RESOLUTION SUPPORTING
THE USE OF POSTIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL TRAINING IN JUVENILE JUSTICE AGENCIES

WHEREAS the role of the juvenile court system is to rehabilitate and treat young offenders while holding them accountable and maintaining public safety; and

WHEREAS there is a growing interest in increasing the impact of investments in justice interventions; and

WHEREAS it is important to promote decision frameworks or statutes that consider cumulative risk and needs, and target services to the highest risk offenders; and

WHEREAS the development of temperance (self-regulation) is especially important for positive outcomes for juvenile offenders; and

WHEREAS adolescent cognitive abilities are associated with biological immaturity of the brain and an imbalance among developing brain systems;

WHEREAS access to appropriate support services (mental health, substance abuse, etc.), in both institutions and the community that are of adequate intensity and involve family members promotes positive long-term outcomes;

WHEREAS infusing youth and adolescent development theories and practices into daily operations and behavior management strategies improves outcomes; and

WHEREAS services and re-entry planning significantly reduce the chances of repeated systems involvement; and

WHEREAS in general, programs that offer interventions with a cognitive or cognitive-behavioral emphasis, “do work” to reduce recidivism of serious institutionalized juvenile offenders; and

WHEREAS the monetary value of saving a high-risk youth from a life of crime is estimated to range between $2.6 and $4.4 million for each child and moving youth from the adult criminal justice system to the juvenile justice system is cost-effective;

BE IT RESOLVED that the National Partnership for Juvenile Services supports the use of evidence informed practices with a specific emphasis on the use of positive youth development strategies and cognitive behavioral interventions that;

• Involve a parent or parent figure,
• Increase exposure to positive peers,
• Provide opportunities for decision making/critical thinking,
• Hold youth accountable for wrongdoing and increases acceptance of responsibility in a process perceived as fair, promotes healthy moral development and legal socialization, and
• Are supported with increased provision of services (mental health, substance abuse, etc.) to adolescent offenders in both institutions and in the community, ensuring that the services are of adequate intensity.