

Juvenile Justice Advisory Council

2021-2023 Strategic Planning Priority Areas

Priority 1: Prevention and Intervention

Goal 1: Identify programs, both inside and outside of Iowa, to determine which are leading models.

- Objective A: Engage stakeholders including Area Education Agencies (AEA), schools, service providers (including mental health, substance abuse, behavioral health, residential), community members, and system youth to identify existing programs/services for children 6-10 years of age.
 - Specifically focus on programs working with youth that are system involved, including the programs of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Court-Appointed Advocates (CASA), YMCA/YWCA, Boys & Girls Club.
- Objective B: Identify leading programs in Iowa, Midwest, and nation.
 - Complete a service gap analysis in communities, across judicial districts.
 - Conduct program assessments to ensure that the right youth are being served by the right program at right time.
 - Ensure that any leading models considered include racial and gender equity, and utilize a trauma-informed approach.

Goal 2: Determine how to expand the successes of those programs identified as leading models, and assist with replicating effective programs in Iowa and across the country.

- Objective A: Explore approaches to expand effective programs in Iowa and to replicate successful programs from other states.
- Objective B: Using the service gap analysis, prioritize expansion/replication of programs in the areas a high need has been identified.

Goal 3: In collaboration with the DMC Sub-Committee, enhance and expand Iowa's Pre-Charge Diversion (PCD) program.

- Objective A: Work with communities and law enforcement agencies to replicate and implement the PCD programs in additional communities across Iowa.
- Objective B: Ensure a uniform process is utilized to guarantee all first-time, low-risk offenders are referred to PCD in communities where available.
- Objective C: Initiate a statewide process to collect PCD data for analysis.

Priority 2: Behavioral Health

Goal 1: Determine the extent of screening and assessment for mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and family functioning by the juvenile justice system.

- Objective A: Identify all screenings that are conducted by Juvenile Court Services (JCS) and by juvenile detention centers during the respective intake processes, including screenings for mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and family functioning.
- Objective B: Determine the assessments and referral services that are triggered by JCS screenings, and the availability and ease to access these services.
- Objective C: Collaborate with other state agencies, local communities, and committees addressing the mental health, substance abuse, and family system support of youth.

Goal 2: Collect data on mental health, substance abuse, and family support resource utilization to analyze ongoing needs for services and to measure success for system involved youth.

- Objective A: Determine the availability of mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and family functioning screening information within the Iowa Delinquency Assessment (IDA).
- Objective B: Identify screening tools for mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and family functioning.
- Objective C: Inventory the number of treatment beds for youth in the juvenile justice system for mental health, and substance abuse services, and the number of youths who receive treatment in the beds.
- Objective D: Partner with Juvenile Court Services to identify the number of youths who are referred to outpatient mental health services and who successfully complete services.
- Objective E: Identify the number of youths with identified mental health, substance abuse, or family system concerns that recidivate.
- Objective F: Determine the length of time youth with identified mental health, substance abuse, or family system concerns are involved with the juvenile justice system.
- Objective G: Ensure that all data collected includes analysis by gender and racial subgroups.

Priority 3: Transition of Youth

Goal 1: Extend the original jurisdiction of youth in the Juvenile Court System.

- Objective A: Study effective and efficient community-based and residential rehabilitative models to provide the appropriate level of care for moderate and high-risk juvenile offenders, up to the age of 21 years of age.
- Objective B: Estimate the need and cost for additional community-based and residential facilities for youth up to the age of 21 years of age.
- Objective C: Develop/support policy efforts including legislation to provide Juvenile Court Services with the authority and resources to continue providing services to youth already under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court up to the age of 21 years of age.
 - Legislation should include language that would exclude new criminal charges after age 18 from being included in the juvenile court.

Goal 2: Juvenile Court Maintains Exclusive Jurisdiction of All Juveniles.

- Objective A: Develop/support policy efforts including changes to legislation to eliminate automatically excluding youth ages 16 and 17 that are charged with a forcible felony and other certain felony offenses from the juvenile court.
- Objective B: Develop/support policy efforts including legislation that ensures the decision to waive youth to district court is a responsibility of juvenile court judges.
- Objective C: Develop/support policy efforts including legislation that youth are only waived to adult court for felony offenses.

Goal 3: Standardize Juvenile Reentry Best Practices.

- Objective A: Provide technical assistance and guidance to Juvenile Court Services to advance successful juvenile reentry by:
 - Enhancing and expanding family involvement with youth in congregate care to improve reentry results.
 - Enhancing and expanding support opportunities and services for youth transitioning from congregate care.

Priority 4: Gender Equity

Goal 1: Make the experiences and needs of girls who are disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system (i.e., black, native, and LGBTQ+ youth) central to all ongoing work.

- Objective A: JJAC/CJJP uses racial and gender equity lenses intentionally throughout all of its work.
 - Generate a tangible method for assuring implementation.
 - Use council funds and leverage additional funds to support gender and racial equity training.
 - All JJAC members and sub-committee members are trained in the use of gender and racial equity lenses.
 - Collect data about any training received.
- Objective B: Continue collaborative work with the DMC subcommittee.
 - Continue annual joint meeting.
 - Establish a joint project/activity/goal (e.g., school to court pipeline).
- Objective C: Complete revamp of cornerstone publication, “Healing Justice”.
 - Continue workgroup meetings.
 - Solicit reviews by outside subject matter experts.
- Objective D: Support the implementation of recommendations related to gender and race from the IDA validation report.

Goal 2: Establishment of a specialized setting(s) for serious, violent, and chronic offenders as well as systemic measures to reduce the need for such a setting as outlined in the recommendations of the “Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Female Offenders” report.

- Objective A: Select a small number of recommendations from the report to elevate.
 - Review report recommendations.
- Objective B: Engage legislative and/or other leadership champions interested in establishing this level of care.
 - Revisit talking points.
 - Make use of DHR Legislative Day on the Hill.

Goal 3: Fill the gaps and improve the quality in the continuum of care for girls in both residential and community-based service settings with well-defined options that allow for differential responses based on culture, risk level, development and needs.

- Objective A: Document what options/opportunities girls have compared to boys throughout the system to demonstrate any need for capacity building.
 - Use information from service inventory.
 - Assess and review service data side by side with males.
- Objective B: Explore ways to leverage DHS FFPSA work to fill service gaps for girls.
 - Identify any evidence-based services for JJ girls to replicate.
- Objective C: Explore ways to study low risk/high need girls under JJ supervision.

Priority 5: Disproportionate Minority Contact

Goal 1: Minimize system contact for low-risk youth of color by developing formal, statewide diversion opportunities through implementation of structures and policies at early juvenile justice system processing.

- Objective A: Develop statewide policy on pre-charge diversion.
 - Explore feasibility of developing/introducing/supporting legislation and/or policy around pre-charge diversion including impact of such changes in communities with minimal resources.
 - Provide support to individual communities on implementation of pre-charge diversion efforts.
 - Continue work on pre-charge diversion application (data collection).
 - Seek OJJDP technical assistance to advance a standardized model for pre-charge diversion.
- Objective B: Develop statewide policy to minimize the use of detention for technical violations of probation.
 - Continue to provide training and implementation oversight on use of detention screening tool (DST).
 - Seek OJJDP technical assistance to advance standardized practices for response to technical violations of probation.
 - Explore alternatives to detention for violations of probation.
- Objective C: Expand/amend utilization of the Iowa Delinquency Assessment (IDA) to use the contained information to understand and address system youth's strengths and challenges with regards to mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and family functioning.
 - Survey each judicial district to determine mental health/substance abuse resource utilization for system youth.
 - Collect aggregate data from identified facilities and service providers to determine the representation of youth of color and young women in those settings.
- Objective D: Implement recommendations related to race and gender from the IDA validation.
 - Advance recommendations to State Court Administration from ITFYW and DMC sub committees.
- Objective E: Advance DMC efforts and priorities through support of key legislative/policy initiatives.

- Support the recommendations (including legislative recommendations) contained in the Iowa Girls Justice Initiative (IGJI) “Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Female Offenders” report.
- Seek refinement and expansion of minority impact statement legislation to effect bills that impact minority overrepresentation.
- Support the concept of prohibiting racial profiling to address disparate treatment of minorities in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.
- Advance the recommendations contained in the “Racial Disparities Three Decision Points” report with regards to pre-charge diversion and waiver of youth to adult court.

Goal 2: Continue Collaboration with Iowa Task Force for Young Women to ensure appropriate systematic response and considerations for young women.

- Objective A: Finalize key priorities for Black young women.
 - Review/analyze data (school suspension, JCS, detention, deep end, etc.).
 - Study research-causes for Black females’ overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system.
- Objective B: Hold joint meeting(s) between DMC Sub and Iowa’s Task Force for Young Women (ITFYW).
 - Determine specific areas/activities for the two groups to collaborate.
 - Staff and subcommittee chairs will actively coordinate efforts.

Goal 3: Explore and effect change for deep-end youth of color including those youth under adult court supervision.

- Objective A: Utilize basic data format developed by ITFYW (and other data sets) to develop and write an action plan for boys of color eligible for placement at STS. (using eligibility for State Training School Placement (STS) according to Iowa Code §232.52(2) to define the cohort).
 - Collaborate with ITFYW for action plan development to include eligible young women of color.
- Objective B: Investigate and provide recommendations for youth under adult court supervision as referenced in the “Racial Disparities Three Decision Points” report.
 - Access federal technical assistance, as required, to further efforts.
- Objective C: Advance recommendations for supporting successful re-entry for youth from congregate care (group care, state training school, etc.) settings.

- Work with Juvenile Court Services and provider agencies to develop and advance recommendations for family engagement and case planning for the re-entry of youth from congregate care settings.
- Ensure specific strategies exist to address the needs for youth of color and their families.