

**Arkansas's Three-Year Juvenile Justice And
Delinquency Prevention Plan
(2018-2022)**



Submitted to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

**By the Department of Human Services Division of Youth Services Juvenile Justice and
Delinquency Prevention Unit**

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INTRODUCTION

This three-year plan starts with an in-depth analysis of the juvenile justice system including a systematic review of the various initiatives in place to address youth with problem behaviors and their families. What follows is the analysis of Arkansas's youth serving systems from prevention through aftercare including an analysis of juvenile crime problems, juvenile needs and resource availability and gaps. This strategic plan document will begin with statewide prevention efforts that are integral to the prevention of juvenile delinquency. The Three-Year Plan will provide information regarding the State of Arkansas's juvenile justice system. Finally, it includes Arkansas's plans for addressing the prioritized Formula Grant Program Areas and progress made to date.

Authority

*Citation for the Executive Order Providing the Authority of the Agency Title 9 - Family Law
Subtitle 3 - Minors Chapter 27 - Juvenile Courts And Proceedings Sub- chapter 3 - Arkansas
Juvenile Code § 9-27-349 - Compliance with federal acts.*

9-27-349. Compliance with federal acts. The Division of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services shall have the responsibility for the collection, review, and reporting of statistical information on detained or incarcerated juveniles, for adult jails, adult lock-ups, and juvenile detention facilities to assure compliance with the provisions of Pub. L. No. 93-415, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974

AR Code § 9-28-1102 (2014) states that the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice Board shall:

ARTICLE I NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice, State Advisory Group (SAG), and hereafter referred to as the Board.

ARTICLE

Section 1. The Board is established in accordance with P. L. 93-415, the “Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974”; and by the Governor’s Executive Order No. 96-07 dated December 17, 1996 Section 1. The Board is established in accordance with P. L. 93-415, the “Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974”; and by the Governor’s Executive Order No. 96-07 dated December 17, 1996

OJJDP FY2018 TITLE II FORMULA GRANTS

2. PROGRAM NARRATIVE

a Statement of the Problem

1 System Description: Structure and Function of the Juvenile Justice System

Pursuant to Arkansas Juvenile Code, § 9-27-349 the Division of Youth Services of the Department of Human Services shall have the responsibility for the collection, review, and reporting of statistical information on detained or incarcerated juveniles, for adult jails, adult lock-ups, and juvenile detention facilities to assure compliance with the provisions of Pub. L.No.93-415, the Juvenile Justice and

Delinquency Act of 1974

Arkansas has a separate court division for children who commit criminal acts. The Arkansas Juvenile Justice System consists of the following entities: local law enforcement, juvenile judicial districts, district prosecuting attorneys, public defenders/appointed attorneys, juvenile detention centers, contracted community-based providers and the Division of Youth Services (DYS).

Arkansas' juvenile justice system focuses on rehabilitation of the juvenile offender and victim restitution. When a prosecutor believes a juvenile has committed a crime, he/she may choose to file a "delinquency petition" that summons the juvenile to an "adjudication hearing". If the allegations in a petition are found to be true, a juvenile is "adjudicated delinquent". If the youth is placed in secure detention prior to adjudication or the court enters a disposition after adjudication that includes placement in secure detention, the child is "detained." If, however, the disposition requires the juvenile to be transferred to DYS, he/she is "committed to the custody of DYS." In this application, youth who are detained or committed to DYS are "incarcerated" or "committed to secure confinement." In the commitment order, a juvenile judge may recommend that a youth be placed in a community-based program instead of in a juvenile facility or in a placement. Commitment practices vary from one jurisdiction to another for a variety of reasons. DYS has the sole legal responsibility to determine what services a committed youth will receive, where the youth will be placed, and how long the youth will be held in custody (up to age 21).

Children (per Arkansas' juvenile code) ages 10 through 17 who commit acts that would be considered criminal if committed by an adult are referred to as juvenile delinquents. If a juvenile is an adjudicated delinquent, there are several disposition alternatives available to the judge: undergo counseling, probation, community service, electronic monitoring, the C-Step Program, Drug Court, Youth Advocacy Program, detention, or transfer into the custody of DYS. The judge will decide the appropriate disposition. Juvenile court records are not public records and are not subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act. The court proceedings and filings may also be closed and confidential. A crime victim, persons providing

victim support, or a victim's representative may be present unless the judge decides that the person's exclusion is

necessary to preserve the confidentiality or fairness of a juvenile proceeding. Crime victims do not have the right to present victim impact statements, but some judges may allow them. Information regarding juveniles is not available through the Arkansas Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) Program unless the juvenile is charged as an adult. The commission of some crimes can expose a youth age 14 or older to prosecution as an adult in the of circuit court criminal division. If a person under the age of 18 is tried in the criminal division he/she is considered as an adult and juvenile court procedures do not apply. The Intake Officer determines whether a juvenile should be placed in detention before a hearing or released to the guardian(s). The juvenile court staff operates under the county quorum court with the state subsidizing some salaries. Youth between the ages of 10 and 17 who are adjudicated delinquent and committed to the custody of DYS are committed for an indeterminate period not to exceed 2 years (unless extended by the court) or the youth's 21st birthday. Juvenile judges may also order restitution, community service, place the juvenile in a county detention facility for an indefinite period not to exceed 90 days for probation violations, or place the youth on electronic monitoring in the community. Arkansas maintains fourteen Juvenile **Detention Centers**; the county judge or sheriff operates these facilities

Local Law Enforcement officers who deal with juveniles are part of the municipal police or county sheriff departments. Most jurisdictions do not have officers dedicated exclusively to handling juvenile cases.

Judicial Districts

There are twenty-eight (28) Judicial Districts in Arkansas with at least one judge who hears juvenile cases, one intake officer and one probation officer for each county. The circuit court, juvenile division, has exclusive jurisdiction for juveniles under the age of 14. For youth over age 14, there are statutory exclusions for exclusive jurisdiction and there may be concurrent jurisdiction within the circuit courts. The 82nd General Assembly during the regular session passed “The Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction Act” (EJJ) which states that Arkansas may request extended juvenile jurisdiction designation in a delinquency petition if the juvenile has committed certain enumerated offenses. Therefore, the juvenile judge maintains jurisdiction over the case during the juvenile’s confinement and reviews the case prior to the juvenile’s

21st birthday to determine whether imposition of an adult sentence is merited to protect public safety. The

District Prosecuting Attorney serves the judicial district. The deputy prosecuting

attorney usually prosecutes juvenile cases. **Public Defenders or Appointed Attorneys** usually represent juveniles, especially in cases where a change in custody or incarceration is a possibility.

DYS has recently assumed the operation of seven (7) juvenile assessment centers. The two companies that previously operated DYS facilities, South Arkansas Youth Services of Magnolia and Consolidated Youth Services of Jonesboro, contracts expired on December 31, 2016. South Arkansas Youth Services operated two facilities in Mansfield, two in Dermott and one in Lewisville; Consolidated Youth Services operated facilities in Colt and Harrisburg.

Youth who commit the more serious offenses are separately housed at one of the formerly contracted Juvenile Correctional Facilities or Juvenile Treatment Centers located throughout the state. The minimum residential length-of-stay in each program is six months, followed by an Aftercare phase of at least six

months. Organizations include: emergency shelter, counseling, day services, case management, community supervision/aftercare, intensive case management, diagnosis and evaluations, drug screening, electronic monitoring, therapy, and residential treatment. DYS has 8 secure residential facilities located throughout the state which include five boys' facilities, one girl's facility and one correctional facility for ages 18-21.

ARKANSAS DHS STATISTICAL REPORT DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES

See Attachment "A" FY 2017

1 Youth Crime Analysis and Needs and Problem Statements

a Analysis of Youth Crime Problems

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Division of Youth Services Is to provide effective prevention, intervention and treatment programs to give opportunities for success to families and children in Arkansas and to ensure public safety.

Children and families In Arkansas are safe and have the resources they need in their communities to help them succeed.

This plan is based on many shared values and beliefs among stakeholders for juvenile justice reform:

1. State resources and programs to support children and families In Arkansas should be coordinated in a system of care for maximum effectiveness. This imperative must infuse every goal and strategy in this plan.
2. Redirecting resources from incarceration and punishment to prevention and treatment will be more effective, less

costly, and lead to greater public safety for citizens of the state.

3. Youth and families should receive services in community centers close to their homes whenever possible.
This will allow more community buy-in, family involvement, and ease of transition after treatment
4. Response to children in trouble should involve multi-system interventions with their families, and families should be involved in needs assessment and planning.
5. Programs and services should be strength-based and empower youth and families to succeed.
6. Programs and services should be evidence-based or have data showing effective outcomes. To achieve this accountability will require better baseline data and on-going data sharing as well as a commitment to data-based decision making.
7. All children and youth in the state should have equal opportunities for fairness, help and success without regard to gender, race or ethnicity, disability, geographic location, income level, or any other factor.
8. An effective juvenile justice system will require creative partnerships among state agencies, public and private schools, churches and faith-based organizations, local communities, the judicial system, and foundations.

An analysis of the Arkansas juvenile crime problems and juvenile justice needs reveals the need for systemic change to better serve the youth of the State of Arkansas. There is a greater increase in the number of Caucasian youth and females who are being arrested and adjudicated delinquent. Too many youths are being locked up in potentially damaging correctional facilities and other secure residential placements at a very high societal and human cost for minor, non-violent offenses. In many instances non-violent offenders are confined because juvenile court judges don't have an adequate array of community-based programs to offer them and their families. Existing services are stretched to the limit. The types of programs available in Arkansas to help youth in the community are limited, leaving judges with few alternatives to incarceration. In years past, minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system has been inordinately higher in four counties of the State, i.e., Jefferson, Crittenden, Pulaski and Sebastian. There are large populations of minorities in these four counties as well as statewide; however, the diversion rates for non-minorities demonstrate disproportionality in both diversions and sanctions.

In May 2008, national experts, in collaboration with DYS, released a jointly prepared report entitled, *Juvenile Justice Reform in Arkansas: Building a Better Future for Youth, Their Families, and the Community*. The report identified systemic problems, as well as operational ones, within the system that needed to be changed. The report also identified specific factors that contributed to the state's overreliance on institutional custody. These included:

1. System fragmentation and lack of coordination among DYS, service providers, and the courts;
2. Inadequate risk and needs assessments;
3. Too few community-based resources to provide individualized supports and intervention;

4. Lack of positive behavioral interventions in schools to reduce disciplinary referrals of minor offenses to juvenile courts;
5. Use of the state juvenile justice system to address the mental health and substance abuse needs of non-dangerous youth, needs that could be more effectively managed and better met with non-custodial interventions and supports;

- 6 Use of the delinquency system to serve the needs of “cross-over youth”, that is, those who have suffered abuse and neglect; and
7. Lack of fiscal incentives that favor use of community-based services over state commitments.

The items identified as requisite needs for the continued improvement of the juvenile justice system as listed in the 2015 Three Year Plan for the State of Arkansas remain consistent; however, the State will assure the active consultation with and participation of units of local government or combinations thereof in the development of a state plan which adequately considers the needs and requests of units of local government

- Partnering with stakeholders to develop a uniform means to capture diversions throughout the State;
- Additional training for juvenile officers, facility staff, the judiciary and community-based providers;
- Less dependence on residential placements;
- Intensive action plans to involve community stakeholders;
- Improved capacity building and restorative justice projects within communities;
- Delineation of needs and problems of juveniles entering the system and viable options to address those needs and assurance that consideration will be given to and that assistance will be available for approaches designed to strengthen the families of delinquent and other youth to prevent juvenile delinquency
- Identification of trends in the population served;
- Increased understanding of minority overrepresentation issues throughout the State of Arkansas;

- Production of information in manageable formats;
- Improvement of data collection processes;
- Improvement in the educational system within the Division;
- Meeting needs of the client with a gender specific approach, as well as, assurance that youth in the juvenile justice system are treated equitably based on gender, race, family income, and disability;
- Understanding juvenile crime patterns requires a multi-phase comprehensive assessment of risk and protective factors and the involvement of multiple agencies and professional disciplines; and
- Partnerships with law enforcement agencies, academies and school districts to gain knowledge of current trends and to develop a system of how to address each one.

provide placements for committed youth in “specialty” facilities. Services include sex offender treatment, psychiatric treatment, substance abuse treatment and therapeutic group homes.

The State of Arkansas is required by the federal government to have three targeted counties addressing Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) and follows the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s (OJJDP) mandate to address DMC. DYS currently coordinates with local DMC coalitions in Jefferson, Pulaski, Crittenden and Sebastian Counties.

DYS is working with the Division of Behavioral Health to implement several diversion pilot programs that will link juvenile judges to local treatment options for court-involved youth who have been diagnosed with a disability. Likewise, the Division is partnering with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to continue support for the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) sites currently in the state, as well as potential expansion to other sites.

From FY’ 2015-2017, DYS and the Arkansas Juvenile Justice Coalition (ACJJ) awarded over half a million dollars in federal monies via Title II and Juvenile Accountability Block Grants (JABG) to fund prevention and intervention programming. These encompass mental health services, gender- specific services, deinstitutionalization of status offenders, disproportionate minority contact, juvenile justice system improvement, law enforcement training, graduated sanctions, drug courts, interagency information-sharing, needs and risk assessments, restorative justice, recidivism reduction, and others. Over 30 programs received funding. The Division will provide sub-grantees training and technical assistance for FY’ 2018 to ensure program compliance and success.

b State Priority Juvenile Justice Needs/Problem Statement Narrative

Advocates responsible for overhauling the state's juvenile-justice system will focus on changing how children are sentenced, incarcerated and supported by community programs in a legislative proposal for 2019.

On April 27, 2018 members of the Arkansas Supreme Court Commission on Children, Youth and Families and the Youth Justice Reform Board -- the two groups merged last year -- voted to move forward with a "reform packet" intended to reach lawmakers next session.

The vote comes after years of discussion by the two groups about how best to serve Arkansas youths who find themselves in the juvenile-justice system. The effort began as an undercurrent years ago, but it's grown, and advocates have become increasingly vocal.

Arkansas still locks up more children than most states, when accounting for population, according to recent data. The trend is costly, with expenses running up to \$87,000 per child in a year, using 2017 state records -- roughly \$238 a day.

And because the state's court system is not standardized, the way children are punished for similar types of crimes depends on where they live and which judge they see.

"There have been a lot of conversations among who's been in juvenile justice," said Faulkner County Circuit Judge Troy Braswell. "We were finally tired of having the same old conversations.

"At the end of the day, everyone in the room wants the same thing," he continued. "We want kids to have opportunities, to be rehabilitated, to get back on the path. We don't want kids to come back into the system. Everyone understands the time is now."

Braswell led the Youth Justice Reform Board and now directs the joint panel's working group

that will oversee the legislative proposal.

In Faulkner County, Braswell emphasizes the idea of diversion -- meaning sending troubled youths to programs that can help them rather than placing them behind bars. Between 2015 and 2017, his court saw 47 percent fewer juvenile detentions. The youths who were locked up spent less time in jail, and reoffending dropped by a third.

Braswell says that the legislative proposal's "details need to be hammered out" and it's still too early to offer many specifics. Rather, joint panel members were deciding the set of principles that will guide how the legislative proposal is drafted.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson attended the meeting and expressed support for the panel's mission.

The panel approved the following concepts as it proceeds with drafting its legislative proposal:

- Juvenile sentencing is to be restructured by having court employees formally assess children before they're punished, which allows officials to identify contributing factors such as mental health, family history and drug abuse. More money will be directed to juvenile officers and data collection so the effort can have long-reaching effects.
- The juvenile-court system will be consistent throughout the state.
- Community-based programs that help youths after they leave lockup will receive more money to improve data collection efforts, deliver more effective services and work with courts and the state's Youth Services Division to reduce detention figures.
- Case management will be tailored to youths' individual needs and officials will develop short- and long-term plans to shift funding from "residential treatment" -- essentially placement at the state-run lockups -- to more cost-effective community programs.

The panel expects to cement more details in the coming months, said Rep. David Meeks, R-Conway, who belongs to the Supreme Court-appointed commission.

"You need to do the legwork before you get in the business of the actual session," Meeks said.

"When you put a bill out there, especially major packets of legislation, you want to run it with support and not have to keep going over details."

Bills can be pre-filed as early as mid-December. Meeks said a proposal should be ready by then, and he's anticipating support from other lawmakers.

"I think we all know there are some issues in the system that we need to work on," he said.

"These are our youths who deserve a chance in life."

As of 2015, Arkansas had higher rates of juvenile incarceration than all but one Southern state, according to an analysis of federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention data.

The state committed 451 youths, ages 11 to 19, in fiscal 2017, the year running between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.

During that time, 86 percent of Arkansas children in lockups had not committed violent offenses, according to state records. In the previous year, 91 percent were committed for nonviolent offenses. The national average hovered around 70 percent.

Many Arkansas children are incarcerated for reoffending -- 25 percent and 34 percent in the past two years, state records show.

There are other disparities, noted in the Youth Services Division's 2017 annual report. Jailed children more likely came from southeast Arkansas, where judges jailed more youths than those in other areas, including more populated urban centers, such as Little Rock. And nearly half of all juvenile confinements were black boys, yet they make up only about 20 percent of the state's total adolescent population.

Some advocates say that the approved principles don't properly address the state of conditions at existing juvenile-detention facilities.

For the past four years, inspectors from nonprofit Disability Rights Arkansas continued to find instances of neglect and abuse at the state's seven youth lockups. Reports from the watchdog group say that teens held there aren't receiving adequate schooling and therapy, have been subjected to the use of restraints when they're not needed and live in subpar conditions.

Funding also remains a significant concern. The agency's revenue has been stagnant for years.

The fiscal 2019 budget allotted \$27.6 million of the youth agency's \$49 million budget to state-run juvenile-detention facilities. Only \$16.9 million went to community services, which only partially funds programs that help kids re-entering society after serving their time.

Rank	PROBLEM STATEMENT NARRATIVE
1	<p>Youth in trouble in Arkansas are taken from their homes and communities and committed to state custody largely due to insufficient community-based service capacity. Judges who make the hard-day-to-day decisions about how best to redirect youth who break the law say they are too often required to place youth in the secure custody of the state because there is not an adequate array of alternative community-based service and supervision options. A key to reform and reducing reliance on commitments to state custody, therefore, has been the identification of service gaps and expansion of community-based service capacity. Other areas of system improvement include DMC and deinstitutionalization of status offenders. A harder look will have to be taken at all points of contact that a juvenile will encounter and how the system can be improved to reduce disproportionality and divert more low-risk youth who do not need to be imprisoned/incarcerated/confined.</p>
2	<p>Juveniles in the system come with a multitude of issues. Presently, Arkansas has just begun to collect data related to mental health. Using assessment instruments at various stages of the process, mental health concerns can be identified earlier and addressed more appropriately. Mental health concerns should</p>

	<p>be included in all aspects of prevention, early intervention and supervision areas.</p>
3	<p>The state of Arkansas acknowledges the need for additional training on delinquency prevention. The use of Training and Technical Assistance Requests will be a major component of the preparedness process for stakeholders to effectively deal with the target populations. In addition to this, the State as well as the SAG has agreed to implement training throughout the fiscal year to address areas such as Compliance Monitoring, Disproportionate Minority Contact and Graduated Sanctions just to name a few. This priority will serve a two-fold purpose: to educate those individuals with direct contact to this population and to limit the recidivism rate of the youth participating in the programming.</p>

d The State shall, to the extent practicable, give priority in funding to programs and activities that are based on rigorous, systematic and objective research that is scientifically based.

The State will review its plan and submit to the Administrator an analysis and evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs and activities carried out under the plan, any modifications, including the survey of state and local needs. This has been addressed in the Crime Data section and will be addressed in the annual progress report and DCTAT.

The State shall not continue to fund a program if the sub grant recipient fails, in 2 years, to demonstrate substantial success in meeting the goals specified in the original sub grant application

SCHOOL PROGRAMS (SCHOOL-BASED REFERRALS)

Goal:

Keep kids in school to increase opportunities for youth to graduate high school and avoid contact with the criminal/juvenile justice system.

Objectives

1. Reduce the number of youth in out of school suspensions due to zero tolerance.
2. Train School Resource Officers (SROs) in evidence-based models that provide better alternatives to handling youth with disruptive behavior in school settings as a means of curbing school arrests and expulsion which leads to unnecessary contact with the juvenile justice system.
3. Stop/reduce the school-to-prison pipeline scenario.
4. Partner with schools/school administrators to reverse the negative impact of zero-tolerance in schools
5. Support school-community partnerships with law enforcement and family support

agencies to formulate action plans to address gang membership and activity within schools and communities.

ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION

Goal

To provide an array of services that provide youth with varied alternatives to detention.

Objectives

1. Juvenile Detention Alternatives to Incarceration (JDAI) - A detention reform and juvenile justice system improvement initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. It uses data to demonstrate that moving low-risk youth from secure detention into community-based alternative programs creates positive public safety outcomes, minimizes detention over-crowding, and creates savings for taxpayers by reducing secure detention placements and the need for more expensive facilities.
2. Multisystem Therapy (MST) - An intensive family-based and community-based treatment program that focuses on addressing all environmental systems that impact chronic and violent juvenile offenders, i.e., their homes and families, schools, teachers, neighborhoods and friends.

4. Functional Family Therapy (FFT) - Helps troubled youth and their families to overcome delinquency, substance abuse, and violence. It is a short-term treatment strategy that is built on a foundation of respect of individuals, families and cultures, but that includes powerful treatment strategies that pave the way for motivating individuals and families to become more adaptive and successful in their own lives.
5. Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) - Provides youth and their families with intensive support in their homes, school and community through a wraparound advocacy model. Staff members meet with youth and family's multiple sessions at times most needed by the family, with an emphasis on safety and support. Activities with each youth and family vary, but are goal driven and typically include case management, crisis intervention services available 24/7, skill development, educational and vocational work. YAP specializes in working youth who are marginalized and at highest risk or currently in out-of-home placements.
6. Graduated Sanctions - An intervention in the criminal justice system by which offenders face harsher punishments each time they offend and are meant to reduce recidivism and rehabilitate offenders by addressing the underlying circumstances that lead to crime. It is often used with youth and is designed to teach them accountability for their actions.
7. Electronic (Ankle) Monitoring - A program that electronically monitors juvenile's presence his/her home to enable him/her to remain in the home.
8. Emergency Shelters/Out of Home Placement - Services include room and board in staff secure facility.

or

3) For the immediate return to the community for committed juveniles. Emergency shelter in Arkansas is limited to a maximum of sixty (60) days in any one six- month period. An order from Juvenile Court may supersede the stated time constraints.

9. Matrix Model - For youths and their families abusing or at risk of abusing illicit and prescription drugs and alcohol.

REENTRY AND AFTERCARE

Reentry

Goal

Develop and implement evidence-based and cost measurement tools to enable Arkansas' juvenile justice system to make informed decisions about resources and services for system involved youth.

Objectives

1. Implement and evaluate whether evidence-based decision-making and cost tools can improve juvenile justice outcomes and save localities money.
2. Conduct risk and needs assessments for system-involved youth and local service options, using validated instruments.
3. Work actively with the Structured *Program Evaluation Protocol* (SPEP) Team.

- 4 Reduce the number of low-risk/ high needs youth committed to DYS to cut costs associated with confinement.
- 5 Increase the number of effective programs in the targeted locale so youth can receive needed help.

Aftercare

Goals

To provide a seamless transition back into the community in which an out-of-home placed youth is successfully reintegrated into his/her home community.

Objectives

1. Ensure that a youth receives intensive prescribed intervention services/supervision while they are incarcerated during their reentrance back in to their community and while under supervision in the community.
2. To help youth make a safe and successful transition back into their home communities after their commitment period ends.
3. To provide necessary services to reduce recidivism and/or re-incarceration.
4. Ensure that the necessary collaborative arrangements have been made with community partners, including, but not limited to mental health and substance abuse providers, schools, workforce services, a mentor, and family/guardians to ensure successful delivery of services and supervision.

CO-OCCURRING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Goal

Expand and enhance community-based mental health and substance abuse services to sentenced juveniles upon reentry to their communities by implementing an evidence-based model.

Objectives

1. Expand mental health treatment and related reentry services to sentenced juveniles returning to the community.
2. Expand and enhance substance abuse treatment and related recovery and reentry services to sentenced juveniles returning to the community.
3. Increase the number of youth receiving mental health and substance abuse treatment in a community-based setting.
4. Enhance behavioral programs that include family counseling, academic, vocational, and employment training, anger management, relapse prevention, coping skills and detoxification.

MENTORING

Goal

Successfully match youth with mentors from the community and local college campuses after their release to help minimize re-incarceration/re-offending, strengthen collaborative relationships with key community stakeholders to support mentoring programs, and help youth learn to exhibit a positive change in their behavior.

Objectives

1. Establish/improve administration of mentoring programs for at-risk, underserved youth, including expansion of mentoring strategies and program design.
2. Enhance/improve the organizational capacity, system efficiency, and cost effectiveness of mentoring programs through training/technical assistance and other strategies. mentoring programs through training/technical assistance and other strategies.
3. Improve outcomes for at-risk youth in mentoring programs by establishing and strengthening collaborative community approaches.

VOCATIONAL/TRAINING/POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONPROGRAMS

Goal

Create opportunity for system involved and at-risk youth to participate in a broad range of vocational/career workplace skills to increase their readiness/certification for work and/or postsecondary education.

Objectives

1. Collaborate with the Department of Workforce Services to provide various career training services, such as Key Train, to youth identified as at-risk or system involved.

2 Collaborate with colleges and universities to provide greater visibility and financial assistance to at-risk or system involved youth

SEX OFFENDERPROGRAM

Goal

Provide more opportunities for courts to address the growing need for juvenile sexual offender assessment and treatment for juvenile offenders who have been perpetrators and their families.

Objectives

1. Expand services to include treatment for youth who are in the “victim-victimization cycle; and
2. Provide services to victims, non-offending parent(s), sibling(s), and other family members affected;

DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT (DMC)

Goal:

To continue a qualitative assessment of data regarding social and demographic factors that is contributing to DMC.

Objectives

1. Build momentum in engaging community stakeholders to collect data on DMC in their target area.
2. Assess the “whys” or the causes.
3. Examine and identify the contributing mechanisms at the identified contact points, including-examining, verifying, and collecting more data if needed.
4. Complete a feasibility study to include what is possible or what can be achieved.
5. Develop and identify appropriate intervention strategies.

GENDERSPECIFIC PROGRAMS

Goals

The expansion of appropriate services directed toward at-risk female non-offenders and delinquents to prevent entrance into or further penetration into the juvenile justice system.

Objective

1. Increase the sites where Peace Circles, Girls’ Circle and similar gender-specific, evidence-based programs are being utilized.
2. Add other evidence-based intervention programs that target female delinquents and at risk non-offenders.
3. Develop a mentoring program that is specifically tailored to delinquent and at-risk females utilizing female mentors.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

Goal

To expand and improve data collection activities related to juvenile delinquency in Arkansas. Arkansas does not have a uniform, state-wide data collection system on crime for juveniles. The Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC), Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and

DYS all collect juvenile data, but it is fragmented and does not provide a comprehensive picture of Arkansas' juvenile delinquency problem. DYS recently contracted with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) Criminal Justice Department to collect the appropriate DMC data to enable compilation, data analysis and trend projections. The vendor shall collect and aggregate data by county and statewide concerning youth age 10-17 that have contact with the juvenile justice system.

Objectives

1. Provide funding to expand collaborative efforts to expand the collection data from multiple agencies on juvenile crime, arrest and other risk factors
2. Build consensus among juvenile data collection entities in Arkansas to push for legislation to develop a state- wide data system.

e. Implementation (Activities and Services)

An analysis of the Arkansas juvenile crime problems and juvenile justice needs reveals mandatory multifaceted systemic change to better serve the youth of the state of Arkansas. In years past, minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system has been inordinately higher in three counties. The population of minorities is prevalent; however, the diversion rate for non-minorities is continually gaining momentum. To that end, the following items have been identified as requisite needs for the continued improvement of the juvenile justice system:

To delineate the needs and problems of juveniles entering the system; To describe trends in the population served;

To continue planning and developing strategies to eliminate minority overrepresentation issues in the four target counties of Crittenden, Sebastian, Jefferson, and Pulaski;

To produce information in manageable format;

To identify areas in which data collection improvements are needed; To serve the needs of males who are system involved;

Understand that juvenile crime patterns require a multi-phase comprehensive assessment of risk and protective factors and the involvement of multiple agencies and professional disciplines; and

Based on a comprehensive review of the community needs assessment, the risk factors for delinquency, and the juvenile arrest trends, and the Juvenile Justice Reform Effort currently underway in Arkansas, the following juvenile justice priorities are recognized.

The priority of the state of Arkansas is continued focus on enforcing the Four Core Requirements. DYS understands that although there have been tremendous improvements made in this area there is still a need to continue the work. We will appropriate the mandatory staff and funding toward ensuring that Arkansas remains in compliance with the OJJDP Act.

Funds will also be dispersed via a competitive grant process on a statewide basis for those jurisdictions that meet the funding threshold. This allows those units of local governments/neighborhood programs an opportunity to receive funding to assist with meeting specified needs in the community.

In addition to the Core requirements Arkansas will focus on three priority areas: School Programs, Alternatives to Detention, and Aftercare/Reentry. These areas will encompass many target areas OJJDP wants to see states tackle.

School Programs

School-based-referrals have increased exponentially. As school resource officer (SRO) programs continue to be widely implemented, there is concern that an increasing police presence at schools have “criminalized” student behavior by moving problematic students to the juvenile justice system rather than disciplining them at school

This quagmire has been a challenge to judges who have seen their numbers increase. A need for specialized training for SRO’s has been identified. DYS plans to partner with courts, schools,

and community providers to provide regional training for school districts and their officers to help decrease the number of school based referrals.

Funds will also be dispersed via a competitive grant process on a statewide basis for those jurisdictions that meet the funding threshold. This allows those units an opportunity to receive funding to assist with creating school based programming.

Aftercare/Reentry

Young people leaving juvenile justice residential placement face many concerns as they reenter the community, home, and school/work force. Reentry refers to those activities and tasks that prepare youth placed out-of-home for reentry into their families and communities.

Unfortunately, many youths return to unstable home settings, struggle to remain in school, and lack the skills needed for employment upon leaving secure care placement. Further, most of youth involved in the juvenile justice system have a mental health disorder, and support services in their home communities are hard to arrange until they are formally released.

This can cause a gap in services that negatively impacts the reentry process. To improve the odds of success for youth reentering the community, the justice system, related agencies, and communities must plan for what needs to occur for reentry when youth enter the juvenile justice system: “think exit at entry.” Therefore, coordination and collaboration between agencies and across services and supports are necessary at multiple phases of reentry.

The four main phases are the following: The entry phase: The moment the youth enters residential placement the placement phase: The time the youth is in the secure care facility

The transitional phase: The actual act of leaving the facility and reentering the community, which is immediately before and immediately after the date of exit

The community-based aftercare phase: Usually the 120-day (or longer) period after a youth returns to the community

Successful reentry programs and practices should ensure the delivery of prescribed services and supervision in the community. Specifically, “by fostering improved family relationships and functioning, reintegration into school, and mastery of independent life skills, youth build resiliency and positive development to divert them from delinquent and other problematic behaviors.

3. There are many factors that should be considered when planning for reentry. The literature confirms that successful reentry plans, services, and supports should address at least these five issues:

Family: What services and supports are needed to ensure family and home stability, skill development, and healing of damaged relationships?

Substance abuse: What are the services and supports that promote a reduction or cessation of substance use and/or abuse?

Peer association/friends: What services and supports need to be in place to promote positive use of leisure time, prevent gang involvement, and discourage association with peers engaged in

delinquent activities? Learn more about positive youth development.

School conflict and achievement: What services are in place to promote the transference of educational records and placement in the appropriate school settings that will support educational success and achievement?

Mental, behavioral, and physical health: What services and supports are in place to address mental health, social/behavioral concerns, and/or chronic health problems?

Mentors, Education, and Employment Opportunities

Research has demonstrated that reentry services and aftercare programs which connect youth with professional case managers, mentors, and education and/or employment opportunities can reduce recidivism.

4 Youth in residential settings should be provided with high quality, appropriate education programming that parallels that of mainstream public schools and holds youth to the same academic standards. In this way, youth eligible to return to school after release will be better prepared to persist and succeed in the community setting.

5 Additionally, research consistently shows that individuals who have jobs are less likely to engage in crime; however, youth exiting secure care and seeking employment often encounter obstacles.

6 To help youth develop the skills necessary for successful employment, juvenile justice facilities should offer high-quality vocational training and other employment supports including providing information about how to interview and behave appropriately in the workplace. Learn more about youth employment

Discuss the role of local governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders that will be coordinated by, and that will collaborate on, the offender reentry strategy of the applicant, and certification of the involvement of such agencies and organizations;

Provide extensive evidence of collaboration with state and local government agencies overseeing health, mental health, housing, child welfare, education, substance abuse, victims' services, employment services, and local law enforcement agencies;

Provide a description of the evidence-based methodology and outcome measures that will be used to evaluate the program and a discussion of how such measurements will provide a valid assessment of the impact of the program; and

Plan for the analysis of the statutory, regulatory, rules-based, and practice-based hurdles to reintegration of offenders into the community.

DYS has had several changes in divisional leadership since our reform efforts began. This has impacted the development of the reentry strategic plan. Under our current leadership, reentry has been deemed a priority and we have begun implementing some of the identified priorities.

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Moving forward the state will allocate funding for local programs to provide Reentry/Aftercare services in local communities. Programs and services have been identified and training will be administered to all staff and stakeholders who are vital to the process.

Alternatives to Detention

The Division of Youth Services (DYS) took the initiative to approach the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) about self-funding the Models for Change Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) and in 2013, JDAI was launched in Arkansas. Arkansas' objective is to work with AECF to implement JDAI to achieve JDAI's five basic objectives:

Arkansas have JDAI sites in two counties in northwest Arkansas, i.e., Washington and Benton Counties. These counties represent Judicial Districts 4 & 19 West, respectively. The Benton County and Washington County Juvenile Detention Center sites are considered as one site due to proximity. The state has recently added Pulaski County as a JDAI site. Pulaski County is the largest metropolitan area in the State of Arkansas. It is the SAG's hopes that the Arkansas legislature and Governor embrace JDAI as a means of decreasing incarceration of youth throughout Arkansas and reallocate cost saving revenue toward prevention programs.

The JDAI programs in Arkansas uses the RAI a risk assessment tool which is designed to reduce juvenile

incarceration and racial and ethnic disparities. The Pulaski County JDAI coalition recently visited model site in Santa Cruz, California. Previously, Washington and Benton Counties sent two separate teams to visit a JDAI “model” sites in Santa Cruz, CA and Multnomah County (Portland), OR. Washington and Benton Counties each have a site governance team of stakeholders (traditional and non- traditional), administrators and staff that have been established to support the process. A system assessment and a Detention Utilization Study (DUS) were completed for each county. Each county has developed a data collection tool and data which is to be reported on a quarterly basis implementing the JDAI Quarterly Reporting Spreadsheet. Arkansas is optimistic about the success of JDAI in Northwest Arkansas and Pulaski County and Arkansas is now providing resources to expand JDAI sites in the state.

Funds are dispersed via a competitive grant process on a statewide basis for those jurisdictions that meet the funding threshold. This will give the JDAI sites an opportunity to receive funding to assist with meeting specified needs/milestones of the initiative. The State of Arkansas plans to

Continue to develop and expand community-based programs that target and divert minority youths from secure detention and correctional facilities.

The SAG will continue to implement the strategy to incorporate and emphasize DMC activities into the Formula Grant Request for Proposal (RFA) process. The RFA was issued in April 2015 requesting proposals to address prevention, intervention, diversion and DMC with DMC being a priority, especially in the target counties. The Division is making preparation to issue the FY' 2017 RFA.

In addition, the Division of Youth Services and the SAG sees the need to continue to support legislation to create a uniform data collection system. To accomplish this task the Division of Youth Services and SAG will continue to establish relationships with the Arkansas Crime Information Center, Administrative Office of the Courts, and Council of Juvenile Court Judges. DYS uses Handel Technologies' Rite Track system which offers a software solution used by human services programs throughout county and state government organizations nationwide. It provides the primary means for thousands of caseworkers, administrators, and other professionals to manage their clients and caseloads. The software can meet the needs of a single program's basic case management and scale up to an organization-wide solution that can serve programs across multiple departments. Rite Track's intuitive interface provides a rich user experience through a secure internet connection on any Web browser. Rite Track's extensive library means that there is functionality for practically any data need within a program. Intake, person demographics, documents, notes, and reporting are just some of the core functionality included in a Rite Track solution. A typical Rite Track solution is made up of specific modules to serve the specific needs of the project. Perhaps one of the most powerful aspects of Rite Track is the way an organization can add additional solutions to an existing Rite Track solution as the needs expand.

Arkansas Coalition for Juvenile Justice Board (State Advisory Group)

As of: July 14, 2017

42 USC § 5633; A.C.A. § 9-28-1101	15-33:	Member:	Represents:	G:	Y:	S:	Term	Term Begin:	Term Expire:	Replace:
A: At least 1 locally elected official representing local government	1.	Wiley Branton	A	x			2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
	2.	Llyod Franklin	B				2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
B: representatives of law enforcement and juvenile justice agencies, including juvenile and family court judges, prosecutors, counsel for children and youth, and probation workers	3.	Belinda Cosgrove	B	x			1	7/13/2017	8/1/2018	New Position
	4.	Reginald Watson	C		x	x	1	7/13/2017	8/1/2018	New Position
C: representatives of public agencies concerned with delinquency prevention or treatment, such as welfare, social services, mental health, education, special education, recreation, and youth services	5.	David Scott Tanner	C	x			2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
	6.	Megon Bush	C	x			1	7/13/2017	8/1/2020	New Position
	7.	Kevin Hunt	D			x	1	7/13/2017	8/1/2018	New Position
D: representatives of private nonprofit organizations, including persons with a special focus on preserving and strengthening families, parent groups and parent self-help groups, youth development, delinquency prevention and treatment, neglected or dependent children, the quality of juvenile justice, education, and social services for children	8.	Luke Flesher	D				2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
	9.	Sharon Smith	E				2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
E: Volunteers who work with delinquents or potential delinquents	10.	Edward Holcomb	E			x	2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
	11.	Stephen Cuffman	E		x	x	1	7/13/2017	8/1/2020	New Position
	12.	Lonnie Watts	E				1	7/13/2017	8/1/2018	New Position
	13.	Haley Burks	E				2	8/16/2017	8/1/2020	Reappointed
	14.	Jazzmine Allen	E	x	x		2	1/3/2017	8/1/2020	Not indicated on Official Appointment

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As of: July 14, 2017

42 USC § 5633; A.C.A. § 9-28-1101	15-33:	Member:	Represents:	G:	Y:	S:	Term	Term Begin:	Term Expire:	Replace:
F: Youth workers involved with programs that are alternatives to incarceration, including programs providing organized recreation activities	15.	Regina Taylor	F				2	1/3/2017	8/1/2020	Not indicated on Official Appointment
	16.	Victor Pulido Rojas	F		x		2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
G: persons with special experience and competence in addressing problems related to school violence and vandalism and alternatives to suspension and expulsion	17.	Linda Walker	G				1	7/13/2017	8/1/2018	New Position
H: persons with special experience and competence in addressing problems related to learning disabilities, emotional difficulties, child abuse and neglect, and youth violence	18.	Donnell Hegler	H				2	7/13/2017	8/1/2019	Reappointed
	19.	LaTasha Woods	H				1	7/13/2017	8/1/2020	New Position
Totals:				5/19	4/19	4/19				
5/19 full-time government employees	42 USC § 5633 a majority of which members (including the chairperson) shall not be full-time employees of the Federal, State, or local government;									
4/19 under age 24	42 USC § 5633 at least one-fifth of which members shall be under the age of 24 at the time of appointment; and									
4/19 under jurisdiction of juvenile justice system	42 USC § 5633 at least 3 members who have been or are currently under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system;									

Performance Measures: Attachment “2”