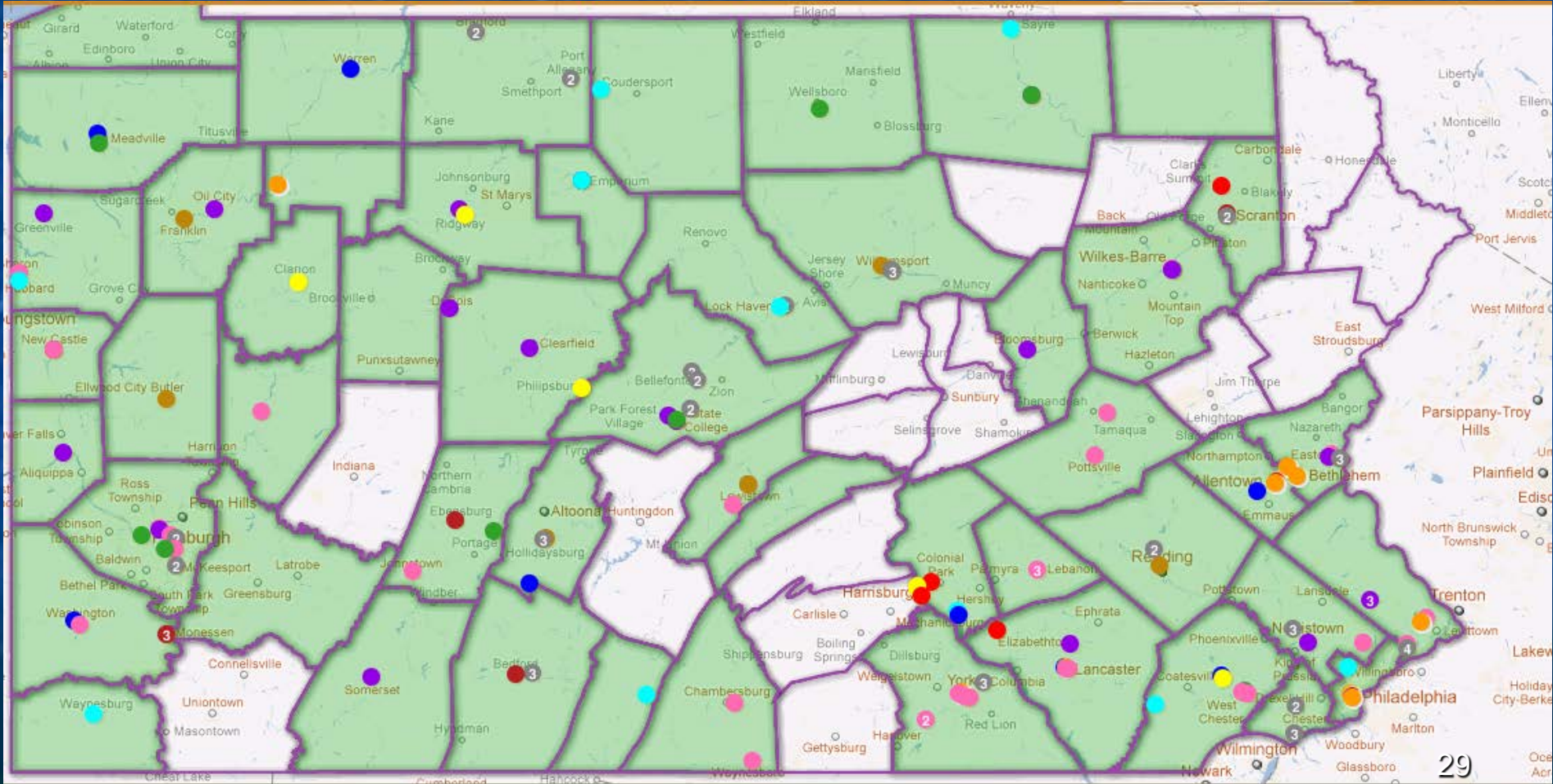
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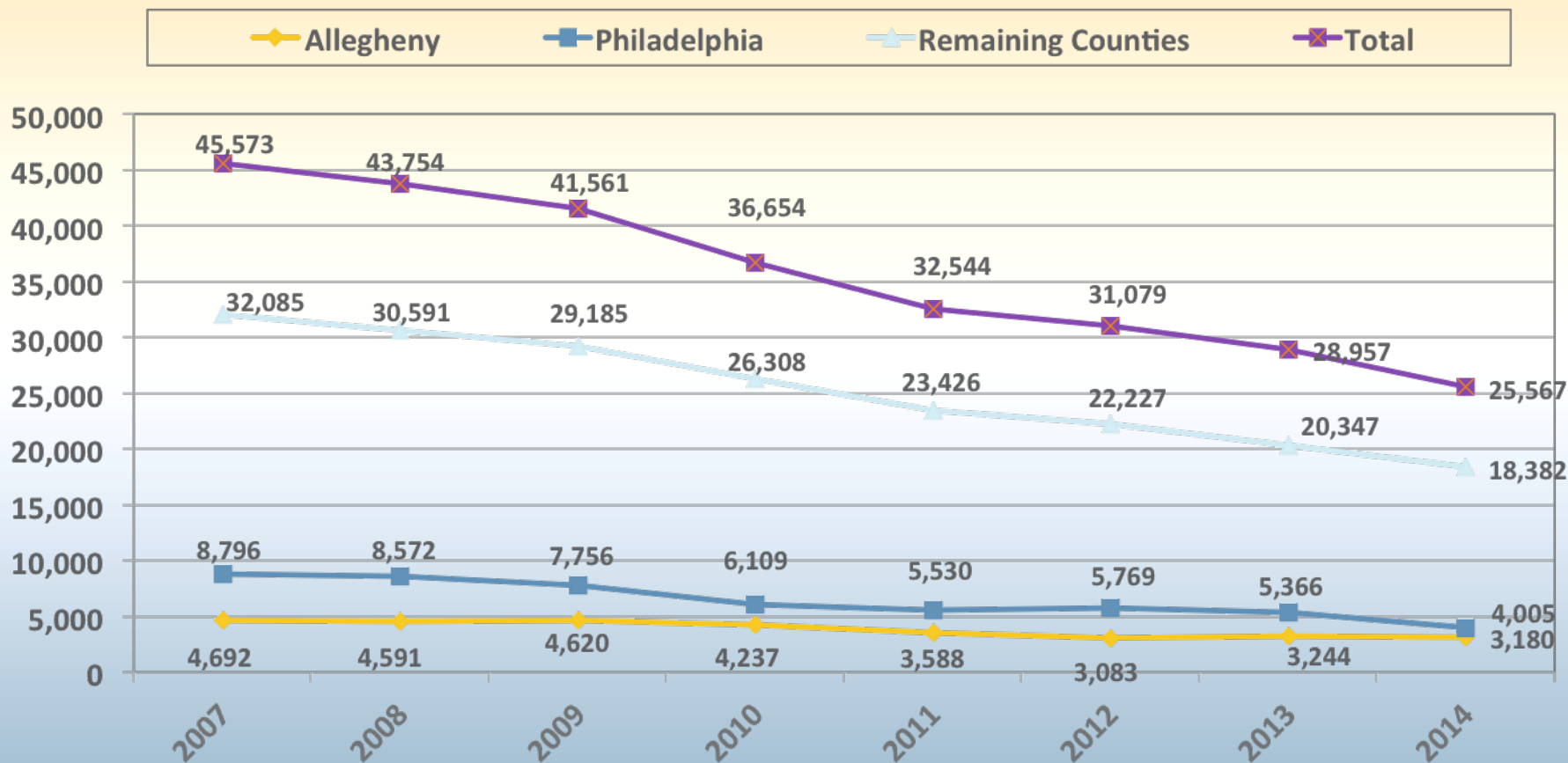
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PA Juvenile Delinquency Dispositions of New Allegations 2007-2014

(Excludes disposition reviews and placement reviews)

Source: Juvenile Court Judges' Commission

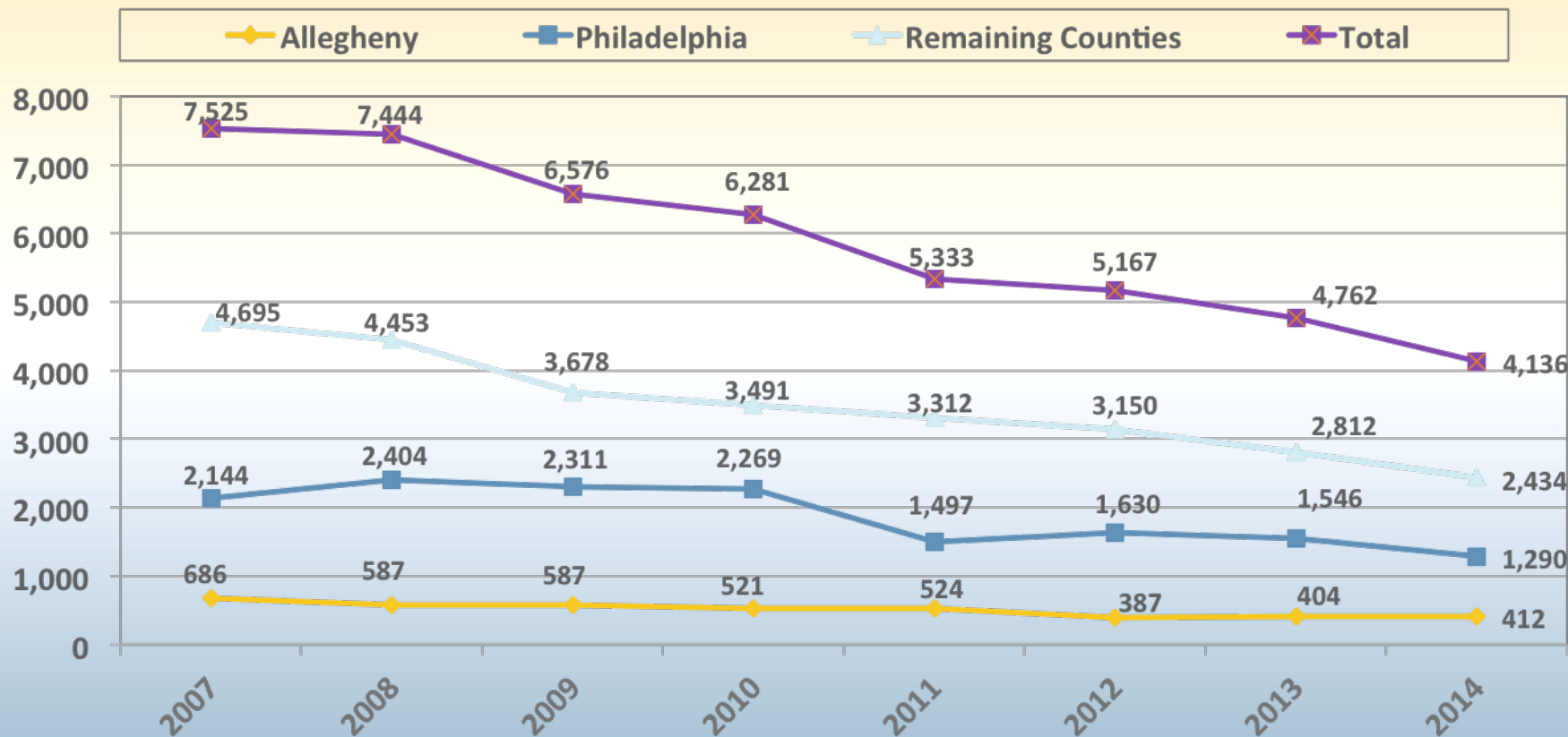


- Between 2007 and 2014, the number of juvenile delinquency dispositions from new allegations decreased 44%, from 45,573 to 25,567.

PA Juvenile Delinquency Placements 2007-2014

(Includes disposition reviews but excludes placement reviews)

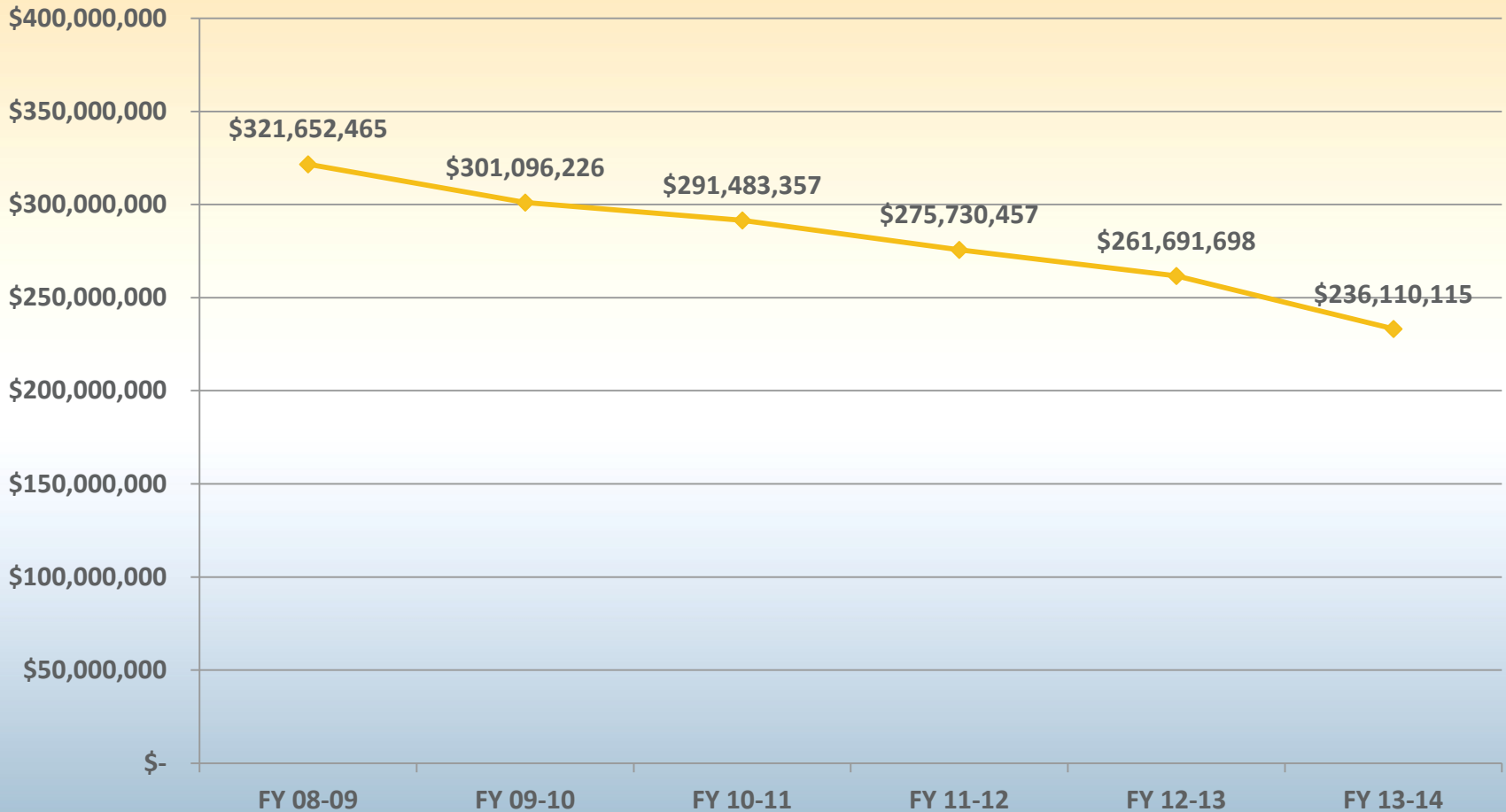
Source: Juvenile Court Judges' Commission



- Between 2007 and 2014, the number of delinquency placements decreased 45%, from 7,525 to 4,136.

Total Delinquency Placement Expenditures*: Fiscal Year 08-09 to Fiscal Year 13-14

Source: Office of Children, Youth, and Families (OCYF) Needs-Based Budget



*Does not include secure detention costs.

- Total delinquency placement expenditures decreased from \$321,652,465 to \$236,110,115, when comparing FY 08-09 to FY 13-14 costs, a difference of \$85,542,350.

The Prevention Pay-Off!

- Tested and effective prevention programs prevent problems and save lives
- Effective preventive interventions are cost-effective and have the potential to save millions of dollars annually

- *Unleashing the Power of Prevention* is published as a Discussion Paper by the National Academy of Medicine. It is available at: <http://nam.edu/perspectives-2015-unleashing-the-power-of-prevention/>



- *Unleashing the Power of Prevention* is also available at the Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare website: <http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/>



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