

Resource Guide for Mental Health Professionals Working with Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System

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INTRODUCTION

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“How do you help a 16-year-old when all their life all they know is violence? You can’t just swoop in and say stop doing what you’re doing. It’s not gonna work”

”

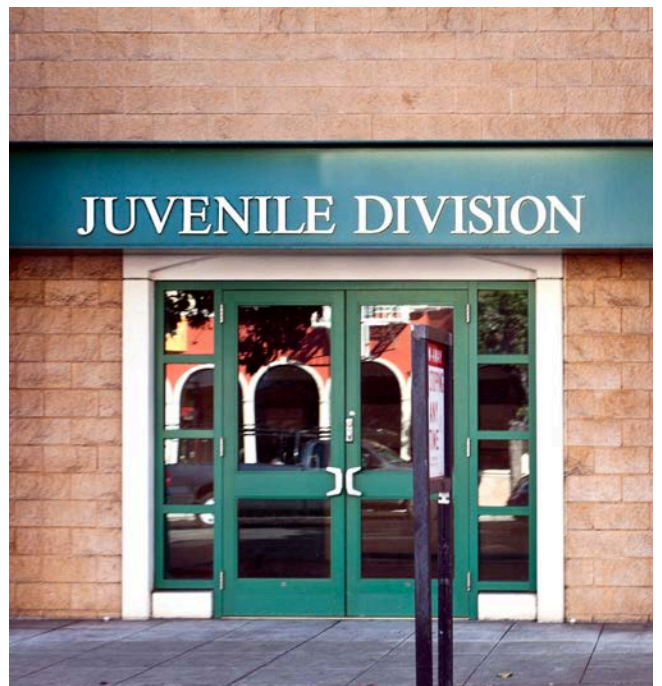
–Formerly incarcerated youth

This Guide is designed to inform mental health providers about the complex challenges that youths and their families face when they become involved in the juvenile justice system.

This is an essential but often overlooked knowledge base because many youth who receive mental health treatment are either involved in the juvenile justice system or at risk for juvenile justice involvement.

By delivering prevention, intervention, and evaluation services, mental health providers can play a crucial role in helping youth navigate the juvenile justice system, as well as stay out of the system and safely in their communities. However, to do this, providers must be knowledge about the complex labyrinthine system that youths, and their families, must deal with when involved in, or at risk for becoming involved in, the legal system.

Purpose: The purpose of this resource is to give mental health providers practical guidance about the juvenile legal system, as well as a trauma informed approach to working with youth and families who are faced with the challenges of navigating that system. This resource also highlights the intersection between mental health and juvenile legal system involvement, including the need for shared resources and interdisciplinary training and communication among professionals. It further provides community-based mental health professionals, as well as those working within the juvenile legal system, with foundational information about both the system and youths’ experiences within the system, so that they might better support, serve, and advocate for their clients.



We will also highlight initiatives specific to the legal system, as well as resources that could complement, or be enhanced by, mental health services.

Intended Audience: This guide was designed for mental health providers who want to better understand the juvenile justice system in order to more effectively support their clients. This resource will be especially helpful for providers with no direct experience in, or knowledge about, the juvenile justice system. However, given the various divisions (e.g., courts, diversion, detention, probation, incarceration) and associated systems (e.g., law enforcement, child protective services, schools) that often function in silos with limited cross-program coordination, this document may be equally useful for providers working across juvenile justice settings.

Complementary Resources: Youth who are the most vulnerable for legal system involvement are often impacted by multiple systems^{1,2} and need multidisciplinary services (e.g., mental health, educational, child welfare).



The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) offers a variety of resources on multisystem involvement and trauma-informed approaches to working with youth. This guide is designed to complement those resources^{3,4}, as well as the resources found on the website of the [Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice \(CTRJJ\)](#).

Format: The resource guide begins with some key facts and a brief history of the juvenile justice system, followed by an overview of the current system and the characteristics of youth who are impacted by the system. Pertinent information is then provided about the juvenile court process, as well as the screening, assessment and treatment of youth at risk for, or involved with, the juvenile justice system. Several approaches to community-based accountability and diversion programs for youth are also described, and overall tips for mental health professionals working with youth who may be involved with the system are provided. This resource also includes an Appendix with a list of relevant resources for mental health providers. The voices of youth impacted by the system are infused throughout.

Disclaimers:

Please note that this is a general primer, as the laws, procedures, and programs vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Consider this as a starting point to prepare you to begin (or continue) working with youth involved in the legal system and collaborating with colleagues in the juvenile justice field.

The term “juvenile justice system” is used here to describe the legal system that youth become involved in when an arrest is initiated by law enforcement. The purpose of that system is to apply the relevant laws to youth who are accused of violating those laws. We recognize that justice may or may not be served in that application.

Trauma Exposure and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

“In almost ten years of providing mental health services to youth in juvenile justice settings, I have yet to meet a kid that hasn’t experienced trauma. And I’m not talking about isolated, discrete instances of trauma, I’m talking about chronic, pervasive things like daily shootings and stabbings in the neighborhood and the deaths of parents, siblings and friends. These are things that no child should ever have to go through.”

–Quote from a psychologist working in juvenile detention

Key Facts

In 2020, 424,300 youth, ages 17 and younger, were arrested in the United States. Only 8% of those arrests were for violent crimes⁵. This represents a:

71%
decline in
arrests since
2011

In 2022, more than 33 Million youth were under the jurisdiction of a juvenile court for a delinquency case⁶, and

43%
of cases
involved
White youth

37%
of cases
involved
Black youth

In the same year,

White youth
comprised
52%

Black
youth
comprised
15%

of the US population.

Up to
70%

of youth in the juvenile justice system have a diagnosable mental health disorder^{7,8,9,10} and almost 30% of youth in juvenile justice settings are suffering from a serious mental illness.^{11,12}

The most common diagnoses found among youth in juvenile justice settings are:

ADHD

PTSD

Substance
Use
Disorder

Oppositional
Defiant
Disorder

Conduct
Disorder

The majority of youth who are impacted by the juvenile justice system have experienced multiple forms of trauma throughout their lives, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, commercial sexual exploitation, exposure to domestic violence and both direct and indirect experiences of community violence^{13,14,15,16}. The rates of trauma exposure for this population far exceed rates found in non-justice involved samples. In fact, one in 11 boys and one in five girls involved in juvenile justice settings have been diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)¹⁷. For youth of color in particular, both overt and covert forms of racial discrimination have also been shown to have a detrimental impact, leading to PTSD and other trauma-related symptoms¹⁸.



In addition to incidents of trauma that youth may experience in the community, contact with the justice system itself can also be a source of trauma. For example, research studies have begun to document the negative impact that being stopped by the police can have on young people, particularly Black and Brown youth. Conditions within detention and correctional facilities can also be an added source of trauma exposure for youth, as elevated rates of violence and sexual abuse have been identified in some settings¹⁹.

Trauma exposure is associated with a variety of negative consequences for youth in the juvenile justice system, including the development of psychiatric and substance use disorders, self-harm and suicidality^{20,21,22}. Trauma exposure and traumatic stress symptoms may also lead to youth to engage in survival coping behaviors, such as aggression, substance use, and carrying a weapon that bring them to the attention of the legal system and increase the risk for ongoing involvement^{23,24}.

Due to the pervasive nature of trauma and potential impact of trauma-related symptoms for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, mental health professionals working with youth in justice settings should be mindful of the ways that trauma may be impacting youths' thoughts, feelings and behaviors. It is recommended that a trauma-informed approach be used when working with youth involved in, or at-risk for involvement in, the juvenile justice system.



Trauma-informed care includes universal screening for trauma exposure and symptoms, as well as the use of trauma-specific interventions to address trauma-related symptoms when applicable. However, trauma-informed care extends beyond screening and treatment to include an overall approach to the delivery of services (e.g., practices, policies, and environmental modifications) that foster a sense of safety and empowerment for youth and their families²⁵. Throughout this guide, we have provided a variety of trauma-informed tools and interventions for working with youth in justice settings. For more information and additional tools, please visit the [National Traumatic Stress Network](#).

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Module 1

OVERVIEW OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“Don't get me wrong, everybody knows the consequences of stealing a car or going and smoking or taking pills or whatever, but nobody thinks about it because it's that fight or flight response. And that's what I don't think any of our probation officers or judges understand. We're still juveniles. We're developing life, and our traumas are a big thing that they don't understand.”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to provide a history of the juvenile legal system and an overall “snapshot” of the current system.

History of the Juvenile Justice System



The American juvenile justice system as it is known today, a system separate from the adult criminal justice system and focused primarily on the rehabilitation of youth, is only about 100 years old. Prior to the establishment of a separate juvenile court system, youth in the United States were charged, prosecuted and sentenced as adults.

This began to change in 1825 when the first House of Refuge, or youth reformatory, was established in New York. Rooted in the growing recognition of childhood as a distinct developmental period, the expressed purpose of these Houses of Refuge was to “rehabilitate” youth who have offended in reformatory schools designed specifically for children and separate from adults. However, Black youth were initially excluded from this reform option, continuing to be charged and sentenced in adult courts. Even after Houses of Refuge became available to youth of color, they were more likely to suffer abuse and endure longer stays than white youth.

By the late 1800’s, documented abuse and exploitation of youth in Houses of Refuge led to a push for further reform. Separate trials for children were first held on a statewide basis in Massachusetts in 1872¹. Under the doctrine of *parens patriae*, which gives the state the

authority to remove youth from “unsuitable” parents and assume supervision, the first separate juvenile court was established in 1899 in Chicago, Illinois (Cook County).

Rehabilitation and treatment were the purported focus of the early courts.² Early juvenile court legislation advocated for keeping children separate from adults in criminal cases, with a focus on balancing the need to “rescue” children while also focusing on punishment.³ Over the next decade, 31 additional states established juvenile courts or probation services and by 1925, all but two states had done so.



Rather than “asking merely whether a boy or a girl has committed a specific offense,” the early courts would “find out what he is, physically, mentally, morally, and then if it learns that he is treading the path that leads to criminality, to take him in charge, not so much to punish as to reform, not to degrade but to uplift, not to crush but to develop, not to make him a criminal but a worthy citizen”⁴. The goal was to provide “guidance and friendly interest” while keeping youth with their families or placing them in a home-like setting: “Locks and bars and other indicia of prisons must be avoided; human love, supplemented by human interest and vigilance, must replace them. In such schools there must be opportunity for agricultural and industrial training, so that when the boys and girls come out, they will be fitted to do a man's or woman's work in the world, and not be merely a helpless lot ...”⁵.

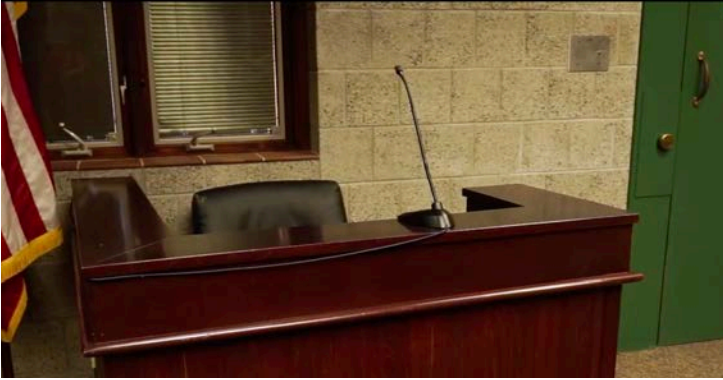


While the paradigm shift from treating youth as adults to establishing separate and distinct processes for youth was progressive for its time, it is important to understand the context in which it occurred. Children were just beginning to be valued as more than an expendable resource and childhood was only starting to be regarded as a precious stage of life. At that time, child advocates’ ardent campaign to dismantle the Puritan belief that children were born in sin and “needed intense discipline and obedience to please God”⁶ was only in its preliminary stages, making this conception more of a flimsy talking point than a firmly held belief. These shifting views are reflected in the American juvenile justice system, where the long stated mission has been to rehabilitate youth, while in practice the system has shifted sharply between that progressive aim and punishment.

By the 1960s, however, the pendulum swung away from rescue and rehabilitation and toward confinement and punishment. Courtrooms, probation offices, and detention facilities or “training schools” became adversarial with “delinquent” youth viewed and treated as “criminals-in-the-making” who should be removed from society to protect public safety. The U.S. Supreme Court established a number of procedural protections designed to provide for reliable legal representation and fairness in legal dispositions (e.g., due process, right to counsel, right to notice of charges, right against self-incrimination)⁷. However, with the

increasing social and economic upheavals of the 1970s and 1980s, youths who violated the law became stigmatized as irreparably dangerous (e.g., super-predators).

Arrests of juveniles increased dramatically into the mid 1990s with almost **3 million arrests** and **1.5 million juvenile delinquency court cases** in 1996, compared to 434,000 arrests and 500,000 juvenile delinquency court cases in 2020.^{8,9}



In the mid-1990's, laws in 45 states were enacted to permit the “transfer” of juvenile cases into the adult courts and to lower the upper age for youths to be tried in juvenile court. As a result, juvenile justice agencies were flooded with cases while many youths, including but not limited to those aged 16 and 17, were subjected to trial and incarceration in the adult criminal justice system.

In the early 2000's, with a heightened focus on adolescent development and a responsiveness to both psychological and neuroscience research, the pendulum began to swing back toward rehabilitation. In 2005, the United States Supreme Court struck down the death penalty as applied to minors, noting key distinctions between youth and adults¹⁰. According to the Court, juveniles are less culpable than adults because they lack maturity and responsibility – as evidenced by their “impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions.” They are also more “vulnerable or susceptible to negative influences and outside pressures, including peer pressure” than adults, and their character is less well-formed and more transitory than that of adults¹¹.

In establishing these distinctions, the Court relied not only on common sense but also referred to psychological research submitted in amicus briefs (i.e., briefs submitted by “friends of the court”). In subsequent cases, the emphasis on psychology, and increasingly neuroscience, was even more solidly established. The Court used this research to strike down as unconstitutional life without parole for juveniles convicted of non-homicide offenses¹² or through mandatory sentencing schemes¹³, and to establish that police must give Miranda warnings if a “reasonable child” would have perceived that he or she was not free to leave¹⁴.



The Supreme Court's recognition that psychological research and neuroscience play a role in defining how the law should be applied to teenagers has led to a shift from the punitive laws of the 1990s to a new, evidence-based response to juvenile offending, both in the juvenile and criminal justice systems¹⁵.

RESOURCES



[The History of the Juvenile Justice System](#)¹⁶ explores the origin and evolution of the Juvenile Justice System in the United States.



[America's Juvenile Injustice System](#)¹⁷. Marsha Levick, Co-Founder of the Juvenile Law Center discusses the history of juvenile law, describing both the gradual advances and the many major injustices which mark the system, and advocates for a shift in public thinking around children and youth.



[Youth First Initiative](#)¹⁸ provides a historical perspective on the juvenile justice system.

Brief Overview of the Current Juvenile Justice System

“We were saying how we wish that they would appoint probation officers or judges with a background like us.”

–Youth in Detention

“At the end of the day we’re about public safety, but when it comes to kids public safety and rehabilitation are inextricably linked and that also involves working with their families.”

–Andy Block, Director Virginia DJJ

Contemporary juvenile courts reflect the history detailed in the previous section. Each state retains elements of the original juvenile court separate from the adult criminal justice system, with ongoing attention to rehabilitation (although often alongside other penological goals). To this end, today’s juvenile courts are tasked with balancing the best interests of the youth and the safety of the public, as well as the due process rights that all youth are entitled to when charged with a delinquent act. For example, like adults, youth in all states are

entitled to due process rights such as the right to counsel, the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses, and the right to remain silent¹⁹.

While many states still have adult sentencing and other harsh dispositions for juveniles, the past two decades have turned the focus to the need for evidence-based and developmentally appropriate interventions, including trauma-informed services for youths and their families in juvenile justice facilities (detention, training schools) and community (e.g., probation) programs as well as in community-based prevention and diversion programs²⁰.



Please see Module 2 for more specific information about the juvenile court process in today's system. Detailed information about the flow of juvenile court cases can also be found here: https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistical-briefing-book/structure_process/case

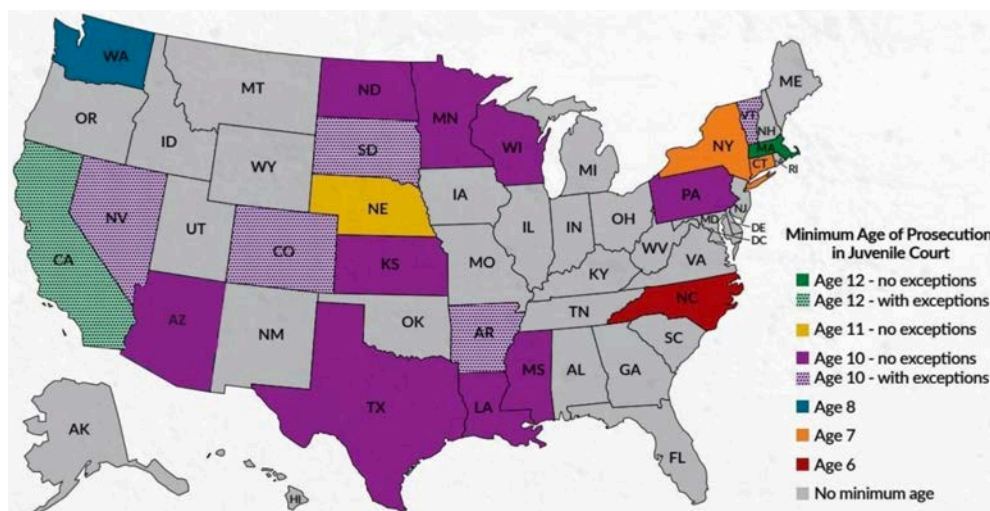
Types of Juvenile Court Cases

Delinquency Cases

In a juvenile delinquency case, a youth is charged with a delinquent act, which is defined as an act that would be a crime if committed by an adult. These cases are typically heard in a juvenile or family court.

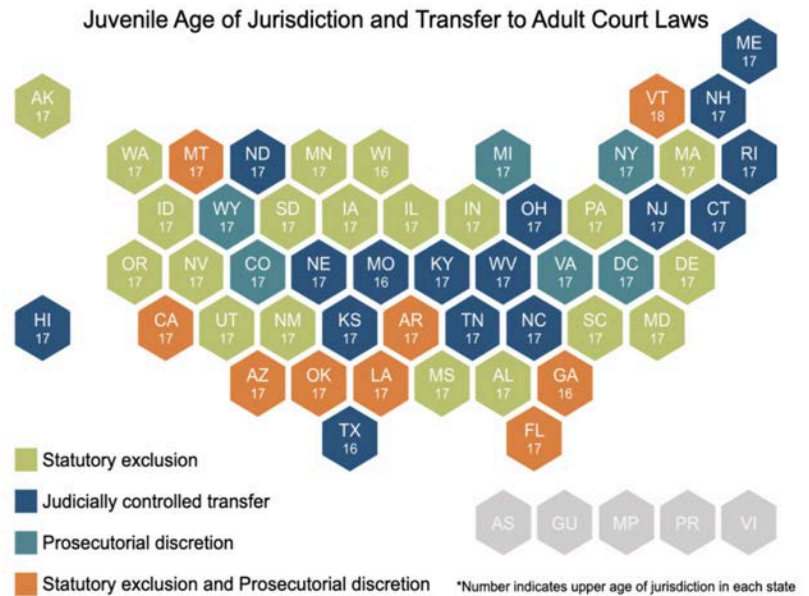
Minimum age of juvenile court jurisdiction

The minimum age for prosecution in juvenile court varies widely by state. Some jurisdictions have no specified age while others set the minimum age as young as 6 (North Carolina). This graphic by the National Juvenile Defender Center shows the minimum age set by each state:



Maximum age of juvenile court jurisdiction

Until recently, youth in some states were automatically prosecuted as adults starting at age 16, regardless of the alleged offense. As a result of recent reform efforts, the age of criminal responsibility was increased in many states. At the time this resource was published, age 17 was the maximum age of juvenile court jurisdiction in 47 states. For further information on state-to-state ages of juvenile court jurisdiction, please see this graphic created by the National Conference of State Legislatures:



Retrieved from: (<https://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/juvenile-age-of-jurisdiction-and-transfer-to-adult-court-laws>)

Specialty Courts

Specialty courts are courts that focus on problem-solving, collaboration, and individualized treatment for young people. Judges preside over cases in specialty courts, but these courts typically include a multidisciplinary team that works directly with the youth and their family. Specialty courts have a specific emphasis on rehabilitation and treatment versus punishment. Examples of specialty courts are included below:

- Juvenile Drug Treatment Court (JDTC): Specialty court for youth with a substance abuse disorder who intersect with the juvenile justice system. JDTCs use an evidence-based treatment approach to handling cases²¹
- Youth Courts: In Youth Courts, also known as Teen Court, youth charged with low-level offenses have their cases heard by a jury of their peers using restorative justice practices as an alternative to formal court processing²².
- Girls Courts: Courts that provide gender-responsive services to court-involved female identifying youth, typically after an adjudication on a delinquency case.

Status Offenses



A status offense is a noncriminal act considered a violation of the law only because the person accused of committing it is of juvenile status²³. Examples of status offenses include truancy, running away from home, underage use of alcohol and “incurability.” In some jurisdictions, status offense cases are also known as PINS (Persons in Need of Supervision) or CHINS (Child In Need of Supervision) cases and in some states, a status offense can result in a youth being detained and further penetrating into the juvenile justice system. In 2021, juvenile courts handled approximately 97,800 status offense cases.²⁴

“You never get your story heard; you know the judge didn’t know that I did not want to be at school because sometimes I didn’t feel safe . . . you don’t get those options. Your case is read and you’re truant. You broke a law. You didn’t pay the fine and so now you’ve violated the law and you go through more court systems.”

–Malika Musa, Americore Youth Fellow at YOUTH Rise, who was adjudicated as truant throughout high school

“The root causes were not being addressed, and that was the reason to why I was truant and truant and continuing to be truant.”

–Malika Musa, Americore Youth Fellow at YOUTH Rise, who was adjudicated as truant throughout high school

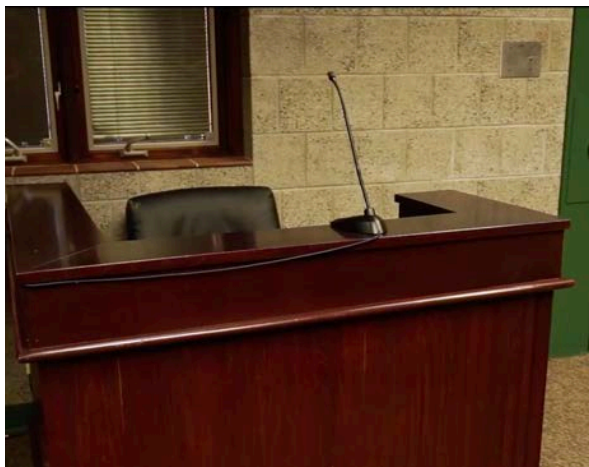
RESOURCES

- [First Hand Experience – Status Offenses](#)²⁵
- [Skipping School Can Get Kids Locked Up?](#)²⁶

“My parents, to add, were very illiterate in these processes. They were not – they did not understand the systems that I were [sic] going through. Me, myself didn’t know that I could get in trouble for not going to school”

–Malika Musa, Americore Youth Fellow at YOUTH Rise, who was adjudicated as truant throughout high school

Youth Tried as Adults



Despite recent reforms, all states in the country still have mechanisms in place for prosecuting juveniles in adult criminal court. In some states, the law requires that youth be automatically prosecuted in adult court for certain serious offenses committed at certain ages. In other states, youth who meet certain criteria may be transferred to adult court at the unreviewable discretion of a prosecutor or by a judge who reviews various factors in favor or against transfer at a “waiver” or “transfer” hearing.” Youth tried in adult court are treated as adults for purposes of the criminal legal system.

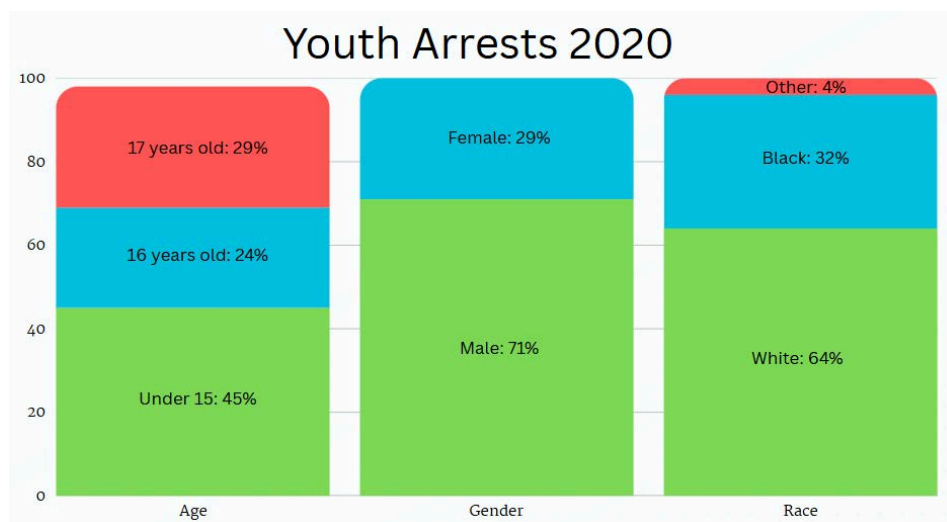
Youth Impacted by the Juvenile Justice System

This section provides the demographic characteristics of youth across the continuum of the juvenile justice system in the United States, including arrests, petitioned cases, and youth who are detained or incarcerated²⁷. For comparison, demographic information for youth in the general US population is also provided.

Youth Arrests

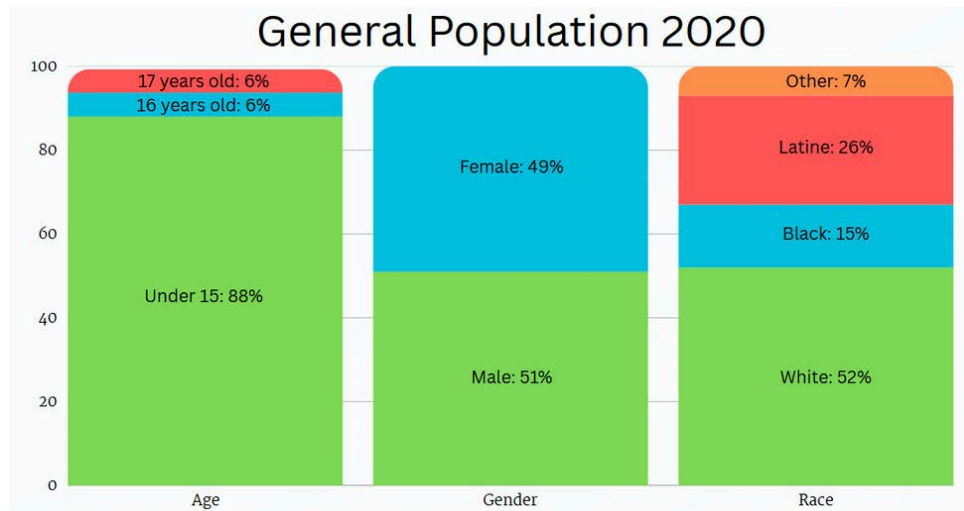
In 2020, the most recent publicly available arrest data, law enforcement agencies in the United States made 434,000 arrests of persons younger than 18²⁸. Black youth made up 15% of the US population in that year, and 32% of all juvenile arrests.

More detailed information about the demographic breakdown of youth arrests in 2020 is included below:



Adapted from: https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistics/DataSnapshot_UCR2020_o.pdf

The figure below provides the demographic breakdown of the general population of youth in the United States in the same year.

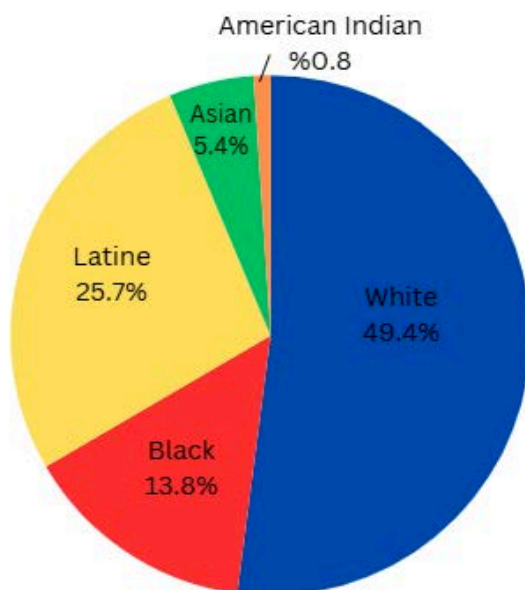


Adapted from: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045224>.

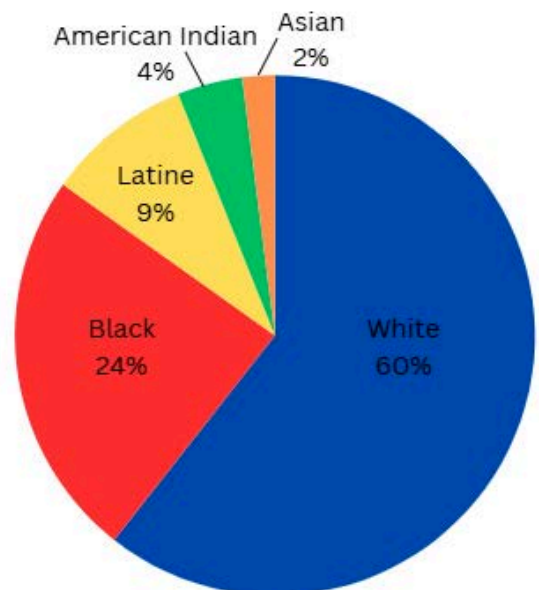
Youth Formally Processed in Juvenile Court

In 2021, more than 430,000 delinquency cases were processed by a juvenile court. The demographic breakdown of those cases as compared to the general population can be found below:

General Population by Race 2021

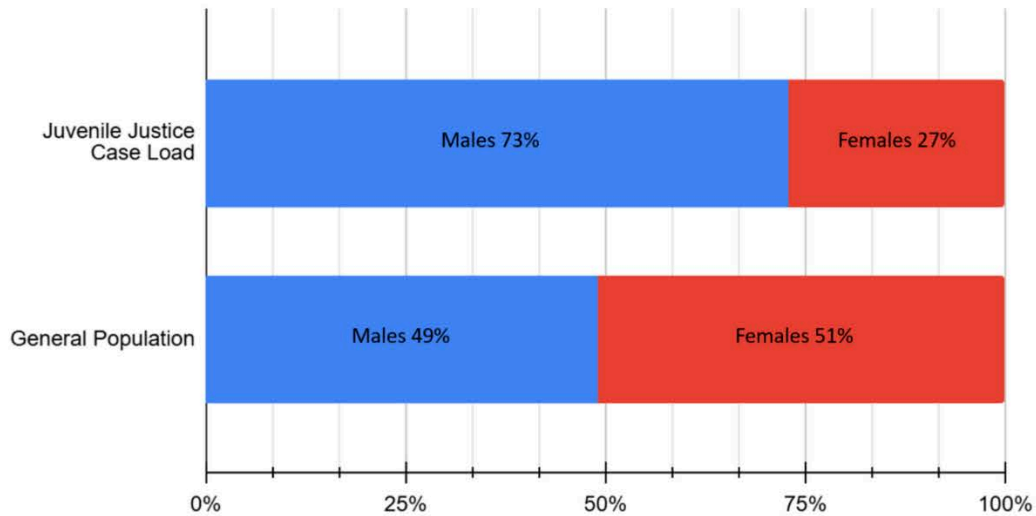


Petitioned Cases by Race 2021



Created from: https://www.ncjj.org/pdf/jcsreports/jcs2021_508Final.pdf

Sex Distribution in Juvenile Justice System Compared to General Population in 2021

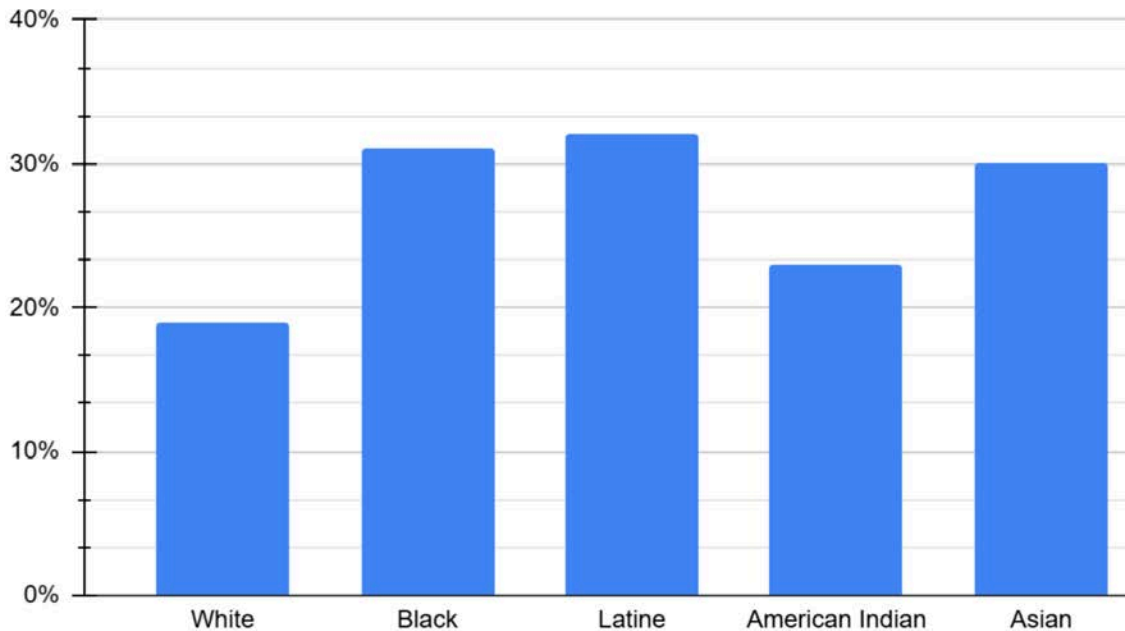


Created from: https://www.ncjj.org/pdf/jcsreports/jcs2021_508Final.pdf

Youth in Confinement

Every day, more than 48,000 youth are held in out of home placements pursuant to a juvenile or criminal court case. Youth of color are more likely than their White counterparts to be detained and incarcerated.

Detention by Race



Created from: https://www.ncjj.org/pdf/jcsreports/jcs2021_508Final.pdf

NOTE: Children under the age of 10 years of age not included due to minimum age guidelines in the Juvenile Justice System. In some jurisdictions 17-year olds are referred to the adult criminal court and are not counted as part of the juvenile system.

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

There have been many efforts to reform the juvenile justice system, including some of the important initiatives highlighted below:

Organization	Initiative	Initiative Link
MacArthur Foundation	Safety and Justice Challenge Network	http://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/
Vera Institute of Justice	Reshaping Prosecution Project	https://www.vera.org/projects/reshaping-prosecution-program
	Prosecutor's Guide	https://www.vera.org/unlocking-the-black-box-of-prosecution
	Restoring Promise Project	https://www.vera.org/ending-mass-incarceration/dignity-behind-bars/living-conditions-in-prison/restoring-promise-initiative
	Status Offense Toolkit	https://www.vera.org/publications/status-offense-toolkit
Juvenile Law Center	Juvenile Life without Parole	https://jlc.org/issues/juvenile-life-without-parole
Juvenile Law Center Youth Advocacy Program	Empowering Youth in Court	https://jlc.org/youth-advocacy
	Expunging Juvenile Records	https://jlc.org/youth-advocacy

National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)	Ending the Practice of Trying and Incarcerating Youth in the Adult Criminal System Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/policy/ending-practice-trying-incarcerating-youth-adult-criminal-system/
	Reforming the Juvenile Justice System to Treat Children in a Developmentally Appropriate Manner Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/initiatives/create-youth-justice-system-supports-development-and-opportunity

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Module 2

NAVIGATING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“I will admit though, I've gotten the lucky hand every single time I've been in here. They let me out normally my first or second court date, but my second court date is coming up. Hopefully I will get released, but I'm not sure, but I'm just asking to get released on unsuccessful probation. And that means that I can't get in trouble until I'm 19 or my juvenile charges turn into adult charges.”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to provide an overview of the juvenile justice continuum and the most common ways that youth move through the system.

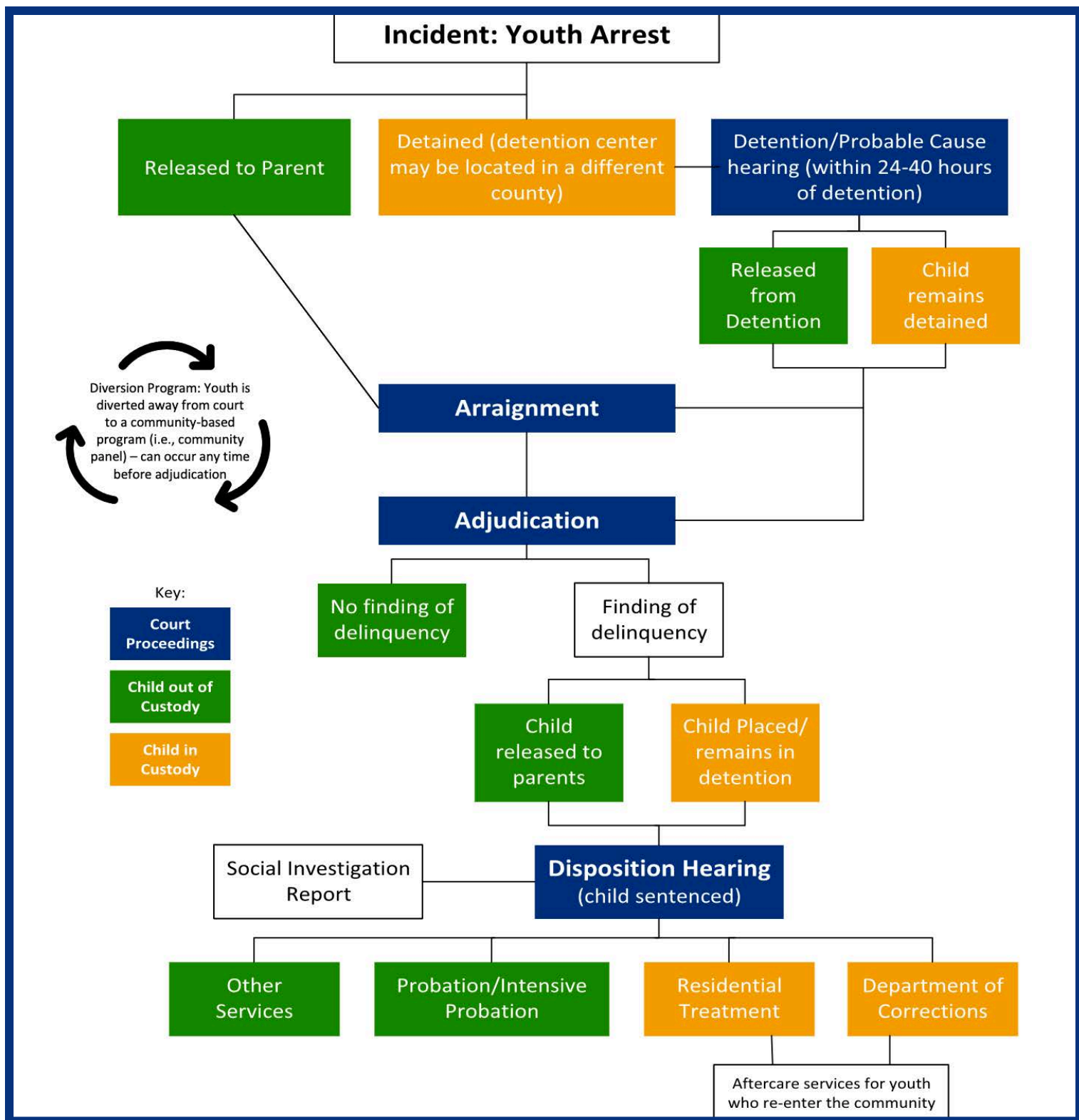
The Juvenile Justice Continuum

The juvenile justice system is a multifaceted and complex system with a variety of different entry points and settings that vary by jurisdiction. However, most youth come to the attention of the juvenile justice system when they are accused of committing a delinquent act, or an act that would be charged as a crime if committed by an adult. This typically begins with an arrest by law enforcement, which is the most common point of initial contact.



According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 84% of referrals made to juvenile courts in 2020 originated with law enforcement¹. Other referral sources include victims, probation officers, schools and parents. Status offenses, which are non-criminal acts that are only violations due to a youth being a minor, may also bring adolescents to the attention of the system.

The following flow chart provides an example of the typical juvenile court process, beginning with an arrest and ending with the dispositional (i.e., sentencing) stage. **Please note that there are many “off ramps” throughout this process, and not all cases move through all stages of the system.**



Adapted from the Gault Center's [Flowchart of the Juvenile Court Process](#)².

Additional information about each stage of the juvenile court process is provided in the following pages. However, it is important to note that the structure of the system, as well as the governing policies, procedures and laws, varies widely from state to state. This guide provides an overview of the juvenile justice system with a focus on concepts that span across jurisdictions, but jurisdiction specific information can be obtained by accessing local and state resources.

Arrest

If an arrest is made, a youth may be released by law enforcement with no further action, referred to juvenile court or diverted away from the juvenile justice system to an alternative program.



If the youth's case is sent to juvenile court, an intake is conducted (often by the probation department and/or prosecutor's office) to determine whether to dismiss the case, handle the case informally outside of court or prosecute the case in court. Informal processing of a case typically involves an agreement with the youth to adhere to things such as payment of restitution to the victim, school attendance, curfews, and/or community service. If the youth complies, the case is dismissed. If not, the youth's case is typically referred for formal court prosecution.

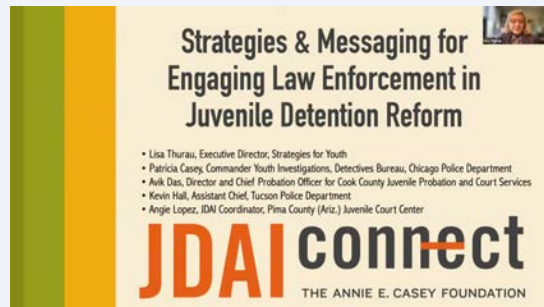
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- In 2020, the most recent publicly available arrest data, law enforcement agencies in the United States made 434,000 arrests of persons younger than 18³.
- Arrests by law enforcement primarily involve patrol officers and school resource officers (see Module 7 for more information about school resource officers).
- Law enforcement personnel have the discretion to divert youth instead of arresting them (e.g., give a warning, return to home/parents, require attendance in community or social service programs)
- Being arrested can be frightening and traumatic for any youth, especially if the arrest involves weapons or use of force. Between 2015–2020, 4,000 youth aged 17 and younger experienced the use of force by law enforcement⁴. This was found to be particularly salient for Black girls, who represented 20% of the victims of use-of-force victim (vs. White girls who represented 3%) during that time period.
- Many jurisdictions now provide additional training for law enforcement, with the goal of reducing the use of violence during youth arrests.



- Training programs developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation provide for law enforcement personnel with new strategies for engaging youth to prevent violent encounters⁵.

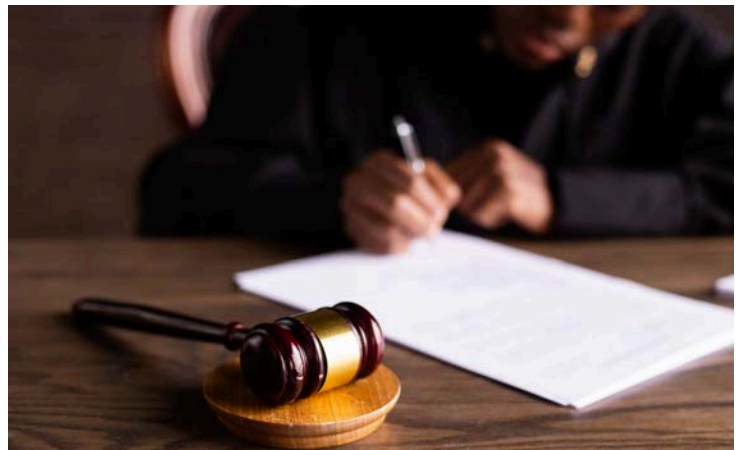
RESOURCES



This [report](#)⁶ and corresponding [webinar](#)⁷ were created to help Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) sites join together more effectively with law enforcement to reduce the use of detention and increase opportunities for diversion.

Formal Court Prosecution

If a youth's case is formally prosecuted in juvenile court, the prosecutor files a petition detailing the allegations and requesting that the youth be adjudicated delinquent, which results in the youth becoming "a ward of the court." In some jurisdictions, for more serious charges, the prosecutor may also file a waiver petition requesting that the youth be "waived up" and prosecuted in adult court. In other jurisdictions, the prosecutor may directly file a criminal case against a youth in adult court.



As shown in the diagram above, formal prosecution typically begins with an arraignment (or first appearance) in front of a judge. At the arraignment, the judge makes an initial determination about whether the youth will be detained or will be allowed to remain in the community pending the case outcome. If there is a finding of guilt after a fact-finding (i.e., trial) or the youth pleads guilty, the youth is "adjudicated as a delinquent" and the case proceeds to disposition (i.e., sentencing).

Disposition



If a youth is adjudicated delinquent in a juvenile court case, the next step is for the judge to determine the outcome, or disposition, of the case. At this stage, a judge may order a psychological evaluation to assist with tailoring a dispositional plan in line with the youth's needs.

Although specific options vary by jurisdiction, common dispositional outcomes include:

Probation

A dispositional option available to the court as an alternative to commitment, in which an adjudicated youth remains in the community under certain conditions and under the supervision of a probation officer for a specified period of time⁸. While on probation, the youth may have to abide by certain requirements, such as meeting regularly with the probation officer, attending school consistently, and/or engaging with mental health treatment. If a youth is placed on probation, they must complete the entire term of probation, or the case will be referred back to court. As of 2019, probation was the most likely sanction imposed by juvenile courts, with probation being the most restrictive outcome in 65% of adjudicated cases⁹.

Placement (also known as Commitment)

This dispositional option involves placing a youth away from home for a specified period of time determined by the judge. Depending upon the jurisdiction, placement options may include post-adjudication residential facilities (i.e., juvenile prisons) as well as non-secure residential facilities (i.e., group homes). If residential placement is the disposition, then a period of aftercare will usually be ordered after release from placement.

Residential Facilities

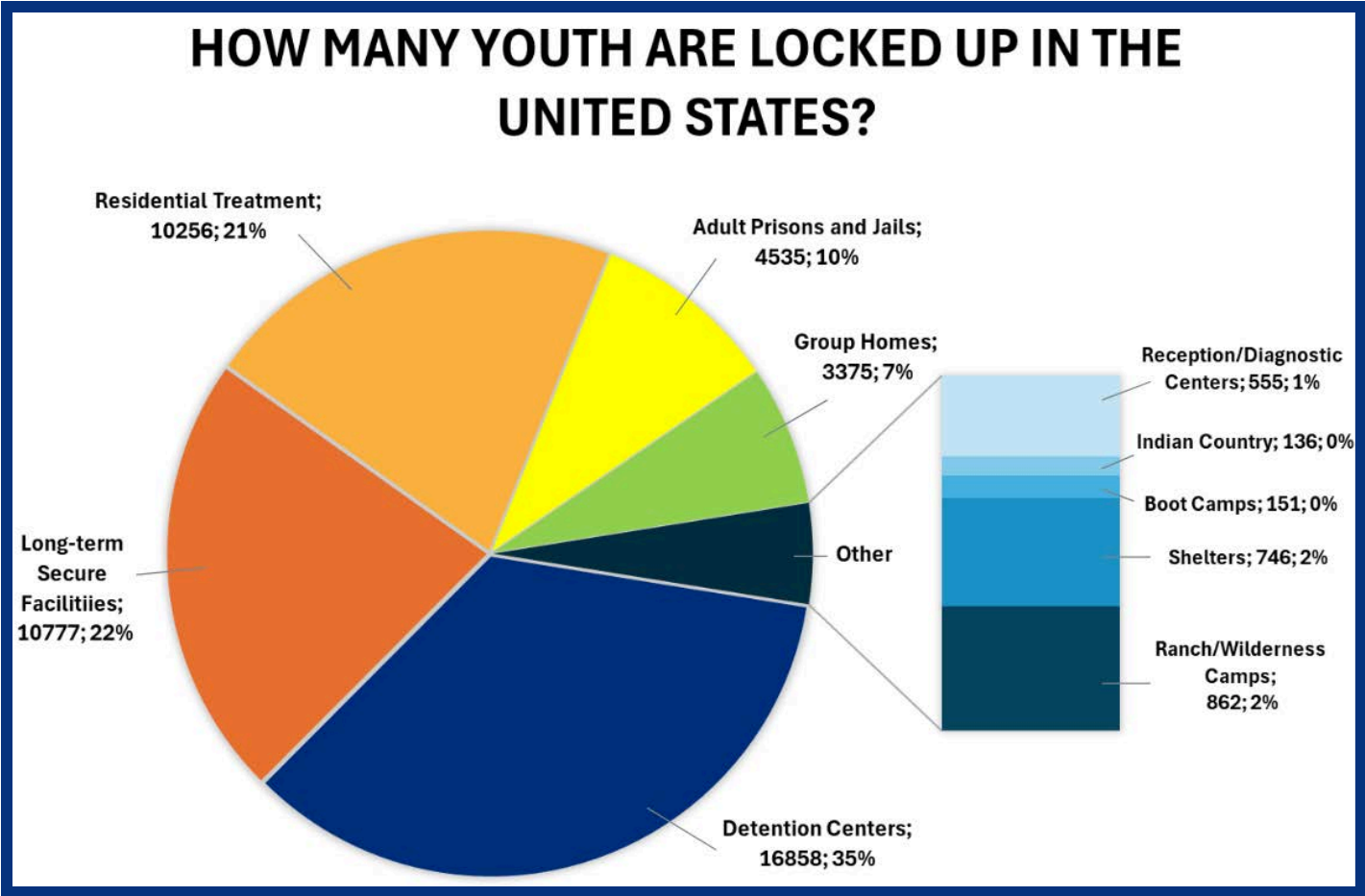
“When I wake up I just see all these bricks everywhere and I am like damn like this is not what I’m used to waking up to an it’s never going to be what I’m used to waking up to”

“One of the good things I can say here is reassurance that you know what you know what you gonna be doing in the next 2 hours. You know when your meals coming, you know when you gonna go to sleep, you know when you gonna wake up.”

–Marques, youth in detention on his experience¹⁵

Although the terminology may differ by jurisdiction, there are two main types of residential facilities available in juvenile justice cases. These types of facilities are frequently called detention facilities and correctional facilities. In both types of facilities, front line staff provide around the clock care to youth. In some jurisdictions, front line staff in detention facilities are known as corrections officers, whereas in others they are more akin to youth counselors. In general, residential facilities are required to provide educational programming, medical and mental health services to youth, as well as recreational programming. However, there is significant variability in the services provided to youth across jurisdictions and settings.

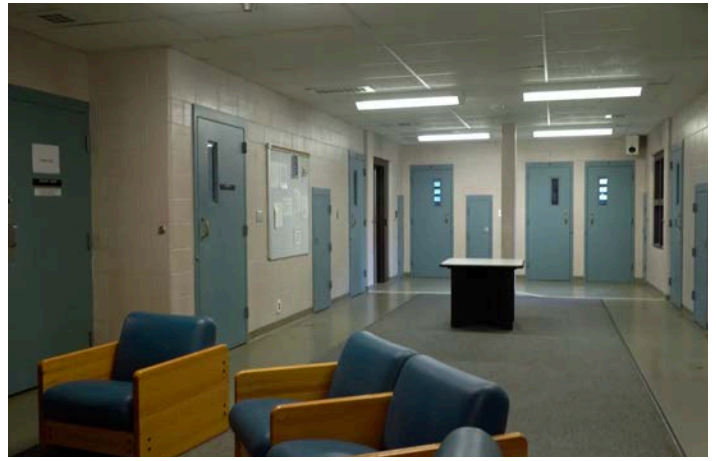
The figure below provides an estimate of the number of youth in different types of out of home placements in any given year.



Adapted from: <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/youth2019.html>

Detention Facilities

Youth who are awaiting the outcome of a delinquency case may be held away from home in a juvenile detention facility. Juvenile detention facilities may be designated as secure (i.e., locked) or non-secure, which is more akin to a group home setting. A judge may order a youth to be detained in a juvenile detention facility at any point throughout the juvenile court case. In 2023, 13,285 youth in the United States were residing in pre-adjudication detention facilities¹⁰.



Correctional Facilities

Following a delinquency adjudication, youth who are sentenced to placement away from home may be placed in a juvenile correctional facility for a specified period of time. Although the options vary by jurisdiction, correctional facilities tend to be secure settings where youth reside for longer periods of time as compared to detention settings. In many jurisdictions, correctional facilities are located in more rural environments, far from the youths' home communities. Some states, such as New York, have made efforts to include placement options that are more integrated within youths' communities, thereby making it easier for families to be incorporated into treatment and dispositional planning¹¹.

Discipline and Crisis Management

In some residential settings, staff are trained to use verbal de-escalation strategies when youth become dysregulated, relying on holds and other physical restraints only when necessary. Commonly used restraint techniques include Safe Crisis Management (SCM), which emphasizes relationship building and the use of restraints and holds as a last resort¹². However, this varies greatly by jurisdiction and setting, with some settings using physical restraints and even abusive tactics more frequently than others. In more extreme cases, youth may be handcuffed, shackled, pepper sprayed or confined to restraint chairs¹³.

Solitary Confinement

Solitary confinement refers to the practice of involuntarily isolating youth in detention or correctional facilities to one area for a period of time. Although solitary confinement has been shown to be extremely detrimental to youths' mental health, this practice is still used in juvenile detention and correctional facilities across the country. It is sometimes referred to by other terms, such as room confinement or seclusion.

Reform efforts:



State reforms: Some states have taken steps to significantly reduce or ban the use of this practice.

In 2017, the Juvenile Law Center filed a federal lawsuit alleging the harmful use of solitary confinement and other harsh practices in two residential facilities in Wisconsin. As a result of the settlement in that case, the state of Wisconsin agreed to stop the use of solitary confinement and pepper spray, limit the use of mechanical restraints, and use strip searches only when necessary.¹⁴

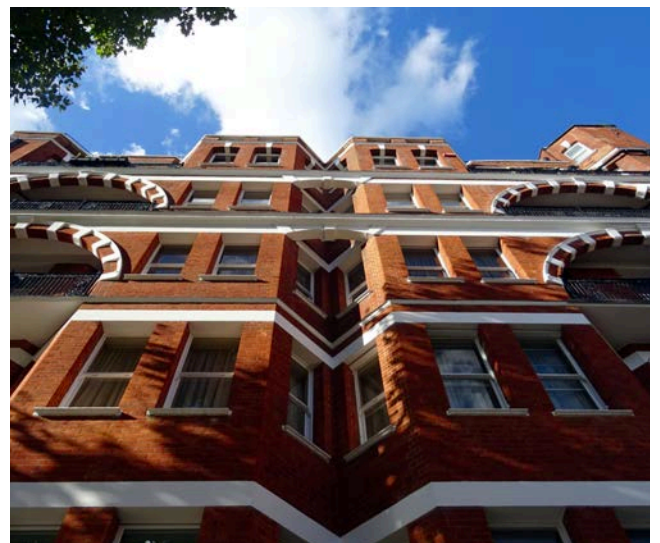
“It’s just the way we do things everything is about security here, making sure everything is accounted for. Getting searched every day to and from school. I don’t really feel any way towards it that’s just what it is.”

“It makes me happy visualizing what I could be doing if I was home. Me having the freedom to go wherever I want to go talking to my family.”

–Marques, youth in detention on his experience¹⁵

Community Reentry

Community reentry (also known as juvenile reentry or aftercare) consists of programs and services to help youth make the transition from out-of-home placement to the community. Services may include, but are not limited to, assistance with housing, school enrollment, employment, and medical and mental health care. The extent to which a youth receives such supports depends upon the jurisdiction and placement facility from which they are being released. The overall goal of reentry programs is to reduce recidivism and prevent youth from returning to the system after their release.



“

“Having the right people, mentors who understand that you know you went in when you were young and so for myself for example, I went in when I was 17 and I was sentenced to life in prison and I did 16 ½ years and when I came home, one of the things I realized and it was mostly like through therapy that like psychologically I was still kinda like 17 years old . . . so for me going out and coming home at 32 and trying to get my life together there were so many things I didn’t learn”

”

— Chris, formerly incarcerated individual, Founder of Second Chances¹⁶

“

“A lot of kids go home and come back multiple times and I personally talked to a few that have and some of them said because they have 3 meals a day they have [clothes] on their back and they don’t have to worry about struggling trying to figure out when the next meal is gonna be or where they’re gonna lay their head”

”

— Zhacori, formerly incarcerated youth¹⁷

RESOURCES

[Youth Returning to the Community from Juvenile Justice Facilities: A Guide for Advocates](#) is a comprehensive guide to youth reentry created by the Youth Law Center¹⁸.

This [guide](#) was developed for youth, to assist them in their reentry back to the community¹⁹.

In this video [Embracing Principles of Effective Practice for Juvenile Reentry](#), Jennifer Pealer, Senior Policy Analyst at the CSG Justice Center provides a framework for developing evidence based juvenile reentry programs and guidelines for best practices²⁰.

This video, [Juvenile Justice ReEntry Transition Tuesday Episode 65 by Ten Sigma](#), discusses ways to help students make the transition back to their home school after being in detention²¹.

Lived Experiences: This video features [Which Reentry Programs Reduce Recidivism?](#) provides an introduction to 3 juvenile re-entry programs that seek to prevent recidivism in young offenders²².

Community-Based Alternatives

In the past decade, there has been a greater emphasis on diverting youth away from the juvenile justice system and towards involvement in alternative programs in the community. This can happen at any stage in the juvenile justice process, including pre-arrest, post-arrest, pre-disposition or post-disposition.



For example, youth can be informally diverted prior to the filing of a petition in a juvenile court, which keeps them out of the system entirely. Diversion can also take place more formally after the filing of a petition but as an alternative to adjudication or incarceration. Diversion is intended to hold youth accountable while providing needed services to assist youth and their families in the community²³. This takes place without resorting to legal sanctions, court oversight or the threat of confinement.

Points of entry for youth diversion include:

- a. Prior to arrest: The first opportunity for diversion is for police officers not to make an arrest or for school officials not to involve police or initiate a court referral when confronting youth involved in minor law-breaking behavior at school.
- b. At juvenile court intake: After an arrest, juvenile court intake officers can assess and determine that the youth does not pose a threat to public safety, and it is not in the interest of the young person to refer the case for formal processing in juvenile court.
- c. At the prosecutorial level: Once youth have been referred to juvenile court-prosecutors or judges could decide that formal processing would neither make the public safer nor benefit the young person.

More detailed information about diversion can be found in Module 5.

Examples of alternatives to detention or incarceration:

Home-based options:

- Home confinement or house arrest
- Day (or evening) treatment
- Intensive Supervision Programs (ISPs)

Residential alternatives to secure confinement:

- Shelter care
- Group home
- Specialized foster care settings



RESOURCES

[Closer to Home: An Analysis of the State and Local Impact of the Texas Juvenile Justice Reforms from The Counsel of State Governments Justice Center \[CSG Justice Center\]](#)

[What Is Juvenile Diversion? – The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

Organization	Initiative	Website
JLC Youth Advocacy Program	Conditions in Youth Prisons	https://jlc.org/juveniles-justice/conditions-youth-prisons
Johnson et al. (2025)	Youth Detention and Incarceration Facilities in the United States (2010 to February 2023): Mapping Closure Intents and Implementation	https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.H.2025.308118
Annie E. Casey Foundation	Reducing Youth Incarceration	https://www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/reducing-youth-incarceration
	Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)	https://www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/jdai
The Sentencing Project	System Reforms to Reduce Youth Incarceration	https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/system-reforms-to-reduce-youth-incarceration-why-we-must-explore-every-option-before-removing-any-young-person-from-home/
National PREA Resource Center	Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://bja.ojp.gov/program/prea/overview • https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/ • 34 USC Ch. 303: PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION
Youth First Justice Collaboration	No Kids in Prison Initiative	https://www.nokidsinprison.org
Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA)	Medicaid Opportunities to Support Youth Leaving Incarceration Resources	https://cjja.net/resources/

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11. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/rehab/close-to-home/>
12. <https://safecrisismanagement.com>
13. Juvenile Law Center (n.d.). Solitary confinement & harsh conditions. <https://jlc.org/issues/solitary-confinement-other-conditions>
14. <https://jlc.org/cases/jj-v-litscher>
15. Inside Juvenile Detention, The Atlantic, running time 10 min 40 sec, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-obURq6wBo>
16. Inside Juvenile Detention, The Atlantic, running time 10 min 40 sec, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-obURq6wBo>
17. Inside Juvenile Detention, The Atlantic, running time 10 min 40 sec, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-obURq6wBo>
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Module 3

TIPS FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS INTERACTING WITH JUVENILE JUSTICE

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

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“How do you help a 16-year-old when all their life all they know is violence? You can't just swoop in and say stop doing what you're doing. It's not gonna work”

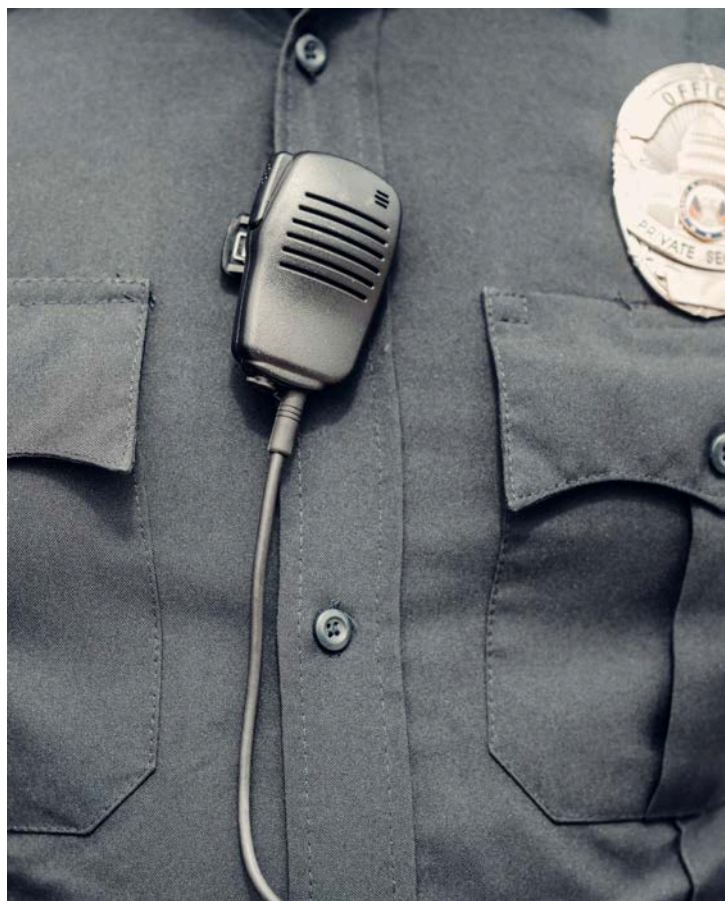
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-Zhacori, formerly incarcerated youth

The goal of this module is to provide specific guidance to community-based mental health professionals about the best way to interface with the juvenile justice system and support youth in their practice who may be involved, or at risk of involvement, with the juvenile justice system.

Interfacing with the Juvenile Justice System

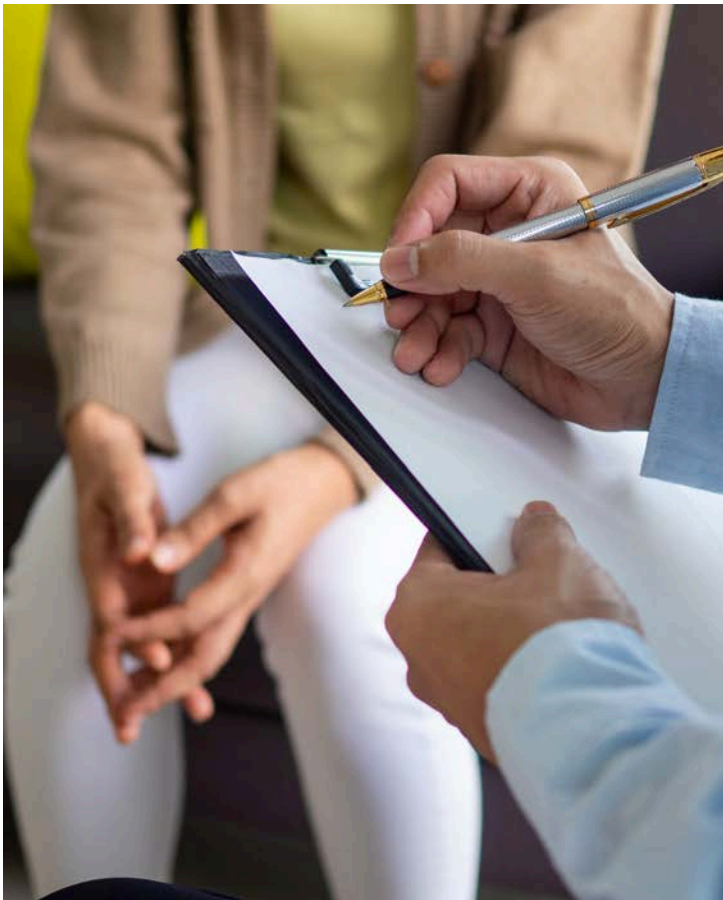
When working with youth involved in the juvenile justice in some capacity (e.g., courts, probation, detention), it can be helpful to communicate with juvenile justice staff and any mental health providers who may be interacting with the youth. However, it's important to note that this communication can be nuanced. For example, communicating a youth's needs to a detention-based mental health provider (after executing a HIPAA release) can be extremely helpful for continuity of care, not all youth are able to access therapy in detention or correctional settings and it may take some leg work to identify and make contact with a provider in many settings. If this presents as a challenge, reaching out to the youth's attorney or caregiver may be helpful.



Additionally, communicating mental health-related information to non-mental health staff in court systems and juvenile justice settings can help such settings identifying a youth's needs and incorporate appropriate services, but mental health professionals outside of the juvenile justice system should be aware that some communication (verbal or written in the form of evaluations/other documentation) may be misunderstood by juvenile justice professionals and end up affecting young people negatively.

“Remember these are kids who oftentimes, have no reason to trust another adult given what they have been through. Be patient, consistent and empathic.”

—Clinician working in juvenile detention



Juvenile justice professionals who are not trained to understand mental health problems and diagnoses, may have a colloquial understanding of diagnoses/diagnostic labels and not truly understand the potential mental health challenges a youth may face, make connections to the behaviors exhibited, nor understand the context for the mental health challenges. This can lead to misunderstandings, attributing certain behaviors to non-compliance for example (when they may actually be trauma-related), and contribute to stigma around mental health challenges in general. Mental health professionals should be cognizant of how mental health challenges are framed and provide psychoeducation and context whenever possible.

Additionally, the impact of misdiagnosis is not unique to juvenile justice settings. However, misdiagnosis in this setting can have deleterious and lasting effects on youth in the juvenile justice system, as these diagnostic labels can follow a youth throughout the system, potentially impacting court/disposition outcomes. In fact, research has also shown that diagnostic bias and unconscious bias in the diagnosis of conduct disorder and other disruptive behavior disorders exists, contributing to the overdiagnosis in youth of color and that following a diagnosis of conduct disorder, youth of color face poorer outcomes than white youth^{1,2,3}. Conduct problems may be a behavioral response to underlying issues such as depression, anxiety, or posttraumatic stress, as opposed to underlying antisocial pathology implied in a conduct disorder diagnosis⁴.

“

“Allow the young person to be your teacher. Show deep interest and compassion for what they have been through. This helps establish and strengthen rapport. This gives them a sense of control that they may have never experienced in their lives.”

”

— Clinician working in juvenile detention

In juvenile detention centers, frontline staff often spend the most time with youth and as a result, can provide helpful information about youth’s emotions, behaviors, adjustment and functioning. While this insight can be valuable, frontline providers often don’t have opportunities to communicate with outside providers. Case managers in detention can serve as a bridge to connecting community mental health providers with different members of the multidisciplinary team in detention (ex. frontline staff, programming, medical, mental health and educational providers). A youth’s legal team can also serve as a bridge for communication with providers.



Supporting Youth and Families in Your Practice/Setting

“

“Just because in the moment I was in crisis, doesn't mean I'm a bad kid. It means you were in crisis. It does matter that you are in crisis and how you reacted, but it doesn't mean that you're a bad kid.”

”

–Youth in Detention

As noted throughout this guide, many youth involved in, or at risk of involvement in, the juvenile justice system have exceptionally high rates of trauma exposure and traumatic stress symptoms. Involvement at any stage of the juvenile justice system is also highly stressful and can be triggering for youth and their families, potentially leading to traumatization and/or further exacerbation of existing traumatic stress. On top of this, families in justice settings are often facing other life stressors that may influence the degree to which they are able to effectively manage a youth’s justice involvement (e.g., poverty, limited service access, lack of insurance, discrimination, parental incarceration, child

welfare involvement, intergenerational trauma). This makes it all the more crucial for a youth to have a mental health provider who can provide support, coping resources and other important services.

Youth Who Have Been Arrested and/or Formally Prosecuted

When working with a youth who has recently been arrested, it's important to consider that this is a time of significant stress for both the youth and their family. This stress is irrespective of the charges or reasons why a youth was arrested. Non-judgmental support from a mental health provider at this stage of the process is critical, as an arrest (whether founded or not), can trigger a host of negative responses from individuals and settings in the youth's ecosystem, including school officials, community members, peers and even family members. An arrest does not necessarily mean that the youth will end up moving further along the juvenile justice continuum, as some youth are arrested and the case is subsequently dropped, but it is important to prepare for this possibility.



Youth who are arrested and formally prosecuted will have multiple court dates in front of a judge, and it may take many months or even years for the case to reach a resolution. Mental health support can be extremely beneficial during this period, as it is fraught with uncertainty about what will happen next, with the possibility for significant, life-changing consequences depending upon the severity of the charges. Youth and families are often confused about the innerworkings of the court system and process, further increasing their stress.

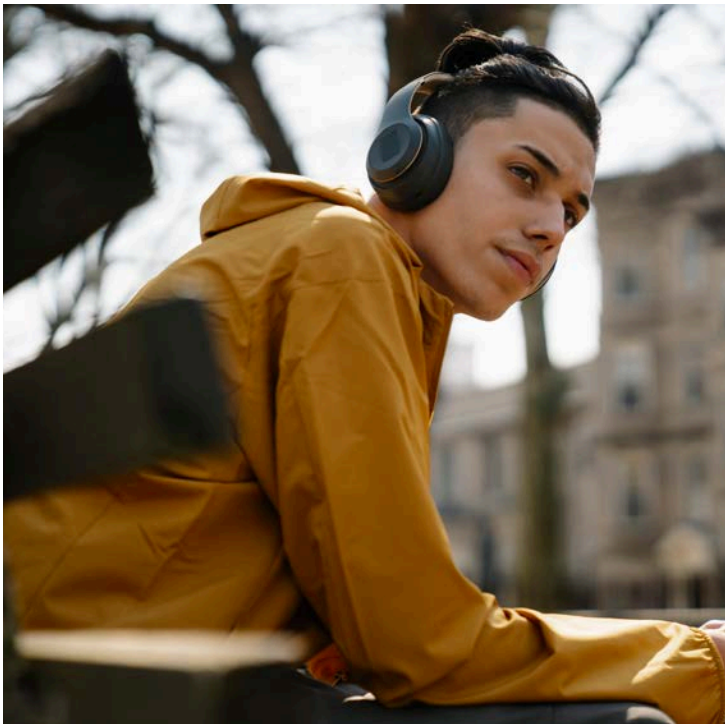
Youth on Probation or Otherwise Mandated to Services

Many youth who receive a disposition (or sentence) in a juvenile justice case are mandated to a period of probation or other community-based services. Youth who are on probation will have a probation officer assigned to them, as well as many requirements to fulfill, such as meeting with the probation officer, attending school on a consistent basis, refraining from the use of substances, and not having any subsequent arrests. Support from a mental health provider can be integral in helping a youth to meet these requirements.



Mental health services may also be ordered as part of a probation disposition. When working with youth on probation, it can be helpful to communicate with the youth's probation officer in order to gain a better understanding of what is expected of the youth during the probation term. Additionally, if a probation officer knows that a youth has a pre-existing relationship with a mental health provider, this could be continued to satisfy any mental health-related service requirements rather than having the officer create an entirely new service referral. However, when communicating with probation officers, it is important to recognize that they are not mental health providers and their goals are different from non-justice service providers in the community. For example, if a youth is struggling with service engagement and a probation officer perceives that the youth is not complying with the conditions of their probation, the officer may be required to report this as a violation, which can result in a youth's probation being revoked in favor of a more restrictive sentence. In this instance, and many others, the timeline, considerations, and goals for mental health treatment do not always match up with those of the juvenile justice system.

Youth Returning to the Community from Detention or Residential Placement



When working with youth who are returning to the community after a stay in detention, there are several things mental health providers should consider. Assess and address the potential barriers that may keep youth from continuing mental health treatment including, the stigma of receiving mental health services, feelings of guilt, shame for both youth and families, unchecked bias/culturally incompetent clinicians, and safety concerns (for example, does youth feel safe attending treatment in the neighborhood or community the services are provided in?) to name a few.

“We must first acknowledge that issues pertaining to race and racism exist and are deeply embedded in our society and then we must provide the young person with a space to explore and openly discuss these issues. Naming racial trauma and providing young people with a space to explore the unique challenges they face on a daily basis as well as their hopes, dreams and aspirations is crucial. Allowing them voice and choice when exploring these issues.”

— Clinician working in juvenile detention

Mental health providers should use screening and assessment tools to help match youth to appropriate services and evidence-based treatments based on needs (ex. dual diagnoses). When screening for trauma exposure, providers should consider screening for exposure to racial trauma as well (for example the UConn Racial/Ethnic Stress & Trauma Survey: UnRESTS⁵) and address these experiences in treatment.

“It’s important for clinicians to understand the child through a trauma lens. Conduct and other disruptive behavioral diagnoses are purely behavioral and don't give much insight into what is happening for the young person and/or has happened to that young person. These diagnoses don't acknowledge the context of the child/family/neighborhood and what has led to the behaviors and risk further misunderstanding and negatively labeling the person which can have serious implications for their future treatment and care. Context is everything and if we don't acknowledge it, we fail to understand the child/family.”

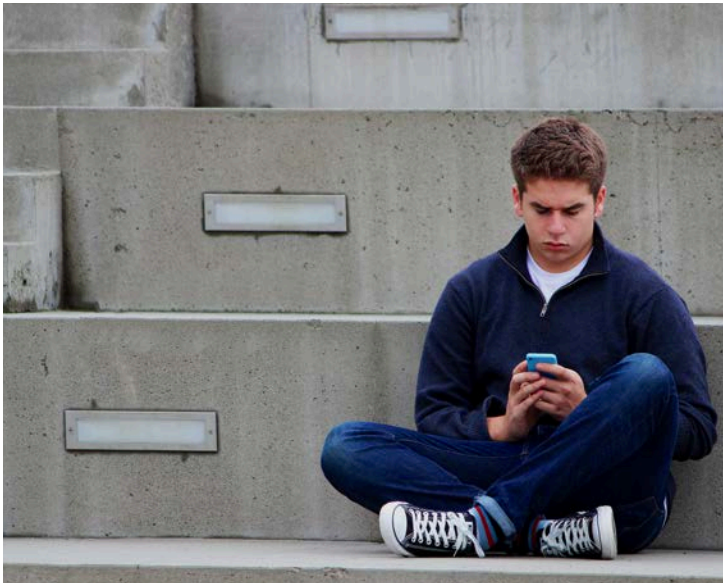
— Clinician working in juvenile detention

Treatment Considerations

The importance of building rapport and a therapeutic alliance cannot be overstated. Trust and consistency will be key in the treatment relationship as youth who have been in detention have likely experienced settings where inconsistency and unpredictability were the norm. Physical and psychological safety will be important to treatment progress. Youth may have not had access to mental health care while involved in the juvenile justice system. And if they do, treatment may have not been evidence-based. If youth did have access to evidence-based treatment (e.g. TF-CBT for posttraumatic stress), treatment may have been limited. TF-CBT highlights that issues of imminent safety, for example being in a dangerous environment, prevents engagement in trauma treatment. For example, youth in treatment that is focused on addressing traumatic stress may not be able to delve into a trauma narrative right away or at all. Providers should consider the psychological impact of incarceration and institutionalization⁶ and actively address this in treatment.

“When I got home, I still felt like I was in [detention]. I was waiting for someone to tell me its time to go downstairs for breakfast. I even found myself asking for permission to use the bathroom! But I was home...”

—Youth discharged from detention



Youth with mental health issues, including exposure to trauma and traumatic stress, can emotionally deteriorate in custody, resulting in their conditions worsening⁷. Helping youth adjust to life in the community and empowering them to exercise their voice and choice and access to resources and support should be integral to their treatment. In addition to the above challenges, youth will also be faced with exposure to triggers, peer pressure, and substances that they may have avoided to a certain extent in the facility.

Juvenile justice involved youth have many strengths, however they are often overlooked. As a therapist, and especially due to the nature of the setting, it can become natural to focus on the limitations or weaknesses of an individual. However, youth in juvenile justice settings often find creative ways to survive and navigate dangerous situations and environments. They are also talented artists, writers, speakers, athletes, comedians, musicians, dancers etc. Taking time to explore a youth's strengths and focusing on them can completely change the course of treatment.

“Acknowledge and search for untapped strengths and potential. No matter how hopeless the situation seems, there is always something that these young people are good at, whether they know it or not, and this can be fostered and developed.”

— Clinician working in juvenile detention

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Module 4

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“I was like, You know what? I'm done. I'm throwing in the towel. So I went to school. I was like, Hey, I need to talk to the DCFS worker. Finally, they were like, Hey, what do you want? And then like the 13th time that I've called, they're like, You're just the girl that cries abuse. So what's going on?”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to describe the mental health screening and assessment process typically used in the juvenile justice system. A list of commonly used screening and assessment measures can be found in Appendix III.

Purpose of Screening and Assessment



Similar to clinicians in community-based settings, professionals working within the juvenile justice system use screening tools to identify youth in need of mental health treatment, assess for risk of harm to self or others, and inform treatment planning. Screening tools may be conducted by mental health clinicians working in juvenile justice settings (e.g., legal settings, detention, placement) as well as by other juvenile justice professionals such as probation officers and intake workers.

While the terms “screening” and “assessment” are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. Screening is typically briefer, can be conducted by professionals outside of the mental health field, and is a cost-effective way of identifying youth who may be experiencing current mental health problems or are at risk for harm (e.g. suicide). Screening is often used to identify individuals who are in need of a more thorough assessment^{1,2}, which is a more comprehensive evaluation of mental health needs.

Mental Health Screening and Assessment in Juvenile Justice

Juvenile justice facilities have a legal and societal responsibility to respond to the needs of the youth in their custody^{3,4}. As previously noted (see Key Facts section), a high percentage of youth entering the justice system have mental health needs. Consequently, mental health screening typically occurs upon a youth's entry into the system (e.g. arrest, detention, probation intake). For example, a youth may complete an intake and screening process upon admission to a juvenile detention facility, sometimes with several different departments (e.g., mental health, admissions, case management, medical). The level of training required for administration of screening measures may differ by tool.



Initial screening results can inform whether youth are in need of a more in-depth assessment, which can help to more accurately identify mental health needs, make diagnoses, and inform mental health treatment and interventions. Comprehensive assessment measures typically require administration by trained mental health professionals. See Appendix III for commonly used mental health screening and assessment tools.

Risk Assessment

Standardized risk assessment tools are often used in juvenile justice settings to evaluate a youth's propensity for future offending and identify factors and services that may reduce this risk⁵. Depending upon the setting and purpose, risk assessment results can be used to determine a youth's level of care before or after adjudication, as well as to inform the dispositional and/or service plan.



Risk assessment tools can be brief or comprehensive. Brief tools tend to focus on risk for reoffending or continued offending behavior, while more comprehensive tools often examine both risk factors and factors that contribute to youths' offending behavior. It is also important to note what risk assessments don't do. For example, risk assessments are not

meant to tell the judge what decision to make for a particular youth and most do not assess for risk of sexual offending^{6,7}.

Risk Assessment Tools	
Advantages	Things to Keep in Mind
Can identify factors that if treated and changed, may reduce the likelihood of youth reoffending.	Mental health problems in general are considered specific responsivity factors through the RNR model (see below), but risk assessment tools are not designed to identify mental health problems or make diagnoses. Additional evaluation is needed for this purpose.
Available for use at several different decision points, including diversion, pre-trial detention, post-adjudication, and re-entry.	Risk assessment tools should not include items that are unrelated to risk for future offending.
Helps to conserve more intensive resources for youth with the highest risk and need, while also identifying youth at low risk of offending who may not need court involvement and should be candidates for diversion.	To avoid potential bias, only tools that have been validated with a particular population of youth should be used with that population.
Can be administered by trained probation officers, juvenile justice staff, and mental health professionals (e.g. psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers).	When tools rely primarily or exclusively on static or historical factors that focus on histories of arrest, prior charges, and/or supervision/placement failures, they may be more likely to misclassify youth of color as high risk.

Most risk assessments examine static risk factors, dynamic risk factors or a combination. Static risk factors are factors that are historical and do not change, such as prior criminal history and family history. Dynamic risk factors can be influenced or changed through intervention, such as peer associations, school engagement, and substance use. The degree to which a risk assessment tool examines static or dynamic factors depends upon the type and purpose of the tool. For example, risk assessment instruments (RAI) are used to inform decisions about short-term detention and tend to rely more on static factors, such as risk for failure to appear in court and/or likelihood of a new charge prior to adjudication. In contrast,

tools that inform case planning and risk reduction strategies examine dynamic factors associated with future offending over longer periods of time.

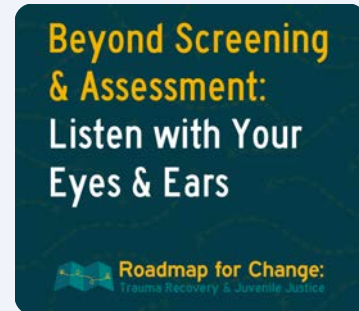


Risk assessments should also include assessment of protective factors (i.e. factors that decrease the potential harmful effect of risk factors, such as positive peer, family and mentoring relationships) and responsivity factors (i.e., aspects of a youth's circumstances that impact their ability to make progress in interventions, such as motivation to participate and change and mental health problems)^{8,9}.

Risk assessment is generally grounded in the Risk-Needs-Responsivity model^{10,11} which supports the idea that justice systems should match treatment/service programming to address youth's dynamic (i.e. changeable) risk factors and criminogenic needs according to one's overall risk to reoffend (i.e., informing the intensity and dosage of services needed to address the future delinquency risk)^{12,13,14}. In line with this model, risk assessment helps conserve the most intense and costly resources for those youth with the highest risk and need. Conversely, the RNR model reinforces that when a youth is determined to be low risk for future delinquent behavior, they should be considered candidates for diversion or light touch responses to avoid ensnaring them in the system and inadvertently increasing the likelihood of future offending due to over prescription of unnecessary services.

RESOURCES

The [CTRJJ Roadmap for Change](#) podcast episode discusses more about the tools and interventions needed to ensure success for youth in the juvenile justice system.



NOTE: More information about risk assessment tools can be found in **Appendix III**.

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Module 5

MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

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“[My therapist] helped me when I got that news from court because, you know, court sucks. So after bad Harvey, hearing bad news really sucks. And it feels like that you can't. It just feels horrible. And she got me through that, and she was able to help me with what it called learned in your anger management. Basically, like, it's okay to get angry, but you can't.”

”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to describe the most commonly used evidence-based interventions for youth involved in, or at risk of involvement in, the juvenile justice system. Some of these interventions may differ from those provided in non-juvenile justice settings.

Note: Mental health interventions that are typically used in non-juvenile justice settings are not included here, as they are likely to be more familiar to mental health professionals.

Commonly Used Juvenile Justice Interventions

Evidence-based treatments (EBTs) are interventions that have achieved successful outcomes after undergoing scientific testing, typically in the form of research studies. Below are some examples of EBTs that are commonly used with youth in the juvenile justice system. For additional information about research-practice partnerships related to the implementation of interventions in the juvenile justice system, please see this [APA Monitor article](#)¹.

Missouri Youth Services Institute (MYSI)²

According to the Missouri Youth Services Institute, “[t]he Missouri approach to juvenile justice emphasizes moving beyond symptoms to the root causes of juvenile delinquency so that changes made by young people are long-lasting, preparing them to return and contribute positively to their school, home, and community. Our broad-based approach works with the entire family and engages the community through active community liaison councils and partners.”³

Model Resources

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|-----------------------|--|
| Introduction to Model | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This video provides an introduction to MYSI⁴• This MYSI Overview provides a comprehensive look at the MYSI model and it's underlying principles. |
|-----------------------|--|

Components

MYSI is a therapeutic group treatment model for residential settings. The following are fundamental components of the model:

1. Youth reside in small, non-institutional facilities, ideally near their communities, and they remain in the same groups of 10-12 throughout their stay;
2. Youth engage in structured and predictable programming throughout the day, with an emphasis on developing skills, insight, and self-awareness;
3. Every youth has an individualized treatment team;
4. All staff are trained in the model, engage in respectful interactions with youth, and supervise youth 24/7;
5. All youth attend educational classes and teachers are part of the treatment teams;
6. Family engagement and collaboration is emphasized;
7. Each youth is assigned a case manager at intake to support them through discharge⁵

Settings

MYSI is used in detention and correctional settings.

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)⁶



MST “is an intensive family and community-based treatment for serious juvenile offenders with possible substance abuse issues and their families. The primary goals of MST are to decrease youth criminal behavior and out-of-home placements. Critical features of MST include: (a) integration of empirically based treatment approaches to address a comprehensive range of risk factors across family, peer, school, and community contexts; (b) promotion of behavior change in the youth's natural environment, with the overriding goal of empowering caregivers; and (c) rigorous quality assurance mechanisms that focus on achieving outcomes through maintaining treatment fidelity and developing strategies to overcome barriers to behavior change.”⁷

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	This Introduction to Multisystemic Therapy (MST) video provides a brief overview of the model ⁸
Components	<p>In MST, a team of Master’s-level therapists work intensively with youth and their families 3–5 months. At least one therapist on every team is available to the family 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The main components of MST include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting concrete rules and specific consequences for specific behaviors • Engaging parents in rule-setting, enforcing, and posting rules • Supporting and reinforcing parents for following through with consequences • Helping to reframe parent frustrations when a youth breaks a rule • Helping the family to build support systems outside of the home to increase the chances of rule-following behavior.
Settings	MST is primarily delivered in the community. Therapists work with youth and their families in the home, school and other community-based settings.
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MST Services: Youth & Family Intervention Resources & Training • Find a Licensed MST provider: MST Services: Our Juvenile Justice Services Community

Functional Family Therapy (FFT)⁹

According to FFT LLC, FFT “is an effective, short-term evidence-based family counseling service designed for 11-to-18-year-old youth who are at risk or have been referred for behavioral or emotional problems. FFT works with a young person’s entire family and extrafamilial influences to facilitate positive growth and development. Our effectiveness stems from the idea that families are not identical—they all have a unique set of circumstances, so our treatment plans are individualized to fit the specific needs of youth and their families.”¹⁰



Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FFT LLC website provides a comprehensive overview of the FFT model, including goals, components and underlying principles. In this video, Diane Gehart, Ph.D provides an overview of the FFT Model¹¹. This video discusses the reality of implementing an FFT program in Ireland¹².
Components	<p>FFT includes 8–12 one-hour sessions, with up to 30 sessions for families in need of more intensive services. Treatment is typically delivered over the course of 3 months and is divided into phases.</p> <p>The phases include¹³:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engagement 2. Motivation 3. Relational assessment 4. Behavior change 5. Generalization
Settings	FFT is delivered in outpatient settings and is also used as a home-based model.
Other Resources	Authorized FFT Sites

Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT)¹⁴



MDFT is a manualized family-based treatment and substance abuse prevention program that targets adolescent drug and behavior problems, as well as delinquency. It can be delivered in both inpatient and outpatient settings¹⁵.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDFT A Research-Proven, Innovative Treatment for Adolescent Substance Abuse¹⁶
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Components	<p>MDFT treatment is framed by 10 principles¹⁷:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adolescent drug abuse is a multidimensional phenomenon. 2. Problem situations provide information and opportunities. 3. Change is multidetermined and multifaceted. 4. Motivation is malleable. 5. Working relationships are critical. 6. Interventions are individualized 7. Planning and flexibility are two sides of the same therapeutic coin. 8. Treatment and its multiple components are phasic. 9. Therapist responsibility is emphasized. 10. Therapist attitude and behavior are fundamental for success.
Settings	Delivered in both community and residential settings

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC)¹⁸

MTFC provides an alternative to residential placement for youth with chronic offending and other challenging behaviors. In MTFC, youth reside with a trained foster parent for a specified period of time. The intervention is delivered to youth, the foster parent and the biological parent or other discharge resource¹⁹.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This video, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, provides an overview of the MTFC model²⁰ • There are three versions of MTFC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MTFC-P (for preschool children, ages 3 to 6) ○ MTFC-C (for middle childhood, ages 7 to 11) ○ MTFC-A (for adolescents, ages 12 to 17)
Components	<p>MTFC intervention activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Behavioral parent training and support for MTFC foster parents 2. Family therapy for biological parents (or other aftercare resources) 3. Skills training for youth 4. Supportive therapy for youth 5. School-based behavioral interventions and academic support 6. Psychiatric consultation and medication management, when needed
Settings	MTFC is multifaceted and can be delivered in multiple settings.

Mode Deactivation Therapy (MDT)²¹



“Mode deactivation therapy provides an empirically based treatment for adolescents with behavioral problems such as anger, oppositional defiant and sexual and physical aggression (Apsche & DiMeo, 2010). It offers therapists a more efficient and timely intervention that positively affects recidivism rates; MDT is derived from Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Functional Analytic Psychotherapy and Mindfulness and Meditation from ancient Buddhist practices.”²²

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	This meta-analysis provides an overview of the MDT model ²³ . Mode Deactivation Therapy (MDT) a case Conceptualization ²⁴
Components	MDT “systematically assesses and expands underlying compound core beliefs that are a product of [the] unconscious experience merging with their cognitive processing, acceptance, balance, and validation” ²⁵ . MDT incorporates meditation, imagery, and other relaxation techniques to increase emotion regulation and facilitate cognitive processing.
Settings	Can be used in a variety of settings, including residential.

Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA)²⁶

“The Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) is a developmentally-appropriate behavioral treatment for youth and young adults ages 12 to 24 years old with substance use disorders. A-CRA seeks to increase the family, social, and educational/vocational reinforcers to support recovery. A-CRA includes guidelines for three types of sessions: individuals alone, parents/caregivers alone, and individuals and parents/caregivers together. According to the individual’s needs and self-assessment of happiness in multiple life areas, clinicians choose from a variety of A-CRA procedures that address, for example, problem-solving skills to cope with day-to-day stressors, communication skills, and active participation in positive social and recreational activities with the goal of improving life satisfaction and eliminating alcohol and substance use problems.”²⁷

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	This Program Profile provides an overview of the model ²⁸ .
Components	<p>Practicing new skills during sessions is a critical component of the skills training used in A-CRA. Each session begins with a review of the homework assignment from the previous session. Every session ends with a mutually-agreed-upon homework assignment to practice skills learned during sessions. Other components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of happiness across multiple life domains to guide individualized treatment. • Selection of procedures based on individual needs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Problem-solving skills for stress and challenges ◦ Communication skills (especially within families and peers) ◦ Encouraging participation in pro-social activities (e.g., recreational, school-based) • Skills training
Settings	Outpatient, intensive outpatient, and residential treatment settings.

Contingency Management (CM)²⁹

Contingency management programs are primarily used to treat substance use disorders. CM is typically delivered directly by program staff in treatment facilities, but can also be used in outpatient settings. Goals of CM include weakening the influence of substance use reinforcements while increasing reinforcements from alternative activities, with particular emphasis on activities that are incompatible with ongoing use.³⁰

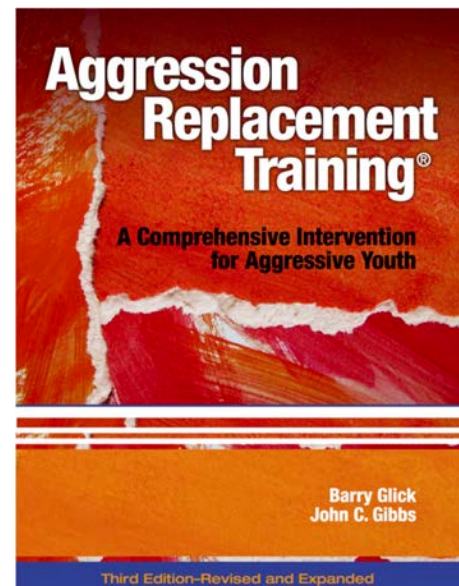
Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This video provides an overview of the CM model³¹. • The Recovery Research Institute website provides additional information on the CM model.
Components	<p>CM is grounded in the principles of operant conditioning and includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “(1) Identify and specifically define target therapeutic behaviors, such as drug abstinence • (2) carefully monitor the target behavior(s) objectively on a prespecified schedule • (3) deliver reinforcing or punishing events (eg, tangible rewards or incentives and loss of privileges) when the target behavior is or is not achieved.”

Settings	Can be used in a variety of settings, including outpatient and residential treatment.
Other Resources	<u>Contingency Management for the Treatment of Substance Use Disorders: Enhancing Access, Quality, and Program Integrity for an Evidence-Based Intervention</u> ³² .

Aggression Replacement Training (ART)³³

“Aggression Replacement Training® is a cognitive-behavioral intervention that targets aggressive and violent adolescent behavior”³⁴. When used in the juvenile court setting, ART can be implemented by trained court probation staff. Youth are eligible for ART if a formal assessment tool indicates a moderate to high risk for reoffending and identified challenges with aggression or prosocial functioning. ART uses repetitive learning techniques to help youth develop skills for managing anger and utilizing alternative behaviors. Guided group discussion is also used to modify antisocial thinking that can contribute to problematic behaviors³⁵.



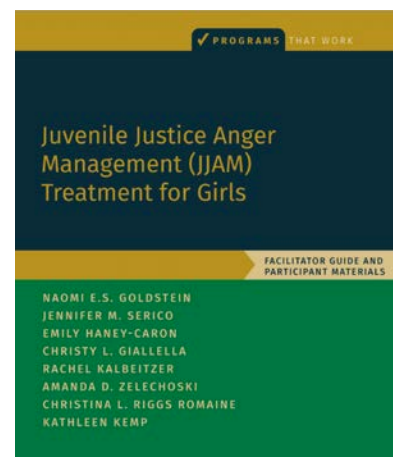
Model Resources

Introduction to Model	See this website for an overview of the model: <u>https://www.cebc4cw.org/program/aggression-replacement-training/</u>
Components	<p>ART is a 10-week, 30-hour cognitive-behavioral program administered to groups of 8 to 12 youth involved in the legal system three times per week. There are three main components, with each component specifically matched across each week and integrated for content and process. Each week builds upon the week before. Clients attend a one-hour session for each component, with the sessions occurring at the same time each week. The ART components include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social Skills Training: Teaches social skills 2. Anger Control Training: Teaches youth a variety of ways to manage their anger 3. Moral Education: Helps youth develop a higher level of moral reasoning.

Settings	Juvenile justice facilities, schools, outpatient clinics, and community-based agencies
Other Resources	Link to ART manual

Juvenile Justice Anger Management Treatment for Girls (JJAM)^{36,37}

JJAM Treatment for Girls is a structured, manualized intervention aimed at helping adolescent girls and young women in juvenile justice residential facilities manage aggression and anger. The model is grounded in the developmental and gender-specific needs of the youth and the sessions incorporate real-life experiences shared by participants, allowing the content and activities to be customized to the unique needs, backgrounds, and interests of each group.



Model Resources

Introduction to Model	This Program Profile provides an overview of the model ³⁸ .
Components	<p>JJAM is a 16-session, manualized group intervention using a cognitive-behavioral framework. Sessions are 90 minutes each and run over the course of 8 weeks. The components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on emotion regulation, coping, communication, cognitive restructuring, and problem-solving. • Sessions include psychoeducation, skill-building, and applying skills to real-world situations. • Sessions 1–3: Teach anger, physical vs. relational aggression, and differentiate anger from aggression. • Session 4: Introduce cognitive restructuring for reframing anger-provoking situations. • Sessions 5–6: Identify physiological cues and triggers for anger. • Sessions 7–10: Build skills for managing arousal and preventing aggression. • Sessions 11–14: Teach and practice problem-solving and communication skills. • Sessions 15–16: Practice generalizing and applying all learned skills.

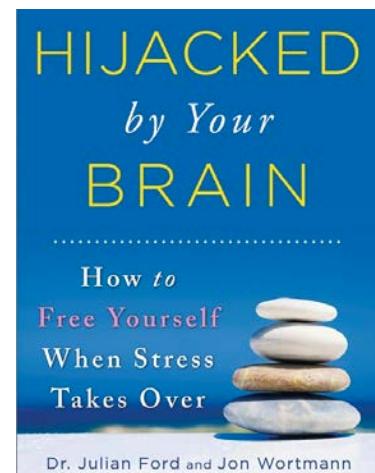
Settings	Juvenile justice residential facilities
Other Resources	The facilitator manual includes a user-friendly, session-by-session guide, along with the accompanying workbook materials for youth participants. The facilitator manual can be found here .

Trauma-Specific Interventions for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

Below are examples of trauma-specific EBTs that are commonly used to address traumatic stress among youth in the juvenile justice system. Further information on the effectiveness of trauma specific treatments for youth in juvenile justice settings can be found in this [CTRJJ Science and Services Spotlight](#) and [corresponding systematic review](#)³⁹.

Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education and Treatment (TARGET)⁴⁰

TARGET is a strengths-based therapeutic intervention for the treatment of traumatic stress in youth and adults. The TARGET curriculum focuses on a set of skills to help survivors of trauma manage traumatic stress reactions and increase self-regulation. The curriculum can be delivered by mental health clinicians and front-line staff in a group or individual format. TARGET has been used with youth impacted by the juvenile justice system in a variety of settings, including community and residential treatment programs, probation, and detention.



TARGET was originally developed in order to make two fundamental therapeutic mechanisms that are universal across multiple approaches to psychotherapy for PTSD and Developmental Trauma Disorder (DTD) transparent and practically accessible for clients and therapists: trauma processing and emotion regulation. TARGET's psychoeducation was designed to enable clients (and therapists) to understand and mentalize (i.e., visualize the internal workings of) the networks within the brain that are responsible for stress reactivity and emotion dysregulation in PTSD and DTD. Clients are provided with pictures and an accurate but non-technical description of how stress reactions involve an interaction of the stress/salience network (represented by the amygdala as an "alarm"), the self-referential memory encoding/retrieval network (represented by the hippocampus as a "memory filing center"), and the executive function network (represented by the prefrontal cortex as a "thinking center"), and how these neural systems are altered in PTSD and DTD and can be re-set with a seven-step sequence for emotion regulation skills that is summarized by the acronym, FREEDOM (described below).

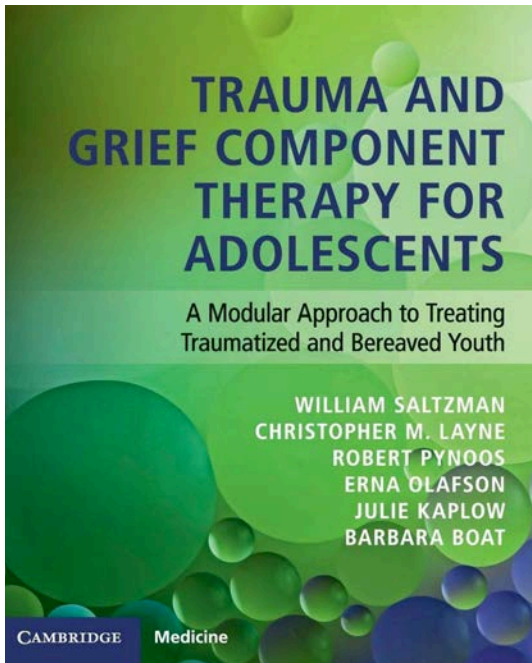
Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<p>This fact sheet provides an overview of the TARGET model (National Child Traumatic Stress Network).</p> <p>This program profile provides additional information about the model and evidence behind it's effectiveness.</p> <p>TARGET adaptations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● TARGET 1,2,3,4 (T4)● T4 for Caregivers● TARGET for Families● TARGET-based Trauma Informed Care for Staff (T-Care)● TARGET-based Trauma Informed Care for Supervisors (T-Care Plus)
Components	<p>TARGET is a manualized intervention for youth and adults (ages 11+) that can be used as an individual or group treatment. The model is typically delivered over 10-12, 50 minute sessions. Sessions are centered around a seven-step sequence for emotion regulation skills that are summarized by the acronym FREEDOM. The FREEDOM steps include:</p> <p>Focal point: choosing an adaptive focal point or orienting thought</p> <p>Recognizing triggers that set off the alarm, followed by reappraisal in four domains, including</p> <p>Emotional awareness</p> <p>Evaluation of thoughts and beliefs</p> <p>Defining goals</p> <p>Options identification</p> <p>Making a contribution</p> <p>The final step involves taking responsibility for using the first six skills in the sequence in order to make decisions and take actions that increase the safety of the individual and others, and that honor the individual's core values and life goals.</p>
Settings	<p>Schools, hospitals, community-based organizations, justice systems, outpatient clinics, and residential facilities</p>

Other Resources

Research on TARGET as an individual, group, and family therapy intervention has been done with children and adolescents of diverse backgrounds and developmental trauma histories, including studies showing evidence of reductions in behavioral incidents and mental health problems and increased prosocial behavior when TARGET was provided to youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

Trauma and Grief Component Therapy for Adolescents (TGCTA)⁴¹



TGCTA is a therapeutic intervention that was designed for older adolescents who have been impacted by trauma, loss or traumatic loss. TGCTA focuses on the interaction between grief reactions and traumatic stress reactions. TGCTA is a modular intervention that can be customized to fit the needs of the individual youth, as well as the needs of the setting and time available for treatment. TGCTA has been shown to be effective in reducing behavioral incidents and trauma-related symptoms⁴², and prolonged grief reactions⁴³ in youth in juvenile detention. TGCTA's modularized, flexible design allows clinicians to customize their intervention according to the specific needs, strengths, and life circumstances of specific youth and the time available.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model

The [TGCTA website](#) provides comprehensive information about the model.

This [fact sheet](#) provides additional information about the TGCTA model (NCTSN).

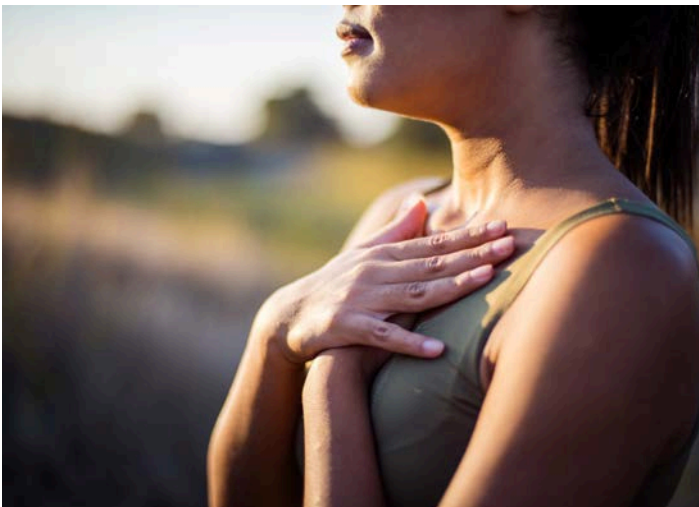
Components

TGCTA includes four modules but the selection and sequencing of the modules are left to the clinician's discretion based upon a youth's needs, strengths, and availability for treatment. Depending upon the number of modules delivered, the treatment may be completed in 8 to 24, 50 minute sessions.

The TGCTA modules and general components include:

Components	<p>Module 1: Emotion Regulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build skills to identify and manage emotions • Develop coping strategies for distress <p>Module 2: Trauma-Focused Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychoeducation on trauma and its effects • Process traumatic events and reduce distress • Address maladaptive trauma-related beliefs (e.g., guilt, self-blame) <p>Module 3: Grief-Focused Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate normal vs. maladaptive grief • Support expression and processing of grief • Foster meaning-making and healthy connections to the deceased <p>Module 4: Developmental Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuild routines and peer/school involvement • Promote identity development and future planning
	Settings
	Schools, community clinics, and juvenile justice facilities
	Other Resources
	An annotated bibliography of empirical studies supporting the effectiveness of TGCTA can be found here .

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT)⁴⁴

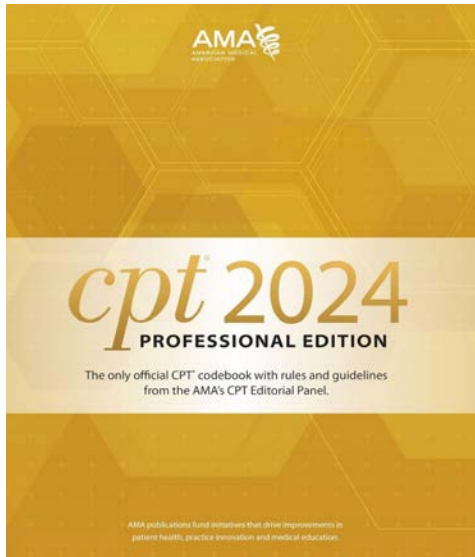


TF-CBT is an evidence-based treatment for children aged 3–18 that focuses on providing psychoeducation about trauma, enhancing coping, relaxation, and interpersonal skills, altering problematic cognitions, processing traumatic memories, and enhancing safety. TF-CBT also includes parallel sessions for non-offending caregivers. A study with detained adolescents found that TF-CBT led to a reduction in PTSD symptoms following treatment⁴⁵.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	An overview of the model and certification process for therapists can be found here .
Components	<p>TF-CBT is delivered in 8–25 individual sessions. The PRACTICE acronym is used to describe the model components, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychoeducation about trauma and positive and Parenting skills Relaxation Affective expression and modulation Cognitive coping and processing Trauma narration and processing In vivo mastery of trauma reminders Conjoint child caregiver session Enhancing future safety and development
Settings	Outpatient, community-based organizations, group homes, schools, hospitals
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TF-CBT research supports its efficacy with children and adolescents from diverse cultural backgrounds, varied types and number of types of potentially traumatic experiences including abuse and family and community violence, in the United States and internationally in Europe and Africa. TF-CBT was implemented in a randomized controlled trial with 81 adjudicated youth in residential treatment facilities, with improvements found in PTSD and depression symptoms⁴⁶. TF-CBT also has been integrated into Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care, later renamed Treatment Foster Care Oregon, in which trauma-affected girls at risk for justice involvement received TF-CBT with the active participation of specially trained therapeutic foster mothers⁴⁷. Use this link to find a TF-CBT certified therapist: https://tfcbt.org/therapists/

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT)⁴⁸



CPT is a cognitive therapy approach that is primarily used to treat PTSD in adults, although studies have supported its use with adolescents as well⁴⁹. In CPT, patients are taught to use cognitive restructuring skills to challenge and modify unhelpful, trauma-related beliefs. This enables patients to create a new and more balanced view of the traumatic event, thereby reducing the negative impact of the traumatic experience on daily life. “To accomplish these treatment goals, the patient first learns cognitive restructuring through Socratic questions. The goal is to help the patient begin to challenge and modify stuck points, particularly assimilated stuck points involving self-blame, shame and hindsight bias.”⁵⁰. Original versions of CPT included a narrative exposure component, but this is no longer a necessary component of the model.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model

- These treatment guidelines provide an overview of the model: <https://www.apa.org/ptsd-guideline/treatments/cognitive-processing-therapy>
- Additional information about CPT can be found at the [National Center for PTSD](#).

Components

CPT is delivered across a variable number of sessions. It can be delivered as an individual, group or combined treatment. Two versions of CPT are available; the original manual, which features the creation of a detailed trauma narrative, and the CPT-C which focuses on the construction of an “impact statement.” The overall CPT components include:

- Psychoeducation – Learn about PTSD and how thoughts influence emotions.
- Impact Statement – Write about how the trauma affected beliefs about self, others, and the world
- Identify "Stuck Points" – Spot unhelpful or distorted beliefs related to the trauma.
- Cognitive Restructuring – Challenge and modify negative thoughts using techniques like Socratic questioning

Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Narrative (optional) – Write and process the trauma story to reduce avoidance and emotional distress • Address Core Themes – Explore beliefs around safety, trust, power/control, self-esteem, and intimacy. • Homework Assignments – Practice skills between sessions to reinforce learning.
Settings	Outpatient, groups, hospitals, juvenile justice facilities

Skills Training in Affect and Interpersonal Regulation for Adolescents (STAIR-A)⁵¹



STAIR began as an individual therapy for adults with PTSD related to childhood abuse. An adaptation for adolescents (STAIR-A) was designed as a brief group therapy, with psychoeducation on psychological trauma and emotion identification followed by modules on emotion regulation and interpersonal communication skills. When delivered in urban schools and psychiatric inpatient settings, adolescents have reported decreases in PTSD and depression and increased coping self-efficacy^{52,53}.

A quasi-experimental evaluation of STAIR using with groups in two locked, secure juvenile justice facilities showed evidence of decreased rates of youth violent incidents when staff were carefully trained to support youth in using the skills on a daily basis and when at least one in seven youth in the facility participated in the intervention.⁵⁴

Model Resources

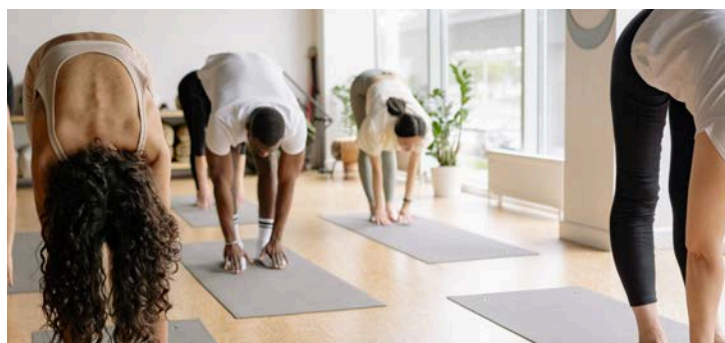
Introduction to Model	An overview of the STAIR model can be found here .
Components	<p>The overarching components of the STAIR model include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotion Regulation • Interpersonal Skills • Cognitive Coping • Stress Management • Problem-Solving • Self-Esteem & Identity

Settings	Outpatient, schools, residential facilities, groups
Other Resources	https://istss.org/clinicians-corner-skills-training-in-affective-and-interpersonal-regulation-stair-marylene-cloitre-phd/

Trauma-Informed, Mindfulness-Based Yoga (TIMBY)⁵⁵

TIMBY is a twice weekly, 1-hour long group-based Hatha Yoga intervention adapted for youth in juvenile detention facilities. A yoga teacher guides youths in practicing a varying series of yoga poses designed to lead to physical and mental relaxation and mindful present awareness. Security staff, teachers, case managers, and behavioral health professionals in five juvenile detention centers where TIMBY was being conducted reported increased prosocial behavior and mindfulness, and decreased PTSD-related symptoms (hyperarousal, emotional numbing), anger, impulsivity, and sleep problems among youth participating regularly in TIMBY⁵⁶.

Youth participants (N=70; >80% Black or Hispanic) reported appreciating being treated with respect and empathy by yoga instructors, and changes in their daily lives including reduced stress, anxiety, anger, and need for psychotropic medication and improved emotion regulation, mental focus at school, and sleep⁵⁷.



Model Resources

Introduction to Model	<p>This website provides an overview of the model:</p> <p>https://www.charliehealth.com/post/trauma-informed-yoga#:~:text=Trauma%2Dinformed%20yoga%20often%20incorporates,therapeutic%20benefits%20for%20trauma%20survivors.</p>
Components	<p>TIMBY is a twice weekly, 1-hour long group model. The components include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Consent • Mindful Awareness • Gentle Movement • Emotional Regulation • Empowerment • Consistency • Trauma-Informed Teaching

Settings	Juvenile Justice settings, school, community-based organizations, and outpatient settings
Other Resources	This video takes participants through a trauma-informed yoga class: www.youtube.com/watch?v=GR-5dcyFpv4 ⁵⁸

Good Lives Model for Girls (GLM)⁵⁹ *

GLM is a strengths-based, person-centered framework for rehabilitation that can be implemented alongside evidence-based treatments for traumatic stress with female adolescents in the juvenile justice system. GLM includes six phases and focuses on reducing the risk for offending through empowerment and identification of primary values and goals^{60,61}.

GLM supports parents, teachers, and the broader community in helping girls acquire the tools required develop prosocial internal and external resources⁶². GLM focuses dual attention to females' internal values and life priorities and external factors such as resources and opportunities (see more [here](#)).

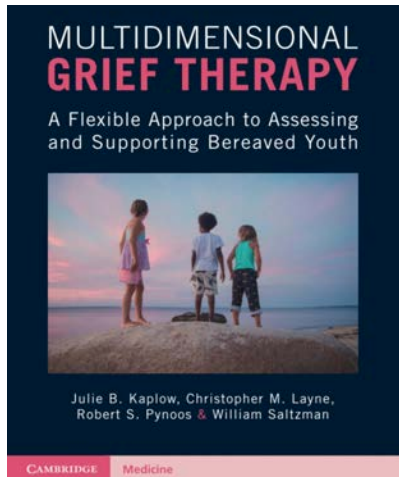


Model Resources

Introduction to Model	The Good Lives Model website provides an introduction to the model.
Components	<p>Components of GLM include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Goods • Personalized Goals • Skills Development • Well-being • Treatment Integration • Strengths-based • Recidivism Prevention
Settings	Juvenile justice settings
Other Resources	https://ecsa.lucyfaithfull.org/good-lives-model#:~:text=The%20GLM%20treatment%20and%20case,corrections%20and%20the%20custodial%20setting.

*The Good Lives Model is not yet considered an evidence-based practice, as more rigorous and high-quality research is needed to determine its effectiveness in reducing recidivism.

Multidimensional Grief Therapy (MGT)⁶³



Multidimensional Grief Therapy (MGT)⁶⁴ is an evidence-based intervention for children and adolescents, ages 7 and up, designed to reduce unhelpful grief reactions (grief that keeps kids “stuck”), promote adaptive grief reactions (grief that helps kids to cope better after a death), and help children and adolescents who have experienced loss lead healthy, happy, productive lives.

Model Resources

Introduction to Model	https://health.uconn.edu/trauma-recovery-juvenile-justice/resources/introduction-to-multidimensional-grief-therapy/
Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Grief Psychoeducation: Provide education about grief and its impact.● Emotion Identification: Help express emotions related to the loss.● Loss Narrative: Create a coherent narrative of the loss experience.● Cognitive Restructuring: Modify unhelpful thoughts about the loss.● Behavioral Activation: Encourage engaging in activities for well-being.● Caregiver Involvement: Involve caregivers in the process.● Future Planning: Support the development of future goals and hope.
Settings	Schools, community-based organizations, outpatient therapy, hospitals
Other Resources	A link to the MGT manual can be found here: https://www.amazon.com/Multidimensional-Grief-Therapy-Assessing-Supporting/dp/1107566509

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

Organization	Initiative	Website/Contact
National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)	A Trauma-Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems	https://www.nctsn.org/resources/a-trauma-informed-guide-for-working-with-youth-involved-in-multiple-systems
	Essential Elements of a Trauma-Informed Juvenile Justice System	https://www.nctsn.org/resources/essential-elements-trauma-informed-juvenile-justice-system
National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ)	Trauma-Informed Courts	https://www.ncjfcj.org/child-welfare-and-juvenile-law/trauma-informed-courts/
National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS)	Family Justice Initiative (and Court Readiness Assessment for Implementing FJI Principles)	https://www.ncsc.org/services-and-experts/areas-of-expertise/children-and-families/family-justice-initiative

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Module 6

ALTERNATIVES TO ARREST & INCARCERATION

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“I've been under house arrest for, like, over a year now. Even when I'm out if I leave the house, like, that's a violation of my probation, I can't. Even if I'm not doing anything bad, I still got to look over my shoulder.”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to expand upon the concepts and practices of diversion and restorative justice while also providing resources for further information.

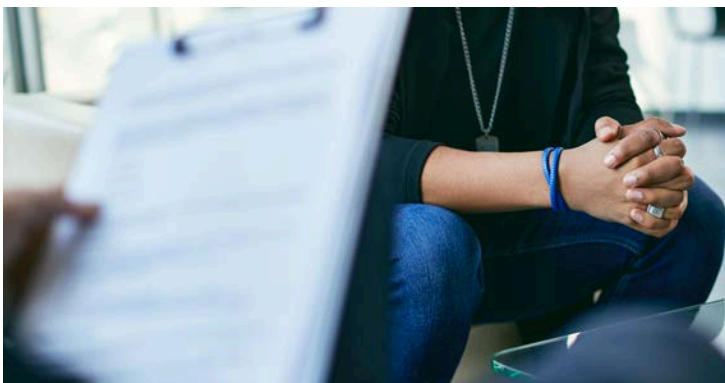
Diversion

“Bon Air specifically (youth detention facility) is so far removed from the communities the youth are coming from. Why we wouldn't consider placing what's needed in the communities where the youth are coming from that is beyond me.”

–Valerie Slater, Coordinator RISE Youth

“You're just stuck in a facility you can't call home, can't do nothing but just sleep.”

–Youth in Detention



Diversion programs offer an alternative to formal court processing while also holding youth accountable¹. Diversion is most commonly used for youth accused of non-violent offenses and it has demonstrated greater effectiveness at reducing recidivism than formal court processing and other more traditional juvenile justice interventions^{2,3}.

Options for diversion include warning and releasing a youth with no further action, mandated community service, community-based services, and restorative justice practices. Diversion can occur at multiple points across the continuum, including prior to or after a formal arrest. Depending upon the jurisdiction, the decision to divert youth can be made by the police, prosecutor, judge or probation department. In research studies, diversion has been associated with positive impacts on a variety of outcomes, including decreased risk for juvenile and adult offending.^{4,5}

RESOURCES

[What is Diversion in Juvenile Justice?](#)⁶ provides an overview of youth diversion practices and key outcomes.

[Reducing Youth Arrests: Prevention and Pre-Arrest Diversion](#)⁷ outlines the arguments and evidence supporting a national commitment to arrest prevention and diversion.

[Balancing Accountability and Support](#)⁸ features three leaders who launched and sustained pre-adjudication diversion programs in Philadelphia, Los Angeles County, California, and Memphis, Tennessee. Participants learn what motivated the leaders and their jurisdictions to increase diversion, how they implemented their pre-arrest diversion programs, and what data and outcomes they are tracking.

[How to Start a Diversion Program and Make it Work](#)⁹ continues the case studies in Philadelphia, Los Angeles County and Memphis. The panelists describe how they addressed common issues, such as: ensuring equity in access to diversion; enlisting law enforcement, prosecutors and others to try responses outside of court; securing funding; identifying and supporting grassroots community partners; and assessing and healing youth who have experienced trauma.

[The Essential Role of Juvenile Diversion](#)¹⁰ provides lessons learned from juvenile diversion improvement initiatives, including how to identify and expand the population of youth who can benefit most from diversion services while protecting public safety; what research shows are the key elements of effective juvenile diversion, including clear eligibility criteria, the use of validated risk and needs screening tools to guide diversion decisions, cross-systems collaboration, family engagement, and restorative justice; how to overcome challenges that states and counties often experience in adopting these best practices; and examples of innovative diversion programs and approaches, including Choose 180 in Washington State and the Juvenile Civil Citation Program in Delaware.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice practices focus on accountability, collaboration, and healing. Such practices aim to hold young people accountable while providing an opportunity for individuals who have been harmed by youth to voice their needs.



The process typically involves the use of trained facilitators who bring the harmed party and the young person together in order to reach an agreeable outcome. Family and community members may also be involved. Everyone must first agree to participate in the process. Restorative justice practices have been associated with a reduction in the risk for further legal involvement, as well as greater satisfaction for the party harmed as compared to formal court processing¹¹.

According to Prison Fellowship International, restorative justice is based upon three main principles:

1. Repair: crime causes harm and justice requires repairing that harm;
2. Encounter: the best way to determine how to do that is to have the parties decide together; and
3. Transformation: this can cause fundamental changes in people, relationships and communities.

RESOURCES

[What is Restorative Justice?](#)¹² provides a brief introduction the concept of restorative justice.

[Why We Need Restorative Justice?](#)¹³, details the process of restorative justice and explains why it might be a better alternative to the current system.

[Restorative Justice Briefing Paper](#)¹⁴ provides an overview of the restorative justice process and highlights the various ways restorative justice is being integrated into mainstream justice models around the world.

[Juvenile Justice: Restorative Justice and Young People](#)¹⁵ provides additional information on restorative justice and young people, including a database for tracking state legislation initiatives in each state.

NOTE: Any responsible effective restorative justice work must still be planned and executed with the recognition that those considered “harm-doers” at the time of a restorative justice intervention have also survived personal traumas and intergenerational trauma. These factors, along with the inherent power imbalance juvenile offenders often face due to their youth as compared to all other actors in this process, must be actively and openly addressed to prevent re-traumatization.

Transformative Justice



Like restorative justice, transformative justice seeks to address and repair the harms inflicted on individuals outside of the formal court process. However, transformative justice goes beyond restoration by focusing on transformation, improvement, and system change¹⁶.

RESOURCES

[What is Transformative Justice?](#)¹⁷, discusses the concept of transformative justice and asks the questions: How do we prevent and stop violence and harm without creating more violence and harm? How do we transform a society in which harm is endemic to build a culture where violence becomes unthinkable? How can small everyday acts of accountability and relationship building lead to a broad cultural shift away from harm? In this video, practitioners define the scope and potential of transformative justice.

[Everyday Practices of Transformative Justice](#)¹⁸, discusses is a vision and framework for preventing, intervening in, and transforming harm. There are a number of different practices that fall under that broader framework. In this video, longtime practitioners of restorative and transformative justice discuss the everyday skills that we need to develop to reduce violence and to address harm.



[How to Support Harm Doers in Being Accountable](#)¹⁹, people with years of experience facilitating processes between survivors of harm and people who have caused harm talk about what it really takes for people to embrace accountability.

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

Organization	Initiatives	Website/Contact
Justice Policy Institute (JPI)	Smart, Safe, and Fair Initiative	https://justicepolicy.org/research/reports-2018-smart-safe-and-fair-strategies-to-prevent-youth-violence-heal-victims-of-crime-and-reduce-racial-inequality/
Justice Policy Institute (JPI)	Defining Violence Initiative	https://justicepolicy.org/research/reports-2016-defining-violence-reducing-incarceration-by-rethinking-americas-approach-to-violence/
Various states	Sentencing Project	www.sentencingproject.org

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Resource Guide for Mental Health Professionals Working with Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System

MODULE 7

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Module 7

OVERARCHING CONSIDERATIONS

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“We're still juveniles. We're developing life, and our traumas are a big thing that they don't understand. And yeah, coping mechanisms or coping mechanisms, but they don't give us the resources like we have to go out and find our own therapist. Some of our parents can't pay the \$150 every week to go see a therapist and then we get thrown in here for a probation violation because we didn't go see our therapist.”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to provide information on the various overlapping personal, social and political realities that may impact a given youth’s interaction with the juvenile justice system.

NOTE: We recognize that there are many additional layers and realities that may impact youth beyond what is noted here. When working with youth in the juvenile justice system, we recommend asking the youth to share their perspectives on the factors that have impacted their journey.

Individual-Level Considerations

Girls in the Juvenile Justice System



Over the past 25 years, there has been a rise in juvenile justice involvement by girls^{1,2,3}. While girls make up a smaller percentage of the overall juvenile justice population as compared to males, they account for 33–50% of the “crossover” population, or group of youth who have had contact with both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems⁴. Girls’ experiences of family violence frequently influence their pathways into the juvenile justice system⁵.

Girls tend to be detained or incarcerated for less serious offenses than boys, including technical probation violations and status offenses, often as a result of self-protective behavior such as running away from violence in the home. Similarly, to the extent that girls are arrested for violent crimes, their offenses disproportionately involve family members or others with whom they have relationships, often when witnesses or victims of domestic violence⁶. Thus, reactive aggression in defense of self or others may be a substantial problem legally and interpersonally for girls affected by trauma. Self-directed aggression (i.e., self-harm) is also more common among girls affected by trauma than boys.

Girls are at higher risk for sexual abuse in detention or incarceration settings as compared to their male peers.⁷ Programs operating in juvenile justice facilities may not have been validated for use with girls or may not be available to girls because of the smaller population size⁸. More limited program options may also result in girls being sent farther away from their communities and for longer periods of time as compared to males.⁹



RESOURCES

[Spotlight on Girls in the Juvenile Justice System](#)¹⁰ highlights trends and characteristics of girls at various stages in the juvenile justice system.

[Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Among Girls in the Juvenile Justice System](#)¹⁰¹¹ pact of trauma exposure on girls both before and during involvement in juvenile justice systems

[Making Detention Reform Work for Girls](#)¹² provides detailed practical guidelines for JJ facilities in which girls are detained.

Youth of Color in the Juvenile Justice System



Youth of color are disproportionately represented across the juvenile justice continuum. For example, although Black youth represented 13.8% of the United States population in 2021¹³, they represented 24.2% of all petitioned juvenile justice cases and 31% of youth in detention¹⁴. Research has also demonstrated that Black and Latinx youth are more likely to be formally processed¹⁵, incarcerated¹⁶, and detained¹⁷ as compared to their White counterparts.

Moreover, for these youths and their families, there are often limited community-based options available for rehabilitation and positive development¹⁸.

RESOURCES

In her book [Rage of Innocence](#)¹⁹, Kristin Henning highlights the practices that have contributed to Black youths' perceptions of law enforcement, as well as the long-term consequences of Black youths' experiences in the system.

[Repairing the Breach](#)²⁰ presents the history of the American juvenile justice system from the point of view of children of color.

The [UN Report on Racial Disparities in Youth Commitments and Arrests](#)²¹ presents data on the racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

In [Race and the Juvenile Justice System](#)²² Alisa Rachelle Blair discusses racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

[Seeing RED](#)²³ outlines the steps taken by one state to address the systemic racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system.

LGBTQ+ Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

Youth who identify as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning) represent approximately 10% of the nation's population and 20% of youth in the juvenile justice system²⁴. They are more likely than their peers who identify as straight to experience rejection or abuse by their families (both biological and foster), victimization at school, homelessness, and certain types of criminal charges, such as prostitution²⁵. While youth who identify as LGBTQ+ enter the justice system for a variety of reasons, many become involved for reasons relating to their gender identities or sexual orientation, such as chronic truancy because of fear of harassment at school, running away because of harassment or abuse at home, and "survival crimes," such as sexual exploitation^{26,27}.



Once in the system, youth who identify as LGBTQ+ are especially vulnerable to experiencing rejection, harassment, and victimization, as well as mental health problems²⁸. Youth in placement who identify as gender non-conforming may also be placed in solitary housing with limited access to services. In addition, youth who identify as LGBTQ+ who have been victimized are at increased risk for self-harm and suicidality²⁹.

RESOURCES

[LGBTQ Youth in the Juvenile Justice System](#)³⁰ presents an introductory discussion about the challenges faced by LGBTQ youth in the juvenile justice system.

[Practice Guide: LGBT Youth in the Juvenile Justice System](#)³¹ presents information about LGBTQ youth in the system and guidance on best policies and practices.

[Model Policy: Transgender, Gender Nonconforming, and Intersex Youth in Confinement Facilities](#)³² provides operational practices that promote the safety, dignity, and well-being of TGNCI youth in confinement facilities.

[LGBTQ Youth Incarcerated in the Juvenile Justice System](#)³³ provides an overview of LGBTQ youth experience in the Juvenile Justice system.

This [document](#)³⁴ examines the treatment of LGBTQ youth in the juvenile justice system.

System-Level Considerations

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

The terms commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and child sex trafficking refer to activities that involve the exploitation and/or sexual abuse of children and adolescents for monetary or non-monetary gain³⁵. Examples include exploitation of a child for purposes of pornography, prostitution, or “survival sex” in exchange for money, housing, or other necessities³⁶. Although many states now prohibit youth from being charged with prostitution, some states still allow this practice even though minors cannot legally consent to a commercial sexual act³⁷.

RESOURCES

[The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: CSEC 101](#)³⁸ is a training video designed to help identify victims of CSEC and addresses many of the challenges youth face.

[Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children](#)³⁹ is a 4-page guide described implications for policy and clinical practice of screening, assessment, and services designed to meet the needs of sexually exploited youth.

Crossover Youth

A subset of youth in the juvenile justice system have also experienced child maltreatment and may or may not have past or present involvement with the child welfare system. This is important to keep in mind for several reasons. First, youths’ experiences of maltreatment and even placement in out of home settings, such as foster care, can have a significant impact on their mental health, including high rates of posttraumatic stress symptoms⁴⁰. Second, when youth are dually-involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, they may have multiple service providers and legal advocates within each system.

Third, youth with more formal involvement in the child welfare system may have an ongoing court case associated with their child protective case, which is typically separate and distinct from any court involvement on a pending juvenile justice case. Formal child protective cases may also include judicial orders related to parental and/or sibling visitation that are important to keep in mind.



- **Crossover Youth:** A broad term that encompasses youth who have experienced child maltreatment and juvenile offending, with or without formal system involvement⁴¹.
- **Dually-Involved Youth:** Youth who have had some level of system contact with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- **Dually-Adjudicated Youth:** Encompasses only those youth who are court-involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems⁴²

RESOURCES

[How to Improve Outcomes for Youth Caught Between the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems?](#)⁴³, provides an introduction to the crossover youth program and explains how it affects positive outcomes for youth.

[Crossover Youth Practice Model](#)⁴⁴ provides an introduction to the model and technical assistance for implementing the model.

Lived Experience: This video, [Seeing All of Me: A Multi-System Approach For Foster Care Youth Who Get Arrested](#)⁴⁵ presents the firsthand experiences of youth in the crossover youth practice model.

The [Trauma Focused Practice Supplement for the Crossover Youth Practice Model](#)⁴⁶ is “designed to improve multi-system collaboration on behalf of crossover youth and their families and inspire practice and policy changes aimed at better meeting their needs.”

[A Trauma Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems](#)⁴⁷ “is to help those working with youth involved in multiple systems (YIMS) and their families to use a traumatic stress perspective and provide trauma-informed care.”

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status (SES), which includes a family’s income level and other factors such as occupational and educational attainment, has been linked to adolescent mental health and well-being. For example, research has found that youth living in poverty are at increased risk for negative mental health and other outcomes⁴⁸, including juvenile offending⁴⁹. Youth from

more impoverished communities are also disproportionately represented in the juvenile justice system⁵⁰ and often have limited access to community-based mental health, medical, and other protective resources that could help to ameliorate these risks.



It is also important to keep in mind that there may be financial implications for families with children in the juvenile justice system, as some jurisdictions impose court fees and may even charge a daily rate for every day a youth is remanded to juvenile detention (see [Florida Cost of Care](#) for an example). Such costs disproportionately impact families in lower SES brackets who are already struggling to make ends meet.

RESOURCES

This video [Blueprint Webinar Series–Juvenile Justice & Homelessness: The Role of Poverty in Youth Incarceration](#)⁵¹ discusses youth centered practice and preventing criminalization of poverty.

This report [Dreams Deferred](#) by the Juvenile Law Center⁵² discusses the impact of imposing fees on families with children in the juvenile justice system.

Caregivers

“I come about twice a month, which from what I hear is a lot to be traveling you know so far, but I would like to come you know more often, but with the distance I mean you know I still have to work and things like that and the visitation is only on Sunday, you know it gets a little tough.”

–Marques Jackson’s mother, parent of youth in detention⁵³

The term caregiver can refer to many different types of adult relationships for youth with juvenile justice involvement, including biological parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, family members and friends. Within the context of the juvenile justice system, support from a caregiver can positively impact a variety of important outcomes, including reentry success⁵⁴, completion of mandated programs^{55,56}, and improved mental health symptoms⁵⁷.





However, caregivers of youth in juvenile justice settings are often left out of treatment planning and decision-making about their children⁵⁸ and report feeling overwhelmed, judged, and blamed at various stages of the juvenile justice process⁵⁹. A survey of juvenile justice professionals further highlights the challenges that parents face when interacting with the juvenile justice system, including shame and a lack of resources⁶⁰.

It is important to note that caregivers of youth in the juvenile justice system face barriers that impact their engagement, including involvement in multiple systems, transportation and child care barriers, and barriers to culturally sensitive and responsive service delivery^{61,62}. Many are also facing enormous stressors of their own that may interfere with their bandwidth to support and meaningfully participate in the treatment and rehabilitation of their children at the level expected by the system⁶³. These stressors may include trauma exposure, poverty, and mental health symptoms^{64,65,66,67}).

Despite the stressors they face, caregivers report wanting to be more involved in their children's treatment within the system⁶⁸ and family engagement is a key component of a trauma-informed juvenile justice system⁶⁹. Keeping all of the aforementioned challenges in mind, juvenile justice professionals have recommended changes to the system that would support more family involvement, including increased opportunities for caregivers to connect with each other, emphasizing families' mental health needs, shifting power to families, and extending family care beyond juvenile justice settings⁷⁰.



RESOURCES

[Family Engagement in Juvenile Justice Systems: Building a Strategy and Shifting the Culture](#)⁷¹ and its corresponding [webinar](#)⁷² provides a new framework for family engagement and guidance for implementing new practices and policies.

This [video](#)⁷³ provides family perspectives as well as answers to some common questions about the system. This is a great resource to provide to caregivers of youth with juvenile justice involvement.

This [CTRJJ webpage](#) provides resources specifically geared toward caregivers.

Listen to this [CTRJJ Roadmap for Change](#) podcast episode to hear more about supporting caregivers and siblings of youth in the juvenile justice system.

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives and Other Resources

Organization	Initiative	Website/Contact
Center for Youth Justice (CYJ)	Reform Youth in Custody Practice Model	https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/youth-in-custody-practice-model/
	Supporting System-involved LGBTQ Youth Certificate	https://cyj.georgetown.edu/certificate-programs/supporting-lgbtq-youth/
	Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Certificate	https://cyj.georgetown.edu/certificate-programs/advancing-racial-justice-and-equity/
National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)	Collaborative Responses to Commercial Sexual Exploitation Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/focus-areas/commercial-sexual-exploitation
	Defending Reproductive and Sexual Health Access for Youth in Foster Care Initiative, Information about Laws Impacting Adolescent Health Care Access	http://teenhealthlaw.org
	Protecting the Due Process Rights of Children in Federal Immigration Custody Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/initiatives/uphold-and-expand-rights-detained-immigrant-youth
NCYL and the Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice (CTRJJ)	Primer for Juvenile Court Judges: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Judicial Decision-making for Newcomer Immigrant Youth in Juvenile Justice Proceedings	https://www.nctsn.org/resources/primer-juvenile-court-judges-trauma-informed-approach-judicial-decision-making-newcomer

NCYL and the Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice (CTRJJ)	Guidance for Mental Health Professionals Serving Unaccompanied Children Released from Government Custody	https://youthlaw.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2022-03/2021_Guidance-for-Mental-Health-Professionals-Serving-Unaccompanied-Children-Released-from-Government-Custody.pdf
National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)	Resource Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems	https://www.nctsn.org
Juvenile Law Center (JLC)	National Extended Foster Care Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://jlc.org/resources/national-extended-foster-care-review-50-state-survey-law-and-policy • https://jlc.org/foster-care#paragraph-863
JLC Youth Advocacy Program	Aging Out of Foster Care	https://jlc.org/youth-fostering-change/aging-out-foster-care
	Engaging Older Youth in Permanency Planning	https://jlc.org/youth-fostering-change/engaging-older-youth-permanency-planning
	Juvenile Justice Fines & Fees	https://jlc.org/ATYS
Vera Institute of Justice (VIJ)	Initiative to End Girls' Incarceration	https://www.vera.org/projects/the-initiative-to-end-girls-incarceration/learn-more
	Girls Matter Project	https://www.vera.org/girls-matter
Justice Policy Institute (JPI)	Crimmigration Initiative	https://justicepolicy.org/research/reports-2017-the-cost-of-crimmigration-exploring-the-intersection-between-criminal-justice-and-immigration/

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Module 8

SCHOOLS AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

“It's one of the other and mainly they don't like to listen because they're like, Oh, I'm big and bad, I stole a car and you're trying to tell me that I need to do my schoolwork. You're not my dad, you're not my mom. But in reality, we've been through the we understand how it is. And that's the thing.”

–Youth in Detention

The goal of this module is to provide an overview of the intersection between schools and the juvenile justice system.

The Role of Schools

“I went to school, but I wanted to be a teacher because the most impact of people in my life were teachers my teacher had.”

–Youth in Detention

Schools play a very important role in young people's lives and overall development. Within the context of the juvenile justice system, youth who feel a sense of belonging in their school environment are at lower risk of dropping out^{1,2,3}, which in turn reduces their risk for juvenile justice involvement⁴. Similarly, feeling bonded to school can moderate the risk for externalizing behaviors⁵ and school attachment has been highlighted as a protective factor against the risk for offending⁶. Academic achievement can also moderate risk for offending in adolescence, with lower academic achievement increasing the risk for youth offending overall⁷ and violent offending in particular⁸.

“Obviously, graduating high school, I need my diploma. I can't live with the GED, especially in my situation. Um, being able to live my life when I'm under like a microscope all the time, that's like my biggest goal just getting off of probation, parole, getting out.”

–Youth in Detention

School-to-Prison Pipeline

“School to Prison Pipeline” is a term that has been used to describe the path from more punitive, zero-tolerance school discipline practices to the funneling of youth into the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems⁹. Discipline practices that negatively label youth, exclude them from mainstream school environments, and criminalize minor infractions often lead to an increased likelihood of juvenile justice involvement. Exclusionary practices have been linked to an increased risk for future incarceration¹⁰ as well as other risk factors for juvenile justice involvement such as lower rates of school attendance, academic achievement and educational attainment¹¹.

Youth with learning disabilities, and youth of color in particular, are at higher risk of encountering academic challenges and exclusionary discipline practices that lead subsequent juvenile justice involvement¹². This is evidenced by the high prevalence rates of learning disabilities found among youth in juvenile justice settings, which range from 65–70% versus 13% in public school settings^{13,14}.



“

“So it was very difficult for him to have days in days out. School missed. therapy sessions. Missed it? It's not fair. you know, again. He's not a bad kid. It was a moment of crisis.”

”

–Parent of a Youth in Detention

RESOURCES

[The School to Prison Pipeline Explained](#)¹⁵ defines the School to Prison Pipeline, outlines factors that contribute to the problem and provides possible solutions. This corresponding [video](#)¹⁶ provides further information.

[How Zero Tolerance Blurred the Lines Between Schools and Criminal Justice](#)¹⁷ examines the connection between zero tolerance and other strict discipline policies in schools and the juvenile justice system.

[School to Prison Pipeline: Decriminalizing Public Education](#)¹⁸ is a panel discussion that examines the school to prison pipeline and possible solutions.

[Bias Isn't Just A Police Problem, It's A Preschool Problem](#)¹⁹ presents research on factors in the education system as early as preschool that influence the school to prison pipeline.

Listen to this [CTRJJ Roadmap for Change](#) podcast episode to learn more about education within the juvenile justice system.

Lived Experience: School to Prison Pipeline



This video, [Gone Too Far: Our Kids in Handcuffs](#)²⁰, presents that story of Kyle Thompson, a student whose accidental infraction of a school rule placed him in jail and under house arrest.

Screenshot from [Gone Too Far: Our Kids in Handcuffs](#)

School Resource Officers

The term “school resource officer” (or “SRO”) is sometimes used to refer to anyone who works in a school, wears a law enforcement–like uniform, and is responsible for a school’s security. However, the term technically only applies to sworn law enforcement officers who are assigned to work at a school on a long-term basis. SROs might also be confused with school police officers, who are sworn law enforcement officers who work in schools. The difference between SROs and school police officers is that the latter are employed by a school police department²¹.



Research examining the impact of SROs in schools has found mixed results. In a systematic review on this topic²² found that some schools with SROs report higher crime rates and more exclusionary discipline practices as compared to those without this role, whereas other schools have found the presence of SROs has no impact on youth offending behavior. There were also mixed results with regard to daily interactions between students and SROs, with some schools reporting that more interactions have led to more positive perceptions of SROs and others finding that more interactions have led to decreased school connectedness. In several studies, SROs also reported feeling undervalued and inadequately trained. These concerns and a greater focus on the school-to-prison pipeline have prompted a number of recent initiatives aimed at reducing and reforming the role of SROs in schools.²³

RESOURCES

This [School Resource Officer Fact Sheet](#)²⁴ developed by the Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) provides information about the role of school resource officers and the importance of employing non-punitive tactics within schools.

[A Brief About School Resource Officers](#)²⁵ presents an overview of the role of a school resource officers and provide key information, links to resources, evaluative information about this law enforcement role.

Lived Experience: School Resource Officers

This video, [Beyond the Badge: A Profile of a School Resource Officer](#)²⁶, follows School Resource Officer Ronald Cockrell as he works to bridge the gap between students and police officers in the midst of turmoil and division between law enforcement and the community of Ferguson, MO, St. Louis County works to bridge the gap between students and police officers.

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

Organization	Initiative	Website
National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)	Defending the Civil Rights of Students Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/policy/defending-civil-rights-students/
	Shutting Down the School to Prison Pipeline Initiative	https://youthlaw.org/policy/disrupting-school-prison-pipeline-2/
Juvenile Law Center (JLC)	Operation: Education	https://jlc.org/juveniles-justice/operation-education
	Access to Higher Education	https://jlc.org/juveniles-justice/access-higher-education

JLC Youth Advocacy
Program

Improving Access to College

<https://jlc.org/youth-fostering-change/improving-access-college>

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Appendix I

RECOMMENDED VIEWING

This module and its contents are intended for educational purposes.

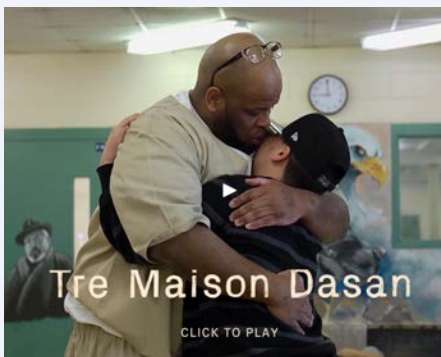
Documentaries

Raised in the System



VICE, 'Raised in the System' Season 6 Premiere from HBO. "Actor Michael Kenneth Williams (HBO's The Wire) goes in depth and explores mass incarceration and the juvenile justice system." View here: [VICE | 'Raised in the System'](#)

Tre Maison Dasan



"Tre Maison Dasan is an intimate portrait of three boys growing up, each with a parent in prison. Directly told through the child's perspective, the film is an exploration of relationships and separation, masculinity, and coming of age in America when a parent is behind bars."

Presented by Hello World Productions in Association with Chicken and Egg Pictures, Shine Global, Sustainable Films and Pilgrim Media Group. View here: [Tre Masion Dasan](#)

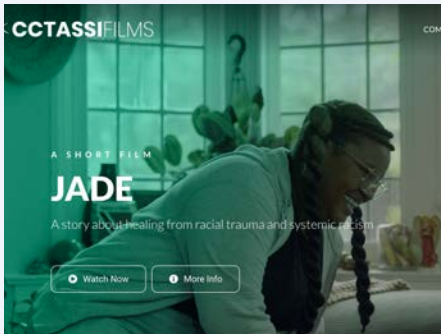
Cutline, "Spotlight on Juvenile Justice."



"CT Public's Accountability Project takes a deep dive into Connecticut's juvenile justice system---why lawmakers are calling for reform, what youth advocates and teenagers say they need and what the data shows about car thefts and juvenile crime." From PBS. View here:

<https://www.pbs.org/video/spotlight-on-juvenile-justice-cnqzgw/>

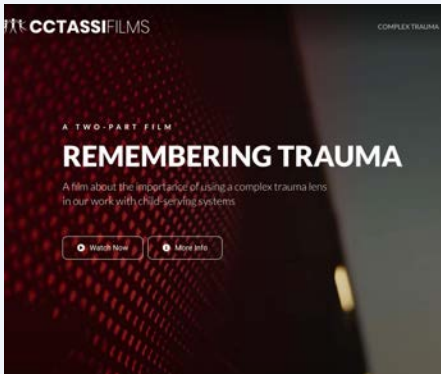
Jade: A Short Film



“When Jade ‘clashes’ (read: is on the receiving end of racist behavior) with yet another teacher, her high school guidance counselor demands that she see the new school therapist. Having had terrible experiences in the past, she is very skeptical, even with her big brother’s words of encouragement. Armed with his support, she walks into the session to find out if anyone at this school could ever understand her.” CCTASSI Films. View here:

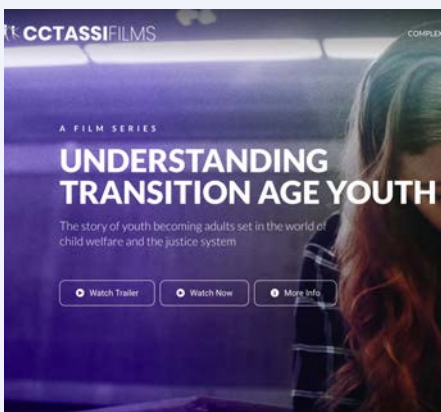
<https://www.cctassifilms.org/racial-trauma/>

Remembering Trauma: Connecting the Dots between Complex Trauma and Misdiagnosis in Youth



“A short narrative film (16 minutes) that highlights the story of a traumatized youth from early childhood to older adolescence illustrating his trauma reactions and interactions with various service providers (including probation officer, school counselor, and therapist). This product was created in order to support the critical importance of using a trauma lens in our work within child-serving systems and the potentially detrimental impact of not incorporating a trauma framework. We believe this resource can serve as a powerful educational and awareness raising tool. ‘Remembering Trauma Part 2’ incorporates scenes from the narrative Part 1 film, with poignant commentary from real world professionals who work across child-serving settings, including school, juvenile justice and mental health.” CCTASSI Films. View here: <https://www.cctassifilms.org/child-trauma/>

Understanding Transition Age Youth



“Designed to raise awareness about the unique trauma-related needs and strengths among transition age youth (TAY). It highlights the stories and experiences of a diverse group of system-involved, youth adults who have transitioned out of child welfare and juvenile justice settings. The film series consists of a combined version as well as four separate episodes that highlight messages for each service setting or topic area in more detail: Part 1: TAY in Juvenile Justice; Part 2: TAY in Child Welfare; Part 3: Coping and Resilience; Part 4: Moving Forward.” CCTASSI Films. View here: <https://www.cctassifilms.org/transition-age-youth/>

Mental Health, Racial Trauma, and Health Inequities Confronting Boys and Men of Color



“In this webinar, viewers will hear from Dr. Wizdom Powell, an artist, Director of the Health Disparities Institute and Associate Professor of Psychiatry, and a Senior Consultant for the Center for the Treatment of Developmental Trauma Disorders, at UConn Health, who has worked to advance health equity for boys and men of color. During this segment, Dr. Powell will describe the impact of chronic exposure to racial and developmental trauma on young Black men and share how intergenerational trauma has affected families and communities of color. She will highlight creative pathways that can be considered to promote healing for boys and men of color who have experienced racial and developmental trauma.” NCTSN. View here: <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/view.php?id=548>

How Race, Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity Impact Treatment of Trauma



“In this webinar, you will hear from five expert trauma therapists about their experiences and reflective processes while working with children and families who have experienced developmental trauma and come from complex backgrounds in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, and identity. In addition, Dr. Rocio Chang (who also participated in the roundtable discussion) will moderate live commentary with Dr. Maureen Allwood, Dr. Ernestine Briggs-King, and Dr. Russell Jones. They will talk about the importance of open conversations related to the roundtable topics as well as the impacts of recent events that have brought racism to the forefront.” NCTSN. View Here: <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/view.php?id=543>

Podcasts

[Roadmap for Change](#) dives into the pressing need for transformation of the juvenile justice system. Through the voices of youth and their families, this podcast explores the changes they believe would truly support healing and growth. Alongside, experts share the latest insights on trauma-informed practices, along with actionable strategies to implement them.



Dramatized Documentaries

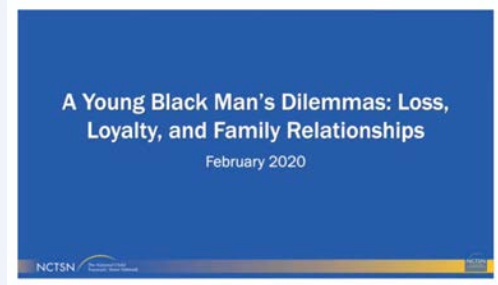
Trauma Avengers.

- <https://traumaavengers.com/>



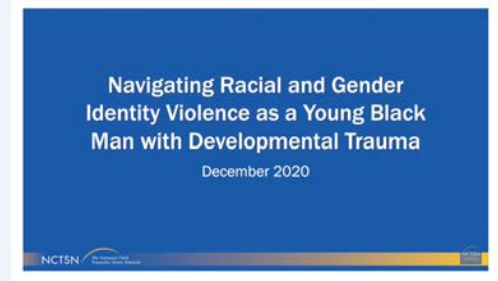
A Young Black Man's Dilemmas: Loss, Loyalty, and Family Relationships

- <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/view.php?id=558>

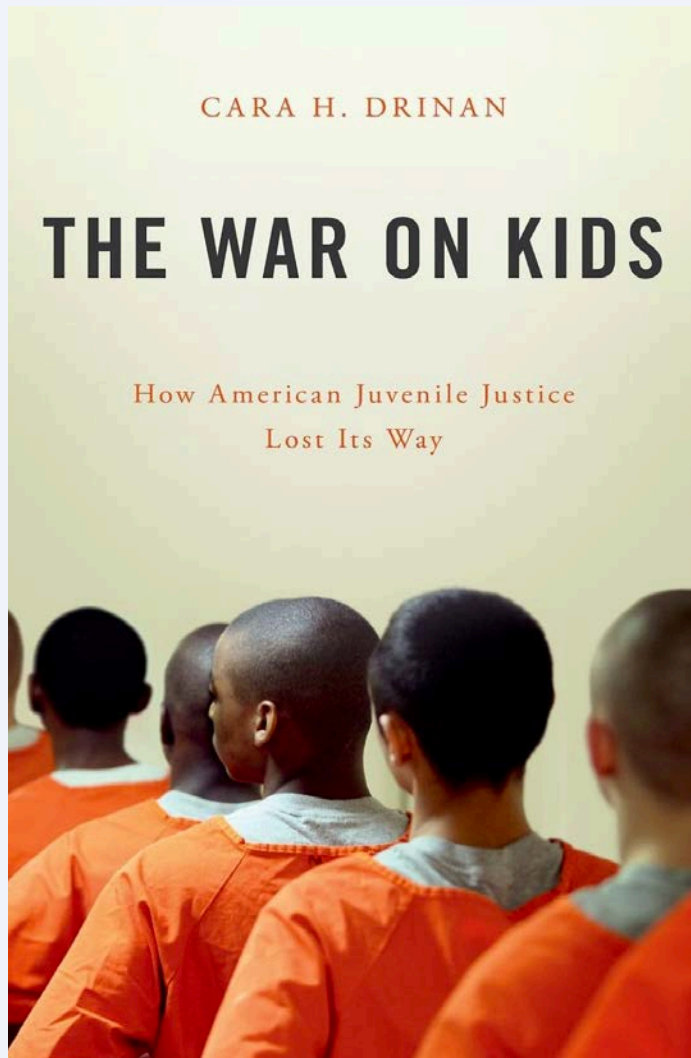


Navigating Racial and Gender Identity Violence as a Young Black Man with Developmental Trauma

- <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/view.php?id=552>



Nonfiction



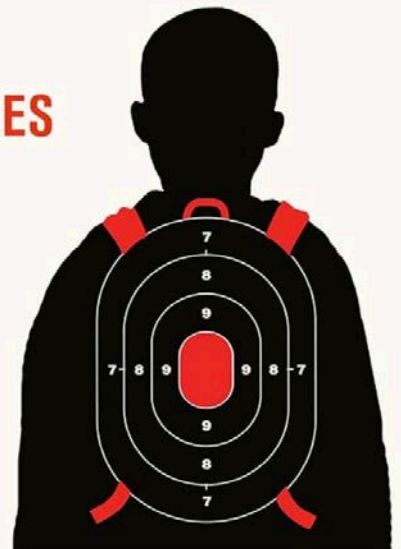
The War on Kids: How American Juvenile Justice Lost Its Way, by Cara Drinan (Oxford University Press)

"*The Rage of Innocence* . . . offers both a tribute to the humanity of Black children and a searing portrait of what we lose every time we shuttle another Black child into the pipeline." —Robert Walker Sterling, *The Washington Post*

THE RAGE OF INNOCENCE

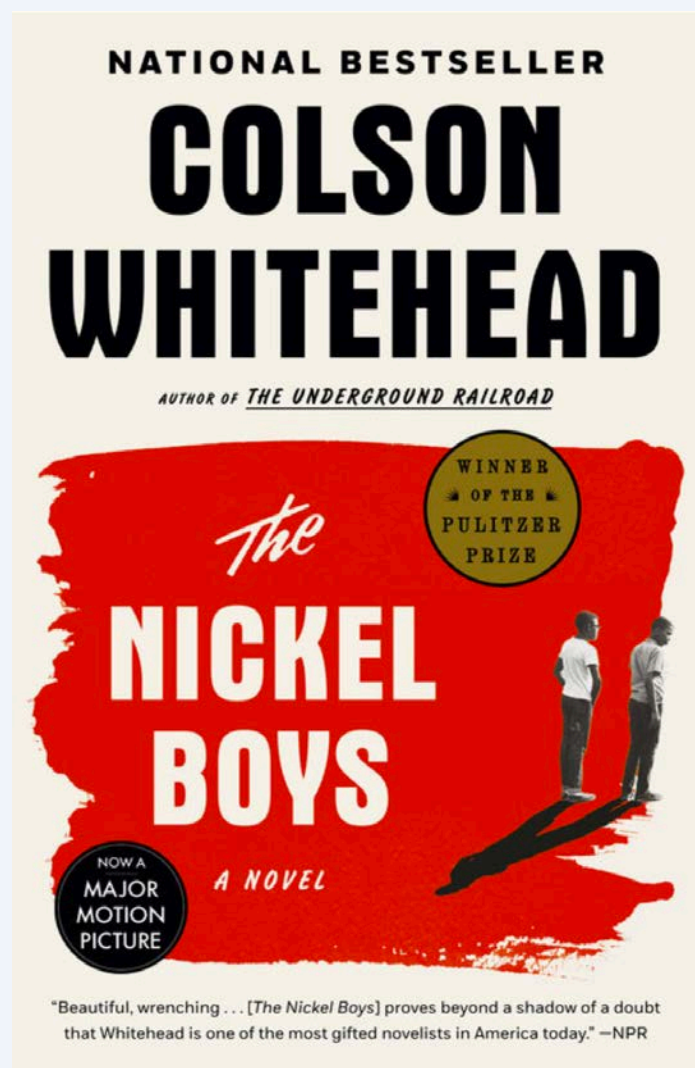
—
**HOW
AMERICA
CRIMINALIZES
BLACK
YOUTH**

**KRISTIN
HENNING**

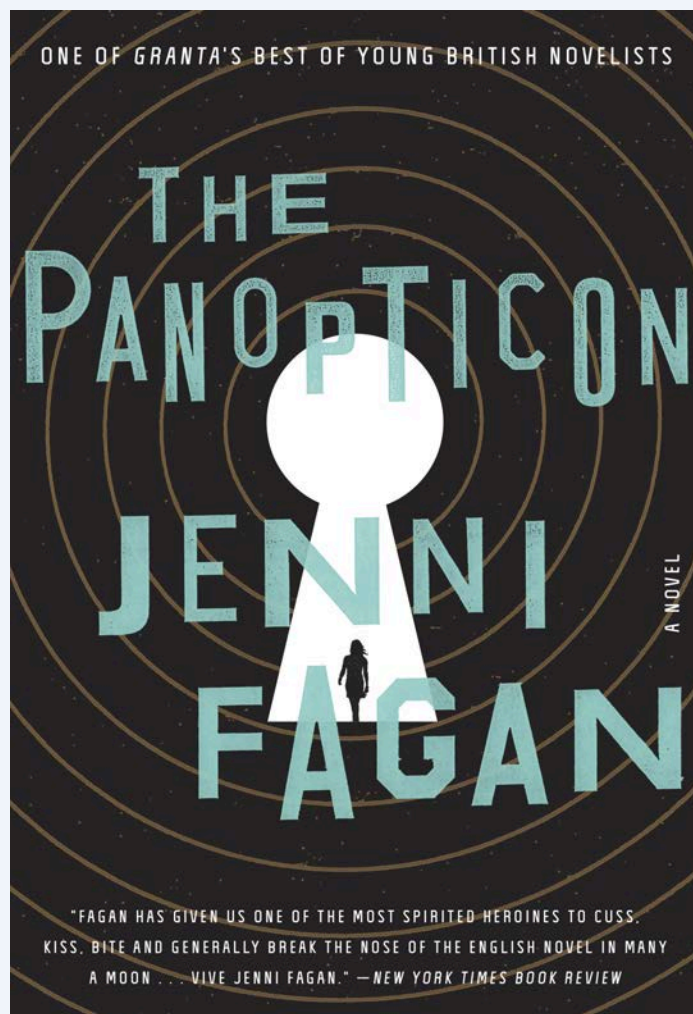


The Rage of Innocence: How America Criminalizes Black Youth, by Kristin Henning (Pantheon)

Fiction



The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead
(Penguin Random House Books)



The Panopticon by Jenny Fagan (Penguin Books)

Commentaries by Youths

The Beat Within Magazine Written by Incarcerated Youth
(<https://imprintnews.org/justice/juvenile-justice-2/supporters-vow-to-continue-the-work-of-david-inocencio-founder-of-the-beat-within-magazine-written-by-incarcerated-youth/244680>)

Cycling Through Foster Care and Juvenile Detention (<https://imprintnews.org/youth-voice/cycling-through-foster-care-and-juvenile-detention/243496>)

Positive Role Models for Juvenile Justice-Impacted Youth(<https://imprintnews.org/youth-voice/positive-role-models-for-juvenile-justice-impacted-youth/245585>)

The Compounded Issues of Native Youth in the Juvenile Justice System (<https://imprintnews.org/youth-voice/the-compounded-issues-of-native-youth-in-the-juvenile-justice-system/244856>)

Poetry

Poems from Inside Juvenile Justice Facilities (<https://imprintnews.org/justice/juvenile-justice-2/words-unlocked-poems-juvenile-justice-facilities/31922>)

Mental Health Screening and Brief Assessment Tools

MAYSI-2¹ The MAYSI-II is a self-report screening instrument designed specifically for use in juvenile detention centers. It contains seven subscales with one item that differs slightly between boys and girls and is primarily used during intake in juvenile detention, probation, and diversion programs.^{2,3,4}

Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9):^{5,6} The PHQ-9 is a questionnaire with 9-items that assess for depressive symptoms in line with DSM 5 criteria.

Structured Trauma-Related Experiences and Symptoms Screener (STRESS):⁷ The STRESS assesses adverse childhood experiences and potentially traumatic events through a 25 item self-report questionnaire.

UCLA PTSD Reaction Index (UCLA PTSD-RI):^{8, 9} The UCLA PTSD-RI is an assessment tool for children and adolescents that assesses for both a history of traumatic experiences and prevalence of PTSD symptoms over the past month. It is a self-report questionnaire that directly aligns with the DSM 5 criteria for PTSD⁸.

Adolescent Dissociative Experiences Scale (A-DES):^{10, 11} The A-DES is a 30-item self-report measure designed to assess pathological dissociation for youth ages 11-18¹¹.

Inventory of Callous and Unemotional Traits (ICU):¹² The ICU contains three subscales (Callous, Uncaring, and Unemotional) that are assessed through a 24-item questionnaire.

CRAFFT Questionnaire:^{13,14} The CRAFFT is a 6-item screening tool used to identify problematic substance use.

Child Trauma Screen (CTS):¹⁵ The CTS is a 10-item screening measure of trauma exposure and PTSD symptoms children age 6-17 (age 3-6 version is in development), intended for use by clinical or non-clinical staff in any child-serving setting. The CTS can be administered as an interview or self-report; both child and caregiver report versions are available.

Risk Assessment Tools

For a comprehensive review of risk assessments and their implementation in the juvenile justice system, please refer to: [Risk Assessment in Juvenile Justice: A Guidebook to](#)

Implementation

Several risk screening/assessment tools have evidence of predictive validity in more than one jurisdiction, for the goal of identifying youth who are at risk for additional violations of the law.

Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment:¹⁶ The WSJCA has also been modified into the Youth Assessment and Screening Instrument (YASI). Both are computerized assessment tools that measure risk of reoffending and consist of three parts: prescreen, full assessment, and reassessment. They are administered by trained probation officers and other staff. Youth rating moderate or high risk on the prescreen complete the full assessment, whereas those rating low risk do not get a full assessment. The WSJCA/YASI prescreen is a brief risk assessment tool with published evidence of validity in more than one jurisdiction.

Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory 2.0 (YLS/CMI 2.0):¹⁷ The YLS/CMI is a well-validated, comprehensive, standardized inventory for assessing risk among youth ages 12–18 involved with the juvenile court. It includes measures of static and dynamic risks that can assist with post adjudication case planning. Created specifically for administration by probation officers, it is a tool that is widely used by probation offices in the United States.

Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY):¹⁸ The SAVRY is a comprehensive risk assessment for adolescents. It contains measures of structured static and dynamic risk factors and protective factors to be combined with professional judgment in deriving the youth's level of risk. Although the SAVRY originally was intended to assess violence risk, research indicates that it also has high accuracy for predicting general delinquent reoffending.

Risk & Resiliency Checkup (RRC):¹⁹ The RRC is a comprehensive risk assessment with semi-structured interview designed to assess behaviors that place a youth at risk of reoffending. It contains both risk and protective factors. J-SAT allows juvenile justice agencies to add items to the existing validated instrument in order to meet the needs of the agency. Both San Diego (SDRRC) and Los Angeles (LARRC) have versions of the RRC.

Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability: Adolescent Version (START-AV):^{20, 21} The START-AV is an adolescent risk assessment focusing on harm to others and harm to the adolescent while also focusing on strengths. The START-AV orients professionals to the adolescent's strengths, vulnerabilities, and risks in order to assist in management and safety planning for youth.

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20. Desmarais, S. L., Sellers, B. G., Viljoen, J. L., Cruise, K. R., Nicholls, T. L., & Dvoskin, J. A. (2012) Pilot implementation and preliminary evaluation of START:AV assessments in secure juvenile correctional facilities. *International Journal of Forensic Mental Health*, 11(3), 150-164. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14999013.2012.737405>
21. https://protect-international.com/product/short-term-assessment-risk-treatability-adolescent-version-startav-manual/?aelia_cs_currency=USD

Appendix IV

JUVENILE JUSTICE-SPECIFIC INITIATIVES AND RESOURCES

The goal of this appendix is to provide a comprehensive listing of the various organizations, initiatives and resources related to educational and/or reform-based work in the juvenile justice system. Many of the resources listed here are also organized within their corresponding modules within the resource guide.

Organizations

The following organizations focus on advocacy and initiatives related to youth in the juvenile justice system and their families. Many of these organizations are the drivers of the initiatives listed in this guide.

NOTE: Please note that this list is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather a snapshot of some of the advocacy organizations that might not be familiar to mental health professionals in non-justice settings.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF)



**THE ANNIE E. CASEY
FOUNDATION**

AECF is a private philanthropy based in Baltimore that provides funding to organizations and communities looking to “create more innovative, cost-effective responses to challenges facing children and young people.” AECF focuses on initiatives that strengthen families, build stronger communities and ensure access to opportunities.

AECF also advances “research and solutions to overcome the barriers to success, help communities demonstrate what works and influence decision makers to invest in strategies based on solid evidence.”

Resource Link

<https://www.aecf.org/about>

Contact Information

Website	https://www.aecf.org/
Fax	410.547.6624
Phone	410.547.6600
Address	701 St. Paul Street Baltimore, MD 21202 503 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21201

Center for Youth Justice at Georgetown University (CYJ)

The Center for Youth Justice at Georgetown University supports and educates leaders across systems of care to advance a balanced, multi-system approach to improving outcomes for, and promoting the positive development of, youth at risk of juvenile justice involvement.

The Center works to focus the nation's juvenile justice and related systems of care on the key principles embodied in an evidence-based juvenile justice reform agenda, utilizing a multi-system approach. These include:

- An effective balance of prevention and intervention services
- An individualized system of justice for youth
- Implementation of proven and effective practices
- Strong linkages to the community
- Significant public engagement and building of public and political will



The Center for Juvenile Justice Reform's Juvenile Justice System Improvement Project (JJSIP) is designed to help states improve outcomes for juvenile offenders by better translating knowledge on "what works" into everyday practice and policy.

Resource Links

CJJR's Juvenile Justice System Improvement Project: <https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/juvenile-justice-system-improvement-project/>

CYJ's Crossover Youth Practice Model: <https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/crossover-youth-practice-model/>

Contact Information

Website	https://cyj.georgetown.edu
Email	centerforyouthjustice@georgetown.edu
Address	Capitol Hill Office 500 1 st Street, NW Washington, DC 20001

Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)



CJJ is a nationwide coalition of State Advisory Groups (SAGs), organizations, individuals, youth, and allies dedicated to preventing children and youth from becoming involved in the courts and upholding the highest standards of care when youth are charged with wrongdoing and enter the justice system. CJJ envisions a nation where fewer children are at risk of delinquency; and if they are at risk or involved with the justice system, they and their families receive every possible opportunity to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

CJJ's substantive areas of work include:

- Promoting evidence-informed policies and practices in delinquency reduction and prevention;
- Educating the public and advising federal policymakers on state and local juvenile justice issues;
- Assisting the states (including territories and the District of Columbia) in meeting the core requirements of the [Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act](#);
- Improving racial/ethnic fairness, accessibility, and overall quality of community and court-based policies and practices; and
- Linking national, state, and local advocates and organizations to pursue a common mission.

Contact Information

Website	https://www.juvjustice.org
---------	---

Email	info@juvjustice.org
Phone	(202) 827-9751
Address	1629 K Street NW Suite 300 Washington, DC 20006-1631

Council for Juvenile Justice Administrators (CJJA)

CJJA is a national non-profit organization, formed in 1994 (as CJCA) to improve local juvenile correctional services, programs and practices so the youths within the systems succeed when they return to the community and to provide national leadership and leadership development for the individuals responsible for the systems.



CJJA represents the youth correctional CEOs in 50 states, Puerto Rico and major metropolitan counties. CJJA fulfills its mission through educational activities and programs as well as research and technical assistance projects.

Resource Links

<https://cjja.net/resources/>

Contact Information

Website	https://cjja.net/
Email	info@cjca.net
Phone	781-843-2663
Fax	781-843-1688
Address	639 Granite St. Braintree, MA 02184

Juvenile Law Center (JLC)

Since 2008, JLC's Youth Advocacy Program has prepared young people to lead advocacy and policy reform efforts. Youth Advocacy featured programs are listed below.

Resource Links

<https://jlc.org/about>

<https://jlc.org/youth-advocacy>

JLC Youth Advocacy Programs: Featured Programs

[Operation: Education](#)

[Engaging Older Youth in Permanency Planning](#)

[Conditions in Youth Prisons](#)

[Empowering Youth in Court](#)

[Juvenile Justice Fines & Fees](#)

[Access to Higher Education](#)

[Expunging Juvenile Records](#)

[Improving Access to College](#)

[Aging Out of Foster Care](#)

Contact Information

Website

<https://jlc.org>

Email

info@jlc.org

Phone	(215) 625-0551
Address	1800 JFK Blvd, Suite #1900B Philadelphia, PA 19103

National Center for Youth Law (NCYL)



NCYL has worked for more than four decades to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and youth. NCYL leads campaigns, weaving together research, public awareness, policy development, technical assistance and litigation to ensure governmental systems provide the support these children and youth need to thrive.

NCYL works directly with many state and local public agencies to develop model practices and policies in the areas of:

- Information sharing between agencies
- Addressing implicit bias
- Interagency coordination and collaboration
- Minor consent and confidentiality
- School discipline
- Use of psychotropic medications on children in foster care
- Meeting the educational needs of system involved children and youth
- Creating an inter-agency response to child trafficking

NCYL is available for consultation, technical assistance and training in each of these areas.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/about/#for-pro>

Contact Information

Website	https://youthlaw.org
Email	info@youthlaw.org

Phone	(510) 835-8098
Address	1212 Broadway Suite 600 Oakland, CA 94612

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)



The NCTSN is a network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners committed to changing the course of children's lives by improving their care and moving scientific gains quickly into practice across the U.S.

The NCTSN is administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and coordinated by the UCLA-Duke University National Center for Child Traumatic Stress (NCCTS).

To accomplish the NCTSN mission, grantees and Affiliates work to:

- Provide clinical services
- Develop and disseminate new interventions and resource materials
- Offer education and training programs
- Collaborate with established systems of care
- Engage in data collection and evaluation
- Inform public policy and awareness efforts

Resource Links

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources>

Contact Information

Website	https://nctsn.org
Email	info@nctsn.org
Phone	(310) 235-2633 (UCLA) (919) 682-1552 (Duke University)

Address

11150 W. Olympic Blvd., Suite 650
Los Angeles, CA 90064

1121 West Chapel Hill Street Suite 201
Durham, NC 27701

National Youth Justice Network (NYJN)

The logo for the National Youth Justice Network (NYJN) features the words "NATIONAL YOUTH JUSTICE NETWORK" in a bold, sans-serif font. "NATIONAL" and "NETWORK" are in white, while "YOUTH JUSTICE" is in yellow. The text is set against a dark blue background with a subtle pattern of white lines.

Our mission is to clear a broad path for people of color to lead us toward justice system reform. We seek to elevate the leadership of people of color who know how to transform the oppressive systems harming communities of color.

Resource Links

<https://nyjn.org/about-us/>

Contact Information

Website

<https://nyjn.org>

Email

info@nyjn.org

Address

1200 G Street, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

Vera Institute for Justice

The logo for the Vera Institute of Justice features the word "Vera" in a large, bold, red serif font, followed by "INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE" in a smaller, bold, red sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark blue background.

Vera Institute for Justice is a national organization that strives to end mass incarceration. Employing researchers, advocates and activists, Vera works alongside governments, local organizations and communities to develop and pilot programs that address the root causes of incarceration.

Relevant initiatives include [Reshaping Prosecution](#) and Ending Girls' Incarceration. Click on this [video](#) to learn more about the organization.

Contact Information

Website	https://www.vera.org/
Email	contactvera@vera.org
Phone	(212) 334-1300
Address	34 35th Street Suite 4-2A Brooklyn, NY 11232

Juvenile Justice Specific Initiatives

Below is a list of juvenile justice specific initiatives, organized by topic area. Many of these initiatives can also be found within their corresponding modules throughout the resource guide.

Alternatives to Confinement: Reducing Incarceration

Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)



Using a model rooted in eight core strategies, JDAI has effectively helped participating jurisdictions create alternative programs for juvenile offenders, thus safely reducing their detention populations, which can reduce the odds that youth will be found delinquent and committed to corrections facilities and increase the odds of future success.

Resource Links

Juvenile Detention Resources: <https://www.aecf.org/topics/juvenile-detention/>

Mental Health Related Resources: <https://www.aecf.org/search/?q=mental+health>

Contact Information

Website	https://www.aecf.org/ https://www.aecf.org/work/juvenile-justice/jdai/
Fax	410.547.6624
Phone	410.547.6600
Address	701 St. Paul Street Baltimore, MD 21202 503 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21201

Justice Policy Institute's Smart, Safe, and Fair Initiative
(Strategies to Prevent Youth Violence, Heal Victim's of Crime, and Reduce Racial Inequality)



In consultation and with the support of victims of violent crime, The Justice Policy Institute's Smart, Safe, and Fair Initiative advocates for community based solutions for youth charged with violent offenses rather than inefficient, costly and unjust confinement.

Resource Links

http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/12222?utm_source=%2fsmartsafefair&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=redirect

Contact Information

Website	https://justicepolicy.org
Email	info@justicepolicy.org
Phone	(202) 558-7974
Address	1012 14th St. NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20005

**Justice Policy Institute (JPI) Defining Violence Initiative
(Reducing Incarceration by Rethinking America's
Approach to Violence)**

In Defining Violence, JPI says it's impossible the U.S. will be able to lower its incarceration rate significantly without changing how the justice system treats violent crimes. To address this complicated issue, we need to rethink how the justice system responds to violent crimes, starting with how these crimes and behaviors are defined, and how that affects prison populations. Who defines a behavior as violent, how the justice system treats these behaviors, and whether the approach to violent crime makes us safer needs to be scrutinized if we are ever going to make meaningful reductions in the use of incarceration.

Resource Links

<http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/10708>

Contact Information

Website	https://justicepolicy.org
Email	info@justicepolicy.org
Phone	(202) 558-7974
Fax	(202) 558-7978
Address	1012 14th St. NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20005

**MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice
Challenge Network**

The Safety and Justice Challenge is providing support to local leaders from across the country who are determined to tackle one of the greatest drivers of over-incarceration in America—the misuse and overuse of jails. Within the Challenge Network, 28 Implementation Sites are receiving substantial funding and expert technical assistance to implement ambitious reforms to make their local justice systems fairer and more effective. Twenty-Four Innovation Sites are receiving short-term support to design and test a single innovative reform program or project.

The Challenge Network sites represent 51 cities and counties, across 32 states, that are modeling and inspiring reform.

Contact Information	
Website	http://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/
Email	etwyman@macfound.org
Address	140 S. Dearborn Street Chicago, IL 60603-5285

Vera Institute of Justice Reshaping Prosecution Project (and Prosecutor's Guide for Advancing Racial Justice)

Through the Reshaping Prosecution program, Vera is helping reform-minded prosecutors rethink their role in delivering justice and pursuing public safety. Vera is partnering with prosecutors to put their campaign promises into action as concrete, data-informed policies and practices. The goal of these partnerships is to develop strategies for prosecutors to reduce incarceration and promote racial equity in their work, and increase the public's confidence in their office.



Unlocking the Black Box of Prosecution is a tool developed by the Vera Institute of Justice for interested community members and prosecutors to better understand what prosecutors can do to advance equal justice.

Resource Links	
https://www.vera.org/unlocking-the-black-box-of-prosecution	
Contact Information	
Website	https://www.vera.org/projects/reshaping-prosecution-program
Phone	(212) 334-1300

Address	34 35th Street Suite 4-2A Brooklyn, NY 11232
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Best Practices in Juvenile Justice Facilities

CYJ Youth in Custody Practice Model

Informed by research on “what works” in serving youth in custody, as well as professional standards and the field’s preeminent the Youth in Custody Practice Model on best practices, the (YICPM) initiative is designed to assist state and county juvenile correctional agencies and facility providers in implementing a comprehensive and effective service delivery approach.

The Youth in Custody Practice Model offers guidance on essential practices in four key areas:



1. Case planning;
2. Facility-based services (e.g., education, behavioral health, behavior management, rehabilitative programming);
3. Transition/reentry; and
4. Community-based services.

Resource Links

<https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/crossover-youth-practice-model/what-is-the-cypm/>

Contact Information

Website	https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/crossover-youth-practice-model/what-is-the-cypm/
Email	centerforyouthjustice@georgetown.edu
Address	500 1st Street NW Washington, DC 20001



Restoring Promise, an initiative of VIJ and [MILPA](#), works with prisons and jails to address the root causes and consequences of mass incarceration in how it manifests in prisons and jails. We work directly with prisons and jails to transform the culture, climate, rhythms and routines that define the prison system, starting with young adults.

Young adults are “mentees” who participate in meaningful daily activities, deepen their connection to their culture and healing, cultivate an ideology of self-determination, and restore relationships with family and community. Mentors (people over the age of 25) support them in their personal growth. Staff undergo intensive training to become agents of change in support of this mission

Resource Links

<https://www.vera.org/projects/restoring-promise-young-adult-reform-initiative>

Contact Information

Website	https://www.vera.org/
Email	contactvera@vera.org
Phone	(212) 334-1300
Address	34 35th Street Suite 4-2A Brooklyn, NY 11232

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed in 2003 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.” (Prison Rape Elimination Act, 2003). In addition to creating a mandate for significant research from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and through the National Institute of Justice, funding through the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections supported major efforts in many state correctional, juvenile detention, community corrections, and jail systems. The act also created the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission and charged it with developing draft standards for the elimination

of prison rape. Those standards were published in June 2009, and were turned over to the Department of Justice for review and passage as a final rule. That final rule became effective August 20, 2012.



In 2010, the Bureau of Justice Assistance funded the **National PREA Resource Center** to continue to provide federally funded training and technical assistance to states and localities, as well as to serve as a single-stop resource for leading research and tools for all those in the field working to come into compliance with the federal standards.

Resource Links

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title34/subtitle3/chapter303&edition=prelim>

National Prison Rape Elimination Commission Report:
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/226680.pdf>

Contact Information

Website

<https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/>

Contact Page

<https://www.prearesourcecenter.org/about/contact-us>

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

NCYL Collaborative Responses to Commercial Sexual Exploitation Initiative

NCYL advocates on behalf of this highly vulnerable population with the goal of preventing trafficking and effectively intervening with children that do fall victim. NCYL raises public awareness about the plight of these children and young adults and helps formulate and implement public policies that address their needs as victims, not criminals.

**National Center
for Youth Law**

The California Child Welfare Council's Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Action Team is a multidisciplinary body, comprised of substantive experts from across the state, dedicated to researching and identifying promising prevention and intervention practices, collaborating with survivors, providing guidance to county agencies and community partners, and conducting evaluation to ensure policies improve outcomes for children.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/focus-areas/commercial-sexual-exploitation>

<https://youthlaw.org/csec-action-team-o>

Contact Information

Website	https://youthlaw.org
Email	info@youthlaw.org
Phone	(510) 835-8098
Address	1212 Broadway, Suite 600 Oakland, CA 94612

Crossover Youth

CYJ Crossover Youth Practice Model



Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) was developed in 2010 to address the unique needs of youth that are at risk of or are fluctuating between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. These youth are commonly referred to as “crossover youth.”

Crossover Youth Practice Model (CYPM) was developed in 2010 to address the unique needs of youth that are at risk of or are fluctuating between the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. These youth are commonly referred to as “crossover youth.”

The Crossover Youth Practice Model is a nexus between research and best practices that outlines systemic changes youth serving systems can make to improve their ability to serve youth.

The CYPM has four overarching goals:

1. Reduction in the number of youth crossing over and becoming dually-involved;
2. Reduction in the number of youth placed in out-of-home care;
3. Reduction in the use of congregate care; and

4. Reduction in the disproportionate representation of youth of color, particularly in the crossover population

Resource Links

<https://cyj.georgetown.edu/our-work/crossover-youth-practice-model/>

Contact Information

Website

<https://cyj.georgetown.edu>

Email

centerforyouthjustice@georgetown.edu

Address

500 1st Street NW Washington, DC 20001

NCTSN Resource Guides for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems

Trauma-Focused Practice Supplement for the Crossover Youth Practice Model

NCTSN
The National Child
Traumatic Stress Network



Trauma-Focused Practice Supplement for the Crossover Youth Practice Model

This practitioner guide is designed for those working with youth involved in multiple systems using the Crossover Youth Practice Model. This supplement is a brief version of A Trauma-Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems developed specifically for staff working with youth who are currently or have been involved in the child welfare, juvenile justice, and other systems. After a brief description of the CYPM, real world examples are provided that highlight five distinct steps of trauma-informed practice with crossover youth.

Resource Links

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/a-trauma-informed-guide-for-working-with-youth-involved-in-multiple-systems>

A Trauma-Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems

This resource guide uses two case vignettes throughout to illustrate the concepts within.



A Trauma-Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems

It describes what trauma and recovery might look like for YIMS, trauma-informed practices that could be beneficial, using trauma-informed screening and assessment with YIMS, engaging in trauma-informed case planning and intervention, and managing secondary traumatic stress for providers. Guidance is provided to help those working with youth involved in multiple systems (YIMS) and their families to use a traumatic stress perspective and provide trauma-informed care.

Resource Links

<https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/resource-guide/trauma-focused-practice-supplement-for-the-crossover-youth-practice-model.pdf>

Developmentally Appropriate Trial & Sentencing for Youth in Juvenile Justice

NCYL Ending the Practice of Trying and Incarcerating Youth in the Adult Criminal System Initiative

**National Center
for Youth Law**

Each year, nearly 1,000 California youth are prosecuted, sentenced and incarcerated as adults, despite research and legal holdings finding youth to be especially capable of rehabilitation. Together with key partners, NCYL is leading a campaign that ensures California's justice system treats youth in a manner appropriate for their age, cognitive development and ability to change.

This campaign addresses closing pathways to the adult system as well as creating meaningful opportunities for release of prisoners serving lengthy sentences for crimes committed as youth.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/laws-policy/keeping-14-and-15-year-olds-out-adult-criminal-justice-system-2018>

Contact Information

Website	https://youthlaw.org
Email	info@youthlaw.org
Phone	(510) 835-8098
Address	1212 Broadway, Suite 600 Oakland, CA 94612

NCYL Reforming the Juvenile Justice System to Treat Children in a Developmentally Appropriate Manner Initiative

The goal of this project is to transform California's Juvenile Justice system to ensure children and youth are treated in a developmentally appropriate manner. This requires completely eliminating the practice of prosecuting and incarcerating youth as adults, as well as eliminating the practice of trying children under the age of 12 as delinquents.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/focus-areas/youth-justice>

Contact Information

Website	https://youthlaw.org
Email	info@youthlaw.org
Phone	(510) 835-8098
Address	1212 Broadway, Suite 600 Oakland, CA 94612

JLC Juvenile Life without Parole Initiative

Juvenile Law Center

Fighting for the rights
and well-being of youth

JLC is a leading advocate nationwide in the fight to end juvenile life without parole and other harsh sentences for youth. JLC has been actively engaged in challenges to juvenile sentencing in the US Supreme Court and they provide ongoing litigation support, training and technical assistance for the implementation of sentencing reforms.

Resource Links

<https://jlc.org/issues/juvenile-life-without-parole>

Contact Information

Website

<https://jlc.org>

Email

info@jlc.org

Phone

(215) 625-0551

Address

1800 JFK Blvd, Suite #1900B
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Family and Court Readiness

National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) Family Justice Initiative (and Court Readiness Assessment for Implementing FJI Principles)



INSTITUTE FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF THE
AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM



NCSC promotes the rule of law and improves the administration of justice in state courts and courts around the world. The Family Justice Initiative is a national collaborative of children's attorneys, parents' attorneys, educators, researchers, and national policy advocates who

share a common goal: to increase access to high-quality legal representation for children and parents in child welfare cases. Judicial leadership and courts considering implementation of the Family Justice Initiative (FJI) Principles are offered a self-assessment tool designed to help court leaders highlight priority areas and foresee potential barriers to implementation.

Resource Links

<https://www.ncsc.org/services-and-experts/areas-of-expertise/children-and-families/family-justice-initiative>

https://www.ncsc.org/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/18690/fji_readiness_checklist.pdf

Contact Information

Website

<https://www.ncsc.org>

Phone

(800) 616-6164

Address

300 Newport Ave
Williamsburg VA 23185

Females in the Juvenile Justice System

Vera Institute of Justice Initiative to End Girls' Incarceration

The logo for the Vera Institute of Justice. It features the word "Vera" in a large, bold, red serif font. To the right of "Vera", the words "INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE" are written in a smaller, red, all-caps sans-serif font, stacked in two lines.

The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) believes that we can end the incarceration of youth on the girls' side of the juvenile justice system by building stronger, safer, and more equitable communities where girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender-nonconforming (LGB/TGNC or "gender expansive") youth—particularly youth of color—are no longer criminalized for the violence and discrimination they face.

Through its Initiative to End Girls' Incarceration, VIJ aims to end the confinement of girls within 10 years by partnering with jurisdictions to build new reforms and programs that will better support the safety and well-being of girls and gender expansive youth in their communities, address the root causes of their incarceration, and close the doors to girls' juvenile detention and placement facilities.

Resource Links

<https://www.vera.org/projects/the-initiative-to-end-girls-incarceration/learn-more>

Contact Information

Website	https://www.vera.org/
Email	contactvera@vera.org
Phone	(212) 334-1300
Address	34 35th Street Suite 4-2A Brooklyn, NY 11232

Vera Institute of Justice Girls Matter Project

This initiative centers gender in status offense reform. Within a comprehensive gender-responsive framework, it is especially urgent to focus on girls, whose experiences have been left behind in a reform field focused largely on boys, and for whom the toll of sexism, racism, and misogyny is often exacerbated by justice involvement.

Resource Links

<https://www.vera.org/girls-matter>

Contact Information

Website	https://www.vera.org/
Email	contactvera@vera.org
Phone	(212) 334-1300
Address	34 35th Street Suite 4-2A Brooklyn, NY 11232

Foster Care

JLC Extended Foster Care Review

In an effort to provide a comprehensive resource on how each state handles the extension of foster care to youth over 18, JLC surveyed states to create the National Extended Foster Care Review. This tool provides readers with information on the laws, procedures and policies in states related to extended foster care. See below for the link and additional resources.

Resource Links

Juvenile Law Center's Extended foster care page: <https://jlc.org/resources/national-extended-foster-care-review-50-state-survey-law-and-policy>

This executive summary describes the National Extended Foster Care Review—a tool for advocates, policymakers, and other stakeholders to enhance how we serve and support older youth in the child welfare system:

<https://jlc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2018-05/2018-NationalEFCReview-ExecSummary.pdf>

Finding Your State's Policy on Extended Foster Care: <https://jlc.org/issues/extended-foster-care>

Supporting Young People Transitioning from Foster Care:

<https://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/SYPTFC-Findings-from-a-National-Survey-11.29.17.pdf>

Contact Information

Website

<https://jlc.org>

Email

info@jlc.org

Phone

Local: (215) 625-0551
Toll-free: 1-800-875-8887

Address

1800 JFK Blvd, Suite #1900B
Philadelphia, PA 19103

NCYL Defending Reproductive and Sexual Health Access for Youth in Foster Care

NCYL believes that young people in the child welfare system must have the ability to take ownership of their own bodies and reproductive decisions in order to have a fair start in life.



To do so, foster youth must have access to comprehensive and complete sexual health education that addresses their unique needs and circumstances, the opportunity to access confidential reproductive and sexual health care on their own when they want it, the ability to make their own decisions about pregnancy and when to become parents, and the ability to make their own decisions about when and with whom to share reproductive and sexual health information.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/policy/reproductive-and-sexual-health-access-for-youth-in-foster-care/>

<https://youthlaw.org/initiatives/empower-youth-lead-and-make-decisions-about-their-sexual-and-reproductive-health>

Information about Laws Impacting Adolescent Health Care Access:
<http://teenhealthlaw.org/>

Contact Information

Website

<https://youthlaw.org>

Email

info@youthlaw.org

Phone

(510) 835-8098

Address

1212 Broadway, Suite 600
Oakland, CA 94612

Immigration

JPI Crimmigration Initiative



JPI highlights the mounting costs federal immigration policies have on local taxpayers through additional law enforcement deployment, increased spending on jail beds, lawsuits from residents, and losses to the labor force when noncitizens are removed from the community. While costing counties and cities more, immigration enforcement also undermines public safety as residents fear interacting with local law enforcement, and policing resources are deployed away from more effective crime prevention and enforcement activities.

Resource Links

<http://www.justicepolicy.org/research/11453>

Contact Information

Website	https://justicepolicy.org
Email	info@justicepolicy.org
Phone	(202) 558-7974 (phone) (202) 558-7978 (fax)
Address	1012 14th St. NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20005

NCYL Protecting the Due Process Rights of Children in Federal Immigration Custody

The goals of this campaign are:

- Reduce the number of undocumented children placed in detention facilities
- Ensure undocumented children in detention facilities are quickly reunified with their families or placed with caring adults whenever possible
- Ensure undocumented children receive the constitutional due process protections to which they are entitled

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/policy/protecting-due-process-rights-children-federal-immigration-custody/>

<https://youthlaw.org/initiatives/uphold-and-expand-rights-detained-immigrant-youth>

Contact Information

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Phone

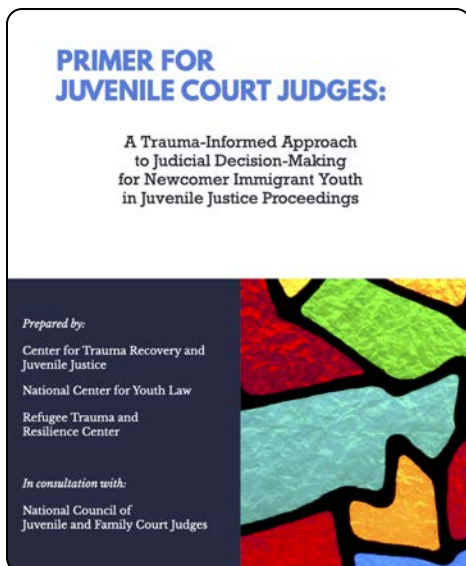
(510) 835-8098

Address

1212 Broadway, Suite 600
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NCYL and Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice (CTRJJ)

Primer for Juvenile Court Judges: A Trauma-Informed Approach to Judicial Decision-making for Newcomer Immigrant Youth in Juvenile Justice Proceedings



This guide introduces key factors that juvenile court judges should consider in order to take a trauma-informed approach when newcomer immigrant youth come before them in juvenile justice cases. This primer discusses the definition of newcomer immigrant youth, case studies to provide clarity, the role of trauma in newcomer immigrant youth's lives, pathways from trauma exposure to the juvenile justice system, traumatic stress within the juvenile justice system, legal implications of involvement in the justice system on immigration status, cultural considerations, how to strengthen protective factors, and what judges can do.

The primer also includes a number of helpful appendices on the unique experiences of unaccompanied minors, Supreme Court jurisprudence, adolescent brain development, as well as glossaries.

Resource Links

<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/primer-juvenile-court-judges-trauma-informed-approach-judicial-decision-making-newcomer>

Guidance for Mental Health Professionals Serving Unaccompanied Children Released from Government Custody

Providing effective mental health services to unaccompanied children released from federal immigration custody is both critically important and incredibly challenging. Developed by children's rights attorneys and mental health experts on trauma and immigration, this Guide is grounded in the voices and experiences of unaccompanied children. The Guide provides context on the distinctive experiences unaccompanied children carry with them and offers guidance on how to meet the therapeutic needs of these children. Featured quotes from detained unaccompanied children throughout the Guide come from interviews conducted by attorneys representing children in federal custody. As a mental health provider, you may be the first adult who understands the multi-layered impact that trauma has had on your client. Although each child's experience is distinct, there are commonalities that can help you to provide trauma-sensitive and culturally responsive care for children who have faced the unique dangers, challenges, and losses involved in the journey to this country as an unaccompanied child. Without a deeper understanding of who unaccompanied children are, and what traumatic stressors their journey to and within the U.S. has entailed, even a seasoned clinician with expertise in child trauma may struggle to effectively provide mental health services to this population. This Guide is intended to support mental health providers in effectively serving unaccompanied children released from immigration custody.

Guidance for Mental Health Professionals Serving Unaccompanied Children Released from Government Custody

Stanford Early Life Stress and Resilience Program
National Center for Youth Law
Center for Trauma Recovery and Juvenile Justice

NOVEMBER 2021

To that end, the Guide includes:

- An overview of the layers of trauma unaccompanied children may experience throughout their journey – beginning in home country, through their time in federal immigration custody, and upon release into the community
- An overview of the distinctive traumatic stressors impacting unaccompanied children
- General and specific characteristics of the type of government custody where unaccompanied children are placed that increase the likelihood of traumatic stress
- Priorities for mental health professionals working with unaccompanied children

Resource Links

https://youthlaw.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2022-03/2021_Guidance-for-Mental-Health-Professionals-Serving-Unaccompanied-Children-Released-from-Government-Custody.pdf

LGBTQ Youth

Center for Youth Justice Supporting System-Involved LGBTQ Certificate

The Supporting the Well-Being of System-Involved LGBTQ Youth Certificate Program is designed to help juvenile justice, child welfare, and other system partners target and improve outcomes for at-risk LGBTQ youth.



The program will focus on the particular challenges faced by LGBTQ youth in child-serving systems (including juvenile justice, child welfare, education and behavioral health) as well as strengths and protective factors common to the population, and will highlight effective policy and practice reforms that promote positive youth development and take a holistic approach to addressing their needs.

While individuals are accepted this is recommended for teams for up to 7 from the same organizations including directors and senior leaders who are responsible for, and capable of, effectuating change

Resource Links

<https://cjjr.georgetown.edu/certificate-programs/supporting-lgbtq-youth/>

Contact Information

Website

<https://cyj.georgetown.edu>

Email

centerforyouthjustice@georgetown.edu

Address

Capitol Hill Office
500 1st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Additional NCTSN resources related to LGBTQ youth can be found here:

<https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/populations-at-risk/lgbtq-youth/nctsn-resources>

Race and the Juvenile Justice System

Center for Youth Justice Reform Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities Certificate



The Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice Certificate Program is an intensive training program designed to support local jurisdictions in their efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in their juvenile justice systems.

While there are no minimum education or experience requirements to apply, a preference will be given to those in a professional position to move reform efforts forward upon completion of the program. Participants can be individuals working on best practices for diversion at the local, state, or national level.

Resource Links

<https://cyj.georgetown.edu/certificate-programs/advancing-racial-justice-and-equity/>

Contact Information

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Address	500 1st Street NW Washington, DC 20001

NYJN Youth Justice Leadership Institute



“NYJN’s Youth Justice Leadership Institute (YJLI), is a year-long leadership development program for BIPOC advocates, organizers, healers, and creatives with leadership experience to expand and elevate their advocacy efforts.”

Resource Links

<https://nyjn.org/youth-justice-leadership-institute/>

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Address

1200 G St. NW Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005-6705

School to Prison Pipeline

NCYL Defending the Civil Rights of Students Initiative

**National Center
for Youth Law**

NCYL uses a wide range of strategies to defend the civil rights of students and to make schools safe places for where everyone can learn and thrive. Today, far too many students face bullying and other barriers to education based on their race, religion, national origin, gender identity, disability, first language, or sexual orientation. Immigrant children continue to be illegally denied the right to enroll in school.

Increasingly divisive and hateful rhetoric and growing anti-Muslim and White nationalist sentiment only serve to exacerbate the threats to already marginalized students. Through this campaign NCYL and key partners are reminding state and local education agencies of their obligations under the law, assisting those who need help in complying with legal mandates and holding accountable schools, districts and states that fail to meet these obligations.

Resource Links

<https://nyjn.org/youth-justice-leadership-institute/>

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NYCL Shutting Down the School to Prison Pipeline Initiative

Across the nation, schools' districts are implementing punitive disciplinary policies that push students out of school. Law enforcement is also gaining a greater role on campuses leading to increased arrest and referrals to juvenile courts. The "school-to-prison pipeline" is a phenomenon documented in a growing body of state and national research. Disrupting class, using profanity, misbehaving on a school bus, student fights, and truancy once meant a trip to the principal's office. Now they often lead suspension, ticketing and arrest.



NYCL seeks to interrupt this destructive cycle and prevent the loss of more young people to the "school-to-prison pipeline" through early interventions focused on creating positive school environments that address students' academic and behavioral needs.

NYCL has launched a campaign to ensure all California students receive educational instruction to stay on the path to graduation and out of the criminal justice system.

Resource Links

<https://youthlaw.org/policy/disrupting-school-prison-pipeline-2/>

Contact Information

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Status Offenses

Vera Institute of Justice Status Offense Tool Kit

The logo for the Vera Institute of Justice, featuring the word "Vera" in a large, bold, red serif font, and "INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font to its right.

Resources for developing and implementing effective status offense reform strategies.

Resource Links

<https://www.vera.org/publications/status-offense-toolkit>

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