

OHIO

Juvenile Justice Working Group

REPORT

September 2024

A holistic review of Ohio's juvenile justice system and recommendations for short-term and long-term system transformation.



Prepared for Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

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A Message from the Ohio Juvenile Justice Working Group Chair



Dear Fellow Ohioans,

In November 2023, Governor DeWine announced the formation of the Juvenile Justice Working Group (JJWG). In the months that followed, the JJWG heard from numerous juvenile justice professionals in Ohio, local and national subject-matter experts, Department of Youth Services (DYS) employees, and Union representatives who all provided and shared valuable knowledge, resources, and experiences. This accumulated information enabled the JJWG to thoroughly examine the juvenile justice system and corrections in Ohio and make recommendations to improve juvenile justice in Ohio.

As former director of both the Ohio Department of Public Safety and the Ohio Department of Youth Services, and the current Chair of the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, it was a great honor to be asked to chair the JJWG. The opportunity to lead such an esteemed group of professionals on a project of this magnitude, to impact families and youth who come in contact with the juvenile justice system, is most humbling.

As I reflect on the assiduous work of the JJWG members, I am reminded of their dedication to Ohioans who

interact with the juvenile justice system. I extend my appreciation for their commitment, passion, time, and suggestions – they were invaluable. I would like to also thank Director Amy Ast for her input and leadership throughout this process, and for being open to the suggestions and recommendations of the committee. She and her team supported our work throughout our deliberations.

Finally, I would like to thank Governor DeWine for his dedication to the youth of Ohio. Governor DeWine's focus on families and youth as one of Ohio's greatest assets is highly commendable.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Stickrath', written in a cursive style.

Tom Stickrath

Chair, Juvenile Justice Working Group
Chair, Commission on Accreditation
for Corrections

Report to the Governor

On November 13, 2023, Governor Mike DeWine announced the formation of the Ohio Juvenile Justice Working Group (JJWG) to examine the state of juvenile justice and corrections in Ohio. The JJWG was chaired by Tom Stickrath, former director for both the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) and the Ohio Department of Public Safety (DPS), and the current chair of the National Commission on Accreditation for Corrections. The JJWG was comprised of stakeholders with diverse views, experiences, and perspectives of the juvenile justice system in Ohio. Recognizing that the JJWG may recommend legislative change, Governor DeWine included four Ohio legislators as advisory members, two from each major political party.

MEETING

1

The group focused on a thorough, holistic review of juvenile justice operations throughout Ohio, including the Department of Youth Services, community corrections facilities (CCFs),¹ county juvenile detention Centers (JDCs),² and agencies' partnerships with county juvenile detention facilities.

The JJWG held ten meetings in total, either in-person or virtual. The content of the meetings allowed the JJWG to hear from subject matter experts, independent experts, staff, and those with lived experience. The presentations encompassed and reviewed a wide range of topics, including staff and youth safety, youth education including vocational and rehabilitative programming, reentry support, behavioral health and substance use services, and staffing levels, recruitment, retention, and training. The JJWG toured the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility to see first-hand operations. In addition, the JJWG accepted public comments and all meetings were made open to the public to ensure transparency.³

The meetings commenced on November 28, 2023 (virtual), with comments from the JJWG Chair Tom Stickrath, followed by presentations from Amy Ast, *Director of the Department of Youth Services* and Monica Kelson, M.S., *Franklin County Court Administrator*. Director Ast provided an overview of the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) including the different areas of juvenile justice in Ohio, population management, staffing and recruitment, the impact of low staffing on safety and security, juvenile reentry, and the Director's priorities. Ms. Kelson presented an overview of Franklin County Juvenile Intervention Center (JIC) including case statistics and indicators, recidivism rates, and a description of the Detention Screening Instrument (DSI) utilized at JIC. For organizational purposes, Chair Stickrath and the JJWG developed their mission and identified four (4) categories as pivotal topics to address.

- (1) Behavior Health and Cross System Collaboration
- (2) Staffing: Recruitment, Retention, and Training
- (3) Population Management: Intake, Recidivism, Reentry Facilities, and Locations
- (4) Operations and Safety for Staff and Youth.

MEETING

2

The second meeting, held on December 12, 2023, JJWG members convened at the Department of Public Safety in Columbus and invited comment and feedback from three unions, specifically: the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA); Service Employees International Union (SEIU) District 1199; and the State Council of Professional Educators (SCOPE). OCSEA declined to attend and provided no comments or feedback.⁴ The JJWG listened to testimony from SCOPE member teachers and SEIU member staff who shared their first-hand experiences of working within the juvenile justice system across the state.

MEETING

3

The third meeting, held on December 19, 2023 (virtual), the JJWG heard from various professionals who presented information about local and state experiences and outcomes within the juvenile justice system, national perspectives, and best practices. The presenters included Prosecutor Melissa Day, *Juvenile Division Chief, Stark County Prosecutor's Office* (also a member of the JJWG), who discussed issues with the slow investigative processes at DYS facilities, the overall slow judicial processes and how both, negatively affect juveniles, staff, and system functionality. Prosecutor Day also understood and discussed the fact that there are, from time-to-time, a number of youths that repeatedly engage in serious unruly conduct, such as assaults on staff. Prosecutor Day further noted that the inability to timely remove these youth from DYS causes several safety and security issues to DYS staff and youth. Nina Saloman, MEd, *Deputy Division Director, Corrections and Reentry from the Council of State Government (CSG) Justice Center*, noted that Ohio's issues surrounding juvenile justice are not unique and are occurring across the nation. She offered best practices in matching youth with the right services, the necessity of multi-system collaboration, and addressing staffing shortages. Thomas Woods, *Senior Associate, Juvenile Justice Strategy Group, Annie E. Casey Foundation* discussed recent trends in youth justice including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MEETING

4

The fourth meeting, held on January 9, 2024 (virtual), JJWG members heard from Maureen Corcoran, *Director of the Ohio Department of Medicaid*, who discussed a need for a system shift to provide intensive in-community services, out-of-home service, and lower intensity services all of which can ultimately help youth thrive. She suggested OhioRISE as the managed care program that can provide care coordination and support to youth who have complex and multi-system needs. Courtney Alcott, *Revenue Enhancement Administrator, Division of Community-Based Innovations and Solutions, Ohio Department of Youth Services* discussed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 and the mandated compliance by January 2025. Implementation of this will allow Medicaid coverage for youth while they are detained and pending disposition, increased community-based interventions to begin 30 to 45 days prior to release from DYS, utilization of CANS Assessments, OhioRISE enrollment, and linking juveniles to community services prior to release. Bob Stinson, *PSY.D., J.D., LICDC-CS, ABPP, Clinical and Forensic Psychological Expert with Stinson and Associates, Inc. and Forum Ohio, LLC*, discussed issues with staffing and emphasized safety as a necessity for both staff and youth. He also addressed the need for program fidelity and system collaboration to benefit the youth and suggested that facilities should ideally move to smaller models to allow for more rehabilitative and therapeutic framework. Habeebah Grimes, *Chief Executive Officer, Positive Education Program (PEP)* (also a member of the JJWG) discussed trauma-informed care, its relatedness to the Neurosequential Model, and utilization of healing centered practice and educational platforms such as PEP to benefit incarcerated youth.

MEETING

5

The fifth meeting, held on January 16, 2024 (virtual), JJWG members heard from Lorie Brusman, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor, Bowling Green State University, Department of Human Services - Criminal Justice Program*, and Paula Smith, Ph.D., *Associate Professor and Associate Director, University of Cincinnati-School of Criminal Justice*. Their presentation, "Considerations for Justice-Involved Youth in Secure Placements" included information surrounding recidivism, effective interventions including cognitive-behavioral strategies and trauma-informed treatment, how institutional culture and safety impacts youth and staff, and issues surrounding staff recruitment and retention. The second presentation "Ohio's Behavioral Health Juvenile Justice (BHJJ) Initiative: Making a Difference with Justice-

Involvement Youth” provided an overview of how BHJJ works and its processes, the services provided through BHJJ, and eligibility criteria. Both presenters from the *Begun Center for Violence Prevention Research and Education at the Jack, Joseph, and Morton School of Applied Sciences at Case Western Reserve University*, Jeff Kretschmar, Ph.D., Professor and Director and Dan Flannery, Ph.D., Research Associate Professor and Managing Director, shared research, implications, outcomes of BHJJ, and addressed gun violence amongst youth in terms of accessibility, availability, and lethality of youth carrying firearms.

MEETING

6

The sixth meeting, held on January 30, 2024 (virtual), JJWG members heard from Brooke M. Burns, Managing Counsel, Youth Defense Department, Office of the Ohio Public Defender, discussing youth crime statistics, the impact of low staff-to-youth ratios, the impact of over-incarceration, and advocated for smaller facilities, brief stays in confinement, family members being included in treatment, and effective interventions which all foster positive change for youth. Angela Chang, Director, Youth Defense Division, Hamilton County Public Defender, discussed trends on youth intakes, admissions, and commitments in Hamilton County and suggested recommendations to include committing more funding to front end, preventative programs and reentry support. Leah Winsberg, Esq., Senior Policy Attorney, Children’s Law Center, discussed the need for effective interventions that are developmentally informed as the key to supporting public safety and rehabilitating youth. She advocated for smaller, regional facilities with family and community engaged in treatment and for rigorous preventative treatment for better outcomes. Mujaddid Muhammad, CEO-Restored Citizen FAITH Foundation shared his lived experience as an incarcerated youth nearly 40 years ago and expressed the need for an understanding of the impact of trauma on youth, the impact of intergenerational trauma on families, and how trauma is the greatest silent epidemic in society. He advocated for the Credible Messengers model as a positive, engagement strategy to transform youth lives.

MEETING

7

The seventh meeting, held on February 8, 2024 (virtual), the JJWG heard from a variety of professionals regarding security threat groups (STG), interventions and reduction strategies, and gang membership in communities and institutional settings. Presenters included Jack Vicencio, Bureau Chief of Programs and Unit Management, Ohio Department of Youth Services, Ryan Smith, Bureau Chief of Behavioral Health Services, Ohio Department of Youth Services, Adam Watkins, Ph.D., Professor and MSCJ Coordinator, Bowling Green State University, Department of Human Services - Criminal Justice Program, Laron and Angela Douglas, reNOUNce deNOUNce Gang Intervention Program, and Mike Crispen, Chief of Police, City of Whitehall.

MEETING

8

The eighth meeting, held on February 20, 2024, JJWG members met at the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility. The JJWG heard from Travis B. Stillion, Executive Director, North Central Rehabilitation Center. Mr. Stillion discussed numerous aspects of how CCFs are operated, as well as many of the successes and challenges they experience. Following Mr. Stillion’s presentation the JJWG toured the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility and spoke informally with youth and staff.

MEETING

9

The ninth meeting, held on March 21, 2024, the JJWG members convened at the Department of Public Safety in Columbus to identify the main issues, suggest solutions, and discuss the implications and the viability of the offered solutions.

MEETING

10

The tenth meeting, held on April 16, 2024 (virtual), DYS Director Ast presented general updates at DYS, as well as updates on Interim Recommendations #1 and #2. Further, Chair Stickrath gave a general status update on the Report and Recommendations.

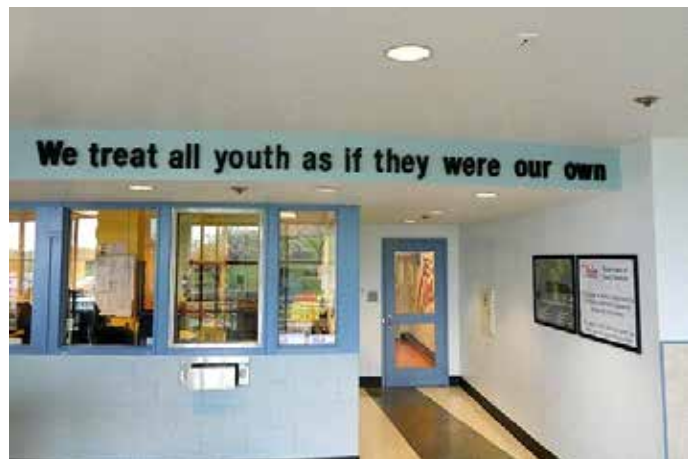
Interim Proposals/ Recommendations

Recognizing that certain external factors were ripe for potential change, and in order to move forward with some solutions, Chair Stickrath made two interim recommendations at the January 30, 2024, JJWG Meeting. Those proposals, together with circumstances surrounding each, are as follows:

Interim Proposal #1:

The Department of Youth Services should engage in a “System Transformation” with respect to the design and size of its correctional institutions, by replacing its current large facilities with numerous smaller facilities. DYS should work with appropriate state agencies, local officials, and community partners to develop a master plan for this transformation, addressing such factors as appropriate size, number, and design of the facilities, as well as siting, timelines, and costs (both capital and operational).

In light of the fact that budgeting and planning were already underway for the construction of a new DYS facility, coupled with the fact that certain changes would need to be made to fully and appropriately operationalize the “smaller is better” concept, Chair Stickrath set forth Interim Proposal #1 to the JJWG. Interim Proposal #1 was approved by the JJWG at the January 30, 2024, meeting.



Interim Proposal #2:

The Chair of the Juvenile Justice Working Group should work with the Directors of the Departments of Youth Services, Administrative Services, Budget and Management, and Public Safety, to develop a Request for Proposal for the hiring of an outside consultant(s) to review operations in the three DYS facilities and a sampling of local juvenile detention centers and community correctional facilities. The Chair shall ensure that appropriate local officials, such as juvenile court judges and detention center directors, are consulted with respect to the review of the local detention centers.

At this stage, the JJWG recognized that certain changes to the Ohio juvenile justice system would be called for in relation to aspects of DYS, CCFs, and JDCs in Ohio. The JJWG further recognized that to properly evaluate Ohio’s juvenile justice system, the feedback of industry professionals or consultants would be extremely valuable. Thus, Chair Stickrath advanced Interim Proposal #2 for consideration of the JJWG, which was approved. It was determined that six subject matters areas should be evaluated further, specifically: (1) use of force, (2) separation, (3) youth discipline and behavior management process, (4) behavioral health services, (5) staffing/ retention; and (6) training. Chair Stickrath coordinated with DYS, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS), the Office of Budget Management (OBM), and DPS to have a Request for Proposal (RFP) put together soliciting proposals from consultants. Additionally, Chair Stickrath reached out to county JDCs to solicit participation, as well as worked with DYS to identify CCFs to include in the analysis. The RFP was issued by DAS on June 28, 2024, one response was received on July 31 and is currently under evaluation.

Impact of Staffing Crisis on Juvenile Corrections and Treatment Methodology



Certain aspects of DYS policies, practices, and procedures are intentionally designed to operate differently than adult correctional and detention facilities. As research and brain science has evolved, it has informed and reformed juvenile justice policy and practice. Adolescent brains⁵ are very different than adult brains, much of which is related to the ongoing development of the prefrontal cortex in adolescent brains. Science and research have led to the recognition that more progress and positive results can be realized by intentionally operating juvenile systems differently, to include certain environmental design and operational factors that incorporate what works best with youth. Moreover, youth in DYS have significant histories of trauma – even more so post-Covid. Trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate interventions will achieve the best outcomes for youth and safety.⁶

DYS is different from adult corrections – facilities and environmental factors are structured and designed differently and there is more focus on education, special education, and individualized education programs. DYS emphasizes and prioritizes programming, development, treatment, providing age-appropriate and trauma-responsive behavioral health services; as well as keeping youth schedules structured and consistent. By design, youth specialists/juvenile corrections officers (JCO) are

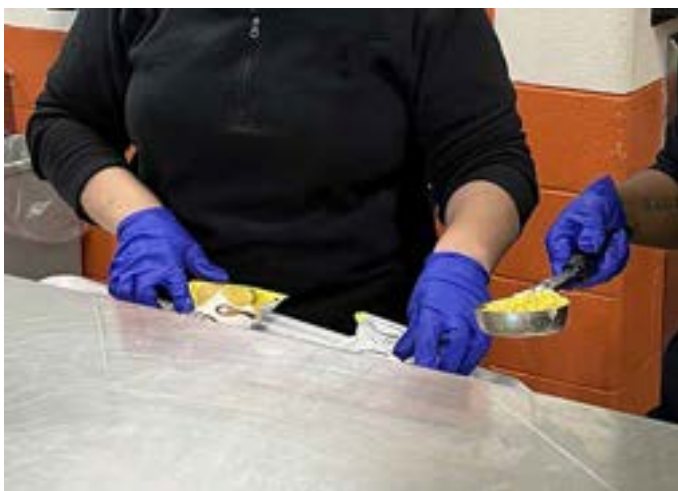
trained very differently than adult correctional officers, with a large portion of the job function being geared towards personal interaction with youth to build healthy relationships and mentoring. Approved use of force tactics to respond to violence and other emergent situations is very different at DYS than that of the design and practice in adult facilities. The consequences for youth after a violent or aggressive outbreak(s) are, by design, different than adult corrections. All these factors are informed by an understanding of adolescent development and trauma and together, with others, intentionally create very different experiences specifically structured and designed to habilitate youth. In sum, juvenile corrections are focused on improving Ohio's future by habilitating youth and empowering families – giving every youth an opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Corrections is suffering more than other market sectors from a lack of qualified professionals to fill necessary roles. Given the specialized skills required, as noted above, the labor shortage has significantly impacted juvenile corrections.

The current situation in corrections, especially juvenile corrections, is more of a labor crisis. According to The Council of State Governments (CSG):

“We are facing a staff hiring and retention crisis, not just in juvenile justice but probably in every industry you can think of, but in juvenile justice and criminal justice in particular, we are seeing a staff hiring crisis in our facilities, also with community based service providers . . . causing wait lists for programming for young people . . . causing backlogs in cases, at times causing . . . unsafe conditions for both young people and staff in facilities.”⁷

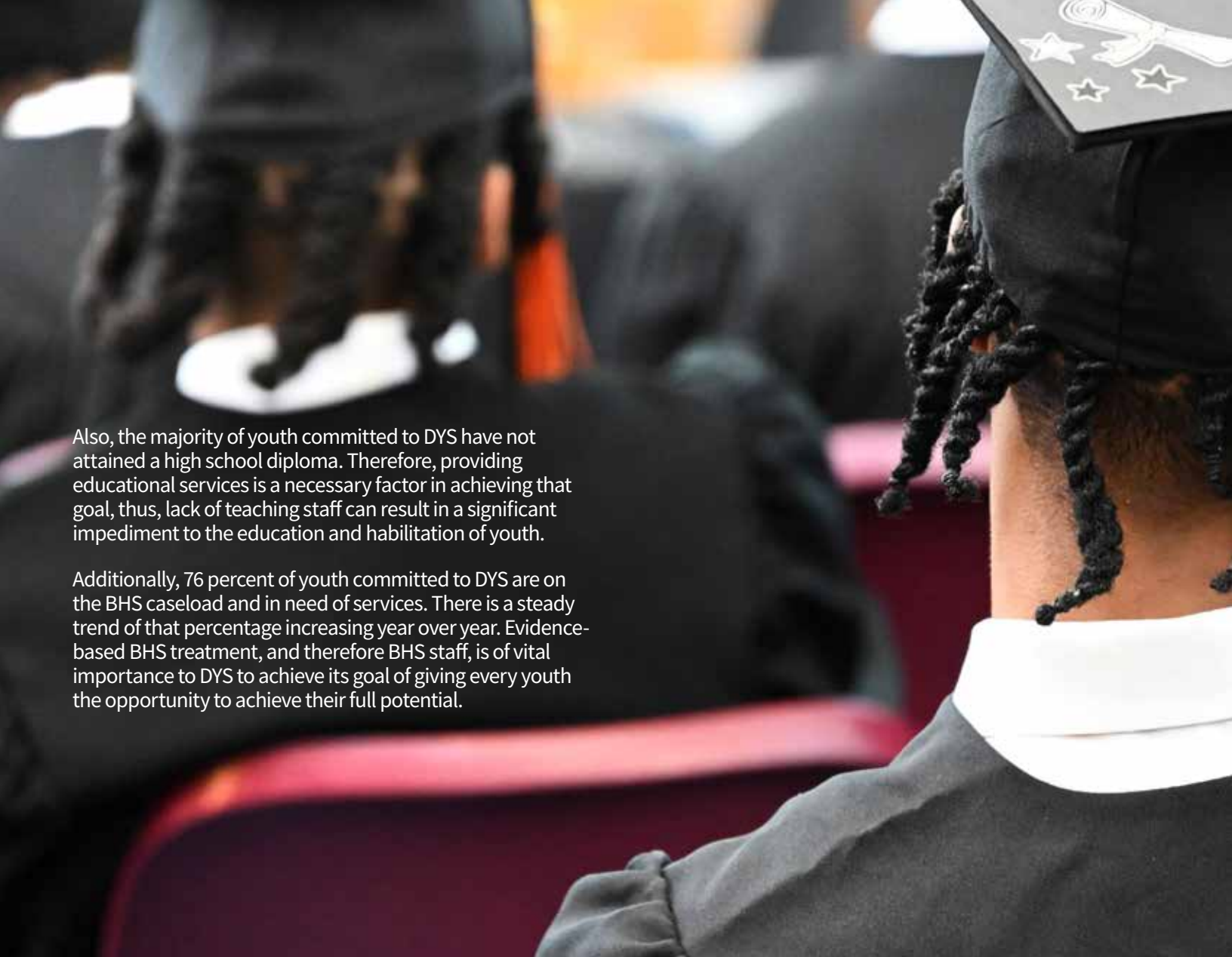
While certainly not isolated to Ohio, the labor crisis causes significant issues within DYS, CCFs and JDCs in Ohio. CSG (in partnership with the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University and the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute) surveyed over 200 juvenile justice agencies nationwide and found that “almost 90 percent of all agencies reported moderate or severe challenges with hiring and retaining front-line facility staff, with staff vacancy rates as high as 30 to 40 percent in some locals.”⁸



CSG noted they are “seeing a lot of gaps in the number and quantity of service providers that work with young people in the juvenile justice system, a lot of service providers closing down, a lack of capacity in terms of counselors and therapists, and in particular a general lack of behavioral health services for adolescents, both in the community and in residential facilities.”⁹ CSG also found there is more need for intensive behavioral health services and modalities for the juvenile population.¹⁰ In the current market and environment, resolving staffing issues that stem from the labor crisis is vital to solving many, if not most, of the existing problems in Ohio’s juvenile justice system. “The key here . . . is getting a stable staff who will stay with you for a while . . . you can get the best plan in the world, but if you can’t execute it with the staff who are going to be there day in, month in, year in to do that, you are going to be chasing your tail forever.”¹¹



Similarly, DYS is experiencing across the board complications because of the current staffing crisis. Based on the nature and function of the juvenile system, certain key positions have a greater impact on facilities, specifically: JCOs, teachers, and behavioral health providers. Lack of adequate JCO staffing can result in youth being separated/secluded for safety and security reasons as well as to maintain compliance with certain American Correctional Association (ACA) and Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards. This can result in youth being idle, not being able to engage in activities, doing schoolwork in their rooms, having less time with staff that also serve as mentors, and exacerbate their trauma among other concerns. These impacts in turn often lead to more disruption and violence in the facility.



Also, the majority of youth committed to DYS have not attained a high school diploma. Therefore, providing educational services is a necessary factor in achieving that goal, thus, lack of teaching staff can result in a significant impediment to the education and habilitation of youth.

Additionally, 76 percent of youth committed to DYS are on the BHS caseload and in need of services. There is a steady trend of that percentage increasing year over year. Evidence-based BHS treatment, and therefore BHS staff, is of vital importance to DYS to achieve its goal of giving every youth the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The JJWG recognizes that DYS has taken multiple steps to increase staffing levels. In order to deal with the transition out of COVID restrictions as well as the constricting labor market, both of which are significant factors contributing to the labor crisis, DYS has developed and implemented numerous programs, incentives, and initiatives to respond to the staffing crisis. DYS has worked to apply culture change to improve both recruitment and retention. It has engaged in many forms of recruitment efforts drawing upon partnerships from Ohio's colleges and universities, sister agencies in joint job fairs, local media, and internally by implementing steps to improve the organizational culture. In addition, DYS has implemented core wage increases for essential job classifications and offered hiring and retention incentives as well as sign-on bonuses.

In addition, DYS has focused on staff wellness and made investments in staff retention. Some of those include engaging Aurrera Health Group for a readiness assessment for a complete transformation to trauma-responsive practice at DYS – involving a full review of policy and interviews with more than 200 DYS personnel to develop recommendations, launching a Trauma-Certified Canine Program to reduce staff stress, deploying wellness rooms for staff at all sites, and implementing a multip-tier program from stress management and combatting correctional fatigue. To ensure that it was providing the most effective tools for staff to balance work and life, DYS submitted its policies and protocols for review by Mental Health America – DYS was conferred with their Gold Bell Seal for a mentally healthy workplace in 2023 and was again recognized with the Gold Bell Seal in 2024.

Recognizing that training and continuous improvement are essential to retention, DYS appointed a new Training Academy Program Director. After evaluating outputs and outcomes, the DYS Training Academy began upskilling the training and development staff in preparation for a new approach to training (e.g. implementing Kirkpatrick methods). With new skills established within the training team, the Training Academy has begun working towards increased retention on three fronts:

- (1) converting the pre-service model from lecture style to a learner-centered model based on human interaction and practice;
- (2) working across divisions to set, train, and evaluate standards for middle-manager development for more effective leadership; and
- (3) reimagining on-the-job training to better support new staff in their transition to the challenging work of juvenile corrections. Nevertheless, more work remains to be done.

Recently, DYS was one of only eight jurisdictions/entities in the U.S. invited to engage in the 2024 Reimagining Youth Justice Workforce Innovation Network (Innovation Network) orchestrated by the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy (CJJR), and the University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI). This initiative is designed to support youth justice system officials and partners to develop, study, and share strategies aimed at addressing the field's current staffing challenges, including strategies designed to fundamentally transform systematic structures, policies, practices and approaches.¹² This program runs from April 2024 to April 2025, and DYS will be involved in developing and implementing an action plan to improve system-wide staffing and hiring retention initiatives.¹³

The invitation for Ohio DYS to participate in the Innovation Network demonstrates that Ohio remains a national leader in juvenile justice and will play an important role in addressing the current staffing crisis. For decades, Ohio DYS has been a national leader in juvenile justice reform dating back to its pilot program and leadership role in the Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors (RECLAIM) Initiative, which continues to fund and encourage juvenile courts to divert appropriate youth from DYS to alternative placements.¹⁴ DYS' national leadership continued with its partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) and supported DYS' reform efforts and commitment to a community-based service delivery system.¹⁵ DYS' leadership in the field of juvenile justice is also reflected in the work done and funding provided in connection with the BHJJ, which is a cohort of evidence-based programs designed to identify and safely divert justice-involved youth with mental health

and substance abuse disorders into community-based treatment.

To further support remedying staffing crisis and address safety concerns, on January 30, 2024, the JJWG advanced and approved Interim Proposals #1 and #2. Interim Proposal #1, recommending a "system transformation," was proposed to aid in the staffing crisis, and notably has the positive benefits of the "smaller is better" strategy by improving safety for youth and staff overall, which is supported by credible research. JJWG Interim Proposal #2 recommending the hiring of an outside consultant(s) to review operations at DYS facilities and a sampling of local JDCs and CCFs was proposed, in large part, to look for new and innovative solutions to the current and ongoing staffing crisis. The JJWG is hopeful that an expert evaluation will yield assistance, advice, and additional solutions from consultants that are experts in this field.

One of the primary purposes of the JJWG is to address safety and security concerns facing staff and youth in Ohio's juvenile justice system. We cannot over emphasize the negative impact that the current staffing crisis has on the juvenile justice system's ability to safeguard staff and youth and to ensure effective habilitation throughout this state. The JJWG recognizes that there is no single solution to this problem, and certainly no overnight solution. Likewise, there is no clear list of multiple solutions that will solve this problem. Nevertheless, it is a real and significant problem that we, and other juvenile justice professionals throughout Ohio, must remain diligent to identify and implement viable solutions.

The JJWG is optimistic that several innovative solutions DYS is currently implementing, including the Innovation Network, will result in additional assistance in mitigating the staffing crisis. JJWG Interim Proposals #1 and #2 are not only designed to aid in addressing staffing and safety issues, but also consistent with evidence-based research designed to make the juvenile justice system better suited to achieve the goal of rehabilitating youth. While the majority of the other recommendations advanced by JJWG may not specifically mention the staffing crisis, many of those recommendations were designed and advanced to address the crisis, both directly and indirectly. The JJWG is optimistic that initiatives currently being implemented by DYS, the expert analysis recommended by the JJWG in Interim Proposal #2 and the several other recommendations advanced by the JJWG, will lead to solutions that considerably mitigate the issues related to the current staffing crisis and related safety concerns. We hope that these endeavors will lead to staffing solutions, better enable Ohio's juvenile justice system to rehabilitate youth, and establish more positive environments to attract and retain qualified juvenile justice professionals in order to realize both DYS' mission "to improve Ohio's future by rehabilitating youth and empowering families and communities" and the vision of the agency "a safer Ohio: one youth, one family, and one community at a time."¹⁶

Recommendations

INTERIM RECOMMENDATION 1

The Department of Youth Services (DYS) should engage in a “System Transformation” with respect to the design and size of its correctional institutions, by replacing its current large facilities with numerous smaller facilities. DYS should work with appropriate state agencies, local officials, and community partners to develop a master plan for this transformation, addressing such factors as appropriate size, number, and design of the facilities, as well as siting, timelines, and costs (both capital and operational).

Interim Recommendation #1 was proposed and approved at the January 30, 2024, JJWG meeting.

INTERIM RECOMMENDATION 2

The Chair of the Juvenile Justice Working Group should work with the Directors of the Departments of Youth Services, Administrative Services, Budget and Management, and Public Safety, to develop a Request for Proposal for the hiring of an outside consultant(s) to review operations in the three DYS facilities and a sampling of JDCs and CCFs. The Chair shall ensure that appropriate local officials, such as juvenile court judges and detention center directors, are consulted with respect to the review of the local detention centers.

Interim Recommendation #2 was proposed and approved at the January 30, 2024, JJWG meeting.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Approved January 30, 2024, by the JJWG, Interim Proposal #1 provides in part, “[t]he Department of Youth Services should engage in a ‘System Transformation’ with respect to the design and size of its correctional institutions, by replacing its current large facilities with numerous smaller facilities.” The JJWG further recommends that DYS consider facilities that allow for specialized housing units (or areas) to better control/manage violent/assaultive youth. Specialized units/areas could be based on a variety of factors, such as: age, developmental maturity, physical size, nature of court ordered treatment, and intake assessments of youth.

The JJWG’s recommendation for DYS to engage in a “System Transformation” with respect to the design and size of its facilities is based on significant research demonstrating the lack of effectiveness of large congregate-care juvenile facilities and the programmatic, economic, and systemwide advantages of small, regional/ decentralizing youth correctional facilities.¹⁷ “Leading authorities point to the advantages of small, community-based facilities for . . . juvenile offenders who require a secure, structured setting.”¹⁸ Evidence further supports “a series of key characteristics . . . that define a best-practice, theoretical facility model: small-scale, locally sited, and integrated with the surrounding community, designed to promote relational and differentiated security, and comprising therapeutic design characteristics.”¹⁹ The “size and social networks” of facilities have a “profound effect” on the everyday life of residents. Research evaluating large adult prisons in California compared to much smaller facilities in England and Wales found smaller congregate facilities allow officials to govern populations more easily as a result of the following factors: (1) reduced risk that large groups will challenge officials’ authority and control; (2) less crowded conditions allow officials to more easily observe interactions; (3) smaller populations afford more opportunities to develop respectful relationships; and (4) smaller facilities tend to have less bureaucratic hierarchy – leading to greater responsiveness to the needs of their population.²⁰

“Smaller facilities” have “programmatically advantages that are generally missing from large congregate-care facilities.”²¹ Smaller facilities are generally connected to local communities, include community partners, and provide a more comprehensive prevention, sanction and treatment model.²² They are typically in locations closer to home, thus allowing engagement in ongoing intensive family involvement and intervention activities and offering enhanced opportunities for independent living upon discharge.²³ Smaller facilities “are more likely to be rooted in local values, engender community support and involvement, and reflect the needs of local jurisdictions.”²⁴

Simply committing youth to smaller facilities can cut down on the length of juvenile sentences. Many youth are committed to DYS for low-level, non-violent felonies with relatively short sentences but engage in conduct while serving that sentence which adds significant time to their length of stay at DYS, either through the addition of institutional time or through additional criminal charges/adjudications. Committing youth to smaller facilities for low-level non-violent offenses will aid in avoiding situations resulting in youth receiving additional time on their sentence due to incidents that occur while they are in a large congregate juvenile detention facility environment.

Research indicates that smaller facilities improve relationships between youth and staff. “A key factor for healthy development is the ‘capacity, ability, and opportunity to build relationships with caring adults.’”²⁵ This setting allows facility staff to spend more time with youth in small groups/settings, allowing them to forge personal bonds with facility staff, mentors, and other caring adults in the community.²⁶ Additionally, staff in smaller facilities report more positive relationships with senior officials and management as compared to medium and large facilities due to more efficient processes of smaller operations and the fewer number of staff overall.²⁷ Staff generally report enhanced job satisfaction, reduced stress, and increased safety.²⁸ Moreover, evidence suggests that separation/seclusion time for youth in smaller facilities is less prevalent.²⁹

The JJWG heard testimony firsthand from industry professionals discussing the lack of effectiveness of large congregate-care juvenile facilities compared to the programmatic, economic, and systemwide advantages of small, regional/decentralizing youth correctional facilities.³⁰ Dr. Bob Stinson, Psy.D., J.D., LICDC-CS, ABPP, Managing Partner at Forum Ohio, summed up this concept in his testimony as follows: “big = bad; small = safer.”³¹ The JJWG received information and testimony from numerous expert speakers regarding the need for a system transformation and the benefits of smaller facilities.³² Moreover, the JJWG received recommendations from working group members and third parties advocating for the smaller-is-better concept.³³

In addition to improving habilitation of youth, research suggests that smaller facilities can be economically beneficial. Missouri, which operationalized the smaller-is-better concept, experienced a per diem for secure care in a state-operated facility of \$307.66 in fiscal year (FY) 2023. This equates to costs of 48 percent less when compared to Ohio’s FY 2023 per diem of \$592.10.³⁴ Though Ohio’s statutes and cost of living are on a different scale than Missouri’s, both have a similar overall population count.

In 2003, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) established national standards for correctional institutions, including minimum staffing ratios. DYS struggled to maintain those staffing ratios for years. The COVID-19 pandemic, together with a national industry labor crisis, has exacerbated this issue. Ohio’s three juvenile correctional facilities were each designed and constructed before PREA. Smaller, modern facilities should, from inception, be developed for optimized staffing levels to maximize DYS’s capacity to treat delinquency and improve youth citizenship and public safety after release. DYS has been in the planning stages to replace its outdated facilities. The JJWG recommends that DYS begin implementing the smaller-is-better concept. Further, the JJWG recommends that DYS engage in systematic, long-term planning to move the entire DYS juvenile system to align with the smaller-is-better concept. This alignment should be informed by the expert review to ensure expeditious implementation of recommendations. Upon the receipt of the consultant’s recommendations, a timeline for completion will be established.

RECOMMENDATION

4

The JJWG recommends that relevant state agencies develop a coordinated master plan to enhance efficiency and enable better outcomes for youth. The JJWG recommends the master plan include, but not be limited to, facility site selections, grant requests, and continuity of services.

To ensure that DYS’s systemwide transformation is effective and orderly, coordination and planning with other relevant state agencies to develop a master plan designed to achieve better overall outcomes for Ohio youth is essential. Agencies that should contribute to a statewide youth wellness master plan development process include but are not limited to the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY), Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

(ODJFS), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS), Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), including ODM’s Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence (OhioRISE) program. Because the master plan should focus broadly on the wellbeing of all youth and not exclusively on justice-involved youth, coordination of the master plan should be led by DCY.

RECOMMENDATION

5

The JJWG recommends that regular monthly meetings be convened with appropriate Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) investigator(s) and the relevant facility superintendent (or the superintendent’s designee) to discuss the status of open cases and active investigations of youth at DYS facilities.

OSHP investigates all crimes that occur on state property, including in DYS facilities. DYS and OSHP currently convene quarterly meetings with OSHP supervisory staff and the DYS chief inspector, but it is important for the superintendents of DYS facilities to also have knowledge of the status of such cases and for DYS to be responsive to OSHP in ongoing investigations.

RECOMMENDATION

6

The JJWG recommends the Ohio General Assembly approve new funding in the DYS operating budget for use by county prosecutors who have DYS facilities in their jurisdictions (Cuyahoga, Pickaway, and Stark) to assist with administrative resources related to felony offenses that occur in DYS facilities.

County prosecutors have a statutory obligation to prosecute, on behalf of the state, all controversies in which the state is a party that occur in their respective jurisdiction/county.³⁵ Thus, the prosecutor in counties where DYS facilities are located has the obligation to ascertain whether individuals have committed illegal/criminal acts, and if so, properly prosecute such violations. The JJWG recognizes that this additional caseload taxes local prosecutor budgets to an extent not demonstrated by other juvenile justice partners. Augmenting prosecutor funding will better equip them to handle the additional caseload, provide staff education, staff training specific to juvenile corrections cases, and quickly respond to emergent situations in

DYS facilities. The additional DYS funding should be objectively tied to the additional burdens to individual county prosecutors and other potential impacted agencies should review any economic impact that may be addressed in their respective operating budgets.

RECOMMENDATION

7

The JJWG recommends that the Ohio General Assembly enact legislation to increase the minimum age for youth commitments to DYS from 10 years of age to 14 years of age.

On May 1, 2024, DYS had 822 youth either on its campuses, in its alternative placements, or under its community supervision. Of these youth, two were admitted to DYS before their 13th birthday, accounting for 0.24 percent of DYS population. An additional 14 youth were admitted at the age of 13, accounting for 1.7 percent of the population. Thus, 98.05 percent of the DYS population is 14 years of age or older. Further, as of May 1, 2024, the average age of youth on DYS campuses or in its alternative placements was 17 years and 8 months, and the average age of youth on DYS parole was 18 years and 7 months.

Experts suggest that “the younger the kids are generally the worse they do in a secure congregate environment.”³⁶ Children between the ages of 10 and 13 are different in many respects from the vast majority of the DYS population. They are not only physically smaller than their older peers, but they cognitively receive and process information much differently than older youth. Brain research indicates that they are also much less mature emotionally and developmentally overall. This raises several concerns with placing children 13 and under at DYS. The physical and cognitive developmental disparities with older youth create an increased risk of physical harm and trauma to children 13 and under when committed to a DYS facility. Attracting and retaining specialized staff equipped to effectively educate, treat, and habilitate children of this young age further exacerbates the staffing crisis. The conclusion of the JJWG is that better alternate options exist, such as alternate placements, to support children ages 13 and under.

RECOMMENDATION

8

The JJWG recommends the Ohio General Assembly enact legislation to allow juvenile judges to use their discretion when sentencing youth adjudicated of gun specifications.

Currently, juvenile judges are required to issue mandatory terms of confinement for youth who are adjudicated on gun specifications, which removes the ability for local judges to determine the duration of a youth's confinement on a case-by-case basis.³⁷ Where incarceration is deemed necessary for an Ohio youth, the JJWG recommends that judges be given flexibility to issue commitment lengths that do not exceed a youth's point of "maximum benefit," or, as the JJWG has heard it described, the "sweet spot."³⁸

At the December 19, 2024, JJWG meeting, experts indicated there is a "sweet spot" in terms of the amount of juvenile incarceration time needed to achieve the maximum benefit. "Too short of a stay, too quick of an exposure, does not provide enough of an opportunity for the kids to connect with adults and connect to the services and the programs that are available."³⁹ However, "feeling like they are going to be there for a long, long time also kind of has an alienating effect."⁴⁰ Data indicates that the "sweet spot" for youth who are committed to state custody is somewhere between 6 and 12 months.⁴¹

At the January 30, 2024, JJWG meeting, additional details of the "maximum benefit" principle and the impact of over-incarceration for youth were discussed,⁴² citing research indicating that "low risk and moderate risk kids actually see an increase of recidivism and offending when they are placed into the deep end of the system."⁴³ Over incarceration leads to numerous negative outcomes, and several examples were provided to the working group:

- Recidivism increases for youth that spend more than 6 months incarcerated.⁴⁴
- The Sentencing Project found, in a 2020 study funded by the Anne E. Casey Foundation, Inc., that incarcerated youth are 33 percent more likely to commit another felony, or re-offend, versus youth that are kept in the community or kept close to home.⁴⁵
- Incarcerated youth are less likely to graduate from high school, and incarceration increases youth trauma.⁴⁶
- A 2013 Ohio study evaluating "The Impact of Length of Stay in a Custodial Setting on Recidivism" revealed that the likelihood for reincarceration for a new crime increased steadily the longer the child remains incarcerated on an initial offense.⁴⁷

The Children's Law Center provided similar information and statistics in its presentation to the JJWG⁴⁸ and specifically recommended legislation to "eliminate or significantly reduce mandatory specification time."⁴⁹

Research shows that youth have tremendous capacity to grow and mature out of offending behaviors, and late adolescents (ages 18–21) are remarkably resilient, with developing brains that are poised for positive learning through interventions and rehabilitative services.⁵⁰ For youth, the time of incarceration spans years when their brains are still developing and, among other things, encompasses the time in their life where youth learn to interact in society and become good citizens. Removing youth from the community too long has the effect of stripping youth from those opportunities and requiring youth to miss developmental milestones.

The JJWG believes that eliminating mandatory gun specifications for youth and giving more flexibility to juvenile judges who have the most relevant facts and information on each case will lead to better outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

9

The JJWG recommends the Ohio General Assembly enact legislation, similar to what is already in effect in the adult system, prohibiting first-time non-violent fifth-degree (F-5) and/or fourth-degree (F-4) felony offense(s) from being placed at a DYS state facility. The JJWG recommends that out of home placement for these low-level offenses be avoided whenever possible. To the extent that juvenile judges deem an out of home placement necessary for such offenses, juvenile judges should use their discretion to place youth in an alternative placement, such as a CCF.

Evidence-based expert opinions presented to the JJWG support the position⁵¹ that the three primary DYS facilities are better suited for more serious (higher felony level) commitments, while out of home placement should be avoided for low-level non-violent offenses. Interested parties spoke to the JJWG arguing for eliminating incarceration of low-level felony offenders because "research shows that low-risk youth who are incarcerated are at increased risk of recidivism when compared to peers who were system involved but not confined."⁵² The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center argued for "providing restrictions around the use of detention and out of home placement for certain offenses"⁵³ suggesting that "out of home placements should only be used for public safety reasons"⁵⁴ and "as a last resort."⁵⁵

The JJWG recommendation on this issue is analogous to the voluntary Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison (TCAP) that was enacted by the General Assembly several years ago and is applicable in the adult system.⁵⁶ TCAP is intended to “effectively supervise, treat and hold accountable low-level, non-violent offenders, while safely reducing Ohio’s prison population.”⁵⁷ Pursuant to this legislation, “offenders who are sentenced to a prison term of ≤ 12 months cannot be sent to prison and instead must serve their sentence locally”⁵⁸ unless certain factors are present.⁵⁹ The sentencing scheme also restricts a court from sending an offender to a lengthy prison term should they violate the terms of community control.⁶⁰

The JJWG agrees that non-violent low-level felony offenders should not be committed to an out of home placement, except in situations that raise public safety concerns or in other exceptional circumstances. In extraordinary circumstances in which an out of home placement is appropriate for low-level non-violent felony offenses, CCFs can better tailor requisite youth supports,⁶¹ which can also minimize the risk of sentence enhancements for low-risk youth serving a sentence. CCFs are smaller facilities which typically result in more specialized and personalized treatment and care, often affording more consistent staffing ratios and generally resulting in more youth contact with staff and less unsupervised time. A lower number of youths serviced at CCFs, presents opportunities to provide a more comprehensive program schedule as well as less youth idleness. For example, it is easier to keep youth occupied with more structured activities and individualized treatment options. Additionally, CCFs can, and often do, partner with local providers to augment their services. CCFs can provide more specialized treatment, such as anger management, substance use, trauma related treatment, problematic sexual behavior treatment, victim awareness, and other specific treatments. Often, youth can be placed at a CCF that is closer to home, which allows for more visitation/interaction with family as well as enabling more effective family-involved treatment. Another advantage of CCFs is, due to the smaller environment, gang activity can be more easily identified and properly addressed. It is common for CCFs to have very little or even no gang activity. Notably, the smaller environment in CCFs creates an experience that is more like a community than a larger JCF. This also improves the likelihood of a successful transition back into the community when a youth’s commitment has come to an end.

The JJWG understands full information related to value-added benefits that can be realized by utilizing CCFs is not always readily available to all juvenile court judges. The JJWG recommends the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges (OAJCJ), in conjunction with the Ohio Supreme Court (OSC), compile and disseminate information on the benefits of CCFs to juvenile court judges throughout the state. Further, the JJWG recommends that DYS work with, and assist, the OAJCJ and OSC in gathering and compiling relevant information to be disseminated.

JJWG recommends the Juvenile Justice Committee of the Ohio Sentencing Commission (JJC-OSC) evaluate Ohio’s statutes on bindover, specifically to evaluate and determine the appropriateness of eliminating Ohio’s current mandatory bindover provisions. Further, the JJWG recommends and requests that DYS assist, advise and consult on any and all matters relevant to the JJC-OCC analysis, as the JJC-OCC deems appropriate.

Juveniles may be bound over or transferred to the adult criminal court system and sentenced to the adult correction system in Ohio for certain offenses.⁶² For many offenses, bindover is discretionary, which means the county prosecutor can request youth be bound over to the adult system and the juvenile court judge can make the final determination as to whether bindover is appropriate.⁶³ A more limited number of offenses are subject to mandatory bindover,⁶⁴ but the nature and character of those offenses are the most severe. For offenses enumerated as mandatory bindover in the Ohio Revised Code, no discretion on the part of the prosecutor or judge comes into play, just as no aggravating and/or mitigating circumstance are considered. Thus, if a youth is charged with a crime that is designated as a mandatory bindover, *they must be bound over to the adult system – without exception.*

Certain criminal offenses, offenses generally of a less serious nature than those currently subject to mandatory bindover, are currently subject to either a mandatory or discretionary serious youthful offender (SYO) dispositional sentence. Under Ohio SYO sentencing law, juvenile offenders who are designated serious youthful offenders are not immediately bound over to adult court, rather they are subject to blended sentences where both a juvenile disposition and an adult sentence are imposed.⁶⁵ They are first subject to the juvenile sentence, but upon the happening of certain events the juvenile sentence can be set aside by the court and the adult sentence imposed.⁶⁶ As such, for any and all offenses that may be removed from the current mandatory bindover requirement; the JJWG strongly recommends that they remain eligible for discretionary bindover and the Ohio Revised Code also require those offenses remain, or become if not already, eligible for a mandatory SYO sentence.

The JJWG is mindful of the serious nature of offenses currently subject to mandatory bindover. However, Ohio has a longstanding public policy and practice of treating juvenile offenders differently, with an extensive focus on

The JJWG recommends the Ohio General Assembly approve DYS funding to establish CCFs in the three counties that commit the highest number of youths to DYS in Ohio, specifically Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton counties. Further, the JJWG recommends DYS assist Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton counties with siting and operationalizing the CCF locations.

There are currently 11 CCF locations in Ohio.⁶⁹ The JJWG finds it surprising that none of them are in the three counties with the largest commitments to DYS. Establishing CCFs in the counties that commit the most youth to DYS would provide an additional option for relevant and eligible youth committed from those areas. It would allow justice-involved youth to stay closer to home as well as allow for more family involvement in counseling as well as other matters related to youth habilitation. It would further allow for more home passes to be issued to youth as well as other opportunities to assist youth with reentry back into the community. Additionally, in light of the ongoing national staffing crisis plaguing the corrections industry, CCFs in Cuyahoga, Franklin and Hamilton Counties will provide an additional mechanism for DYS to manage its population by having additional options to divert and step-down youth from DYS to CCFs in appropriate circumstances.

In mid-March of this year, the JJWG Chair met with judges from Cuyahoga, Hamilton, and Franklin counties, among others. The judges uniformly agreed that establishing a CCF in each of the three counties that commit the most youth to DYS is appropriate and a positive development for Ohio's juvenile justice system. The group consensus was that the additional CCF would be an opportunity to provide targeted and timely treatment and education to youth, targeted programming, and improved opportunities for family reintegration in preparation for successful reentry.

DYS has the appropriate personnel with relevant background and experience in siting and operationalizing CCF locations. As such, the JJWG recommends the counties leverage this resource to site, build, and operationalize their respective CCFs with the assistance of DYS.

treatment and habilitation. Research on brain science that expounds upon the lack of prefrontal cortex development in the adolescent brain, and the increased propensity (or potential) to rehabilitate juveniles, leads the JJWG to question whether a rigid requirement that every youth who commits certain offenses must leapfrog the juvenile system entirely and be placed in the adult system fails to account for certain situational anomalies or to allow for individualized determinations which are a hallmark of the juvenile court system. Accountability should be proportional to the offense and developmentally appropriate. Research shows that youth have tremendous capacity to grow and mature out of offending behaviors and most youth who commit crime – even those who have been violent and persistent offenders when younger – do not continue offending into adulthood. This is also true of late adolescents (ages 18–21) whose developing brains are poised for positive learning through interventions and rehabilitative services.⁶⁷ A robust body of research also indicates that committing a violent crime before age 20 is not a strong predictor of future criminality, thus, effective accountability requires proportionality and interventions that are developmentally aligned with existing science.⁶⁸

With respect to mandatory bindovers, as noted above, the prosecutor's position is neither solicited nor considered. A judge is prohibited from considering any mitigating circumstances relevant to the youth or the individual circumstances of the alleged crime. Thus, the JJWG asks the JJC-OSC to consider whether statutory changes to Ohio's current mandatory bindover statute are appropriate.

The JJWG also recognizes that other practical considerations need to be factored into this analysis. Simply eliminating mandatory bindovers and making them discretionary could have significant negative consequences to the juvenile justice system. Such a change, without analysis of the system as a whole, including consideration of the impact of the other DYS population recommendations, could be untenable. For example, in FY 2023, there were a total of 175 bindovers in Ohio; 111 of them (or 63 percent) were mandatory and 64 (or 37 percent) were discretionary. Thus, in FY 2023, elimination of statutory mandatory bindovers could have resulted in up to 111 more youth admissions to DYS. DYS had 344 admissions in FY 2023, and the removal of mandatory bindovers could theoretically have increased admissions by 32 percent. Such immediate and profound change, or even a fraction thereof, could have major implications on DYS' three facilities and Ohio's juvenile justice system. Thus, unforeseen potential consequences must be considered in any proposal for legislative change.

RECOMMENDATION

12

JJWG recommends DYS and CCF governing boards, or their representatives, establish uniform and consistent criteria for CCF admissions. Once established, DYS should formally memorialize established uniform standards, criteria, and rules, which will promote uniform practices across CCF environments and ensure optimum utilization of CCFs across the state.

Currently, CCFs are funded by DYS and each CCF has its own set of admissions standards that, in some cases, vary widely. Some CCFs have admissions criteria that do not lend themselves to accepting challenging youth. Others have criteria that exclude youth because of antiquated standards that bear no reasonable relationship to issues that face youth today, nor the ability of the facility to provide youth with necessary and appropriate treatment options. The JJWG recommends that CCF admission standards be modernized in a consistent manner throughout Ohio. These updated standards will help with more consistent youth placement in Ohio and provide more options for DYS and CCFs to properly place youth to address their care and treatment needs. They will also be helpful to judges, prosecutors, and defense counsel to better understand youth populations committed to CCFs.

The JJWG understands that certain CCFs specialize in certain types of treatment. This factor is, overall, beneficial to the system and helps the juvenile justice system better provide the needed care and treatment for Ohio's youth. Certainly, these specialized factors can, and should, be a basis for courts to make decisions on the best facility to place individual youth.

The JJWG anticipates that DYS and the 11 existing CCFs will work collaboratively and in a timely manner to develop statewide uniform and consistent criteria for CCF admissions, and that the criteria will provide a significant overall benefit to justice involved youth and Ohio's juvenile justice system. If consensus on criteria is not achieved in a timely manner, the JJWG recommends DYS reach out to the Ohio General Assembly with guidelines for recommended criteria, together with a request that uniform criteria be codified. Should the General Assembly not act for any reason, the JJWG recommends DYS revisit this matter with individual CCFs at the time of the next contract renewal for state funding/appropriations.

RECOMMENDATION

13

The JJWG recommends juvenile judges commit youth with special needs, such as total blindness, profound deafness, wheelchair confinement, and other similar physical disabilities and/or factors, to alternate placement facilities, in lieu of commitment to DYS. Further, the JJWG recommends DYS work with juvenile judges to assist in identifying appropriate alternate placements at CCFs or other appropriate facilities.

Providing the appropriate environment and necessary facilities for youth with certain physical special needs in a juvenile correctional environment can pose significant challenges. Accommodating various types of special needs can be difficult in large facility settings and likewise could also strain the resources of smaller alternative placement facilities. The JJWG recommends committing juvenile court judges be mindful of these challenges and take care in ordering the appropriate commitment for youth. Further, DYS should assist juvenile judges by working with CCF directors and other relevant facilities to identify alternate placement opportunities. This recommendation is not included because of any deficiency in the services DYS currently provides, rather it is intended to improve safety, help to limit the burden on already strained DYS staff, and to mitigate risk.

RECOMMENDATION

14

The JJWG recommends JDCs be accredited under the standards of a national accrediting body and certified with Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards. The JJWG also recommends DYS cover initial and ongoing contract costs/fees directly associated with accreditation and PREA certification. Further, the JJWG recommends the Ohio General Assembly appropriate funds for DYS to hire accreditation manager(s) to provide technical assistance with accreditation and PREA certification.

“The standards created and refined [under national standards] represent fundamental correctional practices that ensure staff and inmate safety and security; enhance staff morale; improve record maintenance and data management capabilities; assist in protecting the agency

against litigation; and improve the function of the facility or agency at all levels.⁷⁰ The purpose of PREA is to “provide for the analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape in federal, state, and local institutions and to provide information, resources, recommendations and funding to protect individuals from prison rape.”⁷¹ The act also created the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission and charged it with drafting standards for eliminating prison rape, which were turned over the U.S. Department of Justice for review, and ultimately passed as final rules in the Federal Register.⁷² Currently, one of the 34 JDCs in Ohio is PREA certified (Union County), and one is nationally accredited (Summit County). Both national accreditation standards and PREA standards are national best practices and should be adhered to by all juvenile facilities, regardless of their size, location, and/or other characteristics.

The JJWG recommends that DYS assist JDCs with costs associated with accreditation and PREA certification. In order to assist county JDCs, the JJWG recommends DYS agree to be the responsible party for the costs associated with initial audit accreditations as well as required ongoing audits. Further, the JJWG recommends that DYS agree to be the responsible party for PREA Certification Audit costs for JDCs. Moreover, DYS has individuals with the necessary expertise to assist with accreditation and PREA compliance, as well as maintaining ongoing compliance with these standards. The JJWG further recommends that DYS provide accreditation managers to assist with obtaining and maintaining accreditation and PREA compliance. If necessary to achieve these goals, the JJWG recommends DYS hire additional accreditation managers to provide technical assistance and otherwise aid counties with certification/compliance.

RECOMMENDATION

15

The JJWG recommends the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges (OAJCJ) and the Ohio Juvenile Detention Director’s Association (OJDDA) should be prepared to implement the JDC and CCF training recommendations to be made by the juvenile justice consultant pursuant to JJWG Interim Proposal #2.

The JJWG has repeatedly heard about the need for more and better training for staff at local juvenile facilities, as well as the success of the DYS’ JDAI initiative for effective diversion. At the January 30, 2024, meeting of the JJWG, Interim Proposal #2 was advanced and approved, which provided that the JJWG should work with the directors of various agencies to develop RFP for the hiring of an outside

consultant(s) to review operations in DYS facilities, as well as a sampling of local JDCs and CCFs. This interim proposal was advanced in response to a common theme in the JJWG discussion that local training needs were not being met.⁷³

RECOMMENDATION

16

The JJWG recommends DYS engage with state and local experts on gang activity, security threat groups, bullying, and other related matters and develop best practices for state juvenile corrections facilities. Further, the JJWG recommends DYS create an additional staff position to focus on gang behaviors and activities, including but not limited to tracking and monitoring Security Threat Groups (STG).

The issue of gangs was raised at numerous JJWG meetings and was the specific focus of the February 8, 2024, meeting. DYS discussed some of its current prevention and intervention strategies, which include efforts at building healthy relationships with youth; ensuring staff create a safe environment; mentoring and role modeling; mediation and family involvement; safety planning; and individual and group counseling.⁷⁴ The JJWG heard testimony that youth sometimes join gangs because they fear for their safety and they felt it was necessary to join an affiliated group for their own protection.

To create safer facility environments where both staff and youth can thrive, effective violence deterrence and mitigation should be explored. This includes, but is not limited to, aggregating records from multiple youth systems to the extent possible to include courts, custody, education, child welfare, and behavioral health. Findings from this initiative should be used to develop specific recommendations designed to curb gang, bullying, and other anti-social activity at DYS JCFs. DYS shall be informed by the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA) “Toolkit: Gang Reduction Strategies for Juvenile Justice Facilities.” Prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts must include promising practices, trauma-informed approaches, and be outcome focused.

Further, the JJWG recommends DYS create an additional staff position in the Chief Inspector’s Office whose duties include tracking and monitoring Security Threat Group activity. This position should serve as a liaison between DYS and local law enforcement gang task force units in the community to understand issues, trends, and gather intelligence outside of facilities to allow for data driven prevention of gang activity in facilities. This position should also collaborate with the Ohio State Highway

Patrol and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to run special operations that detect and deter contraband from entering DYS facilities.

RECOMMENDATION

17

The JJWG recommends DYS facilitate discussion(s) with local provider(s)/clinician(s) to explore opportunities to augment DYS Behavioral Health Services (BHS) vacancies, with a goal of providing more consistent treatment and continuity of care to DYS youth. Augmentation of DYS staff resources will also allow for smaller treatment groups and individual treatment that DYS does not currently have the staff resources to achieve.

The number of youths in DYS in need of behavioral health services continues to increase each year, while the availability of qualified individuals available to provide treatment continues to decrease. It has been a constant challenge for DYS to hire and retain BHS staff. Currently, DYS has a 40 percent vacancy rate among BHS staff positions, yet 76 percent of DYS youth are on the BHS caseload and in need of BHS services.

Evidence-based BHS treatment, and therefore trained BHS staff, are of vital importance to DYS. Failure to provide adequate BHS to youth could result in youth continuing to engage in the behaviors that led to their commitment. DYS youth on the BHS caseload need to receive treatment from licensed professionals/clinicians. The behavioral health services DYS provides give youth the opportunity to learn new patterns of behavior and move away from unhelpful thinking patterns, adapt to new living situations when they reenter society, identify trauma reactions and triggers as well as acquire coping strategies and prosocial behaviors. Likewise, clinicians can target problematic behaviors with specific treatment modalities to address issues such as anger management, substance use, trauma related treatment, problematic sexual behavior treatment, and victim awareness. Ultimately, youth must be helped to recognize the need for (or value in) changing their behavior and be willing to engage in behavior change. For youth on DYS's BHS caseload, this requires the intervention of skilled behavioral health professionals.

The JJWG recommends that DYS work with private practice clinicians and public organizations to identify providers from local communities who have an interest in working with the juvenile population. Often, contracted providers were unable to provide dedicated staff to work with DYS youth in need of behavioral health services. Because continuity of care and a strong youth-clinician rapport

are paramount to successful outcomes, therapeutic relational strategies should be developed to promote youth and, when appropriate, family engagement. Contracts should only be considered for those who demonstrate a willingness and ability to consistently engage with youth in individual sessions and group therapies. DYS should also ensure adequate space that is conducive to the individual and group delivery of BHS by community providers.

RECOMMENDATION

18

The JJWG recommends each JDC conduct a needs assessment and develop a strategic plan to deliver mental and behavioral health services/programming. JDCs should submit their strategic plans to relevant county officials for approval and implementation. DYS, Ohio Department of Medicaid, and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services should be available, as needed, for consultation to support JDCs in connection with this recommendation.

Detention directors are not usually mental health clinicians and need the support of reliable mental health professionals to successfully execute their duties. A mental health service needs assessment is an important tool when creating strategies and plans to implement effective services for youth with mental health needs. For instance, a needs assessment can identify prioritized targets for the implementation of behavioral health services. Additionally, the needs assessment will help JDCs apply for applicable grants and otherwise advocate for services to address youth needs. The JJWG recommends that detention directors work with local Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services boards, and other local community providers to assist with evaluating behavioral health assessment needs.

The planning processes should consider service type(s) needed based on prevalence of mental health diagnosis within the population, availability of programming and treatment providers, diagnostic tools and clinical ability, and processes for program evaluation and continuous quality improvement. Needs assessments should include behavioral health screenings, diagnostic assessment, identification of trauma and incorporation of trauma responsiveness, treatment planning which focuses on the strength of youth, psychiatric and crisis services, and psychological testing to determine intellectual functioning as well as to identify supports needed.

The JJWG further recommends that DYS be available to advise and consult on conducting needs assessments and developing strategic plans to deliver mental health/behavioral health services/programming.

RECOMMENDATION

19

The JJWG recommends that local juvenile court judges explore existing services that are designed to help youth and families such as the Ohio Department of Medicaid’s OhioRISE program and Ohio’s Prevention Services plan operated by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. Further, the JJWG recommends local juvenile courts consider partnering with DYS to develop front-end family resources and host a behavioral health and juvenile justice (BHJJ) project through DYS.

In recent years, many juvenile courts have participated in an MOU with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services under the Title IV-E program (now, Ohio’s Prevention Services Plan under the Ohio Department of Children and Youth). Similar to RECLAIM, community-based subsidy funding from DYS (including community assessment, family resource centers, other front-end prevention, and diversion programming) the IV-E program funds evidence-based programming for youth and families as an alternative to formal court involvement that leads to out-of-home placement. Courts that participate in the MOU are entitled to partial reimbursement of their expenses for training, administration, and providing interventions, as well as a portion of the per diem for youth placed in qualified residential treatment programs (QRTPs). The Prevention Services Plan and DYS’ RECLAIM Ohio Initiative are solid examples of the power of preventive relationships between counties and state agencies that share the goal of preventing youth being pulled deeper into the juvenile justice system.

The BHJJ initiative is a cohort of evidence-based programs designed to identify and divert justice-involved youth with mental health and substance abuse disorders into community-based treatment. Funding for BHJJ is provided by DYS and OMHAS with administrative oversight provided by DYS. Approximately 80 percent of youth who complete BHJJ programs do not have a new felony charge within one year, which results in a 50 percent reduction in risk for out of home placements.

Partnerships between the state, local governments, and county courts, such as BHJJ demonstration projects, will also better enable local authorities to design and implement projects that best meet the needs of their

communities; assist county governments in building a continuum of care at the local level; and prevent mental health problems from worsening for both youth and families. This includes several viable services such as mobile response and stabilization services (MRSS) and intensive home-based treatment (IHBT). Through a shared governance model that recognizes the importance of serving youth who are Medicaid eligible and non-Medicaid eligible,⁷⁵ local governments, county governments, and state resources should look to build that intensive community array of services.⁷⁶

RECOMMENDATION

20

The OJJWG recommends DYS, DCY, OMHAS take the lead in analyzing whether it is useful and appropriate to implement the national Stepping Up Initiative in Ohio’s juvenile justice system.

The Stepping Up Initiative is a national initiative that brings together a diverse group of organizations including those representing the criminal justice system, treatment providers, people with mental illnesses and their families, and mental health and substance use program directors⁷⁷ to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses who are incarcerated.⁷⁸ Currently, many individuals with mental illnesses continue to be cycled through the juvenile justice system, often resulting in missed opportunities to link them to treatment. This prevents better outcomes, more efficient uses of funding, and improved public safety. Work done in Ohio on this Initiative shows positive results in the adult system. As of July 2023, 61 Ohio counties passed resolutions in support of Stepping Up Ohio and are participants in the initiative⁷⁹ More recently, lessons learned from the Stepping Up Initiative are being applied to juvenile justice. The work done in Ohio on the adult justice system can help provide a useful template for its application in Ohio to take action to assist counties with reducing the number of adjudicated youth with untreated mental illness and/or substance use disorders in Ohio’s juvenile justice system.

The JJWG recommends DYS, DCY, and OMHAS conduct an exploratory analysis as to whether it is reasonable and appropriate to implement the national Stepping Up Initiative model in Ohio’s juvenile justice system. To the extent the exploratory analysis indicates that the implementation of the Stepping Up Initiative is reasonable and appropriate, DYS, DCY, OMHAS should collaborate to develop a plan for the application of the Stepping Up Initiative in Ohio.

RECOMMENDATION

21

The JJWG recommends DYS issue a request for information (RFI) to identify and solicit proposals from entities that can collaborate with DYS to establish a “credible messenger” program that connects youth with individuals who have relevant life experience. DYS’ Best Practices Institute should evaluate all program proposals and established outcomes to ensure the fidelity of program standards, proper vetting procedures, and other appropriate requirements.

Credible messenger programs are developed on a core belief that communities have within them transformative resources to support justice-involved youth in a positive way. These programs match youth with specially trained adults who have relevant life experience – lived experience in the legal system or similar life circumstances and have sustainably transformed their lives – called “credible messengers.” This approach fosters authentic partnerships between justice systems and communities that lead to lasting change, promote youth and family engagement, encourage buy-in to the behavior change process, and to facilitate connection with positive adults and prosocial activities. Credible messengers can be utilized in a variety of interventions including mentoring, peer-based supports, and violence interrupters. These programs have been found to increase youth engagement, reduce re-arrest, increase compliance with court mandates, and create more community capacity to support juvenile justice-involved youth. Given that these programs target not just youth at risk of violence, but community norms related to how to curtail the juveniles’ ease of access in obtaining guns, gang membership, and conflict resolution, credible messenger programs are effective at reducing violent offending and gun offenses. These programs can be utilized at various stages in the system (diversion to post-disposition) as a violence prevention and intervention strategy both inside facilities as well as in communities and can enhance re-entry in supporting youth to transition into adulthood crime-free.⁸⁰

RECOMMENDATION

22

JJWG recommends DYS create a parent-guardian liaison position to answer questions and assist parents/guardians with children adjudicated to DYS in navigating the system. Further, the parent-guardian liaison should be responsible for creating and facilitating a Parent Advisory Council.

To support parents and/or guardians whose youth are adjudicated and are under the care of DYS, a parent-guardian liaison position should be created to assist family members of youth in navigating the DYS system. Research conducted by CSG indicates that families involved with juvenile justice systems often “receive minimal guidance and support on how to engage with the juvenile justice system, making it challenging to navigate the system, advocate for their child’s best interest, and play an active role in guiding and managing their child’s treatment and juvenile justice experiences.”⁸¹ Research also suggests that moving from an ad hoc, system-centered approach to a family-centered approach requires a shift in policy and a change in the traditional culture surrounding the juvenile justice system.

RECOMMENDATION

23

The JJWG recommends DYS implement a reentry continuum that improves linkage to local resources, such as OhioRISE which can address wraparound, home, and community services. Linking to local resources better equips youths with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully reintegrate back into their communities.

Reentry starts upon entry into a DYS facility with the development of a case plan. An effective plan includes consideration for educational (literacy), vocational, and therapeutic goals. The reentry continuum should include evidence-based curriculum that focuses on personal responsibility, a growth mindset, social skills, and critical thinking necessary for responsible citizenship. In addition, DYS should strengthen its relationships with apprenticeship programs and trades to better prepare youth for employment. This can include leveraging DYS’ partnership with Ohio Means Jobs, the completion of in-demand industry credential programs, and career exploration. These goals have been stunted over the past several years because the COVID-era saw significant reductions in programming and case management capacity statewide, and it is only now beginning to rebound. Moreover, the ongoing national staffing crisis and its significant impact on corrections have hampered DYS’ ability to coordinate necessary functions related to providing relevant services.

The expansion of mandatory and optional Medicaid service coverage for DYS youth 30 days prior to release and up to 30 days post-release⁸² presents an unprecedented opportunity to ensure continuity of critical care and successful community re-entry. The JJWG urges DYS, ODM, and OMHAS to partner and collaboratively work

toward developing a strategy to achieve mandatory coverage and examine the optional coverage opportunity pre-disposition to maximize potential benefits of this enhanced source support. The connection to family-level, community-based behavioral health resources provide a continuation of care and preventative benefit for younger siblings. Using a multisystemic approach that focuses on linkage to community programs prior to release will reduce the potential disruption of critical services.

RECOMMENDATION

24

The JJWG recommends that DYS and all JDCs and CCFs create a staff wellness policy. Written policies and procedures should encourage and support employees to engage in health and wellness activities inside and outside of their agency. The policy should include, but not be limited to, health and wellness education, monitored goals and objectives, engagement surveys, incentives to encourage employee participation, and linkages to support programs (i.e. employee assistance program).

“One of the greatest threats to correctional [staff] wellness involves the stress they encounter as a result of their occupation . . . stress increases the risk for [correctional staff] to suffer from heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and a host of other physical ailments.”⁸³ “Stress also weighs heavily on [correctional staff] mental health and can lead to serious psychological distress, emotional disorders, and an elevated risk of suicide.”⁸⁴ Corrections workers face a higher degree of depression and/or PTSD.⁸⁵ The negative effects of stress also extend to the correctional agency through “reduce[d] work performance, absenteeism, employee turnover, and replacement costs for new employees.”⁸⁶ As a result of 20+ years of study, Desert Waters Correctional Outreach has found that “correctional staff wellness is not only crucial in its own right, but it is also a foundational component of a much broader and also desperately needed mission – prison reform.”⁸⁷

Professionals working in juvenile justice face a myriad of challenges daily, a population with complex mental health needs, violence, critical incidents, and staffing shortages that result in long hours. Prolonged stress can cause burnout and emotional exhaustion, resulting in poor job satisfaction. Wellness programs provide support and healthy ways to de-stress, which in turn can lead to improved morale, increased staff retention, and higher quality service delivery.

RECOMMENDATION

25

The JJWG recommends DYS continue to foster current alliances with Ohio colleges and universities and identify opportunities for students pursuing higher education or certification to be exposed to jobs and careers working with youth in the juvenile justice system.

By partnering with Ohio colleges and universities, DYS can establish a better talent pipeline to fill vacant positions with individuals aspiring to make a career of working with youth in the juvenile justice system. A person interested in working with youth in the juvenile justice system needs specialized skills “to deliver services to youth with histories of criminal offending and/or other complex mental health needs, such as complex developmental trauma.”⁸⁸ By engaging college students working toward degrees or certifications in helping professions and exposing them to pre-service course work and field experiences⁸⁹ students may be encouraged to pursue careers working with justice-involved youth. In addition, partnerships with higher education may foster development of specialized or certification programs that train students to work effectively with high-risk youth with complex, acute behavioral needs.

Further, the JJWG recommends DYS reach out to other agencies that may have similar alliances with higher education institutions and evaluate if any program synergies exist.

RECOMMENDATION

26

The JJWG recommends DYS consult with other agencies and academia to develop a structured leadership development program and consider matters related to succession planning in conjunction with the analysis.

The JJWG’s recommendation for DYS to analyze its succession planning needs stems from a larger phenomenon observed across many fields but is a particularly significant and pervasive phenomenon in the field of corrections – the nationwide staffing crisis. The resulting succession plan should include effective characteristics of succession planning support from executive leadership, an assessment of the unique needs and dynamics that define an organization, a formal process or commitment from its stakeholders, as well as a partnership between employees that allows potential future successors to develop valuable skills, connections, and institutional knowledge in appropriate conditions.

Conclusion



This report is submitted with the approval of all the members of the JJWG. The aspirational recommendations contained herein have both short-term and long-term impacts and encompass a system transformation. Some recommendations propose legislative changes, while some speak to fiscal needs, but together they are designed to address the underlying foundational issues around staffing, staff and youth safety, and youth outcomes by transforming operations at DYS and its partnerships with CCFs and JDCs.

The actual work, however, is just beginning. Success in operationalizing such a system transformation will require monitoring, oversight, and structured follow up. DYS has expressed its commitment to implementation of the recommendations proposed herein. To that end, the JJWG recommends that DYS employ an individual to oversee the implementation and process changes. DYS should develop a plan for implementation (together with a timeline, where appropriate), monitor outcomes, and submit quarterly progress reports to the Governor's office.

The implementation will require DYS and other state agencies to work collaboratively with local stakeholders including courts, community providers, CCFs, local public officials, researchers, advocates, and others. The goal of this collaborative work should be to elevate best practices, foster interest in innovation, enhance and share data and research, and embrace a sense of shared accountability to ensure DYS fulfills its vision and commitment to success.

Appendix



Glossary of Terms

ACA - American Correctional Association

BHJ - Behavioral Health Juvenile Justice

BHJJI - Behavioral Health Juvenile Justice Initiative

BHS - Behavioral Health Services

CCF - Community Corrections Facilities

CHJCF - Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility

CJJR - Center for Juvenile Justice Reform

COVID - Corona Virus Disease

CSG - Council of State Governments

DAS - Department of Administrative Services

DCY - Department of Children and Youth

DEW - Department of Education and Workforce

DODD - Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

DPS - Department of Public Safety

DSI - Detention Screening Instrument

DYS - Department of Youth Services

FY - Fiscal Year

IHBT - Intensive Home-Based Treatment

JDAI - Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

JDC - Juvenile Detention Center

JCO - Juvenile Corrections Officers

JIC - Juvenile Intervention Center

JJC-OSC - Juvenile Justice Committee of the Ohio Sentencing Commission

JJWG - Juvenile Justice Working Group

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

MRSS - Mobile Response and Stabilization Services

OAJCJ - Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges

OBM - Office of Budget Management

ODJFS - Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

ODM - Ohio Department of Medicaid

OMHAS - Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

OJDDA - Ohio Juvenile Detention Director's Association

OSC - Ohio Supreme Court

OSHP - Ohio State Highway Patrol

PREA - Prison Rape Elimination Act

PTSD - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

QRTP - Qualified Residential Treatment Program

RC - Revised Code

RECLAIM - Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors

RFP - Request for Proposal

SCOPE - State Council of Professional Educators

SEIU - Service Employees International Union

STG - Security Threat Group

SYO - Serious Youthful Offender

TCAP - Targeted Community Alternative to Prison

UCCI - University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute



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August 20, 2024

Mr. Tom Stickrath
Chair, Ohio Juvenile Justice Work Group

Chair Stickrath,

It has been an honor to serve on the Ohio Juvenile Justice Work Group to provide perspective and share information on trauma-informed care as practiced at PEP in support of young people with complex mental health needs. An aspect of such care that I hope will be considered by the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) is ensuring that young people in its care and custody have access to culturally responsive services, including availability of corrections staff and administrators, educators, and behavioral health providers who share cultural backgrounds with the young people in DYS settings.

Educational researchers, such as Gloria Ladson-Billings, describe culturally responsive pedagogy as encompassing the social-emotional, relational, and cognitive aspects of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Practices born out of this concept have proven effective in educational settings and are now applied in other areas of human services, including mental and behavioral health services and addiction treatment, in acknowledgment that when care is respectful and responsive to the cultural identities of persons served, there is greater opportunity for improved outcomes.

A critical component of culturally responsive practices is assuring that leadership and staff within systems of care are racially, ethnically, and linguistically representative of the persons served along the entire continuum of care, and throughout the organizational hierarchy of agencies delivering care/services. It is my hope that the cultural diversity of the DYS workforce would be a priority embedded within the recommendations to *augment DYS Behavioral Health Services (BHS) vacancies* (Recommendation #17), *foster current alliances with Ohio colleges and universities and identify opportunities for students pursuing higher education or certification to be exposed to jobs and careers working with youth in the juvenile justice system* (Recommendation #25), and *consult with other agencies and academia to develop a structured leadership development program and consider matters related to succession planning* (Recommendation #26).

1 | Grimes Letter to OJJWG

Associated with Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
Contract Provider of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County
Accredited by CARF: Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities



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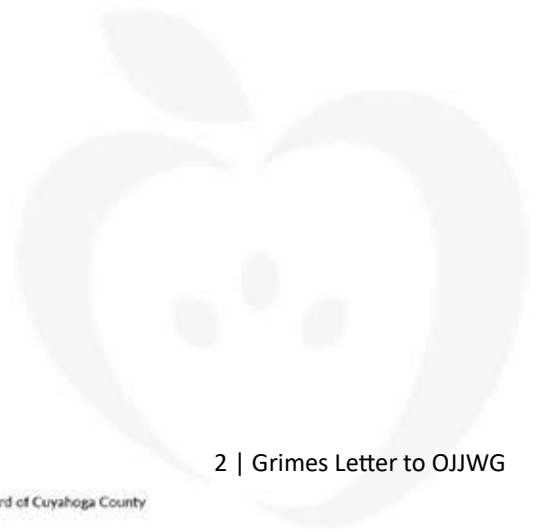
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There is strong evidence that when young people have role models who have shared cultural identities in their care providers and educators, their outcomes are better. Further, when a diverse community of practitioners and service providers have managers and administrators with shared cultural identities, it better supports their performance and professional growth. It is with these factors in mind that I offer this recommendation.

Thank you,

Habeebah Rasheed Grimes
Chief Executive Officer
Positive Education Program



Associated with Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
Contract Provider of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County
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¹ A Community Correction Facility (CCF) is a county or multicounty rehabilitation center for felony delinquents who have been committed to the department of youth services and diverted from care and custody in an institution and placed in the rehabilitation center pursuant to division (E) of section 5139.36 of the Revised Code. R.C. 5139.01(A)(14); O.A.C 5139-36-01(J).

² A Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) is a facility operated by Ohio counties used to detain alleged delinquent children until final disposition for evaluation pursuant to R.C. 2152.04; and to confine children who are adjudicated delinquent children and placed in the facility pursuant to R.C. 2152.19 or R.C. 2152.21. See R.C. 2152.41.

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- ⁸⁰ Winsberg, L., Senior Policy Attorney, Children's Law Center, Inc., (March 20, 2024). *Children's Law Center Interested Party Public Comments*, (pp.3-4); Weber, J. (2024) Justice Center, The Council of State Governments (CSG). *Restorative Justice Practices and Credible Messengers: Promising, Innovative Approaches for Improving Outcomes for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System, A Review of Current Research*. <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/restorative-justice-practices-and-credible-messengers-promising-innovative-approaches-for-improving-outcomes-for-youth-in-the-juvenile-justice-system/>
- ⁸¹ Agus-Kleinman, J. & Ueberall, S., (n.d). Justice Center, The Council of State Governments (CSG). *Family Engagement in Juvenile Justice Systems: Building a Strategy and Shifting the Culture*. <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/family-engagement-in-juvenile-justice-systems/> (as cited in Garfinkel, L., (2010). "Improving Family Involvement for Juvenile Offenders with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders and Related Disabilities." *Behavioral Disorders* 36, No.1:52-60). Improving Family Involvement for Juvenile Offenders with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders and Related Disabilities on JSTOR
- ⁸² Public Law 117-328. 117th Congress. An Act. (Dec. 29, 2022). 136 STAT. 4459 PUBL328.PS (congress.gov)
- ⁸³ U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center, (2013). *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*, (p.1). http://www.nationaljailacademy.org/_documents/resources/employee-wellness/staff-wellness.pdf
- ⁸⁴ U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center, (2013). *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*, (p.1). http://www.nationaljailacademy.org/_documents/resources/employee-wellness/staff-wellness.pdf
- ⁸⁵ Denhoff, M.D., PhD. & Spinaris, C.G., PhD., (2013). *Desert Waters Correctional Outreach. Depression, PTSD, and Comorbidity in Corrections Professionals*, (pp. 14-15 & 35-36). <https://perma.cc/UZ8A-LXNN>
- ⁸⁶ U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center & Brower, J., Psy.D, ABPP, (2013). *Correctional Officer Wellness and Safety Literature Review*, (p.3). http://www.nationaljailacademy.org/_documents/resources/employee-wellness/staff-wellness.pdf
- ⁸⁷ Spinaris, C.G., PhD., LPC, (July 13, 2013). *Desert Waters Correctional Outreach. Prison Reform & Staff Wellness Are Inextricably Linked*. <https://desertwaters.com/prison-reform-staff-wellness-are-inextricably-linked/>
- ⁸⁸ Grimes, H., Chief Executive Officer, Positive Education Program, (March 19, 2024). Ohio Juvenile Justice Working Group Member. *Grimes Recommendations*, (p.1).
- ⁸⁹ Grimes, H., Chief Executive Officer, Positive Education Program, (March 19, 2024). Ohio Juvenile Justice Working Group Member. *Grimes Recommendations*, (p.1).

Notes

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