

The Exchange of Information in
Charlottesville/Albemarle:
Results from a Survey of Local Agencies

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
The Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families

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Executive Summary

The Charlottesville/Albemarle Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee conducted a study of 114 local professionals to examine practices, policies, and attitudes regarding the exchange of information about youth in the community. Some highlights from the survey include:

Formal Requests for Information

- Most professionals request information a few times per week to a few times per month, but receive requests for information less often.
- School records were the most, whereas court records and police reports were the least, frequently requested documents.
- Most types of information are received directly from the agency, except for court documents, which many respondents indicated must be viewed at the court.
- Although not specifically asked, some participants mentioned that trying to obtain information from court records was not worth the effort.
- Some agencies (e.g., DSS, Region Ten and the JD&R court) reported that they were more likely to have their requests granted than others (e.g., Court Services Unit, schools).
- In order to release information, most agencies require a release of information signed by the youths' parents. Court orders are rarely required to obtain information.

Informal Channels for the Exchange of Information

- Most professionals receive information through informal channels either a few times a week or a few times a month, but provide information through informal channels less often.
- The most common informal channel for receiving and providing information is through direct phone calls.

Restrictions to Exchanging Information

- The most commonly cited restrictions to exchanging information were concerns about breaching confidentiality and Virginia laws.
- Some agencies (e.g., J&DR court, police) mentioned fewer restrictions than other agencies (e.g., Public Defenders/Guardians ad litem, Region Ten).

Amenability to Freer Exchange of Information

- A Culture of Confidentiality Scale was used to measure attitudes and openness to sharing information. Professionals from the police department, the schools and DSS had the most open attitudes toward information sharing, whereas, Public Defenders/Guardians ad litem, J&DR court clerks and Court Services Unit employees were at the other end of the spectrum.

- The overwhelming majority (89.2%) of respondents indicated that they would be interested in using methods that would make the exchange of information easier. However, approximately half of the participants thought that other agencies would be resistant.
- The most commonly mentioned benefit to facilitating easier exchange of information was the potential for improving services to youth and their families.
- The most commonly mentioned concern about making the exchange of information easier was the potential for the loss of confidentiality.

Background

Concerns about community safety and better service provision to youth have led to increased attention to the concept of information sharing at the national, state and local levels. Restrictions on interagency exchange of information may result in duplication of effort in assessment and service planning for clients; confusion and frustration for families as they tell and retell their stories; delayed response time from human service and educational agencies; and inappropriate designation of sanctions and services by professionals with only one part of a complicated picture. In the long-term, lack of a common information sharing agreement among agencies makes it difficult to assess and verify the outcomes of youth interventions. Further, a common base of knowledge complicates agencies' efforts to effectively plan, coordinate and implement successful strategies for juveniles and their families.

At a national level, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has made information sharing a priority. In March 2000 they issued a bulletin on establishing and maintaining interagency information sharing. In Virginia, the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has assembled a statewide group to address the matter of information sharing. The group, which is represented by four localities (including Charlottesville/Albemarle, Loudon County, Fairfax County, and Chesapeake), is involved in a collaborative effort to: (a) investigate the national and state laws surrounding information sharing; (b) develop effective and secure computerized management information systems, and (c) assess barriers to information sharing at a local level.

In March 2000 the Charlottesville/Albemarle Commission on Children and Families (CCF) was awarded a Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) to conduct an assessment of the barriers to information sharing among agencies serving juvenile offenders. The exchange of information became a focal issue in Charlottesville/Albemarle when the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) issued its first year annual report in October 1999, indicating that data tended to be isolated within agencies in the community. The report stated that confidentiality policies and practices were limiting the sharing of necessary information among agencies working with youth.

In order to determine local policies, practices and attitudes toward exchanging information about youth, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee of the CCF sent a comprehensive 12-page survey to 283 professionals representing more than 20 agencies that provide services to youth (See Appendix for a copy of the survey). Results are based on the responses of 114 individuals who returned the survey.

Participating Agencies and their Policies

Of the 114 individuals who responded to the survey, nearly a third (28.1%) were from the Charlottesville and Albemarle schools. Most of the professionals (58.8%) were involved in direct service provision (e.g. teachers, nurses, psychologists, counselors, and caseworkers, line staff), with the others divided between administrators, supervisors, attorneys, and deputy clerks.

Agency	Number of Responses	% of Participants
City and County Schools	32	28.1%
Region Ten CSB (Region Ten)	13	11.4%
Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD)	11	9.6%
Department of Social Services (DSS)	9	7.9%
Public Defenders/Legal Aid/Guardians ad litem (PDs/GALs)	9	7.9%
J&DR Court Clerk's Office	7	6.1%
16 th Circuit Court Services Unit (CSU)	6	5.3%
Police Departments	6	5.3%
Other Agencies	21	18.4%
Total	114	100.0%

Almost all of the participants (84.6%) indicated that their agency has a formal policy on exchanging information. However, CSU, DSS, Region Ten, and TJHD professionals were more likely to say that their agency had a formal policy than professionals in the J&DR Court, the schools and the police departments.

Two thirds of respondents said that parents are asked to sign a release of information when youth enter their program. Parents are always asked to sign releases when youth enter the CSU, DSS, Region Ten and TJHD, but are less likely to be asked to sign a release by the schools. None of the professionals from the J&DR court or the police department indicated that parents are asked to sign a release. The group of other agencies seems to fall somewhere in between because some groups (e.g. CASA) do not require releases to access information about the children they serve.

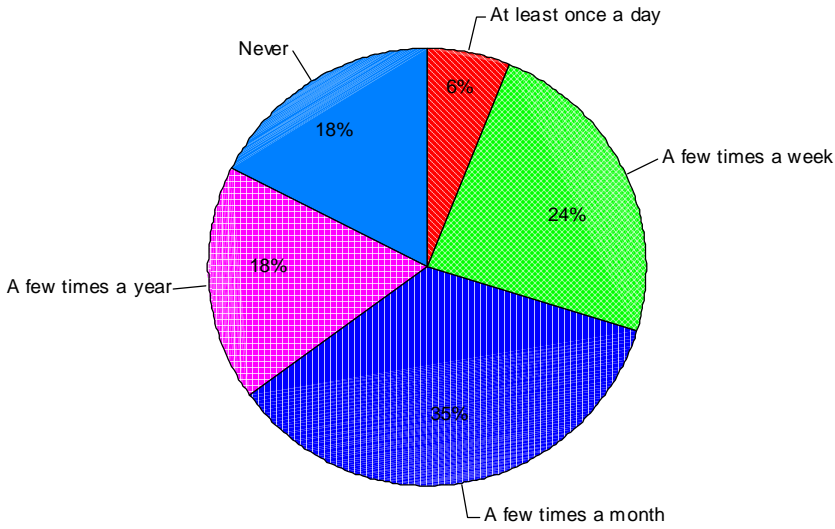
Almost all respondents (97.4%) reported that their agency keeps information in a paper file under the youth's name. In addition, two thirds also indicated that data is also kept in an electronic database. Demographic information (64.9%) is the most common type of data kept in electronic databases, followed by service (37.8%) and court-related information (27.0%), school records (21.6%) and billing information (10.8%). DSS, the police, and the schools were most likely to indicate keeping some information electronically, while the J&DR court and TJHD were least likely.

There is remarkable variability and uncertainty regarding the length of time that agencies retain information about youth. Over a third (36.2%) of professionals did not know how long their agency kept information. Nineteen percent said it was kept for five to ten years, and another 17 percent said it was kept indefinitely.

Making Formal Requests for Information

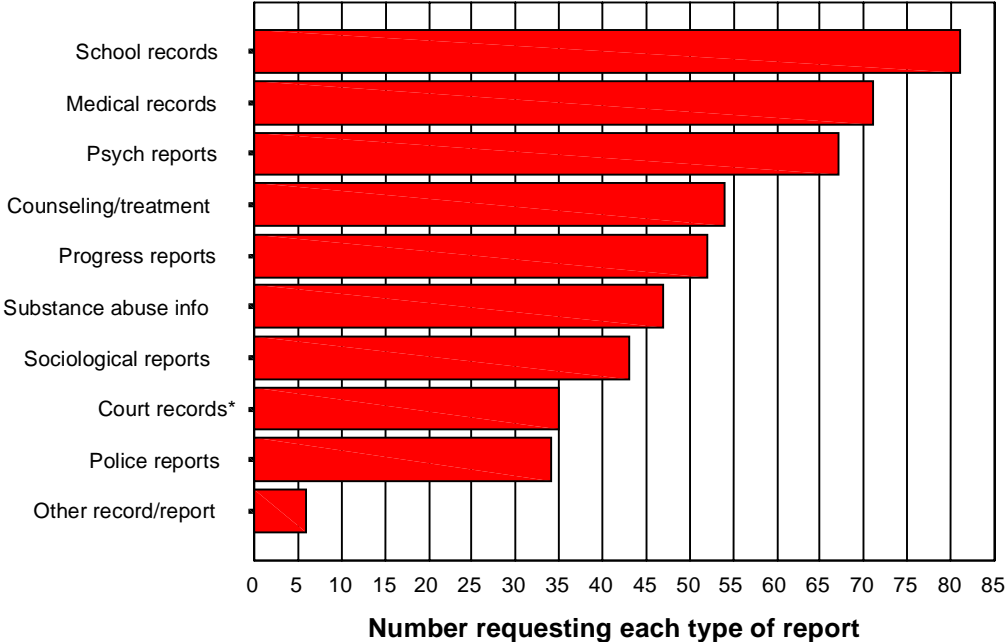
When asked how often they make formal requests for information, most respondents fell in the moderate range (a few requests per week to a few requests per month).

Frequency of Making Formal Requests



The most frequent requestors of information were the CSU, the group of other agencies, and the police. The J&DR court was by far the least frequent requestor, followed by the schools and DSS. School records, medical records, and psychological reports were the most frequently requested types of information, while court records and police reports were the least frequently requested. Of the 94 individuals who requested any information, 81 had placed requests for school records.

Types of Reports Requested by Respondents



*Court records includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports or studies.

Court Records

Respondents who requested court records said they primarily request them from the courts (N¹=12), CSU (N=9) and DSS (N=8). The deputy clerks in the J&DR court are the most frequent requestors of court records, indicating that they often ask for records from other courts. Region Ten and the group of other agencies are also frequent requestors of court records, while none of the CSU or TJHD staff had requested court records. Although it was not specifically asked, a few respondents specifically mentioned that requesting court records was not worth the effort. For most other types of reports, respondents stated that they receive the information from the agency by fax, e-mail or regular mail. However, for court documents, going to the court to view the information was just as common a method for receiving information as getting the documents sent from the court.

Psychological Reports

Requests for psychological reports are most made of private providers (N=29), followed by schools (N=15), Region Ten (N=11), DSS (N=11), UVa (N=8), and other hospitals or residential facilities (N=17). At least three quarters of professionals from CSU, DSS, Region Ten, PDs/GALs, and the group of other agencies make requests for psychological reports. The court clerks and the police are unlikely to request this information.

Sociological Reports

Sociological reports are most often requested from DSS (N=15), the schools (N=14), UVa (N=5), and other hospitals and residential facilities (N=7). CSU, Region Ten and the group of other agencies are the most frequent requestors of sociological reports. Again, the court clerks and the police, along with TJHD staff are least likely to request this type of information.

School Records

School records are almost exclusively requested of the schools (N=55). However, DSS also receives occasional requests (N=8). All agencies except the J&DR court make frequent requests for school records. Most agencies receive records directly from the schools, except for the CSU, which primarily has its employees go to the schools and copy the information.

Substance Abuse Information

Region Ten is most often asked to supply information about substance abuse (N=26), followed by other substance abuse programs (N=9), and DSS (N=7). Request for substance abuse information are made infrequently among J&DR court, police and school personnel, but are made frequently among CSU and the group of other agency personnel.

Progress Reports from Service Providers

Progress reports are most often requested from Region Ten (N=13), private providers (N=12), hospitals and residential treatment facilities (N=11), DSS (N=10), and Community Attention (N=7). At least 80 percent of professionals from DSS, CSU,

¹ N = number of respondents

TJHD and the group of other agencies said that they request progress reports. Again, the police, the J&DR court and the schools rarely request this type of information.

Counseling and Treatment Records

Respondents who request counseling and treatment records make requests from private providers (N=18), Region Ten (N=13), UVa (N=7), other hospitals and residential treatment facilities (N=9), and DSS (N=6). Region Ten, PDs/GALs, DSS, CSU, and the group of other agencies are frequent requestors of counseling and treatment records, while the courts and police are infrequent requestors.

Medical Reports

As expected, medical reports are most often requested from private doctors (N=31), UVa (N=19), Martha Jefferson Hospital (N=10), and other hospitals and residential facilities (N=15). Some respondents said they request medical reports from schools (N=6) and DSS (N=5). The police and the CSU do not often request medical reports. However, at least half of professionals from all other agencies indicated that they sometime request medical reports.

Police Reports

All respondents who request police reports do so from police departments. Police officers, PDs/GALs, and CSU personnel are the most likely to indicate that they request police reports. J&DR court clerks, TJHD, and school professionals are unlikely to request information contained in police reports.

Granting Formal Requests

Individuals who mentioned making requests for information were asked how often their requests were granted when they did not have a court order. (Answers were given on a four point scale, where 1 = all of the time, 2 = most of the time, 3 = sometimes, and 4 = rarely/never.) While there was very little variability in the frequency with which requests for the different types of reports were granted (Range: school records, mean = 1.43; court records, mean = 1.97), some agencies seemed to have their requests granted almost all of the time, but others only had them granted some of the time. DSS, Region Ten and the J&DR court personnel had their requests granted almost all of the time, whereas CSU, school and the group of other agency personnel had their requests granted less frequently.

Court orders were rarely required to receive any reports or records. Yet again, some agencies were more likely to need a court order than others. Schools, the CSU, the group of other agencies and PDs/GALs needed court orders more often than the police, Region Ten, and TJHD. Unlike court orders, releases signed by the youths' parents were required to obtain information at least most of the time, except for police records. Police records required a signed consent form only sometimes. Region Ten, CSU, and school personnel indicated that in order to access information, they needed signed consent nearly all of the time, while DSS and TJHD professionals needed parental consent less often.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the circumstances under which they had formally received information without a court order or release form. Over half (57.4%)

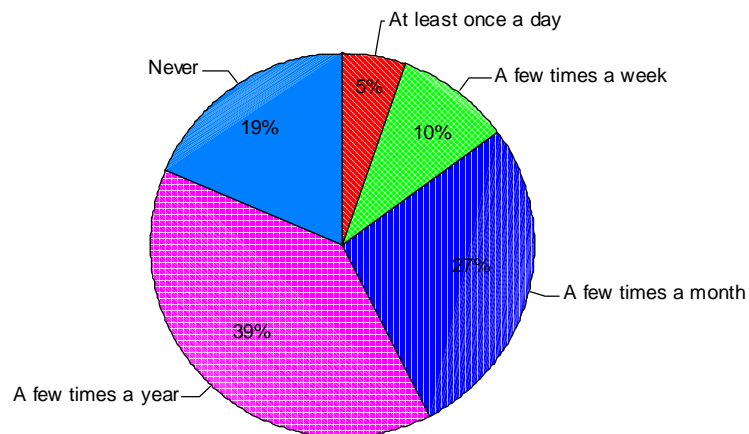
of professionals who request information reported that they sometimes receive information without a court order or signed release in situations in which the agency is mandated to provide the information. This is most often the case when the CSU, PDs/GALs, or police are the requestors of the information. Some respondents (28.7%) indicated they did not need a court order or signed release when their agency had an agreement with another agency to exchange information. The police, DSS, and TJHD professionals were most likely to indicate that they had agreements with other agencies. Approximately two in ten (21.3%) respondents said that they sometimes get information without a court order or release of information when they know someone at the agency who will provide them with the information. The police, school and the group of other agency personnel were most likely to say they are able to receive information without a release or court order if they know someone in the agency.

Participants were then asked about the circumstances in which their requests are refused. Two thirds (66.0%) of participants reported that their formal requests had been refused when they did not have a release of information. Nearly half (43.6%) had their requests refused when the agency believed that they could not legally share the information. Less common reasons for refusals to release information included not having a court order (20.2%) and the belief that the requestor did not have a legitimate need for the information (8.5%).

Receiving Requests for Information

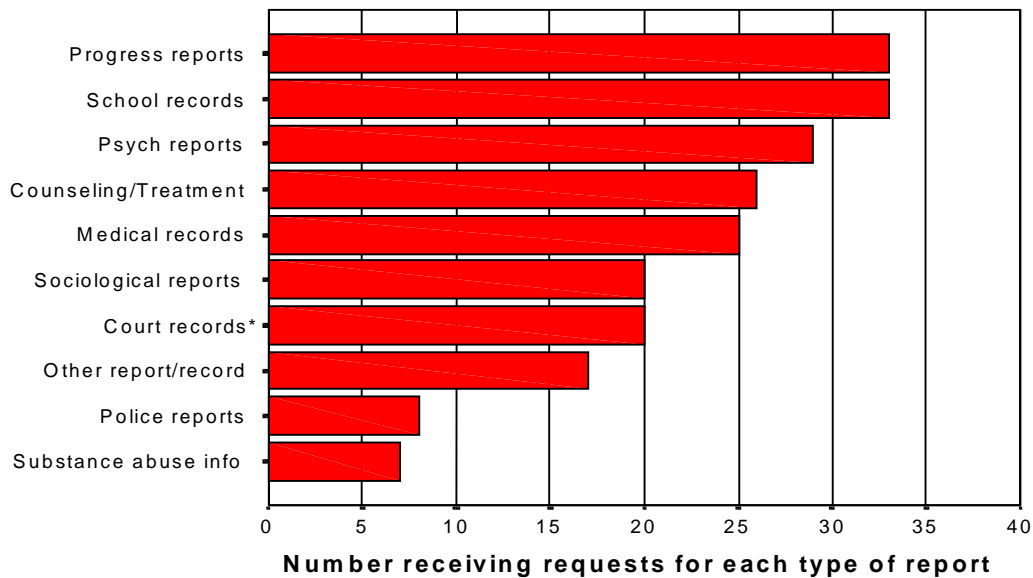
In the sample of professionals who returned the survey, people received requests for information less often than they made requests. The majority of participants indicated that they received requests for information either a few times a month (27.4%) or a few times a year (38.9%).

Frequency of Receiving Formal Requests



Interestingly, even though court reports and police documents were among those least often requested, the police and J&DR court clerks report that they receive requests more often than representatives from other agencies. PDs/GALs reported receiving a few requests per year or less. Approximately one third of respondents indicated that they had received requests for school records (N=33), progress reports (N=33), psychological reports (N=29), counseling and treatment records (N=26), and medical records (N=25). A large portion of the "other" reports included CASA reports and the Juvenile Court Assessment Center reports.

Types of Reports Requested of Respondents



*Court records includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports or studies

Most of the responses provided by requestors of information were consistent with those who reported receiving requests. However, there were some differences:

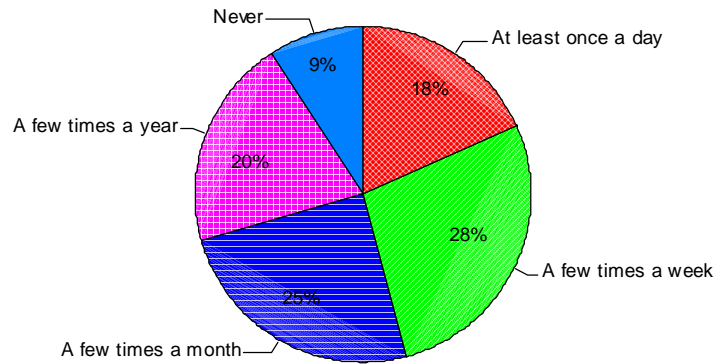
- When asked about the specific need for a court order, the vast majority of requestors indicated that their requests for all types of information were granted all of the time or most of the time, even without a court order. Yet, those receiving requests were less inclined to say they provide the information without a court order, especially when substance abuse information or court records are being requested.
- The circumstances under which information is formally released without signed consent or a court order vary depending on who is asked. When requestors of information were asked if they ever had information released to them when they called someone they knew in the agency, over 20 percent said that they had. However, when asked of receivers of requests, only 2 percent said they formally release information without a court order or signed consent if someone they know and trust from another agency calls to make the request.

- Requestors were unlikely (8.5%) to report that their requests were refused because the agency felt they did not have a legitimate need for the information. Yet, when asked of those receiving requests, over a third (34.8%) said that they refuse requests when they think the requestor does not have a legitimate need for the information.

Informal Channels for the Exchange of Information

When asked how often they receive information through informal channels (e.g. phone calls, chance meetings), the majority of survey respondents indicated that they received this type of information either a few times a week (27.5%) or a few times a month (24.8%). Some agencies were more likely to use informal channels on a regular basis.

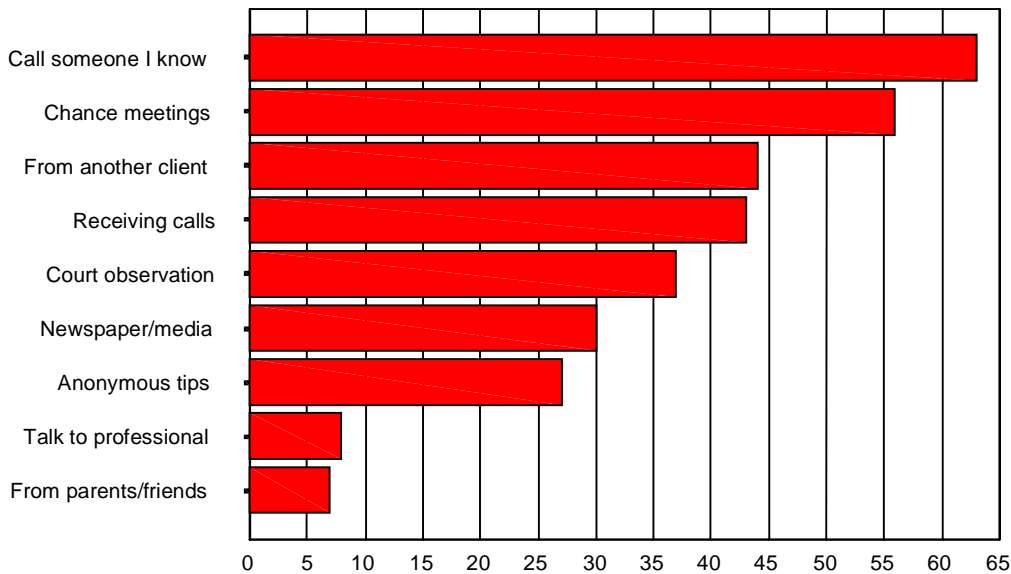
Frequency of Receiving Information
Through Informal Channels



The group of other agencies, Region Ten, PDs/GALs, and the CSU get information informally more often than the J&DR court and the schools.

Among the 99 respondents who indicated that they received information informally, the most common channel was "calling someone that you know in another agency," which was used by 63 individuals. Other popular channels were chance meetings, hearing something from another client, receiving unsolicited calls from someone in another agency and observing in court.

Informal Channels for Exchanging Information

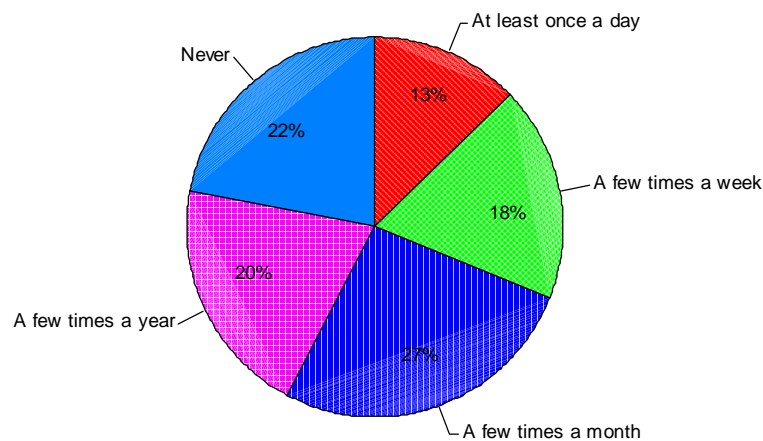


Number mentioning each channel

Most professionals believed that calling or contacting someone they know is the best informal way of receiving information that they need about youth. Although it was not specifically asked, many also mentioned that they use phone calls as a means of obtaining information only when there is a prior signed release giving them access to the information.

When asked how often they provided information through informal channels, most professionals said that they do so a few times a month or less.

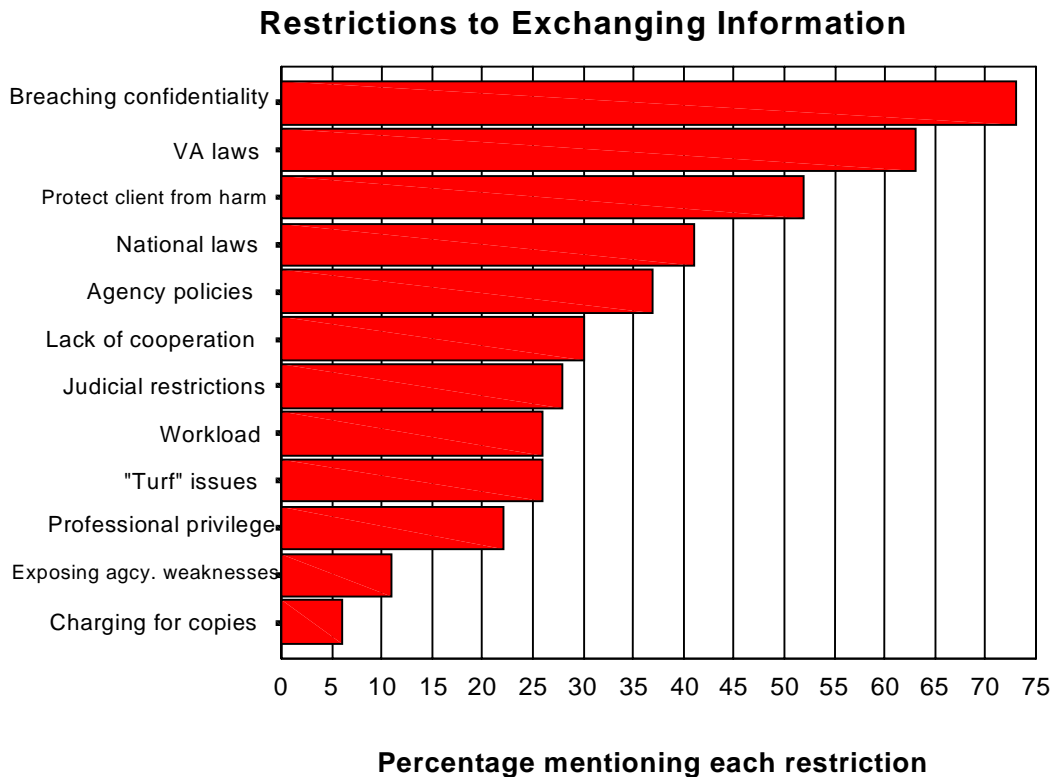
Frequency of Providing Information Through Informal Channels



Among those who provide information through informal channels, receiving calls from someone in another agency and chance meetings were again the most popular avenues for informal information sharing. Eighty four percent said that the best informal way for people to get information from them was to call them.

Restrictions to Exchanging Information

Respondents were provided with a list of possible restrictions to exchanging information and asked to select which they thought restricted the exchange of information. More than half considered concerns about breaching confidentiality, Virginia laws, and concerns about protecting youth and families from harm to be restrictions.

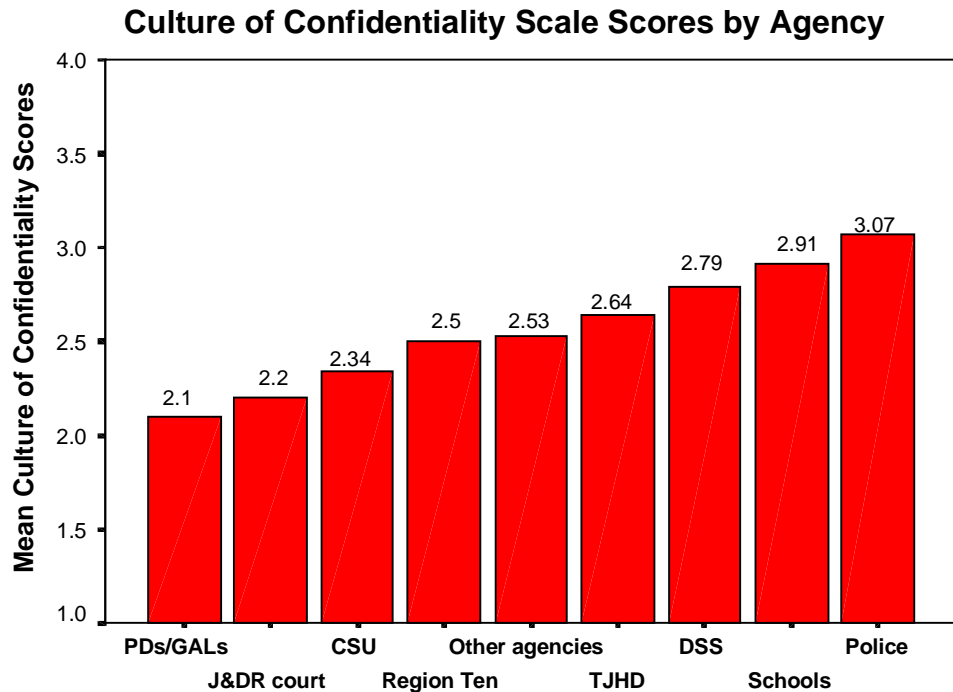


The J&DR court clerks and the police each reported an average of less than three restrictions, while Region Ten and the PDs/GALs each reported an average of more than five restrictions.

The Culture of Confidentiality and Amenability to Freer Exchange of Information

A 14-item scale was created to measure the culture of confidentiality that exists among Charlottesville/Albemarle professionals. The scale asks participants to indicate their level of agreement on a four-point scale (1 = agree strongly, 2 = agree somewhat, 3 =

disagree somewhat, and 4 = disagree strongly). The items were summed to create a total scale score. A higher score is indicative of a more open attitude toward sharing information. (Items b, f, h, i, j, k, and n were reverse coded - See Appendix, page 11.) The overall mean, using reverse coding for appropriate items, was a 2.63, which is slightly above the midpoint of 2.5 on the scale. There were significant differences between the agencies represented in the sample. The police, schools and DSS had the least concerns and most positive attitudes about sharing information more freely, while the PDs/GALs, J&DR court clerks and CSU employees were at the opposite end of the spectrum.



Respondents were asked if they would be interested in using methods that would make the exchange of information easier. The overwhelming majority (89.2%) said that they would be interested. The police and DSS indicated the most interest, while the J&DR court and PDs/GALs indicated the least interest. The validity of the Culture of Confidentiality scale was supported by comparing scores on the scale between those who were interested and those who were not. Those who were interested in using methods to make the exchange of information easier had a mean scale score of 2.75, while those who were not interested had a mean score of 2.08.

In spite of the fact that most respondents expressed interest in the idea of making it easier to exchange information, approximately half of participants (53.9%) thought other agencies would be resistant to the idea. Concerns about confidentiality, political or turf issues between agencies, and the belief that change is often resisted were the three main reasons given for why some agencies might be resistant. PDs/GALs were most likely, while deputy clerks from the J&DR court were least likely, to expect others to be resistant.

In an open-ended format, when asked to identify the benefits of making the exchange of information between agencies easier, most professionals focused on the possibility of improving services to youth and their families. Several other responses were mentioned by three or more respondents.

Benefit Category	Number	%
Improved service provision/Better understanding of client needs/ Better coordination of services/Quicker response time	67	76.1
Less hassle in obtaining info/Saves time, money/More efficient	21	23.9
Better interagency communication/planning	21	23.9
Less duplication of services/Less duplication of effort	16	18.2
More accurate/better information	6	6.8
Can track demographics/statistics	3	3.4
Other benefits	3	3.4

Note: Percentages add to more than 100, because respondents could mention multiple benefits.

Then professionals were given the opportunity to express their concerns about the idea of implementing methods to make the exchange of information easier. Several people (15.6%) specifically reported that they had no concerns. Of those who had concerns, the one most commonly mentioned was the loss of confidentiality.

Concern Category	Number	%
Loss of confidentiality/Concern about client rights to privacy	27	35.5
Too much information exchanged/People having access to information they don't need	23	30.3
Misuse of information/Information used in negative ways/Information used to label kids	17	22.4
Concerns related to electronic databases/Security concerns	8	10.5
Concerns regarding implementation (e.g., resistance to change, fair access)	7	9.2
Families wouldn't like it/Families would be reluctant to share info.	5	6.6
Inaccurate information	4	5.3
Other concerns	7	9.2

Note: Percentages add to more than 100, because respondents could mention multiple concerns.

Future Directions

The results of the present study provide an initial overview of the practices and attitudes toward information sharing in the Charlottesville/Albemarle community. However, the study also introduces new questions that require clarification. In order to answer some of the emerging questions, the JJAC is planning to conduct follow-up focus groups with a several of the survey participants. The focus groups will be designed to answer the following questions:

- What aspects of requesting court records makes it "not worth the effort?"

- Several respondents indicated that they refused to provide information when they felt the requestor did not have a legitimate need for the information. Under what circumstances does this occur? What qualifies as an illegitimate request?
- How much information is exchanged over e-mail? What are some of the concerns about transmitting confidential information over e-mail?
- Why did CSU employees report that their request for information were granted less frequently than other agencies? And why did respondents from the CSU report that they had to go copy school records when most other agencies reported that school records were sent to them?
- Why do the police and J&DR clerks report receiving more information requests when respondents indicated that they do not often request police and court records?
- Under what circumstances to Region Ten employees request court records?

An additional set of focus groups will examine the potential barriers to exchanging information about youth from the prospective of clients and their parents. Then, based on information from the survey, and the client and professional focus groups, the JJAC will design a mechanism to improve the exchange of information. Prior to testing the mechanism, the JJAC will solicit feedback from professionals in the community. Once a consensus has been achieved, a training protocol will be developed to help ensure that the mechanism is properly implemented and utilized.

Appendix:
Information Exchange Survey

Information Exchange Survey

1. For whom do you work:

- 16th Circuit Court Services Unit
- Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Clerk's Office
- Charlottesville Department of Social Services
- Albemarle Department of Social Services
- Region Ten Community Services Board
- Thomas Jefferson Health District
- Charlottesville City Schools
- Albemarle County Schools
- Charlottesville Police Department
- Albemarle County Police Department
- Charlottesville Commonwealth's Attorney's Office
- Albemarle County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office
- Public Defender's Office
- Other (please specify) _____

2. Are you an: administrator

supervisor

caseworker/counselor/line staff

attorney

clerical

other

 (please specify) _____

3. Does your agency have a formal policy on exchanging information (access to information)?

Yes

No (If no, skip to question 5)

4. What is stated in the policy?

5. a. When youth enter your program or agency are their parents asked to sign a release of information form?

Yes

No

b. Are the youth asked to sign a release of information form?

Yes, regardless of the age of the youth

Yes, but only if the youth is over a certain age What age? ____

No

If you answered yes to either part of question 5, please enclose a copy of your release form with your survey.

When answering the following questions, please refer to your personal experience in your current position rather than answering the questions for your entire agency.

6. Approximately how often do you make **formal (official)** requests for information from other agencies?

- At least once a day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Never (If never, please skip to 14)

7. Which of the following types of information do you **formally (officially)** request from other agencies?

Information contained in...

From which agencies? (If you make requests from multiple agencies, list up to 3.)

- a. Court records* → a. _____
- b. Psychological reports (other than court ordered) → b. _____
- c. Sociological reports (other than court ordered) → c. _____
- d. School records → d. _____
- e. Substance abuse information → e. _____
- f. Progress reports from service providers → f. _____
- g. Counseling & treatment records → g. _____
- h. Medical reports → h. _____
- i. Police incident reports → i. _____
- Other:
- j. _____ → j. _____
- k. _____ → k. _____
- l. _____ → l. _____

* Court records includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports or studies.

8. When you don't have a court order, are your **formal (official)** requests for each type of information granted *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't request
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. To obtain information for **formal (official)** requests, are you required to have a court order *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't request
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. To obtain information for **formal (official)** requests, are you required to have a release of information form signed by the youths' parents *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't request
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Under what circumstances is information **formally (officially)** released to you without a court order or release of information form? *Check all that apply.*

- When it is legally not required/When the agency is mandated to provide the information
- When I know someone at the agency who will give me the information
- When my agency has an agreement with another agency to exchange information
- Other (please specify) _____

12. Under what circumstances are your **formal (official)** requests for information refused? *Check all that apply.*

- When I do not have a court order
- When I do not have an authorized release of information form
- When the agency indicates they cannot legally share the information
- When the agency does not feel that I have a legitimate need for the information. (Please describe) _____
- Other (please specify) _____

13. How do you **primarily** receive written information contained in each of the following types of reports/files? **CHECK ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH TYPE OF INFORMATION.**

- Court Records: (includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports or studies) I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Psychological Reports: (other than court ordered) I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Sociological Reports: (other than court ordered) I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- School Records: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Substance Abuse Info.: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Progress Reports from Service Providers: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Counseling & Treatment Records: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Medical Records: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)
- Police Incident Reports: I receive the information from the agency (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 I go to the agency and copy the information
 I go to the agency to view the information (copies are not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (I don't request this type of information)

14. We know that people get information they need through **informal** channels. Approximately how often do you receive information through **informal** channels (e.g. phone calls, chance meetings)?

- At least once a day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Never (If never, please skip to 16)

15. a. Which of the following **informal** channels do you use to get information about youth?

- calling someone that I know in another agency
- receiving unsolicited calls from someone in another agency
- chance meetings
- court observation
- newspaper/media
- hearing something from another client
- anonymous tips
- other (please specify) _____

b. In your experience what is the best **informal** way to get information that you need about youth?

16. Approximately how often do other agencies make **formal (official)** requests for information to you? *Please remember, these questions refer to requests made to you in your current position, not to your agency as a whole.*

- At least once a day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Never (If never, please skip to 24)

17. Which of the following types of information do other agencies **formally (officially)** request from you?

Information contained in...	Who requests this information? (List up to 3 requesting agencies.)
a. Court records*	<input type="checkbox"/> → a. _____
b. Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/> → b. _____
c. Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/> → c. _____
d. School records	<input type="checkbox"/> → d. _____
e. Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/> → e. _____
f. Progress reports from service providers	<input type="checkbox"/> → f. _____
g. Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/> → g. _____
h. Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/> → h. _____
i. Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/> → i. _____
Other:	
j. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> → j. _____
k. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> → k. _____
l. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> → l. _____

* Court records includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports or studies.

18. Without a court order, do you grant **formal (official)** requests for each type of information *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Not requested
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. In order to **formally (officially)** release information, do you require a requestor to have a court order *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Not requested
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. In order to **formally (officially)** release information, do you require a requestor to have a release of information signed by the youths' parents *all of the time, most of the time, sometimes or rarely?*

Information contained in...	All of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Not requested
Court records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sociological reports (other than court ordered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Progress reports from serv. providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counseling & treatment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Under what circumstances do you **formally (officially)** release information without a court order or release of information form?

- When it is legally not required/When we are mandated to provide the information to the requesting agency
- When someone I know and trust makes the request
- When my agency has an agreement with another agency to exchange information
- Other (please specify) _____

22. Under what circumstances do you refuse **formal (official)** requests for information? *Check all that apply.*

- When the requestor does not have a court order
- When the requestor does not have an authorized release of information form
- When I determine that my agency is not legally permitted to share the information
- When I do not think the requestor has a legitimate need for the information.
(Please describe) _____

- Other (please specify) _____

23. How do you **primarily** provide written information contained in each of the following types of reports/files? **CHECK ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH TYPE OF INFORMATION.**

- Court Reports: (includes petitions, court orders, and court ordered reports and studies) I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Psychological Reports: (other than court ordered) I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Sociological Reports: (other than court ordered) I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- School Records: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Substance Abuse Info.: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Progress Reports from Service Providers: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Counseling & Treatment Records: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Medical Records: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)
- Police Incident Rpts: I provide the information to the requestor (e.g. fax, e-mail, regular mail)
 The requestor comes and copies the information
 The requestor comes to view the information (copies not allowed)
 Other (please specify) _____
 N/A (This type of information is not requested)

24. We know that people provide information through **informal** channels. Approximately how often do you provide information to people through **informal** channels (e.g. phone calls, chance meetings)?

- At least once a day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- A few times a year
- Never (If never, please skip to 26.)

25. a. Which of the following **informal** channels do you use to provide information about youth?

- making unsolicited calls to someone that I know in another agency
- receiving calls from someone in another agency
- chance meetings
- court observation
- newspaper/media
- hearing something from another client
- anonymous tips
- other (please specify) _____

b. In your experience what is the best **informal** way to for people to get information from you?

26. Within your agency, how is information kept? **Check all that apply.**

- In a paper file under the youths' name
- In an electronic database (What types of information are kept in the database?)

- Other (please specify) _____

27. How long does your agency retain information about youths served? _____

28. Which of the following do you consider to be restrictions to exchanging information? **Check all that apply.**

- Virginia laws
- National laws
- "Territorial" or "turf" issues between local agencies
- Local judicial restrictions
- Concerns about exposing agency weaknesses
- Concerns about breaching confidentiality
- Concerns about protecting youth and their families from harm
- Professional privilege
- Workload (too time consuming)
- Agency policies
- Lack of cooperation between agencies
- Agencies charge for copies of requested information
- Other (please specify) _____

29. For each of the following statements please indicate whether you *agree strongly*, *agree somewhat*, *disagree somewhat* or *disagree strongly*.

	agree strongly	agree somewhat	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly
a. I am concerned that information shared with law enforcement and prosecutors will be used against youths.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. An interagency agreement to exchange information will result in better service to youths and their families.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I have enough concerns about confidentiality that I think parental consent or a court order should be required to release any information about a youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. When the child is old enough to understand the information in the consent form, his/her consent should be required for the release of information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. It is harmful for parents to have access to social histories and psychological assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I am eager to exchange information about youth with other agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. If information is shared more freely, more youth will be labeled as "bad kids."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Computerized databases linking all agencies that serve youth are desirable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. I think that it would be helpful to have a uniform consent form for the release of information that could be signed by youths and their parents at court intake.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. I would be willing to give out more information about youth with other agencies if the policies of my agency did not prohibit it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. I would be willing to share more information about youth with other agencies if Virginia law did not prohibit it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. The ethics of my profession make me resistant to the idea of more freely sharing information about youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Schools penalize kids when they learn about kids' involvement with the court.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Improving an agency's ability to evaluate outcomes is a good reason to exchange information about youth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following questions give you an opportunity to express your opinions about implementing mechanisms to make exchanging information about youth easier. Please remember that your responses will be kept completely confidential.

30. Would you be interested in using methods that would make the exchange of information about youth easier?

- Yes
- No

31. What do you think would be the benefits of easier exchange of information between agencies?

32. What concerns do you have about the idea of implementing methods to make the exchange of information easier?

33. Do you think other agencies in Charlottesville/Albemarle would be resistant to making it easier to exchange information?

- Yes (If so, why?) _____
- No _____
- _____
- _____