

**2009 Maurice B. Cohill Young Investigator Award
Student Instructions**

1. Contact Information and Deadlines

Send your Completed Application Packet (Research Paper and Appendix, Cover Sheet, Abstract, and Application) by **April 1, 2010** to:

**NCJJ
Cohill Award
3700 S. Water Street
Suite 200
Pittsburgh, PA. 15203**

Send questions about the scholarship, application materials, or your completed application, to:

Lora Leddy
leddy@ncjj.org

2. Research Paper Requirements

- Maximum Page Length: 25 pages; Minimum Page Length: 20 pages (DOES NOT INCLUDE APPENDIX)
- Double-spaced, 12pt. font, Arial typeface
- Page Numbered in Sequence
- English Language
- Completed Logic Model (as part of the Appendix to your paper)

Your Paper Must Include the Following Sections (Using Section Titles as Written Below):

Section 1 – Issue Statement: *This section must provide background on the issue you will be exploring in your research paper.* In this section you should provide: a) a basic description of the issue that your paper will be addressing and any definitions or terms you will be using, b) historical information that puts this issue and its development over time into context and c) how this issue is currently impacting youth today.

Section 2 - Research Question: *This section must describe the question you are exploring in your research paper and the reason(s) why this particular question is important to study.* For example, the question “Do truancy laws increase school attendance?” could form the basis of your research paper. In this example, you could explain the importance of studying this question by suggesting that truancy laws could be having the unintended effect of keeping more kids out of school, because more kids might end up in detention on truancy charges and miss more school as a result.

Section 3 – Research Methods: *This section must describe the specific ways in which you gathered information to answer your research question.* There are many different ways you can collect information to answer a research question, including: gathering statistics or numbers, conducting a review of research articles, newspaper articles, legislation, or other preexisting sources of information, collecting new information, first-hand, through conducting interviews, observing situations, surveying people about their opinions, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, or behavior, or otherwise gathering new information that has not been reported previously. You can use more than one research method to answer your research question. Make sure you not only describe the method(s) you used, but also describe in detail: a) *why you chose the method(s)*, b) *the time period for information collected*, c) *how you actually went about using the method(s)*, and d) *what sources were used for collecting your information.*

Section 4 – Research Findings: *This section must present a summary of the information you gathered when trying to answer your research question.* The information should be organized in a clear way that is easy to understand, and directly relates to the research question you are trying to answer. You may use graphics, tables, figures, or charts to explain your information and you should number them and title them for easy identification. If you have extensive information to report, but do not want to use all of it in the body of the paper, you may include it in the appendix of your paper. Remember, your goal is to use the information you gathered to try and answer the research question(s) you are interested in, but in this section you should only present the information gathered without making any arguments for whether, or not, this information answers your research question(s).

Section 5 – Conclusions: *This section must use your research findings to conclude or make a judgment about the original research question(s) you were trying to investigate.* Did you answer the question you were interested in? Be careful to use your findings accurately. It may be that your research findings do not answer your research question in the way you had imagined. If your findings only suggest a certain answer or are inconclusive, you should discuss this issue and what it might mean in the context of your overall research process. Perhaps your methods were not adequate, information was biased, or the question you posed cannot be answered at this time. It is just as important to understand when research cannot answer a question as when it finds the solution you were looking for.

Section 6 – Recommendations: *This section must describe the specific steps you would recommend for addressing the issue impacted by the question you researched.* For example, if the issue being researched was truancy from school and your research showed that truancy laws end up decreasing school attendance, you might make a recommendation to fix this problem by having special staff positions created in police departments where truancy officers work with schools to return students to class rather than bringing them to the juvenile court. Your recommendations should be written as action statements for how something should be done to address the research findings you explained in your paper. Recommendations are not just your opinions or attitudes and each recommendation must make a logical connection to the findings from your research.

Section 7-Appendix: *The appendix should contain your completed “Logic Model” as well as your information references (articles, books, etc.), any information collection tools you used to collect information (survey questionnaires, interview questions, etc.), and any other supporting information you feel is important to include.*

3. Description of Research Paper Topic Areas

Juvenile Law and Public Policy

Research papers in this category need to address issues around laws that affect juveniles or public policies that impact juvenile justice practices. Laws pertaining to juveniles would be laws that define delinquent or criminal behavior (for example, truancy), or laws that direct the ways in which juveniles are processed in the legal system (for example, juveniles being charged as adults for particular crimes). Public policies that impact juveniles in the justice system could include formal or informal agreements for the way juveniles are handled in a particular situation. For example, a public policy could be an agreement between police and schools to divert any non-violent school-based incidents to a third-party mediator, rather than serving school suspension or being referred to juvenile court for these incidents.

Juvenile Courts and Probation

Research papers in this category need to address issues affecting juvenile courts and juvenile probation departments as they impact youth outcomes. Juvenile court practices and processes, such as the way hearings are conducted, use of lawyers, family involvement, or the role of the juvenile court judge are examples of court-related issues that could be explored. Juvenile probation-related examples could include the role of the juvenile probation officer, the process or assignment of probation itself, the services available or restrictions involved while on probation, alternatives to probation, or the role of probation in schools or the community.

Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency

Research papers in this category need to address the root causes of juvenile delinquency or the prevalence of child abuse and neglect that may lead to child dependency cases in the child welfare system. Papers in this category may cross-over between issues of delinquency and dependency if the research question involves a cross-over concept or if research findings suggest such cross-over may be important. Papers in this category must clearly define what class of behaviors is being considered as delinquent. For example, if actions made illegal by virtue of a youth’s age, such as an underage purchase of tobacco (status offenses), are not considered to be delinquent, the paper must explicitly make this case. Those papers discussing the prevalence of child abuse and neglect may focus on either the perpetrators (abusers) or victims (children) when explaining root causes of the problems. *Papers that focus on this topic area must present recommendations for preventing or reducing the future prevalence of delinquency or child abuse and neglect.*

Juvenile Crime and Law Data Analysis and Interpretation

Research papers in this category need to either address the current manner in which particular juvenile crime and law data are analyzed and interpreted, or investigate new methods for analyzing and interpreting juvenile crime and law data. Data analysis-related papers may focus on particular types of data based on where the data come from (for example, FBI statistics, court statistics, etc.) or what the data are used to represent (for example types of offending behaviors, victimizations, etc.). Data-interpretation-related papers may focus on the way(s) in which historical or current data have been interpreted either by the social science research field, public policymakers, or the media. Papers that explore entirely new quantitative or qualitative methods for analyzing crime and law data are included in this category, but recommendations from those papers must be able to clearly explain how this new method would demonstrably improve our current understanding of juvenile crime and law issues.

Helpful Resources for Completing Your Research Paper

Topic Area Resources

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/>

Children's Defense Fund: <http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-advocacy-resources-center/child-advocacy-groups/juvenile-justice.html>

National Criminal Justice Reference Service: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/>

Center for Children's Law and Policy: <http://www.cclp.org/>

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges: www.ncjfcj.org

National Center for Juvenile Justice: www.ncjj.org

Research Process Resources

The Seven Steps of the Research Process:
<http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill1.htm>

The Research Process: <http://www.statpac.com/research-papers/research-process.htm>

Logic Model Resources

Logic Model Development Guide-WK Kellogg Foundation:
<http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>

Puzzle Game for Learning About Logic Models: <http://www.nationalservicerresources.org/star/ac-logic-puzzles>

**2009 Maurice B. Cohill, Jr. Young Investigator Award
Student Research Paper Cover Sheet**

Directions: Complete this Cover Sheet and attach to your Research Paper.

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| First Initial: (Do Not Write Your First Name) | Last Name: |
| Name of Your High School/Home School/Charter School: (Do Not List Location) | |
| Which Topic Area Are You Applying Under? (Check only 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Law and Public Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Courts and Probation <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Crime and Law Data Analysis and Interpretation | |
| Title of Your Research Paper: | |



**2009 Maurice B. Cohill, Jr. Young Investigator Award
Student Application Form**

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---|------------------|
| First Name: | | Last Name: | |
| School Name: _____ | | | |
| School Type: (check 1) | | Grade Level: 11 th OR 12 th (circle 1) | |
| Public ___ | | Gender: Male Female Transgender (circle 1) | |
| Private ___ | | Age: _____ | |
| Charter ___ | | Race: (self-describe) _____ | |
| Home School ___ | | | |
| Military Base ___ | | | |
| School Address | | | |
| Street: | City: | State: | Zip Code: |
| Student's Home Mailing Address | | | |
| Street: | City: | State: | Zip Code: |
| Student's Email Address | | | |
| Student Email: | | Parent/Alternate Email: | |
| Student's Phone Number | | | |
| Home Phone Number | | Cell/Alternate Phone Number: | |

Which Topic Area Are You Applying Under? (Check only 1)

- Juvenile Law and Public Policy
- Juvenile Courts and Probation
- Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency
- Juvenile Crime and Law Data Analysis and Interpretation



Title of Your Research Paper: _____

How did you hear about this scholarship opportunity? _____

2010 Maurice B. Cohill, Jr. Premio de Investigador Joven
Aplicación

| | | | |
|---|----------------|---|-----------------------|
| Nombre: | | Apellido: | |
| Nombre de Escuela: _____ | | | |
| Tipo de Escuela: (elegir 1) | | Nivel de Grado: 11 O 12 (elegir 1) | |
| Publica ____ | | Género: Masculino Femenino Transexuales (elegir 1) | |
| Privada ____ | | Edad: _____ | |
| Escuela "Charter" ____ | | Raza: (auto describir) _____ | |
| Escolarización en Casa ____ | | | |
| Base Militar ____ | | | |
| Dirección de la Escuela | | | |
| Calle: | Cuidad: | Estado: | Código Postal: |
| Dirección del Estudiante | | | |
| Calle: | Cuidad: | Estado: | Código Postal: |
| Correo Electrónico | | | |
| Correo Electrónico del Estudiante: | | Padre/ Correo Electrónico Alternativa: | |
| Número de Teléfono del Estudiante | | | |
| Número de Teléfono de Casa: | | Cellular/ Número Alternativa: | |

¿Qué tema está usted aplicando? (Elegir 1)

- Ley de Menores y de Políticas Públicas
- Tribunales de Menores y de Libertad Condicional
- La Delincuencia Juvenil y la Dependencia
- La Delincuencia juvenil y la Ley de Interpretación y Análisis de Datos

Título de la Investigación del Papel: _____

¿Cómo se enteró de esta oportunidad de becas? _____

**2009 Maurice B. Cohill, Jr. Young Investigator Award
Paper Abstract Form**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| First Initial: (Do Not Write Your First Name) | Last Name: |
| Name of Your High School/Home School/Charter School: (Do Not List Location) | |
| Which Topic Area Are You Applying Under? (Check only 1) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Law and Public Policy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Courts and Probation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Crime and Law Data Analysis and Interpretation | |
| Title of Your Research Paper: | |
| Description of Your Paper (200 word maximum) | |



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Return this Paper Abstract with your Research Paper and Cover Sheet to NCJJ by April 1, 2010.

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Logic Model Template

Instructions: You must complete this logic model and include it in the Appendix of your research paper. A list of logic model resources is available in the Student Instructions sheet for background reading purposes, but you should use only this template, and no other form, to complete the logic model requirement. Use a separate row to list each distinct question, method, data source, findings and recommendations, as shown in the *“Logic Model Example”* on the following page. The idea is to create a flow or linkage between each column, from left to right, across each row so you can see how things are logically connected together. You should only have one research question, which is why there is only one row for the column heading.

| Your Research Question | Your Research Methods | Your Data Sources | Your Research Findings | Your Recommendations |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | |
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Logic Model Example

| Your Research Question | Your Research Methods | Your Data Sources | Your Research Findings | Your Recommendations |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| Do truancy laws increase school attendance? | Interviews | High School Teachers | Attendance is only increased if truancy is caught early on when kids are in elementary school. | Focus truancy enforcement and programs at the elementary school level. |
| | Surveys | High School Students | Truancy laws do not increase attendance because they make kids feel like the school and police are out to get them instead of helping them. | Bring students, schools, and police together to talk about their common goals for helping youth succeed in school and how truancy laws are part of this process. |
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